

THE GWYDYR_{NO34 (JAN / FEB 2013)}

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GWYDYR MOUNTAIN CLUB



Crib Goch & Moel Siabod from Llechog

Welcome all to the latest newsletter and it's great to see that winter is still with us ☺

We've had some exceptionally snowy walks over the past six weeks as well as some lovely bright sunny warm days where it was possible to get onto the real rock rather than the plastic walls.

Sadly there have been a few tragic fatalities in Scotland and Andy Chapman, who is working up there at the moment, says that conditions have been treacherous at times so be careful folks ☺

Dave Gray has sent me the following from a Tuesday night when he took the notes.....

On the 5th January day trip – 9 of us had a fine sunny day on Velvet Hill, Moel Gamelin and Mynydd Morfedd and staying dry underfoot. We had fine valley and hill views and this was new ground for some of us. We had a pint afterwards in the Bridge and Pontybodkin.

Lindsey's ascent of Jebel Toubkal the highest peak in North Africa in snowy condition, Well done Lindsey ☺

In Spain Paul and Lin Jensen did Puig Campana near Benidorm

First meet up on the calendar was Dave Gray's Long Mynd walk in the Shropshire hills and a very snowy affair it proved too with snow drifts down to the roadside and a fair amount of the tops as well. It was a very well attended meet amongst unfamiliar, to me at least, hills and despite cloud obscuring views for most of the day when they did part the views certainly suggested plenty of scope for future visits.



A snowy Shropshire landscape ☺

Jim Metcalfe has been out in the snow as well and kindly emailed me the following – thanks Jim ☺

On 10 January did a quick circuit from the car-park at Gwefn Gof Isaf on the A5, up the tarmac road and on to Carnedd Lewellyn, then south back via the Ogwen MRT base to the A5.

Having left thick fog on Merseyside I had great day, almost spring like and absolutely still on the tops with excellent views.

Last Sunday 20 January couldn't have been more different. Decided to take my son-in-law Jonathan for his first full-on winter mountain trip straight up Moel Siabod from the Bryn Glo carpark.

When we got to about 600m with deep powder snow and virtually no visibility we met up with two girls who had decided to take this 'easier' option leaving their two male friends to go via Llyn y Foel and up the ridge beyond.

The girls told us they had never been on Siabod before or on any mountain in winter. Not having a clue where they were going they asked if they could join us.

Despite the very poor visibility, navigation to the summit was not too bad but it wasn't helped by the fresh deep snow which made progress very slow.

Once on the summit my party grew to nine as various people asked if they could tag along for the descent as they were unfamiliar with the mountain/lacked confidence in the extreme conditions.

Great day. Everyone down safely!

Attached photo of Jonathan and me on the summit was taken by one of our newly acquired friends! Sorry no scenic views from the top.



Chris & Janet Harris have been away having fun Snow-shoeing in Austria and kindly emailed the following – thanks Chris ☺

SNOWSHOWING IN AUSTRIA

Janet and Chris Harris

The previous week was warm (11C) with some rain and we were more than a bit worried.

We landed at Innsbruck in light snowfall, and by the next morning nearly a foot had fallen, about 6 inches the next day then 2 or 3 inches a day thereafter, totalling nearly 3ft in the week.

Perhaps we had too much snow. The ascents were difficult, as even with snowshoes on we sunk to our knees in waist deep snow. The descents were easy, fast and fun.

We bought the Kompass 1:25000 map at the Spa shop in town and tried to find as many un-cleared footpaths as possible.

We bought the 12 euro bus pass for the week and easily got our money's worth.



We were glad we didn't take the car



Paths were well signposted



All you need to do is follow the markers on the trees



There were plenty of benches for lunch stops



The views were amazing



We saw lots of animal tracks but mostly they seemed to stay in the refuges.

Seefeld is not the place for keen downhill skiing but the cross-country has 266km of trails and the 143km hiking trails are cleared with mini snow-blowers even after a foot of snow.

On the 20th January Andy Odger & Helen Smith went for a walk up Snowdon, Andy writes....

Following the Railway path up Snowdon and hoping if conditions allowed a sneak onto the summit. I chose the railway as I have never approached Snowdon from this way before and as Helen is a novice I guessed it would be easier for her .After a short while I decided we could just walk up the Railway instead as no Train was running ;-)

After reaching approx 700 metres in very blustery and blizzard like conditions in parts we came across thigh deep snow piled in a cutting

(Word of advice you cannot run through thigh deep snow !!!! I ended up face first after my attempt !!!!)

Deciding to switch back to the path we ventured on despite conditions getting more blustery for periods of time but yet maintaining great visibility once wind eased we reached just short of the tunnels . At this point we came across 2 hardy souls who had braved the summit earlier and were fighting their way back down After a brief conversation they described the summit as empty and the explanation being visibility was between 5-10 metres near the path to summit. I decided at this point to turn around and walk back when I was approached by a young Belgian couple who were studying in London on a 12 month exchange and had come up for the weekend they were staying in Pen Y Pass YHA and were intending to go down the PYG track but could not find the stone marker for the start of the path.

I advised to return back down to the car park in Llanberis with myself and Helen and we would drop them off. They were extremely grateful for this as wind and snow were starting to get a trifle annoying ;-)

We fought our way back down an Icy but passable path to the car park stopping en route for a warming and fabulous Hot chocolate at the Tea House Pen Ceunant the very very Eccentric owner Stefan regaled us with tales of his life and those of his customers over the last 47 years and was a most entertaining host and a welcome break from the wind and snow . Plus free Bara Brith always does it for me

Having returned to the car and driving up Llanberis pass to drop off the young couple (Learnt a lot about Energy engineering that day) at the YHA there were several families enjoying sledding around Pen y pass and could have even managed a space in Car park if we wished to re-enter the gloom of a moody Snowdon.

A very enjoyable day and despite not topping out enjoyed some amazing views if only I had brought my camera ;-)

Cheers for this Andy ☺

John Simpson was also on Snowdon the same weekend but his ascent proved less eventful by all accounts ☺

The next meet on the club calendar was the annual Burns Night event at the Chapel. Chris & Janet Harris once again did sterling work on the catering front and in particular the Venison stew was brilliant ☺. The addressing of the Haggis proved particularly memorable as was the heart-felt rendition of the endearing Proclaimers classic tune of 500 miles ☺ This event has always been well attended and it may well be worth considering that the Community Centre in Capel Curig can accommodate up to 60 people and it has a fully fitted out kitchen.....



Some Pictures of the Burns Night festivities ☺

The walk prior to the meal proved interesting for most and hard work as well given the wind and thigh deep snow on the Carneddau.



A party of ten heading Pen Yr Helgi Du – before the maelstrom !!!

Beth and I came out a couple of days earlier and had some great walking on the Snowdon massif, Ice Climbing as well as some great fun Sledging at the Pen Y Gwryd & the woods near to Betws Y Coed ☺



Needless to say that after the excesses of Saturday night not too much was done on the Sunday ☺

The next club trip was Mark Barley's Bickerton Hill walk which my notes describe as a misty & moisty affair with eleven members attending. Apparently a couple of delightful 'off t'hill' pints were enjoyed in the Sandstone Inn at Brown Knoll village ☺

Jim Metcalfe had a great week walking in wild weather in the Lake District and Geoff Brierley was out running the Welsh hills again in anticipation of a very good time for the 3000'ers later this year – just take it easy on the Whisky & Cigars bud ;-)

Margaret Blakeborough and Sue Taylor did a good walk from Llyn Dinas – Aberglaslyn – Llyn Dinas passing an impressively carved bench and sneaking a quick look at Gelert's grave near Beddgelert and admiring the bronze statue of the faithful hound.

Beth and I were unable to make it to Mark's walk but we did a similar one a couple of weeks later and managed to find the amazing Queens Parlour Cave just off the Sandstone Trail near to Raw Head. For those who have never found it I can recommend making the effort – its huge ☺ (Grid ref :- SJ511551) oh and a head-torch is useful !



Queens Parlour Cave.

The weather at the beginning and middle of February certainly became drier so Beth and I decided to venture to some places anew and get a bit of rock climbing done. One bitterly cold but sunny Saturday afternoon saw Beth, her friend Nicky and I at Llanymynech Quarry where we managed one short route in the Cul De Sac quarry before the pull of a warm pub and the six nations rugby proved too strong.....

The next day we went to the amazing Nesscliffe and its stupendous sandstone quarry, it was still a tad cold but I managed some easy bouldering while Beth & Nicky drank coffee from Oliver's viewpoint !

The new Cheshire & Merseyside Sandstone guide enticed Beth and I back to Irby Quarry where we enjoyed a warm afternoon's climbing in the sun. On the day we went to the Queens Parlour Cave I checked out the small bouldering buttresses on Bickerton Hill which were ok but the cold made it hard work though the following day we had a great time on Helsby in perfect spring sunshine. I have to admit that the bouldering on the top tier is great and a definite venue for the long summer evenings ahead ☺



Blue skies and warm(ish) rock ☺

The next club event was the Chapel weekend of the 22 / 23 Feb and it was great to see nearly a dozen members and guests out despite a forecast that wasn't the best. Teresa Peddie & Bryn went up Pen Yr Helgi Du et al on the Saturday in weather best described as challenging they had a good day. Geoff Brierley went on another mega run / walk from the chapel to Dolwydellan and Moel Meirch etc. John Murphy had been out for a few days previously and had some great walks over the Snowdonia hills in near perfect weather and he seemed particularly taken with Moel Yr Hydd in the Moelwyns ☺

Beth, Hollie and I came out on the Friday after a brief sojourn to Pigeon Hole cave on the Great Orme, we were very surprised to find huge icicles on its lip – it's at sea level for those who don't know it ! Saturday saw us at the Beacon climbing wall in Caernarfon and Sunday afternoon was spent in Llyn Idwal admiring the views and constant procession of ice climbers heading up Idwal Stream.



An Icicle is a weapon.....

A frozen Llyn Ogwen ☺

Beth & Pen Yr Ole Wen



Y GARN



LLYN IDWAL

FORTHCOMING MEETS:

MARCH 2013	
08-09	Sat Walk: High Peak Station to Station (Mark Barley)
19	Club AGM
22-23	HUT Weekend 46th Annual Dinner (Sue Taylor et al)
29-01	BH Scottish Backpack (Chris Higson)
APRIL 2013	
05-06	Southern Highlands YH/Bunkhouse (Adrian Dolan)
12-13	Sat Walk: Clwyds (Ross Mcgraw)
19-20	HUT Weekend St Georges Day (Geoff Brierley)

Mark Barley has sent the following around recently about his Sat walk on the 9th March 2013, having done a similar walk a few years ago I can recommend it and there is always the enticing prospect of a beer in the Nags Head and / or Ramblers in Edale ☺

Walk on Saturday 9th March:- Edale to Chinley

We will meet in the station car park in Chinley (GR-038826) at 10:00. The plan is to catch the 10:21 from Chinley which arrives in Edale at 10:29. We will then walk back to Chinley via Jacob's Ladder and the outskirts of Hayfield (including a detour to the Sportsman Inn). Total distance about 10 miles. This walk skirts the edge of the Kinder plateau and (weather permitting) should provide some good views as we walk down towards Hayfield. Please bring stout walking boots and a packed lunch and let me know if you are planning to join us.

To get to Chinley either take the A6 through Stockport and then on towards Buxton or cut across to Whaley Bridge from the Macclesfield area. The A6 through Stockport, Hazel Grove, High Lane and Disley can be very slow so allow plenty of time. If taking this route go through Furness Vale and about 1 mile south of this village the road goes under the rail line that has been beside the road for

about the last mile. Where the road goes under the rail viaduct turn sharply left (doubling back on yourself) onto the B6062 which goes for a few hundred yards north on the other side of the rail line before a sharp right bend takes it along the valley. Chinley is about 2 miles along this road and the station is signposted from the main road. Station road loops back to the main road and the car park is close to the entrance to the station (pedestrian access only). It is free parking in the station car park for rail users, but, if it is full, there is further parking on Station road.

Coming from Whaley Bridge follow signs for A6/Stockport and Manchester. Just north of the outskirts of Whaley Bridge turn left at a roundabout onto the A6 towards Stockport. The railway bridge and turn off onto the B6062 is about 400 yards north of this roundabout.

CHAPEL ELECTRICAL WORKS

For those who are unaware the Chapel is now closed for at least a week pending the carrying out of essential electrical works / partial re-wire and an email will be sent to the membership when it re-opens. One thing I ask members to be aware of is that if you decide to donate ANY electrical item to the Chapel OR Cottage then please let the Hut Warden or Cottage Secretary know so that it can be checked / assessed before being put out for people to use.

2013 ANNUAL DINNER

The 2013 club dinner will take place at the Tyn-y-Coed on Saturday 23 March. It is a highlight of our GMC year and not to be missed!

New members and dinner newbies – please come along to this excellent traditional event. It is a lovely opportunity to catch up over a nice meal and see if you can recognise people in posh clothes.

Saturday activities will sort themselves out when we know who is coming and will involve a walk and maybe a bike ride if someone is willing to organise. If anyone would like to arrange an activity, please let us know.

Geoff will be organising a slide show which will run as we have pre-dinner drinks. The theme this year is 'GMC in bad weather'.

Bryan will organise the photo competition. The winning photo, voted on the night, will be guaranteed wall space in the hut.

Tracy will organise the raffle. Please get in touch if you have a stunning prize to donate.

The Dinner

- The evening will commence at 6:30pm with drinks in the bar and a rolling slide show.
- Dinner will be served at 7:30pm.
- Photo competition winner will be announced.
- A raffle will help raise funds for club projects and we will again have some amazing prizes on offer.
- Ivor will provide the entertainment. He seemed to get most people up dancing last year, so we've booked him again.

Dress code – dress up a bit, but just be as smart as you want to be.

Cost £27 per head.

Menu as follows:

Starter

- Leek & potato soup

Mains

- Shoulder of lamb braised in a red currant sauce
- Roast loin of pork topped with welsh rarebit

- Homemade feta spinach filo pie

Pud

- Sticky toffee pudding
- Fresh fruit salad
- Cheesecake

What you need to do

- Let Sue have your choice for main. Pudding can be decided on the day
- Send Dave your payment
- Let Dave know if you want to reserve a place at the hut
- Send any photos you want included in the slide show to Geoff
- Send your photo to Bryan if you want it to be included in the competition
- Contact Tracy if you have a prize to donate
- Get ready for a great night!

IMPORTANT – CLUB AGM TUES 19TH MARCH 2013 – 8PM THE STORK HOTEL, BIRKENHEAD.

The clubs AGM is as above and I have two things to mention:-

- (i) We need a new Hut Warden as Margaret Blakeborough has stood down after several years volunteering for which we are all grateful and indebted. If you are interested in filling this vacant position, or indeed want to stand for any position on the committee, then please contact the club secretary for details.
- (ii) Michael Gavin has introduced a proposal to amend the club constitution to bar voting rights by post, proxy or email. Essentially he suggests that voting can only be done by a show of hands on the night. Details will be forwarded to the membership in due course. You **can** still vote on this amendment by email or post. It is a member led amendment and one that has not emanated from the committee. I may be criticised for this but it is certainly NOT an amendment I can support and I ask that all members exercise their vote in this matter.

Adele & Christy charitable events.

For those members who do not attend on a Tuesday a couple of our members are doing great stuff for charity this year.

Adele Blakeborough is competing in the Devizes to Westminster Canoe race on the 30th March – 1st April 2013 on behalf of Mental Health Research UK. Please see www.justgiving.com/jean-adele-dw to make a donation.

Christy Miles is going for a short run around London ☺ , (ok, it's the marathon) it's in aid of the Princes Trust. Please sponsor her on :-<http://my.artezglobal.com/personalPage.aspx?registrationID=409773>