

# West Bromwich Mountaineering Club Newsletter



January 2016

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## Happy New Year!

After the Christmas feast of December's newsletter, I present you the bite-sized January edition – hopefully a little more digestible.

Just a quick note from our membership secretary: you need to renew your annual subs for 2016. Membership is £27.50 and should either be given to Joanna Cheung, sent to 551a Walsall Road, Great Barr Birmingham B42 1LS or transferred via the HSBC bank - account number 41139827 sort code 40-23-03. If paying through the bank please let Joanna know by text: 07808030577.

My thanks to this month's contributors: Paul Brindley, Nigel Tarr, Richard Cooksey and Bob Franklin.

If you have anything that you'd like to be featured in next month's newsletter – whether you're selling gear, looking for a climbing or walking partner, you've seen an event that members might be interested in, anything at all – send it to me at [joe.priest@live.co.uk](mailto:joe.priest@live.co.uk) (or through our website if it's an article) before the end of the year.

All the best for the New Year,  
Joe

## 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](http://www.wbmc.org)

# Coming up

13<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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.

28<sup>th</sup> February – 6<sup>th</sup> 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*

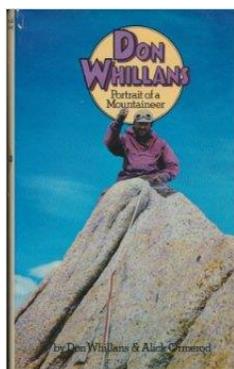
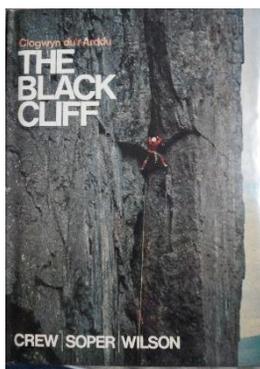
Words by Bob Franklin  
Pictures from amazon.co.uk

On a recent visit to the Wheatsheaf, somewhat late in the evening, feeling a little tired and emotional, one of the great and good took unfair advantage of me and I was persuaded to contribute to the highly commendable series of articles in WBMC's monthly epistle. The series, of course, is an enjoyable take on 'Desert Islands Discs' so here goes.

Gazing around the library at Franklin Towers (in Cleobury Mortimer) at the vast array of leather bound volumes embossed with the family crest, the following tomes caught my attention.

Number One - 'The Black Cliff' by Crew, Soper & Wilson. A significant book related to the history of rock climbing in North Wales and developments on Clogwyn Du'r Arddu, a place I have visited on occasions in certain exalted company. This is a 'must have' for any mountaineers' bookshelf with wonderful monochrome pictures and excellent prose.

Number Two - 'Portrait of a Mountaineer' which you will know from a previous article in this series, tells of the life and times of Don Whillans. This book to my mind is more readable than the more recent biography 'Villain'. However, 'Portrait' is not a 'warts and all' tale but a good easy read which outlines an impressive C.V.

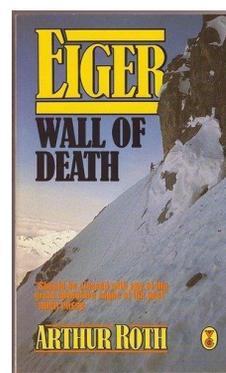
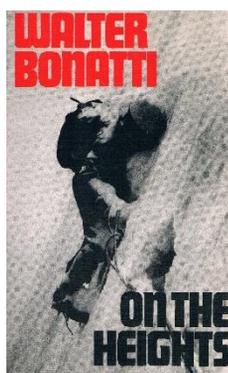


Number Three - 'On the Heights' by Walter Bonatti. Although I found the language a little unusual, his achievements from 1949 to 1962 are impressive, and his commitment even more so. Although possibly his judgement could be called into question at times.

Number Four - The title of this book being 'Eiger Wall of Death' is more akin to Mickey Spillane (Dead Dames Don't Squawk etc.) rather than the modest Arthur Roth who came to climbing rather late in life

and hails from the USA, which may explain the title. However, the book is written in English not American and covers early ascents of the Eiger, but moreover the North Face, from the late 19th Century to 1978 with all its attendant success, failures, tragedies and heroics. An excellent read.

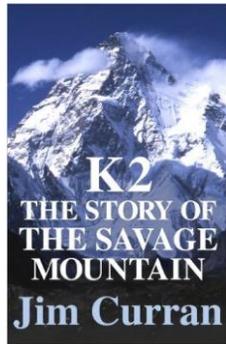
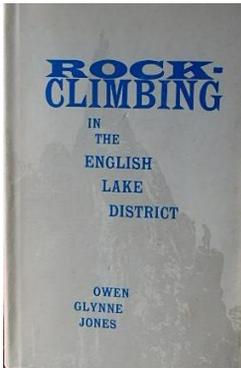
At this point I think that books No. 3 and 4 could inspire the reader to greater effort and commitment, or to seriously consider brass rubbing as an alternative pastime.



Number 5 - 'Rock Climbing in the English Lake District' by Owen Glynn Jones. This is a reprint of his book first published in 1900. Although the text is a little quaint by today's standards, it remains enjoyable and serves as a timely reminder that whilst modern equipment, clothing etc., may make days out safer, comfortable and arguably easier (?), it does not make one better. What also entertains are the equipment adverts of the period contained in an appendix. Worth a read.

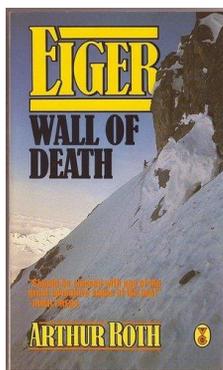
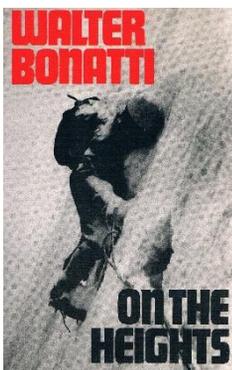
Number 6 - 'K2 The Story of the Savage Mountain' by Jim Curran. This book covers discovery and attempts on K2 from earliest times to 1986, and although I am not a fan of the author this is one of his best and very readable.

Continued overleaf...



Number 7 - 'The Mont Blanc Massif' by Gaston Rebuffat. This speaks for itself covering one hundred routes in the area. The photographs are excellent and the text loses nothing in translation, unlike some of the author's earlier efforts. The descriptions which accompany the pictures give an overview of the route in question together with a well detailed description. This book encourages, because not all the routes are in the upper grades.

Number 8 - Now for something completely different. 'A Foreign Field' by Ben Macintyre. This is a brilliantly researched account of four British Soldiers who in the Great War became separated from their various units behind enemy lines and were sheltered by French villagers, until the War's end. I won't reveal the outcome but an excellent account of love, loyalty, heroism and betrayal. If you are interested in this period of history then this is a must read.



To conclude, the choice is not easy and I realise that others have chosen the same titles but that reflects on quality of the books, however, I could easily double up on the aforementioned.

As for memorable days I am sure that we could all contribute an endless list. However, once upon a time on Hen Cloud, Central Route (I believe) it fell to me to lead a certain pitch. So being established on a large ledge we consulted the guide book ..... 'climb the innocuous crack'..... Innocuous? Does that mean wide, narrow, long, hard?

The leader of the excursion made an executive decision, to wit, I was to climb on his shoulders to reach a decent jug, but alas the jug was out of reach and I was forced to stand on his head.

Priest by name but not by calling then quizzed me about sex and travel in his educated drawl (which registered in Leek as a minor earth tremor), and invited me to get my finger out as constant shuffling was not helping his neatly coiffured hair. With this encouragement I overcame the obstacle.

This is a memorable moment like the time at Tremadog when I failed to complete a belay at a critical moment, and again at Anglesey, with time pressing I was given the advice 'pull it tight, he'll climb faster', but these are stories for another time.

Could you face being stranded at the hut? Which books would you take? Send your answers ~~on the back of a postcard~~ via email to [joe.priest@live.co.uk](mailto:joe.priest@live.co.uk)

# WBMC Annual Away Dinner

Friday 18<sup>th</sup>-Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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](http://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		

# Black Mountains Weekend

Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> - Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2016

By Richard Cooksey



We are returning to the Bunkhouse in the Town Hotel, Talgarth ([towerhoteltalgarth.co.uk](http://towerhoteltalgarth.co.uk)). Talgarth is a very friendly town offering opportunities for high and low level walks in the Black Mountains and Brecon Beacons and the hotel also caters for Mountain Bikes ([bikesbunksbeer.co.uk](http://bikesbunksbeer.co.uk)).

The cost is £23 bed in the bunkhouse or £30 per person in a twin or double room, all bed and breakfast per night. The bunkhouse and other rooms are upstairs in the hotel and so ideal for a winter meet with heating and drinks making facilities. The hotel also serves evening meals and real ale and the town also has a working water mill with its own bakery and café ([talgarthmill.com](http://talgarthmill.com)).

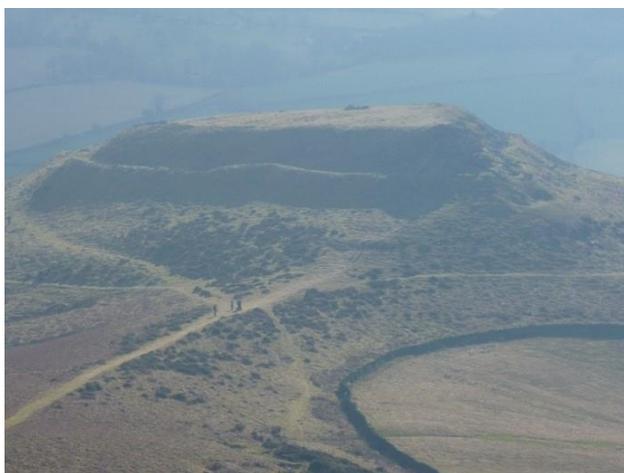


Photo from [visittalgarth.co.uk](http://visittalgarth.co.uk)

There are lots of other things to do in the town ([visittalgarth.co.uk/item/talgarth\\_.html](http://visittalgarth.co.uk/item/talgarth_.html)) and other pubs and eating options include real ale pubs and an excellent fish and chip takeaway and restaurant.

The hotel requires a deposit of £10 non-refundable deposit before Christmas which can be made payable to the West Bromwich Mountaineering Club, the balance is payable by you before leaving the hotel. I am happy to talk to anyone about this meet on including discussing other rooms which would suit couples, children and families.



Photo from [visittalgarth.co.uk](http://visittalgarth.co.uk)

For more information about the weekend, give Richard a call on 07950 087911, or to book, send the form below (along with a deposit cheque) to:

Richard Cooksey,  
24 Lydford Road,  
Bloxwich,  
Walsall,  
West Midlands,  
WS3 3NT.

## Booking form

Party leader's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Guest Names	Room Type	£
<b>Total</b>		
<b>Deposit (£10 per person)</b>		

# Coach Meet – Ogwen

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January

## Depart

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

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

(Brief stop at Corwen)

## Drop off

Pont Cyfyng (735572)

Capel Curig (721582)

Ogwen (656603)

## Pick up

Ogwen (656603)

Capel Curig (721582)

## Required maps

OS. 1:25 000 Outdoor Leisure Map No.17 Snowdonia



Photo from 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

From Pont Cyfyng

Route 1 (9.5km - 6miles)

From Follow the track to a disused quarry (717555) then continue to Lyn Y Foel (713547) from where you can climb the South East ridge of Moel Siabod (Grade 1 scramble of Daer Ddu). From the summit (705546) descend via the North East ridge to grid reference 713565. Continue through the forest to Plas y Brenin and Capel Curig pick up.

From Capel Curig

Route 2

Head west and follow the ridge to Galt yr Ogof (685586). Continue over Y Foel Goch (678582) to Llyn Caseg-Fraith (670581) and find a cairn at the col marking the Miners' Track. Follow the path to Bwlch Try fan (662588) and ascend Try Fan (664594) via the South Ridge. Descend via the West gully to Ogwen.

Route 3 (~9km – 5.6miles)

Follow Route 2 to Llyn Casag-Frith (670584) and then climb to the summit of Glyder Fach (656583). Continue along the plateau to Glyder Fawr (642579) descend to Lyn y Cwn (638584) and then take the path to the right of the Devil's Kitchen to Llyn Idwal (647598) and back to Ogwen.

Route 4 (~16km – 10miles)

Head north to Craig Wen (729602) and on to Creigiau Gleision double summit (729616 and 734623). Then descend to the Llyn Cowlyd Dam and climb Pen Llithrig y Wrach (716624) before returning to Capel Curig. If the weather is bad return could be via the lakeside track.

*More routes overleaf*

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 – Ogwen

Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> January

## Suggested routes continued

Route 5 (~16km – 10miles)

Head NNW to Pen Llithrig y Wrach (716624) and descend to its West ridge to Pen Yr Helgi Du (699629). Follow the narrow ridge NW onto Carnedd Llewellyn (684645). Head south, then SW, and finally west onto Carnedd Dafydd (664630) and from here the quickest way back to the coach is to contour round to Pen Yr Ole Wen (655619) and descend the path down its South West ridge to Ogwen Falls (649605). Then east along the A5 to the coach.

From A5 near Lyn Ogwen

Route 6 (~7km - 5miles)

Follow the road to grid reference 663603 and tackle the North Ridge of Tryfan (Grade 1 scramble). At the summit (664594) jup from Adam to Even and back if

you dare (weather permitting) then descend the South Ridge to Bwlch Tryfan (662588) and continue up the Bristly Ridge (another Grade 1 scramble) to the summit plateau of Glyder Fach (656583). A less exposed alternative is to climb the scree slope to the east of the ridge, scramble over Castell Y Gwnt (654582) and follow the plateau edge northwest to the top of Y Gribin (651583). Descend this fine ridge back to Ogwen.

Route 7

As Route 6 but continue along the Glyder plateau to the summit of Glyder Fawr (642579). Descend as in Route 3 or if time climb Y Garn (631596) and descend its North East Ridge to Ogwen.

## Your photos wanted!

The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with links for Home, About, News, Meet Calendar, Photos, Links, Contact Us, and a Members' area. Below the navigation, there is a 'Photos' section with a sub-header 'See what our club members get up to. Members can add photos to these albums through the Members' area.' The main content area displays several photo albums:

- Gower Weekend** July 2015 - 4 photos: A collage of four photos showing people on a beach, a cliff face, and a person climbing.
- Lundy Island** May 2015 - 26 photos: A collage of five photos showing a coastal landscape, a map, and people on a boat.
- SKYE 2015** May 2015 - 41 photos: A collage of five photos showing a mountain landscape, a coastline, a person climbing, and a group of people.
- Coach meet - Seatoller** May 2015 - 21 photos: A collage of five photos showing people on a hillside, a person climbing, and a group of people.
- Evening Meet - walk over Clent** May 2015 - 13 photos: A collage of five photos showing people walking on a path, a person climbing, and a group of people.

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

# Coach Meet – Patterdale

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February

## Depart

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

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

(Brief toilet stop at the M6 Services)

## 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