

West Bromwich Mountaineering Club Newsletter

January 2017

This month's photo from the Scottish Weekend in January 2015, by John Edwards

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Hello all!

First and foremost, my sincere apologies for the delay in delivery of this newsletter. I'll endeavour to get future ones out on a more reasonable schedule.

Huge thanks as always to this month's contributors: Dave Jones, Graeme Stanford, Georgie Hind, John Edwards, Nigel Tarr, and Guy Harris.

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 newsletter@wbmc.org (or through our website if it's an article) before the 20th of the month.

Cheers,
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.

**BMC**
AFFILIATED CLUB

www.wbmc.org

Noticeboard

Second-hand gear

A female individual who has been on the last couple of meets is looking for help from WBMC members. Does anyone have any second hand gear lying around or gear that they don't use anymore, size 12 or size 7 in footwear.

If anyone has any unwanted items please e-mail anthenia91@hotmail.com

For Sale

- Rab Vapor Rise Ladies Trousers (size 10) - £25
- Trespass Ladies Ski Trousers (size 10) - £15
- Berghaus Quartz 65+15 litre rucksack - £50
- Scarpa Charmoz GTX Mens mountaineering boots EU size 45 - £45
- Scarpa Triolet Mens mountaineering boots size 9.5 - £15
- Camp Rockstar climbing helmet blue with headtorch attachment - £20
- Camp Rockstar climbing helmet white - £15
- Eurohike survival bag (brand new in wrapper) - £2
- Outdoordesigns classic mountain shelter medium (4-6 persons) - £25
- Montane scarab mens jacket blue size M - £25
- Hawkshead mens half zip fleece size L - £5
- Paramo mens reversible trekker hoodie blue size M - £20
- Mountain Hardware Goretex Performance shell mens waterproof trousers size M - £50
- Lowe Alpine mens ice cap - £10
- Various pairs mens gloves/balaclava

If you are interested in any of these items please contact Guy or Tracey on 07815 185447 or 07967 820002

GoPro Hero 4 silver plus accessories and 30 metre waterproof case - £200

Contact Geordie 07505364318 or email geordiehind@gmail.com for further details.

It's a small world!

Carol & I were on a Holiday Fellowship 'Twixmas break in the White Peak a few days ago and on one of the walks I happened to mention the West Brom Mountaineering Club coach meets to the lady I was walking near (Pat who lived in Nottinghamshire) and she exclaimed that her husband was a club member back in the 1960's! He was Mike Oneil and she said how much he loved the Club hut, although she seemed to think they went off climbing in private cars in those days. They left for Canada together in 1968 but returned 5 year later; she hated the very cold winters! Alas Mike died in 1997 but Pat knew the names of several old timers such as Jack Dodd, Mike Aldritt, Pat Tweedale etc. and asked to be remembered to them. Maybe other readers will remember Mike.



On the previous day's walk we came across a beautiful metal seat at SK 22582 62265 which might be of interest to one of our members in particular!

Happy New Year to all @ WBMC, from John Edwards

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

Coming up

27th – March 2017

Cairngorm Trip

Last March a few club members visited a bunkhouse just south of Aviemore for a spot of winter climbing in the Cairngorms. The bunkhouse is owned and run by the RAF and can be booked by serving personnel and veterans. As such I was able to book one of the four wings. This gave us shared access to the main building, honesty shop, drying rooms etc. and private access to the wing which consisted of four twin rooms (bunk beds) showers and toilets and a sitting/ dining room with full kitchen. The facility is called Feshiebridge Lodge and is in a remote spot giving access to all the Cairngorms have to offer. The website is:

<http://feshiebridgelodge.co.uk>



I have now booked three wings of the lodge for the last week in March 2017. This equates to 26 places. At this point all the beds are taken but, as with everything else, there is always the chance that someone will pull out. The building has another small

flat attached, also with its own independent facilities, which sleeps 4. These 4 are in the form of a double bed and a double sofa bed. Perfect for two couples or very friendly people. This flat has not been booked at this point but is still available.

All three wings have identical facilities. The cost per individual (assuming we fill all 26 beds) is £45 each.

The booking is for 5 nights, 27th March to 1st April 2017, which means driving up on Monday 27th and driving back on Saturday 1st. This gives 4 full days on the hills. A bargain at £45 (the place even has free Wi-Fi! Each wing also has a TV, DVD player.

As with our own hut the sleeping and cooking facilities are all provided you just need to bring your own food, drink and bedding.

A deposit is required to confirm the booking so I will require a £10 deposit per head as soon as possible. Full payment is required 1 month before arrival so please get your remaining payment in as soon as possible after 01 Jan 17.

If you wish to be added to the reserve list, or if you feel the 4 person flat would suit you, I can be contacted either on my mobile 07846 281878 or e-mail grim830@virginmedia.com

I hope to run the same trip again in 2018 and will endeavour to get the information into the newsletter much earlier to give people a chance to take advantage of it.

June & July 2017

Exchange visits with the YMC

Do you remember from your youth when the kids at school, whose parents had money, got to go on exchange trips to France and Germany etc.? Well this is nothing like that! In June / July 2017 we have invited members of the Yorkshire Mountaineering Club to come and share our hut. This will be followed by members of our club visiting their hut, which is in the slate mines in Coniston and sleeps 28.

The YMC was formed in the early 1940s as "*The junior Mountaineering club of Yorkshire*" and was renamed '*The Yorkshire Mountaineering Club*' at their 1952 AGM. They're of a similar size to the WBMC.

The purpose of the visits are simply to extend the hand of friendship between two groups of likeminded folk from different areas. I'm sure both clubs have the

benefit of local knowledge of lesser trodden paths and lesser climbed crags in the area of their huts and I'm sure both visits will be an enjoyable experience for all.

The weekend at our hut will be 02 – 04 June 2017 and the weekend at the Coniston hut will be 21 – 23 July 2017.

Obviously there's a disparity between the capacity of the two huts so the same people can't go on both trips. We also have not discussed what activities people will want to engage in (walking, climbing, scrambling etc) at this point but, for planning purposes, please e-mail me or text me and let me know if you're interested in taking part. Nearer the time we'll see how many names we've got and work from there.

My contact details are grim830@virginmedia.com or 07846 281878

Coming up

Updating the coach meet routes

West Bromwich Mountaineering Club will be making changes to suggested routes in February 2017. The committee have listened to requests from members and we feel going forward that we should emphasize that more challenging and less well travelled routes will start to be published in the forthcoming newsletters on a monthly basis, as some members would enjoy the extra challenge.

We may also start to look and identify more technical, more remote possibilities for members that would like to carry out more varied technical routes. Please don't be alarmed; the normal routes pick-ups and drop offs will still be on the newsletter, there will just be an addition of different routes to get individuals interested in getting off the beaten path and graded scrambles etc.

Obviously we would only expect individuals to tackle such routes with the correct experience training and competency, these technical routes can obviously attract risks, however the benefits of tackling such routes outweigh the disadvantages.

By adding these routes to the meets we feel that the transition can be made from hill walking to scrambling, climbing, and mountaineering if desired.

New member(s) have the choice to:

- Have a go. start on easier routes and build up experience
- Get training either from experienced WBMC members or on formal courses from outdoor training providers
- BMC offer discount courses to affiliated clubs/members

Thursday 9th February

Nepal talk, by Rob Cox

After 35 years working for BT, I decided that there were more interesting things to do with my time. Since retiring, I have spent nine months in Nepal. For five months of that time I have been a volunteer teacher – on my first visit at Ghat Village School and more recently at Khumjung Secondary School, both in the Khumbu region. Living with local Sherpa families has given me a fascinating window into the lives of the mountain people of Nepal. I've also been fortunate to be able to spend much of the remaining time trekking, climbing and kayaking in different areas of this beautiful country. My camera has travelled with me and on sheer law of averages; there have to be a few good photos in my extensive collection.

We would recommend that newer/inexperienced members go on a skills weekend to learn the skills if they are not confident at having a go themselves.

There may be opportunities where a club member may lead a technical route but obviously we cannot guarantee this, and we would not expect a leader to take large groups on such routes, obviously any leader has to be happy to lead and also aware of experience.

There is vast experience within the club and if anyone has any questions, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the committee.

By adding this option to the monthly coach meet we hope to see member participation increase and also give experience to future WBMC members. If anyone has any issues/concerns please contact me davidjones840@gmail.com

Dave Jones,

Chairman WBMC

I expect that few of you will have heard of the Himalayan Trust, but if I mention the name Sir Edmund Hillary, there will be more recognition. Sir Ed set up the original Himalayan Trust back in the early 1960s to raise funds in support of his work to improve the lives of the Sherpa people. The various international branches of this charity still fund a wide range of essential activities in the mountain regions. I hope you will find this talk both informative and enjoyable and as a result give a donation to the Himalayan Trust UK.

If anyone is interested in visiting Nepal, I am more than happy to help with information to assist in planning their trip.

December Coach Meet

by John "Spare Tyre" Edwards

Words and pictures
by John Edwards



As most members will have no doubt heard, the December coach meet to Hayfield was eventful for the wrong reasons. For the first time that I can remember the coach had a tyre blow out on the way to the hills – and to cap it all ANOTHER ONE when we were almost back to the West Midlands! Fortunately we were not delayed too much on either occasion.



The first tyre change at Alfreton

For the first we limped into the Travelodge/Little Chef at Alfreton and had our morning break while a guy from Lodge Tyres changed the nearside rear outer tyre with an compressed air drill, sledgehammer, 2 long crowbars and a 5ft long torque wrench. There were still intermittent odd noises and smells as we set off north again but our driver couldn't feel or see anything wrong so the first drop off at the Snake Inn occurred just after noon. A few stayed on to Hayfield but the majority started walking at the top of the Snake Pass where the mist was down and views were nil. Because of this most of this group decided to give Kinder Downfall a miss and just did a short traverse across Featherbed Moss and down William Clough, about 5 or 6 miles in all. Graeme Stanford's group managed to get in around 9 miles going to the clagged-in waterfall via Gateside Clough while the peak-bagger group completed a short-ish circuit from Hayfield to Famine Hill, South Head and back.



Setting off across Featherbed Moss



Looking down to Kinder Reservoir

We were all able to enjoy at least an hour in "The Pack Horse" before we had to get back on the coach. This struggled to get through Stockport because of the traffic but we then seemed to make reasonable progress until a rear offside tyre exploded with a lot of burning smell and smoke just as we pulled into Penkridge. Apparently there was a problem with the brake drum and it had broken into 3 parts! A replacement driver was due to turn up in any case as Mike was going to be over his hours, and fortunately he was able to arrive in a replacement coach so the majority of passengers got back to West Brom at around 9.45pm.



Mike the driver taking a photo of Anthenia & Mayya playing coach drivers while waiting for the replacement coach

So a memorable trip was had by all, although traumatic for driver Mike & our Coach Sec who, even after all the hassle of the meet, volunteered to give our two new passengers, Anthenia & Mayya, a lift to help them get home before midnight. He also returned a pair of odd socks – thoughtfully washed and ironed – to one member who had inadvertently left them on the November coach: what a star! The photos show some of the day's action and views.

Coach Kings and Queen 2016

Words and pictures by
John Edwards



There were 13 coach meets in 2016 but there are no records of who went on the February coach because nobody had to fill in the route book, with passengers anticipating walking from Patterdale but ending up late in the day in Llangollen due to jams on the M6. So this time I've included Mitch's Meet which means that these stats can't really be compared with other years. Apologies to all those who went on the February coach but I didn't feel I could include some people and accidentally miss out others.

As last year 120 different people used the coach on the 12 meets there are data for, with 422 seats taken during year out of the 588 available. The coaches were therefore 72% full with the average number of seats taken being 35. May and August saw the most passengers (45) and September the fewest - just 18!! For every lady that travelled with us there were approximately 3 gentlemen, at least I think most of them meet Jonathan Miller's wonderful 'Beyond the Fringe' observation:- "There's that marvellous unpunctuated motto over the lavatory saying, 'Gentlemen lift the seat'. What exactly does this mean? Is it a sociological description - a definition of a gentleman which I can either take or leave? Or perhaps it's a Loyal Toast? It could be a blunt military order, or an invitation to upper-class larceny." But I digress...back to the stats.

Hilary Jones was the only person who went on all 12 meets (I know she really did 13) so for the 3rd (or is it the 4th?) year running she takes her title as "*WBMC Coach Queen*".

Three men went on 11 coaches (really they only missed 1 out of 13) and so "*Coach Kings 2016*" are Paul Brindley, Andy Brown and the Coach Sec, Nigel Tarr. Congratulations to all these loyal supporters of the coach meets.

Only 3 people went on 8 coaches:- Dee Sendeva, Emily Smith & Rob Thomas

Fitting 7 people are recorded as having done 7 (at least) meets. I know I have only done 7 but maybe Claire Hammonds, David Hough, Linda Howells, Peter Kane, Graeme Stanford & Oliver Stephenson were also on the February meet.

Records show that the 9 people who went on at least half of our trips to the hills were Stephen Cartridge, Joanna Cheung, Richard Cooksey, Phil Cox, David Doherty, John Harris, Liz Perks, Phil Smith & Phil Williams while Noah Cox, Janet Dawes, Bob Franklin, Andy Jones, Andrew Mitchell & Hugh Rothero were the half dozen who took advantage of our coaches to get to the hills on 5 occasions. Teresa Chilles, Mel Evans, Darren Groutage, Fred Hammonds, Lloyd Jones, Angie

Murdoch, Ann Parrot, Colin Talbot & Joe Wood travelled with us 4 times.

Leon Brindley, Geraldine Evans, Matt Gallow, Sue Goddard, David Hadley, John Howells, Mel Sutton & Andy Wright are down as being on one quarter of the meets and the following people managed a couple:- John Bastable, Martin Conway, Anthenia Dimitriou, Steve Gwynne, Denise Jarvis, Mike Lay, Wendy Morris, Daniel Round, Stu Shaw, Jo Taylor & John Taylor.

The 54 single trip passengers were Simon Backhouse, Ben Barnes, Adrian Bates, Dan Blow, Dave Brace, Leo Brooks, Prem Choughan, Sanjay Choughan, Ray Cooksey, Charles Day, Michael Day, Matt Donnan, Bob Duncan, Mary Duncan, John Eadon, David Elliott, Stuart Fellows, Annalise Foster, Sue Fownes, Alan Godden, David Hall, Steve Harris, Geoff Hill, Pauline Hind, Daniel Howells, Jonathan Howells, Rachel Isles, Bob Jackson, Jason Jones, Mayya Konovalova, Stephen Lee, Oliver Line, Staci McDonald, Ian Merther, Glen Monforth, Andy Nock, Neil Parsons, Dave Porritt, Pete Poultney, Indhu Prabakar, Jess Priest, Ken Priest, Paul Read, Lee Roberts, Kath Smith, Stewart Smith, Pat Thorneycroft, Tara Timmins, Jayne Williams, Mary Williamson, Rosie Williamson, John Wilson, Gary Winton & Sara Winton, plus maybe one or two more in February.

As usual some of these names are very unfamiliar and some familiar names are missing. A big thanks to Robinsons' coaches for getting us to and from the hills and they, like the committee, will no doubt be keen to see many smiling faces heading to the hills in 2017. As I finished last years summary: if you know someone who likes the countryside please tell them about our coach meets which are open to the general public as well as West Brom MC members.

The destinations of the individual meets in 2016 (& the number of passengers on them) were as follows: Mitch's Meet to the Breidden Hills had 33 on it.

January (Ogwen)	43	July (Patterdale)	33
February (Llangollen)	??	August (Cader Idris)	45
March (Arans)	27	September (Aber/Ogwen)	18
April (Braithwaite)	38	October (Coniston)	44
May (Brecons)	45	November (Moelwyns)	34
June (Horton)	25	December (Hayfield)	37

Coach Meet – Llanberis

Sunday 12th February 2017

Depart

07:00 – West Brom. Edward St Car Park (B70 8HU)
Service Road Junc 2 M54
(Short stop at Corwen)

Drop off

Capel Curig (721582)
Pen-Y-Pass (647556)
Llanberis (583598)

Pick up

Llanberis (583598)
Pen-Y-Pass (647556)
Pen-Y-Gwyrdd Hotel (9660558)

Required maps

OS 1:25000 Outdoor Leisure
No 17 – Snowdon



Photo from where2walk.co.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 (15km - 10miles)

From Capel Curig head West and follow the ridge to Gallt Yr Ogof (685586) continue over Foel Goch (678582) and past Llyn Caseg - Fraith (670584). After the view that this ridge affords of Tryfan (hopefully !!) ascend Glyder Fach (656583) followed by Glyder Fawr. Descend South to Peny -y-Pass followed by a road walk to the Pen Y Gwyrdd Hotel

Route 2 (13km - 8 miles)

The classic "Snowdon Horseshoe" from Pen Y Pass and return to Pen Y Pass via Crib Goch or Lliwedd
This is a hard day in the time available

Route 3 (17km - 11 miles)

From Pen Y Pass ascend Snowdon via the Pig Track. Leave NW and descend via the Snowdon Ranger path as far as Bwlch Cwm Brywynog (9591558) a steep grassy climb then leads to Moel Cynghorion (586564) Descend to Bwlch Maesgwm (573559) then follow the easy path N to Llanberis coach park on the right hand side just past Electric Mountain visitors centre

Route 4 (17km - 11miles)

From Pen Y Pass ascend Glyder Fawr and then drop NW to climb Y Garn before continuing along the grassy plateau to Foel Goch Mynydd Perfedd Carnedd y Filiast and Elidir Fawr before dropping down to Llanberis coach park

Route 5 (14km - 9 miles)

Snowdon from Llanberis Snowdon Mountain Railway Station (582598) Walk South along the main road and take the first road on the right . This leads you past some cottages/houses and the start of the ascent to the summit. The road turns South and shortly after you take the signed path on the left (582590) Follow this broad path as it climbs steadily. Passing through a short tunnel under the rail way you reach Halfway Station. Climb more steeply than the railway to reach the top of of the Pyg Track. The top is now in sight. To return to the start retrace your steps making sure you keep the railway on your left as far as Clogwyn Station on your right until Halfway Station and on your left again for the remainder of the route.

Coach Meet – Keswick

Sunday 12th March 2017

Depart

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

07:20 Penkrigde

Drop off

Scales (340268)

Threlkeld (if you're quick) (352254)

Keswick (junc A66/A591) (264244)

Keswick Coach Station (264234)

Pick up

Keswick Coach Station (242234)

Scales Lay By (340268)

Required maps

OS 1:25000 Outdoor Leisure

No 4 The English Lakes NW

No 5 The English Lakes NE

Suggested routes

From Scales

Route 1 (~15km / 9.5 miles)

From Scales Farm (340268) follow the path past Mouthwaite Comb then turn NW to Scales Tarn (329281). As you arrive Sharp Edge- a short grade 1 (but not too difficult) scramble is the obvious ridge on the skyline. From the top of this it is an easy walk to the summit of Blencathra (324278). You can continue along the ridge to Knowe Crags (312270) and then head NW to a footbridge over Glenderaterra Beck (296278). From here it is a short climb to the path junction of the Cumbria Way (293279) and this can be followed S past Lonscale Crags and a car park (281253) to reach Keswick crossing the A66 by a footbridge at (269243).

From Threlkeld

Route 2 (~14km / 9 miles)

Climb Blencathra (324278) via the impressive Halls Fell Ridge or less spectacular Middle Tongue or Gategill Fell. Head E and descend easy slopes to the col at (327292) (via Sharp Edge if you are prepared to loose more height) Bowscale Fell (334306 & off map unless you have an old 1 inch) and Bannerdale Crags (335390) can then be climbed before descending down to Scales to await the coach.

Route 3 (~12KM / 8miles)

Expert scramblers could trudge down the B6322 down St Johns in the Vale to Sandbed Gill (317217) - one of Lakelands finest gill scrambles. Follow the road through Bram Crag Quarries and cross a stile leading onto the fellside. The gill entrance is guarded by trees but the route is obvious - you simply follow the watercourse. However the route is a serious ***3S scramble and is only escapable by retracing your steps. To quote Graham Thompsons book "the rock is often slippery & the route is best climbed during a dry spell, a rope, slings and a selection of nuts should be carried for the crux and waterproofs are advisable". Then walk over Clough Head (334226) and fell bash to Scales



Photo from where2walk.co.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.

From Keswick

Route 4 (~16 km / 10 miles)

Follow the road from the roundabout (264244) to Briar Rigg (267241) and follow the Cumbria Way past car park (283255). Here you start climbing steeply to the summit of Little Man (266278) from where a good path continues to Skiddaw (261291). Descend the very steep west face of Skidaw to Carlside Tarn (256283) & if the weather is good walk out to Ullock Pike (244281) for superb views over Bassenthwaite Forest. Retrace your steps to the summit of Carlside (255281), then descend S to Millbeck (256262) Follow the road into Applethwaite and follow the Allerdale Ramble back into Keswick.

Route 5 (~18km / 12 miles)

Another possibility might be to follow the Allerdale Ramble NW through Thorn thwaite Forest and eventually reach Ravenstone Hotel (236297). To the right side of the hotel follow a steep path through a conifer wood and then take the long heather - clad ridge to Ullock Pike (244287). This was Wainwright's favourite walk up Skidaw & "probably the most attractive up the mountain" (Bob Allen) but it is a long walk to the start. Continue along the slate rocks of Longside Edge to Skidwa and then descend via Cumbria Way (reverse of first part of route 4) or follow the Allerdale Scramble back into Keswick.

Route 6 (~12km – 8 miles, less if you take boat)

Take paths to Portinscale and then Cumbria Way to climb Cat Bells (244198). Alternatively it might be possible to take a Derwent Water launch (anticlockwise) from the landing stages at (264227) to Hawes End to save the walk in.