

GREAT WEATHER THE LAST FEW WEEKS!!



Ian Merther on Moel Siabod on 8<sup>th</sup> June – his first mountain summit since before he got COVID. “Hard work in the heat today but did it 😊 with Paul Read” Well done Ian!!



Coach First Timer Jacky White enjoying the view down the NE Face of Trum y Ddysgl on the Nantlle Coach Meet 3 days later - a tough first meet especially in the conditions.

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Don Simpson dancing up one of the classic routes on Burbage North Crag near Sheffield in his old pink rock boots on 10<sup>th</sup> June (photo Geoff Brown)

**EDITOR / CHAIR'S CONCISE CORNER:**

A very warm welcome to new prospective members Karl Bradley, Paul McAlley & Richard Smart. And a huge Thank You to Andy Brown & Nigel Tarr for spending a day checking whether the coach would be able to get over the Pennines to Swaledale, By deciding it wouldn't be able to make the turns they've saved everybody a futile trip in August but that's going beyond the call of duty!

This Newsletter was produced by John Edwards. Members are always welcome to write about their adventures in the hills but not much received for this one!  
If you would like to write an article or spot something interesting about the mountains please get in touch with John via [jaejed@hotmail.com](mailto:jaejed@hotmail.com)

Interested in the history of the WBMC? Have a look at our entry in Wikipedia - we're one of the few mountaineering clubs to have one!

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West\\_Bromwich\\_Mountaineering\\_Club](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Bromwich_Mountaineering_Club)

**EDITORIAL:**

Producing the WBMC Newsletter can be an enjoyable, fun & satisfying experience. It can be a fairly simple & speedy to put a copy together, especially so in the days before computers, when 'cut & paste' was something you did with scissors & glue, or it can be time-consuming & complex, depending on the amount of effort one wants to devote to the task and the number of photographs one wants to insert (as each has to be re-sized & position adjusted). At times it can be very stressful, for example if there are computer glitches which cause copy or edits to be lost, or when the intended publication deadline approaches. The latter was especially so when an edition needed to be produced every month, which is one of the main reasons few editors have served for more than five years. Now that we have MailChimp to circulate members with important new or changed information within a day or two, it has become possible to "get away with" a bi-monthly production and, having done both 6 & 12 issues per year, I can confirm this eases the pressure considerably. I recall the BBC occasionally has 'Guest Editors' for programmes like Radio 4's "Today" and hosts for "Have I Got News For You", so,.....

**DO YOU FANCY BEING THE GUEST EDITOR FOR AN ISSUE?**

Would you like to try your hand at putting just one issue of the Newsletter together? Have you got hidden literary talents that deserve to see the light of day? If there were just 3 volunteers, it would mean I'd certainly stay on for another year, as producing an issue every 4 months would / should be a doddle!

Guest editors could stick pretty closely to the current format, as I did to Joe Priest's in 2020, or they could give full rein to their artistic & writing talents and produce an entirely unique conception. I would endeavour to give help and advice if and whenever this was needed, and offer to provide some copy if the Guest editor requested this. You do not have to reveal your email etc to the world (unless you don't mind) as the club has a dedicated [newsletter@wbmc.org](mailto:newsletter@wbmc.org) address to receive copy online. Who knows, you might enjoy the process so much that you'd feel like wanting to take over the role permanently for a year or two, and the Guest editor idea could be a way of finding new potential full-time Editors!

**WILL YOU BE ONE OF A SELECT BAND OF WBMC BIRO OWNERS?**

A limited number of retracting biros that advertise the Club have been re-discovered.



Now only 10 left!!

They look great, write in blue ink and are only £1 each. If you would like one (or more) please get in touch. Until they are all sold they will be brought to Club events & coach meets.

**AND DON'T FORGET "T SHIRT UK" OF COVENTRY FOR LOGO'D GEAR**

You don't have to wait for others to generate a 'bulk order' to get clothing etc with the famous WBMC logo on it. Visit <https://www.tshirtuk.com> and select West Bromwich MC from the list of 52 'categories' down the left and you will see you can get a Hoodie or a Barrel Bag (ideal for the coach) for £20, a Fleece for £27, Polo shirt for £15, Sweatshirt for £17, Beanie hat, T shirt or Scarf for £10, Mug for £7.50 – all with the Tryfan & ice axe logo. Many different colours are available and the quality is excellent! Plus if you pay an extra £2 you can get your name, initials or other lettering for a special event / occasion on the right breast!

**NOTICEBOARD****PROGRAMME OF FUTURE EVENTS:****COACH MEETS TO THE HILLS & MOUNTAINS:-**

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> July – Keswick (Long Meet)

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> August – Hawes & N. Yorkshire

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September – The Moelwyns

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?*

**OUTDOOR MEETS :-**

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July** – Mel Evans will lead a walk from “The Hinksford Arms”, Swindon Rd, Swindon, Kingswinford, DY6 0BA which has a large car park & is very dog-friendly. Meet 6.30pm for a 6.45 pm walk start. Food is available but please organise directly with the pub (01384386069) after looking at [www.hinksfordarms.co.uk](http://www.hinksfordarms.co.uk)

**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> August** – Pete Poultney will be leading a walk. Details later

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September** – Rob Allen will be leading a walk. Details later

**CLIMBING NIGHTS – Last Tuesday of the Month & Wednesdays / Saturdays**

Meet at “High Places”, Wyre Forest Climbing Wall, Silverwoods Way, Kidderminster DY11 7DT from 4.30pm on **Tuesdays 25<sup>th</sup> July, 29<sup>th</sup> August & 26<sup>th</sup> September**, although a few newer & younger working members are meeting 6.30 -7.00pm. Just turn up or get in touch with Pete P (07779 366905) and ask to be added to the WhatsApp group.

Darren G tells me another group are meeting at “Red Point” Birmingham on **Wednesday around 1215 pm &/or Saturdays at around noon** so feel free to pop along if these times or venue suit you better.

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

**13<sup>th</sup> July, 17<sup>th</sup> August & 14<sup>th</sup> September** Committee meetings start at 7.30pm (observers are welcome). Otherwise come along at around 8.30 pm for a drink & a chat or meal.

**WEEKENDS & OTHER MEETS :-****WOMEN'S WEEKEND AT THE HUT Friday 15<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September**

Always popular and a great culinary success, the 2023 Women's Weekend organiser is again Vanessa Biddulph so contact her (07709 514180) to secure your place or get more info.

**TRAIL RUNNING WEEKEND Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> - Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September**

The first of 2 weekends for those who like running. This weekend it's The Trailfest Half Marathon – ‘one of the most scenic you could hope to run’, starting at Blaenau and descending 710 feet to the sea at Porthmadog. No entries on the day this year! Contact Pete Poultney (07779 366905) for more information and to reserve your place in the Hut and check out <https://www.trailfest.co.uk/info.html>

**SCRAMBLING WEEKEND Friday 29<sup>th</sup> September – Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October**

The Barrow Mountaineering & Ski Club Hut at Coniston Coppermines has been booked at £15/person/night for Friday & Saturday. 14 beds are available in 3 rooms (4,4,6) & @ 1<sup>st</sup> May 8 places have already been taken. Although primarily aimed at members interested in 'scrambling', the weekend (which is a self-catering w/e) is open to anyone. New Club member Dan Bow will be helping by taking 2 ropes of 2 people out over the Scrambling Weekend. Further information about the hut is readily available on the website:

<https://bmasc.org.uk/cottage/>

To book please give Mel a call on 07845 060043.

**BIKING WEEKEND Friday 21<sup>st</sup> – Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> October**

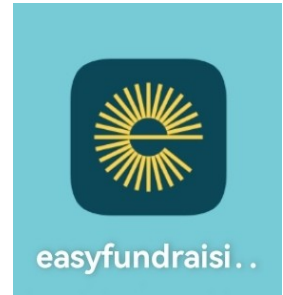
Jonathan Howells is organising this but at the moment is unsure whether it will be road, mountainbiking or both. Details should be in next Newsletter

**SNOWDONIA MARATHON EYRYI WEEKEND Friday 28<sup>th</sup> - Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> October**

A second opportunity to get those running shoes on for an event twice voted as "Britain's Best Marathon" <http://www.snowdoniamarathon.co.uk/> Contact Pete Poultney (07779 366905) for more information and to reserve your place at the Hut.

**EASYFUNDRAISING REMINDER : PLEASE BECOME A SUPPORTER**

Easyfundraising was launched in 2005 and is now the UK's biggest shopping site that supports charities & CASCs with over 2 million supporters who between them have raised over £42 million for thousands of causes across the U.K. It is partnered with over 7,000 brands & stores (eg Asda, Morrisons, Sainsbury, Tesco, Dunelm, John Lewis, Apple Store, eBay, Amazon, M&S, Emirates, Tui, Halfords, Mountain Warehouse etc etc) who will donate part of what you spend to a cause of your choice – hopefully West Bromwich Mountaineering Club!! It won't cost you any extra. The cost is covered by the brand, who pay EF a commission because when you start your shop from the easyfundraising website or app, they can see EF sent you to them. If you make a purchase, a commission is generated, and we turn that into a donation – magic!



Already within a month of signing up 2 members have each raised over £ 4 for WBMC through their everyday shopping online activities – it's that easy!! Imagine the funds that could be realised if 100 or more Club members signed up ?? So..... please.....

1) Go online and select West Brom Mountaineering Club as your cause.  
2) Sign up to create an account (takes around 2 minutes)  
3) Everytime you shop online via Easyfundraising after that brands will give cashback to WBMC as a 'thank you' for shopping with them. You can shop via your laptop, a free app on your phone and can get donation reminders if you it looks like you are going to shop, to ensure you go onto the brand's website via Easyfundraising so you then get a donation of up to 5% of your spend. See [https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/how-it-works/efr\\_source=website&efr\\_medium=easyfundraising&efr\\_campaign=header-navigation](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/how-it-works/efr_source=website&efr_medium=easyfundraising&efr_campaign=header-navigation)

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**THINGS YOU'VE BEEN DOING RECENTLY**

There's been lots on Facebook & WhatsApp but no-one has written anything so this is just a summary. Claire, Fred, Andy B & Dave H made the trip to Rhum for a long weekend & enjoyed themselves. You can see some photos on Fred Hammonds' page. 10<sup>th</sup> May saw a group hiring from Wye Valley Canoes and paddling down from Glasbury to Whitney with a pub stop at Hay-on-Wye. As should always be the case on such occasions at least one person ended up in the water! Sadly the Chapel Stile w/e had to be cancelled but end of May saw a group scrambling up in the Lakes, based at Patterdale. Pinnacle Ridge was amongst the routes ascended.



Stuart Fellows led a B&B walk to Kinver & then spent a week in the Lakes with family based at Windermere while Geordie & his wife visited the Alps. As I'm typing this another group are enjoying themselves climbing, surfing and playing card with the loser downing sambuca shots!



My view for today. Mont Blanc just in cloud. Great venue for Boots and Beer. Bloody expensive Beer though at 9 euros for 500ml.

10:13

**SATURDAY 8th JULY : LONG COACH MEET - KESWICK****Depart:** 07: 00 –West Bromwich. Edward Street

Car Park £4 charge on Saturday (B70 8NL)

07: 20 –Penkridge (ST19 5AS)

**Toilet stop:** Charnock Richard services**Drop offs:**

Scales NY 343 269

Threkeld NY 325 254

Keswick Coach Station NY 263 235

**Pick up:**

Keswick Coach Station NY 263 235

Grasmere Coach Park NY 339 082

Ambleside

**Required map/s :** OS 1:25000 Outdoor Leisure 5*Skiddaw's summit ridge with Skiddaw Little Man on left***English Lakes North East or OS 1:50000 Landranger 90 Penrith & Keswick****SUGGESTED ROUTES:****From Scales Route 1: Blencathra. & Skiddaw - 16 miles / 27km 1600m / 4,600 ft ascent**

<https://ridewithgps.com/routes/43425900> From Scales follow the footpath NE then N and NW before the grade 1 scramble up Sharp Edge and round to Blencathra. Continue down the SW ridge of Blencathra before going W to cross Glenderaterra Beck (296 278) and reaching the Cumbria Way (293 279). After crossing the beck go S along the Cumbria Way before climbing NW to the summit of Lonscale Fell and continue to the top of Skiddaw. Retrace your steps to descend to Keswick and if time and stamina permits add Latrigg to your list of hills bagged.

*A very long and arduous route which can be cut short at a number of points. However Sophie Kellaway has come up with an alternative for the peak baggers! <https://ridewithgps.com/routes/43425856> which has same distance and elevation gain as the above but takes in 9 Wainwrights instead of 5!!*

**From Threkeld Route 2: The Dodds, Helvellyn & Fairfield - 15.5 miles / 25km 1650m ascent**

From Threkeld follow footpaths S and climb to the summit of Clough Head. Continue S along the ridge over all the tops till Helvellyn and Dollywagon Pike. Drop down to Grisedale Tarn before the steep pull up to Fairfield. Continue S to Great Rigg and then over Stone Arthur and down into Grasmere. *Another arduous route with the only option to cut short onto the 555 Keswick to Grasmere road and then a bus ride or hitch.*

**From Threkeld Route 3: Rte 2 with Ambleside finish – 17 miles 27km 1750m ascent.**

Follow Route 2 to Fairfield summit. Continue E then S over Hart Crag and High Pike back to Ambleside. *Not for the faint hearted but you've plenty of time and you will have earned your pint.*

**Plus plenty of shorter & less hilly routes from Keswick for example****From Keswick Route 4: Ullock Pike, Skiddaw & Cumbria Way / Allerdale Ramble**

Follow the Allerdale Ramble NW through Thornthwaite Forest to eventually reach Ravenstone Hotel (236297). From the right side of the hotel, follow a steep path through a conifer wood then take the long heather-clad ridge to Ullock Pike (244287). This was Wainwright's favourite route up Skiddaw. Continue along the slate rocks of Longside Edge to Skiddaw and then descend via the Cumbria Way and the Allerdale Ramble back to Keswick.

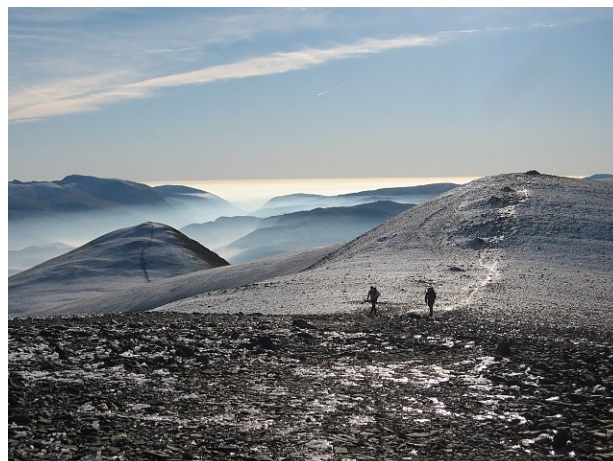
**From Keswick Route 5: Cat Bells & back (take money if you want to catch the boat!)**

Take paths to Portinscale and then the Cumbria Way to climb Cat Bells (244198). Alternatively, it may be possible to take a Derwent Water Launch (anticlockwise) at the Landing Stage at (264227) to Hawes End to save the walk in. *Distance 12km (8 miles) less if you take the boat cruise one way.*

**Fares: Members £23, Guests £26, Under 18's & Full time students £10****To Book Your Seat contact Nigel Tarr on 07703 345729**

*Should you need to cancel, please do so no later than the Wednesday prior to the coach date or a £5.00 fee will be charged. Fail to turn up and the full coach fare will be expected.*

Thanks to Andy Brown for help with the routes & Sophie Kellaway for the [GPS Tracks](#)



**SUNDAY 13th AUGUST: RETURN TO HAWES / N. YORKS**

(Was going to be SWALEDALE – a Club cpach first – but we don't think it would be able to get there, so it's another attempt to visit Hawes after the March coach broke down)

**Depart:** 07: 00 –West Bromwich. Edward St Car Park (B70 8NN) NB Charges apply on Saturdays !

07: 20 –Penkridge

**Drop offs:** Hawes The coach will park in the Auction Market Coach Park (SD877896). This is on the edge of the town so there will be a pick up near the town centre at the junction of the A684 & B6255 @ SD 869 898.

**Pick up:** Hawes SD 877896 & SD 869 898.

**Required map:** OS 1:25000 Outdoor Leisure Map No 30 Yorkshire Dales N & Central Areas & maybe No 2 Yorkshire Dales Western Area OS 1:50000 Landranger 98

*Right: Hardraw Force with its sheer 100ft drop*

**Suggested Routes:**

**Route 1. Great Shunner Fell & Lovely Seat (14 miles / 23 km & 2050 ft ascent)** <https://ridewithgps.com/routes/41920954>

Follow Pennine Way out of Hawes on road to Hardraw and after crossing pastures call in to see Hardraw Force (Entry via Green Dragon Pub!!!) After leaving continue on Pennine Way to top of Great Shunner Fell (849974) Leave Pennine Way and drop down to Little Shunner Fell (858970) and then continue SE to Grimy Gutter Hags (869963) & then southerly to the road cattle grid. Cross the road here and climb up to Lovely Seat (878950), then head E to Coghill Beck and follow Beck down to track at (900942). Follow track S for 2 Km when track turns SW towards Smuker Hill (889923) where it turns S to join Shutt Lane (889916). Follow Shutt Lane into Sedbusk and then cross fields to join Hardraw Rd at (877905) and back to coach.

**Route 2 Great Shunner Fell ((12 miles / 19.3 km & ~1500 ft ascent)** As Route 1 to cattle grid and then follow road S to just below Sweet Hill where we leave road left (865936) and follow path in S Easterly direction via Pike Hill towards North Rakes Hill where we leave track and turn S (884924) on path and then SE to join Shutt Lane and then as Route 1. <https://ridewithgps.com/routes/41921391>

**Route 3 Dodd Fell Hill & Drumaldrace (11 miles / 18 km & 1,600 ft ascent)**

Follow Pennine Way to Gayle and onwards SW. After a couple of miles Cam Road come in from the right & around 837850 strike off left up over rough moor to the trig point (841846) of the flat, featureless top. Descend due SE to the head of Sleddale (845841) & on to Cam High Rd. At 862853 veer off right through a gate & up to Drumaldrace summit (874867). Return to the 'road' and at 882870 take the track which leads N down to Burtersett or Gayle, thence Hawes. <https://ridewithgps.com/routes/41921666>

**Route 4 (Bad weather routes) (7 miles or 12.5 miles if PW followed to Cam High Rd)** Follow Pennine Way in South Westerly direction out of Hawes towards Gayle. After leaving houses and road the PW takes a 90 degree right turn in field. (868890). Leave the PW here and head towards Gayle Beck which is followed to just above Aysgill Waterfall where you cross a footbridge & head up to road. Turn right up Beggermans Rd to meet Cam High Rd (862853) and turn left to Weather fell. From Weather Fell turn left on path (882870) to descend back into Gayle tuning left at (883879) on way down.

**Route 4 Hardrow Force (3 or 5 miles / 5 or 8 km)** Take a leisurely stroll over to Hardraw and after enjoying the pleasures of the Green Dragon pub wander up to see Hardraw Force and picnic in the natural amphitheatre before returning to coach (3 miles) If this is too short a walk, leave pub left and take footpath to West House and turn right to Sedbusk and then cross fields to coach.

**THERE WILL BE A LED WALK DEPENDING ON CONDITIONS ON THE DAY.**

**Fares: Members £23, Non members £26, Under 18's & Full time students £10**

**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.*

**SATURDAY 9th SEPTEMBER : THE MOELWYNS****Depart:** 07: 00 –West Bromwich.

Edward Street Car Park

07: 20 –M54 Junction 2

**Toilet stop:** Llangollen OR ???**Drop offs:** Capel Curig bridge (735572)

Pen-y-Gwryd (660557)

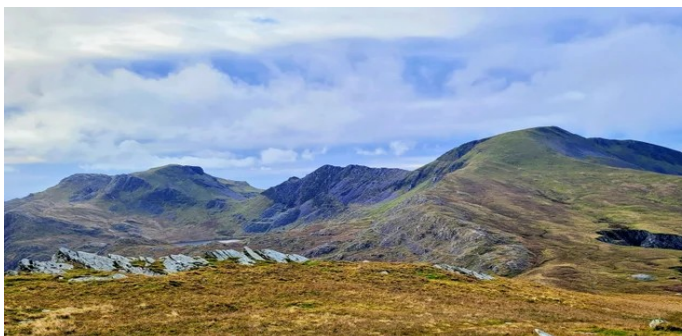
Nantgwynnant (627506)

Maentwrog(660410)

Tanygrisiau (685448)

**Pick up:** Tanygrisiau (685448)**Required map:** OS 1:25000 Outdoor

Leisure Map No 17 Snowdon &amp; 18 Harlech &amp; Bala

**SUGGESTED ROUTES:-****From Capel Curig (Pont Cyfyng) : Route 1 – Moel Siabod to Ysgafell Wen.**

Leave the coach at the bridge and cross over by the spectacular rapids to follow the track to Llyn y Foel (714549). Then scramble up Daiar Ddu, an easy, fairly narrow arête, up to the summit of Moel Siabod (705546). Descend west over Moel Gid (695545) to Bwlch Rhiw'r Ychen (677543) & then head south, following a fence on the boggy ridge over Carnedd y Cribau (676537) and much farther on Moel Meirch (662504). Pass to east of Llyn Edno to Ysgafell Wen (White Ledge) with its 3 summits (664488, 664486 & the highest at 667481). Then descend west to col south of Llyn Yr Adar (Lake of the birds) at 657477. Turn left & follow a path SSE to the disused quarry (665462) then a good track can be followed to Cwmorthin & down to Tanygrisiau (685448) & the coach.

**NB: This route ideally needs a clear day as it can be confusing in mist. (~ 21½ km / 13 miles)****From the Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel : Route 2 – 'Ridge' to Ysgafell Wen without Siabod.**

Climb a stile west of Llyn Lockwood and walk uphill in a SE direction over boggy ground to Bwlch Rhiw'r Ychen (677543) Then it's route 1 over the Ysgafells and on to the coach waiting at Tanygrisiau. (~ 16 km / 10 miles)

**From Nantgwynnant: Route 3 – Cnicht**

Take the track past Plas Gwynant and follow the minor road to Gelli-lego (632483) where a track heads uphill to the right of a stream. Climb a stile at 637473 and then head SE to the top of a steep scree slope (643465) from where an easy scramble leads to the summit of Cnicht (=Knight) (645466). Head NE & pay your respects to Cnicht's north summit (648469), which is easy to miss, and then stroll down the NE ridge to the cairn at the col (657477) with Llyn Yr Adar off to the left. Turn right and follow route 1 to Tanygrisiau (About 13 km / 8 miles)

**From Maentwrog: Route 4 -** If you're not feeling that energetic a pleasant path leads from Llyn Mair (655413) eastwards through woods and past waterfalls to Dduallt station (679421). It then heads north over the fells alongside the Ffestiniog railway before this disappears underground. Take your pick of the paths past Tanygrisiau Reservoir to the village and the coach, the one up the west side will enable you to have a look at the hydro-electric power station (679445) (About 7 km / 4½ miles)

**From Tanygrisiau: Route 5 – Moelwyn Mawr, Cragysgafn & Moelwyn Bach**

Follow the track to the head of Llyn Cwmorthin (678460), cross a slate bridge & climb to the disused quarry (665462). Head south past the disused Rhosydd quarry & up the N ridge of Moelwyn Mawr (=Big White Bare Hill). It's north top has some fine rock teeth (661453) & another 400 ft takes you to the true summit (658448). Descend the S ridge to the minor top of Cragysgafn( 658449) from where some easy scrambling leads to Bwlch Stwlan (661441). Traverse the face of Moelwyn Bach, then turn west to its summit (660437). Descend via Carreg Blaen-Llyn to the reservoir (666444) from where a good path leads back to Tanygrisiau (~12 km / 7 ½ miles)

**Route 6 – Stwlan Dam, Moelwyn Bach, Cragysgafn, Moelwyn Mawr, Moel-yr-hydd & Moel Druman**

Why not head SW to the Stwlan Dam, then S over Carreg Blaen-Llyn, to climb Moelwyn Bach from the south? Then down to Bwlch Stwlan, up over Cragysgafyn and on to Moelwyn Mawr. Descend NE and climb Moel-yr-hydd (672454), then Foel Ddu to the north before dropping down to the ruined Barracks in Rhosydd quarry (665462). Take the path north to Llyn Yr Adar (657477) and then turn east to the main summit of Ysgafell Wen (667481). Drop SE to a col and a line of old fence posts leads past Llyn Terfyn and Llyn Coch, then the ridge ahead swings leftish to the (cairnless?) top of Moel Druman (672476). Head east from the summit, taking the path to the left of the little lake to the north of Llyn Conglog (675477) and then veer off right up to the 8<sup>th</sup> and final top, Allt-fawr (682475). A broad ridge leads S to Cwmorthin Quarry with it's tips and disused inclines. Pick the right one and you'll soon be back at Tanygrisiau !! (About 16 km / 10 miles)

**For Climbers there are lots of possibilities on the crags to the W & N of Tanygrisiau****Fares: Members £23, Non members £26, Under 18's & Full time students £10****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.***

October		<u>REMAINING MEET CARD 2023</u>	
Thursday	5th	Indoor Meet - Red Lion	
Sunday	8th	Coach Meet - Ambleside/Grasmere	Nigel Tarr
Thursday	12th	Members Night - Red Lion	
Sat - Sun	21 <sup>st</sup> - 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Biking Weekend	
Sat - Sun	28 <sup>st</sup> - 29 <sup>th</sup>	Runners Weekend	
November			
Thursday	9th	Indoor Meet - Red Lion	
Saturday	11th	Coach Meet - Llanberis	Nigel Tarr
Thursday	16th	Members Night - Red Lion	
Sat - Sun	18 <sup>th</sup> - 19 <sup>th</sup>	Skills Weekend @ the Hut	Dave Hind
Friday	24th	Curry Night in West Brom	Nigel Tarr
December			
Thursday	7th	Indoor Meet - Red Lion	
Sunday	10th	Coach Meet - Hayfield	Nigel Tarr
Thursday	14th	Members Xmas Night - Red Lion	

+ Climbers night held on the last Tuesday of the month, 6.30pm at Wyre Forest Leisure Centre, Kidderminster DY11 2DT

### HUT NEWS

**New Hut Sec:** At the last committee meeting we heard that Pete Poultney had tendered his resignation from his role as Hut Secretary. Fred Hammonds volunteered to take over the role and his position as an ordinary committee members was filled by co-optee Jonathan Howells. I'm sure everyone would want to thank Pate for all the time, effort & commitment he put into the role since he took it on in 2019. Any future Hut bookings should be made to Fred via [hut-secretary@wbmc.org](mailto:hut-secretary@wbmc.org), 07527 744481 or [f.hammonds@btinternet.com](mailto:f.hammonds@btinternet.com).

**Dogs @ The Hut:** The committee have set up a sub-committee to discuss the way to proceed now that more and more people seem to want to take their dog/s to the Club Hut. At the moment you need to tell the Hut Sec the size & breed of dog if you intend to take one and say where it would be sleeping. If someone else has already booked that date and is allergic to dogs, they currently have priority. If they tried to book after an owner & dog had booked they would be told the situation & it would then be up to them to decide to go then on a different date. If you have strong feelings about whether or how the Club should go about accommodating dogs, PLEASE send them to the Chairman or Hut Sec so they can be considered properly.

**Parking at the Hut:** Normally there is enough parking outside the Hut, although not always at "special weekends". Pete Poultney has obtained permission that if our Hut car park is full people can park their cars on the other side of the road opposite providing they do not block through traffic.

**New Shower:** There is now a new shower in toilet block so please keep it nice & clean for as long as possible

**Malcolm Collins Photograph:** The committee & Pete P still have not heard anything about the whereabouts of the photograph of Malcolm Collins that was at the Hut. Please return it if you have it. As there is no photograph of him in the Club's 50 Years book, I would be grateful to receive any photographs members might have of Malcolm Collins to include in future Newsletters as and when appropriate – by email or by post.



**Hut Etiquette:** It should not be necessary to say this but please be considerate of others after 10pm, especially if there are wives or children present. If there are only “rugged mountaineering types” in the hut you should still keep the noise down and not be rowdy after midnight!! Some people want to be up early to walk!! Apparently there were a few, possible well-lubricated individuals stopping at The George Starkey Hut at the recent Scrambling weekend who ignored this unwritten rule and were still noisy at around 2am.

### **CONCERNS NOW RAISED OVER RENAMING OF BRECON BEACONS!**

The National Park Authority that oversees the Brecon Beacons National Park decided that the Welsh name of Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog should be used for the South Wales mountains from April 17, but many in the tourism industry have criticised the decision saying it was done without consultation. Ashford Price, chairman of Dan Yr Ogof, the National Showcaves Centre for Wales, said he has had ‘countless emails and phone calls’ from ‘furious tourism operators’ concerning the rebranding. “Some years ago, the Wales Tourist Board in an extensive national survey asked people what were the top iconic names that they associated with Wales,” he said. “Snowdonia National Park, Pembrokeshire National Park & Brecon Beacons National Park came up as the top 3 names most people associated with Wales in this survey. Locals do not have an issue with using Welsh names but would have been much happier if the Park Authority had continued to promote both the Welsh & the English translation. This park authority have always had an uncanny knack of upsetting local people with their attitude that they are the ‘elite’ and always knowing what is best for the locals. The decision to change their name to just Bannau Brycheiniog was done with no tourism consultation.”

Mr Price also pointed out potential issues if the park is referred to by its Welsh name, highlighting the awkward history of the King Brychan whose ancient kingdom was roughly the area within the national park’s boundary. The Irish-born king, with a Welsh mother & Irish prince for a father, was born in 419 AD and, according to Dictionary of Welsh Biography, he was said to have been given as a hostage by his father to Benadel, the king of Powys. There he grew up to be a ruthlessly fierce warrior who would collect his enemies’ dismembered limbs after a battle and display their chopped up remains as trophies! He was also a ‘notorious lecher’ who preyed on the women of his kingdom and may have fathered up to 63 children! After researching various historical records, the Dictionary of Welsh Biography states that he had at least 11 sons & 25 daughters. It is also recorded that he even raped the king of Powys’ daughter whilst being held hostage and had 3 or 4 wives, but their fate is not recorded.

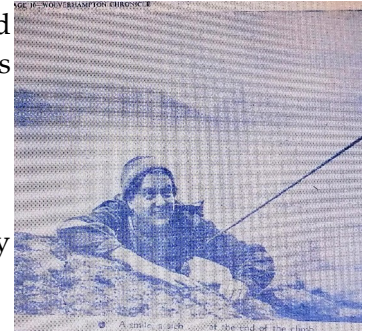
Amazingly, King Brychan is also noted as a saint, with a feast day on April 6! His family is known as one of the saintly tribes, with a number of his children being venerated over the following years! Mr Price concluded, “Promoting the name Brycheiniog as part of the park’s new rebranded title may not be wise as it is so closely connected with a sexual predator, and this name may also upset the residents of park. Who would want their local national park associated so closely with a rapist and a king with such an appalling record regarding his treatment of women?”



**MARGARET GEORGE R.I.P.**

Older members will remember our Treasurer from 1995 to 2000, Margaret George, and her late husband Alan. I for one have been conscious that we have lost touch with her over the last few years (she stopped being a member sometime between 2018 & 2020). In the last few weeks her brother Chris Jones & granddaughter Eloise George have been in touch and told me she had been suffering from dementia for the last few years. Sadly this accelerated alarmingly after a fall a couple of months ago and extended hospital stays. Before this she had been living at home more or less independently but with mobility issues which meant she did not go out walking, only being taken out by car. She was no longer mobile so she moved to the Wulfrun Rose Care Home last week. I had written here that maybe some WBMC members might like to visit her as Eloise said she knows it would mean a great deal to Margaret if she knew she was remembered. However sadly I heard she passed away peacefully in her sleep on Mid-summer's Day morning with her family around, so none of this will be possible.

Eloise also sent a cutting from the Wolverhampton Chronicle of Friday 18<sup>th</sup> July 1958 when Margaret & Alan, as members of Wolverhampton MC, were involved in taking reporters onto the hills. She remembers her grandma saying that a lot of the photo's were staged – for the one I've included here Margaret said they actually lowered her down to take the photo rather than having her done the climb upwards! I'll make sure the rest of the cutting features in the next Newsletter. If anyone wants further details, or has any memories of Margaret & Alan they'd like to share with Eloise & Chris please get in touch with her [eloise260493@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:eloise260493@hotmail.co.uk). I'm sure she & Chris will be very interested to receive them.

**NEWS FROM OUR YORKSHIRE CORRESPONDENT GEOFF BROWN**

Don Simpson popped down from York to join our informal Tuesday Climbing Group for a few climbs on 'Burbage North' on the 10th June. It had been a while since Don had climbed on grit but once he'd shaken the cobwebs out of his old pink rock boots (circa 1987?) he danced up a few of the classic routes at the crag.

It was the hottest day of the year so far and we all worked up fair a sweat. The heat may have contributed but after a while, the sole on one of Dons pink boots began to come adrift and flapped around as he sought out foot placements! (See photo right for how they looked before) At that point we all decided that dehydration wasn't something to be taken lightly and we headed for "The Norfolk Arms" at Ringinglow and had a couple of pints. It was a great social afternoon cragging and hopefully Don will join us again for a more climbs on' t grit once he's found the Bostic and glued the sole back on.



*Editor: A big THANK YOU to Don Simpson for sending me copies of the missing Meet Cards mentioned on page 16 of last Newsletter.*

**RECENT EVENING MEETS**

Mike's Smith & Thompson's Canal walk on the evening of 11<sup>th</sup> May would have suited all those who like a bit of mud as it had rained most of the day. In the event only 6 members braved it but they had a good (very muddy) walk before an excellent meal at The Longhorn pub. By contrast the June 8<sup>th</sup> evening walk led by Andy Brown came in the middle of a period of warm sunny weather and attracted 14 walkers, plus 2 well-behaved dogs – Lin Wainwright's "Blue" & Andy's "Seb". They met at the RSPB Reserve in Hampstead and did a walk through the Sandwell Valley which involved crossing the new dam built near Forge Mill Lake by The Environment Agency to protect properties downstream at times of flooding. After the walk they returned to "The Red Lion" for refreshments.

**THE DESI LANDLORDS HELPING TO RESHAPE BRITISH PUB CULTURE: THE RED LION GETS A MENTION!**

David Jesudason, a writer of Indian and Malay origin, recently told the BBC about the "under-celebrated" history of desi pubs is one of resistance - as well as a celebration of multiculturalism. The term "desi pub" is commonly used to describe venues run by people of Indian origin offering food as well as beer but they were not a feature of his youth. Growing up in a market town in Bedfordshire, he said he suffered racial abuse during his first pub experiences and it wasn't until he moved to London and went to "The Blue-Eyed Maid" – a pub with an Indian restaurant upstairs and a team of Asian bouncers that he felt safe & could totally be himself. Since then, the author describes having an "amazing journey" - visiting pubs across the country including the West Midlands. *"They're totally under-celebrated and unrecognised,"* he said, continuing *"It's not just an Asian story, it's the story of white people who saw their pubs change and become the vanguard of multiculturalism. Most of the places I went to in the West Midlands were Punjabi, and I found it really, really empowering to see a landlord with a turban who is really proud and community-orientated, When they first started, they were a resistance to racism - to forge a safe place for people of Asian extraction - who maybe worked in the foundries of the West Midlands, and then it became a thing where everybody was welcome."*

A "strong claim" to be one of the first desi pubs in the country was "The Wheatsheaf" in Coventry. In the 1960s they would hold kabaddi tournaments & have a big barbecue grill in the garden, the author explained <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-birmingham-65532039>

He went on to mention the pub we meet at, saying "When landlord Satnam Purewal's father Jeet first took over "The Red Lion" in West Bromwich in 1997 he often faced hostility from fascist groups and kept a baseball bat behind the bar. He had to win them over, of course, and he did so deftly, proving once again that British-Indians were well-suited to running pubs," Visiting the pub, now run by Mr Purewal, was a "moving experience", said Mr Jesudason.



He continued, "Stained glass windows commemorate a visit by the civil rights activist Malcolm X and the toil of the Indian diaspora when they first arrived in the West Midlands. It is now completely family-friendly, and there's even a quiet room for autistic children. Traditionally Punjabi drinking culture was male, but what "The Red Lion" did was show the way of how to turn these things into very family-friendly environments. Pubs create social cohesion. And that's the best thing about them. We don't often talk about the success stories of multiculturalism, and I think that's what desi pubs really are."

*"Desi Pubs" by David Jesudason (published by CAMRA Books) will be released on 17 May.*

**RECENT COACH MEETS**

The Malham & Nantlle coach meets both attracted 36 passengers and were great successes, enjoyed by all who booked their seats. The majority on both opted for the ‘Led walk’ routes which for Malham meant visiting Janet’s Fosse before scrambling up Goredale Scar to Malham Tarn and then visiting the famous Cove & its limestone pavement. See Stuart Fellows’ photos below. A contingent of runners took to the higher ground and crossed Pen-y-Gent & Fountains Fell from Horton and a couple trod The Dales High Way.



Padding in Janet’s Fosse



Trying to avoid the water climbing the Scar



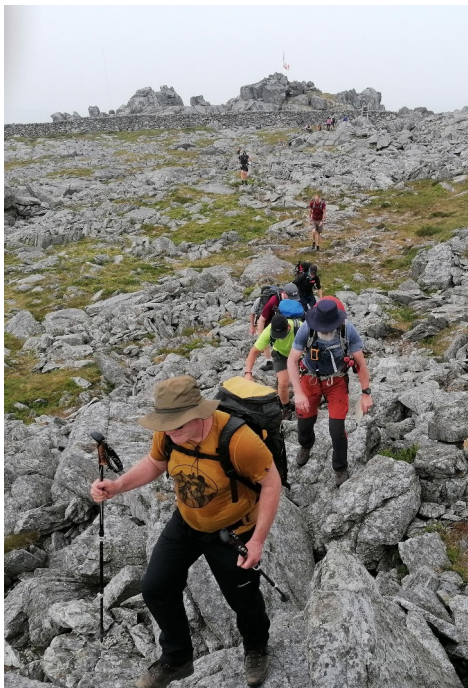
Lunch on the Limestone Pavement



Looking up at the climbers on the Cove

As Liz Perks put on “WBMC B and B photos” WhatsApp, the Nantlle Ridge was the *“It ain’t arf ot mum, coach meet”*, with a very humid heat that saw clouds cutting out the direct heat of the sun for most of the day which was just as well as everybody sweated buckets and

drank loads! Four alighted at the 94 m spot ht on the A487 to reach the ridge via Garndolbenmaen village but 23 opted to take the usual approach approaching via Nebo and Llyn Cwm Dulyn and reached the Royal standard-adorned summit of Mynydd Graig Coch at noon after a sweaty 75 minute climb. Geordie H & Dave Kirk went climbing on Craig y Bera (Sentries Ridge) on Mynydd Mawr, which was the mountain Chairman Dave climbed while Paul & Leon Brindley walked to Nantmore, Cwm Bychan & Moel Sygyn from



Beddgellert. The main traverse party found the Bwlch Cwmdulyn remarkably un-boggy and lunched at and around the Garnedd-goch trig point at 1pm before going on to enjoy the rest of the lovely ridge, where there are 3 geocaches mentioning WBMC that were placed by John Edwards. He was able to check on 2 of these but had received notification about a month ago that the one of top of the 20 foot pillar on Mynydd Tal-y-mignedd (built by quarry workers to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee) had gone missing. Anthenia D very kindly offered to make the climb to put the replacement he had brought with him back



on top wedged between a couple of rocks, thus saving him climbing the thing for the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> time! We ended up leaving the Cwellyn Arms around 30 minutes later than intended but made good time back to West Brom. Everyone agreed it had been a great day out!

**ONE PERSON'S ATTEMPT TO MOUNTAINEER IN A MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY WAY: "My, a pinch more, sustainable mountaineering!" by Tim Weller**

Climate science over the last 200 years has shown that the earth is warming fast, in the geological timescale, from our rapid exploitation and burning of finite fossil fuels. In addition, I think, our folly is to live as if they are inexhaustible. Hence, the climate emergency. Over a lifetime of hillwalking in the UK in an effort to visit the summit of every hill listed in the SMC's 'Munro's Tables' book, I have done my bit to hasten the strain on the planet's creaking life support systems by bombing up and down the M6 as many as six times, once, in one busy year.

Firstly, I am now reducing my visits to two a year but each one lasting for as long as my wife is forbearing and injuries allow. I also try and park further out and then cycle longer before I start the climb.

To reduce my hypocrisy quotient, I am also driving my diesel car at between 60 and 65 mph on 70 mph roads. In this way, on my injury aborted trip last month to the SMC's Donalds, I got over 80 mpg on one tankful. It brought 17 miles/litre when I filled up again on my arrival home. That is impressive!!

Thirdly, I am trying to show more restraint by only visiting Wales by bike and train. It is a great adventure to train / bikepack when the weather is fine and settled. Just for three or four days.

Fourthly, I am having great fun exploring local and regional public rights of way. Are we the only country with 140,000 miles of paths to explore? I've had years, zooming off to Wales to walk and climb but I've been missing the most amazing and beautiful scenery on my doorstep! You still need navigation skills to find the intriguing paths and crossings - and a compass.

Fifthly, I feel guilty driving and have cut my driving in half to ~5,000 miles a year and cycle all local journeys & even some regional journeys. I'm using the bus & train more than ever before. Buses in the Lake District & the Sherpa in Eryri are excellent but must become more frequent and cheaper.

Sixthly, old crocks like me (now 75) have had our turn and must now show restraint for you youngsters to enjoy the big hills.

Seventhly, try 10-10-20 vision - use a max 10 units of electricity/day (ours is 2.6 kWh/day with solar); at least 10 miles/litre out of the car; and, max 20 C in the room you live in and other rooms lower.

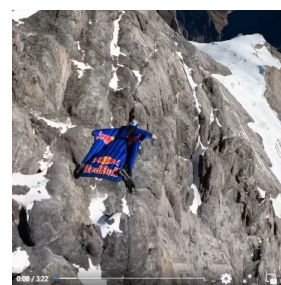
*Ed: Well done Tim for making such efforts. I wonder if any WBMC members are striving to make changes in the way they go climbing & walking? Please feel free to write and tell other Club members about them.*

**GLIDING DOWN THE EIGER**

If you have a spare 3 ½ minutes you might want to watch this video made by the Red Bull Skydive Team of Marco Furst & Max Manow coming down the Eiger in wingsuits.

It was put online 24th April and Ken Priest spotted it first but I just had to repost it saying "Wish I'd the balls to try something like this when I was younger 😊 ..... only it hadn't been invented then 🌈" So far I've had no offers of a tandem ride :-)

<https://www.facebook.com/redbullskydiveteam/videos/1376887413154726>



**“WBMC NUTTERS” – DO YOU LIKE NUTS? by John Edwards**

As a result of forgetting to pick up his sandwiches from the fridge one Wednesday in the summer of 2022 the Editor arrived at the lunchtime pub stop food-less. They weren't doing food either as the place was still in refurbishment after a change in ownership, so I ended up buying a portion of nuts from a jar labeled “Mixed Nuts with Truffle & Pecorino Cheese” for a couple ££.

They were so amazing I asked the Landlord where he got them from and he told me a firm called “Cambrook Extraordinary Nuts” based in Hampshire.

To cut a long story short there is now a ‘Trade customer’ called “WBMC Nutters” that is now eligible to buy online at a discount. Anyone who wants to secure nuts at bargain prices are invited to go online at [www.cambrookfoods.co.uk](http://www.cambrookfoods.co.uk) and take a look. For example a 1 kg bulk bag of their cheapest Mix 23 (Spicy & Sweet Snack Mix) currently costs me just £6.30 plus a proportion of the postage cost while their most expensive (& my favourite): Mix 18 (Truffle & Pecorino Mix of Nuts) is £18.80 for the kg bag. These are savings of £3 & £8 respectively on the online price! For comparison at Morrisons supermarket two 500g bags of plain single nuts cost £14 and their Pistachio Kernals are £26.65 per kg. I've now made 3 orders (8kg total) for my own consumption and took some samples round on The Black Mountain coach meet for people to try. They seem to go down well so I may well buy a bulk order over £100 to get free delivery and then sell them on to WBMC members for the wholesale price I had to pay – the problem will be me getting the bags to them! Wholesale prices (excl postage):-

1 kg bag Almonds baked & salted £ 14.70	1 kg Mix No.
1 kg bag Almonds baked unsalted £ 14.70	(2) Baked & Salted Mix of Nuts £ 18.00
1 kg bag Almonds hickory smoked £ 15.00	(11) Baked & Salted Mix of Nuts £ 10.02
1 kg bag Cashews baked & salted £ 16.20	(5) Salted & Caramelised Mix £ 13.80
1 kg bag Cashews umami £ 16.80	(6) Salted, Smoked, Caramel'd & Spiced Mix £ 10.02
1 kg bag Cashews baked & salted £ 16.20	(7) Salted, Caramelised & Sweet Chilli Mix £ 8.16
1 kg Almonds & Cashews hick'y sm'd £ 15.30	(10) Salted, Caramelised & Spiced Mix £ 7.50
1 kg bag Pecans baked & salted £ 17.28	(15) Baked Truffle Nuts £ 18.30
1 kg bag Pecans caramelised £ 19.62	(16) Salted, Caramelised & Spiced Mix £ 15.72
1 kg bag Macadamias baked & salted £ 31.74	(17) Baked, Salted Nuts & Chilli Corn £ 7.13
1 kg bag Peanuts baked & salted £ 4.74	(18) Truffle & Pecorino Mixed, £ 19.80.
1 kg bag Peanuts caramel'd & sesame seeds £ 7.50	(20) Baked Chilli & Lime Cashews & Peanuts £ 11.34
800 g bag Pistaschios baked & salted £ 16.80	(23) Spicy & Sweet Snack Mix £ 6.30

Of course if it's easier you can buy online yourself and forget the trade discount!

**EVEREST UPDATES: NEW RECORDS!!**

**27 ASCENTS:** On 17<sup>th</sup> May, Reuters announced that Nepali sherpa, Kami Rita Sherpa, age 53, had scaled Mt Everest for a record 27th time, beating his own record (our May / June Newsletter reported this as 24). Thanesar Guragai, the general manager of the Seven Summit Treks, for which Kami Rita works, said he got to the summit of ‘Sagarmatha’ that Wednesday at 8.30am (2.45am BST) via the traditional south-east ridge route, guiding a foreign climber. “We’re trying to get details but for now it’s 100% confirmed that Kami Rita scaled for the 27th time,” Guragai said.



Kami Rita first scaled Everest in 1994 and has climbed it almost every year since then, except in 2014, 2015 and 2020, when climbing was halted for various reasons. Kami Rita, who comes from Thame village in the Solukhumbu district, home to Everest & other peaks, could not be reached for comment as he was descending to lower camps on Wednesday.

This year, Nepal has issued a record 478 permits for people to climb Everest, compared with the previous record of 408 in 2021. May is the ideal time for trying to reach the top of Everest, with clear weather before the monsoon arrives from the south, bringing cloud and snow to the peaks and rain to the lowlands.

### **FIRST DOUBLE BELOW-THE-KNEE AMPUTEE**

**ASCENT:** Hari Budha Magar, a former soldier in the Gurkha regiment who lost both his legs when he stepped on an improvised explosive device (IED) in Afghanistan in 2010, has reached the top of Mount Everest and created history by becoming the first double above-the-knee amputee to scale the mountain. When he woke up after the blast, the father of 3 said he felt like his "life was finished" but after taking up skiing, golfing, cycling & climbing he regained his confidence and took on the challenge to "inspire others" & change perceptions of disability. On May 8<sup>th</sup>, after waiting patiently at basecamp (5,364m) for 2 weeks he finally set off up the Khumbu glacier with a team of Nepalese climbers, led by Krish Thapa, himself a former Gurkha and SAS mountain troop leader. They reached the summit at about 15:00 BST on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May and over a satellite phone call, he told the rest of his team it was "harder than I could have ever imagined". Hari, 43, who lives in Canterbury, and the climb team



are now resting before returning to the UK around the end of May, so all told they will have been away for just over a month!! "No matter how big your dreams, no matter how challenging your disability, with the right mindset, anything is possible." To make the climb happen Hari was supported by over 30 organisations including TeamArmyUK and over 600 individuals and is now urging supporters to dig deep as he raises money for 5 veteran charities including Team Forces, Gurkha Welfare Trust, Pilgrim Bandits, Blesma & On Course Foundation with the aim of raising £884,900 (= the height of Everest x100) <https://crowdfunder.co.uk/p/harieverestappeal>

### **MAY / JUNE ISSUE PRIZE CROSSWORD : ANSWERS & WINNER**

**ACROSS:** 5. Pea 8. Ibis 9. Igloo 10. Norm 11. Venables 12. Pitons 13. Club 15. Reef 17. Fells 19. Khumbu Glacier 20. Sleds 21. Crag 22. Gulf 25. Chalet 26. Ocho Rios 28. Brno 29. Resin 30. Pass 31. Nam

**DOWN:** 1. Abseil 2. Asia 3. Hill Tribe 4. Alps 5. Poopo 6. Angstering 7. Wrangler 14. Bourdillon 16. Eiger 18. Kangshung 19. Kalahari 23. Lhotse 24. Storm 26. Omsk 27. Rope No entries were received by 21<sup>st</sup> June so the £10 prize remains in the Editor's pocket!

### **PARAMO JACKET FOR SALE**

Colin Talbot (07982 401989) has been in touch via Dave Jones. He is looking to sell a Paramo jacket that is in "as new" condition, only worn half a dozen times when he was out with WBMC. He paid around £250 for it and is looking for around £100 as he's just taken early retirement and will be moving to Lincoln (where there aren't many hills!) next month.





**CLIMBING SKILLS : “HEADING OUTSIDE” by Steve Long (part of the BMC Summit Magazine series from back in 2004)**

**Bouldering**

Bouldering is one of the easiest aspects of climbing to transfer to the outdoors. I mean, crank on sloper indoors, crank on sloper outdoors – how different can it be? Well, not very, but for the unwary beanie clad boulderer there are still a few potential pitfalls.

Real boulders present challenges and hazards that demand awareness and a different approach from their artificial counterparts. The ground surrounding and beneath boulders is generally uneven and much less forgiving than indoors, and there may well be protruding rocks that could easily cause injury in the event of a fall. Many boulderers now carry a padded mat to reduce these dangers, but don't over-estimate the effectiveness of this cushioning. It's still very easy to turn an ankle or wrist, especially on a carelessly positioned mat, or just plain miss the mat entirely! Mats should be placed under the point where a fall is most likely and/or would have serious consequences. An attentive spotter, ready to protect the climber's back and head or to absorb some of the impact from an awkward landing is always highly recommended. And if you're sharing a mat, beware eagerly nabbing it whilst somebody is still climbing above.

But mats or no mats, treat the consequences of a slip or fall with respect and don't lose sight of this in your desire to get the tick. Some problems lure the unwary climber far from the ground or deliver a head-first ejection, and even experienced climbers can be surprised in this way.

**On to the crag**

If routes are more your thing than single pitch crags are a great way to learn the basics in a relatively controlled environment, and provide most people's first taste of life outside. "Single pitch" means that the climb is short enough to be completed in one rope length (pitch), so there's no need to set up a belay part way up the route. Choose a small outcrop, ideally less than half the length of a typical climbing rope in height (i.e. less than 25 metres high). This makes communication straightforward, and means that the climber can be lowered back to the ground from any point on the route in case of difficulty. Climbs with a complex (e.g. tidal) approach or no easy descent from the top are unsuitable at this stage.

**Sport climbs**

On the continent, many climbs are protected with bolts, just like indoors, so at the start there are fewer new skills to learn. However Britain has a long tradition of preserving a natural protection ethic, so relatively few crags are equipped with bolts and lower-off points, and those that exist are usually featureless, steep and hard.

But for some climbers, sport climbs will provide a handy transition between indoors and natural routes, especially if you happen to live near one of the lower grade sport climb honeypots such as Portland.

Seeing a line of bolts, it's tempting just to jump on the route, after all, that's what you'd do indoors? But unlike inside, no one is ultimately responsible for the state of the bolts, and even on BMC managed crags such as Pen Trwyn near Llandudno, only the top lower offs are checked periodically. There is simply no guarantee that the bolt you're about to clip is still solid.

Treat all fixed gear, including bolts with a healthy degree of scepticism. Is it attached to solid rock or have cracks appeared? What does the bolt hanger look like – is it thin and rusty? On some routes you may also encounter pitons or "pegs". These are similar to bolts but hammered into natural cracks and holes, held in place by friction not glue. They can easily deteriorate over time, so your degree of trust should be relative to how secure the piton appears. Bad signs are copious amounts of rust, cracks in the metal (especially the "eye"), and if the head of a peg isn't butted tightly up against the rock, treat it with a degree of suspicion relative to the amount of metal left protruding. Some fixed gear may have tape slings attached – check these for fraying or UV deterioration and replace if in doubt.

After clipping any piton or bolt I would recommend giving the quickdraw a sharp tug in the direction of anticipated loading and watching for any movement, rotation or other signs of frailty. But whenever testing a runner this way, be sure to keep a good grip on the rock in case it does fail!

Sport climbs rarely have a simple attachment karabiner at the top. Even those that do may present problems as the gates quickly seize shut through corrosion on our damp isle. So it's more usual to find a sealed ring or two, through which it is necessary to thread the rope before being lowered to the ground.

Whilst you could just simply clip in with a quickdraw, untie the rope, then tie back after threading, this is not ideal. For a short period you are at the mercy of a single point of contact at the belay, and are very stuck if you drop the rope! A safer method is to thread the rope through the rings and tie back in, all before unfastening your original attachment.

Clip in to one or both anchors with quickdraws or a sling and feed a loop of rope through the lower off points. Tie a knot in the loop and clip this onto your harness attachment point with a screwgate karabiner. The original rope tied to your harness can now be unfastened, so that the rope now passes from the belayer, through the anchor and into the new knot. Pull the long end of

**LOWERING OFF:**



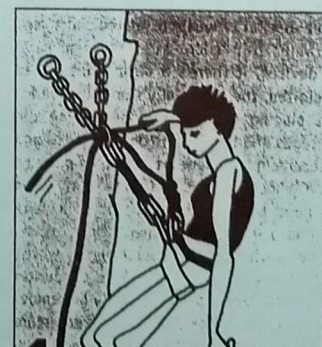
**1** The climber secures him or herself to the anchors with the belayer keeping them on belay throughout.



**2** A bight of rope is threaded through the anchor.



**3** A figure of eight knot is then put onto this bight and attached to the harness via a screwgate.



**4** The slack is then taken in by the belayer and the original end of the rope untied from the climber's harness.

spare rope through the anchors to allow a visual check of the attachment. The belayer can now take in any slack rope, until the leader unclips the extender(s) from the anchors and is lowered to the ground. Never allow yourself to be lowered on a rope threaded directly through a tape anchor. The tape would wear through virtually instantly, with obvious consequences.

### Trad climbs

Most British crags are climbed using natural protection (gear). This means that the natural features of cracks, spikes or threads on the route are utilised to protect the climb. A hundred years ago this meant threading slings round pebbles, or hoping to encounter natural spikes, but these days climbers have a whole arsenal of weapons at their disposal. From wafer thin micro-wires to huge camming devices, if there's a natural feature to be exploited, there's usually something to fit.

But placing gear and understanding the advantages and limitations of each piece and it's placement is a dark art requiring practice and patience to master. In the early days you'll need to enlist the support of a more experienced mentor, and spend time experimenting with practice placements whilst safely on the ground. Your first encounter with gear placements will probably be removing them as you follow the climb after a more experienced leader, or perhaps when helping to set up a top rope.

### Top roping

Top roping will be a familiar system for anybody who has already used ropes at the wall. Essentially the rope is threaded through a reliable anchor at the top of the pitch, so that two strands of rope hang down the approximate line of the climb. One end is attached to the climber while the belayer uses the other end.

It's easy to appreciate that the choice of top anchors is a vital one. Usually, two or more anchors are linked together to equalise the load and provide a backup in case of failure. The simplest anchors are trees, boulders, or a natural rock spike, but although they may look solid initially, never blindly trust them.

Start with a visual check. How big is the anchor? Thin trees and tiny boulders could well be unseated if subjected to loading. A detached boulder might be precariously balanced or perched on a slope. Sometimes even very large boulders can be moved surprisingly easily, and boulders that have been used for years become unseated after rain or frost. Watch out for rounded or "whaleback" boulders since slings just ride up and flip off under load. This sort of boulder can only be used if undercut at its base, and the sling should be carefully placed. To reduce leverage place it as close to ground level as practical, and test by running the sling back and forth in your hands in the anticipated direction of loading. If in doubt, look elsewhere.

Rock spikes should be tested for soundness; any cracks should be viewed with suspicion, and the edges should be checked for friability. Give a potential spike a tug in the intended direction of loading, and a hard knock with fist or foot, watching for any signs of movement. Again if in doubt, move on.

Sometimes you'll be able to find a natural thread, and pass a sling through a gap, or round a chockstone to find a quick and easy anchor capable of withstanding loading from many directions. But again check for stability, and make sure it really is a rock thread, and the sling is not just being held in place by some dried mud.

### Placing Gear

But often there will be no convenient tree or spike, and you'll have use gear to create the anchors. Natural protection falls into two broad categories; static and camming. Static protection is simply wedged into a constriction, whilst camming devices actively convert their loading into sideways pressure to hold them into a crack, even a perfectly parallel one with smooth sides.

### Static placements

For small to medium cracks, wedge-shaped chocks (aka nuts, wires) such as Rocks, Wall-nuts etc. can be used. These are usually attached to a swaged wire loop, although some larger sizes do come on cord. Prior to use the attachment loop should be checked for damage, and wires with broken or rusty strands should be binned. Some very tiny wires are available, such as "zero's" or RP's. On harder climbs these are used for protection, but they have a very low breaking strain and are best left in the shop when starting out. For protecting larger cracks an assortment of hexagonal shaped tubes are available, with a cord or a tape loop. These "hexes" are often moulded into an offset shape, allowing the skilled user to introduce a degree of rotation when loaded, giving a camming effect.

For static placements, tapered or keyhole-shaped cracks are usually required, allowing the metal to be inserted and slid down into the constriction. The best placements retain the wedge in place even if subjected to pulls from a range of directions. Removing such gear afterwards can be quite difficult, and judicious use of a metal "nut key" might be needed to prise a stubborn placement out.

### Camming placements

Many cracks have parallel sides, and this is where camming devices come into play. Spring loaded camming devices were invented in the 70's and now are available in a bewildering range of sizes to suit all situations. However they are relatively pricey items and tricky to place securely, so don't rush out and buy a full set just yet.

The craft of placing reliable natural protection equipment requires considerable practice and experience, so novices should take great care, particularly when setting up belay anchors for top roping, where equipment failure could well be catastrophic. Initially, only very substantial boulders, trees and spikes should be used as testing them is relatively intuitive, and an experienced mentor should be on hand to check your work.

### The Belay

For back up purposes it's normal to use two or more anchors for a belay. Ideally using different blocks or crack systems. But these different anchors all need to be linked together, which can cause a headache. There are many ways to link anchors together; the simplest and most effective methods require a long sling or spare rope which is tied into all the

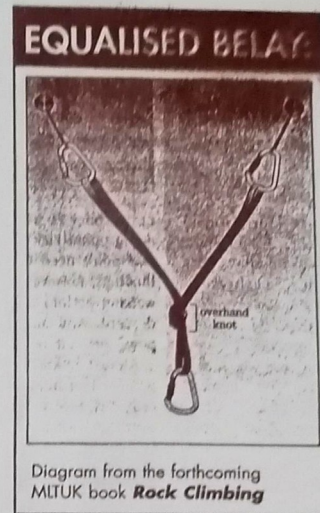


Diagram from the forthcoming MITUK book *Rock Climbing*

anchors to create an attachment loop that pulls equally on each anchor when loaded. This means that the individual anchors share the load – the various loops should feed into the main knot within an angle of around 45–90° for optimum strength and stability.

Once the anchors have been equalised in this way, a screwgate karabiner or two can be clipped into the main attachment loop and the rope can be threaded through for top roping. If you intend to position the belayer at the foot of the climb like at the wall then take care to protect the top of the crag (and your rope) from erosion by friction. A simple way to achieve this is to make the main attachment loop long enough to extend beyond the crag top, or use a sling to extend the loop over the edge. This is particularly important for softer rocks such as sandstone, and for crags such as Harrison's Rocks codes of practice have been drawn up to protect the crag environment.

### Lead Climbing

Lead climbing on traditional climbs is for many people what it's really all about. And when you've got the right skills and confidence, it allows you to head up into some pretty special places. But getting to this stage takes time, so practice those gear placements at ground level and stay tuned for the next in the series – **Learning to Lead. II**

## NATURAL DANGERS

Crags and boulders are subject to natural erosion and prone to loose holds and stonefall. The only person responsible for checking that a particular route or descent is safe is you. Holds may be wet or dirty, obscured by vegetation or even disintegrate. Detached rocks can also be dislodged by other climbers or perhaps wildlife, and can present a serious threat. Climbs with loose exits demand great steadiness or are best avoided altogether, and you should remain alert at all times to the risk of rocks or even equipment being dropped from above. Wearing a climbing helmet is always a sensible precaution and with the development of effective lightweight helmets, this is no longer a chore.

**MINUTES WBMC COMMITTEE MEETING 18th May 2023 @The Red Lion 7.30pm start**

**Present:** Dave Hellyar (chair), Andy Brown, Rob Allen, John Edwards, Darren Groutage, Claire Hammonds, Fred Hammonds, Nigel Tarr, Mike Smith, Mike Thompson.

**1. Apologies for Absence:** Jan Cox, Tony Emms, Geordie Hind, Pete Poultney, Jonathan Howells

**2. Acceptance of April Minutes:** Proposed by Claire H ; seconded Andy B Accepted nem

**3. Matters Arising:** Chair opens and informs we are quorate for the meeting and there are no matters arising.

**4. Officer updates: Treasurer:** Club balance is £40,835 (£30,000 ringfenced) as of 20/03/2023. Claire now has full access to the online account. She will be investigating ways to get interest on the ringfenced £30,000. There was £10,835 in the general account on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 2023. George Starky hut was paid by online banking and Robinsons will be paid by cheque this time.

**Membership Secretary:** 2 prospective new members Karl & Tate were on the last coach meet. It was suggested to try and enquire reasons why people have not renewed their membership to help the club better understand going forward why they left.

**Newsletter:** John was well ahead with the next newsletter and just a few things needed to be checked. One being the Coach driver routes. red and Mike Smith agreed to do the next Led walk on the Nantle Ridge.

**Website/Publicity:** The Chair commented that the website was good in parts but contained a lot of ancient history and other aspects on the site did not seem relevant. i.e still says we meet at Cricketers Arms. It is understood that any prospective new members can't fill the forms out online and they have to be printed out and posted which is not acceptable these days. The overall consensus was that it looked MoriBond and in a state of decay.

Jan Cox sent a letter to the chair outlining what she believes the salient points of the website should be, as follows.

1. The site should be up to date, accurate with clear links to archive past events, photos and newsletters
2. The club should have ownership & committee have access so modifications can be made rapidly & accuracy ensured
3. There should be additional headers/advertising the next Event (usually a coach meet/evening meet)
4. The current newsletter should have more prominence and perhaps another heading linked to the next event heading.
5. The new membership application pack needs to be able to be filled in electronically.
6. Satnam at the Red Lion said he is willing to set up a basic website that we can run.

John E said that Joe Priest was keen to meet and carry on with the website. A suggestion that 5 members (Darren, Tony, John E, Claire and the Chair) could meet with Joe and be shown how to operate it sooner rather than later, would be facilitated by the Chair. It is hoped this will enable us to upload, manage & alter certain elements of the website & keep it more up to date.

The main points of the website were to convey the following.

1. Newsletters
2. Membership pages (and ease of use)
3. Coach meets
4. Events proposed by club
5. WBMC on wikipedia

**Hut Secretary:** A letter off Pete was handed to the committee. It mentions the Old Timers weekend, the new Rhododendrum bush and a silver flask & peppercorn pot which are missing. Mike T commented that he had found the pepper pot in his kit by mistake and would return it on his next visit.

Discussions on the hut included, the maintenance, up keep, tree planting, amount that can be spent before going through committee and other general points. The main takes were as follows, but I stand to be corrected if this is not what was perceived:-

1. It was noted that Pete does a sterling job on the upkeep & looking after the hut, even upgrading it out of his own pocket at times.
2. Mike T said when he was Hut Sec there was a £120 limit that could be spent before running it past for the committee's approval and you did what was beneficial / for the good of the hut. The Chair suggested this might be raised to £200 but was not a conclusive answer.
3. Discussions about the fir trees and Rhododendron bush :- We need more car park space not less. Fred and Mike T said the car park should be extended not made smaller. (Beddgelert has apparently spent £150k trying to eliminate Rhododendrons in the valley). An apology by Andy was made to the committee about the accident with the Rhododendron bush.
4. The shower diverter valve and other gas / water bits & pieces were replaced with a bill of circa £670. The shower has been repaired although the header tank pressure is not good. It was noted that Jeff Hanley is the Plas Gwynant Headmaster.

**Coach Secretary:** The last coach meet lost £54 with 37 persons present. (5 @£10). 2 wives were present for the first time and said they may come again. So far 22 people are tentatively booked on the next coach to the Nantle Ridge. Dave Coates paid for his seat by internet banking. Claire could now check that these have been paid into the bank and confirm with Nigel. John E is sending Andy B & Nigel the Swaledale & Moelwyns draft route pages so that he & Nigel can talk to the coach drivers / company on the correct routes for these trips so that no time is lost en route.

John E explained how the EASY FUNDRAISING app works and so far just by 2 committee members using it £9 had been donated in just two months. The club should therefore actively encourage everybody to download the app and sign up.. [ I have now done this now (Darren) and can confirm it is very easy and quick to do, so if I can do it anyone can.] Just an email and password are needed, not even your address. It covers some big supermarkets, Amazon, Argos, Ebay and many other big stores. It was suggested that another big advert for this be placed prominently in the next newsletter to encourage more members to sign up as it could result in hundreds of extra pounds for the club over the year.

**Meets:** Jan to chimp out details of the next Evening meet. Next Evening meets as follows:

June - Andy Brown 8<sup>th</sup> June 1830 Middleton????

July - Mel Evans August - Pete Poultney September - Rob Allen - From Red Lion over Sandwell ? valley

May's Evening meet attracted just 5 people as the weather throughout the day had been awful. All said the food & drink in the Longhorn Pub were excellent. Dave is considering The Chairman's Challenge options as this is on the meet card.

Chair asked what was happening with the Trail and running weekends. (Pete Poultney) and the cycling weekend (Phil Matthews-who apparently has not rejoined). Also the cycling weekend which we think Vanessa is organising.

Andy B said the Rum trip to Scotland was very successful on the Rum Cuillin and is thinking of maybe organizing another one in the future using a Private Charter rather than CalMac ferries. Fred said he might organize a trip to Jura?

**5. BMC:** Area meeting advertised on their website only so easy to miss. Ian Wyatt is the BMC organizer of the Midlands

BMC Clubs Network and notifies Mel & John E who sometimes attend the Zoom meeting.

**6. AOB:** It was noted that **all** committee members should be encouraged to try and attend the monthly meetings so all items can be discussed with a balanced approach from all. Anthenia has been invited to the Committee meetings by the Chair, but struggles with work shift patterns at present.

The BMC insurance issue was discussed at large and Darren is looking into alternative insurance companies to see if this is feasible in the first place. With BMC visitors are insured for the first 3 months but only if they become members after that.

The BMC insurance is due on March 2024 so we have plenty of time to look into other alternatives of insurance including "Directors and Officers" insurance. The club have just paid £3612.10 to the BMC and an additional invoice of £200 for new members has been received. Mike T wants 2 ex members to re-join. Tony Emms to advise?

It is now thought that Chris Dean puts the upcoming meets and Events on Facebook only. We are not sure who puts the events on Instagram or Twitter, but Anthenia does upload pictures of what The Club has been up to. Darren suggested if possible it would be good if one person could do all these but realises as a club peoples times are limited and this may not be possible. Fred suggested we need a 5 min comfort break in the middle of the meeting!

**Meeting finished** 2140 **Date of next meeting** 15/06/2023 The Red Lion. 1930

### **MINUTES WBMC COMMITTEE MEETING 15th JUNE 2023 @The Red Lion 7.30pm start**

**Present:** Andy Brown, Claire Hammond, Nigel Tarr, Dave Hellyar (Chair), Mike Smith, Fred Hammonds, Geordie Hind, Jonathan Howells, Jan Cox, John Edwards, Mike Thompson, Tony Emms

**1. Apologies for Absence:** Rob Allen, Darren Groutage

**2. Acceptance of May Minutes:** proposed by Andy and seconded by John

**3. Matters Arising:** Dave gave a resume of the productive meeting with Joe regarding the new website. This is being tri-alled by some of the Committee before release. The new website should give more control to the Committee regarding the inputting and modification of information, Parking is possible on the road opposite the hut. Plas Gwynant has no issue regarding the planting of a non-native Rhododendron.

**4. Officer updates: Treasurer** Club balance is £10,356.24 +£30,000 ringfenced as of 15/05/2023. Claire in the process of opening a business account in order to get 2% interest on the £30,000 online account. Easyfundraising has earned over £9 via online purchases from 6 people. John and Claire have had giftaid paperwork passed to them as they can access HMRC. John contacted HMRC regarding the reimbursement of £1500 which was paid into an extinct account.

**Membership Secretary** Agreed that rejoining members can become full members and can bypass the provisional membership criteria. There is one rejoining member, one paid prospective member and 7 enquiries. Tony to send a list of prospective members to Claire so that she can check payment has been made. Tony, Andy, Claire and Nigel will form a working party to cover all eventualities regarding financial information transfer between Membership Sec, Treasurer and Coach Sec.

**Newsletter** John has almost finished the July/August newsletter. He will add a note instructing new and existing members to reference any payment made to the Club. Also, Guest Editorship of the newsletter is advertised to encourage others to participate. **Website/Publicity** Tony, Darren, Jan, Geordie and Dave to evaluate the new website.

**Hut Secretary** A letter from Pete was read whereby he offered his resignation from the position as Hut Secretary. Fred expressed an interest and so it was decided to thank Pete for his efforts over the years and accept the resignation. Dave proposed to accept Pete's resignation, seconded by Andy and the vote was unanimous. Dave proposed that the Committee accept Fred's offer to take up the post of Hut Secretary and Mike T seconded this. Again the vote was unanimous. Dave will inform Pete and Fred to manage the handover.

**Coach Secretary** The Nantlle coach meet made a loss of £61, there were 5 new persons at £10 each. So far 21 have booked for the Keswick long meet. Mike expressed a concern that he could not distinguish led walk from non-led walk participants. To rectify this, in future, Nigel will get those doing the led walk to sign the book first and the led walk will aim to stay separate from other groups/individuals.

**Other Meets** Thanks to Andy for the Sandwell outdoor meet. Mel will lead the July meet. Jan to chimp details. Jan agreed to book for the December Christmas coach meal and advertise a proposed Club trip to Slovenia in 2024.

### **5. BMC Nada**

**6.AOB** Procedures regarding hut bookings and dogs at the hut were mentioned at the AGM. Fred, Mike, John and Tony to form a working party to consider these issues. Two letters of complaint have been received by the Chair and these were read out and the contents discussed. **Meeting finished** 20.54 pm **Date of next meeting** 13/7/2023 The Red Lion.

### **MEANWHILE AT THE GOWER**

