

THE GWYDYR NO40(DEC/JAN 2014)

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GWYDYR MOUNTAIN CLUB



Andy Chapman on Mt Vinson Summit



Andy at South Pole

Hi all, a belated Happy New Year and all that !

Andy Chapman is now back from the Antarctic after summiting Mt Vinson three times and reaching the South Pole – well done mate and I'm sure I speak for everyone in congratulating you on a magnificent achievement. Andy is now in Scotland till mid March where apparently there's loads of snow to go with the high winds.

Well the weather so far this year has been horrendous though it's good to see members have been out and about regardless. I've not been down much on a Tuesday due to work but I'm going to change all that now as I've got some sort of routine going and so future newsletters will be more like the past – apologies to all.

At New Year there was a good crowd out at the Chapel and some great walks were done but no climbing given the poor weather. Beth and I had some nice walks including one to a small island in the Afon Dwyryd estuary called Ynys Giffan. It's a lovely short walk which is dependant upon the tides so if anyone chooses to follow out steps be aware..... It's easy to get to though the walk through the initial salt marshes is more suited to wellingtons than walking boots. There is an old house on the island (complete with an AGA !) and it would have been a wonderful place to have lived, the island was abandoned in the 1960's. The views over to Portmeirion were lovely and it's possible to walk right round the island though getting to the top would prove interesting given that it's quite overgrown in places.



This picture was taken from the Portmeirion side, you walk from the other side from Talsarnau station

I copied this from the web..... “Like a brown egg half buried in the sands of the Afon Dwyrdd, Ynys Giffan is fortunate enough to command views of Portmeirion and the Irish Sea in one direction and Snowdonia (and, hey, Snowdon itself when the mists clear) in the other.

A gift from Queen Anne to Lord Harlech (hence its name, which means Anne’s Gift Island) in the early 18th century, the isle has but one residence, a stone-built cottage. It’s currently unoccupied and was, sadly, vandalised recently, but if you wish to do it up a bit and live there, do apply to the island’s owner, the 6th Baron Harlech, who I’m sure would be more than happy to lease you Ynys Giffan (under the terms of the gift he’s not allowed to sell you the island – a canny woman, Queen Anne).”

Dave Gray has ably stood in for me of late on the Tuesday night’s and let me know what everyone else has been doing – thanks Dave ☺

This is from the beginning of January and I assume cover’s New Year at the Chapel.

1. At the Chapel people braved the weather and amongst the things done were Yr Aran, Arenig Fawr, Moel Siabod and low level walks in the Gwydyr Forest.
2. I did a few day trips when the weather was good, notably Cader Fronwen, Moel Fferna, and Moel Famau with Milly last week. Andy Odger has done Moel Famau twice over the last few days!
3. Mike and Lin Gavin had a fine ski-ing trip in Andorra; as did Helen and Glen based in France.

The next meet up was Burn’s Night at the Chapel and Geoff Brierley has kindly provided the following :-

The Burns weekend was a fantastic evening with lots of members present enjoying the evening, if not the weather!

The weekend was another in a similar line of threatening high winds, although several members got out on the hill nevertheless.

I gave Chris Harris, Teresa and Bryn a lift to Nant Peris to start them on their chosen route up Y Garn.

I continued round the other side of Elidyr Fawr and parked up just outside Deiniolen before ascending Carnedd y Filiast, Mynedd Perfedd, Elidyr Fawr and Elidyr Fach.

The promised winds built up, thrashing their way through any gaps that were offered up, and making my progress down from the summit of Elidyr Fawr somewhat interesting!

The rest of my day was spent in the kitchen preparing the evening's dinner, slightly less glamorous than it might sound after the fourth (large) bag of potatoes was peeled.

Eventually, with help from Paula and Helen B things got moving and a great dinner was organised, along with the necessary scotch selection and several bottles of wine.

Thanks to Helen and Bryan who organised a super quiz and to everyone who attended, not least Pete Mann with his ceremonial addressing of the Haggis!



Thanks for that Geoff ☺

Dave Gray sent me the following too:

1. Saturday 11th January. 13 of us plus Lola the dog did a walk on Cannock Chase which is a new area for the Club, in bright sunny weather. I led the party in circles at the beginning but with help from Pete and Chris we navigated successfully thereafter! It's a strange area, a bit like a wilder Delamere Forest, crossed with a larger Thurstaston but without the rocks. Very varied, open heath, green river valleys, old native woods and new pine plantations. It seems to effortlessly absorb a large number of people judging by the cars in the car park. We visited the German war cemetery, very dignified and moving, there's also historical remains of the old firing ranges on the heath. It's worth a good 2 or 3 hours look if you're passing on the nearby M6. We got vast views to the east to the Peak District and midlands plain.

2. Reports on Tuesday last 21/1. Geoff, Neil, Teresa and Bryn, Lindsey and her daughter Laura were out at the Chapel, as were Kev and Andy Odger. Things done included Foel Fras, Ro Wen and the walk to Dolwydelan. They had very high winds. On Monday 20th me, Christine, Milly and Nuala (plus Mab the dog!) met up for a great day out on the Berwyn from Llandrillo, we did Cader Bronwen, Cader Berwyn, Craig Berwyn and Moel Sych and had fine summit views, we had bright weather with clouds playing on the tops.

Like I say the weather has been truly awful so far this year and the next thing I have is Dave Gray's email from the beginning of February – thanks again Dave.....

1. Pete's meet in Shropshire went really well, we had 13 people on the trip, and did a circuit including the Ragleth-Caer Caradoc ridge. 10 miles and 3,000 feet plus of ascent in weather conditions that ranged from bright sunshine to driving snow. We had some huge atmospheric views of all the Shropshire hills and south into Herefordshire.

2. Margaret's being ski-ing in Andorra

3. Doug and Gail have been kayaking on the Tees/Greta and Wear rivers.

Beth and I had a good weekend at the beginning of the month when we had a mighty effort getting up Moel Famau in really strong winds. In fact on the summit I had to crawl on all fours ! Well they do say you have see a mountain in all its moods to truly appreciate it, thankfully on the second part of the walk we dropped down out of the wind. The following day we went up the Wrekin (lovely with great views but way too busy) and found some great muddy paths.....

We retreated to Ironbridge for coffee and scone's which made a nice change and the River Severn was really high covering the foot of the bridge

Miscellaneous

Jim Metcalfe has sent me the following which may be of interest.....

It was torrential rain and howling gales outside as I set off on News Year Day from Keswick at 10.00am following a route via Ashness Bridge, Dock Tarn, Wythburn, Hevellyn, Thirlspot for a cup of tea and then to Greathow Wood where I decided not to take the 555 to Keswick but continue on foot with a blister or two, arriving back at my start at 5.00pm.

You might by now be a little sceptical as this trip sounds a little fishy sceptical and you would be right.

I had in fact not left the comfort of my sofa in Wallasey but I had been introduced by a board game geek friend to 'Backpacks and Blisters', a board game based on the northern Lakes for armchair walkers which I recommend.

If anyone wants more details then the following links will help.

Have fun!

<http://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/3100/backpacks-and-blisters>

<http://cliftonroadgames.co.uk/products/ragnar-brothers.html>

Climbing walls

Much as I hate these places, even though I'm going later after I've typed this newsletter, a big thank you to David L J for sorting the following :-

Both Awesome Walls in Liverpool and the new climbing wall at Queensferry have agreed to give Gwydyr Club members their club discount rate.

This means that the standard entry fee for our members is reduced from £8 to £7. At Queensferry there is a one-off lifetime payment of £10 (admin fee, I am told). The first time that you go, please take your membership card to verify GMC membership.

The wall at Queensferry (well it's in Mancot actually) is quite good though on first arrival you have to pay a £10.00 membership fee ☹️. It's not as high as Awesome walls but steeper in places and the grades seem a bit harsh on first acquaintance but the coffee is nicer than Awesome walls 😊

A trip with a difference.....

Doug Florence has sent the following around but if you haven't received it and fancy going please contact him. I've been down some of the mines in this area and they are impressive 😊

Would GMC fancy a trip down a slate mine near Blaneau? See <http://www.go-below.co.uk/>

Expensive at £50 (or £60 "extreme" version) (Maybe some group discount) but a unique full day. Gail and I would be interested.

Anyone interested respond to me by email? (Note; Prospective members contact via DLJ)

We would need Min 10 Max 30 Persons to get a group discount. If we could get about 15 (to allow for a few drop outs) who say they would definitely be interested we could start to look for a suitable date.

Standard or Extreme trip preferred? G&I would go extreme by preference.

Annual Dinner

For those who have not seen Geoff's email over the Annual Dinner this year I've copied it below. Please try to go and make this a great club event again 😊

Hi everyone, as some of you will know the Annual Dinner will soon be here.

For those members who may not have been to this event it's one of the linchpins of the GMC year when members get together for a weekend, a day, or just a night to catch up, have a superb 3 course meal in the Tyn y Coed and even enjoy some on the Hill fun.

It would be great to see you there!

Several members have already committed to coming along and now is the time to let me know if you are.

Hew, Angela, Brenda and I are organising the dinner. Dave G is taking payment and accepting bookings for the Chapel bunks on a first paid basis.

The cost is £28 per person. This is for a 3 course meal and a folk band (who have received rave GMC reviews!) plus a photo competition, raffle, not to mention the first Welsh 3000's recce for those interested in taking part in

the summer but not 100% sure of the route. We will also be celebrating a certain members birthday with Champagne on Siabod.

So if you're interested please let me know and what your dinner choices will be, and let Dave Gray have your payment, which will also secure a bunk in the chapel, if you need one - this will be on a first come first served basis.

You can pay by direct bank transfer to: Barclays Bank, Account name Gwydyr Mountain Club, Sort Code 20-29-50 account number 90682594. Please let Dave know if you choose to do this.

The dinner choices are:

Starter

Home-made spicy sweet potato soup

Main

A choice of:

Shoulder of Local lamb braised in a Port and Redcurrant sauce

Or

Beef Bourguignon

Or

Homemade Feta Spinach Filo Pie

Dessert

Tyn-y-Coed Sticky Toffee pudding with Hot Toffee sauce and fresh cream

Or

Fresh fruit salad and Fresh cream

Or

Apple and Berry pie and cream

Coffee will then follow.

FORTHCOMING MEETS

February 2014	
01	Saturday Walk: Shropshire (Pete Mann) Done ☺
08	Saturday Walk Arans Circuit (Dave Gray) – Sadly cancelled ☹
21-22	Hut Weekend
March 2014	
07-08	- Borrowdale Hut Weekend (Teresa Peddie)
15	- Saturday Walk: Wirral Circular (Pete Smedley)
28-29	- Hut Weekend: 47th Annual Dinner- (Geoff Brierly et al) Welsh 3000's recce

If anyone wants to go on one of the above meets please contact the organiser or if you are a prospective member please ask David Lane Joynt to forward your details to the organiser.

Beth has kindly forwarded the following to me ☺

BMC Hill-walkers Event 7thFebruary 14

You may have seen the above event advertised on the BMC website or Facebook page. This was the first event of its kind and the aim of the day was to meet with, walk and talk with hill-walkers to see what the BMC can do to support hill-walkers as much as they do climbers. The planned format of the day was a walk from Hayfield to the Kinder downfall, followed by lunch and a session to exchange ideas and thoughts.

When initially advertised the BMC had no idea if there would be any interest at all. After two days they had a list of 35 and so the advert was removed for fear of attracting too many!!

We met at the Bowden Bridge car park, the place where the mass trespassers of 1932 met and were introduced to Scott Titt, BMC President, Dave Turnbull CEO, Carey Davies, Hill-walking Development Officer as well as representatives from The Peak Park and the Chairman of Plas Y Brenin.

Despite a reasonable forecast, it drizzled, then rained then hailed and just as we got back to the car park the sun came out, by which time we were soaked! The walk gave everyone the opportunity to chat and it was interesting to hear the passion people had for the hills and how many were volunteers helping more people get out there, particularly the young.

A decision was made to abandon the plan to go up to the downfall as it was so grim and we spent a great 3 hours slipping and sliding in the mud and paddling in bog around and above the reservoir. I am sure that someone at the BMC has a sadistic streak as we crossed, re crossed and crossed yet again, many a stream on green slimy rocks.....with Carey ever at the ready with his camera to catch on film the one that fell in!

Lunch was provided at the Royal in Hayfield and we were greeted with mulled wine and then tucked in to soup and sandwiches. By now people had made friends and it was lovely to see a group of 35 people who had (generally) never met at 10.30am, so relaxed chatting away as though they were part of the same club....I guess that's what hill-walking does, brings together a great mix of people from all different backgrounds with a common aim; getting out there, rain or shine to exercise, enjoy the scenery and nature whilst being sociable ☺

The BMC took away our thoughts from the day at the 'meeting' that followed and it would be wrong of me to include them here as I am sure there is an article soon to be published on their website or in Summit. It would be useful however to pass on any further ideas from Club members. Please email Al (allangwydyr@hotmail.co.uk) with your thoughts.

A recent survey of BMC members showed that 61% classed hill-walking as their main activity and yet 90% of these also climbed. Another survey showed that the regularity that people walk may have decreased quite substantially; why is this?

What do you think the BMC can do to support the walkers?How do they go about attracting more hill-walkers.....what do you want to see in Summit.....have you an article to contribute to Summit? Let me or Al know and I will pass it all on.

Oh and Al has asked me to let you all know that I got a BMC 'goody-bag' with a BMC white peak map, an instructional DVD and safety in the mountains book ☺ - you would have thought they'd pay my petrol as well ☺

CLIMB OUT

I came across this the other day and found it quite inspirational. It is not just about climbing and well worth a read. The outdoors can be a great medicine!! Beth

BMC news article on Climb Out Feb 2014

Climbing out of depression: Jake's story



I'm very proud to say that the BMC has supported Climb Out by releasing a news article.

For 40 years Jake McManus suffered from serious psychotic depression and has been searching for answers to his mental illness all his life. A year ago he discovered climbing and since then his depression has slowly been lifting and life has turned around for his family.

[You Can read the full article here](#)

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/climbing-out-of-depression-jakes-story>

.....and how about this?.....



.....6 Surprising Scientific Facts about Walking

<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/six-surprising-scientific-facts-about-walking>

Thanks to Beth for that, I hope to get the next newsletter out end of March so please let me know if there is anything you would like inserting.