



The Facebook Cover photo uploaded by William Onion (Coach_Pickles on Instagram) on 18 Sept 2022 of himself & the Group Hike UK clients (*You know where!*) taken by drone. (More inside p 8)

	Contents	<u>Editorial</u>
2 (&17)	Noticeboard / Future Events	<p>A shout out and big “thank you” to Jonathan Howells for organising one of the best attended “Scottish Winter Week”s for many a year with 60 booked into the Ben Nevis Hotel. That’s £17,640 to keep the hotel going if they all stayed 7 nights!! And it needs the dosh as some of the outer building rooms had leaking roofs so we were all roomed in the main hotel. In fact it would have been very quiet if we weren’t there.</p> <p>A summary of what the weather was like & what folk got up to will hopefully be elsewhere in this Newsletter but in the meantime just a few reminders (courtesy of the hotel wall hangings) of why we do it:-</p> <p>Memories made in the mountains stay in our hearts forever.</p> <p>Life is like a mountain, hard to climb but worth the amazing view from the top.</p> <p>And just to show we’re not hiding this away in the small print, here’s ‘Front Page News’ that, sadly, the committee have had to make an increase in coach fares from March as Robinsons jave had to increase what they charge us due to increases in the cost of fuel and drivers’ wages. However, the coach is still excellent value!!</p>
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<p>This Newsletter was produced by John Edwards. Thanks to all those who contributed information. If you spot something interesting about the mountains or want to write a report please get in touch via jaejed@hotmail.com</p>		

PROGRAMME OF FUTURE EVENTS:

COACH MEETS TO THE HILLS & MOUNTAINS:-

Sunday 14th March – The Arans / Dinas Mawddwy
 Sunday 14th April – Horton in Ribblesdale / 3 Peaks
 Saturday 11th May – Seatoller Long Coach Meet
 Reserve your seat with Nigel (07703 345729) and
 be guaranteed a great day on the hills.

*These leave W. Brom at 7am & usually return
 around 9 – 9.30 pm giving ~7 hrs on the hills
 with linear walks often possible. If you don't
 fancy a long walk why not come along for a
 social day out or a stroll through some
 beautiful villages?*

INDOOR MEETS WITH MOUNTAINEERING PRESENTATIONS :-

Thursdays 7th March **Members' Night with Illustrated Talk on "Snakes & Ladders" in
 Snowdonia** by Tony Emms

Thursday 11th April **Members' Night** Speaker to be announced.

Thursday 9th May **OUTDOOR MEET** Somewhere in the West Midlands!

COMMITTEE MEETINGS & SOCIAL NIGHTS AT THE RED LION (B71 1RH) :-

Thursdays 14th March, 18th April & 16th May Committee meetings start at 7.30pm & observers
 are welcome. Otherwise come along at ~ 8.30 pm for a drink & a chat or meal.

**THURSDAY 21st MARCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING @ The Red Lion All Saints
 Way, B71 1RH 7.30pm start. Please come along and help make this crucial meeting quorate.**

INDOOR CLIMBING AT "HIGH PLACES" (KIDDERMINSTER CLIMBING WALL)

A group of WBMC members have been indoor climbing at High Places, based at Wyre Forest
 Leisure Centre, Siverwoods Way, Kidderminster DY11 7DT on the **last Tuesday of every
 month from 6 to 9.30pm** They have a WhatsApp group that enables them to keep in touch and
 if you want to be added to this group or have more information about who goes, cost etc please
 feel free to get in touch with Pete Poultney 07779 366905 or peterpoultney@hotmail.co.uk

Also see <https://www.placesleisure.org/centres/wyre-forest-leisure-centre/centre-activities/climbing/> for more details of how folk can use the Centre.

INDOOR CLIMBING AT "REDPOINT" (BIRMINGHAM CLIMBING CENTRE)

A group of WBMC members has started indoor climbing every week at Redpoint Climbing &
 Bouldering Centre, 77 Cecil Street, Newtown, Birmingham B19 3ST at **12 noon on Wednesdays
 & Saturdays**. They have a WhatsApp group that enables them to keep in touch and if you want
 to be added to this group or have more information about who goes, cost, standards etc please
 feel free to get in touch with Darren Groutage via 07973 405348 or dgroutage10@outlook.com
 Also see <http://www.redpointbirmingham.co.uk/> for details of how folk can use the Centre /
 registration and the various courses they offer.

WEEKENDS & OTHER MEETS :-

AWAY DINNER WEEKEND: Nights of Fri 15th (B&B) & Sat 16th (Dinner B&B) MARCH

At Briery Wood Country House Hotel, Windermere. Contact Nigel Tarr (07703 345729) for more
 details & to book single, double or triple room if you haven't already done so.

Friday Night Double/twin room £149 Single room £139 Tripleroom £159

Saturday Night B&B and Dinner Double/twin £229 Single £189 Triple £269

TORRIDON CAMPING WEEK 18th - 25th May

Stopping at the small, newish Shildaig campsite (IV54 8XN) on the shore of Loch Shildaig. The
 village nearby has a pub that does meals, a lovely cafe & a grocery store. The w/e leader Tony
 Emms (07793 008582) has booked 12 places so if you are interested in tackling some of the
 Torridon "Giants"; some classic roack climbs or delightful low-level coastal walks contact him.
 Excursions to Applecross, Plockton & Syke are all within a days drive, as well!

..... Meets continued on page 17

COACH MEET SUNDAY 14th MARCH 2024: THE ARANS – last visited by WBMC 8 years ago and only 7 times since June 1993 !

Depart: 07:00 – West Bromwich

Edward St Car Park B70 8NL

07:20 – M54 Junction 2

Toilet stop: Corwen

Drop offs: Llanuwchllyn (880299)

Car Park on A470 - Bwlch Oerddrws (803170)

Dinas Mawddwy (Layby) (858147)

Check with Nigel if you want a different drop off between Bala & Dinas Mawddwy

Pick ups: Dinas Mawddwy (Layby) (858147)

Required map: OS 1:25000 Outdoor Leisure 23 Snowdonia – Cader Idris area



Aran Benllyn seen from Aran Fawddwy on a good day

SUGGESTED ROUTES :

FROM LLANUWCHLLWYN Route 1 The Arans Traverse North to South (~ 21 km - 13 miles)

A long but great day out on the hills! ALMOST CERTAINLY THE LED WALK

Head south of town towards and where the road turns sharply NE near the river turn south along a track and after a couple of cattle grids take a bridleway on the right. After a few stiles the bridleway veers right but you should take a grassy path left alongside a wire fence, over Garth-Fawr (875284). The path climbs steeply over grassy moorland up the western slopes of Moel Ddu & Moel Ffenigl, then gets rockier as height is gained, passing Llyn Pen Aran to the summit of Aran Benllyn (867243). This is a fine summit perched on the edge of a cliff where there will hopefully be views of Bala Lake / Llyn Tegid to the N and Aran Fawddwy to the S. Take the path that leads due south to Aran Fawddwy, where a trig point marks the summit (863 224). Continue S before descending SE to a cairn, with a log book to sign ((863213). The path narrows & descends eastwards to the col at Drws Bach before ascending to the flat top of Drysgol (870213). Then descend by good paths SW to Cywarch (853187) & follow lanes some distance to Dinas Mawddwy and the Y Llew Coch – a very Welsh pub.

Route 2 The Arans Traverse North to South Plus Glasgwm (& maybe Foel Benddin) (24 km - 15 miles)

As Route 1 but instead of veering eastwards after Aran Fawddwy summit, descend SW for a considerable distance before the steepish ascent of Glasgwm (836194). From here one could retrace one's steps to a path which descends north of the Craig Cywarch cliffs steeply down into Cwm Cywarch where it's road walking down to Dinas Mawddwy. Or you could stay high going south then east round the S end of Craig Cywarch to go over Y Gribin (844176) and then on to Foel Benddin (854166) followed by a steep pathless descent directly to the caravan / camp site just N of the pub in Dinas.

FROM BWLCH OERDDRWS CAR PARK AT TOP OF A470 Route 2 Eastern Part of the Mid Wales

Mountain Marathon (devised & run by our late Chairman Nev Tandy for many years) (15.5km – 9.5 miles)

Head South, climbing steeply to a ridge following a wall to a 659m spot height (795153). From here continue West to a col, then up over the north part of Cribin Fawr to the summit trig on Waun-oer (786148). Retrace your steps to the col you have just come up from and where the wall kinks (793151), leave it and head to Cribin Fawr summit (795153), then go round the top of the cwm to the top of Craig Portas (802141). Turn left at the wall T junction, descending to a narrow col with exposed cliffs to the left and follow the fence line all the way to the summit of Maesglase (817150) and its eastern top at 822151. Continue south on paths through heather moorland with cliffs on your left to the top of Craig Maesglase (827139) and then on round to the east at the side of a forest to drop down to some disused tips (837139). Follow the track north down into the valley and then head NE to the A470 main road (848159) from where a short road walk takes you to the coach at Dinas Mawddwy.

Fares: Members £25, Non members £29, Under 18's & Full time students £12

To Book Your Seat contact Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729

Should you cancel after the Wednesday prior to the coach date a £5.00 fee will be charged.

Failure to turn up without cancelling and the full coach fare will be expected from you.

COACH MEET SUNDAY 14th APRIL: HORTON-IN-RIBBLESDALE FOR 1, 2 OR ALL 3 OF THE YORKSHIRE THREE PEAKS

Depart: 07:00 – West Bromwich

Edward St Car Park B70 8NL

07:20 – Penkridge

Toilet stop: M6 Services

Drop offs: Ingleton (695730)

Ribblehead Viaduct (765793)

Horton in Ribblesdale (807726)

Pick ups: Horton in Ribblesdale (807726)

Required map: OS 1:25000 Outdoor Leisure No 2

Yorkshire Dales Southern & Western Areas

SUGGESTED ROUTES :



FROM INGLETON Route 1 Ingleborough (9.5km - 6 miles) *Pen y Ghent & Ribblehead Viaduct from Whernside*
Head east along Crina Bottom (722735) and ascend the fine peak of Ingleborough (741745). Descend Eastwards to Sulber Nick (777735) and on to pick up the coach at Horton.

Route 2 Two of the Three Peaks : Ingleborough & Pen y Ghent (20 km - 13 miles)

Follow Route 1 to “bag” Ingleborough and then Route 5 to climb Pen y Ghent.

FROM RIBBLEHEAD VIADUCT Route 3 Two of the Three Peaks : Whernside & Ingleborough (32.5km 20 miles)
Follow Route 3 from the **Viaduct **** to climb Whernside (738814) & Ingleborough (741746)

FROM HORTON Route 4 The Classic Three Peaks (40 km - 24 miles & 4,635 ft of ascent)

Sadly the Pen-y-Ghent Cafe has closed so it is no longer possible to clock in & out to check if you’ve completed the challenge in under 12 hours! But you can still climb Pen-y-Ghent (838734) via Brackenbottom (817722) and then leave the summit down the Pennine Way to GR 838742 near Hull Pot where you head West over boggy ground GR 823743 to rejoin the Pennine Way at Sell Gill Holes (813744). Then pass Top Farm & on to Birkwith Cave (803769). Then follow the Ribble Way past Nether Lodge (792777) & Thorns (782743) and continue over the footbridge to join the Blea Moor Road (776797).

Take the tarmac Left by the Ribblehead **Viaduct **** (765793) to the Inn (764791). Then follow the track before crossing the rail track at 760816. Continue bearing left at 757824 and go W, then SW (768737) and finally S at 741745 to the summit of Whernside (738814). Continue South to Philpin Farm and head up the road past the Hill Inn and take the path at 774746 South to Ingleborough summit (741746) from where you have a simple 6 mile thrash east (744746) past Nick Pot (768737) & on to Horton & the coach. Of course you could do it in reverse - clockwise!

Route 5 Pen-y-Ghent (10.5 km - 7 miles)

If you fancy a shorter day head for Brackenbottom (817722) and pick up the path through Brackenbottom Scar (826726) to the ridge which leads to Pen y Ghent (838734). Return to Horton by heading N on the Pennine Way to G Ref 838742, then go W past Hunt Pot (823743) then S back to Horton.

Route 5 Dale Head & Pen-y-Ghent (15.5 km - 9.5 miles)

Head S out of Horton along the Ribble way (806725) to Helwith Bridge (812695). Cross the river using the road and then take a Left. Where the road turns N go straight on at a track signposted Dale Head. At a path junction take the left path which climbs to the summit Pen y Ghent (838734) & return to Horton as in route 4

Fares: Members £25, Non members £29, Under 18’s & Full time students £12

To Book Your Seat contact Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729

Should you cancel after the Wednesday prior to the coach date a £5.00 fee will be charged.

Failure to turn up without cancelling and the full coach fare will be expected from you.

SATURDAY 11th MAY: SEATOLLER LONG COACH MEET

Depart: 07: 00 – West Bromwich

Edward St Car Park B70 8NL

07: 20 – Penkridge

Toilet stop: Charnock Richard M6 Services

Drop offs: Keswick (264235)

Shepherds Crag (262184)

Seatoller (246137)

Pick ups: Seatoller (246137)

Shepherds Crag (262184)

Keswick Coach Station (264235)

Required map: OS 1:25000 Outdoor Leisure

No 4 The English Lakes – NW Area

No 6 The English Lakes – SW Area



Base Brown, Green Gable & Great Gable from Dale Head

SUGGESTED ROUTES :

FROM KESWICK Route 1 To Seatoller via Catbells, High Spy & Dale Head (15.5 km – 9.5 miles)

Head W to Stormwater Bridge (255239) & into Portinscale. Follow the Cumbria Way south to the foot of Catbells and climb steeply to its summit (244198). Continue S along the ridge over Maiden Moor to High Spy (235162), making sure you enjoy the views behind you over Keswick to Skiddaw. Descend to Dale Head Tarn (230152) and turn W to the summit of Dale Head (223153). Then it's back downhill to Dale Head Tarn and eventually Seatoller via Tongue Gill & Rigghead quarries (240152)

FROM SHEPHERDS CRAG Route 2 High Seat & High Tove + / - Ullscarf &/or Bleaberry Fell (11 km – 7 miles or 19km / 12 miles with Ullscarf)

Head south of Shepherds Crag to hit the minor road to Watendlath. Then take the path E to the rarely visited summit of High Tove (289166). Or, if you're feeling fit, first head S to Blea Tarn (290144) & on to Ullscarf (291122) before heading N to High Tove but this adds several km. From High Tove it's only 1.5 km to the trig on High Seat (287181) & the same again to Bleaberry Fell (2852196). Drop down west to Ashness Bridge and W again to the B5289 where there are hotels very close to Lodore Falls & Shepherd's Crag (262184)

FROM SEATOLLER Route 3 Glaramara & Bessy Boot (10.5 km – 6.5 miles)

Follow the road E to Strands Bridge (252137) and from here follow the path up to Thornythwaite Fell (245118) & on to Glaramara (246105). From the rocky summit head NE to Combe Head (250109) & Combe Door (253109), then pick your way through rocky outcrops & small tarns to Rosthwaite Cam (256118) and the cairn on the summit of Bessy Boot (258125). Then descend W into Combe Gill and retrace your steps back to Seatoller.

FROM SEATOLLER Route 4 Green & Great Gables, Kirkfell & Brandreth (19 km – 12 miles)

From Seatoller follow the road to Seathwaite (235121) and ascend Green Gable (215107) via Sour Milk Gill. From the summit continue to Great Gable (211103). Leave NW to Beckhead Tarn (205107) and then onto the summit shelter on Kirkfell (195105). With luck you should have great views over the Scafells & back to Gt Gable ! Retrace your steps to Beckhead Tarn and traverse below Green Gable to Brandreth (215119). From here you can tick off Grey Knotts (217126) & walk down to Honister Pass (225135), where a short road walk leads to Seatoller.

FROM SEATOLLER Route 4 Green & Great Gables, Allen Crag & Glaramara (19 km – 12 miles)

Reach the summit cairn of Great Gable as per Route 4, then descend to Styhead (220095). Continue past Sprinkling Tarn (226091) to Esk Hause shelter (235083) and on to Allen Crag (235085). You can then follow the undulating ridge to Glaramara (247105) and continue N over Thornthwaite Crag (245118) back to Seatoller.

Fares: Members £25, Non members £29, Under 18's & Full time students £12

To Book Your Seat contact Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729

Should you cancel after the Wednesday prior to the coach date a £5.00 fee will be charged.

Failure to turn up without cancelling and the full coach fare will be expected from you.

2024 MEMBERSHIP FEES – a last reminder!

Membership fees for 2024 became due on the 1st January and should have been paid by now!! Some people have NOT paid the correct 2024 subscriptions which were agreed at the last AGM.

These were Adult £39.00, Students £19.75, 11-18 year olds £17.70, Under 11's free

Included is BMC membership which would cost you £47.20 as an individual and gives protection of up to £15 million from the consequences of claims against the Club or Club & Committee Members, Trustees or Volunteers for injury, financial loss or damage to property, where negligence occurs.

The easiest way for many to pay these fees will be by Bank Transfer to the Club's CO-OP Bank account Acc No: 65487846 Sort Code: 08-92-99 Be sure to quote Reference "AM24UrName" (where UrName is your real name, abbreviated if necessary!)

You can also pay by cheque made payable to "WBMC" and send this to Mr Tony Emms, 28 Farmer Way, Tipton, DY4 0BE.

HUT REQUESTS & NEWS from Fred Hammonds

Just a reminder to everyone that uses the hut to please be thoughtful of the next visitors and make sure there's sufficient newspaper & plenty of kindling chopped & stored in the boxes next to the stove. Also perhaps take some kindling & old newspapers (+ matches, loo roll & hut slippers ?) with you as you drive down to the hut and then you won't be disappointed. The hut needs to be left clean and secure upon leaving, so please double check before you leave and make sure any guests are also told / shown the closing down procedure.👍

At the February committee meeting it was agreed to increase the suggested Hut Donations from 1st April 2024 to reflect increased running costs. For members & prospective members the increase is small - £8 per person per night; guests £15 per night and Children 5 -17 £4 per night.

2024 MEET CARD

MARCH 2024 Thur 7th Indoor Meet - Red Lion Sun 10th Coach Meet - Arans Thur 14th Members Night - Red Lion 15th - 17th Away Dinner - Windermere Thur 21st AGM - Red Lion	MAY 2024 Thur 9th Outdoor Meet Sat 11th Long Coach Meet - Seastoller Thur 16th Members Night - Red Lion 18th - 25th Torridon Camping Week	JULY 2024 6th - 13th Slovenia Week Thur 18th Outdoor Meet Sun 21st Coach Meet - Braithwaite Thur 25th Members Night - Red Lion
APRIL 2024 Thur 11th Indoor Meet - Red Lion Sun 14th Coach Meet - Horton in Ribblesdale Thur 18th Members Night - Red Lion	JUNE 2024 Thur 6th Outdoor Meet Sun 9th Coach Meet - Rhinogs Thur 13th Members Night - Red Lion 14th - 16th Scrambling Weekend - Patterdale 21st - 23rd Gower Weekend	AUGUST 2024 Thur 8th Outdoor Meet Sun 11th Coach Meet - Cadair/Barmouth Thur 15th Members Night - Red Lion For more details on Meets click on News then Newsletters links on www.wbmc.org

SEPTEMBER 2024 Thur 5th Outdoor Meet Sun 8th Coach Meet - Coniston Thur 12th Members Night - Red Lion 13th - 15th Womens Weekend - The Hut 27th - 29th Corbett Weekend - Tyndrum 27th - 29th Trailfest Weekend	NOVEMBER 2024 Thur 7th Indoor Meet - Red Lion Sat 9th Coach Meet - Brecon Beacons Thur 14th Members Night - Red Lion 15th - 17th Skills Weekend - The Hut Fri 22nd Curry Night	<div>  <p>West Bromwich Mountaineering Club Meets 2024</p> <p>Coach 07724 316311 Hut 01766 890284 www.wbmc.org B.M.C Affiliated Membership No 910558 Weather www.metis.org.uk</p> </div>	<div> <p>Indoor Meets & Social Nights</p> <p>At The Red Lion 190 All Saints Way West Bromwich B71 1RH</p> <p>Climbing Nights at Wyre Forest Leisure Centre Kidderminster DY11 2DT</p> </div>
OCTOBER 2024 Thur 10th Indoor Meet - Red Lion Sun 13th Coach - Ogwen Thur 17th Members Night - Red Lion 18th - 20th Cycling Weekend - The Hut	DECEMBER 2024 Thur 5th Indoor Meet - Red Lion Sun 8th Coach Meet - Castleton Thur 12th Members Night - Red Lion Thur 19th Christmas Social - Red Lion		

CLUB TRIP TO SLOVENIA 6th - 13th JULY (NON-MEMBERS ARE ALSO WELCOME)

There are now 13 individuals booked to go to Kranjska Gora in Slovenia for a week in July and anyone is welcome to join the group :-)

Kranjska Gora is a pretty town in the Julian Alps and there is mix of activities available, including some good climbing and via ferrata. Some booked are planning to do some fairly hard hikes like Mangart, Prisank or Spik and others interested in something more relaxing. Jan Cox will lead one optional easy ascent to the border with Slovenia, Italy and Austria where the challenge is to get at least one limb in each country before heading off to a hut in Austria for coffee & cake! There will be another optional led walk around Sleme at the top of the Vrsic Pass. But folk are free to do their own thing.

We can keep in touch via WhatsApp regarding daily activities. There are loads of easy 8 to 20km (less if you use the bus) local walks along the valley. It is also possible to hire a vehicle or taxi if groups want to go further afield like Lake Bled or rafting on the River Soca.

Folk are responsible for their own travel arrangements and accommodation. Kranjska Gora is about 45min by taxi from Ljubljana airport (takes longer by bus). There is a plentiful range of accommodation in the town and two big supermarkets as well as various eateries. The food is good and the beer cheap.

For those who want an easy life Tui are offering a room with breakfast and evening meal in the 4* Best Western (with pool) in Kranjska Gora, including flight from Birmingham and hotel transfer for £870 pp (price accurate on 28/12/23).

Let me know if you have booked or are interested/looking for a roommate and I'll add you to the WhatsApp group.

Jan Cox secretary@wbmc.org

WBMC FACEBOOK PAGES

It's come to my attention that some WBMC members do not realise that there are 2 different WBMC accounts on Facebook and why this is. There is "**West Bromwich Mountaineering Club Members**" page that has Cover photo of 14 members on a snow covered plateau. This is a private group page that was created in June 2019 and only members can post & see who is in the group and what they post. Thus it is ideal for finding walking or climbing companions or posting about gear you have lost or have spare or are selling. It currently has 139 members. Members of the public often 'request to join the group' but if they are not WBMC members their requests are declined.

The other page "**West Bromwich Mountaineering Club**" has the blue & yellow Tryfan logo and was created in September 2010 for the general public to see. As such the ability to post on this page is restricted to certain 'admins', so as not to have it clogged with personal messages etc. It currently has 591 followers & advertises Club meets and sometimes has photographs which show the club's activities in a good light. It also has an email by which members of the public can contact the committee. Ordinary club members cannot post directly onto this page but if they have photos or a story they think worthy of wider publicity they should forward this by email or Facebook to a committee member who will do their utmost to get this posted on the page as speedily as possible, unless it is felt unsuitable for public consumption or doesn't do the Club any favours!

The Club also has an Instagram page "westbrom.mountaineeringclub" which has a link to our website and is very pictorial (although not many members post on this it seems as there are only 58 posts). This lists the numbers of "followers" (users who follow you) and "following" (the users who you follow) : 128 & 211 respectively for me. As far as I know our members do not post on X, Tik Tok or Snapchat. Please let me know if you knowe this not to be true.

John Edwards newsletter@wbmc.org

RECENT INDOOR MEETS

The hastily arranged Winter Skills Evening on 4th January was well supported with around 25 folk attending to listen to Geordie Hind's presentation, which was followed up by a "practical" on Aonach Mor in Scotland by those going on the Scottish Winter Week.

There was a similarly good turn out a week later when Tony Emms sang the praises of the camp site at Shildaig that the Club will be using for the Torridon trip from 18th to 24th May that he is co-ordinating. And his photos of the fabulous "giants" Beinn Alligin, Liathach, Beinn Eighe, Slioch & An Teallach will have hopefully ensured a good number will want to be visiting this great Highland region this spring!!

A "Bring & Buy" event on 8th Feb was also a success with several members picking up real bargains. There were tents, rucksacks, ice axes, boots & clothing going at keen prices and several pieces of the late Nev Tandy's climbing kit were brought along by Mike Smith.

THE LAST TWO COACH MEETS

January saw 30 make a speedy return to Llanberis but conditions were much more wintery than in November. Snowdon via the Miner's Path was again popular but this time many more went north from the Youth Hostel to do the Glyders, Y Garn & Foel Goch. Ian M and Paul R did a different Foel Goch - the one you can do with Moel Elio & Moel Cynghorion. Tony E, Julie A & Hannes T went to Nant Peris and to Llechog and down the Ranger Path while others circumnavigated Llyn Padarn and investigated the slate quarries.

In February the conditions in the Eastern Lakes were very different. The snow had almost completely disappeared and there was a 40-50 mph gale blowing with a few even stronger gusts. What do do given those conditions? Around half a dozen got off at the top of Kirkstone Pass and headed East over Thornthwaite Crag & High Street. Another group fancied going to Howtown to do Halin & Place Fell, but the coach arrived too late for them to catch the ferry over so plans changed and they ended up going to Angle Tarn & Martindale or up onto High Street from Glenridding. By far the largest group decided to see if they could do Helvellyn via Swirrell Edge & come down Striding Edge, or at least get to Red Tarn and see what conditions were like. After heading up While waiting for some to catch up, Martin C, John Ed & Mateusz Piekos slowly went ahead, passing folk who had just come down from Helvellyn, so they knew it was possible. In the end they were the only

ones that made it to the trig point, doing most of the route in the lee of the Edges to get some protection from the wind. Lots of rugged pics and a few videos showing crazy fools being thrown around by the wind were posted of Facebook but everyone was sensible and got back to the coach safely.

(Left) Martin taking care on Striding Edge and (Right) Mateusz heading towards the Gough memorial and the safe way off the Helvellyn plateau



MORE ON "COACH PICKLES" & FUNDRAISING IN HIS MEMORY

When following "The Wild Atlantic Way" around Eire in June 2015, I used the website 'Motorhomecraic' and had thought no more about this until I received an email at the end of January asking me to support a fundraising target in memory of the website administrator's son. Out of interest I clicked on the link & found this was the father of William Onion who's fall from Crib Goch was reported in the last Newsletter, as some of our members had seen several of Llanberis Mountain Rescue Team helping the other distressed members of his party. Apparently the rescue consisted of two helicopters, two Land Rovers, foot teams, a medical team & numerous support personnel, who were all extremely professional. Ally, William's father & owner of the website, together with members of William's "Team83 / Group Hikes UK" will be fundraising for Llanberis Rescue Team throughout 2024, one of which is a Peak District Ultra Challenge in July when they will attempt a continuous 100km walk / run and hope to raise £11,000 by 11/11/24. The link if any WBMC member wants to support this is <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/mollie-nye3>

During 2023 alone, Llanberis Mountain Rescue attended 308 callouts, with 7 of these happening simultaneously within a 24-hour period. Let's hope we at WBMC don't ever need to use their services!



William Onion (33) was originally from Muckamore in County Antrim but joined the British Army where he served as a soldier with the Royal Corps of Signals, no doubt where he learned to fly drones, such as the one he took the picture on this issue's front page with. After serving in Afghanistan he moved to Bournemouth where, as "Coach Pickles", he set up ran a business "Group Hikes UK" - bringing people together through social group hikes, bootcamp fitness classes and personal training - which he ran with his partner Nichol, <https://www.instagram.com/grouphikesuk/?next=%2Ftracypzl%2Ftagged%2F&hl=af> His job and love of hiking took him around the world, including to Everest base camp, but living at the south coast of England he & Nichol also enjoyed running, paddleboarding, hiking & sea swimming. His strength of character and drive meant he was constantly building for their future and mourners at his funeral were told he had "a genius for building life changing communities and often helped raise funds for charities"

Another of GroupHikesUK's fund raising activities was an on-line raffle for many prizes including a guided trip to Everest Base Camp in March, but as the draw took place on 11th February this is no longer of interest to members. Our Anthenia Dimitriou spotted & shared another raffled opportunity, this time with Caerphilly-based Evertrek <https://win.evertrek.co.uk/ref/65b7b779cfa53M> but this also expired in early Feb. WBMC members should obviously keep looking at this time of year if they fancy a prize trek!!

EASYFUNDRAISING - Please don't forget to pick up FREE MONEY for the Club

The Club now has 21 supporters buying online when they can through EasyFundraising, and the Club has now received another £144.40 from this source. Not to be sniffed at!! Darren G is the top supporter by a long way, with Fred, Claire & John Ed all having raised over £30 each.

In time these payments will hopefully become larger as even more people become involved.

If you have not already signed up to support WBMC through occasional purchases, please go on line and register through the following link:-<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/wbmc/>

If you have already signed up it is most important not to forget to enter the website of the store / supplier / business via www.easyfundraising.co.uk to ensure the Club receives a percentage of the cost of your purchase for free. It only takes you an extra couple of seconds!!

COACH KING & QUEEN REPORT FOR 2023

With September's coach being cancelled through lack of numbers and no data available about Mitch's Meet the statistics below relate to 11 coaches. 98 different people occupied seats & 374 fares were collected by Nigel (or paid by bank transfer – a new option under trial this year).

The **most popular** meet appeared to be April's when 40 people travelled to Bannau Brycheiniog and crossed the Carmarthen Vans. Definitely the **least popular** was March's coach which had 26 people aboard, hoping to get to Hawes, but mechanical problems with the coach meant that the meet had to be aborted at Charnock Richard services on the M6. It obviously wasn't the fault of the venue as there were 34 people aboard in August when it did manage to deliver folk for a great day out in Wharfedale. So with an **average of 34.0 seats booked per coach** meet, these are obviously fairly well supported but there's invariably room for more passengers! Not everyone on a coach has to go off doing a "hard" walk! For the price, WBMC coaches are a very cheap way of getting out into some wonderful scenery, having a stroll & maybe try some local produce, as well as enjoying a chat with friends.

Now to get personal..... apart from our much-loved Coach Sec **Nigel Tarr, Rob Allen & Andy Brown** were the only people to travel on all 11 coaches and so earned the title of **Coach Kings**.

Appropriately they can take their pick from 2 **Coach Queens** as **Julie Atkinson & Claire Hammonds** only missed one coach each. So these 4 individuals are the new **WBMC Royalty during 2024**.

Another 5 males attended 10 meets and so Dave Coats, Martin Conway, David Hellyar, Phil Smith & Phil Williams narrowly missed out being crowned as joint Kings. Only 4 people went on 9 coaches, namely Annette Cope, Paul Brindley, Tony Emms & Fred Hammonds.

The half dozen who went on 8 coaches were Jan Cox, George Allen, Darren Groutage, Geordie Hind, Mike Smith & Oliver Stephenson, while John Dale, John Edwards & Hannes Truter were the only people to go on 7 meets.

Unusually only one name appears on the spreadsheet with a total of 6 attendances: Hilary Jones!

The 9 people who went on 5 coaches were Imogen Harley, Liz Perks, Dee Sendeva, Emily Smith, Carl Collier, Stuart Fellows, Adrian Shaw, Mark Steven & Tim Wilkes. The 6 who went on 4 coaches were Anthenia Dimitriou, Sophie Kellaway, Lesley Smith, Caroline Snape, Andrew Snape & Olof Lee.

Suzanne Byrne, Joanna Cheung, Mark Andar, Tate Collier, Bill Darling & Paul Scorey were the 6 attendees of 3 meets.

Then the numbers start to get larger. 20 people, with some "big names" among them, went on just a couple of coaches:- Karl Bradley, Donny Chima, Bill Douglas, Mel Evans, Ray Farmer, Pauline Hind, Norris Hung, Dani Kwok, Dave Kirk, Aleisha Lawley, Paul McAlley, Andy Morley, Wendy Morris, Pete Poultny, Liz Reynolds, Stuart Shaw, Carl Smith, Graeme Stanford, Hazel Webb & Jackie White. And 33 individuals went on a solitary coach meet, namely Matthew Baker, Chris Banks, Adrian Bates, Leon Brindley, Simon Callachan, Teresa Chilles, M. Cope, Stephen Cummings, Chris Dean, Emma Dickinson & Scott Simpson (both up from Kent), Bob Duncan, Benjamin Groutage, Graham Handley, Steve Harris, Steve Heywood, Jerry Ho, Andy Horton, Donna Hung, Wesley Marks, Ian Merther, Maxine Pincher, Jess Priest, Ken Priest, James Roberts, Richard Smart, Kath Smith, Lynn Wainwright, Tony Wallace, Tracy Wallace, Steve Wilkins, Phillip Wood and someone down just as Jerry.

I've tried to do a quick estimate of the Member : Non-member ratio and the results are not too surprising. Of the 39 people who went on 4 or more coaches, 32 (83%) were WBMC members of some category but of the 59 who went on 3 coaches or less only 27 (46%) were members. However, there were some people who had travelled on 5 – 8 coaches that weren't convinced that WBMC membership was worth it for what they would save financially on the coach or gain in other respects.

Well done to Rob Allen, Andy Brown, Julie Atkinson & Claire Hammonds

MITCH'S MEET 2024 – LLANGOLLEN report by John Edwards

For around 25 years at least, the first WBMC meet of the year has been a 'social' one made popular by former Club President John Mitchell and, since his death 20 years ago, named in his memory. There was an era around the turn of the Millennium when this was such a popular event we were able to fill a coach but latterly, especially after Covid, they've returned to being Car Meets. The 7th January saw the event return to Llangollen where, in 2008, we dined at The Royal Hotel after a coach dropped a load of us off at the top of the Horseshoe Pass. This time 15 members enjoyed a good day out after a 2 hr drive.

10 members (Julie Atkinson, David Coats, Tony Emms, Phil Wood, Geordie Hind, Phil Smith, Darren Groutage, Mel Evans, Mike Smith & myself) set off from the town at 10am to climb to the ruins of Castell Dinas Bran (321m / 1053 ft), which we often see protruding from the early morning mists on our "normal" coach meets, while Kath & Andy Brown & Nigel Tarr drove up to the Ponderosa Cafe, a popular destination for day-trippers and bikers at around 400m on the A452 so they could exercise their lurcher & Bob Percival & Fleur Elliot walked the Llangollen canal.

After all the rain & flooding we were exceeding lucky to have a dry, calm and eventually sunny day and were able to enjoy looking down as the cloud inversions in various parts of the Dee Valley rose & fell and occasionally dissolved. After the castle ruins we dropped down to the road known as the Panorama Walk (to World's End) before climbing to the top of the limestone Eglwyseg Escarpment to follow its edge northwards to around 400m where we had a bite to eat.

Darren then continued along the edge while the rest of us dropped down steeply to cross the minor road (= part of Offa's Dyke LDP) where we gained a dog. Thanks to Geordie's makeshift collar we were able to drop the Pointer off with a

local before too long! We then skirted to the south of Fron Fawr, then north past Valle Crucis Abbey to pass south of Eliseg's Pillar to make our final climb to crest of Velvet Mountain (Moel Tan y Coed) before turning south over the 232m / 761 ft summit and dropping down to The World Heritage Site that is the Horseshoe Falls. Like the nearby A5, these were built by Thomas Telford and are totally artificial - & not especially spectacular even after all the recent rain! As we set off east back to Llangollen along the south bank of its eponymous canal a sign asked "How often do you see the start of a canal?" and we just had. Then it was what seemed a long 1¾ miles back to the town, past the renovated Chainbridge (built in 1814 by the wonderfully named Exuperious Pickering), Motor Museum, Eisteddfod site & old railway carriages. At around 3.45pm, 14 of us assembled at The Corn Mill, which was

originally founded by the monks at Valle Crucis but rebuilt in 1786 (& closed as a mill in 1974), where we enjoyed some good beers and decent food in their large top-floor room, most feeling contented with their 9 mile: 606m (1988ft) ascent start to the year.



SCOTTISH WINTER WEEK - SOME DAY TO DAY HIGHLIGHTS

Penguin Post Office 80th Sunday 11th Feb: The hordes (22 in number) went with Georgie Hind to practice winter skills on Aonach Mor & “he marched the up to the top (part way) of the hill & he marched them down again” - with & without crampons!! 7 went on to ‘bag’ the summit in whiteout – all enjoyed a £5 group discount on the gondolas. Mountain hares in winter coats & a snow bunting were spotted. Barnacle Bill Douglas, Chris Dean & Pete Poultney did Beinn a’Chaorainn (N of Loch Laggan) via the S. Ridge & saw broken spectres. Jan Cox, Tony Emms, Dave Coats, Adrian Bates & John Rye did Sgurr na h-Eachainne & Cruim na Sgriodain north of Loch via the Corran ferry.

As it was 80 years ago that the 1st permanent British base in Antarctica was established at Port Lockroy, it was Penguin bars all round at dinner courtesy of J. Ed!

Monday 12th: A day of gales so many went up Glen Nevis to see the gorge, Polldubh & Steall Falls & the wire bridge. The Inchree Falls near Onich were also visited by some. Other visited bothies – the Lairig Bothy in the Grey Corries & Invermallie Bothy & ‘Green Mile’ by Loch Arkaig.

Pancake Tuesday 13th: The ‘Golden Oldies’ (Barnacle Bill, Pete P, Rob Briard) plus 15 yr old Alex Briard’s attempt to do “Golden Oldie II” on the W. Face of Aonach Mor failed because there were no gondolas due to high winds. They ended up doing the rib North of it. John Rye’s plans were also thwarted by the failure of the lift to operate. Vanessa B-H ended up cycling from bottom to top gondola stations 4 times! Some successes: Best of the day - Dave C, Chris D, Will Read & Luke Austin completed the Ring of Steall in deep snow & got views. Sophie Bates & James Tyler were also on the Mamores, summiting Stob Ban & Mullach nan Coirean, while Rob & Georg Allen, Bill Darling, Jim Tansey, Stu Fellows, Suzanne Byrne & Hilary Jones got to the top of Sgurr an Utha in spite of the deep soft snow, which forced John Ed to retreat when a few hundred metres from the top of Beinn Fhionnlaidh. Adrian & others aborted the ‘Old Silver Walk’ from Ardmolich because of the terrain & settled on Castle Tioram by car. Dave Hellyar Oban’d, the Snapes photographed in Glencoe & the female Briards walked from the Lower Falls in Glen Nevis to the Steall Falls.

Valentine’s Wednesday 14th: Rain forecast to move in around lunchtime and most popular climb was the Pap of Glencoe done by Pete P, Jan C, Stu F, Aly, Grahame & Tracey plus Suz B, Toni, & Barnacle Bill. Annette Cope joined Caroline & Andy Snape to do the tourist path up “the Ben” and another group of 6 (Jim T, Vanessa B, Aleisha Lawley, Andrew D & Rob & George Allen) did the same but from a different parking area. David & Ethan Kirk went up the Devil’s Staircase to climb Stob Mhic Mhartuin & Beinn Bheag. Dave H explored Corpach & Neptune’s Staircase as did John Ed, who continued by doing some geocaching walks at Roy & Spean Bridge.

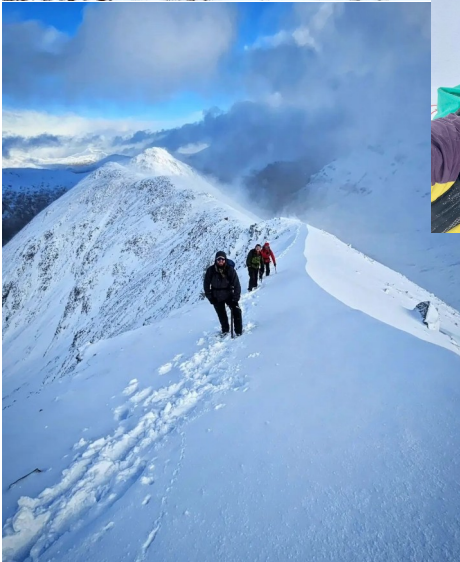
Thursday 15th: Another poor weather forecast (‘murky... getting murkier’) but it didn’t deter Jess Priest from celebrating her 30th birthday with a 10 hr day climbing Carn Mor Dearg & following its arete up onto Ben Nevis with her dad, Ken, Graeme

Stanford & John Edwards. Nor did it stop Geordie Hind, John Lee, Dave Brage & Phil Smith from climbing Loch Lochy's Meall Na Teanga or Sophie B & James T heading to the Cairngorms to climb the Corbett Meall a'Bhuachaille. Suz B & Hilary used the day to go & see the 120 m Steall Falls while lots of folk took the train to Mallaig. John R, Jez Hosking & Tina Deoray took the ferry to Mull & back.

Friday 16th: Possibly the best weather of the week – much less snow after all the sublimation on Thursday – and more rainbows! This tempted the largest party of the day (Hilary, the Snapes, Stu, Jim, Vanessa & Daniel B-H) plus a dog to do the Corbett at the head of Glen Loy, Meall a Phubuill where, high up, they spotted a moving lizard! Chris D, Graeme S, G. Hardy & T. Wallace traversed the two summits of Buachaille Etive Beag. The Allens & Bill Darling climbed Beinn a'Chaorainn & Beinn Teallach to the west of Creag Meagaidh, which also entertained Jan, Annette, Toni & Barnacle Bill as they elected to do the Stob Poite Coire Ardair ridge. They didn't do all they wanted to do but got to 'Point 1001'. Geordie & others stayed local on Cow Hill and Roger Boulton & Mick Cheese had a last great day on Schiehallion!

Apologies to anyone who didn't get a mention or was missed off some of the routes. The commonest comment on the Scottish Winter Week WhatsApp seemed to be **"Thanks to Jonathan and everyone else for making it a great week"**. And a comment from Publicity Sec, Anthenia, who was back in England: *"Pics looked amazing! Great achievements too. Many thanks to everyone who shared their pictures & videos with the Club, and for adding them on our Instagram too."*

P.S. We also got a compliment from Zoe, the Hotel administrator saying *"Thank you so much for a lovely week with your Club! We thoroughly enjoyed having you stay with us over the past week! Hope all your guests had a lovely time"* We did!!!



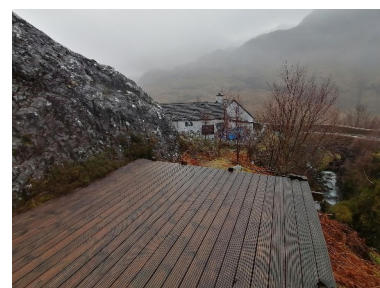
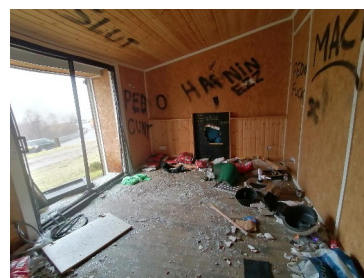
MC-M1

Allt-na-Reigh, Glencoe (better known as Jimmy Savile's Cottage)

Driving up to Fort William I was saddened by the sight of ruinous state of the cottage that once belonged to Jimmy Savile. It was far worse than when I last passed by in 2020 so on my way back home I decided to have a look around to see if it could be resurrected, possibly as mountaineering hut because of its fantastic location. Since then I have learned more about it's history & likely future. Apparently Savile spotted the 2-bedroom cottage in Glencoe on Scottish cycling holiday and bought it in 1998 from renowned Scottish mountaineer & founding member of the Glencoe Mountain Rescue Team, Hamish MacInnes. Savile then used it as a remote holiday retreat until his death in 2011, aged 84, and even had Prince Charles over for dinner there on one occasion. More grimly, it was also the scene of at least 20 incidents of abuse by the notorious paedophile and featured in the Louis Theroux documentary "When Louis Met Jimmy". After Savile's death it was bought at auction for £212,000 but the buyer never lived there and sold it on to the businessman Harris Aslam, Managing Director of Greens Retail & Board Member of Nisa Today Holdings Ltd, for a reported £350,000. Aslam had hoped to demolish the house and replace it with a 2 story contemporary family home, along with a memorial to MacInnes. However, locals & Mountaineering Scotland launched a complaint against the design, which they argued would negatively impact views of the surrounding highland landscape.



The Glencoe cottage was formerly owned by evil predator Jimmy Savile. Image: Sandy McCook.



Clockwise from top left: Allt-na-Reigh around 2000 ; Allt-na-Reigh February 2024 ; Lounge I think ? ; Bathroom that was! ; Your guess is as good as mine! ; Patio area still OK

And so the property has remain unoccupied since Savile's death and has become a magnet for both vandals & ghoulish content makers who film their explorations of the abandoned house. See <https://youtu.be/tbLU5AcS6zw> for what the place was like in August 2021 & compare that to how I found it on 17/2/24. Being such a ruin I had wondered if it might be possible to buy it & the land relatively cheaply but this is obviously way out of the question, as well as a big risk because of vandalism.

Apparently others have suggested it should be given to a mountaineering club to use - but it would now have to be a rich one as it needs demolition and a total rebuild.

COULD 2024 SEE THE FIRST WINTER MUNRO ROUND BY A WOMAN?

In mid January, UK Hillwalking reported that Anna Wells is about 3 weeks into a round of all 282 Munros and, having clocked up 82 summits, had passed the 25% mark in terms of both time & ticks. When we were driving back from Fort William on 17th Feb she was in Knoydart having 'knocked off' 179 (~64%) but had a heel injury. It's a rate of progress she'll need to maintain for the next month, whatever the weather or her physical condition. Anna, 34, who works as a risk analyst for a bank, and has had previous careers as both a Doctor and a Mountaineering and Climbing Instructor, has taken 3 months of unpaid leave for her attempt to complete a winter round and in 2023/4 the astronomical winter runs from 21st December to 20th March. Amazingly if she is successful she will be only the 4th person known, and the first woman, to do a winter



Munro round! Follow her progress on <https://www.instagram.com/rocksandtrails/?hl=en> The 3 previous winter rounds were by Martin Moran in 1985, Steve Perry in 2006 and Kevin Woods in 2020 and Anna puts this down to the fact that it is a very niche attraction, with most people finding it hard to take 3 months off work & everyday life.

Of the 3 only Steve Perry has completed the round as a continuous walk (& cycle), an achievement that must still rate as one of the toughest mountain journeys ever undertaken in Britain. Like Moran & Woods, Anna is using a vehicle to get about, and picking off hill circuits as a series of back-to-back day trips. While it adds flexibility and the chance to sleep every night in a warm, dry bed, the car option is not remotely easy, and many of her days have been epic in scale. Operating so far from a base in Inverness, she has been getting in plenty of mileage on the roads, as well as the hills. N.B. Hamish Brown & Kathleen Murgatroyd did the first continuous rounds in summers 1974 & 1982 respectively.

FASTEST KNOWN TIME FOR A WINTER TRAVERSE OF THE CUILLIN

Also this January, Matthew Pavitt set a new FKT (Fastest Known Time) for a winter traverse of Skye's Cuillin Ridge. On 11th January he started his north-south traverse at 10:29 am from Sgurr nan Gillean and finished at Gars-bheinn at 3:04 pm. So he made it in 4 hr, 35 mins & 17 secs, which is 20 minutes less than the earlier FKT set on 26th Feb 2018 by Uisdean Hawthorn, who completed it in 4 hours and 57 minutes. Pavitt wore crampons from start to end, did all the climbs, and included all the summits. Nevertheless, he felt obliged to apologize that the weather that day might not have been



wintery enough, writing on social media "Were things rimed up to typical Scottish perfect expectations? No is the short answer. But equally, it didn't really feel like summer or rock climbing at all."



Left: The full length of the Cuillin Ridge viewed from Glen Talisker to the W.

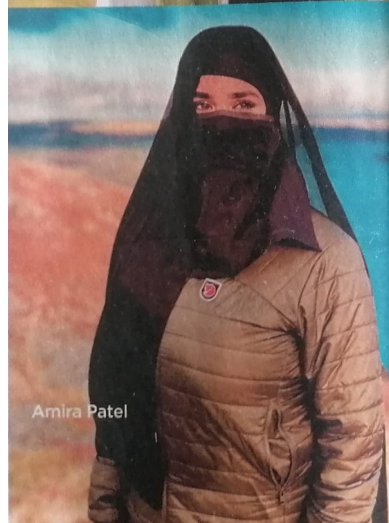
For those who don't know the Cuillin Ridge traverse is a scrambling route that follows the continuous 12km ridge crest that traverses the main summits of the Black Cuillin mountains on the Isle of Skye from end to end. It requires crossing more than 30 summits (11 of them Munros) including around 3,000m of ascent & descent, with some difficult climbing pitches on the Thearlaich Dubh Gap, King's Chimney & the Inaccessible Pinnacle and the traverse is considered one of Britain's finest mountaineering challenges. Local climbers Leslie Shabolt & Alastair McLaren were the first to do the full traverse on 10th June 1911. They went from south to north in a little over 12 hours but most folk usually takes two days to do the route enjoyably. For the record Finlay Wild holds the FKT of this traverse in a non-winter season - on 12th October 2013, he did it in an amazing 2 hours, 59 minutes, and 22 seconds!!!

MORE INSPIRATIONAL WANDERING WOMEN

The only one of the female trailblazers highlighted in Issue 78 of "Walk" –



Carys Rees



Amira Patel

the Ramblers magazine – that I've actually met was **Phoebe Smith**, who does a "Wander Woman" podcast that includes behind-the-scenes tales from her adventures. As well as writing & taking photographs of these she has co-founded the **#WeTwo Foundation** which takes underprivileged youngsters on life-changing, carbon-negative expeditions. See phoebe-smith.com **Lise Wortley** read Alexandra David-Néel's "My Journey to Lhasa" when she was 16 and became obsessed with the stories of female explorers from a bygone age. Now she recreates these expeditions, using only the clothing & kit they had at the time. See

@woman_with_altitude on Instagram. **Carys Rees** lives in South Wales and is a member of

Central Beacons Mountain Rescue Team. She documents her adventures (often solo) via her website, newsletter & Instagram feed, offering fabulous photos, videos, routes, & walking advice. See **@this.girlwalks** on Instagram. **Amira Patel** relocated from Bolton to the Lake District to set up The Wanderlust Women, a

hiking & adventure collective for Muslim women. Her group helps to build skills and confidence, and offers opportunities to explore, with the aim of encouraging Muslim women to spend time in the great outdoors. See thewanderlustwomen.co.uk Cornwall-based, **Stephanie Boon** is attempting to walk all the UK's long-distance national trails, blogging & interviewing other inspirational women walkers along the way (See 10milehike.com) and **Kate Ashbrook** has been a Ramblers Assn trustee for 36 years and President for 4 of these. She remains an area footpath secretary, as well as being general secretary of the Open Spaces Society & being involved in the Campaign for National Parks, The Dartmoor Preservation Association, Walkers Are Welcome and more... See campaignerkate.wordpress.com And one of the last mentioned is **Judith Hible** who, having held almost every Ramblers Assn voluntary role and helping organise Corsham's walking festival, spent lockdown recording the status of every right of way around her Wiltshire town! **@JudyHible** on X (was Twitter)



Judith Hible



Phoebe Smith

PATTERDALE SCRAMBLING WEEKEND 14th - 16th June

We will be revisiting the ABMSAC/AC George Starkey Hut in Patterdale, this year. Places have been booked for 12 people, although it may be possible to add more later. Depending on numbers we may have sole occupancy. The Hut is fully equipped, even with blankets & pillows, but it's advisable to bring your own sleeping bag & pillow case. Although advertised as a scrambling w/e it is open to rock climberd and hill walkers. Expressions of interest should be addressed to the meet leader Tony Emms (07793 008582)

GOWER CAMPING WEEKEND 21st - 23rd June

Worcester, Bromsgrove & West Brom MC's mingle at Pitton Cross camp site Rhossili beach again or, if our quota is full, one of the cheaper ones nearby. Pete Poultney (07779 366905) is co-ordinating. Dare you bivvi the night on Wurm's Head as the blowhole hisses? Or is it more idyllic? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IhPB7C6oFXg&ab_channel=AlexandraReuter

BRITISH TOURISTS WARNED TO AVOID MT FUJI AS A 'TOURIST CAP' IS PROPOSED!

In the last Newsletter we listed the world's most popular mountains to climb. On 8th Jan '24 the Daily Express's Senior Travel Reporter wrote "**Britons have been urged to avoid travelling to Mount Fuji as the tourist attraction has become overcrowded**" continuing *"One of the world's most impressive peaks, Japan's Mount Fuji, has long captured the imagination of adventurers & tourists. While the climb isn't for the faint-hearted, many tourists attempt to reach the peak but, as the photo shows it might be best admired from afar."* Fodor's "No List" has warned tourists to avoid the popular mountain in 2024 as it has become overcrowded, adding *"too many ill-prepared tourists are risking their lives in an attempt to reach the peak. Climbers are at risk of hypothermia and altitude sickness."* Tourists have also found that there are often intense crowds at the top of the mountain, which can take away from the experience. Richard Campbell, a climber, told Fodors: *"Looking up or back down, it was humans every metre or two, as far as the eye could see."* Local communities have appealed to the Government to introduce tourist caps to help protect 'Fuji-san' from overtourism and a cap of 4,000 climbers per day has been proposed.



Fodor's 'No List' highlights destinations that tourists might want to avoid and in 2024 these included Venice, Athens, Lake Superior, The Ganges River, Vietnam's Ha Long Bay & the Atacama Desert!!

MORE PHOTOS OF SCOTLAND

Tony's group shot (l) Ben Nevis Summit 14th (mid) & 15th Feb (r)

2024 AGM CALLING NOTICE : THURSDAY 21st MARCH @ 7.30pm THE RED LION

The business of the AGM is as follows:

- 1) The consideration of the Accounts & Balance Sheets
- 2) The ordinary reports of the Officers & of the Management Committee
- 3) The election of Officers & the Management Committee
- 4) The fixing of the annual subscriptions for 2025
- 5) Discussion of questions relating to mountaineering & debate on motions incl:-

Proposed Change to Section 8 of the WBMC Constitution

To make it easier for young people interested in indoor or outdoor climbing, hill walking or some other aspect of the outdoors such as fell running, mountain biking etc to join WBMC it is proposed that Section 8 be amended as follows:-

(a) Persons interested in the objects of the Club can become Prospective Members by obtaining a form from the Membership Secretary, giving their contact details and paying the relevant Provisional Membership fee.

(b) After 3 months or longer as a Prospective Member, an individual can apply for Full Ordinary Membership, or Junior Membership as appropriate, providing they have participated in at least two activities with Club members present during which they have obtained on their application form the signatures of two Full Members of the Club to propose & second their upgrade. Such applications must then be submitted to the Management Committee who, bearing in mind Clause 6, shall have power to approve, reject or defer any application as they think fit.

The Management Committee may refuse membership only for good cause such as conduct or character likely to bring the Club or mountaineering, climbing or hill walking into disrepute, not abiding regulations set by the Hut Secretary or safety concerns. Appeal against refusal may be made to the members of the Club as detailed in Clause 14.

(c) A successful application for Full Membership will become effective once the new member has paid the relevant additional fee as detailed in Sections 16 – 18.

(d) Any Junior member who, on reaching 18 years of age, has met the Membership requirements in 8 (b) may submit an application for Ordinary Membership.

Proposed by:- John Edwards

Seconded by:- Jan Cox, Darren Groutage, Rob Allen, Dan Bow, David Hind,

(NB It is NOT proposed to change the current Section 6 which reads:-

Membership of the Club shall be open to anyone interested in mountaineering, discrimination: climbing or hill walking on application regardless of sex, age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or other beliefs. However, limitation of membership according to available facilities is allowable on a non discriminatory basis. The Management Committee will have due regard to the law on disability, discrimination and child protection.

Nor is it proposed to alter Section 14 which deals with the termination of the membership of someone deemed unsuitable and the appeal process they have access to if they want to contest this.

Nor change Section 16 (d) to do with the waiving of the balance of the membership fee if someone gains Ordinary or Junior Membership on or before the 30th day of June or Section 18 to do with waiving, reducing or postponing any sums in special cases)

An agenda will be sent out 7 days before the AGM.

Club Officers are elected annually & nominations, which should be proposed and seconded by a Full Club Member, should be with the Secretary at least 7 days prior to AGM (i.e. 14th March'24)

The Officers are:- • Chair • Vice Chair • Honorary Treasurer • Honorary Secretary • Coach Secretary • Hut Secretary • Membership Secretary • Publicity & Social Media Secretary • Newsletter Editor

There are also 5 non-Officer seats on the Management Committee that may be filled in the same way, or by people being proposed from the floor at the AGM. In the latter case the nominee must be present in person and express their willingness to serve, if elected. Alternatively, a written expression of such willingness may be produced to the Chair prior to the AGM.

All of the above positions are open to any full member.

In addition The Malcolm Collins Award may be awarded each year for “outstanding endeavour in mountaineering or service to the Club”. Nominations for this Award should be in writing, seconded, and forwarded to the Secretary at least 7 days prior to the AGM (by 14th March 2024).

MINUTES WBMC COMMITTEE MEETING 14th December 2023 @The Red Lion 7.00pm

Present: Claire Hammonds, Nigel Tarr, Dave Hellyar (Chair), Mike Smith, Fred Hammonds, Jan Cox, Geordie Hind, John Edwards, Mike Thompson, Rob Allen, Tony Emms

Apologies for Absence: Andy Brown, Darren Groutage, Jonathan Howells

2. Acceptance of November Minutes (kindly taken by Darren) Proposed by Fred H and seconded by Mike S.

3. Matters Arising: (i) Website - discussion regarding a new site that Committee should have access to & be able to edit / update. It was proposed to accept Joe's new 'user-friendly' website (7 for and 2 abstentions). The Committee debated a business obligation whereby the Club has a contract with Joe in exchange for payment. Decided to trial the website until March and request feedback from members at March AGM.

(ii) Membership criteria - John had proposed changes to section 8b of the constitution based on what was agreed at last meeting & has mailed these to the Committee. There was an accompanying discussion about the number of meets required for full membership and a definition of a meet. Agreed that at least 2 active meets with Club members is required and these ordinary members should be the proposers for full membership and not just left to the Committee. Agreed that full membership can be attained after 3 months which fits with BMC insurance. Agreed to retain the prospective members fee. An associated discussion on the current prospective membership form highlighted the need for one that is fit for purpose. Tony is working on this but can only complete once Committee have agreed the criteria. Proposed changes will be presented for ratification at the AGM once enough supporters obtained.

4. Officer updates: Treasurer Club balance is £15698.68 + £30,000 (ring-fenced + £105.54 interest) as of 14/12/2023. Balance includes some membership fees for 2024 and 17 deposits for Scotland. Octopus bill from 1st November shows that the standing charge has doubled, from 53p per day to £1.07 per day. The last bill was for £338 per month (includes £68 arrears).

Membership Secretary Four returning members and 5 prospective members are now Full members. Three prospective members who have not participated in any Club activities for over 6 months have been removed from the Club membership list.

Newsletter Next newsletter due out end of December. The editor had heard of 2 complaints about the Committee which were discussed.

Website/Publicity Joe's new website is now live and is being evaluated. Concern expressed about some images which appear when Facebook is accessed by some on Committee. However, not everyone sees these : reasons unknown.

Hut Secretary There were 67 bednights between 5/11 and 12/12 and £418 in donations. Wood now costs £110 and electricity is currently about £250 per month meaning that expenditure on the hut has increased. Fred has now disconnected the underfloor heating as the structure if the hut makes this very inefficient. So far 13 bookings for 2024.

Coach Secretary The December coach made a profit of £22.60 and there are 14 booked for the January meet.

5. Meets Tony Emms agreed to perform at the January meet on 11th; the subject being Torridon, hopefully to promote interest in the Torridon meet in May. Geordie subsequently agreed to repeat his winter mountain skills meet on January 4th as an additional Indoor meet – needs speedy publicity.

6. AOB Discussion regarding funding for mountaineering qualification. Agreed that the Club would continue to subsidise those who have already contributed to the leading of Club events & walks.

Meeting finished at 8.10 prior to the Christmas social **Next meeting:** 18/01/2024 @The Red Lion. Normal 7.30 start

MINUTES WBMC COMMITTEE MEETING 14th January 2024 @The Red Lion 7.30pm

Present: Andy Brown, Rob Allen, Claire Hammonds, Nigel Tarr, Jan Cox, Dave Hellyar (Chair), Mike Smith, Fred Hammonds, Darren Groutage, Mike Thompson, Geordie Hind, Tony Emms, Jonathan Howells

1. Apologies for Absence: Darren Groutage, John Edwards

2. Acceptance of December Minutes: Proposed by Geordie and seconded by Claire

3. Matters Arising: There are issues with the new website which is not entirely editable. No response from Joe to our messages and both members & prospective members have noted the lack of updated information and membership pack. Darren has recommended GoDaddy at a previous meeting and Tony proposed & Fred seconded that we take this route and develop our own website that the Committee can edit. Decision was carried unanimously.

Andy proposed the Club spend up to £13 per month to upgrade MailChimp so mails to members can be sent more frequently. Fred seconded. Motion accepted unanimously.

4. AGM : Changes to the Constitution need to be with the Secretary by 31st January. Chimp sent informing members of this. Also need to decide on subscriptions for 2024/5. Jan to mail AGM notices as usual.

5. Officer updates: Treasurer Club funds as of 14/01/2024 :- Savings Account balance is £30,105.150. There was £32,463.40 in the general account and this includes full payments for the Scottish Week, Away Dinner & membership subscriptions

Membership Secretary So far, 77 members have paid 2024 subs. There are 3 new prospective members. The meet cards are at the printers. Three prospective members have been elevated to full members.

Newsletter Nothing to report

Website/Publicity See Matters Arising

Hut Secretary Fred said 78 beds over 16 nights had been booked in the hut between the 1/12/23 and 2/01/24 resulting in donations totalling £511. The electricity bill for that period was £108.59. The hut is being used, on average, for 18 days per month which means that Hut bookings are reduced by 30% when compared to 2019. Fred is looking for another source of wood. Wood from the back should be used first so the key to the side will be removed. Members are requested to cut or buy kindling to replace that used.

Hut underfloor heating concerns: Utilities costs have risen, for 2021 £600, for 2022 £1700 and for 2023 £2,200. Fred is monitoring electricity usage for 3 clear moths with no underfloor heating. Figures will be ready by the March Committee meet and the AGM. A slot machine for it's usage would cost £200 to install. Also looking at a slot machine for the dryer.

Coach Secretary Nigel reported that 30 were on the January coach which made a loss of £174. So far 20 have booked for next month. Robinsons have increased costs by 3.2% to £850 for a normal & £975 for a long meet. Andy proposed that the Club remain with Robinsons. This was seconded by Clair. Unanimous acceptance. Andy proposed an increase in coach donations to £25 for members and £29 for non members and £12 for students but retain the £10 special offer for first trip. Proposal was seconded by Claire, 10 voted For, 0 Against & 1 Abstention. Motion carried so Coach fees will increase from March 2024.

Meets So far there have been no volunteers for Indoor meets. Suggested an approach to Ken Priest. Tony can present a scrambling/rock climbing show. For February decided there will be a 'Bring and Buy' kit sale. The previous one made £170 for the Club.

6.AOB: Jan requested £85 from Club funds to cover the room hire & meal for Gary on the December coach.

Geordie noted that meet cards were an essential hand out to potential prospective members, especially as the current website gives no information.

Meeting finished 20.41 **Date of next meeting** 22/02/2024 (after Scottish Week) @ The Red Lion 19.30 start

FEBRUARY MINUTES held over to next Newsletter

TAILPIECES FROM THE EDITOR

Birmingham Walk of Light

Carol & I have signed up to do "The Walk of Light, Birmingham 2024" on Saturday 30th March 2024 to shine a light on blood cancer & support Blood Cancer UK in memory of Ian. It's only 5 km through Cannon Hill Park by candlelight, so it's hardly a strenuous event but it will be the first time we have done a charity event since we closed The Ian Edwards Cancer Break Trust early in 2017, having raised £57,414 (and given it all away as grants so ~ 250 young cancer patients could benefit from morale-boosting day trips or short holidays).

We're going along for the experience so have not really set any target this time but if you feel you would like to give a small donation..... the Just Giving link for "The E Team minus ONE" is

<https://www.justgiving.com/team/ETeamminusOne>



British Mountaineering Council

I've just received my BMC Membership Card for 2024 as a result of paying my BMC Club upgrade (£17.95) and received a "Thanks for Supporting Us" which continues

"Since 1944, we've fought for the rights & protected the freedoms of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers, but we couldn't do it without your support.

Our activities are constantly evolving, and we are too: from owning crags for the benefit of everyone to supporting the GB Climbing Team to: from organising community events to raising over £1 million to help mend British mountains.

It doesn't matter whether you're a committed long-distance walker or passionate indoor boulderer, you'll find that the BMC works hard for you. After all, we're all connected by a shared love of adventure, whether that's found on a chalky hold or a windswept mountain. Your full list of member benefits can be viewed at www.thebmc.co.uk" WBMC really should stay affiliated!!