

# THE GWYDYR NO27(MAR2012)

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GWYDYR MOUNTAIN CLUB

Hello everyone and welcome to the latest newsletter ☺



Geoff Brierley et al snoozing in the sunshine prior to the great Annual Dinner ☺

There's been lot's on this month not least our 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner at the Tyn Y Coed which proved a great success, here's to even more turning up next year !!

However, as seems to be the case of late (and long may it continue) I've had a couple of things from members which just missed last months newsletter. First up is Mike & Linda Gavin's summary which I detail below.....

I think most of the older members of the club know that Linda and I have an apartment in Alicante, Spain. We have done a lot of walking in the area and will share our experiences with anyone interested in exploring this area.

1. This year I managed to summit one new peak, El Maigmo 1296m. We drove up to the Balcon de Alicante, a very rugged car park and picnic area with fantastic views of the coast. Linda, Rachel and I started the steep climb and after about 45 minutes we reached a shoulder where the climb got a bit

steeper and on loose stone. Linda and Rachel left me to continue alone, aaaaaah!!! Just before the summit there was a good bit of scrambling up to a secondary summit, with a Memorial to a Spanish climber who lost his life in the Himalayas.

I only managed to get to this secondary summit as to get to the actual summit you had to do a step over a deep crack in the rock that seemed rather risky on your own but would have been a doddle with a group of friends. The summit was only a metre or so higher anyway but next time summit I will. After the mountain, we went to walk by the Embalse de Tibi (the oldest working reservoir in Europe) This is a really beautiful area at this time of year with the almond trees in blossom, clear blue sunny skies and not too hot to walk.

2. Another day, we walked along an old railway track, a bit like the Wirral Way, but in the mountains with lots of tunnels. This is called Ruta Verde El Maigmo and is 22km long great for cycling.

3. The Embalse De Elche is an area full of ancient aquaduct's, tunnels and irrigation channels. We walked around this very dry barren mountain landscape almost amazed to see so much water in the lake. We had a great time playing in some of the old tunnels and walking over some of the aquaduct's. They seem to have a different approach to health and safety in Spain, you do it at your own risk. How sensible, are they in the same EEC as we are?







GREAT PICS AND MAYBE YOU CAN MAKE THE SUN SHINE HERE TOO ?????

Next up Melinda Kinsman sent me the following brief text and brilliant pictures, thanks Melinda they look great and I for one think that you should take up photography full time as you clearly know what you are doing 😊 .....

**The Unplanned “Challenge Walk”...**

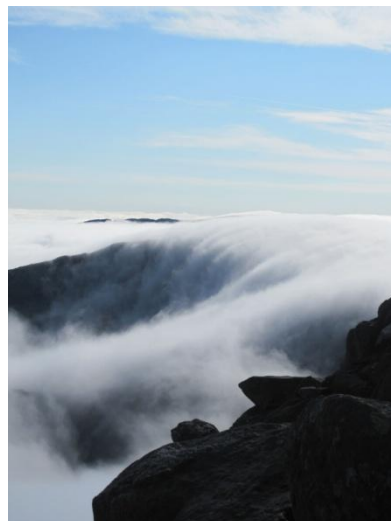
**by Melinda Kinsman**

With no views and a bitter wind, Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> March found me walking along the Elidir Fawr summit ridge, escorted by a local dog-walker and his cow-bell-wearing Labrador. It had all seemed a bit daft earlier that day, as I headed up into the cloud above Devil’s Kitchen and turned first left up to the end of the Glyders, then doubled-back on myself to head towards Y Garn. The route idea came to my drugged-up brain the night before; though at the time it had seemed over-optimistic to think I’d be able to walk at all in the morning.

My “challenge walk” had unwittingly started on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February, when sun, blue skies and amazing views saw a trip along Crib Goch extended to a round of the Snowdon Horseshoe.



It continued on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February, when Ogwen allowed me to witness an incredible day of inversions, streaming cloud “waterfalls” and numerous Brocken spectres. I headed up Tryfan north ridge, Bristly ridge, and down Y Gribin, clicking madly with my camera as I went, barely able to believe the rapidly-changing show.







The following day's good weather saw shorter plans extend into an 18 mile "out and back" trip from Ogwen, taking in all the Carneddau summits.



So, standing in drizzle by the Elidir Fawr summit cairn on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month, I'd completed a round of the Welsh 3000'ers over the course of 3 weeks – all thanks to 3 days of incredible weather, and a 4<sup>th</sup> of daft route-planning!

At the beginning of the month I managed to sneak a couple of hours bouldering at Porth Ysgo on the Llyn Peninsula when helping a mate move a coffee machine into a cafe in Abersoch.

A week later Bethan Hines, Carol Boothroyd and I found a great cafe just off the Cat & Fiddle road above Macclesfield and it was only spoiled by a walk around the Goyt Valley which took in the highest peak in Cheshire 😊 Two days later Andy Odger, Neil Metcalfe and I found ourselves in a Bamford bunkhouse in readiness to tackle the first gritstone routes of the year. Friday night passed largely without incident though sufficient homage was paid to the booze to ensure a dawn start was not on the cards. We were staying in the Cheese House bunkhouse which had the charming advantage of being about 200m from the nearest pub !!

After breakfast in Hathersage cafe we made our way to Burbage North which is always good fun though yours truly did manage to crack a rib (to add to a damaged right hand) on the second route so a day of seconding followed with Neil admirably 'stepping into the breach' and leading the day's climbs 😊 The weather was not warm but at least it was dry and we managed slightly more than a handful of routes before the call of the pub became too strong !

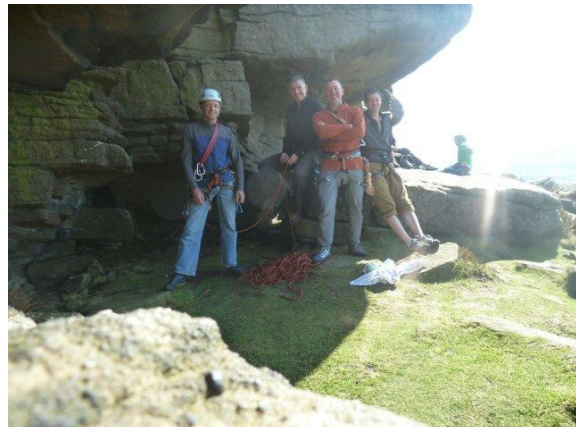
We were joined on Saturday night by Steve McNally (prospective member) who joined us for a beer in Little John's Inn in Hathersage for a few games of pool and a critique of Everton's (winning) performance against Tottenham Hotspur 😊

More beer, food, wine etc followed in the bunkhouse before I was coerced into going to the pub again at ten pm. I have to state that this was not something I wanted to do and I was only persuaded to go when the terrible trio agreed to release me from the toilet block with a promise from me that I would go for just 'a quick one'. Thankfully that was all I had however it was three sorry looking climbers who returned at 1.30am reeking of Gin and with faces that promised a severe hangover the next morning – they did not disappoint 😊

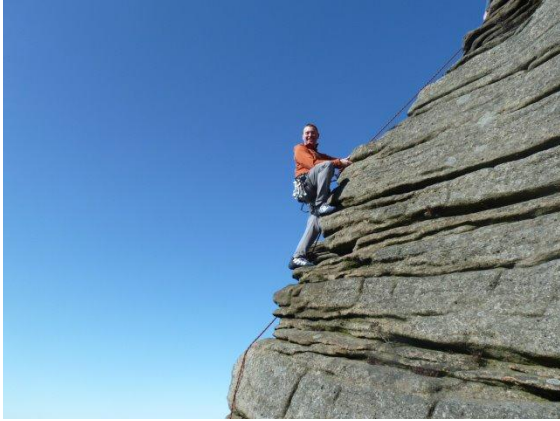




Sunday dawned in a haze for some and despite a hearty breakfast motivation was somewhat lacking but the blue skies boded well as we made our way to Bamford Edge and another handful of cracking climbs and much mirth. It was a great weekend and despite the fact that nothing hard was climbed it was a good giggle and after all that is all that really matters 😊







The same weekend we were having a Peak District 'Jolly' many members (15) enjoyed Mark Barley's walk up on Kinder Scout from Hayfield. While the weather was not overly brilliant it proved to be a great walk and thanks must be given to Mark as a couple of times a year he manages to pull a good walk out of the bag in areas we rarely, if ever, frequent.





Not everyone was in the Peak District though and Margaret, Graham et al did the Llyn Dinas, Sygun Copper Mines and Aberglaslyn circuit in Snowdonia. Paul & Lin Jensen have also been out and about on their bikes in the Yorkshire Wolds and Howardian Hills covering something like 100 miles in 3 days 😊

On Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March Dave Gray wrote the following :-

On the Monday Nuala, Christine Smyth and I did Arenig Fawr by Llyn Arenig Fawr and had a marvellous day out. We climbed above early mist to witness a big temperature inversion, we had Brocken Spectres visible for nearly 45 minutes above the lake, with as many as 4 rainbow glories around our shadows. Then we had warm sunshine for the pull to the summit with views over all Snowdonia and N Wales. Mab the dog came along too – at one point he was reduced to trying to get us to throw blades of grass for him to fetch!

**APOLOGIES ! – I've lost a couple of bits of paper and so unsure of what most people did at the weekend 😞**

Neil Metcalfe, Andy Odger, Teresa Peddie and her friend had a good long day on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> March walking all the Glyders and Tryfan. The next day they were to be found on the Llech Du spur in the Carneddau. Mike McEnaney et al had a cracking Thursday walk on the Sandstone Trail / Helsby Hill with a particularly good pub find 😊

The club AGM was on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March and a good attendance saw matters run smoothly and good progress / feedback was made by the members and committee 😊 I would particularly like to thank everyone for their input and comments.

As always after the AGM is the club Annual Dinner and for once, parental duties / apathy did not get in the way and I managed to actually make this one 😊

The weather was most unseasonable and we enjoyed some beautiful warm sunshine and clear blue skies. Two parties went a walking. One group went with Dave Gray to the Carneddau and another with Geoff Brierley up Yr Aran. Five unfortunates ended up with me on a simple rock climbing day out to Craig Caseg Ffraith. We managed five climbs in glorious sunshine and David Lane Joynt particularly enjoyed the exercise as it's been a fair few years since he's been rock climbing properly though one worries that his preference for a Whillan's harness over a modern one leaves me baffled !!!!!

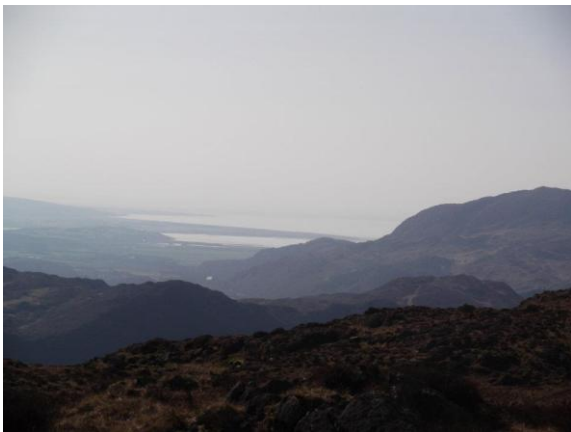
The location was ideal as all the climbs were single pitch and with an abundance of good belays at the top it was all very safe and light hearted. Particular thanks go to Ronnie Davis for helping me out in ensuring that everyone was tied in properly. I may well run a similar thing next year but clearly its all dependant upon the weather.







Ronnie, DLJ, John and Steve climbing on Craig Caseg Ffraith ☺





Geoff's walking group photo's (Thanks to Bethan ☺)

And photo's from the dinner itself .....



Thats all Beth and I took !!!! – Hopefully I will be sent some more for the next newsletter. The meal was very good and the entertainment afterwards was first class though I am sure the raffle was fixed as I didn't win a thing ☺

Surprisingly the Chapel was relatively quiet and so a largely undisturbed sleep saw us wake up to continuing blue skies and a bright sun. Some members went home while others went up Moel Siabod – I decided to give Beth a taste of proper multi pitch rock climbing and so we made our way to Cwm Idwal for Ordinary Route, a classic 'Difficult' climb.

Despite the sunny weather we ended up climbing in the shade though thankfully no-one was ahead of us and so we could move quickly and despite the polished rock and increasing exposure we made good time with Beth keeping her cool if not her tongue (tee-hee) and after a couple of hours we were munching sandwiches some 400ft higher than when we started ☺





Beth praying at the top of 1<sup>st</sup> pitch ☺



Beth moving up on the 3<sup>rd</sup> pitch



Beth nearly lost on the upper pitches



The start of a scary descent .....



Beth on the final scree path down



The Idwal Slabs

On Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March I had a cracking day out in the Chew Valley with Steve McNally who was working in Uppermill. While he was busy fixing Espresso machines I had a great couple of hours climbing and bouldering on Alderman rocks in gloriously hot sunshine. Eight routes was a satisfying tally for the short time I was there and as the sun started to set I was joined by Steve and we went for a good walk on the moors.

The weekend of the 30 / 31 March saw a good number of members and visitors at the Chapel for Bethans birthday party. Neil Metcalfe and Teresa Peddie spent Saturday on the Nantlle Ridge while Beth took her family, friends and their children (including my Hollie – prospective member when she is old enough !) for a short walk on the slopes of Moel Siabod. Much food, wine and cake was consumed and we were entertained in the evening by Beths nephew who plays a mean guitar ☺. The Chapel provides a really good venue for family parties and get togethers and members really could make greater use if they wish – just contact Les Fowles to book !

### **FORTHCOMING MEETS:**

<b>APRIL 2012</b>	
06-13	Easter- Week Backpack Offas Dyke (Steve Thomas)
20-21	St Georges Day Meet (Geoff Brierley)

For those interested in the Offa's Dyke trip please see the email recently sent round by our new club secretary, David Lane Joynt. Steve and Beth will start from Sedbury cliffs on Good Friday and hope to take ten days to make it to Prestatyn. I will be joining them as far as Knighton (half-way in case you were wondering) and members are invited to join them at any stage for a half, full or couple of days. Beth and Steve are doing the walk in aid of various charities and donations are gratefully received. I've not heard anything over the St Georges day meet but am sure Geoff will send us all an email in due course.

Now that the nights are (thankfully) getting lighter the climbers will be looking to visit our local crags and quarries of an evening (again weather dependant) and so if you are interested come along to the Stork on a Tuesday and we will let you know what is happening and when. We are quite fortunate in having several venues relatively close to hand for an evenings fun and exercise and its a shame if we don't take advantage.

### **SUBSCRIPTIONS :**

It's that time of year again and sub's are now due. We've been able to keep them at the same rate of £52 per year and payment can be made direct to Dave Gray either by cheque or BACS. I won't put the club bank details on here (as newsletter goes on club website) but contact Dave Gray if you wish to pay other than by cheque. Thank you ☺

### **THINGS LEFT AT THE CHAPEL :**

Beth and I came across two pairs of boots and a black top which were left at the Chapel in the drying room. Despite our best efforts on a Tuesday night no-one has come forward to claim them so if they are yours please email me so I can arrange their return.

Nuala has recently sent the following around and I include it here in case any of you didn't get the email, please contact Nuala if you are interested :-



Meet on weekend of July 7th at our house will also be to celebrate Christine Smyths 50th,Christine will have been a member of the GMC for over half her life!!!!!!  
We will have the usual variety of options for people, walks, climbs, weather dependant and there are always loads of boats here for those that would like to mess on the water or indeed the sea and a river to swim in.

I would be grateful if people could bring food to share for the BBQ on Saturday night and self cater for the rest of the weekend.

Please let me know if you intend to come, we would love to see you.

One thing that I feel almost compelled to point out is that on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2012 is the eightieth anniversary of the mass trespass on Kinder Scout. For those who are unaware of the dramatic event which saw five people jailed please have a look at the following website :

<http://kindertrespass.com/index.asp?ID=70>

## Description of Trespas - 24 April 1932

The events of Sunday, April 24, 1932 have long since entered the realms of rambling mythology.

Turned off by gamekeepers on Bleaklow a few weeks before and frustrated by the lack of progress made by the official ramblers' federations towards the Right to Roam, members of the Lanchashire branch of the Communist-inspired British Workers' Sport Federation decided they would make a public mass trespass on Kinder Scout, the highest point in the Peak District.



About 400 ramblers set off from Bowden Bridge quarry on Sunday April 24 in 1932. About halfway up William Clough, the trespassers scrambled up towards the Kinder plateau and came face-to-face with the Duke of Devonshire's gamekeepers.

In the ensuing scuffle, one keeper was slightly hurt, and the ramblers pressed on to the plateau. Here they were greeted by a group of Sheffield-based trespassers who had set off that morning crossing Kinder from Edale. After exchanging congratulations, the two groups joyously retraced their steps, the Sheffield trespassers back to Edale and the Manchester contingent to Hayfield.



As they returned to the village, five ramblers were arrested by police accompanied by keepers, and taken to the Hayfield Lock-up. The day after the trespass, Rothman and four other ramblers were charged at New Mills Police Court with unlawful assembly and breach of the peace.



All six subsequently pleaded not guilty and were remanded to be tried at Derby Assizes – 60 miles from the ramblers' homes – in July 1932. Five of the six were found guilty and were jailed for between two and six months.

The arrest and subsequent imprisonment of the trespassers unleashed a huge wave of public sympathy, and ironically united the ramblers cause.

A few weeks later in 1932 10,000 ramblers – the largest number in history – assembled for an access rally in the Winnats Pass, near Castleton, and the pressure for greater access continued to grow.





## Context in 1932

The great issue which motivated the protesters was access. Their area, the Peak District, composed of moorland and mountains, was bad farming land and used mostly to graze sheep or to keep game birds. Kinder Scout itself was used to hold grouse for local landlords. These rich men only rarely went shooting and Kinder Scout was worked only around 12 days a year. The rest of the time the land was deserted, and walkers were not allowed.

The trespassers demanded one simple change: the landowners should open a public path through Kinder Scout, allowing local walkers to ramble through when the land was not in use. But behind this simple demand there were deeper questions. By the 1920s and 1930s most ramblers were working class. With so many unemployed, rambling grew in popularity. Tens of thousands of workers used their Sundays to go walking. By 1932 it is estimated that 15,000 working class ramblers left Manchester every Sunday.

For many, rambling was not easy. Rambling clothes had to be improvised. For jackets, most used old army tops; for boots, old work shoes. The rich loathed the ragged workers they saw walking on their land, while the ramblers were contemptuous of the pampered aristocrats who claimed to possess the earth.

Of the 150,000 acres of mountains and moorland in the Peak District, only 1,200 acres, less than 1 percent, enjoyed public access. There were only 12 'legal' paths to choose from. Paths became crowded and many walkers would sneak off to somewhere quieter. If people walked onto private land, they would be chased by gamekeepers with sticks, dogs and sometimes guns. This was class conflict, if in a minor key. Many trespassers did not believe that the landowners had any real right to own the land and saw it as wrong that anyone should claim the land as private. So the politics of the trespass became socialist.

The Kinder Scout trespass was called by one small group, the British Workers' Sports Federation (BWSF), largely made up of members and supporters of the Communist Party, which enjoyed significant working class support. The majority of those on the trespass were apprentices, engineers and other workers. Some were unemployed. Others came from Jewish families living in Manchester. Of the six walkers who were eventually arrested, two were cotton piece workers, two engineers, one unemployed and one a student.

The federation was a campaigning organisation, set up in 1928, and had gained a reputation through campaigning for Sunday football leagues and new football pitches and facilities. It held camps in the Peak District at Rowarth and over Easter 1932 a group of ramblers were assaulted by gamekeepers there, encouraging the BWSF to call the Kinder Scout trespass.

When news of the trespass came out, official rambling associations rushed to complain. The Manchester District Ramblers Federation sent a telegram stating that it would have 'no part in the events'. The Stockport Group of the Holiday Fellowship expressed its 'utter disgust' at what it called 'organised hooliganism'. These official walking clubs were very respectable organisations. Provided that they applied for permission, and respected the property rights of the landowners, they could walk wherever they wanted. With dukes and earls among their patrons, they reflected a

different class and possessed a different strategy from the young unemployed Communists in the BWSF.

## Something to CROW About

It was to be another 17 years before the passage of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act by the post-war Labour Government in 1949. This legislation set up the mechanism for the creation of National Parks, and the process for the negotiation of access agreements to open country.

The Peak District was the first to be designated, and almost immediately negotiated access agreements with landowners for the former 'battlefields' of the 1930s; Kinder Scout and Bleaklow.

Even so, huge tracts of moorland remained inaccessible to the public for another 50 years until the passing of the [Countryside and Rights of Way \(CROW\) Act](#) in 2000, and its final implementation in 2005.

In 2002, Andrew, the 11th Duke of Devonshire, publicly apologised at the 70th anniversary celebration event of the Kinder trespass at Bowden Bridge for his grandfather's 'great wrong' in 1932:

"I am aware that I represent the villain of the piece this afternoon. But over the last 70 years times have changed and it gives me enormous pleasure to welcome walkers to my estate today. The trespass was a great shaming event on my family and the sentences handed down were appalling. But out of great evil can come great good. The trespass was the first event in the whole movement of access to the countryside and the creation of our national parks"

Anyway that's all for this newsletter folk's.

I hope everyone has a cracking month ahead and have some great days out on the hill and please feel free to email me any articles or photographs (especially of the Annual Dinner) that you think may be of interest to others or that you would like to see included in April's newsletter.

Thanking you ☺