



February 2016

This month's photo: The WBMC on the Scottish Week Feb 2015, by Graeme Stanford

Hello readers,

A quick note from the committee: members' subscriptions are now overdue - they are payable on or before 1 January. In previous years we have got into trouble with the BMC for paying them late because members were renewing their membership with us and paying us late. We simply cannot put our membership of the BMC and all the benefits that brings at risk for those who habitually pay late. This year, I'm glad to say, many more members have responded to the committee's calls, with some paying even before the subs were due and far more than previous years paying in the last few weeks - thank you so very much, this makes several of the committee members' jobs easier, something I believe is important as none of us are paid for our work! If you have not yet paid, please decide NOW whether you want to continue to be a member of the club or not - and if you do, then pay NOW. If you don't want to continue your membership, please have the good grace to communicate that fact to the committee. You see, we will soon set a deadline which will exclude people from membership if they don't pay and don't communicate.

Thanks again to all those who have already paid - your actions are very much appreciated.

Noticeboard

- 2 Welcome to new club member!
- 2 Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue appeal
- Free winter kit
- Your photos wanted!

Coming up

- 3 Scottish Week
- European Winter Week
- St Kilda
- 4 Stranded at the Hut Iris Cooksey
- 6 Away Dinner Richard Cooksey
- 7 Sport climbing trip - Croatia Graeme Stanford
- 9 Coach meets
- Saturday 6th February - Patterdale
- Sunday 13th March - Arrans

The WBMC meeting place



The Wheatsheaf
379 High Street,
West Bromwich,
B70 9QW

Join us every Thursday
night from 9.00pm in
The Wheatsheaf for a
chat and a drink.



2015 Cotswold
Discount Code:
AF-WBMC-M8



www.wbmc.org

Noticeboard

Welcome to new member!

The committee invite you to join us in welcoming new member Andrew Nock to the club.

Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue appeal

OVMRO are asking for used stamps to be collected to raise funds and Nigel Tarr has taken on the task. If you have any used stamps on your mail he'd be grateful if you could save them up and pass them to him when you get the opportunity, on the coach or in the pub. Thanks in advance.

Free winter kit

If anyone has not got 'winter kit' and needs some to try heading into the hills in wilder weather I have the items below. They are free of charge and to help with the cost of kitting yourself out. More experienced members who just need more kit need not apply but newer less experienced members who need it certainly can. Just contact me via normal methods or on grim830@virginmedia.com. Obviously this is 'first come first served'.

- 7 pairs of Grivel G10 (C1) crampons - all hardly used and look new
- 6 standard walking axes (basic) - all well used and slightly old style but perfect as a first axe.

Graeme Stanford

Oggie 8 taking a break in 2016

Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Team have made the following announcement:

After running the Oggie 8 for 8 years we have decided to take a break in 2016. We are grateful to all the

competitors who have supported the event for the last 8 years, and if there is sufficient demand we are likely to run the event again in 2017.

This obviously means you will all be spared the 'tin rattling' that normally accompanies the event (until next year of course)

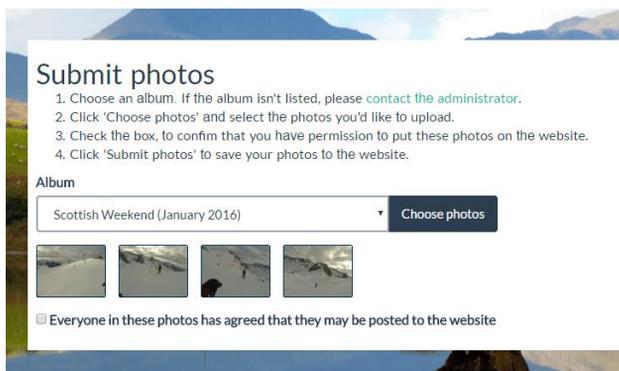
Your photos wanted!

If you take any good photos on the coach meets this year please don't hesitate to add them to the club website. Not only does it let other club members see what you've been up to, it also helps show prospective members the diverse range of activities we offer and how regularly we get out and about.

Adding photos is very simple: once you're logged in, go to the member's area (the link on the top right of every page) then click "Submit photos". Choose the correct album, choose your photos, then click "Submit photos". Done!

If you don't yet have a password for the website, email me (joe.priest@live.co.uk) and I'll sort it out.

Many thanks,
Joe



Hut donations

Members - £4.00
Guests - £7.00
(Max. two guests per member)
16 & under - £1.50

Stamped addressed envelopes are provided in the hut for payment.

To book

Phone or email Alison Whitehead:
07530644874
hut-secretary@wbmc.org

Please contact Alison *before* going to the hut.

WBMC members can purchase a hut key from Alison at a donation of £4.50

Coming up

13th – 20th February 2016

Scottish Week

The Scottish Week is just around the corner! This is a great week with great company, great walking and climbing, in a great hotel in a great location. No wonder it's a popular meet!

We're stopping at the Ben Nevis Hotel, a stone's throw away from the centre of Fort William, a great base centre for exploring the Ben and other mountains, lochs, castles, mountain bike routes, distilleries, Fort William and other attractions.



Photo from visitscotland.com

Yet again Jonathan Howells has cut a fantastic deal with the hotel - £33 per person per night, dinner, bed and breakfast if staying in a twin or double room; single supplement of £11 pppn; under 4s staying free, and 4-14 year olds half the adult price. If you fancy bagging a few Winter Munros or just chilling out in the pool or leisure centre free of charge, you will not find better value anywhere. Here's a link to the hotel website - The Ben Nevis Hotel.

Fancy staying on longer than the week, starting earlier or finishing later, or staying less than a week? No problem, just ask Jonathan!

To book, phone Jonathan on 01922 278973 (after 6pm) or email merapeak@talktalk.net

He will need a cheque, payable to West Bromwich Mountaineering Club, for one night's accommodation per person, as a (non-returnable) deposit to secure your booking - hand it to Jonathan or send it to :

37 Stafford Road,
Great Wyrley,
Walsall,
WS6 6AX.

28th February – 6th March 2016

European Winter Week

Zakopane, Poland

Zakopane is the ski capital of Poland and also an excellent base to climb in the Tatras mountains. Standing at 2503m, Rysy is the highest mountain in Poland and ideally climbed from Zakopane.

With cheap ski passes, equipment hire and instruction, this is an ideal area to learn to ski. However with a chair lift taking you up to nearly 2000m, there are still plenty of slopes to keep the more experienced skiers happy for a few days. There is also 50km of cross country pistes to enjoy and ski-mountaineering is also an option.

Accommodation, food and beer are also very reasonable so this maybe a good chance to have a cheap week away.

For more details call Andy Brown on 07870 145026 or catch him at the Wheatsheaf.

2016

St Kilda

Ian Merther is hoping to organise a trip to St Kilda in 2016. This is no ordinary day excursion, it is a week long trip of a lifetime, and does not come cheap, so I am putting out feelers to see if there would be any interest from club members.

Here's a link to give you an idea of what it's about. Have a look, and if you are interested, contact Ian. <http://clearwaterpaddling.com/trips/Tall-Ship-to-St-Kilda>

Stranded at the Hut

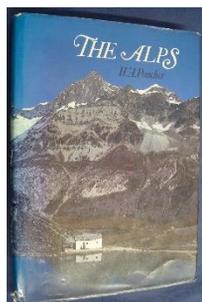
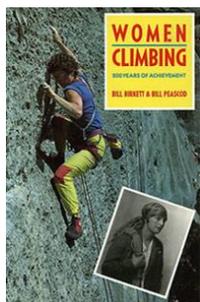
A shameless rip-off of Desert Island Discs

Words by Iris Cooksey
Pictures from amazon.co.uk

I first became interested in mountains way before I was ten. My dad took me to see a film about the Matterhorn and there was a woman in the climbing party. I was fascinated. My dad wasn't a mountain walker, but he did take me on "off piste" routes up Great Orme through the limestone escarpments and up Conway Mountain over to the Schnant Pass

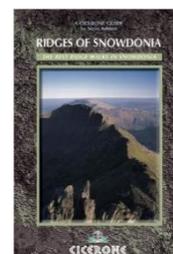
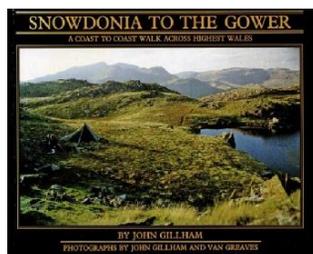
The Hut - nice place to be stranded. I have enjoyed looking through my books and deciding which eight to choose. My selection has turned out to be a mixed bag; so here goes.

1: Women Climbing (200 years of achievement) - by Bill Birkett and Bill Pleascod (A & C Black) I bought this from a second hand bookshop. It was published in 1989 and details the personalities who began climbing from the first female ascent of Mont Blanc in 1808 (Marie Paradis) to the incredible achievements of 20th century rock climbing superstars. It includes Alison Hargreaves who was the first British woman to climb the North Face of the Eiger. And after this book was published she went on to climb Everest in 1995 without oxygen or Sherpa support. Sadly she died on K2 later the same year. The book is full of good quality black and white photos of women climbers and mountains and gives details of the climbers and chronological details of their achievements in mountain ranges throughout the world.



2: The Alps - W.A. Poucher. Poucher's books of the Welsh Peaks and the Lake District were very popular with mountain walkers during the 1960's. These are photographic books - my copies are black and white, with routes outlined with white lines on the photos plus detailed route descriptions. However a close friend bought Ray and I "The Alps" as our Silver Wedding present. This is a book of wonderful colour photographs with brief descriptions. There are excellent shots of The Matterhorn, North Wall of the Eiger, The Wetterhorn and views from the Schilthorn and many other well-known peaks. These wonderful

photographs bring back strong memories of places I have been to and views I have seen. I particularly remember my 50th birthday when Ray and I took a cable car from Grund to the Mannichen and walked beneath the Tschuggen to the summit of the Lauberhorn summit and then down to Kleiner Scheidegg and under the shadow of the North Wall to the Alpignen Hut and on back to Grund where we had left our car and so back to the camp site at Lauterbrunnen - a wonderful day.

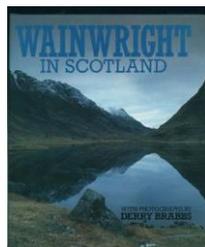
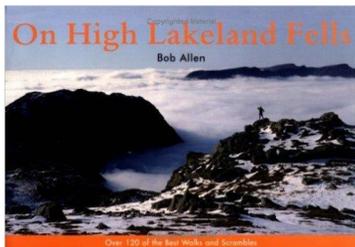


3. Snowdonia to The Gower - a Coast to Coast Walk across Highest Wales by John Gillham with photographs by the author and Van Greaves (Diadem Books) This great looking route can be commenced at Conway or Llanfairfechan and is divided into a trek of eleven days ending at Three Cliffs Bay on the Gower Peninsular. The first day traverses the Carneddau to Helyg with an alternative lower level walk from the Drum. The high level route continues over the Glyders and Snowdon, again with a lower level alternative. Through the mountain ranges and the Elan Valley to Carmarthen Fan and the Black Mountain before the descent to Three Cliffs Bay. The route descriptions and information about the landscape are detailed and informative. Photographs are many and of excellent colour quality. I must confess that I have only walked the summits of the Northern part of this route as far as Caidar Idris, but the whole would make a wonderful holiday.

4. The Ridges of Snowdonia by Steve Ashton (Cicerone Press) Staying in Wales - I particular enjoy reading this delightful book because it highlights the many ridge routes which are in Snowdonia a number of which involve grade 1 scrambles which I really enjoy (well enjoyed). The descriptions are clear and variants are given. Distances are given as are summit heights and metres of ascent. Also there are charts which show ascents and descent between peaks. (Ray drew out many of these for me when I was compiling the News Letter in the 1990's) The black and white photographs are interesting and the sketch maps clear.

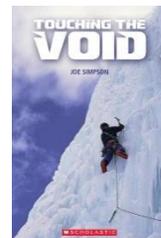
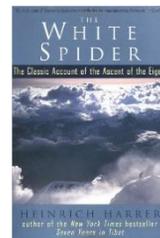
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5. *On High Lakeland Fells* by Bob Allen (Pic Publications) And so to the Lakes. This author had this splendid book published in 1987. He did go on to produce others equally as good which tied up with Wainwrights detailed routes over the fells. However this publication divides the Lakes into 13 groups, i.e. Bowfell and Crinkle Crag, Glaramara and Allen Crag. Routes in each group are listed and a star rating and degree of difficulty is given for each one. Descriptions are comprehensive and colour photographs abound plus the occasional sketch naming peaks. Jack's Rake is featured with good photographs and in the Scafell Group there is a mention of Broad Stand as the most direct way to Scafell from Mickledore and Scafell Pike. It is advised that people without rock climbing experience avoid this route. However during a Nether Wasdale Camp I and two men decided to have a look at this Broad Stand route. We got through the cleft in the rock known as "fat man's agony" and went up to the difficult corner. I knew I couldn't climb it and looked around for an alternative. It so happened that some climbers were coming down and hitched me up by my rucksack and with a push from behind from my companions I was up. My two companions also needed a hitch and a push so I didn't feel too crestfallen.



6. *Wainwright in Scotland* (with photographs by Derry Brabbs (Ted Smart) As many will recall A. Wainwright produced fell walking guides covering the Lake District with detailed descriptions and intricate sketches. However he did find time to climb in Scotland and has produced this interesting book with accounts of his visits. The photographs, by Derry Dabbs, are a joy and picture a variety of scenes and landmarks. Wainwright has contributed his wonderful sketches and plans of the various areas. There are eight of the Black Cuillin Ridge including the Basteir Tooth.

7. *The White Spider* by Heinrich Harrer – translated by High Merrick (Paladin Grafton Books) This account of the early attempts and successes on the North Face of the Eiger is an excellent translation. The actual White Spider is a snow field near the summit which never completely thaws and is always visible from below (will global warming affect this or has it already?) The early mountaineers who attempted this climb were very badly equipped and one group wore two overcoats each for protection. Fatalities occurred during the early attempts one climber falling from the summit snow field. The first successful attempt in 1938 by Anderl Heckmair, Ludwig Vor, Fritz Hasparek and Heinrich Harrer was extremely traumatic for the climbers. This book clearly shows the routes attempted and is indeed extremely interesting and informative to read.



8. *Touching the Void* by Joe Simpson. This is a wonderful factual account of how Joe survived a fall into a crevasse in the Andes after his climbing partner had to cut the rope in order to save himself rather than, as he thought, both he and Joe perish. One feels that one is actually on this climb and with Joe throughout his ordeal. Like many I have enjoyed the book, seen the amazing film and attended lectures by Joe and also by the guy who had to make the decision to cut the rope.

Well that is all I can take, but these publications will keep me out of mischief for some considerable time. Among the good days I recall are – on an Ogwen Winter coach meet ascending Y Garn in firm snow (kicking steps) photo call on the summit and then descending via the side of the Devil's Kitchen – snow sometimes up to arm pits and the ring of ice hammers from the adjacent climbers – a wonderful sunny day with such good conditions. Also there are highlights of the Tour of Mont Blanc completed in clockwise direction (opposite to the guide) and going over the higher cols – Fenetre and Col of Fours.

WBMC Annual Away Dinner

Friday 18th-Sunday 20th March 2016

By Richard Cooksey



Following very positive feedback from this year's event we are returning to Briery Wood with a similar package. To get the prices we have agreed deposits must be paid in November 2015 and so please book ASAP.

Moments from the eastern shores of Lake Windermere and set in seven acres of beautiful secluded gardens and woodland lies Briery Wood Country House Hotel. Briery Wood was built at the end of the 19th century and housed the Earl of Lonsdale's Estates main gardener who developed the stunning grounds that we still enjoy today.



Photo from TripAdvisor

Briery Wood is within easy reach of the popular villages of Ambleside, Bowness and Windermere, so it's a great base for exploring the Lake District. Walking options directly from the hotel include Wansfell, Baystones and Troutbeck. Being close to the A591 also opens up many other walking options and the nearby Brockhole, The Lake District Visitor Centre also offers a wide variety of options for all ages including taking a boat on Windermere giving other options including different walks.

As in previous years the weekend therefore offers the opportunity to climb different peaks that you would not be able to do on coach meets.

We have a similar deal to previous years – Bed and Breakfast on the Friday night; Dinner, Bed and Breakfast on the Saturday night.

- The price is £125 plus disco contribution (see below) per adult for the weekend in a twin or double room.
- The hotel has 43 twin or double rooms including some which can also accommodate families. Children in a room with adults would be charged £20 per night Bed and Breakfast and £15 for a half portion of the Saturday meal or £7.50 for a children's meal.
- Dinner only price £30 plus share of the disco cost.
- The hotel will give 2 single rooms for £125 for the weekend and 3 single rooms for £145 for the weekend. Any further singles would be £195 for the weekend. If people could share where possible that would allow the maximum amount of people to go.

We have to pay for the disco ourselves and this cost would just be divided between everyone who attends the meal.

Here's a link to their brochure:

lakedistrictcountryhotels.co.uk/briery-wood-hotel
and it has a rating of 4.5 out of 5 on Trip Advisor:
tripadvisor.co.uk/Hotel_Review-g186330-d574824

Thanks for everyone who paid deposits to guarantee sole usage of the hotel and the weekend deal. Only two rooms left – please contact Richard Cooksey on 07950 087911.

Booking form

Send the following booking form with a deposit cheque to: Richard Cooksey, 24 Lydford Road, Bloxwich, Walsall, West Midlands, WS3 3NT.

Party leader's name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Type of room: single / twin / double / family

Any special requests (e.g. vegetarian meals):

Guest Names	Adult/Child	£
Total		

Sport climbing trip - Croatia

Saturday 10th – Saturday 17th September 2016

By Graeme Stanford



A trip has been organised to visit the picturesque Croatian town of Rovinj. The town, known as 'little Venice' is situated on the Istrian peninsula opposite Venice on the Adriatic. It's just south of Porec. Rovinj was part of Austria until 1918 when it became part of Italy. In 1947 it was ceded to Croatia as part of Yugoslavia. It's a beautiful town and more information can be found at www.rovinj.co (click on the union flag symbol.)



The purpose of the trip is partly holiday and partly sport climbing. There is an old quarry a short walk from the edge of town which now has 109 bolted (single pitch) sport routes on it. They range from, french grade, 4c to 7c+. There are another two climbing locations within a short drive (car hire in the town is very reasonable and local buses are good quality and cheap. Rovinj to Porec, which passes the other climbs is 32HRK which equates to £3.15) which boast another 187 routes, up to 8c+ with a couple of multi pitch routes.

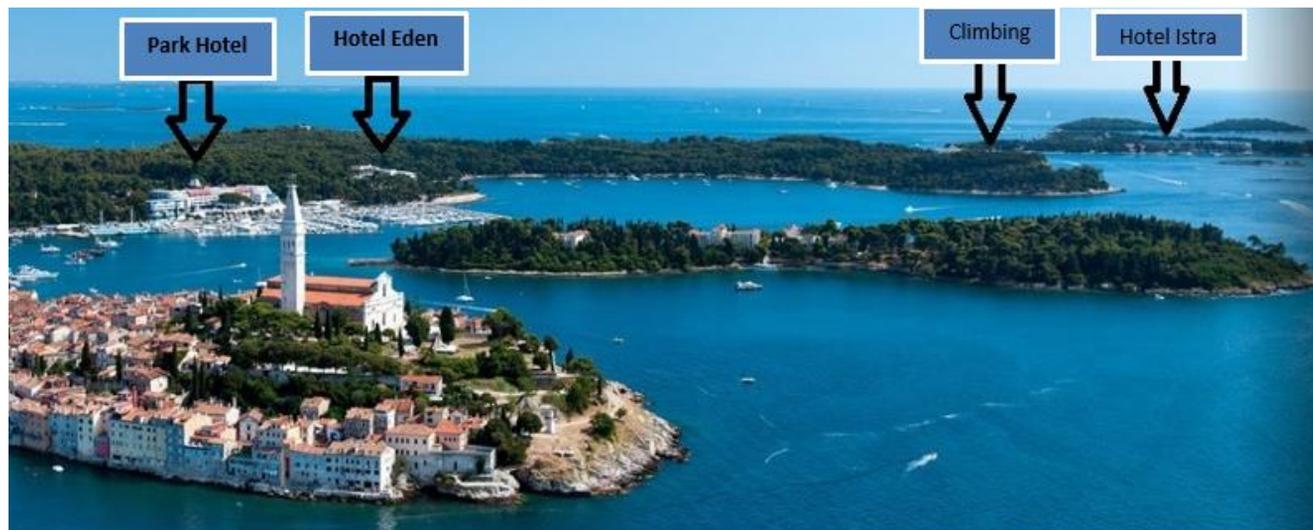
Info on the climbing can be found at: climb-europe.com/RockClimbingCroatia/Istria.htm for images of the climbing available simply google climbing in Rovinj and click on 'images'.

On a previous visit I made contact with one of the local climbers who has offered to meet us and provide any information we may require about the climbing there. The bolts and safety were all replaced in May last year and are safe and in good condition. I visited the crags myself in May and it's a beautiful spot. It's on the coast, in the sun, with a short scramble down to the rocks where you can just dive straight into the sea. The quarry is in a national park and there is a small bar in the park a short stroll away (the bar also boasts a pier which you can also just dive off straight into the sea.)

Some members (9 so far) have already booked accommodation via www.thomson.co.uk there is only limited space left in the hotel we've booked into but there is plenty more in and around the town.

We've booked 7 nights in The Park Hotel (on the marina half a mile from the climbs) and it cost £602 per person, half board including flights and transfers. The flight is from Birmingham, is two hours long, and flies to Pula which is a 45 minute coach trip from Rovinj. Pula is a small provincial airport so there are rarely any delays there.

Continued overleaf...





Other hotels with Thomson include:

Hotel Istra

£657 pp (half board with free booze with your main meal) this hotel is on an island 15 minutes off the coast but the boat goes every hour on the hour til the early hours. It drops off just up the road from the park hotel. I can thoroughly recommend this hotel. Stayed for two weeks last year and it's the most peaceful holiday I've ever had.

Hotel Eden

£740pp (half board) this hotel is even closer to the climbs but is a little more expensive. You get what you pay for though as it's beautiful and as well as the ubiquitous pool there is a private beach.

There is obviously the usual selection of B&B and villa accommodation in Rovinj if you fancy that. Thomas Cook go to the hotel Monte Mulini in Rovinj and it's a lovely place but it's 5 star and £1428pp!

Go to the Rovinj website and have a browse. Having been there twice I can assure you it's not hype. The place really is as beautiful as the photographer makes it look. The climbing is good and in an amazing location. What could possibly go wrong? Join us for some fun in the sun!

Any questions please ask. I'm on 07846 281878

Graeme Stanford

Coach Meet – Patterdale

Saturday 6th February

Depart

07:00 – West Brom. Edward St Car Park (B70 8HU)

07:20 – Service road just off M54 Junct. 2 island

Drop off

Kirkstone Pass (401081)

Patterdale (391161)

Glenridding (386189)

Pick up

Glenridding (386189)

Patterdale (391161)

Kirkstone Pass (401081)

Required maps

OS. 1:25000 Outdoor Leisure Maps Nos. 5 & 7
(The English Lakes NE & SE)



Photo by Ericoides on Wikipedia

Fares

Members £20.00

Guests £22.00

Under 16's and full-time students – £8.00

To book ring Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729

£5.00 pp cancellation charges apply: you must cancel at least 7 days in advance.

Suggested routes

Route 1 (14km - 9miles)

Try climbing north-west from Kirkstone Pass to Red Screes. Continue north-west, descend to Scandale Pass and go past Little Hart Crag and onto Dove Crag. From here follow the ridge over Hart Crag and onto Fairfield. Leave the summit northwards and descend via Cofa Pike and St Sunday Crag down into Patterdale and a short walk into Glenridding and the coach.

Route 2 (15km – 9.5 miles)

Staying east of the Kirkstone Pass, go via St Ravens Edge to Stony Cove Pile. Descend to Threshthwaite Mouth and ascend Thornthwaite Crag then High Street. Go north to the Knott and descend past Angle Tarn into Patterdale and a short walk into Glenridding and the coach.

Route 3 (14km - 9miles)

For Patterdale to St Sunday Crag then onto Helvellyn, descend Striding Edge and then over Birks down into Glenridding.

Route 3 (~9km – 5.6miles)

For a not so high route: Patterdale Common, possibly taking in Place Fell and/or High Dodd. If fit enough you could get to Sandwich Bay, returning via Boredale or the path that skirts Ullswater. Approx. 9km, depending on route taken.

Coach Rule 7 applies: “Do not go above the snowline without ice-axe and crampons.” Please stow your ice-axes and crampons in the side compartment of the coach. Don't leave them in the boot where they could damage rucksacks.

To book on the coach please ring Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729

Coach Meet – Arrans

Sunday 13th March

Depart

07:00 – West Brom. Edward St Car Park (B70 8HU)

07:20 – Service road just off M54 Junct. 2 island

Drop off

Llanuwchllyn 880299 (Arran Traverse Only)

Patterdale (391161)

Car Park on A470 (Top of Dinas Mamddy Hill)

Please note that the drop off at the top of Dinas Maddwy Hill is several road miles from the hill.

Please enquire with Nigel for any other drop offs between Bala amd Dinas Mawddy

Pick up

Minllyn 858142 (about 1km S/SE of Dinas Maddwy)

Required maps

Land Ranger Sheet 125 - Bala and Lake Vrnwy

Explorer OL23 - Cader Idris and Llyn Tegrid



Photo from cambrianway.org.uk

Fares

Members £20.00

Guests £22.00

Under 16's and full-time students – £8.00

To book ring Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729

£5.00 pp cancellation charges apply: you must cancel at least 7 days in advance.

Suggested routes

Route 1

The traverse from Llanuwchllyn head south out of town towards Garth-Fawr and follow path to Moel Ddu and Moel Ffenigl over Craig-Llyn to top of Aran Benllyn(866242) from there due south path leads to Aran Fawddy (8626 2239) trig point. Descents then may be made via Glasgwm or Drysgol (869213) and path to road at(853187) with a 4.5km walk to pick up

The traverse is a long day, if you are not sure of your ability check with someone on the coach first for advice and do not attempt on your own! Thank you

Route 2

From the carpark on the A470 (803170) you can probably work a route to take in Waun-Oer (7856 1478) Cribin Fawr (801151) and Maen Du (822152) and may descend into Dinas via Foel Dinas (842143) and then to Minllyn for the pick up

Coach Rule 7 applies: "Do not go above the snowline without ice-axe and crampons." Please stow your ice-axes and crampons in the side compartment of the coach. Don't leave them in the boot where they could damage rucksacks.

To book on the coach please ring Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729