

THE GWYDYR^{No. 3}

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GWYDYR MOUNTAIN CLUB

Winter is still here !

This has to be one of the best winter's for many a year, some great walking and climbing has been done and here's hoping it will continue through March and into April !

Melinda & Richard's winter update !

1. Mon 28th Dec - Me, Rich, Andy Cole and Ronnie (prospective member) did a snowy "variation" of Heather Terrace up Tryfan. Blue skies & sunshine (and apologies to Dave and Ronnie that Rich seems to have lost what should have been a great summit photo!)

Followed by : Tues 29th - me and Rich wander round Llyn Ogwen in a blizzard, so Rich can eye up the ice routes... / Wed 30th - we fail to get into Pen y pass car park due to deep snow, then head home a bit early.

2. Sat 2nd Jan - Lone walk up Y Garn for me (v.snowy / white out on top!), while Rich, Tony, Andy Chapman and Hugh retreat off some avalanching gully nearby... Then Sun 3rd Jan - I head up Moel Siabod with Chris and Janet Harris - snowy and well-frozen, with some sun, but cloud on top allows us to see a great Brocken Spectre.

3. Fri 8th Jan - Me and Andy Chapman walk over the Glyders, then descend Bristly Ridge. Brilliant blue skies and sun / wacky frozen structures on top / bitterly cold! Then Sat 9th Jan - Another lone walk up Y Garn for me (white out on top again!!), while Rich, Andy and Tony climb *White Hope* on Idwal slabs.

4. Sat 23rd Jan - Me, Helen Beddows and Helen Brady have great fun scrambling up the N. ridge on Tryfan in damp / icy conditions. No views, but who cared! Then Sun 24th Jan - Lone scramble up Moel Siabod E.Ridge for me.

5. Fri 29th Jan - Lone scramble up Moel Siabod E. Ridge for me again! Bitterly cold northerly wind, with some interesting gusts, but stayed dry in the afternoon, and good views on the way down. Then Sat 30th Jan - BRILLIANT DAY! Lone scramble up Pen yr Ole Wen E. ridge (icy), then cramponed my way across well-compacted snow / solid ice to Carnedd Dafydd and Carnedd Llewelyn, before heading along the ridge to Pen yr Helgi Du summit. Early clouds rose to above the summits, giving brilliant blue skies, bright sunshine and almost alpine)



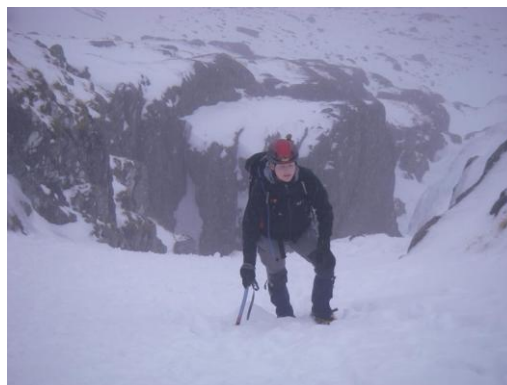
Katie Harris Update.

Just returned from a trip up to Scotland for the weekend. (Staying in Glen Nevis YHA - which does NOT have hot showers, or even luke warm ones).

Saturday saw myself and 3 friends ascend Stob Coire nan Lochan via Fork Gully (Grade 2) - my first grade 2 :) A beautiful day with clear skies and very little wind.

Sunday; a friend and I traversed round from Glen Nevis YHA to the CIC hut (where ice climbers peppered the crags) then ascended Ben Nevis by Gully number 4 and topped out in low visibility, continued on to the summit where low visibility became a total white out. The air was totally still, all that could be heard was the crunching of snow and the faint patter of snowflakes on our jackets. It was impossible to tell the difference between what we were standing on and stepping into, which made it very eerie, especially as the cornices had looked huge from below. The compass decided to play games and spin when following a bearing. Even placing it on the ground and stepping away proved useless. We retraced our steps just short of the summit and retreated back down the slopes of Ben Nevis until below the snowline where we could see again.

Monday brought heavy rain. After choosing a hill by the visitors centre to climb as we were all shattered, we arrived in Glencoe to find the visitors centre closed, the rain hammering down and the wind picking up so decided on a trip to the Ice Factor. As we could not bring ourselves to part with £25 per person for 2 hours ice climbing we drove back home instead. The highlight of the day was a cafe stop for deep fried haggis and chips.



Katie and friends in Scotland, sadly no picture is available of the deep fried Haggis !!

Other members having fun !

At the beginning of February Milly Wright enjoyed a good day walk on the Kirkstone Pass in the Lakes and the Gilbert Bros. did the Armchair Ridge on Y Garn again. Dave Gray did the Berwyn Ridge again and Phil Earl was on the Gribin Ridge above Ogwen. On the 13th February Dave Gray's Saturday walk to Whitbarrow was well attended with 14 members enjoying a pleasant 8 ½ mile walk. Keith Colwell went up Moel Siabod.

It's not all been winter stuff though !

On the 6th February Allan, Neil and Andy Odger went to the Moelwyns to go Rock Climbing in beautiful sunshine, some of the pockets on Whitestreak (Severe) had water in them but other than that the rock was warm and dry and it was great to 'sneak' an easy route in so early in the year. We also climbed a scrappy V-Diff called Babylon the least said about which the better really !. The next day Carol, John, Neil, Phil, Allan & Carol Boothroyd went to the Moelwyns, and it proved to be even sunnier and warmer than the day before, the routes climbed included Kirkus Climb Direct (Severe), Crossover (Severe), Block (Severe) as well as Chic & Slick (both V-Diff) which were Carol Boothroyd's first ever rock climbs !



Andy Odger on Whitestreak



Coming down the descent tunnel on
Craig Yr Wrysgan



Carol B on Slick



It's not you know !

Glencoe & the Mamore's

Allan & Neil drove up to Scotland on Friday morning and arrived at the Bank Street Lodge at Fort William in time for an 'off the drive' pint. Surprisingly the beer was not enjoyed as we felt it was not earned. We would have to make sure they would be the next day !

An early start saw us at the lay by in Glencoe where we were accosted by a producer for Radio Scotland researching a programme on Lyme Disease. We let him know that if any tick could survive this freezing cold they deserved our blood – it was minus fifteen and the slightest breeze chilled to the core. By 9.15am we began our slog, for there is no other word for it, up to Coire Nan Lochan with the intention of climbing Dorsal Arete – a simple Grade II winter climb. The higher we climbed the more beautiful it became, the snow was crisp and delightful underfoot and on the route a swung axe held on the first placement – apart from some climbers who were rather slow and got in our way (!) the climb was a delight and upon cresting the ridge the view towards Bidean Nam Bian was incredible and truly alpine. Its pull was irresistible and we had no hesitation in heading up from the col separating it from Stob Coire Nan Lochan, the aspect from the summit was simply inspirational with Ben Nevis and the Aonach Eagach ridge standing out proud from above a faint wisp of cloud. The descent was made under clear skies down to the Hidden Valley which was as treacherous as always in its lower reaches, if ever a path needs to be 'constructed' then surely it is here. A superb day was rounded off in the Clachaig with a much appreciated beer and a game of pool (Allan won !!). As we left we met a group of Royal Marines who we had seen on the hill and as they had left their sacks outside we thought we would see how heavy they really were, needless to say we were both impressed as it took a fair effort just to lift them up – heaven knows how they coped on the mountain.



Dorsal Arete – climbers can be seen on the lower

Left hand side of the ridge.



Neil approaching the summit of Stob

Coire Nan Lochan



Allan on the first part of Dorsal Arete.

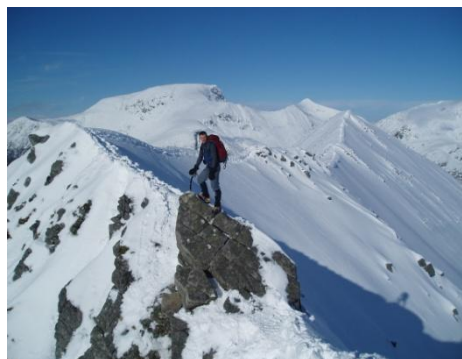
The next day I thought an easier outing would be in order and Neil foolishly trusted me, I've never done the Ring of Steall in the Mamore's so what a day we eventually had. It was still bitterly cold with the Nevis River partly frozen, it came as no surprise that the road was closed at Polldubh cottage and an extra half hour walk was needed just to get to the start.

The path was very icy and we ended up following a trail of blood (literally !) till we came to the wire bridge over the partly frozen river. Then followed a tough climb up An Gearanach where a splendid prospect awaited us, behind loomed Ben Nevis, Anonach Mor & Beag while ahead a ridge of alpine brilliance led to Am Bodach. The snow was crisp and the skies a deep blue while the sun shone and reflected upon the snow crystals which glistened like precious jewels – totally magical and we were both united in saying that the whole range looked as magnificent as the Alps themselves. After Am Bodach it was clear that the final peak was going to be beyond us given the lateness of the day and so a descent down Allt Coire a'Mhusgain beckoned where we indulged in a little glissade to arrive, rather gratefully, at the car park by half four.

A brilliant weekend and the next morning saw us heading home with many stops for photographs, particularly on Rannoch Moor which was not like anything either of us had seen before – more pictures on the club website.



Neil crossing the Wire Bridge



Descent from An Gearanach



Neil Glissading



Rannoch Moor

The AGM !

Our AGM this year will be in The Stork pub where we normally meet on a Tuesday evening and it starts at 8.00pm prompt. Space is limited however the beer is better than the Rugby Club !

The three main things to be discussed are the proposed amendment to the constitution to allow voting by email, the proposal to increase the Annual Subscription by £2.00 to £52.00 and a proposal to increase Chapel booking fees. Those who cannot attend can have their say by sending a written vote to either the Chairman (Allan McDonald) or Club Secretary (Mike Dunn). It is anticipated that the present committee will be standing for election again with one or two exceptions and written votes are invited from the membership. The Agenda for the AGM should be with you by the time you read this or shortly thereafter.

Forthcoming Meets :-

March will be a busy month for meets with something happening nearly every weekend :-

5-6th March 2010 – CLM (Lin's 60th) at the Blencathra Centre.

17th March 2010 - Cains Brewery Tour on St Patricks Night (Chris Harris)

19-20th March 2010 – Lakes Camping Barn meet (Dave Gray)

23rd March 2010 – AGM

25th March 2010 – Thursday walk to Arenig Fawr (Mike Mc)

26 – 27th March 2010 – Annual Dinner

One thing all members must be made aware of is that straight after the Annual Dinner weekend the Chapel will be closed till the 29th April 2010 to allow Reg & Dave to commence

works on the toilet block refurbishment. This also means the Chapel will be closed for Easter so it's a good chance to go somewhere different – Anyone fancy Scotland or the Lakes ??

ADDENDUM

The well known mountaineer Stephen Venables is holding a lecture at Parr Hall in Warrington on Friday 5th March 2010. It's called 'In the footsteps of Shackleton' and should be good. The lecture is mainly focusing on Shackletons epic journey across South Georgia after their heroic battle across the Southern ocean in the James Caird . I think you can pay on the door or buy on line and tickets cost £13.00 each and it starts at 8.00pm. The lecture is the day before Stephen Venables headlines the Llanberis Mountain Film Festival to give the same lecture.