

THE GWYDYR No39(Oct/Nov 2013)

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GWYDYR MOUNTAIN CLUB

MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE 😊



Mt Vinson

Well Christmas is nearly here and for one member it is definitely going to be a white one.....

Andy Chapman is in Antarctica and he has successfully summited Mount Vinson (4892m) - twice in the same trip. I've copied Andy's emails' below which have more information. Mt Vinson is one of the most difficult (financially) of the "seven summits" and with his ascents of Everest, Aconcagua and Kilimanjaro he's now climbed four of them.

Hi Allan,

In Punta a long and delayed flight south arrived with great sunset over Patagonia at 9.45 pm last night so very tired to day.

So far around 50 staff will be working from 16 countries due to fly to Union Glacier and then (I think) Vinson on Monday.

Will send you a Antarctic email address but cannot receive news letter or any large file photos etc so please do not

send.

Will be in touch

All best to all

Andy

Hello Alan GMC contact

Hope things are ok

This is the news. in Punta and due to fly out on Monday weather permitting however the first two flights are delayed David is still here, as I Richard Parks and his Expedition to the pole.

Lots of very interesting facts and figures and trips bigger company than I knew before. There is a Scott exp which was put in from Mucmurdo sound going there and back

Looks like I may be at union in November and on Vinson in December and possible a last degree to pole in early Jan although nothing is certain but they want me to go to pole and take passport as there is an escape route to New Zealand, but the plan is for me to fly back to UG then Vinson late season again to shut down.

I have a tall order and a challenging time as great as Everest in a way, a little bit nervous really as people pay big money, \$58,000 for last degree

Very nice people here very friendly, including Dylan, Todd and Tre-c (Tracy) from USA well they would be like with those names Tre-c is anew her name sounds like Tracy. So I am learning to talk US Awesome etc.

My email address will be when I am there, may not be for a week will be staff.union@antarctic-logistics.com or vinson.base@antarctic-logistics.com with subject name: Andrew Chapman.

Please can you not send any pictures at all as it will be rejected by the system.

Please can Alan not send any newsletters as it will be too big and I can't have any GMC up dates at all please. Alan can you manage this for me, perhaps you can keep GMC up dated and not send my email around too much. I have very limited use in Antarctica thanks

Drop me a line will email again before the flight, the Ilyson has now got video camera in the bomb bay so we see the landing on screem, new this year, 180 mpg landing on ice on wheels no brakes obviously the pilots is called Shasha and Boris. And a cool \$15,000

Will be on hotmail until further notice

Andrew

I am sure I speak for everybody in congratulating Andy on his latest success and perhaps now is the time when he should come clean and let us know which 'list' is he doing..... Messner's or Bass's ???

Maybe for the club's 50th we could arrange a club trip to the Caucasus so he can 'tick' Elbrus ????

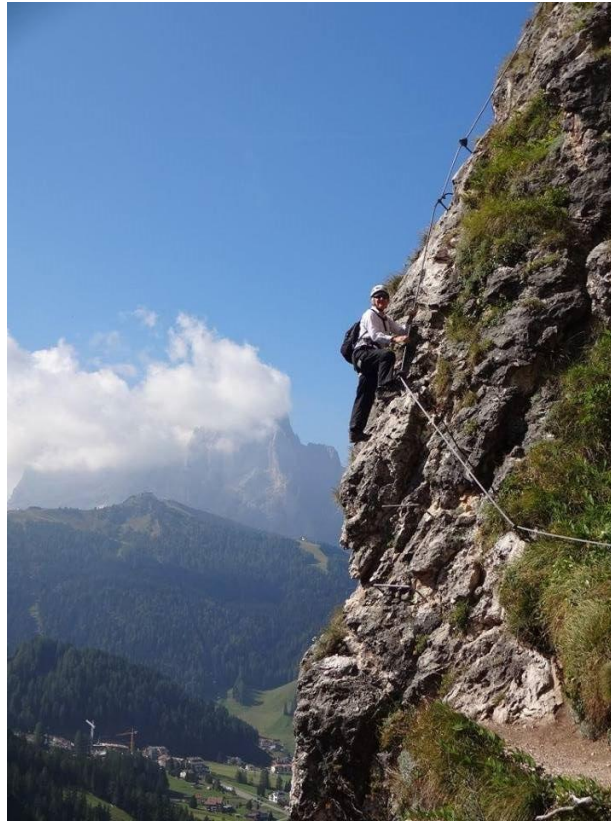


For those of you who don't know about Elbrus, it was first climbed (well the highest peak anyway as there are two summits) by Horace Walker & Frederick Gardiner (Merseyside men!) et al in 1874.

Here's a wiki link which tells you all you need to know: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Elbrus

Actually the Caucasus might not be such a bad idea as travel to the area will be cheaper (flight to Moscow then a internal flight to the Northern Caucasus) and not as long / time consuming as the Himalaya's –let the committee have your thoughts ☺

Andy is not the only member who has been abroad as Doug & Gail have been in the Dolomites and Gail sent me this atypical Dolomite Via Ferrata picture. If you've never been to the Dolomites it is so pretty and the Via Ferrata's are superb and not in the least bit difficult though you do end up in some pretty impressive situations.....



Pic taken in the Valle Lungo (Selva region).

Jim Metcalfe has been out and about on our Welsh hills too and kindly sent me the following together with a couple of pictures, thanks Jim.

On Sunday 23 November I was on the Glyders going up by Devil's Kitchen with the intention of descending via the scree at the side of Bristly Ridge. The snow line was quite high at around 750 metres with significant snow almost from that line. A high cloud base with crystal clear visibility provided great views of the Isle of Man and the Lakes. With the normal descent to Bwlch Tryfan snowed in I descended to the Miners Track and took a direct route to the A5.



I've not been down to the Stork much of late, my new job leaves me little time and so it's even more important that people let me know what's going on. The newsletter is a valuable resource and helps give new and prospective members a flavour of what we do as well as providing a handy historical record – it's easy to forget dates and trips over time.

Dave Gray has kindly forwarded me the following notes from the Tuesday evenings, thanks Dave.

Tuesday 17 related to w/e 15 December, we had Janet Coates' meet, 14 miles on the Wirral with 13 people out. People were out at the Chapel: John Simpson and Geoff did Moel Lefn and Moel yr Ogof; Fi and Neil went for a coastal walk on Anglesey at Llanddwyn Island.

For Tuesday 10 my diary is blank –it was a quiet evening so I think a NIL report other than the great success of the Christmas Meal which you know of anyway.

Tuesday 3 I was away and I think you were there on November 26th?

Tuesday 19 November was the news that Neil Harris and his brother Pete have completed the full section hike of the SW coast path; Fi and Neil were in the Lakes and did High Stile ridge, and also a day on Rosthwaite Fell, Sue Graeme and Margaret did a mid level Nant Gwynant circuit from Sue's.

That would also take in Mark Barley's very successful and well attended Winter Hill day walk on 15/11, we had a great walk over the hill with huge views, fantastic autumn colours.

1. Geoff and Neil Metcalfe running day – Nant Peris to Ogwen section of 14 Peaks.
2. Pete Smedley's off for a long trip to South Africa
3. Adrian Dolan has had a successful trip to Scotland –5 Munros in 2 days on the Ben Lawers range and his total is now around 35!
4. Dave Gray and Christine S had a Wirral walk
5. ANOR (sorry I can't read my own writing) has had a trip to the Forest of Dean.

CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE

Beth and I recently attended a BMC conference in the Peak District and one of the 'work-shops' was about recruiting new (especially younger) members via social media. There was an excellent presentation about using Facebook and Twitter as a tool to get your clubs name 'out-there'. We've dabbled a bit in the past with Twitter and Facebook and maybe the time has now come to promote our club a bit more professionally. Some members

are a bit 'wary' of these websites however it does seem to be the way of the world now and so we should embrace it a bit more.

There have to be some rules though as some members have expressed concern over their picture being visible on a website, in particular Facebook.

THEREFORE IF ANY MEMBER WISHES TO UPLOAD A PICTURE ONTO THE FACEBOOK PAGE PLEASE DO NOT 'TAG' ANYONE UNLESS THEY HAVE EXPRESSLY GIVEN YOU PERMISSION TO DO SO.

We now have a really good Facebook page for members to use, to see it follow this link ; <https://www.facebook.com/#!/GwydyrMountainClub?fref=ts> or email Brenda Jones who is the administrator.

The same time that Jim was on the Glyders Beth and I were on the Arenig's.....

When I first started climbing many many years ago I spent countless hours poring over the old thin-volumed plastic covered Climbers Club guidebooks and dreamed (not too strong a word that) of climbing the great routes described. A weekends climbing would invariably end with me sitting down at home and 'ticking' off the routes I'd climbed even to the extent of doing some extra 'ticking' on the graded list of climbs and index of routes at the back of the guidebook. I think even once I may have even done it in the pub on the way home (sadly a seemingly no longer required tradition as 'off the hill's' only seem to happen on the Saturday night of a weekend now).

I'd stopped 'ticking' many years ago however it has to be noted that this annoying habit has recently re-surfaced in the form of a book Beth bought me for my birthday this year. The book in question is not even a climbing guidebook but, dare I say it, a walking guide to the Welsh 100 (subtitled 'a guide to the 100 highest mountains' in Wales'). I won't say how many I've done however I do find myself, as a consequence, going to hills I've not been to before so it is not all bad one supposes.....

Recently we found ourselves one frosty misty morning in a rather dingy café in Bala.

Our intention was to go somewhere we had not been before, I had done Arenig Fawr and not Fach whereas Beth had done neither so at least one of us was assured that something new would be done. Like I say it was a pretty grey, misty and far from warm day as we sat with a rather poor and overpriced brew waiting for some inspiration, to say nothing of a piece of toast, to arrive from somewhere.

We decided upon Fach as neither of us has done it and it promised to be a shorter walk than Fawr, the fact that there seemed to be no paths marked on the map held promise of perhaps an interesting day. As we climbed steeply out of Bala the mist decided to stay where it seemed most appropriate, nestling in the valley, and we emerged into bright sunshine and clear blue skies.

We drove along the winding road which hugged the shores of Llyn Cwellyn and parked at the picnic / beauty spot which I assumed would be the proper place from which to set off. I was concerned to note a distinct lack of any signage showing a footpath but there was a track leading in roughly the right direction so we hoped for the best.

We set off along the said track with map in one hand and an ever growing lack of confidence in the other. The map showed a couple of fences heading up the hillside but from our lowly perspective they were indistinguishable from the half dozen we could see. We took a left turn which proved to be the wrong left turn so we back-tracked and took another left turn which would have been on our right if we hadn't taken the wrong left turn – confused ? We were. Anyway we decided to just head up the hillside and hoped that by following one of the fences we'd be alright and we were until we found a stream which wasn't meant to be there. The stream was one of those that looked diminutive enough but with tall tale sphagnum and reeds in abundance it promised potential for a soaking if one wasn't careful. Thankfully there was a rickety old fence, which wasn't on

the map either, to serve as a handrail and foothold and wouldn't you know it once we'd crossed there was a track!

This we followed for some time, rising gradually with the lie of the land becoming easier to read and with frequent reference to the map we had more than a fair idea of where we were. The track slowly became a path which then became a bog which was not what we wanted but we could at last see the fence we wanted to follow and there was a stile.

We thought it would be easier going once the longed for fence was reached but knee deep heather and occasionally rocky bits sticking out of same made for tough going and frequent, actually constant, use of the wire fence was necessary to enable upward progress.

Looking skyward we saw, perhaps only 100yards away, a majestic Red Kite circling with its distinctive forked tail clearly visible against a now slowly greying sky. The wind gradually increased and chilled us as we sweated and toiled up this most vague of paths and were it not for the 'bannister' fence we'd have struggled. Eventually the angle eased and slowly the views across the Migneight revealed the triptych of the Snowdon, Glyder and Carneddau ranges gradually becoming enveloped in cloud that promised another dusting of snow before the day was out.

We reached the small cairned summit shelter in a biting wind but the views were more than worth it though we did not linger longer than a sandwich and coffee dictated before descending. We were keen to avoid the awkwardness of the ascent and so took a vague path to the right before following an even vaguer path back to the fence and stile. Those of you who have walked with me will get the idea of what I deem to be a suitable path and while this one had probably not been trod since Neolithic times it did the trick and got us back home after a great little day out.

We met Andy Odger, Neil Metcalfe and Fiona Langton in the Tyn Y Coed (we had to have the obligatory 'off the hill') and they had been up on Moel Elio on Fiona's walk! It was here that I came up with one of my nonsense phrases when describing the terrain to Neil 'The Arenig's are more like the Rhinog's thanthe Rhinog's' – I'll keep taking the tablets!!

A gorgeous but equally vicious Indian take-away was collected from Bethesda and back at the Chapel we gorged ourselves silly and washed it all down with copious amounts of red wine.

Another successful club meet this year was the annual 'bonfire' event at the chapel.....

HALLOWEEN / BONFIRE PARTY

This year's event was superbly organised by Bethan Hines with a little bit of help from me and Hollie.

The chapel was 'converted' into a ghostly haunt and everyone entered into the 'spirit' of things by dressing up in appropriately scary costumes. There was much food, quite a bit of booze and even the rain could not dampen the bonfire outside which blazed all night long.

Beth has provided the following short description of a scary, some would say frightening, event ☺

Having suggested we have a Halloween themed Bonfire meet, it somehow became my responsibility to organise it all (with able assistance from Allan & Hollie) :-). My worries about changing the format of something that is clearly a tradition were premature as it ended up being a great event with lots suggesting that we do the same next year!

There was a great turnout, 35 witches, ghosts, dracula's and a cross dressing member who shall remain nameless.....what goes on at a Halloween party stays at the Halloween party!!!!.....and a good time was had by all. The mulled wine flowed, full of eyeballs and skulls and the chapel was

transformed into a spooky crypt complete with a coffin beer chiller. Rather than the traditional barrel of beer, we opted for a selection of smaller kegs from the Peerless brewery as well as some (blood) red and white wine.

On the menu we had a blood, guts and gore based starter followed by a terrifying tagine with a RATatouille vegetarian option and then finished off with a deadly damson crumble!

The weather was awful all day but John Austin and his team of fire builders did a great job and we had a great bonfire that lasted all evening despite torrential rain. John you are now the official GMC fire starter!

I would love to see some of the photos taken on the night, as there were some great costumes as you can tell by the 'official Group photo' taken by 'Gilbert Photographic Solutions' who was also responsible for capturing this spooky apparition outside the chapel at dusk.....ooooohh Beth x



A BRILLIANT PICTURE ☺



Thanks to Mike Gilbert for the pictures ☺

Brenda, can these go on the Facebook page ???

If anyone else has got some pictures then please forward them and the best can go on the website and / or Facebook page.

SOMETHING INTERESTING

I don't know if anyone has possibly ever read the footless crow web blog (which you should if you like short articles on the outdoors with particular emphasis on North Wales) but there has been a mild furore recently about a man who is arguably the best outdoor writer in a generation, Jim Perrin.

<http://tohatchacrow.blogspot.co.uk/2013/11/whats-eating-ernest-james-perrin.html>

In a nutshell he appears to be severely criticising the winner of the latest Boardman Tasker prize under a pseudonym and what is sad to see is that some people are making some rather disparaging personal comments. It is a shame as if a man is to be judged on the quality of his writings alone there are few to compare with Mr Perrin however it does seem as though the rumour mill has gone into overdrive ☹

FORTHCOMING MEETS:-

December 2013	
7	Christmas Dinner
14	Saturday Walk:: Wirral (Jan Coates)
20-01	Hut GMC Christmas & New year
January 2014	
01-04	Hut GMC Christmas & New year
11	Saturday Walk:: Cannock Chase (Dave Gray)
24-25	Hut Weekend Burns Night

The Christmas dinner at The Dee Hotel in West Kirby was a great success and we had 40 members in attendance which was great to see so a big thanks to Les Fowles for organising 😊 One hopes we can do the same next year as it proved excellent value even if I did have more sprouts than roast potato's 😊

One hope's to see many members out at the Chapel during Christmas and New Year and given that we've got snow on the way it should be great to see the hills looking wintry once again.

Well, that's all folks, have a good one eh 😊