

# MAY 2019



## 60 years 1959 - 2019



## First completion of Phil's Hills

Well I thought it was intended as a challenge to last most of our anniversary year. However Larry King has torn up any preconceived timetable by finishing Phil's Hills, all sixty of them, in just four months! Completing his 59<sup>th</sup> and 60<sup>th</sup> hilltops on the 27<sup>th</sup> April his final one was the Cantlin Stone about 8 miles west of Bishop's Castle (see cover photo).



Congratulations to Larry on his achievement. If you are one of those local members yet to be motivated by the challenge please read Larry's summary of his experiences at the foot of Page 5. It could encourage you to start ticking them off.

Next to complete? Well by chance we bumped into Eve Over on Larry's 59<sup>th</sup> hill, Rhos Fiddle. She had totted up over 30 so far and likewise seems ahead of the pack.

Thanks as always to all this month's contributors.

*Graham Daly, Editor*

### Cover photo:

Larry King completes his 60<sup>th</sup> (and last) Phil's Hill, the Cantlin Stone on 27<sup>th</sup> April. At an altitude of 483 metres (1,584ft) it makes the 'top ten' in Phil's list, being ranked seventh out of the sixty in order of height.

It is situated just off the Kerry Ridgeway (old drovers' road) a few miles west of Bishop's Castle and is only twenty or so metres away from the border with Wales.

If you are wondering why there is a commemorative stone in the middle of nowhere it remembers a pedlar named William Cantlin who died in mysterious circumstances on the hill in January 1691

With its history and elevated views it was probably an appropriate place for Larry to finish although he wishes it to be known the sign wasn't his idea!

### This issue will cover:

- 3 Slide night
- 5 Phil's Hills - a celebration
- 6 Northern Rhinogs, Snowdonia
- 7 Cadair Idris area, Snowdonia
- 8 Moel Hebog, Snowdonia
- 9 The BMC and increased subscriptions
- 10 Upcoming Meets/ Events
- 12 Tuesday walks and Thursday climbs

**Deadline** for the next newsletter is 11<sup>th</sup> July 2019. Any photographs should be a separate JPEG.

## Slide Night 19<sup>th</sup> March

Thanks to Phil and Brenda for hosting the Slide Night at the White Horse, Pulverbatch. This was a new venue and the room used was adjacent to the bar which is always handy. Further hospitality was provided with the supply of thick cut chip butties during the break.

Anticipating a shortfall in the number of presentations, Phil had previously sent out an SOS e-mail. The club responded in full with 9 excellent presentations enjoyed by the 30 members present.

### **1. Grahame James: - Cycling the River Rhine**

Grahame, Mike Blakemore, Dave Stanley and John Tempest set out in 2018 to follow the river from source to sea. Starting in Switzerland they progressed variously through Austria, Germany and France, ending in the Netherlands at Arnhem having cycled nearly 1400km. Not surprisingly there were some photos of the many bridge crossings including a 15<sup>th</sup> century structure. Unfortunately John was unable to complete the challenge due to a family commitment.

### **2. Gareth Egarr: - Cape Wrath Trail (part one)**

Also in 2018 Gareth, Clive Dean and Steve Evison undertook the first stage of this 200 mile Scottish trail by trekking from Fort William to Ullapool. This took them through the "Torridon" range and then more boggy terrain where they got very wet. Gareth presented us with photos of some marvellous scenery but seen under typically Scottish dull weather at times. The experience was enhanced by the sighting of lots of wildlife such as deer and golden eagles. To be concluded (the trio are completing the trail on a second expedition at the time of writing, May 2019).

### **3. Catherine Allen: - "Where in the World?"**

Catherine gave us a thought provoking presentation covering three locations around the world that she had visited in connection with her work.

1. Greenland - A trip for a social impact assessment on a proposed oil extraction project. The community affected still depend on foraging, hunting and eating Narwhals.
2. Liberia - An assignment to the capitol Monrovia where she was evaluating a programme to improve the water supply for an NGO (Non Governmental Organisation). The roads were very bad and she had to travel by helicopter.
3. Nepal - visited just 6 months after the earthquake in April 2015 she was in the Llangtang region. The highest peak is Langtang Lung at 4800m and the hotel was at 4380m. Those of us familiar with Nepal will have recognised the familiar tea house and suspension bridge images.

*Continued*

## Slide Night continued

### 4. Tony Mills:- Climbing Challenges

Tony talked about climbing expeditions with Gerald Higgs in a two part presentation:

1. Visiting Costa Blanca for a day climb with views of Calpe on the coast. They also visited Mascarat Gorge where they did a "Bartomeu/Lloret" climb (HVS5+ 7 pitch 276m) which is deemed to be a "committing undertaking", first climbed in 1974
2. Visiting the Mount Blanc Massif and climbing the "Aiguille de la Perseverance" (grade D with 3 moves of IV superior). First climbed by A Charlet in 1925. Tony said "It can be done in a day but better to stay at Lac Blanc Hut". Ref. Gaston Rebuffat's 100 finest routes.

The photos illustrated well the nerve testing experience of the climbs in a stunning landscape.

### 5. Phil Holden:-Knoydart kayaking - May 2016

Phil and Brenda set off paddling from Arnisdale (Scottish Highlands) and wild camped on the way. From the photos it was clear they enjoyed some fantastic scenery that few get to see unless you are prepared to go kayaking and wild camping. The series of photos was set to music and included a video clip of Phil demonstrating how not to do a kayak roll. They also bagged 2 of the 3 Munro's in the area. They came across a place name sign "Glenelg on earth twinned with Glenelg on Mars" which got the best laugh of the night.

### 6. Larry King:-" 2 Kings 1 Bike" Lands End to John o'Groats

Larry and his daughter Emily took on the challenge of cycling from Lands End to John o' Groats by tandem in August 2018. Photos of some of the notable landmarks encountered were crossing the Severn Bridge, visiting Shrewsbury, the River Mersey, passing through the working class areas in the north and the ferry to Arran. We may have expected to see lots of photos of the back of the lead cyclist's head (Larry) taken by the backseat driver (Emily) but not a bit of it. they were both peddling hard as demonstrated by Larry's thorough attention to detail in the statistics he presented eg.

- ◆ 1046miles in 16 days with no rest day.
- ◆ Longest day - 81.4miles
- ◆ Highest speed downhill - 49 mph
- ◆ 4 punctures
- ◆ 160000 calories burnt

The lows were bike problems mainly due to a wheel wobble. This culminated with the abandonment of the tandem in a hedge for the night. There were lots of highs and they met some interesting characters and well wishers along the way (see also Emily's article in the September 2018 newsletter).

### **7. Jan Campbell:- New Zealand Holiday**

Jan visited Christchurch on the anniversary of the 2011 earthquake and made reference to the recent terrorist atrocity, both highlighting what the city has had to endure. She pointed out that SMC members are represented in NZ, some with relatives & friends.

There are strong historical links between NZ and the UK with many Scottish place names and mock castles. These were illustrated with photos of such places as Oban and Dunedin. Other images included locations with lots of humorous signage, wildlife such as albatross birds and of course views of the beautiful scenery.

### **8. Roger Skews:- Baggy Point, Devon**

Roger recalled his memories with photos of the classic climbs he did on his visits to Baggy Point. This sea cliff location is on the north Devon coast opposite Lundy Island and includes some of the best climbs in the south west. But beware it has the second highest tidal range in the world!

He noted that many unsuspecting climbers have been caught out by this in the past. Roger gave some advice obviously borne out of personal experience, such as there is one climb which is best done with a boot on one foot and a climbing shoe on the other. Also that the place is usually full of inebriated climbers but at this location it is taken as compulsory. Superb Sea Cliff photos were shown which members can capture for themselves this year as the location is on the meet card for 13-14<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

### **9. Phil Holden:- Montage of SMC photo competition entries**

Photos provided by Gareth Egarr were presented in an interesting montage of all the great photos submitted by budding photographers among the membership on SMC meets and private expeditions last year.

*Chris Fletcher*

*(With thanks to Chris for all his note taking on the night as I was unable to attend myself – Ed.)*

## **Phil's Hills - A Celebration of the SMC ... and Shropshire**

Each of Phil's 60 Hills deserves a page in its own right. Many we've trodden, some we haven't, but they all have a story to tell. So, a paragraph on the lot was never going to be easy.

For me, this started as a simple list and finished as a triumphant celebration of Shropshire and all that it offers. It was the friends that I did them with, the historical significance at every turn, the few strangers I met, the shifting weather conditions, the villages and the narrow lanes that link them, the buzzards above and the lambs below, the coffee shops and pubs that provide the fuel, which all made Phil's Hills distinctive and exceptional.

However, if one aspect stood out for me, it is the remoteness and hardship that has been endured in these timeworn hills, long before sofas and TVs were ever thought of. Whilst the world has its challenges, we're a fortunate lot living in this stunning county. So, fill a car with friends, fill your boots and enjoy every single moment.

*Larry King*

## 24th March 2019

### Northern Rhinogs, Snowdonia

Nine of us made the trip to the lakeside car park at the end of Cwm Bychan, Alenka, Andy, Gareth, Graham, Henry (on his first day meet with the club), Jan, Mark, Steve and Tony.

A steep climb straight from the car park brought us to a path that led to the base of Clip. We each picked our own way up through the heather and over the rock outcrops reuniting at the large cairn on Clip's rock paved summit. We were rewarded with extensive views from the Llyn peninsula and Nantlle Ridge in the West round to Aran Fawddwy in the East, with the Southern Rhinogs behind us. Only Snowdon stayed in cloud all day.



*Reuniting on Clip summit  
(Gareth and Jan nearest camera)*

We sheltered from the wind just off the summit for a late elevenses before setting out over the

pathless rocky outcrops of Craig Ddrug, passing the isolated lakes of Llyn Cornystwc and Llyn Du.



*Group photo on Moel Ysgyfarnogod (623m, 2044ft) the highest point of the day. Back row (l to r) Steve, Mark Bayliss, Henry, Tony Mills, Jan and Andy. Front row : Alenka and Gareth*

Lunch was taken sheltering from the wind again next to a worked-out manganese mine looking down on Llyn Trawsfyndd. The group photo shoot was on Moel Ysgyfarnogod, 623m, the highest point of the day.

From here we headed West, downhill, passing more manganese workings to reach Bryn Cader Faner, a Bronze Age (post meet Google) stone circle.

All that remained was to follow the wide tracks of the Arduwy Way most of the



*Pausing at Bryn Cader Faner stone circle*

way back to the cars with views of the morning's ridge walk to our left. The only sting in the tail was going to be a trackless boggy field in Cwm Bychan, or so I thought! The babbling stream I had easily hopped across on my recce was now fast moving and thigh deep. The depth was verified as six of us crossed in various states of dryness. The other three, all sages of the committee, took the longer, dryer, concrete track and tarmac road back to the cars.

*Steve Lowe*

## 14th April 2019

### Cadair Idris area, Snowdonia

Nine members (and Catherine's dog, Annie,) assembled for this one way walk from the Minffordd car park to Bodilan in the Dysynni Valley, a distance of about 11 miles with 1160m of ascent. The group of nine included three new members on their first meet: David Keltie, Emma Tipton and Paul (friend of Ross). The newcomers set a challenging pace for the regulars, Jan, Catherine, Ross, Graham, Chris Wood and meet coordinator Dave B.



*Catherine Allen with her canine companion Annie in playful mood at the summit of Cadair*

We began by moving two cars to a field at the end of the walk, where we had kindly been offered parking space by the farmer. The weather was clear throughout and the wind had much less effect than had been forecast. Lunch was enjoyed on the summit of Cadair.

From there we walked along the ridge extending westwards towards the sea and enjoyed spectacular views of the hills, the Mawddach estuary and the sea.

*View back along the ridge to Cadair.*



*Chris imagining his next meal*

*(Mawddach estuary in background)*

Eventually we made a steady descent to the cars on an easy and attractive path. By this time Chris was ravenous, so we hastened to the Brigands Inn, famous for its cheesy chips and fruit crumble. A superb mountain day in excellent conditions.

*Dave Baldock (photographs also by the author)*

## Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2019

### Moel Hebog, Snowdonia

This mountain was originally on the Meet Card for 18<sup>th</sup> March 2018 but drifting snow and high winds on the day (during the visit of the 'mini beast from the east') saw a hastily arranged 'Plan B' executed and a trek in the Capel Curig area undertaken instead.

No such problems this time around as about a dozen folk assembled in the car park in Beddgelert for an ascent up Moel Hebog in calm, dry weather with the cloud high. Kevin Draper was the meet coordinator and the group included prospective members David and Caroline. Jan was on the meet but due to an ongoing hip problem opted for a lower level walk in the area instead.

Kevin took us on a 9 mile clockwise circuit with the ascent of Moel Hebog early on the route. Climbing high above Beddgelert the view soon opened up to give a spectacular panorama. Beyond the village the lake 'Llyn Dinas' could be seen and beyond that Moel Siabod (see photo below).



*Pausing half way up Moel Hebog. Beddgelert, Llyn Dinas and Moel Siabod are more or less in a straight line on the left of the picture. Meet coordinator Kevin is second from the right (partially hidden) in the dark glasses.*  
Photo : Gareth Egarr

Also visible was the Snowdon Horseshoe, which was surprisingly adorned with a fresh topping of snow one week after a scorching Easter. Lunch was taken at the summit of Moel Hebog (783m, 2,565ft). From the top there were great views of the coast as well as the Nantlle Ridge. In fact the Nantlle Ridge looked so enticing Larry decided to change his upcoming meet on May 12<sup>th</sup> from the 'Capel Curig Area' to a traverse of it from



Rhyd Ddu after canvassing opinion. Back to April 28<sup>th</sup> and from Moel Hebog we carried along the ridge to take in Moel yr Ogof and Moel Lefn.



*Descending Moel Hebog en-route to Moel yr Ogof with the Beddgelert Forest as backdrop*



*The three 'Moels' ticked off during the day*

We then dropped down to the forest area but found lots of tree stumps and random felled trunks as a large area had been harvested for its timber.

Carrying on where the trees were still there we returned to Beddgelert on pleasant forest paths. Thanks to Kevin for organising a great walk – well worth the 13 month wait! *Ed*

## The BMC and increased subscriptions

For those of you that don't already know, the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) is the representative body that champions the interests of climbers, hillwalkers and mountaineers in England and Wales. The BMC has around 85,000 members and 250 affiliated clubs including ours.

Among other things they smooth the way regarding access and offer us combined liability insurance. This is the sort of insurance that means if you cause someone to be injured (e.g. if you are belaying and drop your leader and they are injured) they can make a claim. £14.25 of your subs goes to the BMC. More information can be found at [www.bmc-insurance-centre.co.uk](http://www.bmc-insurance-centre.co.uk).

Sadly, there has been a substantial claim of over £8million made on this insurance recently. As a result the BMC has seen its premiums go up quite dramatically. It was agreed at their AGM in March that BMC subscriptions will have to increase by £6 in order to meet the extra costs.

Therefore, our subs will also have to increase. At committee we agreed to subsidise BMC membership by £1/person in the first year so you will only be paying an increase of £5 rather than the full £6. A membership fee of £30 per year is still very good value if you think of it in terms of 'pints of beer'!

**CLIMB SAFE! DO take advantage of all the advice concerning good practice available on the BMC website. Their short bmctv videos are excellent whether you want to check how to tie a double fishmans or how to set up a top rope or how to belay safely.**

*Jan Campbell*

## Upcoming Meets / Events

### May 25<sup>th</sup> -June 1<sup>st</sup>. Cannich

near Glen Affric, about 25 miles from Inverness. Camping at the Cannich Camping Park which has a small onsite café and does bike hire. Lots of Munros, bike rides and lower level trails in the area. Some of you may wish to book a spot for a campervan if you would like an electric hook up. Adjacent is 'Cannich holiday Caravans' where a cabin sleeping 6 has been booked...still some places; contact Jan a.s.a.p.

**Please e mail Jan to confirm if and when you will be there.**

### Sunday June 9<sup>th</sup> Tremadog

An opportunity to rock climb at Tremadog under the guidance of Allan who has been there more times than most have had hot dinners.

Meet coordinator Allan Day

(For non-climbers, Jan is also prepared to lead an exploratory lowish level walk in the area).

### June 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> Wasdale, Lake District

Camping at the head of Wasdale in the Lake District. It is many years since the club had a meet in this beautiful remote spot.

Good location for the rock climbers with access to classics such as Napes Needle and Tophet Wall, or walk further over to Pillar

Excellent walking too with Scafell Pike etc. nearby.

Meet coordinator : Brenda Duffy

### Thursday June 20<sup>th</sup> 'Over the Hill'

A Thursday outing to North Wales. Take the day off work and come for some traditional climbing on a weekday without the crowds.

Meet coordinator: Rick Robson

### June 28-29<sup>th</sup> Hut meet at Clwt y Bel

Several people are interested in the Welsh 3000s and this is the weekend when they can have support but that doesn't stop others from coming too.

Coordinator: Jan Campbell

### July 7<sup>th</sup> A day out in the Moelwyns

Walk up Moelwyn Mawr, explore the disused quarries or go climbing! Stunningly good location for **rock climbing** with a wide range of multi pitch routes; excellent for beginners and for those learning to lead as well as the more experienced.

Meet 8.00a.m. at the Co-op car park, Bank Farm Rd, Radbrook for car sharing or the Lakeside café at Tanygrisiau at 10.00 a.m.

OS Grid reference 681449. Explorer map OL18 is the best sheet for walking routes

Contact Jan Campbell

### **July 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> Yorkshire Dales/ 3 Peaks Weekend**

Lowstern Hut has been booked for this weekend. Sleeping a maximum of 16 in the hut, there's also ample parking for campervans and space for camping in the grounds.

This well-equipped cottage is in a secluded position in a small wood surrounded by farmland about half a mile from Clapham village, North Yorkshire with a fine open view to the Bowland fells. The southern and western Dales provide many opportunities for walking and climbing, as well as access to Yorkshire's 3 Peaks!

Clapham village has an excellent village store, and a pub. The Reading Room café/ bar is also good. Grid reference: SD 7366 6905 Post Code: LA2 8HL

Cost for the weekend £24. Please contact Cheryl Foster to book.

### **July 28<sup>th</sup> Dinas Mawddwy**

An interesting walk in some little known hills west of Dinas Mawddwy.

Meet 8.00a.m. at Radbrook for car sharing.

Meet coordinator Catherine Allen

### **France. August 24<sup>th</sup> – Sept 7<sup>th</sup> Briancon**

Camping at Les Alberts about 7kms out of Briancon. Also an apartment which sleeps up to 4 in nearby hamlet.

Guide Book 'Walking in the Brianconnais, Cicerone.

Jan's plan is to Eurotunnel on Thursday Aug 22<sup>nd</sup> and return on Monday Sept 9<sup>th</sup>... one passenger welcome!

Maps: IGN 3436 ET, 3536 OT, 3535 OT ... all at 1:25,000.

Contact Jan

*Upcoming Meets / Events is compiled by Jan Campbell*

## Tuesday Evening Walking Programme

Meet at 7.30pm or 9.00pm onwards at the pub. Contact Gareth Egarr for further details

Date	Meeting Place	Grid Ref	Pub afterwards
04/06/2019	A49 layby (The Pipes) *	470961	The Horseshoes, Dorrington
11/06/2019	Oswestry Racecourse *	259305	The Barley Mow, Trefonen
18/06/2019	Canalside, Chirk Bank (up the steep hill from The Bridge Inn and park next to canal on right immediately after sharp bend)	292372	Bridge Inn
25/06/2019	Batch Valley (Roy's Walk)	455955	The Yew Tree, All Stretton
02/07/2019	Mitchell's Fold bend in the road *	302977	The Miners' Arms, Priest Weston
09/07/2019	Secret Hills Centre, Craven Arms *	435825	Stokesay Inn, Craven Arms
16/07/2019	Breidden Hotel, Middletown *	304126	Breidden Hotel
23/07/2019	Trefonen (Barley Mow) *	259267	The Barley Mow
30/07/2019	Ashes Hollow, Little Stretton *	442919	Ragleth Inn

- Walk will include one of Phil's 60 hills for the Club's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary

## Thursday Evening Climbing Programme

Date	Venue	Location
Please contact Dan Williamson for the most up-to-date information.		