

THE GWYDYR No 19 (JUN 2011)

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GWYDYR MOUNTAIN CLUB

Andy Chapman on Everest

Following on from last month's newsletter Andy has kindly provided the following few photographs and brief summary of his successful trip. One hopes, in time, that Andy may be able to do a brief talk / slide show at the Stork – watch this space ☺



Everest's awesome SW face



Scary bridge leading into W.Cwm



Everest summit from South Col



Andy 'chilling' after summit day ☺

From Base Camp on 8th May I left with Richard Parks and Steve Williams who were doing the 737 challenge. Richard was a Welsh rugby player and Steve is a double gold medal Olympic rower 1st gold at Athens with Mathew Pinsent. 737 challenges is the 7 summits and 3 poles, Everest being the third pole in 7 months, as they were late getting back from the North Pole they came to Everest 3 weeks late and had to catch up. I was to climb to Camp 1

through the Khumbu ice fall to Camp 1 then Camp 2 for a few days then I was joining the main team with David Hamilton for the assault plan.

After a few days with the two guys we climbed to Camp 3 on Lhotse face on 12th. After getting all sorted out at 7300m David I learnt that the weather forecast for 14th our predicted summit day was to be 60 mph winds on the summit. The dilemma was do we take the chance go to South Col on oxygen and see what it's doing or back of to Camp 2 in the Western Cwm and wait. Normally you can sit it out at a high camp but on Everest as we were using oxygen that is a vital resource and such a luxury we could not really afford to take. At 6 pm we started abseiling down the Lhotse face and by 8.30 pm we came back to Camp 2 by head torch.

We rested at Camp 2 and on 14th re-ascended to Camp 3 the next day on oxygen at 2 ½ litres a minute started climbing to South Col camp at 7950m it took around 6 hours to get there climbing through the yellow band and crossing the Genève Spur. At the South Col I came off the oxygen for 90 minutes and felt ok, no headaches at all and spent time putting up tents and cutting snow and picking one or two gas cylinders up.

The South Col is a lot cleaner than the pictures taken in 1993 there is some rubbish remaining mostly gas cylinders but oxygen cylinder I saw were depots for this year, last year Everest trip depots empty's at South Col the Sherpa's picked the empty's up and when they were doing carries and I am pleased to say we did at the end get all 115 bottles down from Everest this year. The bottles will now be refilled in India with Oxygen. Some of the ones rented from Henry Todd will be refilled by him.



Andy on the Balcony with client

We left at 9.08pm on Sunday 15th May. It took a steady pace across South Col and on upwards to the balcony I did not see the Japanese dead man on the ropes though I knew he was there. David asked the Japanese team if they wanted him cut loose the said that they will drag him down later, I helped with this a week later at the head of Western Cwm. From the balcony at 1.15 am on 16th we moved off along the South East Ridge towards the first oxygen change below the south summit. The south summit was much harder than I thought advanced scrambling on fixed lines. The south summit was reached around 4.30 am on-wards, I dropped to the gap and could see the famous Hillary Step. Many people say that once you get over the step you have done it, it turns out to be about 1 hour to the top from there. The

Hillary Step reminded me of Milestone Buttress fixed rope but rock and ice climbing, the route then goes left into a crack, I hyperventilated and wet myself. This is common as the lung muscles and spontaneous movement the blander mussels contact. This has happened a few times on Cho Oyu as well.

The final 500meters horizontally took around 45 minutes but the wind which was predicted to be 20 mph was around 40 mph and the temperature ended up being -25 to -35 c I think it was the coldest I have been or at least felt. Despite the fact it has taken most of my life to get in a position to attempt Everest and to do it I probably spent only 3-5 minutes on the summit. Mostly the descent was ok one client said to me “Andy I can’t see” at the Hillary Step, despite the sentence being a short one it took me a while to think of what to say , said something like I get you down. David got him over the south summit his eyes had not recovered and I took him to balcony and down. It was pressure in his eyes. I don’t know whether he has had laser eye treatment but this is a big problem at extreme altitude.

We all descend to the South Col, the round trip was 13-14 hrs and the next day we went to Camp 2 and the next to Base Camp. I spent just under 48 hrs at Base Camp and set off again to Camp 2 with 2nd team they were going with Sherpa’s s for the assault. I was to back up at Camp 2. But after taken them to Lhotse face on Sunday 22nd I ended up at 6 pm being involved in major rescue of Spanish climbers on the Lhotse face. This was co-ordinated at Base Camp by Willie Benagas (who lead the clubs Aconcagua expedition 1998) it’s a long complicated story basically everyone lived, some of the team have had fingers and toes amputated, one guy has lost both feet to frost bite.

Anyhow we eventually got down to Base Camp on the 27th May, I had spent 27 nights in total above 6000 m and all 4 of the 2nd team summited, unfortunately Richard has had frost bite in his big toes, he has undergone advanced urgent medical treatment and as of Monday 13th I was told that he is intending to go to Denali on Friday 17th June and on to Elbrus after that. I eventually flew home on 5th June to Heathrow; my fingers are recovering well from frost nip but I have suffered from headaches as my blood is very thick but I am feeling mostly ok now.

I think I speak for everyone Andy when I say well done and thank you for your essay 😊

Well after that our normal efforts pale into comparison but hey ho.....

At the beginning of the month Jon Murphy had a good day on the Glyders, up Tryfan and Bristly Ridge before descending by the Devil’s Kitchen path. The weather was good and made up for the soaking in Scotland.

The girls have been getting out and about too with Carol Boothroyd, Helen Avison and prospective member Teresa Peddie climbing Snowdon and walking around the impressive slate quarries above Llanberis.



Dave Gray advises that the Mull trip organised by Reg Cromer was a great success though the weather was not as good as it could have been so much walking was done near to the coast where it proved clearer and more pleasant. Ascents were made of Ben More, Dun Na Gaoithe and Mainmir Nam Fiadh. Visits were also made to the islands of Iona, Erraid and Staffa plus a partially successful trip to the Carsaig Arches. Reg managed to get some fishing in and provided a fish starter for one memorable meal. All in all a good trip that consisted of Dave Gray, Reg Cromer, Sue Taylor, Paul & Christine Smythe and the Barley family.

Dave Gray sent the pics below and the coastal scenery looks simply stunning 😊





The chairman, Fiona Langton and her son Joshua went climbing on Little Tryfan on the 11th June, a nice brew in the Royal Oak then saw the three of us see Swallow Falls the cheap way before returning to Betws via Miner's Bridge. Sunday was foul weather wise with very heavy rain and zero visibility so we only made it to Cwm Bochlywd before turning back down and heading home.

On the following Tuesday I went Sea Kayaking again round the Little Orme, sadly far too much beer was consumed the previous night and so I bailed out while the others (from Liverpool Canoe Club) carried on round the Great Orme in glorious sunshine.





On the 19th June Mike McEneaney organised a walk up Aran Fawddwy and wrote the following with pictures 😊

Nine assembled at Llanuwchllyn at the end of lake Bala on a windy threatening day. After a steady climb we reached Aran Benllyn and enjoyed great views of Snowdon and Berwyn range.

Just short of the summit of Aran Fawddwy a hail-storm struck us but thankfully it did not last and cleared after a few brief minutes though the expected views were somewhat spoiled by this interruption. We descended in improving weather and reached the car park after a day of seven hours and 10 miles distance covered. We had ascended over 3,150 ft and a couple of beers on the way home rounded off a brilliant day.



The following weekend I understand that Geoff Brierley and Mike Dagley went mountain biking and saved a lamb's life – how this was done I do not know but I am sure Geoff will tell all in due course. The same weekend Phil Earl, with work friends, climbed the classic Grooved Arete on Tryfan in rather 'damp' conditions – a good effort !

The following Thursday, Mike Mc went out on the Snowdon Horseshoe and wrote the following :-

Along with a couple of mates I completed the Snowdon Horseshoe on Thursday 23rd June.

We left Pen Y pass in a light rain which was supposed to clear at 11.00am followed by some promised sunny periods. The rain cleared half-way up Crib Goch and we reached the summit in a swirling mist. There was no sign of the North ridge ! We had the whole ridge to ourselves and made good progress with the mist clearing from time to time – all very atmospheric. Having negotiated the pinnacles we lunched on Crib Y Ddysgl before heading for Snowdon for some tea and a good rest. By this time the weather had improved considerably so we decided to complete the horseshoe and by the time we reached Lliwedd we had brilliant sunshine and clear views out to Cardigan Bay.

A truly excellent day out followed by a couple of beers and a good meal reaching home by 11.00pm - what one would call a full day 😊



Great one Mike 😊

Next up was a chapel weekend when several members had a great couple of walks in the Carneddau. Ross McGraw, Helen & Davide Avison, Dave Gray, Ronnie Davis, Fiona Langton, Lindsey Foulkes and Dave Cole went up to Llyn Crafnant and on the Sunday a long walk was made up Carnedd Llewellyn, Carnedd Dafydd and Pen Yr Ole Wen before retiring back to the Chapel for the usual 'off the hill' feast 😊



The next weekend, which is in July so a bit of an overlap for which I will not apologise as it was a superb weekend, saw a motley crew head out to the Chapel in glorious sunshine. Margaret Blakeborough, Graham James, Keith and Debbie Tavener went up to Llyn Crafnant and the Craigau Gleision hills before snatching an 'off the hill' in the Bryn Tyrch. Myself, Fiona Langton, Ronnie Davis and Lindsey Foulkes all ventured forth onto Crib Goch and Snowdon which was to prove especially interesting for me with a broken right hand and cracked ribs 😊.

It proved a long, but brilliant day in ideal conditions for the ridge. Snowdon was incredibly busy by the time we got there at half five though a much needed brew fortified us for the descent and a sneaky of the hill in the Pen Y Gwryd helped pass the time before Ronnie and Lindsey caught us up.



You have been warned



Fiona all smiles as usual on E. Ridge of Crib Goch



Ronnie & Lindsey closely behind on E. Ridge



Lindsey & Ronnie on the brilliantly exposed ridge



Fiona & Ronnie on Snowdon's summit

By the time we had got back to the Chapel it was half nine and so too late for a really big meal so soup, pizza, red wine, cava, cake and a cheese board sufficed for the evening. Prospective members Beth and Teresa turned up with the cava and cake and both seemed intent in consigning the previous night's hangover to oblivion and replacing it with another one for the Sunday.



Teresa & her birthday cake 😊



Bethan and some tall guy !



mmm ...cake 😊

Sunday dawned bright and warm, even warmer than the day before so Fiona Langton and I went for another 'short' walk but not before visiting Pete's Eats and the supermarket in Llanberis for much needed fluids – it was going to be a very hot day 😊

We walked up Elidir Fawr, that most disgusting of tramps up a monotonous and steep grassy slope that never seems to end. The views from the summit proved ample reward however and we then made our way over to Y Garn before descending back down to Nant Peris under a blazing sky. I had hoped to bathe my feet in the usually full stream but so dry has it been it was hardly worth taking one's socks off.



Fiona on the summit of Y Garn



Crib Goch and a Hawthorn Tree ☺



Fiona on footbridge near the end of a long day



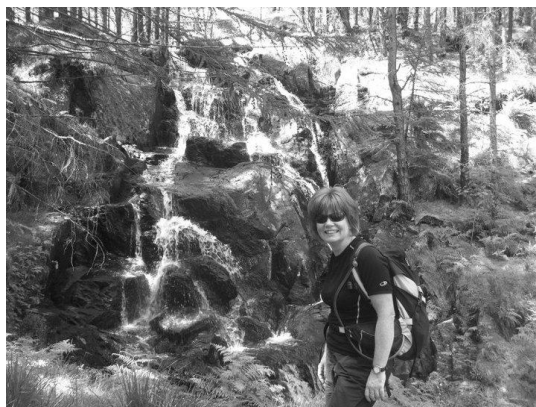
The Chairman's right hand ☺

A much needed cold / beer drink in the Vaynol rounded off another good day and great weekend. If only every weekend could be as sunny !

Prospective members Teresa and Bethan went for a walk on the flanks of Moel Siabod on the Sunday and I've uplifted a few photo's from Facebook to illustrate..... to hell with copyright laws ☺



Oyyyy get a walking you two ☺



A Waterfall !!



Moel Siabod and Foxglove – great pic ☺



The eastern Carneddau methinks !

Other Stuff :-

For those of you who missed the film a couple of Tuesday's ago at the Stork I am doing another presentation at Liverpool Marina on the 11th July 2011 at 7.45pm. Copies of the book will be available but not really sure if I will be able to sign them if my arm is in plaster ☹

Forthcoming meets :-

01-02	Ambleside Low Wray Camp Site (Ray Baines)
07	Thursday Walk: Wirral (Mike Mc)
08-09	Summer BBQ (Nuala Dunn)
23	Saturday Walk: Sandstone Trail (Mark Barley)
29-30	HUT Weekend

The hut weekend is now going to be the Welsh 3000's weekend so participants or helpers need to contact me as soon as possible to let me know what you can or want to do. As I've mentioned before, the committee would really like to see a female complete the course so to speak and if no one individual fancies it what about a team effort ?????

Mike McEneaney now has his popular Thursday walks in full flow, so to speak and asks that anyone who wants to go on this Thursday walk to contact him, the details are as follows :-

Meet at the entrance lane to Dale farm on Oldfield Road, Heswall at 11.00hrs
(Grid ref : 259824)

The Walk will be approximately 8 miles of easy undulating terrain and weather permitting there will be a BBQ at Mike's house afterwards and he will provide rolls, salad etc.

Check the club address list for Mike's details or email me and I will forward them onto Mike.

The same applies for Nuala's barbecue at the weekend and Mark Barley's Saturday walk on Rivington and Winter Hill, the venue has changed from that shown on the meets list. Mark has emailed the following which I re-produce here for those who have not seen it :-

Walk on Saturday July 23rd:- Rivington and Winter Hill

(Please note:- this walk is down in the meets program as "Sandstone Trail". However a walk in that area occurred in April; so I have changed location to a new area. Apologies to anyone who was expecting a second outing to the Sandstone Trail.)

The walk will start at 10:30 (please note) from the car park (GR 652124) on the south eastern edge of Wilderswood on the outskirts of Horwich. The walk will be roughly 8-9 miles in length and will include an ascent of Winter Hill, a short exploration of the lost garden terraces of Rivington, and a tea stop. Please bring a packed lunch, good waterproof boots and let me know if you are planning to join us.

To avoid Horwich town centre, approach the town from the M61 along the A673. When you see a sign advertising 3 bedroomed houses for £119,000 turn right (also signposted for Horwich leisure centre). Follow the road up the hill to a T junction (mini-roundabout) and turn right onto the B6226, heading away from the town. Look out for a significant road coming in from the right by a pub; the lane to the car park is not immediately opposite but a few yards further on the left.

Also we have a SGM on the 12th June 2011 at the Stork to decide on the new trustees etc and approve funding the now urgently required water pipe replacement. Also we have a committee meeting soon so if there is anything you wish to bring to our attention please email either myself or Keith Colwell.

One final thing.....

Sue Taylor is making sterling efforts to liven up next year's Annual Dinner so please email her with your suggestions and / or complete the questionnaire she has sent out. Let's make 2012 a brilliant dinner – maybe an Olympic theme
!!!! ☺

