

THE GWYDYR No.16 (Mar 2011)

The monthly newsletter of the Gwydyr Mountain Club

Well this month has been quite a busy one what with the winter self catering meet at Blencathra, the AGM and the 44th Annual dinner at the Tyn Y Coed. For over 18 months I've been pleading with members to send me articles and photographs for the magazine and now I've got four articles which I've included below - long may it continue. I'm more than happy to put the effort and time into doing this and I do ask that members contribute the odd paragraph and / or photo with description as it breaks the monotony of my ramblings. I know John Huxley had difficulty trying to put together one magazine a year so producing 12 newsletters will be much harder but with an expanding membership and more activity it should not be too hard – one hopes !

The month started with Mark Barley walk in the Upper Irwell area of Darwen area on Saturday 5th March which was well attended with four prospective members attending a cold walk but one with excellent views and apparently lots of potential according to Mr Gray. Helen & Bryan, Mike Mc & Ross endured a rather muddy day in the Clwyds while Mr Brierley & Mr Russell flexed their cycling legs on a long ride in North Wales. Andy Odger, Phil Earl and I went climbing in the Llanberis Pass the same day which was bitterly cold though we managed a couple of the classic climbs on Carreg Wastad before calling it a day and heading for the Royal Oak in Betws for a much deserved beer.



Andy & Phil on Wrinkle



Andy on Skylon

The following day I went with Neil Metcalfe to the Moelwyns and the contrast weather wise was remarkable. Clear blue skies, bright sunshine and warm air made for a great day where we managed Kirkus Climb Direct, Bent, Chic and a new route which we decided to call Lower Pinacl Wall (VS, 4c). It's only a couple of minutes walk from the road and just before you get to Clogwyn Yr Oen, steep and well protected & well worth the effort in doing !



Lower Pinacl Wall

The following weekend was the winter self catering meet and I have Chris Harris to thank for the following :-

Most people did their own thing on the Friday, Janet and Chris Harris decided to do a circuit, of the Dodds. We started from High Row in cool cloudy conditions with a gentle breeze, fine hail was starting to fall. As we climbed gently across boggy ground the precipitation became more wintry and the wind was strengthening. By the time we reached Randerside it was gail force wind and a blizzard. Visibility and navigation were becoming difficult but, we soldiered on. Somewhere on the top was a shelter and we had to find it. Fortunately we did, it sheltered us from the wind but not the snow.



Chris after 2 minutes of “shelter”

After a few minutes rest we decided Watson’s and Stybarrow Dodds could wait for another day and beat a hasty retreat. Arriving back at the car, wet snow was falling so we headed for the Blencathra Centre. Soon after arrival the snow caught up with us.



Evening at the Blencathra Centre

We installed ourselves at the centre and then a team headed for The Horse and Farrier in Threlkeld for off-the-hill and pre-dinner pint(s).

Saturday dawned overcast and mild after a rapid thaw. Janet, Chris, Sue and Mike Gavin headed North East along the valley to Scales Fell to approach Blencathra from the easier Eastern approach. The valley route looked easy enough on the map but actually included crossing numerous swollen becks and a pretty hairy scramble down wet rock to one beck. The views from the top were non-existent thanks to the cloud; we got a passing German to take a photo at the top.



Blencathra summit – well that’s what the sign said

After a walk along the ridge we descended Blease Fell to arrive across the road from the Centre. Back in the Centre, Mike was able to watch some special game of Rugby on TV and we got cleaned up and ready for the dinner.

The Dinner was an excellent affair with everyone making a real effort to produce an international feast with French nibbles, Spanish starters, Indian mains, Italian desserts and finishing off with British cheeses. We were able to employ one long banqueting table and the suppliers of each course waited on to make a leisurely and sumptuous feast. Many nationalities of wine contributed to the night.



After dinner – emptying the bottles

Sunday dawned late for most people but the weather had cleared and it was tempting to do another good walk, some opted for retail therapy in Keswick.

Dave, Chris, Janet, Sue, Ray and Reg headed for Skiddaw. The sun came out and after a 1st lunch by the Hostel we headed across Sale How to Skiddaw.



1st lunch outside the YHA Skiddaw House

The views were amazing, especially towards Borrowdale where it was very dark – presumably snowing. It was windy and freezing cold on the summit so we returned to the coll between Skiddaw and Little Man to find some shelter for lunch. Then it was up and over Little Man and descent via Lonscale Fell.



Looking for the “peak” of Lonscale Fell – it’s a Wainwright !

Returning to the Centre fine snow started to blow across from Borrowdale which added to the atmosphere of the day.

All in all a very successful weekend with all the essential ingredients – good food, good company, good wine and a real mixed bag of weather.

A final comment about the Blencathra Centre, It was warm, clean, spacious, in an excellent location with magnificent views across the valley – thank you Sue for organising the superb weekend.

The same weekend Carol Boothroyd and John Driver went up Carnedd Llewellyn and Yr Elen and had fantastic views. Andy Chapman was in Glencoe climbing the Dorsal Arete, a great easy winter classic climb. Jim Metcalfe was also active walking up Snowdon with his future son in law. I managed to get out on the Sunday for a short walk in the Peak District with prospective member Fiona Langton and despite the rain we had a good walk and two cafe’s ‘ticked’ as well so a good day out.

The following Tuesday saw a well attended AGM at the Stork which went well with no major issues and as Chairman I would like to thank my fellow committee members and also the membership at large for helping us take the club forward with increased membership and improving facilities. We have a lot to be proud of and one hopes there is much to look forward to in the future.

On the 23rd March Dave Gray, Christine Smythe & Milly Wright enjoyed a pleasant sunny day in Lyme Park over Sponds Hill to Bollington and back along the canal, apparently a really nice walk of 11 miles

Annual Dinner Weekend

The following weekend was the club annual dinner, held once again at the Tyn Y Coed, by all accounts it was an excellent event with much happening and I'm awaiting the winner of the photograph competition as well as a detailed account of the evening festivities – I am sure one is on its way soon and it will be included in next months' newsletter. Chris Harris kindly wrote the following on the epic canoe trip on the river Conway.

2011 Club Canoeing Trip

Most of the canoeists arrived on the Friday night and spent the evening increasing alcohol levels in the bloodstream to aid flotation the next day.

On Saturday, as promised, the weather was calm and overcast as we headed for Oaklands to get kitted out – wellies and a Cag being the recommended option. We then had to load up the boats. Nualla asked for a volunteer to reverse the van, unhitch the trailer and hitch up a different one. Having had a driving licence for 42 years which entitles me to drive a vehicle with trailer and never actually done so, I decided I should learn and grabbed the keys from Nualla. After a quick "learning by mistakes" session, we got hitched. The next job was to put a canoe on top of the van – where are the climbers when you need them? Geoff and I volunteered.



2 workers, 5 advisors.

Geoff says he was concerned for my well-being !

All secured we headed off to the Conwy estuary, about half a mile seaward of the Castle, to launch the boats. Timing was good; the tide was about to turn but there was bit of a head wind which was a little worrying.



Nervous anticipation as we receive instruction.

After a brief briefing (Nualla must have thought we were pretty capable as she didn't tell us what to do if we fell in!) we launched the boats and headed upstream. Passing the moored craft and heading towards the castle gave us a totally new view of Conwy. Passing one of the boats, the man on board asked if we were some kind of club.

I said "we are a walking club".

"A walking club?" he echoed.

"Well in fact we are a mountain club" I replied

"A mountain club?" came the now expected echo with more than a hint of disbelief..

"Actually we're doing something a bit different, today" I said, stating the obvious, but he seemed to appreciate my explanation, as he showed his understanding with a simple "Oh"



Gathering, ready to board the Spanish(?) invader

Having passed under the two road bridges and the rail bridge we assembled on the bank by the castle for elevenses.

Re-launching, the momentum from the tide was increasing, the wind was easing and there was even a suggestion that the sun may come out. Weaving (that's what you do in a canoe with a single paddle) up the estuary the sun came out and at last we had our lunch on the bank and "sunbathed" as the sea gently lapped at our boats. If it lapped too much we pulled them further onto dry land – actually it was mud.



We left the river at Tal-y-cafn with most people reckoning they were good for another few miles, wisely Nualla left us wanting to come back for more. There were generous layers of mud at the landing. Up to this stage we had remained clean and dry. The main casualty was David L-J who kept us amused by losing a wellington in the mud, so deep that it started to fill with water. Doing a superb impression of a stork he managed to eventually retrieve it. We, having done our own risk assessment were powerless to help him as we didn't want to get muddy. We did, however, offer plenty of good advice.

Back at Oaklands we were able to unload and get cleaned up in their excellent facilities and then it was back to the Chapel to get ready for the evening annual club dinner.

Many thanks to Nualla for organizing the day and Geoff for sorting the money and participants.

And that is not all, I've had the following from Margaret but sadly her pictures did not come through for some reason :-

Conway Canoe Trip

Once Nula had organized everyone and found kit to fit, Car ferry duly sorted. Off we went. Two canoes were rafted together as a safety boat, they carried four bodies, the rest of us two to a canoe, first problem was that we found someone could not count, as we appeared to have an empty boat, quick re-shuffle and on canoe safely stored back on the trailer, we were away. It was a pleasant morning, but with grey sky, lots of chatting and laughter was the order of the day. Sylvia on her first trip in a canoe looked as though she was going to tackle the Bearing Straights, but better safe than sorry, she certainly was not going to be cold. We stopped soon after Conway Bridge for a coffee, and some necessary body functions, off again but not till we had a change of crews, new partners were selected, we were doing very well no one seemed to be struggling, and we made steady progress, looking at some fine craft moored on the river, and chatting to some salty dogs as we passed, all too soon it was time to look for a lunch spot not so easy on that part of the Conway's banks, we eventually found a shingle slop and we disembarked, and had a leisurely lunch, suitable refreshed and fed Helen providing the after dinner mints, again we selected new partners, this was mainly to give everyone a turn-out of the safety boat. What a great day no mishaps and here we were back at the car for the get off. Oh dear I should not have had those thoughts before we were back in the cars. Next came the trickiest part of the day trying to get out, up a steep slippery very muddy bank, with boats and equipment, I tried a different place to everyone else, and promptly sank well above my ankles, and had to climb back in the canoe with great difficulty, and very muddy.

Graham, managed a dignified exit on some rocks that is until his partner, no names, had an undignified tumble, fortunately nothing was broken not even the boat, which was dropped. Then one member of the group managed some-how to fall in and sat in the water, no names again, but then sorry, but when Sylvia eventually managed to extricate herself from the boat, ended up on one leg, the other waving in the air minus a shoe which was sucked off her foot, and was deep in the mud, not much of a calamity except that it rendered Sylvia helpless with laughter, and all the rest of us laughing at her laughing. However eventually we were all off a bit muddy, but safe, Nuala and meanwhile gone to get the mini bus, and she then transported everyone back to Oaklands to de-robe and clean up. We had a great day, it was a good alternative activity, and many thanks to Nuala for organizing it all.

And if that is not enough, Geoff Brierley submitted the following take on the Canoe trip and the Annual Dinner :-

The Gwydyr 44th Annual Dinner

The weekend of the GMC annual dinner is probably the singular best time throughout the year to meet up with so many of the clubs members, as it attracts those who live further afield as well as those of us who live much closer to Wirral and Wales.

This year was to be slightly different however as the club really wanted to celebrate the dinner and decided that a great way of doing this would be to organise a series of activities on the Saturday.

Several members of the club showed interest in this and a canoeing trip down the Conwy river was offered by Nuala Dunn with Dave Gray leading a walk in the Carneddau Mountains up Pen yr Helgi Du and Pen Llithrig y Wrach.

I was really looking forward to the trip down the Conwy, it had been something I'd wanted to do for several years and finally the chance to get out on the open water in a Canadian Canoe and experience the beauty of the valley from the river itself had come up. Nuala had offered to organise and it was with real anticipation that we arrived at Oaklands to pick through the gear we wanted and get the canoes hooked up to the minibus.

Chris Harris and I jumped at the chance of getting up on the roof and tying on a spare Canadian and before we knew it we were off down through Llanrwst, dropping the spare car at Tal y Cafn which was to be our exit point if all went well and then arriving at the mouth of the now much wider and far more imposing Afon Conwy.



We needed to load the boats up and strapped two together to form a double then we were ready to set off.

Heading upriver, the tide wasn't quite with us and this meant a little more work than perhaps we had expected, still we paddled on and in no time were making our way through the boats moored around the side of the estuary, people were busy working on them and several chatted to us as we passed. Down here at the mouth of the river people really seemed engaged by the waterborne life, the river wasn't an unchanging geographic feature, it was a place these people came to for their hobby and today was our chance to experience the waters of the river first hand.

Conwy Castle sat resplendent under hazy clouds and as we passed under the road and rail bridges I noticed a man metal detecting on the bank. We turned off nearby for a quick break while cars, a bus and a train passed overhead.

Heading once more back onto the water the challenge of negotiating sandbanks soon reared its head. Several times I felt the bottom of the river with my paddle and frantically tried to get us into deeper water. Luckily no one grounded completely although we did pass an upturned boat which had clearly seen one sandbank too many.



As we carried on, Glan Conwy glistened on the far side of the river, its many white fronted buildings shining like some kind of riverine oasis, we chose to stop on the other side of the river however and this seemed like an opportune moment to have 2nd lunch.

This stop wasn't without its challenges though, as I discovered when trying to get back to the boats and getting stuck in some rather vicious mud!

We decided on a swap of boats and Tracy and I jumped ship to the larger 2 boat setup. It made for quite a different paddling experience, but we enjoyed it and even had some competition in the form of a race from Messrs Dagley and Lane-Joynt.

Before we knew it Tal y Cafn was upon us and we piled out of the water perhaps less ceremoniously than we had entered it, we'd all had a fantastic day and thanks must be given to Nuala who had gone so far out of her way to make sure we had a really great time.

Dave Gray has advised that Mike Gilbert did Y Garn on the Friday before the dinner, the main walk on the Saturday before the dinner was the seeming Dave Gray standard pre-dinner walk of Pen Yr Helgi Ddu and Pen Llithrig Yr Wrach, however despite a misty and cold start the day brightened and they all managed to see their own Brocken Spectres on the cloud beneath them – a really special moment.

On the following Monday Mike Gilbert and Pete (The Colonel) Smedley went up Elidir Fawr.

PHOTOGRAPH COMPETITION

Thanks to Geoff for organising this year's competition, it is no easy task but a job well done nonetheless.



This was taken by Mike Dagley and came third



This was again taken by Mike Dagley and came second

And first prize went to :-



Bryan Gilbert photo of John Huxley in the Clwyds Sept 2007

This past weekend saw myself and Geoff Brierley drive out to the chapel where far too much booze was consumed than was helpful however on the Saturday Geoff got on his bike and I went for a great walk from the chapel to Beddgelert over Clogwyn Y Cribiau and Moel Merich, There was much water underfoot and indefinite (ie. non-existent) paths made for tough going however I managed to catch the last bus from Beddgelert to Pen Y Pass. The driver and timetables confirmed that I had enough time for a much needed coffee in the vastly improved cafe however they both lied and I had to endure (well, not really it was a lovely evening) a walk back to the Chapel from Pen Y Pass.

The following day was rather wet though I managed a short walk and quick (and greasy) climb on the crags near Plas Y Brenin before a wonderfully quick and simple trip back home on public transport.

FORTHCOMING MEETS :-

MEETS PROGRAMME	
APRIL 2011	
02	Saturday Walk: Cheshire Peak (Mark Barley)
07	Thursday Walk: Conwy Mt (Mike McEneany)
15-16	Sandstone Trail (Keith Colwell)
22-25	Easter - TBA
29-01	May BH TBA

Mike McEneany Thursday walk has been postponed till the 14th April and Keith Colwell has also re-arranged his Sandstone Trail walk (see recent email for details). As for Easter I am unsure what is happening however for those of you who don't have an invite to the royal wedding I'm planning to do the Llyn Peninsula Coastal Path that weekend so let me know if you want to come along and I'll see what we can sort out.

At the end of May is Andy Odger's Isle of Skye trip which will be a cracker (weather permitting or not) and details will follow in due course. For those who have not been to Skye it is an incredible place – totally unlike anywhere else in the UK (or the world ?) – watch this space or email / call me if you want to know more.

Midweek meets :-

Now that the clocks have gone forward we can enjoy later nights out and we really should make more use of the long hot summer evenings (perhaps wishful thinking but you never know). Usually on a Thursday evening the climbing group will be going to local venues for an evening's climbing however the locations are also handy for an evening walk. We aim to go (weather permitting) to Helsby & Frodsham, Pot Hole Quarry (near Maeshafn), Trevor Rocks (near Llangollen) and the awesome Pex Hill (near Widnes).

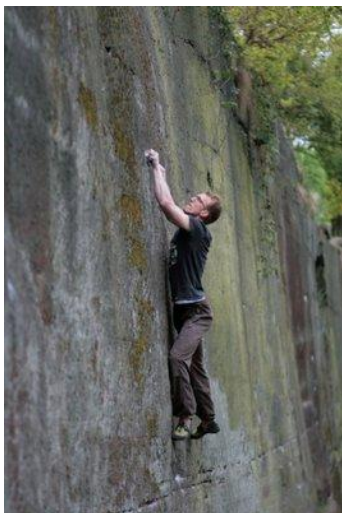
My thoughts are thus, why not come along and have a go at some rock climbing and if that is not your cup of tea most venues have some nice walking near-by and furthermore there is the prospect of a nice off the climb / walk pint in a local pub. We can all share lifts and so for the cost of a few pounds a really nice (and different) evening out can be had. I will start mentioning on a Tuesday evening what is happening and where and if the weather proves unsporting then there is always the option of going another evening and / or the excellent climbing wall in Liverpool.



Helsby Crag



Pot Hole Quarry



Pex Hill Quarry



Trevor Rocks & Quarry

While sorting through some paperwork a few nights ago I came across an old article I'd written for the Vagabonds Mountaineering Club magazine way back in 1990. I thought it might be of interest to some so I've re-produced it here.

It relates to a certain epic climb I did with a good friend on Anglesey on a beautifully hot summer's day. The rope length's referred to in the article were ascertained by the rather large 'nicks' in the rope which we measured afterwards. I must add that I am not so gung-ho now and am certainly a much better climber and perhaps not so over confident as I was back then.

I'd only been climbing just under a year and found that the game was not as hard to play as I first thought. Certainly heights were scary but the feel of warm rock and fluid movement engaged me like nothing else and I just couldn't get enough of it.

The weekend didn't start too well, when I called for Dave he looked decidedly worse for wear after a promotion of some cheap bottled lager, of dubious origin it has to be said, in a local supermarket and that combined with the demands of his young daughter who wanted to play at 3.00am rather than sleep. Needless to say that as we sped along the A55 the alcoholic sleepless daze wore off and we began to get excited discussing what routes we'd climb this weekend. It is something perhaps peculiar to climbers that at the start of the drive out to the mountains we will happily talk about objectives much harder than we could ever contemplate at the time however the nearer we drove to our destination an air of apprehension / reality usually sets in and we begin to become more sensible and focus on routes that we knew we could get up.

I loved Anglesey from the first time I visited the soaring cliffs, the rock was so unlike that found on the mountain crags. There is the red and orange rock of South Stack and Castell Helen and the bleached white stone of the Main Cliff, Wen Zawn and the Upper Tier. Steep cracks cut through seemingly blank walls and the sea lapped the bottom of the crags making access to the climbs all that more exciting.

While having the obligatory brew in the South Stack cafe, I allowed Dave to convince me that I would be able to get up a climb called Mousetrap which was graded Mild Extremely Severe (now E2 !) in my guidebook. This didn't matter as the climb was featured in my beloved copy of Hard Rock and the pictures looked incredible, I was easily led astray. The climb lay near the bottom of the

lighthouse steps and so we geared up and near ran down the steps such was our eagerness to get going.

We came to a small gap in a rock wall which was to afford us access to the aptly named, Mousetrap Zawn. Imagine if you will, stepping from a man made world of cafe's, Ice Cream van's, concrete steps and lighthouses into a world of enclosing walls of sheer rock beneath which raged a sea so loud that it made talking to your partner a few feet away difficult. We descended some rock ledges to reach a traverse line a few feet above the swelling waves and made our way towards a steep wall where our route lay. We came to a point which the guidebook described as 'possibly interesting'. Essentially one was faced with a leap to a lower ledge across a deep water filled fissure where the waves ebbed and flowed, apparently the secret lay in timing your leap just as the wave ebbed and this would afford you time to scramble upwards to avoid the next incoming wave. To err would end a day's climbing at the very least – surprisingly we were in top leaping form and escaped a soaking and soon found ourselves in a stony bay where all around us arose steep walls over 400 feet high, so high and steep where they that the sun had disappeared and it began to become somewhat cool.

Dave elected to lead the first pitch, which I was happy to concede given that it was supposed to be the hardest and, after all, he was the most experienced. The rock was incredible and totally unlike anything I had encountered before, the texture was that of pumice and it largely bore a pale blue hue though intersected with white quartz veins which seemed more solid and reliable than the sandy feeling blue and red rock from which it protruded. That was not all though, clearly great forces had been at work here as the rock was twisted and bent into shallow chimneys and fissures and in many respects it seemed a vertical maze where one had to constantly search for the correct line into the next chimney before the one you were in closed up into a blank wall. Dave made good progress and perhaps only grunted a couple of times before reaching a belay ledge some 150ft up, it was hard to hear him above the waves but I assumed he was safely tied on and followed him up. The climbing was amazing, very steep but with good holds though the rock felt almost alien and very slippery with its fine coating of sand. The chimneys twisted this way and that and I recall thinking that if one were drunk it would all make much more sense.

Now it was my lead and I led up a steep groove, with very little protection, to reach a short wall which in turn led after about 80ft to a large sloping ledge. I

was ecstatic to be doing alternate leads on an extreme climb in less than a year of climbing and when Dave suggested I do the next pitch leaving him the slightly harder (and I subsequently found out better) pitch to take us to the top I was happy to agree.

I don't really know what happened next as the third pitch is meant to be the easiest of the four but such was the nature of the rock one could look at a steep wall and take it for an easy angled slab and vice versa. So I took the easy angled slab which unfortunately it was not.

I climbed a few feet above the belay and placed a really good runner before committing myself to some moves which were clearly much harder than they should have been. Now, faced with the same set of circumstances, I would have made some effort to reverse the moves and get back to the belay ledge to re-check the guidebook. Sadly though at a mere nineteen years of age one has a feeling and stubbornness of invincibility and I carried on upwards following a somewhat vague and tenuous line of quartz holds protruding from the increasingly looser looking surrounding rock. The holds kept leading me to the right and I instinctively knew that our route lay to the left but there was no way I could climb that way and still the small quartz holds led on. After about sixty feet I espied a piton at the base of a shallow corner some ten feet high and I began to feel somewhat less anxious. All I needed to do was clip the piton, layback up the short corner and reach a line of large looking quartz holds which seemed to lead to easier ground and safety. I knew by now that I had gone off route and I just wanted out of there. I took a quick-draw (two karabiners and a short sling) off my harness and leant down to clip the piton. To my absolute and utter horror the mere weight of my quick-draw was enough to pull the piton out of the crack it was placed in and I saw it fall to the base of the cliff some three hundred feet below. This was now going to be very interesting indeed.

I was on a cliff I had not climbed on before, the rock was really steep and loose and I had absolutely no protection in other than a nut runner a few feet above the belay which would probably pull out if it had to take the full force of a hundred plus foot fall. I could not reverse what I had climbed up and so I had to make a decision and quick.

I decided to layback up the corner as it looked easy enough and once on those big quartzite holds I'd be home and dry. As I began to lean out on the corner the

whole pedestal of rock which formed the right wall of the corner came away, unfortunately I was holding onto it at the time.

All I can recall is calling for Dave and seeing the ground hurtling towards me – I know it's the other way around but this is no time to criticise !

A sharp jerk came onto my harness and I was amazed, and not a little bit pleased that the runner had held. It was only when I looked up the rope that I could see that I had not fallen onto the runner but that both ropes had somehow snagged on something, what, I did not know but the wall was vertical and they had caught on a projection somehow. I was suspended some six feet away from the wall of rock and I clearly needed to get back onto the rock face and see if I could make my way across to Dave who was some ten feet below me but thirty feet to my left. I swung into the rock, praying the ropes would not slip free, and grasped a huge flake of rock, like I've said before the rock was very loose and this flake of rock just came away in my hands as I swung back out again into space. Such was my heightened state of mind that on the return swing I placed the offending flake of rock back into its socket or whatever and swung back out.

About twenty feet beneath me I could discern a line of small ledges which led back to the belay where Dave was holding the rope tightly. I asked him to lower me and I remember him asking if I was sure. We did not know what the ropes had caught on and the slightest movement could dislodge them and who knows what would happen then. I had no option but to go down and Dave began to lower me. Almost immediately I fell again, the ropes had clearly come free, and I came to a rest some twenty feet beneath the ledges I had been looking down upon. I looked up the rope and I could see one of our ropes had caught on a protruding flake of rock probably no bigger than a man's thumb.

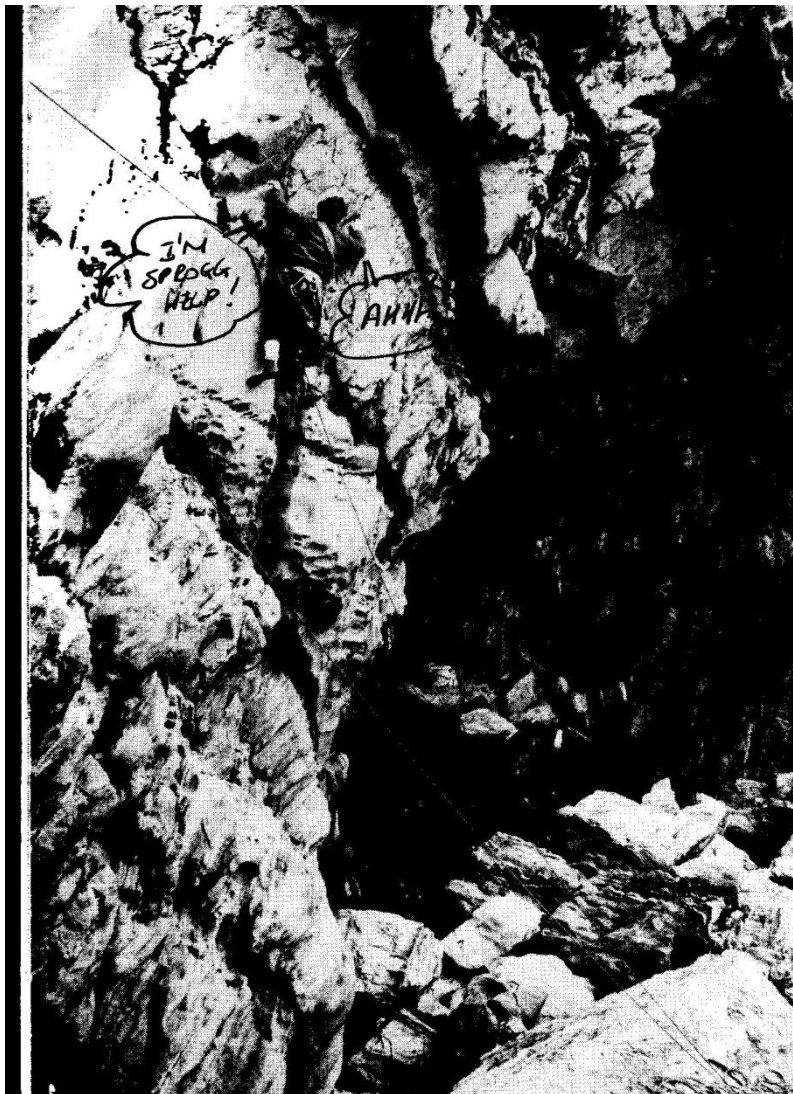
Now this was certainly not in the script and I had grazed my head in the fall, feeling my head with my hand I could see it soaked with blood. Thankfully I could climb up to the small ledges and gingerly made my way up to Dave and the safety of the big ledge. A quick cry while he checked my bumps, well I was young, and a hairy abseil back down to the pebble beach allowed me to bathe my wounds in the cool sea while Dave retrieved the ropes. I realised that a cut to the scalp bleeds profusely though happily I had not sustained any serious injury other than to my pride.

The scramble back up to the lighthouse steps left me somewhat dizzy and nauseous and the steep climb back up the steps left me sweaty and breathless

though my reward, if it can be called that, was a delicious ice cream which restored my flagging spirits though not the desire to do another climb.

I had been very lucky in not getting seriously injured or worse but such is the nature of the game I was climbing the next day but at a much lower grade.

In total I had fallen over eighty feet and had the ropes not snagged twice (really unheard of on a vertical wall) then I would have in all probability died or been very seriously injured.

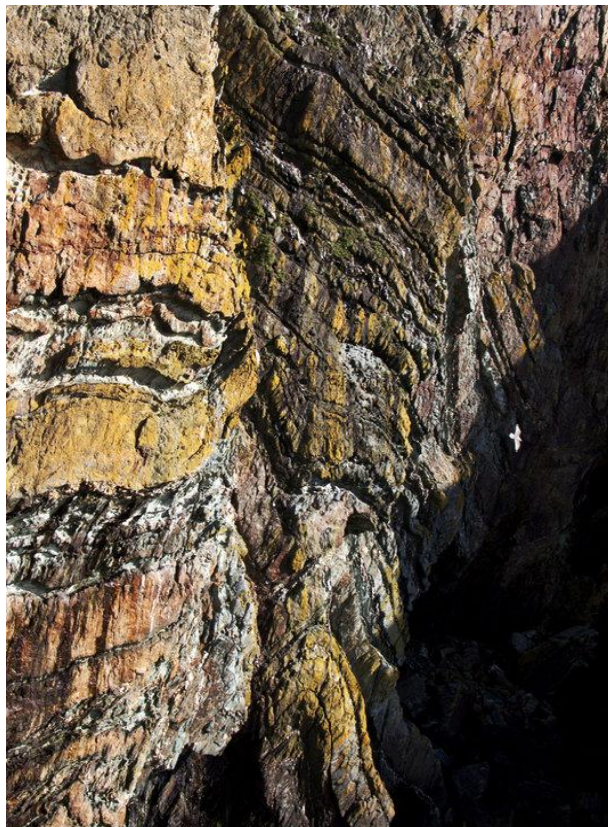


Friends being friends at the time thought it rather funny that I had had such an epic and took the opportunity to deface my newly acquired guidebook as above. As I was the youngest in our close knit group I had been christened the 'Sprogg' and the picture above is of the first pitch of this great climb.

A couple of years later I went back to climb Mousetrap and it proved much easier and I could not believe how I had missed such an obvious and easy slab on the third pitch. The climb passed without incident and where it not for my friends desire to see what the pubs were like in Holyhead on a Saturday afternoon we may have even done another climb



A modern climber on Mousetrap



Mousetrap Zawn, the climb goes roughly up the right hand side of the picture !