

# THE GWYDYR No18 (MAY 2011)

## THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GWYDYR MOUNTAIN CLUB

Ok, some 18 months ago I was elected, by default, to be your Chairman (I wasn't even at the meeting !) however I've enjoyed the job and especially the newsletter which has now come of age in this the eighteenth edition.

What is actually really really good is that this edition has some brilliant news and is probably the most momentous news the club has yet had the pleasure to announce.

For those of you who don't know..... **HE DID IT !!!!!**



Photo's Courtesy of Jagged Globe

Massive congratulations to Andy in what has been a lifetime ambition and the completion of which is one that is richly deserved. We look forward to hearing about his adventures in due course however Andy emailed the following a few days afterwards :-

Many thanks for the messages, yes I reached the summit on Monday around 6.15 am in 9 hrs from South Col. It was windy and cold much colder than anything I have experienced before. It's a long story the ascent, we did come across a dead Japanese climber just below balcony on summit day, the Hillary Step is much easier than I imagined

My fingers at the ends are very mildly nipped but will recover well, if I did go back to the South Col I would risk losing the ends in the cold and thin air.

The 2nd assault starts tonight at 2 am and I shall lead the 2nd team through the ice fall tonight and on to camp two where I shall stay in a rescue capacity as the 4 members and Sherpa's climb the Lhoste face to the South Col and aim to summit 23 or 24th. I feel I have the energy to go back to the South Col on oxygen but we think it's best I don't and stay as support at c2 6500m and the ice fall which is drastically changing. There were several collapses of ice and bridges from going through on 7th May and down on 17th last Wednesday

David Hamilton will stay at base and co-ordinating weather reports and any outcomes, it's rather concerning as the less able teams are now pushing to the South Col and there has already been some drama. On this trip I have been 42 days above 5000m and 20 of which I have been above 6000m, so I shall be tired when I get back from 2 as I will have another 4-5 days at 6500m I will not be home any earlier than 5th June

best regards

Andy

We look forward to your safe return Andy ☺

Well one hopes we have not seen the end of Summer but it has been rather wet of late though the forecasters are still promising us a scorcher.

A few things left over from the last couple of newsletters .....

Pete (The Colonel) Smedly sent me a couple of pictures from the Annual Dinner at the Tyn Y Coed and here they are :-



Lin and Paul Jensen went cycling again on the Lleyn Peninsula and she kindly forwarded the following :-

28-30 April 2011

### Lleyn Peninsula-Cycle camping.

Only a week after Coast and Castles and we were off again in the sunshine. This time, cycle camping with our new Wild Country tent; only my second ever cycle camp so a bit of a learning curve!

The route started at Sue's just outside Beddgelert and basically followed the coastline keeping to minor roads as much as possible using Sustrans routes 8, 41, 42 and 43. We camped at Tudweiliog on the north coast and Llanbedrog on the south. Two good sites at £11 and £9, both with loos and showers and close to decent pubs. Beautiful coast line and beaches and lots and lots of HILLS!!

Cycling on the fringes of Snowdonia was great, looking at the mountains you know so well from an entirely different perspective. We even had toasties at the Tremadog café and watched the climbers! Got a bit stressed cycling the busy and narrow Aberglaslyn road but apart from that the ride was very quiet and peaceful.

A great experience in lovely weather. Thanks to Sue for car parking, B&B and lots of red wine!

Stats - 3 days. 100 miles. I have details of the route if anybody is interested.

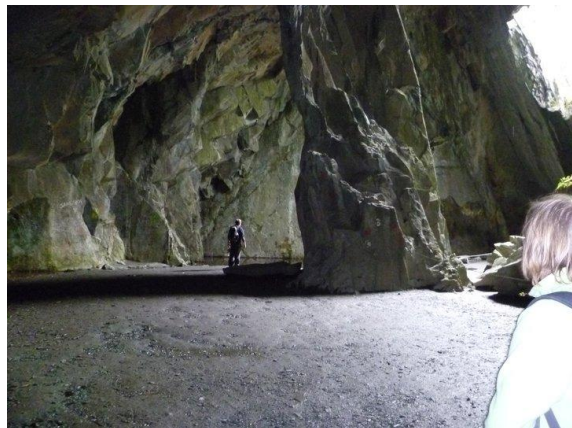
Keith Colwell was also walking with friends in the Lake District and sent me the following :-

To avoid the weekend rush Gabby and I went up on the Monday and stayed with friends in Chapel Stile. We were walking by 10.30am and went along the common to Pavey Ark and tussled with the huge chocks in Easy Gully. On then to Sergeant Man and High Raise before back in brilliant weather along Mickleden to the Stickle Barn.

Tuesday we did a short walk in beautiful weather over to Little Langdale and on the way someone told us about an amazing slate cavern to explore.

Wednesday, still blessed by the marvellous weather the four of us did Wetherlam from Chapel Stile. So we had three excellent walks in the sun-drenched (plus a little vino) Lakes. We were all surprised how few people we met on the hills. So for those who like to avoid the rush of Easter weekends going a few days afterwards might pay.

Keith also sent the following few pics, it looked a nice trip 😊



Right, now onto May proper.....

Phil Earl managed to get out for a very wet and windy day's climbing on Idwal Slabs and did Hope (V-Diff), Lazarus (Severe) and The Arete (V-Diff). Apparently the last climb was the scariest he's ever done at the grade – wait till Skye mate 😊. The same weekend (or week) Sue Taylor, Joyce Bernard and Mike McEneaney went walking on the South West Coastal Path in North Devon. It's lovely down there and I've only ever been once many years ago and would love to go again.

The following weekend Allan (Me !) went to the Chapel a day earlier than most to try and get some walking and climbing done. The weather refused to play ball and on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May (I know !) I got absolutely soaked walking up Elidir Fach, Elidir Fawr, Carnedd Y Filiast and Y Garn. I had intended to walk back to the Chapel from Llanberis but given the conditions and lack of views I bailed out and made my way to Ogwen Cottage where a two minute wait saw the bus arrive to thankfully whisk me back to the Chapel and a delightful shower.

The following day I was joined by Mark Cashman and we made our way to Anglesey (after he had gone for a quick run up Moel Siabod !) and the delightful sea cliffs at Rhoscolyn. It was a tad windy and the seas were really broiling up which added to the overall 'atmosphere'. We did the obligatory classic 'Symphony Crack' (surely for its grade one of the

best climbs in Wales !) and then the steep but easy 'Hi-Jack'. A nice brew in South Stack cafe (essential to any day on Anglesey !!) rounded off a great day.



Rhoscolyn



Mark on Symphony Crack (Diff)



Mark on the belay of Symphony Crack



Mark on Hi-Jack (VS)

When we got back to the Chapel it was not long before the intrepid cyclists arrived after an epic ride from the Wirral.

Chris Harris kindly provided the following describing the ride out ..... and back 😊

**Two Mills to Capel Curig ride 14/15<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

Saturday morning, The Eureka café a two Mills, the intrepid group assembled ready for their annual (except when the toilets are being refurbished) ride to the Chapel at Capel Curig. Optimism was high

on the agenda – the rain may hold off and the wind might not be against us. 10 am we set off to cross the Dee at Harwarden Bridge then the climb to the top of the Halkyns. This was where we realised that the wind was going to be in our faces all the way to Capel Curig. We pushed on against the wind through Babel, Tremerechion to Trefnant where we lunched last year. Fortunately the lunch stop this year was in Henllan as the Trefnant pub is one of the many recent closures. The lovely thatched Llindir Inn at Henllan provided us with reasonably priced food and beer that could have been a bit better.



A Pub !

Leaving the pub it was now overcast and it felt like the temperature had dropped a few degrees – not to worry, there were still plenty of hills to warm up on. Having passed through Llansannan and Llangernyw we hurtled down the massive hill into Llanrwyst where most of us made it to the Café before the heavy shower hit. After tea and scones etc we pedalled through the drizzle to Bewys-y-Coed and then slogged up the hill to the chapel where a cheery crowd of GMC motorists met us. A quick shower (should that be showers - as we did do it individually) and then off to the Tyn-y-coed to re-hydrate. The improved selection of beers was most welcome and the food was excellent.



The (mad) Hero's !

Sunday dawned dull damp and drizzly – what else did we expect.

After a light breakfast (apart from Andy and Neil who went to the Bryn-glo) we headed home, once again full of optimism, at least the wind was behind us this time. The 5 mile hill up to Pentrefoelas didn't seem too bad now it's been resurfaced. The wet stuff held off until we gained maximum exposure on Denbigh moors, but fortunately it didn't last long. The B4501 down to Denbigh from Llyn Brenig is an amazing run on the bikes, over 1000ft of descent. They've put some lovely smooth tarmac on the first mile but after that it's mud, potholes and hairy hairpin bends. Max speed on that section was, I believe around 47mph – not bad considering the state of the road. Lunch in Somerfields in Denbigh gave us time to warm up. After lunch, back through Tremerschion and onto the Halkyns ridge where the rain came down and literally filled our boots. Still, it was soon to be down-hill all the way to Connah's Quay. Sean and Loz managed some amazing stunt work as Sean turned right and Loz didn't notice the No Entry sign ahead. Bikes were snaking and shoulders ricocheting but somehow they stayed upright.

The round trip from Two Mills was about 120 miles, most people added 10 to 20 miles on top as they rode out to the start.

Thanks very much for that Chris 😊

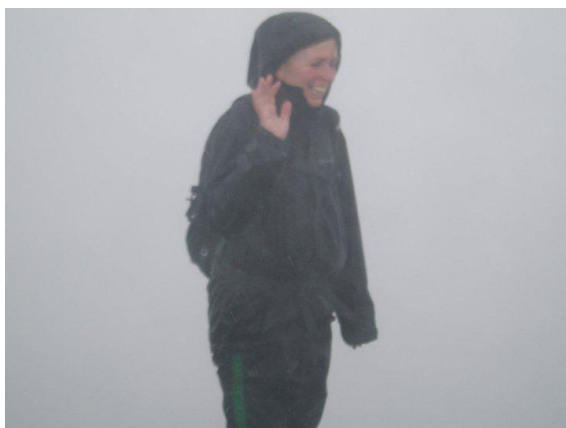
The same day Dave Gray and Helen Avison went all 'neolithic' around Capel Garmon while Ronnie Davis, Sue Taylor and Ray Baines went up Elidir Fawr and Y Garn – apparently they never got wet till near the end of the day but I think they lied 😊

Sunday was indeed an exceptionally foul day weather wise and most people headed back to the Wirral writing the day off however some of us are made of sterner stuff – not !!!

After some coffee and hot cross buns at Sue Taylors house (thanking you 😊) prospective member Fiona Langton and I made our way to the little village of Croesor. Another coffee (well, it's a great cafe !) followed before an exceptionally wet and windy walk up and down Nnicht. I think the pictures on the summit kind of say it all really.....



Wet !!!!



Wetter !!!!!!!!!!!

The weekend of the 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> May 2011 saw the annual clean up / work weekend at the Chapel where apparently sterling work was done (yet again) by a handful of dedicated members. It is sad to record that so few turned up to work in what proved to be a rotten weekend (weather wise) and I think I speak for everyone when I say thank you to all involved. They managed , amongst other things, to fit a new door to the drying room, a proper loft ladder in the Ladies toilets, start work on the 'patio' outside and cleared boulders and detritus from the rear of the Chapel. One urgent matter which now needs to be addressed is that the pipe leading from the Chapel to the mains has finally sprung a leak and needs replacing as soon as practically possible.

At the next committee meeting we will be discussing this matter and we will probably have to call a SGM to seek approval from the membership to spend the required monies for specialist contractors to do the work for us. The only way around this additional expenditure would be to have a massive 'hands-on' weekend with sufficient members being available to wield pick axes and shovels to dig the trench for the new pipe. Please contact Margaret Blakeborough if you have any suggestions. The next committee meeting is the 9<sup>th</sup> June 2011.



Ronnie & Geoff



Margaret B – what a star eh 😊

## Skye 2011

Following on from last year's successful and enjoyable trip to Skye an intrepid and eager group of eleven members and prospective members set out from Liverpool and the Wirral to make their way to the delightful camp site at Glen Sligachan – a mere stone's throw away from a great pub 😊. Alas like all good plans things didn't quite go as expected.....

Andy, Phil Neil and I left Liverpool in two cars instead of one due to the huge amount of gear we all took. We made good time to Fort William, despite their being a huge tailback on the M6 which we just managed to avoid by a sneaky detour on some minor roads, and over a



cuppa in Morrison's a plan was hatched. Andy and I wanted to take the ferry from Mallaig while Phil and Neil elected to take the longer route over the bridge at Kyle of Lochalsh. To the strains of the 'Top Gear' theme tune we raced away on our respected routes each convinced that we would win easily. Andy, as always, is a careful driver and rigidly stuck to the speed limit ;- ) and we arrived at Mallaig with just enough time to buy our tickets (Nearly £30 BTW) and board before the ferry sailed away across the Sound of Sleat. We sat in comparative luxury drinking Tea and Hot Chocolate and basked in a smug glory that surely we would win. A leisurely coast along the road from Armadale saw us arrive at Broadford and an equally calm and law abiding drive along the coastal road saw us at the Sligachan campsite a little after 7.00pm. We were somewhat taken aback at seeing Neil & Phil grinning at us as they had arrived a few minutes earlier. Phil was delirious at the speed Neil had driven at and it was unanimously agreed by Andy and I that the scoundrel had clearly broken the law and the speed limit, on several occasions at least, to arrive before us – what a rotter we thought 😊

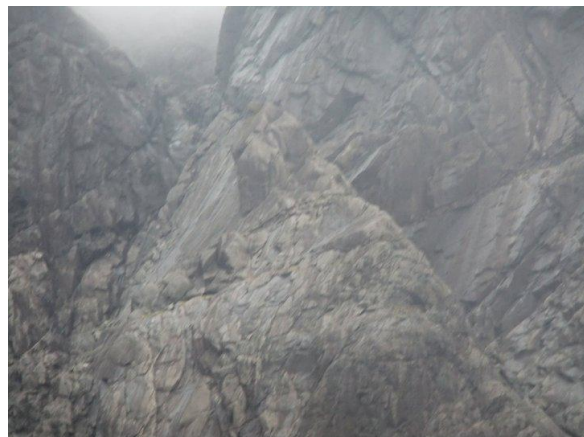
A few beers and a decidedly average meal in the Sligachan lightened the mood as we discussed the next day's objective.

The next morning we were up bright and early and glad to note that no rain had fallen during the night and there was the merest hint of blue in the skies above. I spoke with the camp site owner and asked if he knew the forecast. He replied that the rain was due about lunchtime, I asked what time people have lunch on Skye which drew a wry smile but no firm answer and so hoping that a late lunch is the norm we would have enough time to climb the famous Cioch on Sron Na Ciche.

We drove over to Glen Brittle, observing all the required speed limits, and parked up near to the camp site at the loch head. Once out of the car we allowed the wee midgies a quick feast while we donned boots and sacks and made our way up the path from the camp site towards the stunning precipice of Sron Na Ciche – we could even discern the Cioch itself from the camp site.



Sron Na Ciche from the Glen Brittle Path



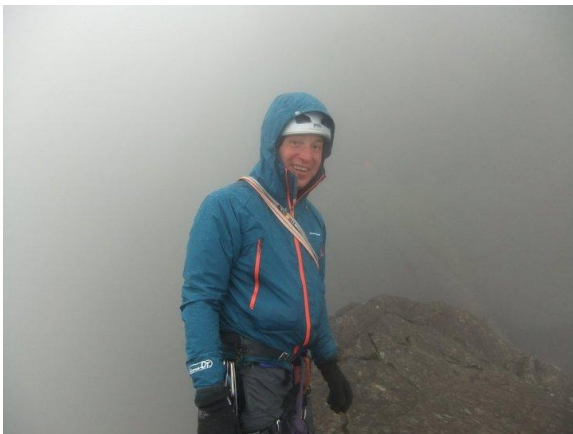
The Cioch Pinnacle from the path

As soon as we reached the base of Collie's Climb the mist rolled in and the first few rain drops fell. The original plan was to 'run' up the Cioch and then descend back to our sacks,

scramble up the Sgumain Stone Shoot to the summit of Sgurr Alasdair and descend the Great Stone Shoot to Coire Lagan and back to Glen Brittle. Alas it was not to be ☹

The mist became denser and the rain fell heavier soaking the rock and ourselves, the wind seemed to pick up as well so as we climbed higher one could sense a more interesting day was developing than we had anticipated.

The climb (Collie's climb – Mod) was easy enough and though the rock was wet the friction was still superb as Gabbro is so coarse it make little difference whether wet or dry (on the easier routes that is !) We soon found ourselves on the large grassy ledge beneath the stunning pinnacle that is the Cioch, a feature made famous in the 'Highlander' film. I went up followed by Andy and then we descended to allow Neil and Phil their turn before we scrambled back down the route to Eastern Gully. An entertaining, though very wet, abseil down a waterfall saw Andy and I at the start of the traverse back to our sacks along the terrace where food and dry clothes awaited us. Neil and Phil were not far behind us and we guessed they would not get lost and so went to our sacks to get changed. Some twenty odd minutes past and there was no sign of Neil and Phil so I scrambled back up to the gully to see where they were. There was no sign and so I shouted their names and received a reply from 100ft down the gully – they'd missed the traverse but soon scrambled up to us and the much needed warm clothes. Neil in particular was soaked through and could not stop shivering, he donned all our dry clothing and we beat a hasty retreat back down to the car in continuing mist and rain and after a total day out of seven and a half hours we were back in the warmth of the car and a realisation that we'd had a really good day out.



Andy Odger on the Cioch summit



Neil & Phil on the summit (honestly !)

Needless to say that we spent the rest of the evening in the pub, after I'd took over the fire, drying our clothes and watering our insides. The wind had picked up considerably as the evening wore on and we texted the other parties to advise that we could not pitch their tents and further that continuing over to Skye might not be the best of ideas – we'd seen the forecast for snow and 80mph winds !

Geoff Brierley, Lindsey Fooks & David Lane-Joynt turned up not long afterwards and decided to continue on to Portree and find somewhere dry to stay. Jon Murphy, Christy Miles, Kevin McEvoy and Helen Avison made it to Glencoe where they stayed in the Clachaig caravan.

During the night the wind and rain picked up considerably and it was agreed (nearly unanimously) to head back south and probably home. We stopped off in Glencoe to deliver the tents to Jon & Christy etc and then we drove in convoy back to England and home. The weather was most unseasonal and I think the hail storm at the Sligachan camp site Saturday morning was the final nail in the coffin.

Geoff, Lindsey and David spent the Saturday walking up into Coire Lagan searching vainly for the Great Stone Shoot leading up to Sgurr Alasdair but sadly the weather proved foul once again and they returned back to Portree and another warm and dry B & B. The Glencoe team went for a walk up into the beautiful 'Lost Valley' on the Saturday afternoon and managed a very wet and windy low level walk through the forests on Sunday morning, Kevin McEvoy continued alone onto the Pap of Glencoe before all members beat a retreat back South and home. Alas with this unseasonal weather we all managed as best we could and it was a shame the meet could not be as good as we all hoped – next year we're looking at the Isle of Arran and a bunkhouse ☺

Allan, Neil, Andy & Phil however managed to wring a couple of days climbing out in Snowdonia and we arrived Monday morning at the Chapel to meet the departing Burnley group and it was a shame we could not have spent more time with them – maybe next year ☺

Monday afternoon saw us at Craig Du in the Llanberis Pass (after the usual cafe and shopping requirements had been completed !) and we did Rib Climb and Rib and Slab (both nice easy V-Diff's) before retiring to the delights of the Bryn Tyrch and the Chapel.



Andy on the lovely 2<sup>nd</sup> pitch of Rib & Slab



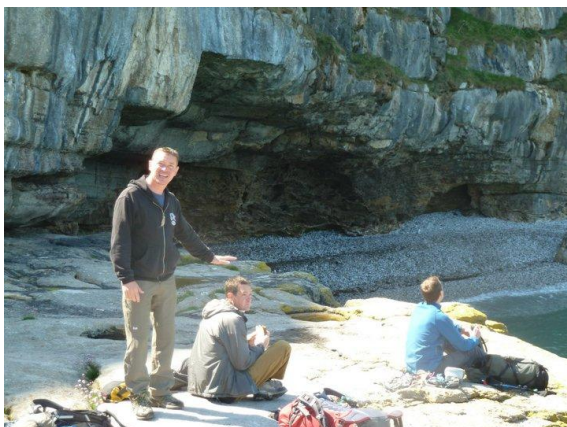
Phil abseiling off Rib & Slab

The forecast the next day was meant to be promising but somewhat typically we were given more rain rather than sunshine and after a decidedly average brew in the Pinnacle Cafe we went to the seaside and had a good day on the cliffs of Pen Trwyn near Llandudno.

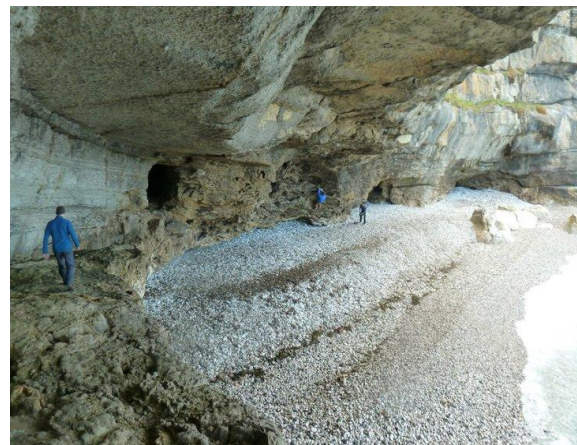
We first went to Pigeon's Cave for a bit of bouldering, this is a beautifully impressive place and provided a great warm up for the routes to come.



A more motley crew than you could ever wish to meet 😊



'I knew him when he was this high'



Bouldering in Pigeon's Cave



'For those that go down to the sea.....'



Allan leading Precious Metal E1 5b ☺



Allan nearing the top of Precious Metal



Phil looking blaise following ☺

We ended up on the upper tier of Pen Trwyn in glorious sunshine and managed two routes (Precious Metal E1, 5b and It at E2, 5b) before we decided to head home after a kind of 'face-saving' two days. A good few days in great company !

## FORTHCOMING MEETS:-

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 10-11 | Yorkshire Dales - YH Meet (Adrian Dolan) |
| 16    | Thursday Walk: Aran Fawddwy (Mike Mc)    |
| 17-18 | Dent - Camping trip (Dave Gray)          |
| 24-25 | <b>HUT</b> Weekend – Welsh 3000s         |

If you are interested in any of the above meets please contact the organiser and, if you are a prospective member and don't have the contact details, please email me on [allangwydyr@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:allangwydyr@hotmail.co.uk) and I'll forward you the details.

The big one is of course, the Welsh 3000's, and we will need volunteers for the support teams. As usual we need someone at Nant Peris, Ogwen Cottage and good ol' Two Stones car park.

What has sadly been amiss the last few years is a 'girly' team or winner and so – as an incentive, would anyone of the (allegedly) fairer sex like to organise a relay team ??? We would need three teams in total (one for Snowdon, one for the Glyders and one for the Carneddau). Now, we have some good walkers in the club and I'm sure if you all put your heads together you could muster up three groups. As for the baton..... what about a bottle of champers ????? to be 'cracked' open at two stones ???