



October 2015

Page

This month's photo: a view of the valley from Pemba's village, Chhiring

- 2 Noticeboard  
Firepit  
Hut phone issue  
Nepal Fundraiser a success!
- 3 Coming up  
Indoor meet – Haut Route  
Scottish Winter Weekend  
Mitch's Meet
- 4 Forth For The Furth John Edwards
- 5 I Love Ennerdale... Hilary Jones
- 6 Stranded at the Hut Ken Priest
- 8 Icelandic Adventures Sue Goddard
- 10 Away Dinner Richard Cooksey
- 11 Black Mountains W/end “
- 12 3.5 Men in a Boat Dave Jones
- 15 Coach meets  
Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October – Rhinogs  
Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November – Llanberis

Hello!

Firstly, I'd like to congratulate the club on a very successful fundraiser on the 10<sup>th</sup> September, which raised an astounding £1,617! The money will be used to not only help Mel's friend Pemba and his family but to also aid his village, Chhiring. Both Mel Evans and John Edwards have written about the event, so I've put them both together on the next page. Huge thanks to everyone involved.

My thanks to this month's contributors: Sue Goddard, Graeme Stanford, Nigel Tarr, John Edwards, Hilary Jones, Mel Evans, Dave Jones, Richard Cooksey and Ken Priest.

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 15<sup>th</sup> November.

Cheers,  
Joe Priest

## 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)

# Noticeboard

## Firepit

Sue Goddard has kindly donated a raffle prize she won to the club for the hut. It is a firepit which has been fashioned from a recycled washing machine drum. It is for anyone to use and may help keep the midges at bay if you want to be outside the hut rather than inside in good weather. It can be found at the back of the hut under the BBQ. *Please ensure it is raised from the ground when in use to avoid burnt patches on the ground outside the hut.* Also return it, empty, to its storage place before leaving the hut unattended (once cooled down of course).

## Hut phone issue

Currently the telephone has a technical issue and it is not possible to make outside calls. The phone can however receive incoming calls normally.

## Nepal fundraiser a success!

Mel and Geraldine: Over sixty club members and friends enjoyed a superb evening at this famous Black Country watering hole on Thursday 10th September raising the fantastic amount of £1,617. This money is going directly to help a Sherpa family living in the small mountain village of Chhiring, Solu, Nepal. It is being transferred to their bank account in Kathmandu.

Already Pemba has informed me, in typical Nepalese style, that the money will be used to not only help him and his family but to also aid the village. He has promised to keep us informed as to how the monies are used and will send photographs as the work progresses. Since this area of Nepal suffers very badly in the monsoon season, now coming to an end, our money will arrive to coincide with a drier period which will allow building repairs before the onset of winter.

If anyone is interested to learn more about this family

please get in touch. As a matter of interest information about the village is readily available via the internet.

John Edwards: Nearly midnight on the bus on last leg of my journey back to Shirley after a great night at Mad O'Rourkes. Wasn't sure what to expect but signed up in spite of my wife's comment that it was a long way to go, and I'm so glad I did as it was great to see so many faces that hadn't been around for ages and catch up with folk who'd been doing interesting things in Iceland, N.Wales & Dudley. The band was ace (big thanks to the great canal builder's namesake ;-)) and food excellent quality and value: just what you'd expect from the best mountaineering club in the West Midlands! We raised a great total to help a family (and maybe their friends) in Nepal. I'm sure everyone who went will agree it was a cracking, if deafening, night so well done to Mel & Paul for coming up with the idea.

On receiving the money, Pemba writes: *Namaste. I'm so happy to you successfully visited to south coast. I'm grateful to you and West Bromwich Mountaineering Club kindly to great support me and my villager family's too. Thankyou very much for kindly to sent money. It is very very big support for me and villager family's.*



## 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](mailto: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

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October

## Indoor Meet: Haut Route



Hilary Jones is sharing her experiences of the Haut Route at the Wheatsheaf.

No idea what or where it is or what it involves? Well, why not come along and find out?

Fancy doing it yourself, but just somehow don't know how or where to start? Come along for some tips!

In need of a little inspiration or motivation? Come along and be inspired!

15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> January

## Scottish Winter Weekend



Photo by Pete Poultney

There are 14 places available at the SMC-owned Lagangarbh Hut in the heart of Glencoe, an excellent base for walking and climbing, with The Clachaig Inn and Kings House Hotel a short distance away.

£10 per person per night, with the option of a third night on the Sunday if required.

£10 deposit required to secure place.

Please contact Guy Harris on 07967 820002 or email [guy.harris1@virgin.net](mailto:guy.harris1@virgin.net).

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> January

## Mitch's Meet



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

It looks like we'll be returning to the Breidden Hills as next year will be 7 years since we last walked the range and there is a cracking pub we didn't use last time!

There are a variety of short and long walks possible depending on weather and personal fitness but the suggested "led route" would be from Middletown on the A458 over the Marilyn summit, Moel y Golfa 404m, onto Middletown Hill and then over to Rodney's Pillar 365m to the NE.

From this it is a short drop down to the "Admiral Rodney Inn" at Criggion SY5 9AU, which the websites say is a "quiet pub" that "serves real ale and does good food". Mary the landlady says she'd be pleased to accommodate us and she opens at noon.

# Forth For The Furth

June 2016

Words and pictures by John Edwards



While on holiday in Ireland in June, a visit to "The South Pole Inn" at Annascaul was high on the agenda as it is world famous as the place that Tom Crean settled down as landlord after his heroic efforts with Scott and Shackleton in the Antarctic. When we finally reached the village on the Dingle Peninsula was a bit 'miffed' when I discovered that I'd missed the 3rd Tom Crean International Festival by just a couple of days and that part of this involved an "Endurance Challenge" walk. This festival is set to become an annual event and that got me thinking about a possible club trip to the Emerald Isle next year to climb the thirteen 3,000 ft peaks there, ending up at the Festival where the last one, Brandon Mountain, could be climbed as part of the Challenge walk. Those who manage to finish this 19 mile high-level walk (i.e. most likely in Irish mist!) within 10 hours are awarded Tom Crean Medallions!

The plan would be to drive to Holyhead on the Friday night and catch the ferry to Dublin. Not sure yet if this would be 11th or 18th June. Next day climb Lugnaquilla 3035 ft (925m) in the Wicklow Mountains Sunday move south west and climb Galtymore Mountain 3015 ft (919m). Then move to the Kerry Peninsula where there are 10 peaks, probably done in 2 ridge walks over the 4 days.



East Peaks: Cruach Mhor 3058 ft (932m), Lackagarrin 3100 ft (944m), Cummeennapeasta 3191 ft (972m), Bearna Rua / Knockoughter 3159 ft (962m), Cnoc an Chuilinn 3143 ft (958m)

West Peaks: Beenkeragh 3314 ft (1010m), Tooth 3000ft (914m), Carrauntoohil 3409 ft (1039m), Caher 3284 ft (1001m) & its W Top 3199 ft (975m)

Finally on the Friday (18th or 25th) drive the short distance north to Annascaul to check in at the Festival and enjoy the craic. Can't be up too late though as at 7am on the Saturday a bus leaves to take walkers to Bailebreac where the 19 miles walk over Brandon Mountain and 7 other peaks starts at 0800. The full route is An Baile Breac - Mount Brandon 3123 ft (952m) - Brandon Peak - An Gearan - Ballysitteragh - Conner Hill Car Park - Sliabh Maca Re - An Cnapan Mor - Windy Gap - Cnoc Mhacilicnain - Com Dubh Mor - Sean Droichhead River Walk - South Pole Inn.



Tom Crean was one of Shackleton's companions in the famous open boat journey of the James Caird & was one of the 3 who made the first ever crossing of South Georgia in a 36 hour forced march, which ultimately led to the rescue of all the other Endurance members from Elephant Island and 2016 marks the 100th anniversary of these events so the festival should be a special one. Over the road from the pub is the Tom Crean Memorial Garden and not far away is the Crean family tomb at the amazing Ballinacourty burial ground, which feature in a 3 hour 'Tom Crean Trail' on the Sunday for those who fancy an easier walk. Last year there was music by Ned & his Merry-men on all 3 nights, a Husky display and various talks and presentations at other times.

More information can be found at [annascaulwalks.org](http://annascaulwalks.org) and [facebook.com/SouthPoleInn](https://www.facebook.com/SouthPoleInn). Get in touch with John if you're interested in going.

# I love Ennerdale because...

YHA Ennerdale Weekend 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2015

Words and pictures by Hilary Jones



So I read the National Trust beer mat in the Fox and Hounds. Well, let's see:



- It's a remote, beautiful valley in the Lake District
- It boasts not one but two Youth Hostels
- Ennerdale Youth Hostel is a fun place for a sleepover – ask the bright young girl who accosted Nigel on arrival (You can't park here, we're still getting off our minibus. Where are you from? Where are you staying? For how long? We're from Workington... we're in the camping barn... butonlyforonenightit'smybirthdaytomorrow)
- The sunsets from Red Pike are superb – ask the sub-warden
- These are Wainwright's favourite fells – his ashes were scattered on Hay Stacks, 597m



- Chris Brasher thought them pretty special too – see plaque at Black Sail Youth Hostel
- In fact it's a super base for exploring the surrounding ridges – ask Nigel (I think I've walked my knees into submission!) or Dave N and Chris
- Pillar Rock – that tantalisingly elusive last Nuttall<sup>1</sup>, the only one that needs a rope – is within easy reach, DVWP<sup>2</sup> (they weren't!) – Grade 3 scramble/wet rock, ask John E
- You never know who you might meet – ask the

Scots, Canadians, Australians on the Coast to Coast long distance footpath

- There are fantastic 360° panoramas for photos even in low cloud – ask Dave D
- It's home to classic ice age drumlins – spot the 'basket of eggs' at the head of the valley



- The forest track is entertaining after dark, driving in torrential rain, skirting potholed puddles with leaping frogs and aquaplaning moths (not to mention a certain self-opening car window – waterproofs essential – ask Clare)
- The fells bear the late summer hue of purple heathers, and fascinating flora like starry mosses or carnivorous butterworts – ask Oliver ('banana skins' – ask Andy B)
- There's no shortage of Marilyns/Nuttalls/Deweys<sup>3</sup> and other assorted tops to bag – spot Andy B with his GPS, ask Darren, man with a List<sup>4</sup>
- It's only an hour's drive for more of the same and for the ascent of his last Marilyn, Black Combe 600m (walking poles guard of honour, hip flask and Eccles cake included) – congratulations John E
- There are hardly any long, tussocky marsh grasses to wade through – but, further afield, don't ask Paul about Sunday
- Finally, there's no mobile signal! (It's a remote, beautiful valley in the Lake District... ☺)

And thanks, Andy, for organising another super weekend!

---

<sup>1</sup> Nuttall – over 610m in altitude, prominence of over 15m

<sup>2</sup> DVWP – *deo volente*, weather permitting – ask my grandmother

<sup>3</sup> Marilyn – any prominence of at least 150m, regardless of absolute height

Dewey – over 500m in elevation but below 2000ft (610m) and relative height of 30m

<sup>4</sup> <http://hill-bagging.co.uk/> – ask Andy B

# Stranded at the Hut

*A shameless rip-off of Desert Island Discs*

I thoroughly enjoyed John Edwards' article some time ago about choosing a selection of mountaineering books, where he alluded to the Radio 4 programme *Desert Island Discs*. Having enjoyed this programme for many years, I would like to encourage members to put forward their selection of mountaineering literature. Unlike some pastimes, we are blessed with a plentiful selection of books, and over the years I have both enjoyed and been inspired by climbers' exploits from nearby Wales to the far away Himalayas.

So to set the scene: imagine you have travelled by yourself to a remote mountain hut, but as soon as you arrive the mother of all snowstorms cuts you off from the outside world. All paths are blocked, there's no phone signal or internet connection, and you're stranded with no hope of escape or rescue. Fortunately the hut is well stocked with food and water, so there's nothing to do but to wait for the snow to melt, and get reading...

The hut you're stranded in has a full set of maps. *Which books would you take with you and why?* For example: was this the first book that introduced you to mountaineering? Does it remind you of a coach meet you did once? Did it introduce you to a new area, or a new activity such as Munro bagging, scrambling or climbing?

For one day only the storm subsides and you are able to choose your favourite day out on any mountain on any route anywhere in the world. *What day out would you choose and why?*

Unfortunately, while you were out enjoying your day trip, the melting snow has leaked through the roof and ruined your books! All apart from one, which you had kept safely under your bed. *Out of the books you've listed, which one would you save and why?*

Being stranded in a remote mountain hut with a plentiful supply of food and drink, presumably a wood burning stove and a choice of reading material sounds like a really good relaxing break.

The difficult part is choosing the books. We are lucky in our pastime in that there is a plentiful supply of books covering all sorts of adventures and activities from Victorian explorers to modern day activists.

By Ken Priest  
With photos from Amazon.co.uk

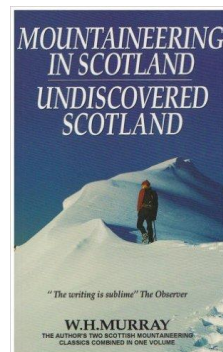


When I look at my bookshelf I am daunted at the task of selecting just 8; there are so many iconic books all with their separate memories of my journey and past in mountaineering.

I will start with those which were contenders but didn't make the cut:

- Everest the Hard Way, Bonnington
- Hands of a Climber (Colin Kirkus biography) Steve Dean
- White Spider, Heinrich Harrier
- Learning to Breathe, Andy Cave
- The Spirit of the Hills, FS Smythe
- Physco Vertical Andy Kirkpatrick
- 100 routes in Mont Blanc Gaston Rebuffat

My journey started following a logical progression of hill walking in Spring/summer, moving into the winter, then scrambling, rock climbing, winter climbing and finally trips to the Alps. This was heavily influenced by MOUNTAINEERING by Alan Blackshaw, an early manual, giving instruction and loads of good advice. My copy is so well read that it has been taped together more than once.

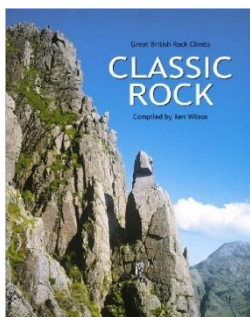


Another inspiring book I obtained early in my progression and inspired us to go to Scotland was MOUNTAINEERING IN SCOTLAND and UNDISCOVERED SCOTLAND by WH Murray. One of these was written in a prisoner of war camp and I imagine kept him going through some dark times. His description of a still, frosty morning with gleaming snow and ice was the reason Pete and Sue Goddard and I first went to Scotland in search of some of these magical places full of history and adventure.

Compendium books must surely be allowed and for this reason I really must have the Eric Shipton SIX MOUNTAIN TRAVEL BOOKS covering Nandi Devi and the reconnaissance of Everest. These adventurous trips were financed on a shoestring and travelled through all sorts of lands and peoples in search of mountains in days of poor communication and basic early equipment. Shipton was really unlucky in not being chosen on the 1953 Everest expedition as he had spent many weeks studying the best approach routes.

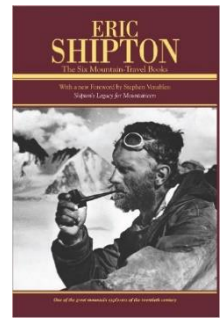
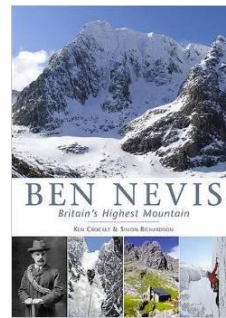
My bible for climbing in Wales would keep me reading for hours and this is RON JAMES, SELECTION OF CLIMBS. His descriptions of each pitch are excellent and full of tips, like "take your wrist watch off for this crack." My copy, which cost 75p second hand is annotated with dates and names of all the climbing partners I have shared a rope with over the years and re-reading this would evoke many happy memories

CLASSIC ROCK and COLD CLIMBS are two must haves for their photography of iconic climbs throughout the UK and their suggestions of the best routes both rock and winter. Both of these have inspired me to seek out the best of climbs in many different areas including sea cliffs in Cornwall to the ice of Ben Nevis and the narrative by different famous climbers on each climb cannot fail to inspire you to at least go take a look and give it a go.



The Wembley stadium or Twickenham of Wales must surely be Cloggy on the side of Snowdon, and my copy of THE BLACK CLIFF sits proudly on my shelf; it is now out of print and worth a bob or two! This book by Ken Wilson, Pete Crew and Soper covers the history of exploration of this crag and reads like the who's who of the British climbing scene, as over the years all of the hard men have put up new routes pushing the grades. Some of the descriptions of repeated attempts in far from ideal conditions with rudimentary gear makes you realise how talented these early climbers were and sometimes the risks they took.

On a similar vein, BEN NEVIS by Ken Crocket narrates the history of early Victorian climbers up to the present day modern style ice and mixed climbers putting up some unbelievable routes. The history of the Charles Inglis Clarke, CIC hut is also covered from its inception to construction. This book again covers all of the climbers pushing the limits and trying their skills on the Ben's north face routes, a great read.



The hardest bit of all come now: which one would I chose to keep? All of them have inspired me down the years, but from a pragmatic level, the SHIPTON compendium would keep me going longer and it evokes a bygone age of exploration with rudimentary maps and a spirit of adventure.

My chosen day out is also a very tough choice; there are several routes in the Alps I would like to do, but it seems right and proper to stay in Wales, where it all started. Winter routes on the Black Ladders or Snowdon spring to mind or a long rock route on Cloggy or Tryffan.

Chosen day out:

CENTRAL TRINITY gully takes you right to the summit of Snowdon and that would do for me.

Book I would save:

ERIC SHIPTON Compendium

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)

# Icelandic Adventures

13<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> August

By Sue Goddard



Thursday 13 August saw Jo Cheung, Dee Sehdeva and me sprinting through Manchester Airport trying to catch our flight to Reykjavik. The sprint was caused by the extraordinary lengthy queue at the Easyjet check-in, not due to any tardiness on our part. No duty free, no breakfast. A shocking start to our trip! Luckily bacon rolls were served on the flight.

We landed in Reykjavik to temperatures of 7 degrees and pouring rain. Oh, and it was a bit misty too – perfect Icelandic summer weather. Leaving our hefty bags at the bus station we took a walk round the rainy small city. Our hostel, Hlemma Square was pre-booked, but was not available til 3pm, so we took advantage of coffee, cakes and WiFi in a lovely cafe (thanks to Dee). Settling into the hostel we packed our rucksacks ready for our exciting trek, and made the acquaintance of Kaspar, with whom we were destined to share much of our trip. His first suggestion of taking the bus to the bus station the next morning was greeted with scorn (Jo), and delight (Sue).

*“Bucketing it down is an understatement. The forecast was horrendous, and the reality worse...”*

Day One started well with the bus taking us to the bus station on time, and off we set for Landmannalauger. A four hour bus trip started on tarmac roads, then spent two hours bouncing along muddy, rocky tracks and crossing rivers the direct route. Did I mention the rain? Bucketing it down is an understatement. The forecast was horrendous, and the reality worse. Upon arrival at Landmannalauger we were advised that no-one was able to start the trek due to the adverse weather, with blizzards and white-out conditions on the approach to the first hut. Best mate Kaspar was lucky to bag a space in the hut at the starting point. We three were dispatched on a three hour bus trip to Selfoss, the nearest civilisation. The friendly bus driver rang a hostel there and secured us a posh three bedded bedroom. Very disappointed, but feeling we had no choice but to heed the advice given by the authorities. One blessing was that I had purchased hiking passes, so we had no additional bus fares to find. We sat in the spacious hostel kitchen eating our rehydrated meals whilst all around us delicious food was being prepared. At least our packs were now a bit lighter.

Day Two felt like déjà-vu. On the bus for three and a half hours, more muddy tracks and deeper wider rivers. The bus delivered us to the Altavatn hut, so to alleviate our guilt at not having walked there we set off for a couple of hours of mooching off in the general direction from whence we should have come. To our surprise we met Kaspar coming to camp at the hut. He confirmed that conditions on the path from Landmannalauger were very difficult. Naturally it was raining, so we returned to the hut where fortified with hot chocolate (more lightening of the load), I settled to read my very thin paperback. Jo and Dee, being made of sterner stuff, and having no paperback went off out into the drizzle. They found a small peak to ascend, and returned happier, but wetter as the torrents had descended. Early to bed, we were excited to actually start our walk the next day.

Day Three dawned very wet, but not deterred we set off at a cracking pace to find our first river crossing. After watching the party in front to see exactly which items of clothing we needed to remove, it was down to our underwear, boots tied onto our sacs. Iceland has many geo-thermal waters – this was not one of them. It was freezing. A quick dry off, and off to find the next, much wider, and if possible, even colder river. Just in case you were wondering, it was stair rods at this point. We decided to find different words to identify each type of rain, drizzle, mizzle, tinkling, pouring, spitting, spotting – I’m sure you get the picture. The terrain was now a lava desert, very flat with interesting rock formations and mossy mountains whose emerald colour contrasted with the black dust underfoot. Route-finding was no problem as the track was way-marked by small wooden posts. After 4 hours 45 minutes I arrived at Emstrur huts (I had run ahead to ensure the following walkers who were gaining on us DID NOT PASS US). We were feeling very pleased with ourselves to have beaten the guide time of 6/7 hours. It boded well for the following day, which was a double.

The small hut was rather reminiscent of our own dear hut as kitchen, large dining table and bunks were all contained within one small room. Once settled in we strolled up to view a deep canyon as the rain had ceased. This proved to be a temporary improvement in the weather.

Continued overleaf...



We were joined in the hut by two rather hunky Americans (ask Jo for details), an adventurous young Dutch lady, and a party of English tourists. Luckily for us, the remaining 5 guests did not show so we all benefited from a double bunk each.

*"It didn't help to hear a tourist guide comment 'they've got a long way to go' as we passed a large group..."*

Day Four was our big day, a total of 30K, descent of 600 metres then ascent of 1000 metres. It could have been divided into two sections, but I felt Jo and Dee needed a challenge. After a false start at 8.30 (I had left my sandals in the hut) we set off on a clearly visible path. IT WAS NOT RAINING. We were rewarded by an early sighting of the Myrdalsjokull glacier in the distance. River crossings over bridges, chains to assist us in descending rock faces, and a gentle meandering path led down to a much greener valley. No real vegetation was to be seen until we had crossed our final river. In spite of the warnings, this crossing was our easiest yet – no need to remove our trousers.

The sun came out, and stayed with us for the next two hours while we descended to Porsmork. Having kept up our pace of yesterday we had time for a quick stop at a small shop to treat ourselves to fizzy pop to top up our energy levels. It was at this point that I confessed to Dee that we had a bit of an uphill to go to reach the hut, well 1000 metres isn't really a lot, only the height of Snowdon. The first part of the trail was a regular tourist jaunt so we felt a bit overburdened by our rucksacks and poles. It didn't help to hear a tourist guide comment "they've got a long way to go" as we passed a large group. It began to rain, the temperature dropped and suddenly the tourists were all behind us. Ahead was the route up the Fimmvoruhals pass, it only went one way – up. Chain festooned rocks and steep snowy slopes led up to white-out conditions across a soft snow field. Where were those helpful wooden posts when you needed them? I confess to feeling a little anxious at this point. Footsteps were going in three different directions.

We had followed the wooden posts to the area where the remains of the 2010 eruption of Eyjafallajokull had created new craters and the youngest mountains in Iceland. We were in the steps of Julia Bradbury. Gut instinct suggested that we needed to be

ascending the slope to our left and I was delighted to find a post confirming this. Icelandic maps are not like our trusted OS maps, so whilst we were in possession of map and compass, it was still not easy. It was getting later and my thoughts were becoming more pessimistic regarding finding the hut. I had a shelter, and we all had sleeping bags so....

Finally after another hour trudging across soft snow I spotted the hut, described as squalid in the guide book. To us it was a palace. "You are crazy" was the guardian's response when she heard where we had set out from. A friendly voice shouted from the dormitory, it was our young friend Kaspar who had decided to extend his walk after listening to our plans. Success, we'd done it.

Day Five was an easy stroll down, following an amazing river with waterfalls along the way. We reached the end of our trek at Skogarfoss, a real tourist trap with restaurants and bars. Big smiles, big burgers then a three hour bus trip back to Reykjavik.

Unfortunately there were casualties – my aged Salomon boots – but in spite of this it was an amazing trip with fantastic scenery and a real sense of achievement at the end.



Would you like to see your article in the newsletter? You can now submit articles and photos through the club's website! Log in to the members' area and click "Submit an Article". Alternatively, you can email them and photos 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)

Please call me to ask for details about the cost of extra nights on 07950 087911. A non-refundable deposit is required (£25 per person) by 10th November, payable to West Bromwich Mountaineering Club, the balance is payable individually before leaving the hotel.

## 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)).

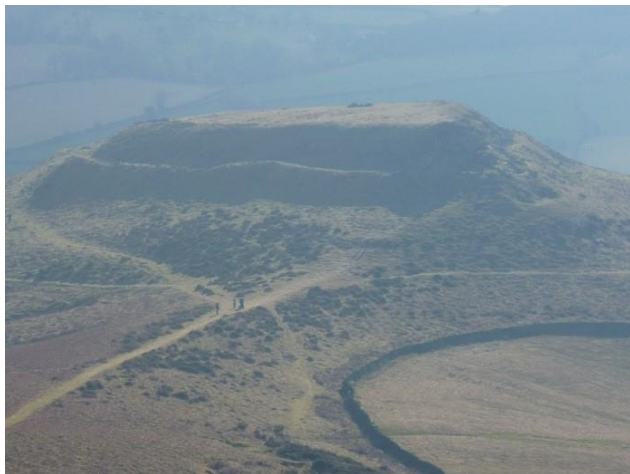


Photo from [visittalgarth.co.uk](http://visittalgarth.co.uk)

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>		

# 3.5 Men in a Boat (and a rescue)

4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> September

Words and pictures  
by Dave Jones



Lee Grainger had mentioned some months previous prior to his Birthday on 21st July that he would like to organise a wild swimming weekend on 4th to 6th September 2015. We had booked the club hut in advance for myself, Lee, Andrew Wright & Tom Keeling. Some of you may remember ten year old Tom Keeling from his first club meet to Seatoller some months back.

Two other groups were also present at the hut doing their own activities which included a Sea Kayaking team that was going to Trearddur Bay, consisting of Graeme Stanford, Tracey Stanford, Ken Priest, Pete Poultney, Chris Dean, Jo Cheung, Jo Tansey. The other group, consisting of Mark Stephens, Fred Hammond's, Paul Brindley & Oliver Stephenson, were Kilimanjaro training.

Mark Stephens picked me up at around 17.00 hours and we started our journey down to North Wales making a short stop at Llangollen to pick up supplies. When we arrived Lee, Andy, & Tom had already arrived they had decided to eat at Plas Y Brenin on route, when arriving we started to settle in. The two other groups arrived later on in the evening followed by good conversation and a few drinks.

Saturday was a very special day for two individuals, it was Graeme's & Tracey's wedding anniversary - congratulations we know you had an enjoyable day followed by a nice evening at Saracens restaurant.

Trearddur Bay group rose early and left for their kayaking day, others rose later and we opted for a good hearty welsh breakfast at Caffi Gwynant prior to our day commencing.

Lee had arranged for us to hire two Canadian canoes from Plas Gwynant Activity centre, after breakfast we got changed into our wet suits and drove up to the centre to place these canoes onto Lee's vehicle.

Even though Lee did have roof bars we did not have the correct spanner to fit the canoes to the bars, so Lee threw a sleeping bag onto the roof of his car, and it took three of us to lift the canoe into place. These canoes are around thirteen feet long, so even though we were only canoeing on Nant Gwynant you have a very good overhang on both the front and rear of the vehicle and without roof bars we were hoping that this canoe was not moving until we got it on water.

We offloaded the first canoe leaving Andy & Tom and myself and Lee went back for the other canoe. I got to admit that Lee ensured that the canoes were secure and at times I thought the tension applied may have dented your roof!

The weather was fantastic with glorious sunshine, as mentioned our day was going to consist of canoeing taking into account Lee's idea of wild swimming. We placed small items into the canoe, got our life jackets on and took to the water, Lee had set up an helmet cam taking footage of our exploits. Looking across to elephant rock we turned left and headed towards some boat houses ensuring that we had familiarised ourselves with our boats and more importantly how to row.



Myself & Lee shared one canoe and Andy & Tom were in the other. We decided to head right across the lake towards elephant rock, on approaching the rock we heard a male voice shouting us from the shoreline, we rowed across and heard that a female was injured whilst out walking. We pulled the boats into a rocky area and myself and Lee went to investigate. We had lost sight of the guy that had alerted us and at first we thought was this a joke, Lee jokingly had said "be careful he has a Scouse accent" on hearing this I carried my paddle with me as security. (no disrespect) Eventually we caught up with the guy that informed that a lady out with her husband had fallen and had become nervous about carrying on with their walk.

Continued overleaf...

*3.5 Men in a Boat*

continued...

She had some marks on her legs where she had fallen but thankfully there was no real injury except for being scared walking on slippery mud. We asked where they had walked from and where they were staying, they both stated that they were staying at Nant Gwynant camp site, we asked if they would like to be taken back to the camp site via the canoe to eliminate them walking back. They gratefully accepted our offer and myself and Lee helped the individual back to the shoreline who was clearly very shaken. We decided that the injured lady was going to sit in the middle of our canoe and her husband was going to sit in Andrew & Tom's canoe.

We started to row across to the camp site trying to reassure her that she was OK and this was the best option for them both. We arrived at a little sandy bay area passing a guy that was also wild swimming, we dropped them off and they went to sit down on a bench probably reminiscing on their adventure, we had obviously done our good deed for the day and by now we really wanted some adventure. Whilst by the campsite the river runs round into some lovely secluded areas, we rowed around looking at campers who were looking at us a little weirdly, by now Lee was trying to keep me on track with my rowing and on a couple of times I had to get him out of trouble LOL.



Andy decided it was time for a photo opportunity, we got out the canoes to stretch our legs and Andy set up his camera on a fence post taking a photo of the rescue team ha ha, we got back in the boats and decided it was time to get wet with some jumping off elephant rock, we got back in the boats and headed our way across back to where we originally came from, we tied the boats up next to a family that had done the same, they was also clambering up the rocks to find the ledges prior to hurtling themselves off the rock into the murky water.

Lee had kindly lent me some wet shoes which was ideal for climbing onto the rocks and obviously the water just drains from them when getting wet. We opted for a lower ledge first just to get used to the water and Lee had positioned his helmet cam for video footage to be later viewed in the comfort of the pub.

Tom was a little cold from getting out of the canoe and climbing up the slippery rocks, and opted to dry out in the sun watching the younger minded adults make fools of themselves jumping into the water and climbing back up to do it all over again. After a few more jumps myself and Lee found an higher perch to climb up to and take a bigger leap, Lee went first and I knew that as soon as he hit the water I had to follow him, I threw myself off hoping that my body kept upright prior to hitting the water, I soon sank to the deep murky depths with my life vest bringing me back to the surface quickly, as mentioned the water was very cold, not so much jumping in, but the actual swimming back to the rocks to clamber back up again. Andy had opted to stay on the lower ledge (sensible choice mate) and was taking photos.



Continued overleaf...

*3.5 Men in a Boat*

continued...

Tom had to be encouraged and was very brave jumping into very cold water, and eventually even went off the upper ledge, see attached photo, this was one photo that had to go in the newsletter, after numerous jumps, Tom had become very cold and started to shake so we decided it was time to row the boats around the corner and dry out and have some lunch.

We got the boats to where the rescue had been done previously, and got all our wet gear off apart from suits and started to dry clothing on rocks, we started to skim stones across the water to see who could get the most skims. We ate Pork Pie, Biscuits etc.

We got back in the boats and headed back down the lake and at the very end it runs into some small rapids that can only be described as exhilarating, but I knew that at the end we were going to run out of water and would have to pull the boat back up stream against the current.

Lee got out the boat at the end, Andy and Tom had decided not to go down in the first instance, so I was left to pull the boat back up stream, I kept falling over on the slippery rock, but kept laughing so much that I could not keep my balance, Lee was laughing and was taking photos of me keep falling over, we got back in the boats and canoed back to where we had originally started by the cars, we pulled the boats back in and decided it was time just to do our wild swimming, we done the obvious splashing to each other and sorry Tom if I splashed you on numerous occasions, Lee described me later on in the evening as being like a man possessed when in water.

We had a full day out and decided it was time to get the canoes back onto the sleeping bag and make two trips back to Plas Gwynant, trying to take wet suits off by the car must have been laughable for car users passing us by the layby.

When we got back to the hut it was shower the wet suits down and then a shower for myself, we sat outside and enjoyed the late afternoon sun.

We heard that the Treaddur group were also on their way back. We decided to go to the Tanronen Inn for our evening meal, and we got a table in the main restaurant area for the group, followed by after drinks in the bar area, reminiscing on our days adventure and looking at photos and video footage.

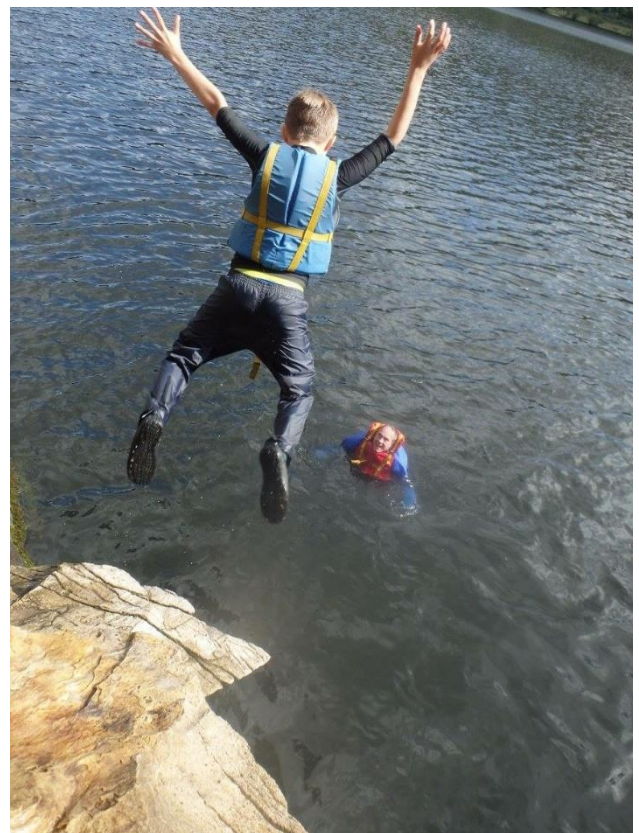
Everyone was back at the hut later in the evening for a good evening of conversation, and our wedding anniversary couple Graham & Tracy had also come back from their romantic meal.

On the Sunday morning some opted for the Caffi Gwynant again, some decided to go for a run, I restocked wood for the hut and done some general chores.

As always weekends go to very quickly at the hut, everyone said their goodbyes and made their journeys back home. I would like to thank my fellow members Lee, Andy and the young very brave Tom Keeling for a very enjoyable weekend.

Canoeing and jumping off rocks never really appealed to me, but it goes to show that if you give things a go you never know if you are going to enjoy them or not. Also we were glad that we could offer our help and support to two individuals that needed help, none of us know when we may require support.

A very enjoyable weekend was had by everyone and see you soon on further adventures.



# Coach Meet – Rhinogs

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October

## Depart

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

07:20 - M54 Junction 2 Service Road

(Brief toilet stop at Corwen)

## Drop off

Pont y Grible (713306)

Llanelltyd (715194)

Barmouth (612158)

## Pick up

Barmouth (612189)

Bontddu (673189)

## Required maps

OS 1:25.000 Outdoor Leisure No18 Snowdonia - Harlech & Bala Areas

Routes 1.2 & 3

No. 23 Snowdonia-Cader Idris Area

Route 4

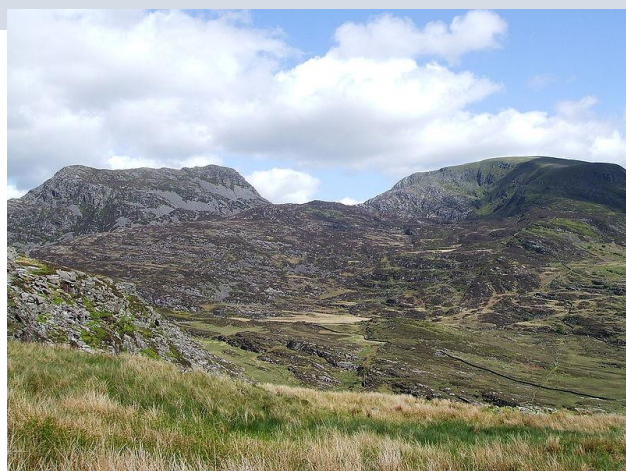


Photo by Gwilym Morrison

## 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 by 7pm on the 8<sup>th</sup> July.

## Suggested routes

### Route 1 (27km - 16.5miles)

From Pont y Grible follow a good track west to Graigddu-Isaf (681301) continue west through the forest to the Roman Steps (661299) and Llyn Du (656294) before climbing steeply to the summit of Rhinog Fawr (656290). Descend east for 40m then descend a very steep gully into the valley (660281) Follow a path east to the col then south making your own way through the heather to the summit of Rhinog Fach (665270) A good path now follows a wall over Y Llethr (661258). Diffwys (661234) and eventually Bwlch y Rhiwgr (627200) From here descend to Sylfaen (632185) where a road leads into Barmouth.

*This is a long and demanding walk, if in doubt have a go at route 2 or 3.*

### Route 2 (24km - 15miles)

From Pont y Grible follow a good track west to Graigddu- Isaf (681301) then head south through the forest past Grugle 9675287) to grid ref (666283) Ascend Rhinog Fach (665270) then follow route1 to Barmouth.

### Route 3 (20km - 12.5miles) – Lead walk

First follow route 2 to the summit of Diffwys (661234). Then descend to grid ref (644227) turn south east down the ridge of Braich to Banc-y-Fran (657202) where a short walk leads to Bontddu.

### Route 4 (15km - 10 miles)

From Llanellytd follow the A470 south to the A493 road junction and cross the bridge over Afon Wnion (713183) Follow the Morfa Mawddach walk along the dismantled railway passing Penmaenpool bridge (695185). Garth Isaf (653162) and Morfa Mawddach Station (628142) Cross the footbridge where a small toll is to be paid at the end before finishing in Barmouth.

The coach will be parked in the coach park at the top end of the town by the Amusement park.

Route 3 will be a lead walk with Mike Smith

# Coach Meet – Llanberis

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November

## Depart

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

07:20 - M54 Junction 2 Service Road

(Brief toilet stop at Corwen)

## Drop off

Capel Curig (721582)

Pen-Y-Pass (647556)

Llanberis (583598)

## Pick up

Llanberis (583598)

Pen-Y-Gwyrdd Hotel (660558)

## Required maps

Outdoor Leisure No17 - Snowdon



Photo by Gwilym Morrison

## 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 by 7pm on the 8<sup>th</sup> July.

## Suggested routes

### Route 1 (15km - 10 miles)

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 Pen-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 Y Lliwedd. *This is a hard day in the time available.*

### Route 3 (17km - 11 miles)

From Pen-Y-Pass ascend Snowdon via the Pyg Track. Leave NW and descend via the Snowdon Ranger path as far as Bwlch Cwm Brwynog (9591558) a steep grassy climb then leads to Moel Cynghorion (586564). Descend to Bwlch Maesgwm (573559) then follow

the easy path North to Llanberis coach park on the right hand side just past Electric Mountain visitors' centre

### Route 4 (17km - 11 miles)

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 Elifir Fawr before dropping down to Llanberis coach park.

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