

PEN CEUNANT, LLANBERIS. 19 – 21 February.



Photograph by Martyn Trasler

Our Welsh Winter Meet was at the Chester Mountaineering Club Hut and was fully booked, being attended by 15 members, one prospective member and two guests. The CMC hut is ideally located above Llanberis at grid 581 591, giving easy access to the North West side of Snowdon.

A party of three arrived on the Friday and from the road at Idwal Cottage completed a circuit of Llyn Idwal, past the slabs on the east shore, ascending as far as the Devil's Kitchen, encountering blizzard conditions for part of their walk.

Arriving on Friday night several members had already discovered the unique pleasures of the nearby Pen Y Ceunant Isaf tea Rooms. Serving much more than tea, with a warm fire and an equally warm welcome from the landlord Steffan (Steven) Roberts.

Saturday morning was clear, still and dry with cloud clinging to the higher tops. Several parties departed for Snowdon. One member set off in advance, hoping to meet up with a group planning to walk to the summit and then descend via Bwlch Main and Llechog. Early morning communication must have been in short supply as he looked down from the railway line track to see his friends below heading for Eastern Terrace on Clogwyn. Although there was fresh snow on the hill, deep in places it had not thawed or bonded to the rock. Conditions on steeper ground were less than ideal. It soon became clear that the terrace was too steep and risky for dogs and the member with hounds opted to walk round and up Clogwyn du'r Arddu, meeting up again on the summit.

As the route passed the finger stone, where walkers from the highly graded Pyg track headed to the summit the mountain became predictably popular, with many young couples and groups variously equipped. Half way from the summit to the finger stone a descending German walker, complete with his baggage tag on his sack, enquired whether this was the way to the Pyg track, as he pointed straight over the edge. It was easy to see why this mountain claims its share of statistics. Dropping from the summit to the new railway top station, complete with Portuguese slate roof and granite clad walls, the president's party descended via Bwlch Main and Llechlog, catching intermittent views from the ridge and returning to the hut down the eastern side of the Afon Arddu. A brand new hut was passed at Helfa-Fawr before returning to the railway road and the hut.

The lone walker continued up Snowdon, descended up Clogwyn du'r Arddu, and completed the round over Moel Eilio and back to the hut.

After an excellent meal several members returned to the café, about 100m from the hut. Stefan presented the club

with a painting of the Anglesey shoreline which attending members felt should be hung in Lowstern.



The president receiving a David Barnes painting from Steffan Roberts

A light fall of snow overnight focussed attention on the very steep single track road from the village to the hut. Road sweeping duties made light work of the hazard and several early departees managed a safe get away.

On Sunday morning a party of two ascended Moel Eilio traversed Foels Gron and Goch to Bwlch Maesgwn, from where they followed the bridleway back to the cottage. They made one final visit to see Steffan Roberts for a brew before departing. One member made a circuit of Lyn Padarn from Llanberis, trying the quarry mortuary tables for size on the way round.

The CMC hut provided a superb venue for an excellent weekend. Having been absent for far too long it was a real

pleasure to find the members extremely welcoming and the special YRC blend of camaraderie and banter alive and well.



Clogwyn Ar'du - Photograph by Mick Borroff

In attendance:

Adrian Bridge (President & meet leader), Peter Bann (prospective member), Mick Borroff, Kevin Brown, Alan Clare, Derek Clayton, Ian Crowther, Paul Dover, Steve Eccleson (Guest), David Hick, John Jenkin, Tim Josephy, Richard Josephy, Alan Kay, Mike Smith, Derek Smithson, Martyn Trasler and Chris Ursell (Guest)

Kevin Brown

LAGAN BRIDGE March 11 -13

It was the coldest, snowiest winter since 1963 in Scotland but unfortunately the thaw started earlier that week. Instead of the dry powder snow and good crampon conditions we had been all looking forward to, the eighteen assembled members and guests had mainly wet snow and breakable crust together with low cloud and drizzle but little heavy rain.

Dave Hick, Michael Smith and Derek Smithson had spent the 3 nights prior to the meet in Glen Affric Youth Hostel and climbed 3 Munros in good weather and visibility. Having collected drinking water from the nearby stream they later found a dead stag in the water 100m above their collection point. Tony Dunford and Ken Roberts had also come to Scotland earlier in the week climbing Toll Creagach and Tom a'Choinich (Glen Affric) in the good snow and weather and 2 days later walked half way to Ben Macdui in soft snow and a white out before turning back. Barrie Wood, Derek Bush and Phil Dover climbed A'Mharconaich after driving up on the Thursday, seeing several mountain hares in their white uniform as well as grouse.

On Friday parties set off from the Pottery Bunkhouse in all directions, Tony Dunford and Ken Roberts headed for Creag Meagaidh, walking up Coire Ardair where they came across a massive avalanche which had come down from near the top of the ridge to the north bringing down trees and boulders in its wake. They climbed nearly to the Window but were turned back by the high winds. Mick Borroff and Adrian Bridge had a long day in mixed snow conditions climbing the round of Beinn a'Chlachair, Geal Charn and Creag Pitridh in 8.5 hours. David Large and Trevor Drage set off hopefully for the Northern Corries and climbed the grade II Goat Track Gully in Coire an t-Sneachda. Two parties headed for the Monadh Liaths, Aaron Oakes and John Brown traversed A'Chailleach and Cam Sgulain but in the cloud and strong wind, turned back down in to the valley before Carn Balloch. Following them went Derek Bush, Barrie Wood and Rob

Ibberson who climbed A'Chailleach, but after reaching Cam Sgulain, decided to return to the valley by the alternative route down Allt a' Chaorainn. However with snow hiding the way through the crags they had to climb back up over A'Chailleach to descend by the ascent route. Michael Smith and Dave Hick went up Glen Feshie and climbed Mullach Clach a'Bhlair and Sgor Gaoith. Iain Gilmour and Phil Dover went for the Corbett Geal-charn Mor and were back at the car by 12.30, with time to do a very icy circuit of Loch an Eilein. Alan Linford and Derek Smithson explored Glen Markie and the Red Burn.

Saturday the weather was similar with some drizzle and fairly strong winds. Adrian Bridge, Iain Gilmour and Dave Hick drove up the General Wade's road towards the Corrieyairack Pass. Dave walked to the top of the Pass and then back down the road whilst Iain and Adrian traversed Corrieyairack Hill and Gairbienn, of which only the latter now qualifies as a Corbett because it is marginally higher and the drop between them is not sufficient to class them as two. Mick Borroff and Phil Dover went down to Spean Bridge to climb the very shapely peak of Stob Ban. At the Lairig Leacach bothy at the bottom were 3 young climbers who had retreated from the Grey Corries ridge because of the high winds. Aaron Oakes, Richard Smith and John Brown walked up to Coire Ardair and to the Window and climbed Creag Meagaidh and Stob Poite Coire Ardair. David Large and Trevor Drage also headed for Coire Ardair hoping for a climb but with the poor snow conditions settled for ascending Creag Meagaidh. Tony Dunford, Ken Roberts and Mike Smith drove to Blair Athol to climb Carn nan Gabhar, one of the Munro summits of Beinn a'Ghlo, and Airgiod Bhienn, which is a top, with good visibility but high winds. Derek Bush, Barrie Wood and Rob Ibberson walked to Lochan na h-Earba and Allt Coire Pitridh but the conditions dissuaded them from attempting the summits. Alan Linford explored the Spey Dam and valley seeing much wildlife including brown hares and deer.

Sunday morning it rained off and on so many members headed straight home although some hardy ones set off to the hills. Richard Smith and John Brown climbed Gael Charn in intermittent showers and occasional sunshine. They saw ptarmigan, grouse and deer on their climb. Adrian Bridge and Mick Borroff with Rob Ibberson headed for Glencoe to climb Buchaille Etive Beag, but deterred by the rain, continued to Loch Tay and climbed the sunlit Munro Meall Greigh, whilst Rob continued up the valley to Lochan nan Cat.

Many thanks to Mick for arranging the meet and to his wife Hilary for the excellent food.

Phil Dover

Attending

Mick Borroff, Rob Ibberson, Tony Dunford, Ken Roberts (G) Derek Smithson, Michael Smith, Dave Hick, Alan Linford Aaron Oakes, Derek Bush, Barrie Wood, Adrian Bridge David Large, Trevor Drage (G), Phil Dover, John Brown Iain Gilmour, Richard Smith