

Pre-Christmas meet, Glan Dena, North Wales

December 2014, by Colin Harper

This year's meet took place at the salubrious Glan Dena hut in the Ogwen valley. It (the hut) is warm and dry, has hot showers and plenty of space, especially for the important task of cooking. This being the pre-Christmas meet, one of the highlights is the communal meal on the Saturday evening where members bring food to share. As always there was a fantastic array of dishes to try; the only downside is that it is difficult to sample them all.

The meal is preceded by a day on the hills and this year was no exception. Eddie and Helen were first to set off for Tryfan by the north face, continued up Bristly ridge then on to the Glyders, down to Chapel Curig and back to the hut. Tony and Judith had a trip to Anglesey, Mick went up heather terrace then on to the Glyders via the scree slope and east towards Foel Gogh and back to the hut by the valley. The rest split into Two groups, Pete, Jude, Pete, Laura, Alan, Gill, Richard, Ruth, Geoff and Sally walked along the road to Ogwen cottage and ascended into nameless combe whilst Mike, Graham and I walked to the Tryfan north face car park and ascended to wards Llyn Bochlywd and thence onto Seniors Ridge; our main objective of the day.

Weather wise the forecast was reasonable, clearing throughout the day but with strong winds later and a freezing level of around 650m. This proved to be accurate and meant that we reached snow higher up. Fortunately there was very little lower down on the scramble which is graded one in summer conditions. Most of the route presents no difficulty at all but there are a few sections which harder routes can be taken to push the grade a little. At the top of the ridge we reached the plateau



a few hundred yards from the summit of Glyder Fawr which we reached, took a few photos and left promptly to find shelter from the wind and had some lunch. No sooner had we sat down when Pete and Laura turned up having evidently seen us in the distance and decided to follow in our tracks. So the four of us sat and ate our lunches and then parted again. Pete and Laura to the summit and us to the next destination: Glyder Fach. The snow on the summits was not very deep; a few inches but enough to instil caution. At the summit the normally easy rocks were covered in snow so we made our way somewhat precariously to the summit rock then with caution quickly back down to the plateau.



The usual descent is down a steep scree gully to the right (looking North) of Bristly Ridge but we thought the Miners track might be a little safer. We eventually arrived at the Bwlch Tryfan and spotted Pete and Laura coming down the scree slope which they decreed was safe but tedious. We stopped for a few minutes then took the easy path back down to the road and on to the hut.

The others arrived back a little later with tales of dramatic trepidatious ascents out of Nameless Combe and onto the Glyders but

despite the difficulties all arrived safely back in time to prepare the meal. Pete and Richard extended their walk and arrived back a little later.

While preparation was going on mulled wine and mince pies were served by Alan and Gill. On the menu for the meal was a choice of two soups to start; carrot and coriander or sweet potato apple and ginger server with crusty bread. For main: pork loin and pea stew, beef bourguignon, sausage casserole, steak pie, roasted carrots and a selection of other vegetables. Cheesecake, fruit cake, rhubarb crumble, a selection of cakes a handsome collection of cheese and biscuits were offered for dessert.



As is the tradition pots were washed in between courses leaving only glasses by the end thus allowing everyone to retire to the living room for some entertainment in the form of quizzes. There were three of these: dingbats, cars and Mick's general knowledge quiz.

Sunday arrived with the promise of some fine weather and many took the opportunity for short walks whilst I was nursing a sore head. Around lunchtime I redeemed myself and went for a short walk around the Llyn Ogwen and returned in plenty of time to see everyone off home.

Despite all of the walking, climbing and scrambling that was carried off over the weekend, probably the most adventurous, some may say intrepid feat was from Ruth who managed to navigate her way to North Wales by motorbike. Not by the normal route but by the back roads as she hasn't yet passed her test!