

THE GWYDYR No21 (Aug 2011)

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GWYDYR MOUNTAIN CLUB

Here we go again..... the weather has been decidedly un-summery (ok, I know there no such word but it how I feel ☺) this August but as usual we've all got out on the hill and had some good walks and climbs. Let us all pray for an Indian summer for the next few weeks eh !

I must offer my apologies right away for the content in this month's newsletter but I've missed a couple of Tuesday evenings and while Dave Gray has admirably stepped into the breach it's kind of hard to decipher the notes and I may have probably lost one as well.....

First thing I would like to mention is that we have finally re-laid a new water pipe from the cottage to the water meter at the bottom car park. The old copper pipe was badly corroded and leaked terribly, given that we are on a meter this was not a good thing but as you can see from the pictures below it has now been replaced with a plastic pipe which should last us many years. A huge thank you to Dave Cole, Ronnie Davis and Chris Harris for being there when the JCB driver turned up and dug the trench.





Job Done ☺ !!!!

Chris Harris wrote :-

The dirty deed is done and you would hardly know. Check out the first and last pictures in the attached. There were some massive boulders in the way !!!
Dave even talked the driver into taking out 2 huge boulders on the bottom "car-park". We should be able to get 4 or more cars in there now.
The driver was brilliant and could really handle the JCB.

First up for the month was Kevin McEvoy's Rhoscolyn camping trip, we stayed at the excellent (though very busy) Outdoor Alternative site a stone's throw from the beach and a ten minute walk away from the superb White Eagle pub. I was lucky to have Hollie with me on this trip and she thoroughly enjoyed everyone's company and the hideously expensive ice creams ☺.

Saturday started a tad damply however as the morning wore on the weather improved and so myself and Hollie, Carol Boothroyd, Dave Gray, Neil Metcalfe, Lindsey Foulkes, Teresa Peddie & Bethan Hines went for a walk along the coastal path to Trearrdur Bay. It was a somewhat gentle walk with many food and photo stops. Dave and Carol decided to miss out on the fleshpots (ie, cafes) of Trearrdur Bay and turned back a little before the place while the rest of us made our way to a pub (we couldn't find a cafe !) where we had a lovely cooling beer excepting Hollie who had another expensive ice cream with a 'Calpol' sauce ☺
The walk back was enlivened by one of my famous short cuts which resulted in yours truly finding a rather impressive bog. Feeling rather 'gung-ho' I led the way and fell in up to my

knees ☹ however the club chairman would never allow his followers to suffer a similar fate and so some convenient boulders and a piggy back for Hollie saw everyone across before being told of by a farmer for trespassing. We eventually found the correct and pleasingly dry path and after a rather long six hours we were back at the camp site ready for the barbecue ably prepared by Kevin and Vanda.



Neil, Bethan, Hollie & Lindsey



The White Arches



Hollie's Ice Cream !



The Gazebo dwellers !!



Carol, Vanda & Kevin



Bethan, Fiona & Hollie

Needless to say an impressive amount of alcohol was consumed as well as lots of meaty things and some lovely cakes and cheesecakes. Fiona Langton joined us late on rather over-attired shall we say in a little black dress (she'd come straight from work !)

The next day dawned beautifully and so the majority of us decided to head over to South Stack and Holyhead Mountain. After a look see into Ellen's Tower we decided to take advantage of the cafe for a second breakfast before climbing Holyhead Mountain and coming down via the hut circles and back to the car. It was a lovely day and, I know she's my daughter - but forgive me, a huge well done to Hollie for completing both walks. If any of you are ever annoyed at me for walking too fast then wait till you see my daughter as she's got even longer legs ☺



The summit of Holyhead Mountain



This is definitely the last time I will do this !



One of the Hut Circles



Such beautiful colours ☺

The same weekend we were in Rhoscolyn, Teresa Peddie took time out to assist in the 'Oggy 8' and she kindly wrote the following :-

On Saturday 6th August, I helped the OVMRO with their major fundraising challenge, the Oggie 8. As I'm sure you all know, this is an annual event where teams attempt the daunting challenge of walking the 8 peaks in Ogwen Valley, Llewelyn, Yr Elen, Daffydd, Pen, Y Garn, the Glyders and Tryfan, and raising money for the MR in doing so.

As most know, I had an accident on YGarn in May while training for the event, and had to be rescued off in appalling weather by the MR team. They were amazing, friendly, helpful, professional, caring, what a wonderful group of people.

As I hadn't regained fitness in time to compete in the challenge, I wanted to help out in some small way in return for their help, so I volunteered to marshall for them on the event, and so spent Saturday morning on top of Pen y Ole Wen checking the competitors through, and saw 24 teams complete the challenge.

OVMRO is totally dependant upon charitable donations and fundraising.

We are lucky to have them, and they will be there for all of us should we ever be in the situation where we need them, 24hrs a day, every single day, whatever the weather or situation. And we never know when that might be, as I found out on that day back in May! If any one is in a position to show their appreciation for this amazing service, we can donate on line via their website. The Website is also a great place to find out more about the team and the fantastic service they provide. www.ogwen-rescue.org.uk



On the Saturday of the 13th August Fiona Langton and I snatched a short walk on Kinder Scout. After the obligatory and essential cafe stop we headed up Grindsbrook Clough (with another short cut !) to make our way along the edge of the moor through the eerie Woolpacks to Kinder Low. Then we made our way over to the steep descent of Jacob's Ladder and back to Edale and the Nag's Head. I love Edale and will arrange a camping weekend there for next year so keep an eye out on next year's meets list !

Andy Chapman was out climbing with Peter Vaughan at Tremadog and while I'm not sure what routes were climbed Andy had a close shave and was hit on the head by a dislodged rock and was slightly concussed. Fortunately, Andy being a sensible chap he had a helmet on

and the consequences without would not be worth thinking about ! Always wear your helmet people 😊 Andy has also been camping and climbing on Lliwedd this month as well.

On Wednesday the 17th August, while staying at the cottage with my sister and family, I took my nephew and brother in law up Snowdon and Carnedd Ugain in glorious weather. Sam is only ten and hardly seemed tired by the trip. You know what they say about youth being wasted on the young well that's how I felt Wednesday evening 😊

Mike McEneaney had his Thursday walk from Aber Falls to Drum and while I am unsure who went it was apparently a rather good walk where they all managed to stay dry which was impressive given the wet weather we experienced in the mountains that day.

New members, Teresa Peddie and Bethan Hines had their first taste of wild camping this week as well and Teresa has kindly written the following excellent little titbit.....

Bethan Hines and Teresa Peddie took advantage of a couple of the few dry days in August and decided to embark on their first Wild Camp!

Being typical girls, our minimal camping gear consisted of everything *except* the kitchen sink and with 2 decanted bottles of cava on board, our rucksacks ended up bigger and heavier than ourselves!

We staggered up the steps by the waterfall to reach Llyn Bochlywd shortly before nightfall, only to find that our chosen spot to pitch the tent was already taken! After clambering around in the heather and berrybil, with darkness drawing in fast, we managed to find a poor second best option on what at first glance looked like a very slight slope and a carpet of berrybil. (We later found out that a slight slope is never slight when you're trying to sleep on it, and berry bil is not very comfortable if you can't flatten it, when Beth ended up spending half the night sliding down and curled up at the bottom of the tent!)

It was a beautiful clear crisp night, what an awesome experience sitting in total peace and solitude looking up at the stars, and watching the space station shooting across the sky at 10.30, and the moon rising from behind the Glyders a bit later.

Next day, up bright and early, porridge and berrybils for breakfast, and coffee with water from the lake.

We went up Gribin ridge, and scrambled up the ridge edge, with some exposure:-o, to the top of Glyder Fawr, with breathtaking views of the clouds rising up from the valley floor. We topped off our scramble with a scramble over the top of the Castle, down onto Glyder Fach, with a couple of compulsory shots on the Cantilever stone.

By this time the mist from the valleys was curling over the tops, so we decided to take the quickest route back down to Bwlch Tryfan down the

scree slope at the side of bristly ridge, which was a bit of adventure as the mist closed in.

We reached Llyn Bochlywd as the rain began, and had great fun trying to find the tent again in the clouds, one minute we could see it the next it was gone!! We beat a hasty and very very wet retreat back down to Ogwen, 2 sodden but very happy and buzzin Wild Girls!



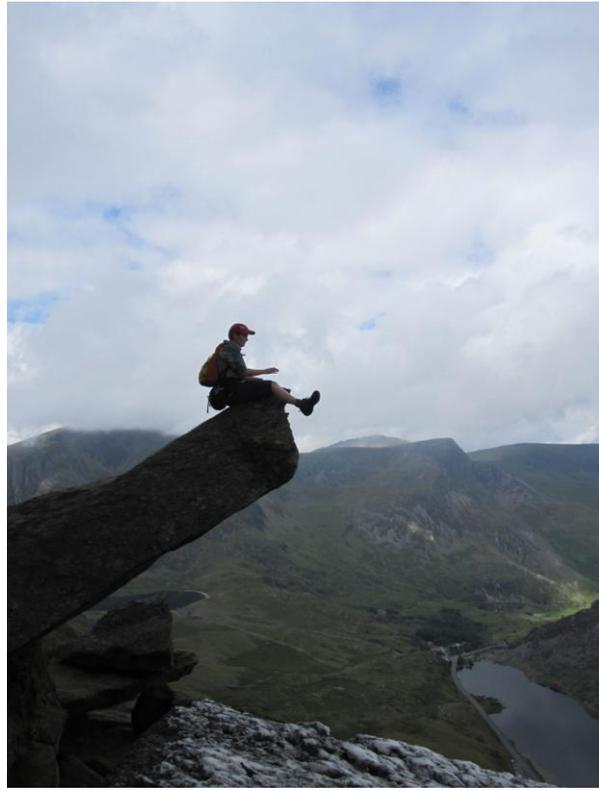
The Following weekend saw Dave Gray, Helen Avison, Carol Boothroyd and John Driver walking in the southern Clywdian range. Mike and Brian Gilbert with Helen were walking in Cornwall and were joined by Hugh Nettleton at one point.

Neil Metcalfe, Teresa Peddie & Bethan Hines were out again buying rock boots in anticipation of their first proper rock climb. They did attempt a scramble on the East Ridge of Y Garn but the weather was foul hence the shopping trip. The following day Neil took Teresa on Holyhead Mountain to practice some top roping. This same weekend Adrian made it up Snowdon via the Watkin Path.

Melinda Kinsman has also been out at the Chapel recently and with Helen Avison they managed the North Ridge of Tryfan – a delightful scramble !



Melinda & Helen on N. Ridge of Tryfan



Melinda on the Cannon ☺

Melinda has also been climbing with Andy Chapman (who is going back to Nepal on the 7th October btw !) and he's let me have the following brief note :-

Zig-Zag VD, Direct Route HS, Holly Tree Buttress VD and Sheep Pen Direct VS on Creigiau Llynnau Mymbyr, the small crag near Plas y Brenin.

Hawk Nest Arete VS, Needle Eye Climb VD and all but last pitch of Direct Route HS on Glyder Fach main cliff.

Idwal slabs area ; Pocket Wall S, Central Route HS and Javelin Buttress VS, I first climbed this in September 1988 with [Pete] Cress and I can still hear him shouting up that it was jolly difficult.... Melinda lead Arete Climb VD on the Continuation Wall

On the bank Holiday weekend Neil Metcalfe, Teresa Peddie and I snook away early from our 'normal' lives and snatched a great climb on the Milestone Buttress in Ogwen. It was Teresa first multi pitch route and was despatched in fine style with much ooohhhing and aahhhhhing such was her clear enjoyment. The weather was brilliant and the couple of hours we spent here allowed us to visit the Tyn Y Coed at a respectable hour for the obligatory 'off the hill'.



Teresa & Neil on Rowan Route



S shafts of sunlight beam down on Llyn Ogwen

We were joined later that evening by Andy Odger and on the Saturday morning Andy's three friends and Bethan Hines. And so there were seven of us and where to go ?? The weather had taken a turn for the worse and so over breakfast in a surprisingly good cafe in Bethesda we hatched a plan to visit Rhoscolyn on Anglesea.

Walking from the car park by the church the skies were an ominous grey and the seas displayed a rather exciting swell which could make the descent to Symphony Crack slightly interesting. As we geared up the first few spots of rain began to fall and within seconds we had a pretty substantial shower to deal with which soaked the rock as well as us lot. Ever the optimist I carried on while the others cast a look of concern over at me – I ignored them and went down to the start 😊

In the end the sun came out and within an hour we were all baking hot under clear blue skies while the mountains remained clad in mist and rain all day. We all made at least one ascent of the brilliant Symphony Crack with the waves crashing onto the rocks below adding an extra spice to the atmosphere though we were well out of their reach. For most of the group it was either their first ever climb or they had only done one or two before so a good effort all round. I finished the day off with Toccata Crack and Hi-Jack two nice little climbs before we all headed back to the Chapel and a good night in the Bryn Tyrch celebrating Andy Odger's birthday



Bethan on the belay ledge



Bethan on Symphony Crack



Teresa smiling her way up 😊



And Neil too 😊



Teresa still smiling, reckon she's enjoying this !



Andy and one of his pressies 😊

The following morning we were all paying for our sins the previous evening with most of us sporting rather impressive hangovers however a good breakfast in the Lakeside Cafe near Blaenau Ffestiniog saw some life return and Andy and I took three near novices up the classic Kirkus Climb Direct in the Moelwyns. The weather was overcast though the showers kept away enabling the climb to be despatched in good style and time by all concerned 😊



Lesley on Kirkus Climb Direct



Kerry nearing the top 😊



Clogwyn Yr Oen



Kerry & Andy at the top

Come Monday morning we were all pretty worn out and so only Phil Earl, who had come out especially, was able to go climbing. We went to the newly developed crags of Penamnen Head (the cliffs beneath the old 70 degrees hotel) where we managed five routes and one particularly annoying wasp sting for your chairman ☹ before heading over to the busy Castle Inn Quarry for a further three climbs. All in all a good day and as a bonus we stayed dry all day ☺



Phil Earl on Intruder F5+

Chris Harris was also busy this month walking from the Chapel back to the Wirral and he has written the following should anyone wish to repeat the walk

Capel Curig to Wirral on foot

The route – in slime green



About a year ago I asked if anyone had walked from the Chapel to Wirral of vice-versa, the answer was “no”. So I thought “why not?”. Looking at the maps, I understood why not, the paths go the wrong way! After many hours I came up with a route of about 50 miles with less than 20 miles on tarmac and what tarmac there was would be on mostly quite country lanes. After weeks of waiting for the right weather I decided to just go for it as on the 11th/12th August as there was a following wind so the rain would not be in my face. The decision was to get the train out to Betws-y-Coed on the Wednesday afternoon, stop at the hut and start early Thursday morning.

A painful phone call the Arriva Wales headquarters in India (try explaining Betws-y-Coed to someone one the sub-continent) confirmed that it was no cheaper booking in advance so I paid on the day. On the day the train journey went OK I even had the company of two gentlemen supping Carlsberg Special Brew at Shotton and we whiled away an hour discussing the problems of the world. Riding around the coast is not the prettiest of routes but the journey up the Conwy estuary makes up for the early section. Getting off the train I walked to the bus stop, jumped on the Sherpa bus (only £1) which dropped me at the end of the lane by the bridge and strolled down to the hut in the pouring rain.

Next day I awoke at 5 am and set out at 0605. The cold easterly had swung south west and the air was really warm and it was raining. The stream at the side of the hut was raging; this did not bode well for the boggy Denbigh Moor section. The path down the river to Betwys was flooded in many places and Swallow Falls were massive. I slipped and splashed my way to Betws in record time. Climbing up to Capel Garmon past the kennels at Pant-y-Pwyll about 10 dogs launched themselves at me when someone opened the door to the kennels. One of them tried to bite my leg and succeeded in ripping my waterproof leggings. I mentioned this in no uncertain terms to the woman who by then had appeared. "I'm very sorry, we don't expect walkers this early" was her defence. "It's a track and a public right of way, only half an hour walk from Betwys-y-Coed !!" I said "it's quarter to eight and since when has there been a time limit on public foot paths!" Anyway realising I was losing precious time I told her I would put a warning on the web so that other people would not have the same problem. In fact I have written to the Welsh Tourist board. At Capel Garmon I found the pub there is up for sale – "offers over £200,000. I hope it finds a buyer that will keep it open.

Climbing to Nebo then up and on to Denbigh Moors, the bit I was dreading, the drizzle intensified and the mist rolled across the hilltops. I followed the track to the point at which I planned to leave it and go "off-piste". My luck was in, there was a broad path, but not surprisingly it soon petered out and I followed the compass heading due East-ish. The tussocks were knee high, losing height meant the inevitable bogs and shoulder height reeds – actually a lot higher when I fell over, which I did too frequently partly due to my trying to maintain a fast pace. I came to a stream about 2ft wide, trickling through the grass. Extending my poles so I could vault across, I plunged one in only for it to disappear up to my hand – how deep was that trickle? I found a solid patch and leap across hoping that the many pools weren't equally deep. With all the dodging and stumbling, whenever I checked my compass I seemed to be about 90degrees out. First past Llyn Alwen then Llyn Aled then on to the bit I'd reckied. This shows a bridle way on the map but is masses of knee high heather and 6ft reeds. 3hours and 8 miles later I staggered off the moors with legs like jelly and headed down the lane to the A543 North of Lyn Brenig. About a mile of road then back on tracks and bridleways to Nantglyn. About a mile from Nantglyn I noticed more and more derelict cars alongside the track and approached an equally rundown farm with windows black with dirt. Like the cars, I don't think it had seen any maintenance since the eighties. The path seemed to go through the farm yard so I backtracked to make sure I'd got it right. This of course started some dogs barking and inevitably the door opened and a male person probably in his thirties staggered towards me all toothless and bedraggled. All I could hear in my head was Duelling Banjos. "Hello, I'm looking for the path to Nantglyn" I said. He pointed in the direction I first decided on and strung together a few unintelligible words (Welsh?), the only word I caught was Nantglyn so I quickly headed off in the suggested direction.

The next couple of miles from Nantglyn were on bridleways and good paths, or that's what the map implied. The trees hadn't been trimmed since Offa was a lad. An NVQ in Limbo Dancing would have been better than any navigation qualification. Scratched and battered I then decided to risk a shorter route through the grounds of Llewesog Hall. Unfortunately about half a mile into beautiful parkland it looked like I would have to walk through someone's garden. Not surprisingly a woman appeared as I walked past the house. "I hope I'm not on private land" I said. "I'm not sure, it is a private estate though" came the reply. She seemed quite nice and not too upset so I asked her to

top up my water bottle, presumably she was on holiday. 5 miles later I arrived at the Golden Lion at Llangyhalaf for my overnight stop. After a swift pint I was shown my room. The room was excellent and there was a bath to soak in and warm my bones. I dined on garlic mushrooms and a massive, delicious rump steak (£9.95) accompanied by a couple of Tatton Blondes – it's a beer, honestly. Having overdone the food the night before, breakfast was just fresh fruit, cereal, full Welsh, toast and marmalade washed down by orange juice and coffee. I really do recommend the pub for food and accommodation, there is also a basic campsite at the back.

Second day. Never has the path up Moel Famau seemed so steep. The legs were aching, the rain was raining but I was soon over the top and heading for Cilcain where I intended to buy a sandwich for lunch at the Post office. No sandwiches - so I made do with a packet of choc chip cookies. I followed the river to Rydymwyn and started the climb to Soughton. The farmers had been playing hide-the-path so I strayed a little and ended up having to climb a fence. I dropped down the other side into a 6ft deep ditch of brambles and nettles. Climbing up the vertical bank needed all limbs so I ended up rather muddy with a scratched face. South of the A55 at Northop Hall the path went through a farm. I followed the arrows and ended up by the farm house. The farmer (friendly) told me the path goes through the cow shed and round the concrete silage pit! Crossing the A55 needs no description, it's just very difficult. Walking through Wepre park I stopped at the café for a plate of the worst chips I've ever had. I should have waited until I got to Shotton, I must have passed 4 chip shops in 200yards. Over Harwarden Railway Bridge, through the Deeside Industrial Estate, I was soon on the marshes skirting the firing range. At this point Janet rang to ask when I wanted picking up. For some reason I decided not to finish at the Harp but carry on to the Boathouse at Parkgate – this meant I had to walk past 4 pubs to get that well earned pint. The young barman asked the question "walked far?" – so I told him briefly and he told me about his favourite walk from Meols to Hoylake, stopping at every pub!

It's not a bad walk the main problem is that the paths are rarely walked and either concealed by farmers or overgrown. I think this is a one-off for me.

Statistics:

Day 1;	32.3 mls -	7100ft ascent	- 12 hours 25 mins
Day 2:	23.4 mls-	4000 ft ascent	- 9hrs 5 mins
Total	55.7 mls-	11,100 ft ascent	

That's a good effort Chris, nice one 😊

Well that seems to be all I have for this month but apologies to anyone whose exploits I have missed out and if you let me know I will add them into next month's newsletter which should be interesting as I should get something from the female members of the club who have taken over the Chapel this weekend for a 'girly weekend' :-O

FORTHCOMING MEETS:-

SEPTEMBER 2011	
09-10	HUT Weekend
16-17	Rhinogs Camping (Ray Baines)
24	Saturday Walk: Pennine Edges (Mark Barley)
OCTOBER 2011	
07-08	HUT Weekend
07-08	Wasdale Show (Bryan Gilbert)
15	Saturday Walk: Glyders (Keith Colwell)
21-22	Lakes Camping Barn (Dave Gray)
28-29	Cwm Cywarch Hut Meet (Ray Baines)

If any members wish to attend any of the above meets can you contact the respective organiser to arrange, many thanks.

ANDY CHAPMAN EVEREST TALK :-

Andy Chapman has kindly agreed to do a brief talk and slide show on his recent successful summit of Mount Everest. It will be on the 8th November 2011 at The Stork pub. The start time is 8.30pm. It should be well worth attending so make a note in your diary.

MISC.....

Lin Jensen has emailed the following and I thought I might as well re-produce it here in case anyone has not received it.....

FOR SALE :- Virtually brand new Asolo Powermatic 200GTX boots, size 9.5 with leather uppers and a Vibram sole. They have only had five short outings this year and are a good

solid three season boot. They cost £165 new and Lin is asking £80 ono Please email Lin if you are interested 😊



These are the boots in question – in fact Cotswolds are asking £180 for them now !!!