

JANUARY 2020



New Year 2020

Not just a new year but a new decade although a few anoraks are trying to tell us otherwise.

The media seems to have invented 'Megxit' to fill the controversy void created by the apparent resolution of Brexit. Although Harry and Meghan are destined to lose 'HRH' the letters 'SMC' are available to all who renew their subscription or join afresh.

Before looking ahead to 2020 a finishing note from 2019. 11 members appear to have completed the '60 Hills' challenge in the year and are listed on the page opposite. Well done all on your achievement. Thanks also to Phil Holden for the 60 hills idea to celebrate the club's 60th anniversary. To reword the old lager slogan in a Shropshire landscape context it enabled members to reach the parts other people never reach.

The arrival of the January issue signals that the Annual General Meeting is imminent. For those able to attend details, including the agenda are on the back page before which are last year's minutes.

Attendees will also get the chance to vote on the best mountaineering/ landscape pictures taken by members in 2019. Gareth informs that 80 pictures were entered by 15 people. Maybe it will be a one off year when hills exceed mountains but as you will see

This issue will cover:

- 3 Phil's Hills challenge: list of finishers
- 4 Annapurna Circuit, Nepal 2019
- 6 Clwydian Hills, North Wales, Part 2
- 7 Clwt y Bel xmas party weekend
- 8 60th anniversary challenge :final hills
- 8 Pre xmas walk and lunch
- 9 New Year's Day walk Bridges
- 9 Countdown to 2026
- 10 An Y Garn less travelled
- 11 Upcoming Meets/ Events
- 12 Tuesday walks and Thursday climbs
- 13 Minutes for 2019 AGM
- 16 Agenda for 2020 AGM

from pages 4 and 5 there could be some spectacular mountain ones from the Himalayas.

Thanks as always to all this month's contributors. *Graham Daly, Editor*

Cover photo:

Andrew and Rachel Lawton become the second and third members to complete the 60 hills challenge in 2019.

They are pictured on their 60th and final summit, Manstone Rock, Stiperstones on 3rd December. They saved this one until last even though they see it every day from their house.

Not pictured but also deserving a mention is their border terrier dog Millie who accompanied them to all 60 summits.

For other 'last hill' pictures see Page 8.



Deadline for the next newsletter is 10th March 2020. Any photographs should be a separate JPEG.

'Phil's Hills' challenge : roll of honour

The following members completed all 60 hills in the calendar year 2019 in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the club's founding in 1959.

	Name	60 th and final hill	Date challenge completed
1	Larry King	Cantlin Stone	27 th April
2&3	Andrew & Rachel Lawton	Manstone Rock	3 rd December
4&5	Phil & Brenda	Llanfair Hill	9 th December
6	Jan Campbell	Moel y Golfa	17 th December
7&8	Jon & Anne Yeeles	Rodney's Pillar	23 rd December
9	Alenka Toinko	Rhos Fiddle	29 th December
10	Cheryl Foster (with partner Martin)	Manstone Rock	30 th December
11	Graham Daly	Abdon Burf	31 st December

Also worthy of mention : Gareth Egarr (51 hills completed by 31st December)

Subscriptions

As usual subs (£30) are **due in January** and should be paid by January 31st.

Ways to pay:-

Cash or cheque made payable to '**Shrewsbury Mountaineering Club**' direct to Brenda Duffy on any Tuesday night, at the Patterdale meet or at the AGM on January 21st

or

Post a cheque

An s.a.e is very helpful to Brenda for posting your membership card.

Annapurna Circuit, Nepal 2019

A trip to the Himalayas jointly described by Rick Robson, Sue Ford and Steph Mackey

DR, our Nepali friend and guide, has been a visitor to our house (the Robson's) for many years now. Every year he asked Jan and myself when we would visit Nepal so we decided to join Steph, Eve and Sue for their trek last October.

DR met us at Tribhuvan airport with garlands of marigolds; from that moment, he looked after us so well - morning tea and biscuits and ginger and lemon tea on demand. He led us on a fabulous journey through Annapurna villages and shared his extensive knowledge of the mountains. His team, a Sherpa and three porters were equally good company and it was a privilege to spend time with them. We shared sweets and tea bags with the tea house hosts and their children in return for smiles and greetings of "Namaste".



Sue, Steph and Jan above Manang acclimatising to the altitude. Snow capped Gangapurna in background.

We started our trek from Ngadi at an altitude of 930m and followed the track alongside the Marsyangdi river, in full flow after recent rains and with many landslides. The hills were steep and wooded and we passed through some beautiful stone built Brahmin villages, accompanied by stunningly bright butterflies. From Jagat (1340m), the path rose steeply but finally we were over the top into a broad fertile valley with a river bed of white cobbles and the busy village of Tal with teahouses, maize hanging out to dry and crops growing in small stone walled plots. From Dharapani (1860m) we sighted our first 8000m peak, Manasula, closely followed by Annapurna II, so majestic against blue skies. From Upper Pisang, (3300m) DR took us up the 'jig-jag' path to Ghyaru, a slow steady climb with vultures flying in the valley below us.

In Manang we had two nights to assist with our acclimatisation.

DR led us at a snail's pace over Thorong La Pass at 5,400m with frequent stops for drinks and we all completed the walk with no recourse to a pony ride. We recovered overnight at a comfortable teahouse in Muktinath thinking our major challenge was behind us.



Group photo including porters at Thorong La, the highest point on the Annapurna Circuit 5,416 m (17,769 ft).

Due to the constraints of our available time in Nepal DR had arranged for us to travel the 60km journey to Tatopani by bus. This form of transport added a depth of flavour to our Annapurna experience – think scotch bonnet chillies – but given more time, it would have been better to have walked ! If anyone saw the Christmas ‘Top Gear’ Nepal programme our bus ride was 3 times as scary and 10 times better company !

Tatopani was relatively bustling and the hot springs pools were relaxing and surprisingly egalitarian. The next day we enjoyed the walk to Shikha despite the multitude of steps (mostly up) as we passed through lush greenery and enticing villages. It felt like the last remote village of the circuit and contrasted with trekkers’ busyness of Ghorepani. We did not get the hoped for views from Poon Hill after our early morning hike but it was good to share the camaraderie with the multitude of other walkers. We climbed literally thousands of steps down to Hile for our last night and farewell meal with our porters and guides.

We spent our final two days in Pokhara and Kathmandu where we visited the orphanage where DR provides a home for 16 children from outlying poor villages in Eastern Nepal – it was a moving experience to see this commitment to ensure the children are looked after. We spent our final night with DR and his family and it is good to think he will back in the UK next year. We have taken home wonderful memories of our time in the Himalayas with such generous Nepalese friends.

Rick Robson, Sue Ford and Steph Mackey (with photographs supplied by Eve Over)

24th November 2019

Clwydian Hills, North Wales, Part 2

Part 1 was back in July 2018 on a scorching hot day when we walked from the Moel Arthur car park. Part 2 explored the range further south in cooler temperatures (albeit mild for the time of year) commencing at Bwlch Penbarra car park.

It was a reasonable turn out of ten members and one guest (and two dogs). However Sian Barnes and her mountaineering friend Pete (the guest) had vehicle problems en-route from South Wales and were delayed getting to the start point. With impatience from the assembled group imminent Gareth selflessly agreed to await their arrival at the car park while the rest of us got going.

After nearly two miles on the Offa's Dyke Path National Trail and over 600 ft of ascent we arrived at the Jubilee Tower on Moel Fammu. This is the highest point on the Clwydians at 555 m (1,821 ft) but the cloud was down so we had no views.



Traversing the Clwydians on the Offa's Dyke Path. Catherine Allen and Dave Baldock nearest camera.

Attempts to contact Sian and Gareth by mobile for an update on the latecomers drew a blank. However just when we were wondering what to do a breathless Gareth appeared out of the mist, pony express on foot to inform us that Sian and Pete had arrived and were on their way up the hill. Full complement of walkers assembled we continued on the Offa's Dyke path, with mist receding, to just below the Moel Arthur hill fort. It used to be a

different Iron Age tribe that lived in these parts. Back in what became Shropshire the hillforts such as the Wrekin were inhabited by the Cornovii: up here it was the Deceangli.

Changing direction to head south the parallel path was at a lower level. The views improved and lunch was taken enjoying a panorama over the Vale of Clwyd. Continuing, the going as they say in horse racing, was somewhat soft. The path coincided with a spring line in places and it had been a wet November. However we got back to our start point at Bwlch Penbarra before the daylight began to fade.

With 10 miles completed we had earned a cafe stop on the way home. Refreshments were taken at Caffi Florence at the nearby Loggerheads Country Park. Relaxing with our drinks some of us were somewhat surprised to see two further SMC members Heather and Mark B walk in unannounced. Missing the morning's start they had done their own route in the Clwydian Hills.



View over the Vale of Clwyd

Graham Daly. Pictures by Gareth (above left) and guest Pete (above)

6- 8th December 2019

Clwt y Bel xmas party weekend

A good number of people were at the hut for a very social Friday evening and the realisation that if anything was to be done outdoors on the Saturday then it had to be done by lunchtime; this was dictated by a truly wet and windy weather forecast. Some biked, some went on the Carnedd y Filiast/Elidir Fawr circuit and others stayed lower. All got wet and most were back in the hut by 2pm ish. The rest of the day was then spent either anticipating or consuming food and drink which officially started with mulled cider and mince pies at 4.30pm.



Masterchef Adrian with his sous chefs. From left Cheryl (with antlers), Tracy and Catherine

By 7.30pm 25 of us were tucking in to a tremendous, traditional xmas dinner coordinated by Masterchef Adrian and his team of sous chefs. The following puddings included home made xmas pud (Jan), an incredibly chocolatey dessert (Tracy) and an apple and raspberry crumble (Sian). Some had retired to their bunk by the time the port and cheese came out and apparently this all went on until the last to bed was Adrian with a record 3.40am.



Dinner is served



Party mode although Richard Pugh (right foreground) seems less amused !

Most of Sunday morning was spent clearing up although some did go off for exercise e.g. vet Dave and Blakey went for a bike ride.

Many thanks to everyone for their contributions to this real 'team effort' of a meet.

Jan Campbell

December 2019

60th Anniversary Challenge : final hill pictures



Ann and Jon Yeeles finished on Rodney's Pillar on a fine Monday December 23rd. Accomplished following surgery Jon's achievement deserves the greatest acknowledgement. Looks like they borrowed the mini-banner from the Lawton's though ! (see cover).



Boldest picture award goes to Cheryl Foster (with her partner Martin). Cheryl's dog Skye doesn't look too impressed mind. Like the Lawton's their final summit, achieved on the 30th December, was Manstone Rock on the Stiperstones.



Alenka was accompanied by her son Luke on her final hill : Rhos Fiddle on a fine Sunday 29th December.



Your Editor left it late : only a few hours of daylight were left in 2019 when he finished on a wet Abdon Burf on the last day of the year, 31st Dec.

22nd December 2019

Pre xmas walk and lunch at the Stiperstones Inn

This annual gathering was much the same as last year only with many more people (24 for lunch I believe) according to Phil the landlord. The pub really does manage to cope with this sort of unexpected number very well --we had estimated 12-15 !

Fortunately everyone put their orders in before we set off for the leisurely walk.

A very social meet!

Jan Campbell

1st January 2020

New Year's Day Walk : Bridges and Long Mynd



Atmosphere on the Long Mynd. (Pic: Catherine Allen) Some of the 31 (Photo: Cheryl Foster)

The Portway and Long Mynd looked atmospheric today, and what better place for 31 of us to blow all our New Year's cobwebs away. It made the chips, sandwiches and soup at The Bridges pub afterwards taste all the better, too. Happy New Year everyone !

Catherine Allen (via SMC Facebook Group)

Countdown to 2026

What's happening in 2026 I hear you shout! Apart from the Brexit negotiations beginning Stage 4 - the agreement on which biscuits to have during the negotiations, 2026 will bring about closure of the Definitive Map.

The Definitive Map is every Local Authority in England and Wales's document which records all of the legal Rights of Way in the county. The requirement for LA's to produce this goes back to the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949. However, the completion of the maps proved difficult for many areas and it took until 1982 for them all to be completed. However, this was not the end of the process as every LA continued to receive challenges as people claimed historic routes which were suddenly closed to them. In order to remove this continued bureaucratic issue, the government has decided (following consultation) that a deadline must be set, beyond which no further historic routes can be added to the Definitive Map. That deadline is the 31st December 2025.

SMC is therefore asking its members to check that all of the routes that they walk or ride and believe should be Rights of Way are designated as such. The easiest way to do this is to look on the relevant OS map. If there are routes that anyone feels are missing then please contact a committee member. SMC will collate all of the claims and make a submission to Shropshire Council. Of course, that does not preclude anyone contacting the council directly; probably the more claims the better.

There is no urgency with this. We have a few years but it may take many months to gather evidence for a route to be added so the sooner we start the better.

Thank you. Gareth Egarr

5th January 2020

An Y Garn less travelled

I am reliably informed that there are “at least 4 Y Garns in Wales” so while I didn’t choose the obvious one for the first Welsh meet of the decade there are some others to discover should you feel so inclined.

Considering the weather forecast and the proximity to New Year it was a surprisingly good turn out with 5 stalwarts (myself, Jan, Val, Dave B, Graham D) and 3 “ newbies” , Eoin Fitzgerald, David Jakeman and Toby Pay attending.

The conditions unfortunately were low cloud and rain but the winds were lower than we’d been led to expect. Just as well as the rock was the opposite of Gabbro and sliding was to be avoided on the more difficult sections.

The route started from the Rhyd-Ddu car park with an uneventful ascent of Y Garn (633m) itself, but the route south over the top of Clogwyn Marchnad to Myndd Drws-y-coed (695m), was not without interest, being best described as an easy scramble.



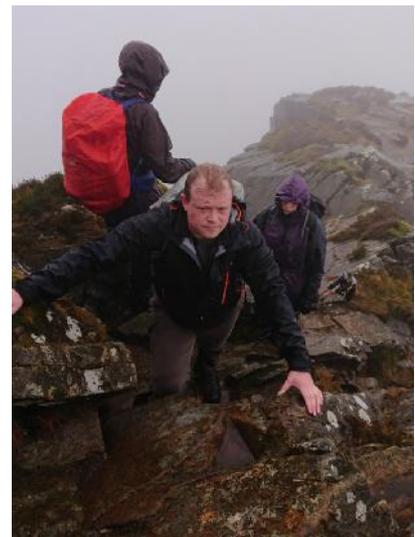
On the misty ascent from Rhyd Ddu to Y Garn

Due to the low cloud the lovely views of the south side of Snowdon and the Porthmadog estuary were missing, but I did tell people how nice they had been the week before. After an easy, although still wet and slippery, descent to Bwlch-y-Ddwy-elor, we returned through the forest without getting lost once !

We then retreated to the Moel Siabod café for well-earned tea and cake. Here we were met by Tom and Barbara, who very wisely had done the “other” Y Garn in much better weather the day before!

For those of you interested in such things the total distance was 10.3km, with a height gain of 749m, at an average “moving speed” of 3.7km/hr. We took 4 hours 11 minutes including stops.

Graham Baldry (photographs also by the author)



'Newbie' Eoin wears a serious expression scrambling on the wet rock

Upcoming Meets / Events

Tuesday January 21st

AGM at the Cock Inn, Hanwood

7.30pm to get drinks in ready for a prompt 8.00 start. This is a good opportunity to pay your subs.

Attendees also get to participate in the deciding vote for the 2019 Photo Competition.

Sunday Feb 2nd

Carneddau, Snowdonia

A classic route from the Ogwen Valley with the potential to play in the snow if there is any !

Meet coordinator Andy Bentley

Feb 15-22nd

The annual trip to Scotland

This year staying at the luxurious Achnacloch Baronial house about 6 miles from Oban and near to Ben Cruachan.

£150 each for the week's accommodation. At the time of writing there was 1 place remaining.

Meet coordinator Jan Campbell

Sunday March 1st

The Snowdon Horseshoe

Meet coordinator Sean Toms

Sunday March 15th

Cadair Idris

Always popular and a different route to the one we did last year.

Meet coordinator Kevin Draper

Tuesday March 24th

Annual slide night

White Horse pub, Pulverbach

Organised by Phil Holden

Here you have a chance to show the rest of us what you have been up to in the great outdoors in the last year BUT you are restricted to 10 mins.

Please liaise with Phil on the technicalities.

*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
04/02/2020	Plush Hill (Jinlye), All Stretton	SO 451963	The Yew Tree, All Stretton
11/02/2020	Corbet Wood car park	SJ 524237	New Inn, Hadnall
18/02/2020	Eastridge Woods near Habberley	SJ 392027	Mytton Arms, Habberley
25/02/2020	Motte & Bailey, Pulverbatch	SJ 422022	The White Horse, Pulverbatch
03/03/2020	Womerton	SO 458972	The Horseshoes, Dorrington
10/03/2020	Bridges	SO 394964	The Bridges
17/03/2020	Royal Oak, Cardington	SO 507953	Royal Oak
24/03/2020	SMC Slide Night	n/a	The White Horse, Pulverbatch
31/03/2020	Nesscliffe C'try Park, Oak car park	SJ 383199	Wingfield Arms, Montford Bridge

Tuesday Night Challenge !

Those of us who turn out on a Tuesday enjoy one of around 35 meeting points/walks that we visit once or twice a year. It's high time we found some new places to meet and walk. I challenge club members to come up with some suggestions please. It will need to have reasonable parking and provide a walk of around 2 hours (4 to 5 miles). Some hilly landscape would be good as we ARE a mountaineering club but the odd flatter, interesting walk is quite acceptable. A half decent pub to retire to after is also required but does not need to be on the doorstep.

I eagerly await your responses !

Gareth Egarr

Thursday Evening Climbing Programme

Date	Venue	Location
	There is indoor climbing at 'Climbing the Walls' off Battlefield Road, Shrewsbury on Thursdays from 7pm.	

Minutes of Shrewsbury Mountaineering Club Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at the Cock Inn, Hanwood Tuesday 22nd January 2019

Present:- Catherine Allen, Stuart Altman, Andy Bentley, Mike Blakemore, Jan Campbell, Tom Cave, Graham Daly, Allan Day, Brenda Duffy, Gareth Egarr, Chris Fletcher, Cheryl Foster, Vilma Gulbinaite, Gerald Higgs, Phil Holden, John Howard, Grahame James, Phil Latter, Steve Lowe, Tony Mills, Scott Pardoe, Judy Preece, Richard Pugh, June Purce, Simon Shanklin, Liz Shanklin, Roger Skews, Melanie Sprengers, Val Swingler, Andy Tetsill, Alenka Toinko, Sean Toms, Steve Turk, Chris Wood, Anne Yeeles. Total 35.

Apologies: Jackie Eyre, Tim Tindle, Kevin Draper, Nicola Cowen, Jane Holmes, Andrew & Rachel Lawton, Alek Sadowski, Ross Lister, Jean Heiron, Jeff Morton, Jon Yeeles, Jenny Howard Larry King.

Minutes of the AGM 2018 Approved

Matters arising; Crag X which was mentioned by Stuart Cathcart has been visited by SMC a couple of times on Thursday evenings.

Secretary's report (Jan Campbell)

- Slight increase to 108 members including three honorary members, Mike Jones, Gordon Croxton and Pete McAree.
- 9 new members in 2018 most of whom are already attending regularly and some helping with the running of the Club e.g. Steve Lowe is coordinating a Rhinogs meet this year and Catherine Allen is organising a round of T-shirts/Fleeces.
- News of members: sad death of James Blair in June 2018 and more recently John Stevens. Two babies! Eadric born in July to Vilma and Dave and Lily born in Oct. to Joe Penfold and his partner Claire.
- Newsletter editorship transferred from Vilma to Graham Daly
- Extremes of weather in 2018. Beast from the East and the mini-beast affected both the Tarrens and Moel Hebog meets. Contrast in the summer with 15 people enjoying a heat wave in Ullapool and almost too hot to walk on Mike Blakemore's meet in the Clwydian Hills.
- Benefit of Club membership is to team up with like-minded people for extra adventures. Mike Blakemore, Grahame James and Dave Stanley cycled from the source to mouth of the Rhine and a group got together for the Long Mynd Hike with Catherine Mangham, Simon Shanklin and Eve Over completing it.
- Other extra adventures include Larry and daughter cycling land's End to John o'Groats on a tandem and Hugh Gaspar achieving the summit of his first really big mountain in Bolivia. Stuart Altman trekking the South Island part of Te Araroa.
- Only 10 years since our 50th birthday and the challenge of the Clwt y Bel Way and now at our 60th we have Phil's Hills. Also looking forward to our meet in France near Briancon.

Minutes of Shrewsbury Mountaineering Club AGM held at the Cock Inn, Hanwood Tuesday 22nd January 2019 continued

Treasurer's report (key points) from our treasurer, Mike Blakemore

- A similar income from subscriptions as last year with £14.25 per person going to the BMC.
- For Club admin, the income continues to exceed expenditure
- For the third year running the hut has brought in about £6000
- Expenditure on the hut has been less than the income
- Many thanks go to Cheryl for collecting hut booking money and Brenda for managing subscriptions and liaising with the BMC and Gerald Higgs for auditing the accounts.

Chairman's report (Roger Skews)

- Thanks to everyone for attending and to all those who help with running our Club; with special thanks going to the officers and committee as well as those who have organised meets, helped with hut maintenance and lastly, but not least, Vilma and now Graham for their editorship of the newsletter.
- Remember that you can see lots of photos of meets and set up extra activities together by using the closed group Facebook page.
- The hut Trustees **Roger Edenborough, Judy Preece, Gareth Egarr and Roger Skews**, formally met this year to review and plan important work needed especially with regard to Fire Safety. Plans were approved by the committee to upgrade Fire safety and also to fit an extractor fan over the cooker. Special thanks to Rog Edenborough who planned the majority of the work and ensured its completion.
- **Stuart Cathcart** decided to retire earlier this year. His shop, High Sports, full of the best outdoor gear around and at special discount prices to SMC, is no more.

Election of officers and committee. All the officers and committee apart from Scott Pardoe were willing to stand for re-election. Catherine Allen said she was prepared to stand and was nominated by Jan Campbell and seconded by Brenda Duffy. The meeting then agreed to vote in the committee en bloc.

See table at top of page opposite

	Proposed	Seconded
Chair: Roger Skews, hut trustee	Jan Campbell	June Purce
Treasurer: Mike Blakemore	Andy Bentley	Judy Preece
Secretary: Jan Campbell	Grahame James	Gareth Egarr
Committee: Brenda Duffy - subscriptions Tony Mills - climbing rep Andy Bentley -website Catherine Allen - T shirts Cheryl Foster - Hut bookings Gareth Egarr -hut trustee, photo competition		

T-shirts (£10) and fleeces (£20). There were some samples on display to help with sizing and colour choices Catherine Allen explained the system for ordering these. We need money with the order, cheques payable to SMC.

Break for beer and chips.

Harry Gregory Trophy. Mike Blakemore announced the winner this year, Stuart Altman. The trophy was then presented by last year's winner, Grahame James. Stuart then gave a brief synopsis of his backpacking trip in New Zealand...over 1400 kms in 61 days to celebrate being 60yrs old! Great effort. Incidentally, Stuart also completed the LMH for the 43rd time this year.

Photo competition 2018 - results.

19 members submitted 69 photos between them although Gareth would prefer it if they didn't leave it until the day of the deadline. Gareth announced the winners and runners up:

Landscape: Runner up Catherine Allen. Winner, **Catherine Allen** with a view from Causeway Wood.

Mountaineering: Runner up Adrian Wilcock. Winner, **Steve Lowe** with an action shot in N.gully on Tryfan

AOB. Phil Holden put in a plug for the slide night on March 19th at the White Horse, Pulverbach. There will be no limit on the number of slides/video but you only have 9 minutes.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm.

AGM Tuesday 21st January 2020. The Cock Inn, Hanwood

7.30pm for a prompt 8pm start

As ever, it would be useful if you could read and bring with you the minutes from last year's meeting and also the Agenda for this year.

Please remember to bring money for your subs (£30) which Brenda will be happy to receive. Cash or cheques payable to 'Shrewsbury Mountaineering Club'.

AGENDA for 2020

- Apologies
- Minutes of the 2019 AGM
- Matters arising
- Secretary's report (Jan Campbell)
- Treasurer's report (Mike Blakemore)
- Chairman's report (Roger Skews).
- Election of officers and committee.
- *Break for refreshments (food provided) and voting for photos*
- Harry Gregory Trophy.
- Photo competition 2019 – results.
- AOB.