

SHREWSBURY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB: COMMITTEE LIST

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HOUSENOTES

Where did the summer go? I hope none of our meets will get washed out like last year. Fingers crossed! A few notes and information you might like to have.

- First of all, we have two new members, **Ian Roberts** and **Andy Bentley**, and a renewing member, **Chas Warren**. Good to have you with us, and see you out on the hills soon.
- Note for your diary. The Chairman's Meet in October is now to be on the weekend of the **17/19th** of the month, and **NOT** the 24/26th as in the 2008 list.
- The committee is collecting photos from the past 49 years involving club members past and present to feature at the 2009 anniversary dinner, and to be available to club members afterwards. All are welcome, and pictures from the early days are particularly sought, so let Jan have anything you consider may be of interest.

Dave Laddiman

SMC 1959 to 2009

Next year the club will be fifty years old, and we will be celebrating it with some special events. These will include:

CEILIDH in Shrewsbury on the 28 February, with This Way Up playing the music

CLWT Y BEL WAY, FINALE - 24 May, at Clwt y Bel

As you will almost certainly know, Jackie, Frank, and friends have been (and are still) busy creating the Clwt y Bel Way, a largely off tarmac long distance walk from Shrewsbury to Clwt y Bel, taking in as many of the hills and interesting bits of countryside as they can on the way. Quite an undertaking. It's hoped that on the Sunday, as many club members as possible will walk the last leg from Capel Curig to the hut. Of course, if anyone wants to run it all from Shrewsbury, that would be OK.

THE ALPS. ARGENTIERE - 11 July / 25 July.

It's hoped that a lot of us can get together for all or part of, this fortnight, to enjoy a summer holiday in close proximity to some of the most impressive and highest mountains in Western Europe. There is camping and there are apartments to rent (Sian should have some more information on these when she returns shortly). Argentiere is relatively quiet compared to Chamonix, which is only a few miles down the road if you want a big town, nightclubs, and lots of shops.

There is a vast array of outdoor things to do here, apart from the obvious alpine objectives, but if you want to try Mont Blanc, it would almost certainly be necessary to book the huts a long time in advance.

SMC CELEBRATION DINNER.

At the new football club complex off the old by pass. We hope everyone and partners/friends can come, it's a big room, and it should be a memorable evening.

Obviously, none of the above have been fully organised yet, but nevertheless, feel free to quiz or to make suggestions to any members of the committee about them, at any time.

Oh, and as you might expect, some 50 Anniversary clothing will be available to

MUSSN'T GRUMBLE by MAGIC (the neglected dog)

As a long-running honorary member, and mascot, of Shrewsbury Mutt-aineering Club, I want to say that when I was taken to the kennels before my Master(?) went off to NZ, I had no idea he was going for so long; I felt I had been betrayed and abandoned. Anyway I was forced to endure the situation; even though the ladies at the kennel took me for a walk each day, it was nothing like what I was used to. I didn't like the food, had no treats, and only ate it to survive. I met lots of other dogs I could bark to (He said my voice had changed when He did at last come for me), although some of them were rather frightening and aggressive. I must say I was very pleased to see Him and it was lovely to return to a nice warm bed, and have my usual food and daily treats.

Apparently, they had a great time in NZ, and it was a lot warmer than I had it in Concover! They said the highlights of the trip were walking the Routeburn Track, The Tongariro Crossing (through the volcanic landscape) and the best bits of the Abel Tasman Track, seeing Milford Sound and Mt. Cook in perfect conditions, cruising along Doubtful Sound, going to White Island (an active volcano), seeing Royal Albatross, Yellow-eyed and Little Blue Penguins, a Brown Kiwi (in the wild), hot springs and boiling mud pools at Rotorua, swimming in a hot river and bathing in natural hot pools with Maoris, giant Kauri trees, jet-boating across the Bay of Islands, going up the Sky Tower in Auckland and on the Taieri Gorge Railway at Dunedin, seeing an ancient Jurassic forest on the shore near Invercargill, wine-tasting in the Marlborough Valley, eating Greenlipped Mussels, whitebait fritters and really fresh "Fush n Chups", meeting the Barmy Army at the Test match in Wellington, going to a gold mine at Thames on the Coromandel peninsula, seeing a replica of Scott's hut at Mcurdo sound in Antarctica, driving on country roads almost devoid of traffic.

Well, THEY had a good time and they said they had thought of me; I wonder how long it will be before they leave me at the kennels again?

Munro Magic

NOW FOR SOME MEET REPORTS

LAWRENNY, PEMBROKSHIRE – 2-5 May – Jan Campbell

Unfortunately our meet co-ordinator (Tim Tindle) had a serious problem with his back and was unable to attend, but nevertheless, for the three of us who turned up, this meet it was absolutely glorious; a delightful campsite with nice thick grass and plenty of space, good weather and a very nice restaurant at a vineyard for Saturday evening.

On the Saturday, Kim Williams, Tony Rogers and I took a leisurely but fairly long (13miles) stroll along a coast path to Lawrenny Quay and beyond through a deciduous woodland and estuarine environment. The flowers in the woodland were particularly good at this time of year but none of us were too good at identifying them! On the Sunday, the coast called and

a fair stretch of the Pembrokeshire Coast Path was walked on a circular route from Broomhill Burrows near Angle – another 12-13 miles! On Monday Kim and I called it a day after visiting St.Govan's Chapel, watching some climbers and afternoon tea at Mrs Weston's café. Those who have climbed in Pembrokeshire will be pleased to know that Mrs Weston is still alive, but starting to look rather frail. Tony was so impressed with the area that he stayed several more days and we would all hope to go again sometime.

ELAN VALLEYS – 18 May 2008 – Sian Barnes

This was a day of wide-open spaces, long picnics and aerial displays. A group of six (me, Dave, Jan, Graham, Chris and Jeff) met at the car park at the southern end of Penyarreg reservoir at 10-30am and set off through the mossy woodland that lines the valley leading up to the dam. Water was just beginning to trickle over the dam face, owing to the previous week's rainfall. It had been mutually decided that a leisurely day was in order, so we spent some time admiring the architecture of the two dams on Penyarreg and Craig Goch reservoirs. Once we walked out into the empty space north of Craig Goch dam, we saw no one else; the quietness of the Cambrian hills never ceases to amaze me, given their loveliness and proximity to the reservoirs and habitation. The weather was kind; visibility was perfect, cloud shadows skimmed across the hills and the breeze was light. We could see all the way to the Welsh Coast on one side, with fantastic vistas across Powys in all other directions. The experience was finished by the presence of a soaring red kite, which obliged us with an overhead display of circling on the breeze. The birds are a particular feature of interest in the Elan Valleys and surrounding hills; there are two bird reserves and several red kite-feeding stations in the area. Mindful of this, we stayed on well-used paths, to avoid disturbing the tiny, delicate ground-nesting birds that made regular appearances in the heather. Lunchtime was especially leisurely; we rested on the rock beside a waterfall and in the case of one particularly relaxed group member, even indulged in forty winks. Our descent route saw a few more human presences, in the form of both walkers and twitchers. We returned to the shores of Carreg-Ddu reservoir via a bridleway that drops steeply off the hills to the foot of Nant Dolfolau. Our return to the car park was punctuated by a second picnic stop; we followed the cycle path alongside the water in warm sunshine and weaved our way down through the woodland and across the old stone bridge, to return to the cars. The day finished with one of the best of club traditions-a visit to a teashop in Rhayader.

ARRAN – 24-31 May – Jan Campbell

Subtitled "It was aaalll going very well"

Some people arrived early (Roy, Eric, Jeff, Mike and Jean, Martin and Queenie) and some had already got some exercise done by the time the rest arrived although the best weather waited until the majority had settled in to their various campsites and caravan. People filtered in gradually but not without incident as Alenka, Gareth, Luke, and Holly, had a traffic jam on the A74 and missed their allotted ferry. Incidents continued with domestic issues affecting Andrew and Jan, a bike puncture affecting Pete on his way to Lamlash from the ferry, a written off car (Alenka), another missed ferry, and finally the wrong sort of wind which meant that Roger and Harry didn't sail to Arran at all! And then there was illness with Jan having a cold early in the week and both Dave and Jeff feeling 'off'. Nonetheless, lots of mountains were climbed, bikes ridden and cafes visited.

I continue now from a personal point of view, as I have no comprehensive knowledge of what everyone else got up to.

Sunday – a very wet boat trip across to Holy Island, which was beautiful with a calm pleasant atmosphere as it is owned by a Buddhist group and they care for it in an environmentally sensitive way. All visitors are welcomed as they get off the ferry and the landmarks and walks are made clear; at the end of your walk you can get a free mug of tea!
Monday – an ascent up the rocky ridge of Ben Bharrain on the west side of the island with glorious views across to the central hills of Goatfell etc. The highlight must be Tuesday when

we had a mass ascent of Goatfell (a Corbett) and from the summit several of us went on to North Goatfell, down a scrambly ridge to the Saddle and then down Glen Rosa.

Wednesday – started with rain but cleared up sufficiently in the afternoon for various tourist features to be visited – we bumped into Steph, Kim, Matt and Katie who seemed to be on the same circuit as us at both the Standing Stones and King's Cave. This was the worst day for midges.

Thursday – Bryan Johnson arrived by bicycle at the caravan at 8 a.m. bright-eyed and bushy tailed raring to go up a mountain – however, he just got to go for a coastal walk with Dave, Annie and me to the Cock of Arran – very pleasant but not what he'd expected.

Friday – after having Sou'wester Slabs on the tick list for over 20 years, it is good to report that Dave and I have now climbed it! Perfect weather, perfect grippy granite rock, stunning location and a 3-hour walk in up Glen Rosa! Saturday – a good gathering at the ferry terminal and nail biting moments as Annie and Andrew squeaked onto the 10.50a.m.- the penultimate vehicle allowed on.

All in all, a splendid week – a real family holiday!

CLWT Y BEL – 14 3000ers – 20-22 June – Dave Laddiman

Friday evening, the end of a glorious summers day, saw a small group of us at the cottage, having a bit of a briefing, and a meal, before the fun started. Ian Roberts and Bryan Johnson were the two aspirants at the cottage this year. (But already walking up to the top of Snowdon were Tony Mills and his mate, who were doing the traverse without backup, having left a car at Aber.) The time came, and Bryan, who had wisely been watching the weather forecasts, retired to the common room with a few drinks. Unfazed by this, Ian, keen as mustard was dropped at Pen y Pass for his first ever bivouac on Snowdon Summit, (it was a fabulous evening), and the backup team returned to the cottage to make sure Bryan didn't have to drink alone.

You can guess what was coming. It's North Wales of course.

At 6.00am Ian was waiting for us at Nant Peris, had a quick drink, and ran off towards Elidir Fawr, as we watched the high cloud scudding towards the east and starting to devour the tops. Four hours later, the backup team was parked at Ogwen, near the Milestone Buttress, and the cloud was right down and delivering constant heavy rain enhanced by a strong wind. Nothing happened for a couple more hours while the backup team kept comforting themselves that there was no need to worry...yet. Then came a phone call, from Tony. They had got as far as Bwlch Tryfan, and were baling out. Could someone pick them up at Ogwen Cottage please? An hour later, looking like two drowned rats, closely followed by the shade of Hypothermia, they emerged from the cloud, and were taken round to Aber and their car by Jean. It all went quiet again, and as Tony had started from Snowdon summit somewhat later than Ian, the backup team thought that starting to worry was not a bad idea. Then, relief. The phone rang again, It was Ian. He was safely back at the cottage. He had spent some time being comprehensively lost on the Glyder plateau (haven't we all at some time in our climbing careers), and, as in the murk he didn't have any idea of how to get to Bwlch Tryfan safely, sensibly turned West and descended the steep but relatively straightforward hillside, ending up somewhere near Pen y Pass, where he hitched a ride off a passing van driver right to the door of Clwt y Bel.

We let him dry out and rest for a short while, and then took him to The Beacon for an afternoon's workout.

Sunday saw the rain cease, but the wind was even stronger. Low level walking in the Llanberis area was all that could be safely achieved.

Three years ago, when there were half a dozen club members attempting the traverse, it was blazing heat that stopped all but one of us completing it. Hey Ho.

OVER THE HILL 2008 – 24 June – Dave Laddiman.

Rick wasn't with us this year; some feeble excuse on the lines of 'he had to be at the other end of the country for work' or similar... But we managed. It wasn't a classic Over the Hill, in that we didn't all leave Shrewsbury at 3.00pm to climb none stop in Snowdonia somewhere until it went dark and the pubs were about to close, and didn't get home until one AM...but it was OK.

9.00am ish saw five of us (Pete, Allan, Gerry, Chris and I) crammed into my Vectra heading West. The weather forecast was a bit doubtful, and so we took a democratic vote (such as Mr Mugabe would have been proud of), on The Moelwyns or Tremadog. Tremadog won somehow, and we pulled in to Eric's Café for a fortifying coffee and bun. It was closed!!!!. We had no options left other than go climbing!

Apart from a bit of a hiatus late morning when it rained for a short while, the day was therefore spent on dry rock, and climbing done included Grim Wall, Shadrach, One Step in the Clouds, and First Slip. The day finished unusually early though, when Pete announced that he had to be back in Shropshire by nightfall to tend to Ann and Jon Yeels (who were away on holiday) geese and chickens; what are things coming to? We only had time for one pint on the journey home.

ROAMATHRAPY IN NEW ZEALAND – John Howard (who shamelessly left his dog in kennels for months, while he went off and enjoyed himself!)

After flying down to Queensland in South Island, we set out next day on the Routeburn Track, one of the Great Walks of NZ, a 36km old Maori trade route. I pre-booked the huts and transport on the internet, to and from the road heads, so we only needed the bare essentials of kit. It was late summer; the first day, a fairly short walk of about 4 hours, was warm and sunny as we walked through the cool temperate rain forest along a well-graded path, over a wobbly suspension bridge, sometimes glimpsing snow capped peaks of about 8-10 thousand feet. We arrived at the Routeburn Falls Hut at about 5pm and found ourselves a bunk (the hut was full), cooked our meagre tea on the gas stoves, and turned in at 9pm after a fine sunset.

Next morning dawned sunny but with high cloud, which lowered as the sun rose. We climbed steadily to the Harris Saddle, the highest point on the route at about 6000 feet, where the cloud was down and it had started drizzling. Instead of eating our lunch in the emergency shelter we went on along the steep traversing path above the Hollyford valley, through the Alpine zone to the Mackenzie Hut. This is a large modern hut set in a wild location beside a lake. We went for a stroll up the lakeside to see a huge split rock; the clouds lifted and we had a view of the pointy mountains. The hut warden gave us a very funny talk on the do's and don'ts in the hut and the dangers of fire (there had been a drought in NZ that summer) It rained most of the night but stopped about 10.30am, so we set out for the final hut, the Howden Hut, through rain forest (very Entish with moss and lichen hanging from the branches). We passed a 174m high waterfall, which was very impressive after the heavy rain. We went up to Key Summit with spectacular views of the snowy mountains (Pyramid Mtn. must be the NZ Matterhorn) Next morning the rain had stopped so we walked to the end of the track at the Divide and waited for the bus to Milford Sound to pick us up. It had been a memorable, albeit easy walk, across the watershed seeing some great wild mountain country.

The weather at Milford Sound was brilliant and the night cruise along the vertical sided fjord was awesome. From here we went to Te Anau and on a boat trip along Doubtful Sound (so named by Cook as he was afraid of becoming land-bound in his ship); the weather was dull and wet but it made it very atmospheric. We hired a car for the rest of the trip, going down South to Invercargill and Dunedin, where we saw Royal albatross flying and Yellow-eyed Penguins waddling up the cliffs; then up to Mount Cook village where we walked up a very steep path to the Mueller Hut and went up Mt. Ollivier (Ed Hillary's first hill) and got some

fine views of Mt. Cook and Mt. Sefton. We stayed overnight at the hut then made a very knee-jarring descent back to the valley and signed in at the D.O.C. office.

We drove round to the West coast and went North to the Franz Josef Glacier (nearly down to sea level), Westport (I found a cache at Coalbrookdale!) then on to Nelson from where we went and walked the best bit of the Abel Tasman Track (a bit tedious through dense rainforest with occasional coastal views). After that we crossed the Cook Strait to North Island and Wellington, and drove up the centre to the Tongariro National Park where we did a classic one-day walk through this active volcanic region (we saw Mt. Doom!). Then we drove on to Lake Taupo and the geothermal region of Rotorua, with geysers, hot springs and boiling mud pools (I swam in a hot river with some Maori guys), then up to the North coast at the Bay of Plenty, where we took an excursion by boat to White Island, an active marine volcano; this was an amazing experience, if a little risky walking around inside the crater with its lake of sulphuric acid, hydrogen sulphide gas, hot springs and fumaroles. Then we went up to the Coromandel peninsula (an old gold-mining and logging region), back to Auckland, then up to Northland; here we saw some 1500 year old kauri trees with a height of over 50m and a girth of about 14m. Finally we went to the beautiful Bay of Islands and went on a jet-boat ride, which was exciting although I was drenched by the spray and battered by the crashes on the waves.

We both loved New Zealand; the life- style and people are very relaxed and friendly (not quite so “in- your-face” as the Ozzies), the country is beautiful, and the climate is very agreeable. We want to go back.

SUMMER EVENTS

1-3 AUGUST	HARLECH CAMP	John Edwards 01743 365766
	A repeat of the well loved formula. Camping at Merthyr Farm on Friday and Saturday nights. Two days to go walking over the Rhinogs or any of the other hills in South Snowdonia, and a meal in the usual pub in Harlech on the Saturday night. Also easy access to climbing venues at Tremadog and the Rhinogs if the weather is appropriate.	
23-25 AUGUST	COTTAGE WEEKEND BBQ	Mike Jones 01743 884529
	The usual relaxed weekend away from the crowds, but with the Snowdonia hills and crags to walk and climb on, as well as distractions such as sailing on the coast. Also the usual BBQ on the Saturday night.	
12-14 SEPTEMBER	YORKSHIRE 3 PEAKS	Larry King 01939 232218
	Camping at one of the sites adjacent to Lake Coniston from Friday night onwards. Saturday will probably involve a day walk taking in the Old Man with a BBQ afterwards. Sunday will probably see another maybe shorter mountain walk.	
28 SEPTEMBER	DINAS MAWDDWY	Andrew Lawton 01743 884592
	A day out in the hills of this somewhat neglected area of central Wales. Details of the days plans not yet available but will be in the next edition. Meet at the café by the roundabout on the A458, one mile south of Dinas Mawddwy at 10.00 am.	
7-9 OCTOBER	LAKES MID WEEK – CHAPEL STILE	Mike Jones 01743 884592
	Another mid week meet in the Lakes for those too old or too lazy to work. I really must come along this year if I can make it. Accommodation has been booked so contact Mike soon to reserve your place, as this event is usually very popular.	
17-19 OCTOBER	CHAIRMAN'S MEET CLWT-Y-BEL	Mike Jones 01743 884592
NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE	The usual cottage weekend to walk/climb/enjoy North Wales as the end of the year draws near and of course as ever our chairman's hospitality on the Saturday evening.	