

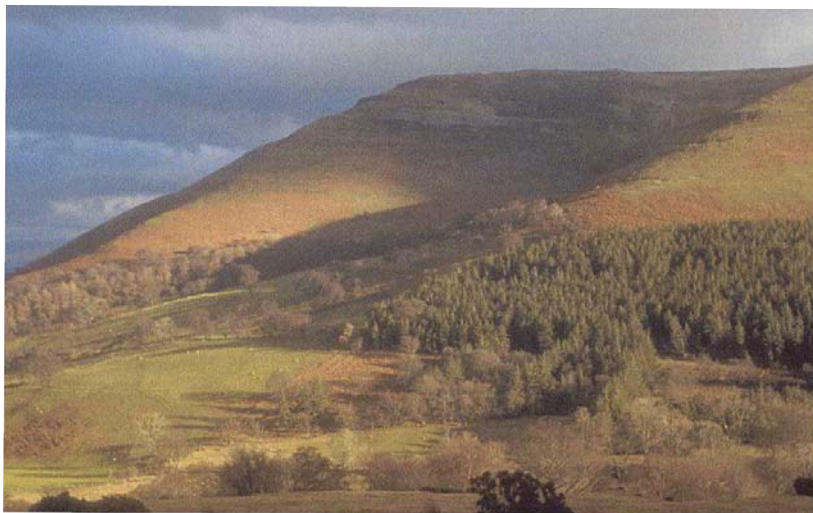
The View

Issue No. 28

Spring 2007

THREE PEAKS TRIAL— NEW 'SILVER' ROUTE LAUNCHED

Photo: Waun Fach, Black Mountains



Silver Route First Peak—Bloreng



Silver Route Second Peak—Sugar Loaf

The New Silver Route attracted a good turnout of 50 entries. Together with the Platinum and Gold Routes the Three Peaks Trial 2007 was another success thanks to Team COG! See Page 8 for details.

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Newsletter of



Letter from the Chair



It's a time of change for the YHA and its local groups. Not only is the YHA 'streamlining' its network of hostels, but also revising the relationship it has with its local groups. Because local groups have been free in the past to determine their own programmes of activity, this, the YHA argues, has led to a divergence of local group activity with 'variable commitment towards furthering YHA's charitable object' (quoted from the YHA document *Guidance for Hostelling and Local Groups 2006*). A task group was established in December 2005, made up of a team of Trustees, Staff, Local Group Committee members and a Seconded from the Inland Revenue, to consult with local groups, with the aim of ensuring 'that the rights, responsibilities and roles of both YHA and the Groups would be clear in future' (quoting from the same document).

The YHA has recently published its guidelines for the new arrangements with local groups, having taken into account the task group's findings. A new affiliation scheme is proposed, with local groups referred to as affiliates. I quote:

Affiliation represents a relationship between a group or club and YHA, in which the group or club supports YHA's objectives and wishes to contribute towards the development of YHA's services and policies. In turn YHA values and recognises the commitment of its Affiliates and will provide the following benefits:

- Host an annual Affiliates Day
- Provide information about YHA and its work, including information on Hostel news and offers of interest
- Consult with Affiliates about YHA policies and services
- List all Affiliates on the YHA website
- Explore potential opportunities to engage with Affiliates following the wider Governance Review.

Fortunately, there are not too many changes as far as the Cardiff Outdoor Group is concerned. For example, one new requirement which does not apply to us is that affiliate groups can no longer refer to themselves as the Swanport Local YHA Group. Instead, they must adopt a new, non-YHA name. However, two new financial arrangements that will affect us are (1) the introduction of an affiliation fee (£25.50) which we have to pay the YHA as of 2008, and (2) the fact that we will only be eligible for discounted accommodation at selected times of the year, as opposed to all-year round.

If you would like a copy of the *Guidance for Hostelling and Local Groups 2006* document, email me at clive.cazeaux@ntlworld.com and I'll send you a copy.

Happy hostelling.

Clive

CHALLENGE WALKS



Apr 14 - Black Mountains Roundabout - 25 miles, 6200ft Ascent . A tough mountains walk. Refreshments at finish & cert. Send SAE to: Martyn Rogers, 122 Stow Hill, Newport, Gwent, NP20 4GA. Tel. 01633 257632 or download entry from <http://walk.to/nogs>.

May 12—Walk-in Caerphilly—26 or 15 miles. From Parc Penallta near Ystrad Mynach. A new event going thro the spectacular valleys of Caerphilly thro farmland, woodland & across open moorland, with weather permitting, fantastic views towards the Brecon Beacons, over Cardiff Bay & across the Bristol Channel to Somerset & N Devon. Start 26ml 6.00am, 15ml 7.30am. Entry £5, no entries on day. Contact Rural Developments Officer, Countryside & Landscape Services, Unit 5, Woodfieldside Business Park, Penamen Road, Pontllanfraith, Blackwood. NP12 2DG.

May 19 - Elenydd Hostels Fundraising Walk - 5 or 15 miles see www.elenydd-hostels.co.uk/ for details.

May 19 - Big Black Mountains Challenge - 43, 7,16 kms - From Llanthony Abbey, event covers a total of 15 mountains over 660m. Send SAE to: Big Black Mountains Challenge, Longtown Mountain Rescue, PO Box 36, Monmouth, NP7 5YZ or download from www.longtownmrt.org.uk.

May 26—28 Cant Canolbarth Cymru (The Mid Wales 100) Taith drwy Galon Cymru. A journey through the heart of Wales. 100 miles and 14000 ft of ascent in 48 hours starting from The Pavilion, Llandrindod Wells, Powys. A circuit of the County of Radnorshire crossing Aberedw Hill, Glascwm Hill, Radnor Forest, visiting the Elan valley and the historic Abbey Cwm Hir. **Contact:** Mike Gammon **Address:** Jacob's Cottage, Rhos-y-Meirch, Knighton, Powys. LD7 1PE **Web Site:** <http://www.cantcanolbarth.co.uk>

Jun 10 - Gower Gallop - 30, 20, 12.5 miles - From Pennard Sports Pavilion, Swansea GR SS 553882. The routes explore the Gower Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty & include hill, farmland & coastal walking. Entry £5 (£6 on day) concession £3.50 inc cert & light refreshments at two Cp & tea & cakes at finish. Entrants will need to navigate their own routes between Cps. **Contact:** Gower Gallop **Address:** c/o 35 Huntingdon Way, Sketty, Swansea, SA2 9HN **Telephone:** 01792 296219 **Web Site:** <http://www.swanseaoutdoorgroup.org.uk>

Photo Montage of COG Events

The events shown are from recent COG walks and events.

Clive with Collette & Andy outside their new abode. Join them for a walk in the Monnow Valley on 3rd June, refreshments at theirs.



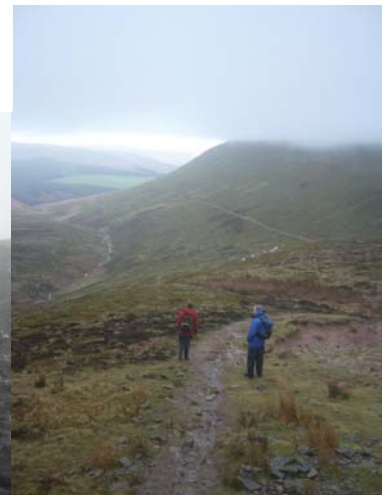
18th Feb.: Llanharan Windmills—in answer to 'Cariad Yw' (Love is) COG members answer seems to be hugging a windmill!



Shrove Tuesday—Cooks Rhona & Katherine do the flipping.



The COG Christmas Curry at the Juboraj in Rhiwbina



25th Feb.—Waun Fach Black Mountains Walk. Little bit boggy at the summit!

STEVE'S BIG SACK

Spring has well and truly arrived and what with the sap rising on crisp, clear mornings, one's thoughts naturally turn toward backpacking.

Last February's backpack proved the unlikely truth that backpacking with COG is most popular at this quiet time of year. Six of us actually backpacked, one person couldn't come because of transport problems and two people couldn't come because of prior engagement/injury. So there *could* have been nine. The previous February backpack (Knighton to Newcastle-on-Clun and back) had had eight (but with two in a B&B).

It was a classic weekend with Friday night at that perennial favourite, Llanthony Priory campsite. Of course, Roger, Bob G and I went in search of the medieval experience in the hotel bar. Next day we went straight up to the ridge then more or less straight back down towards the Black Hill before heading up the ridge. The weather overall was very good for February – dry and mild. After hitting the Offa's Dyke path again we went down to Clyro then up to the campsite in Hay-on-Wye. This is an excellent little site which now has an indoor cooking area for campers. There were other campers at the site but it was a very quiet, clear night.

We awoke to some very attractive river mist in the morning and didn't hang around before setting off again, this time in a southerly direction along Offa's Dyke footpath. The weather was again good, and very warm for February, though there was a chilly wind up on Hay Bluff. From there it was a straightforward walk along the ridge then down into the Llanthony valley.

So there you have it – two fine February days and NO rain – ideal backpacking conditions. On the Saturday night I tried talking Bob G into organising a backpacking weekend in the summer – hopefully he hasn't forgotten....

Probably there's no backpacking in the programme for May/June



8/9th June—Night walk includes the Clydach Gorge.

so you'll have to control your frustrations until the July/August programme.

In the meantime, on Friday 8th and Saturday 9th June there'll be a new breed of COG event – the overnight walk! Ever felt that you've had such a good day that you don't want to go to bed and you wish you could go for a 21 mile walk? If so, or even if not, this is the event for you. The plan is to get the train to Abergavenny train station on Friday evening, have dinner somewhere then walk up Bloreng, along Llanelly Hill, down to the Clydach Gorge, up Mynydd Langynidr, down to Crickhowell then up Sugar Loaf and back to Abergavenny in time for breakfast on Saturday morning before getting the train back. And if you think that's a silly idea, be thankful I didn't stick to the original plan (a 29 mile overnight walk from Abergavenny to Merthyr Tydfil – one for the future). If you only do one barking mad COG event this year – *make it this one!*

Steve Bees

Take a Walk Through Time

A large-scale clearance of the 150-year-old quarry at Wern Ddu Clay pits Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), in Caerphilly, will create a window into Wales' past by uncovering some of the world's most important geological features.

The clearance work, conducted by the Countryside Council for Wales, is part of a project aimed at improving the SSSIs that make up the South Wales Geopark – a project to link up some of the most internationally important sites for geological science.

An amphitheatre is also being built, for visiting schools, and it is hoped that interpretation boards, a website and leaflets will also be created, along with new paths and a series of guided walks, allowing everyone to learn about Wales' rich geological heritage. Dr Bill Wimbledon, Senior Geologist for the Countryside Council for Wales said: "The rocks here, date back to the Carboniferous period. During this time, Wales was part of the Pangaea super continent, situated on the equator, and was covered in equatorial forests, which explains the great thicknesses of coal found in South Wales.

"Because of the intense mining and quarrying of the industrial revolution, South Wales is now the best place in Europe and Asia to see and study these late Carboniferous rocks. Similar rocks from all over the world are compared with the ones found in South Wales to determine their geological age. "The Geopark project will ensure more people realise and appreciate the international importance of Wales' geology. It will also provide great opportunities for schools to educate pupils using practical and interesting methods."

Geopark partners include the National Museum of Wales, British Institute of Geological Conservation, Caerphilly Woodland Trust, Caerphilly County Borough Council and the Forestry Commission.

The Wern Ddu SSSI owned by Caerphilly Woodland Trust (CWT) and Forestry Commission Wales, is also a very important site for wildlife, including dormice and amphibians.

The digging work will end on Thursday, 22nd March. If you would like to visit the site please contact Bill Wimbledon on 029 2077 2400 or Delyth Willis, Regional PR Officer, on 029 2077 2455 or email d.willis@ccw.gov.uk. For more information about the South Wales Geopark please contact Chris Cleal, National Museum of Wales, on 029 2039 7951 or at chris.cleal@museumwales.ac.uk

Article from the CCW website.



World War 2 Wellington Bomber Crash Site Walk, Black Mountain

In July the walk in the Black Mountain near Craig y Nos will include a visit to the crash site of a World War Two Wellington Bomber. The story hit the papers last year when a local whose relative collected a photo from the crash site tried to find out who it was in the photo. This is the story from Wes Cross, McGill University, Montreal.

On November 20, 1944, while on a night training mission, Wellington bomber MF-509 crashed into the southwest slope of Carreg Goch (Red Rock), in the mountains of Brecon Beacons. The accident, although attributed to crew error by the RAF (Royal Air Force), was likely caused by icing of the carburetor which led to problems with the starboard engine. The entire Canadian crew, known as the Alouettes, were killed: Pilot Sgt Charles Hamel, Navigator Sgt Jules Robert Rene Villeneuve, Bomb Aimer F/Off William Joseph Allison, W/Op/Air Gunner Sgt Joseph Paul Ernest Burke, Air Gunner Sgt Arthur Groulx, and Air Gunner Sgt Gerard Dusablon. Assisted by local people from Craig y Nos, the RAF rescue team reached the site and removed the bodies. Two days later, on a visit to the wreckage site, Eric Price, a local from Ynesen, recovered an unidentified photo of a flier, which he incorporated into his family album where it was to remain for 61 years.

The Search for the Identity of the Photo:

In 2005, Eric Price's granddaughter, Caroline Davies, began searching the web for the identity of the flier. She posted a request for assistance in identifying her grandfather's photo of the flier on RootsChat history messaging forum. The brother of the air gunner, Ernest Burke, was located in New Brunswick. On the McGill Remembers website, Davies came across the name of William Allison, who had attended McGill in 1936, and was listed among McGill's war casualties. She contacted Professor Christopher Milligan of McGill University's Faculty of Education and Wes Cross of the Dean of Students Office, both part of McGill Remembers Project, for further information. Upon learning that Allison had never married and had no children, Cross and Milligan felt they had reached an impasse until Milligan located the obituary of Allison's sister in the McGill University Archives. Noting that a sibling was married to a Pare and recalling that Professor Anthony Pare worked at McGill, Milligan contacted him and learned that one of Allison's siblings, Phyllis (Allison) Burns, was still alive. Further research ensued revealing that the photo was not that of William Allison but that the pilot, Charles Hamel, and the navigator, Jules Villeneuve, had received their training at McGill's air school.



Surviving family members of the crew members were contacted. They were all surprised to learn that not only did the crash site still exist, but that a memorial had been erected there. They had all assumed that the plane had crashed near Chester the burial site of the crew.

The Visit to the Crash Site:

On May 6, 2006, Wes Cross, Caroline Davies, Damien Thomas, Arwel Michael, Bill Grey, Paul Saunders, and Carl Ryan, as well as four locals who regularly tend the memorial, hiked the 7 km to the crash site. Phyllis (Allison) Burns and her husband had been scheduled to visit the site with this group; however, due to health issues, Phyllis was unable to travel. Thus, Wes Cross performed a ceremony on behalf of the Villeneuve family and the First Peoples House. Reflecting Jules Villeneuve's First Nations Heritage, Mr Cross laid a native Indian prayer stone and a traditional offering of tobacco at the site. As well, the plaque that Phyllis Allison Burns had inscribed to record her visit to the site of MF 509 was attached to the site's memorial cairn and a prayer was said, the sentiment of which was that those who had perished would not be forgotten.

Soldier's Identity Still Unknown:

Unfortunately the identity of the airman in Eric Price's photo is still unknown. Due to his bout of air sickness, Gaston Caron, the crew's navigator, was replaced by Jules Villeneuve just prior to the crash. This explains why Caron figures in the crew photo and how he survived the war. It has been suggested that the photo is that of Caron, however, this has not been proven.

Article from the McGill University Archive Website & South Wales Evening Post.



BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK CELEBRATES 50 YEARS!

This year, Brecon Beacons National Park celebrates its 50th anniversary, reflecting on its history as it looks toward its future relationship with the land and the people who live, work and visit in it. The celebrations recognise 50 years of cultural diversity, landscape heritage, wildlife conservation, spectacular geology and natural history in an ever changing world where threats to the natural environment are constantly round the corner.

To commemorate this anniversary, the National Park Authority is planning numerous celebrations throughout the year which will include exhibitions, events, publications, new educational and learning experiences. Also a new Conservation Trust will be created which will provide a lasting legacy for the Park.

The main celebration event will take place on the weekend of July 6th, 2007, where it is hoped that the night sky will be brought to life by the age old tradition of lighting beacons on mountain tops within the Park.

HISTORICAL CIRCULAR WALK UNVEILED AT TALYBONT-ON-USK

An historic 'walk-back-in-time' project has come to successful fruition with the unveiling of the new Henry Vaughan circular walk. The local Community Council wanted to commemorate the Vaughan brothers, who lived in the Usk valley in the 17th century.

The gentle and scenic circular route takes in the magnificent landscape of the Talybont Valley and has seen great improvements over the last few months. Most notably, visitors can experience improved access with new benches, styles and way-marking and the much talked about installation of interactive swing posts that reveal excerpts from the Vaughan brothers notable poetry. Sam Ridge, Eastern Area Warden for BBNPA, said: "One of our main aims when creating this new walk was to improve the infrastructure of the public right of way that the walk sits on. This has been achieved with new stiles and kissing gates installed. Any discrepancies between the definitive right of way and the route on the ground were also straightened out, making this a very rewarding project indeed."

Caving News

How Caves Form

As more research is conducted into cave formation, we learn more about the rate of passage growth. Of interest is the latest comparison between caves formed by 'normal' mechanisms and those due to 'biofilms'. Conventional wisdom suggests that caves are formed when rainwater picks up carbon dioxide from the air and forms a weak carbonic acid. This erodes limestone and forms caves.

The action of microbes has long been known to have an involvement—for example rainwater would soon be neutralized by surface rock however the underground microbes' respiration produces carbon dioxide which mixes with water forming another source of carbonic acid. This is a factor that has been known for many years through research at , amongst other places, Ogof Ffynon Ddu in the 1950's.

Less commonly, some caves are formed due to the action of microbes that consume sulphur; these include sites such as Carlsbad Caverns and Lechuguilla Cave in New Mexico, where chemosynthetic bacteria lived on sulphur in oil deposits and produced sulphuric acid. At Cueva de la Villa Luz in Mexico, biological action on sulphur has produced an astounding cave where water can attain an acidity of pH 0 or 1—an extreme indeed. Closer to home, it has been suggested that the unusually high amount of gypsum (in UK terms) found in Ogof Draenen in South Wales is linked to the nearby presence of coal deposits, another source of sulphur.

The result of a bacterial coating is a cave biofilm—a layer of bacteria covering surfaces in caves.

Another Aggy Incident

Further problems have occurred with the gate to Agen Allwedd. On 4 November, Alan Jeffreys was part of a group in the cave when he heard a noise and, on arriving back at the gate, found that it had been sprung open and the team's rucksacks had been stolen—four youths were seen on mountain bikes in the distance. Another incident happened on the first weekend in March. This time six muddy looking youths were seen on mountain bikes and the Aggy lock had been hit hard enough to jump the catch. Cambridge UCC were in the cave at the time and had left a key and logbook near the entrance. The key was stolen and the logbook vandalized. Obviously it is not safe to leave any times in the cave, its not only the car park that must now be considered unsafe.....

Fawr's Big Push

Those familiar with the sinks and risings of the limestone outcrops in South Wales will be well aware of Ogof Fawr. This is a most impressive stream sink in Cwm Cadlan, yet for many years it has defied attempts to gain entry. Originally broken into by Westminster SG members in 1969, reaching an 18m pitch and a series of chambers the cave was last pushed in the early 1980's by Jeff Hill, John Parker and others. They excavated a dig over 10m long and gained access to an 8m shaft that was closely followed by a third drop, 4m deep. Here the stream thundered in from above and disappeared noisily into the boulder floor. Disappointingly, before the team could return, a major flood undid all their good work and refilled the initial excavation.

Tony Donovan and friends have renewed their interest in the site and are now gearing up for a major spring offensive here, intending to drive a short section of tunnel to bypass the flood-prone blocked section. Their plans—which include using a heavy-duty drill suspended from a monorail and powered by a surface generator—sound very interesting and we await developments with interest. They estimate that only eight trips might be required to gain the chamber with the first pitch, with the aid of a multi-club team.

Tax Changes Affect Clubs

Club treasurers may not follow the budget to check for changes which might affect their caving club. On 1 April 2006 the chancellor (*grabber Gordon!*) removed the nil rate band on corporation tax. Previously, an organisation making less than £10,000 trading profit did not need to pay tax; however, this change means that all clubs must consider possible taxation.

Being a club is slightly different from being a trading organisation, most notably because membership fees are not considered part of trading. However bank interest payments are part of trading or by selling advertising space in your journal. For example, although BCA has a turnover of £63000 in 2004 only £300 was considered to be trading income and liable for corporation tax (the rest was membership fees).

One way to avoid this charge is for your club to be classed as a Community Amateur Sports Club or CASC. The CASC scheme is a halfway house between being and not being a charity for recognised activities such as caving. Clubs that don't register will at a minimum, have to pay corporation tax on bank interest.

Above extracts from 'Desent' cavers mag. available from Up & Under.

Cycling News

New sites will make roads and tracks a hole lot better

Two new online tools, which will help get potholes fixed and off-road trails cleared of obstructions, have been launched by CTC – the UK's national cyclists' organisation.

Using the new system at www.fillthathole.org.uk cyclists (and other road users) can zoom into any road in the UK, mark the location of the defect, and let the authority know about it, which then has a duty to take action. It takes no longer than 2 minutes to use, and it is possible to include photos, measurements and other useful information, which other people will be able to see.

A similar facility at www.clearthathtrail.org.uk allows cyclists to report off-road obstructions. CTC Director Kevin Mayne said: "Potholes and other road defects are more than just a nuisance; they're a danger to cyclists. They're responsible for 12% of compensation claims by CTC members, and local Councils have a duty to fix them. Reporting problems like this can be a chore, but our online facility has made it quick and easy." The websites also allow other cyclists to see what has been reported, and if a problem is ignored and someone subsequently crashes, it will be possible to show that the council knew about it. Meanwhile, CTC will be working with local authorities to help them meet their duty to keep the roads and trails well maintained.

Penarth Headland update- Renewed doubts for headland link

Plans to build a headland link between Cardiff Bay and Penarth have suffered a setback. The multi-million-pound scheme was on the verge of being scrapped last year due to mounting costs. But public pressure forced a re-think and a review of the scheme was ordered in a bid to shave several million pounds off the cost.

Now money that has been set aside for the project by the National Assembly could be withdrawn unless details of a revised scheme are produced in the next couple of months. Andrew Davies, Minister for Enterprise, Innovation and Networks, has decided to withhold any further grant payment to Vale of Glamorgan Council for the project, pending further information from the authority. A statement from his office said: 'There remains a significant funding gap of some £5.1m and the council continues to consider alternative sources of funding and development opportunities.'

'Details of the council's alternative options including the funding package are expected to be available in the next couple of months. In view of the continuing uncertainty about the deliverability of the project, the Minister has been advised to consider withholding any future grant payments pending further information from the council.' The cost-cutting review was ordered when Councillor Jeff James and his Conservative cabinet were in control.

But he was ousted following a vote of no confidence just before Christmas, and the review is now being carried out with Labour councillor Margaret Alexander and her cabinet in charge. The original cost of the link was estimated at £20m. The review aims to bring that down to £13.5m, including £7.5m from the National Assembly. Council officers have now put forward a figure of £18.6m, leaving a £5.1m funding gap. Penarth councillor Lis Burnett said she remained confident that the link would be built. 'The council has been told the project has not been terminated. I am confident it will go ahead.'

Cogan Spur Ely Bridge Demo

The campaign to get a new bridge to accommodate cyclists has reached the demonstration stage. There will be a demonstration regarding on Sunday 22nd April. More info at: <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/cyclecardiff/message/72>

Loop & Link-ed

A new section of the "loops and links" cycleway at Maesycwmmer is almost complete. The new zig-zagged path, part of the Mid Valley's rural village strategy, is just below the giant wheel of coal drams at Hengoed Viaduct and runs through some spectacular countryside in Caerphilly County.

St David's 2 Campaign Success

A report from the inspectorate who examined the issues with the new road layout for the St David's 2 development stated that he did not believe cycling standards were followed. The points made by the inspectorate will be referred to in future correspondence with the Council. It is hoped that this will prompt them to investigate matters more fully in future to prevent further inspections.

The above is from the websites of the CTC, Cardiff Cycle Campaign and the South Wales Echo.



The Elenydd Wilderness Hostels Update

COG donated the proceeds from the Three Peaks Trial 2006 and will be donating proceeds from 2007 to the Elenydd Wilderness Hostels Trust. The Trust is now running Ty'n Cornel and trying to buy Dolgoch

Ty'n Cornel

The hostel was bought by two of our supporters on 5th January and we have begun running it, with our first hostellers staying over New Year, nine months after our first meeting in Tregaron.

Working weekend

Our working weekend on 6th/7th January was quite eventful starting with the eviction of a ram which had taken up residence in the shed. There was painting in the kitchen and repairs to stairs and shed. A combination lock was fitted to the front door, a require-

ment of the insurance for the buildings. Hostellers will be given the code, which will be changed from time to time, when they book the hostel. The long tradition of daytime access for passers by is ended, but members who want to call in for a drink and a rest can contact us for the code before they go. On an even darker note, the shed opposite the hostel was found to be ablaze on 8th January and, despite the efforts of the Tregaron Fire Brigade with two engines, it was burned to the ground. We lost a very useful building, along with some tools and a ton of coal. We think it was a foolish accident and not malicious. A makeshift coal store has been rigged up but it leaves the hostel temporarily without a cycle shed, or shelter for passers by. The owners are hoping to be able to rebuild the shed before too long.

Volunteer wardens

We now have a more or less complete rota of volunteer wardens for Ty'n Cornel from 3rd March to 27th October. We would still like to hear from other wardens willing to stand in for anyone who is ill, perhaps at short notice, so please get in touch: ring 01283 537440 or e-mail Wardening. Remember that we hope to be recruiting volunteers for Dolgoch as well next year.

Bookings

Ty'n Cornel is open now for advance bookings all year round. It costs £10 per night (£7.50 for under-18s; discounts for students and those on means-tested benefits relating to low income).

Survey

We now have a full survey of the building. Some of the work needed we hope can be grant funded, including some of the work needed to meet fire regulations, but some jobs we can tackle ourselves.

Trustees

Please contact us if you would like to consider becoming a trustee. We need a broad range of experience and skills. There will be an opportunity to choose more trustees at our AGM on 21st April.

Sponsored Walk

It is now time to register for the sponsored walk on 19th May to raise some money for the Trust, enjoy a walk in the Elenydd and meet others involved. The walks will end with a barbecue at Ty'n Cornel. Click here for an application form. Please let JJ know if you are coming as soon as possible so that he can complete his planning.

Cycle Hire

The Trust is applying for funding to set up small cycle hire depots at Ty'n Cornel and Dolgoch.

Launch Celebration

To mark the taking over of Ty'n Cornel, the Trust plans to hold a celebration at the hostel at 2 pm on Sat. 21st April. We are inviting all Trust members and other supporters to come along and celebrate the Trust's success so far with food, drink and entertainment. **RSVP!**

Dolgoch

The meeting of 20 supporters at Ty'n Cornel on 2nd December again resolved that we should try to keep Dolgoch running as a hostel. We have written to the YHA offering to buy it for £110,000 and are waiting to hear back from them. We have had over £39,000 worth of donations and membership subscriptions (245 members so far). We have applied for about £7,800 of gift aided tax back. There have been start up costs for Ty'n Cornel (insurance, survey, etc.) and some money must be allocated to essential maintenance there which may not be covered by the income from hostellers. We think up to about £30,000 is available towards buying Dolgoch so far, about £17,000 of which can only be used for that purpose. We are waiting to hear the result of several funding applications which if successful would make up the balance. We also asked supporters whether they might be prepared to join the Trust in buying Dolgoch, possibly by buying shares (of £5,000+) in a company set up to do that. This needs more working out before we can be definite about how it would operate, but a number of supporters have expressed interest in it so far with amounts totalling over £60,000. There is a difficulty in using both private and charitable money which we hope to be able to resolve. If only half a dozen more people could offer such a conditional contribution we could well have enough committed funds to purchase the hostel outright. If you are interested in contributing in this way, please contact the Secretary as soon as possible. There is also the possibility of leasing the hostel from a private buyer and we are looking into this, but the majority of trustees favour the Trust at least part-owning the hostel to make more sure it remains as a hostel open to all for future generations. We expect Dolgoch to be put on the market in March and we suspect there is interest from other quarters, so **please make a donation if you can so we can keep it as a hostel. This may be our last chance.**

Maintenance

We now have the full survey of Dolgoch and the result is encouraging. There are major works to do such as felting the roof but we hope that this would attract a grant. Generally it is not as damp as was feared. We need to find skilled volunteers who can lead us in carrying out the simpler jobs. Please get in touch if you can help as a volunteer or volunteer co-ordinator.

Meetings

We had excellent meetings on 15th October, 2nd December and 20th January, getting through a lot of business and meeting a few new people with new ideas at each. Please come and join in if you can. The next meeting is:

- Saturday 21st April, 11am in Llanddewi Brefi community hall: Annual General Meeting followed by launch celebration at Ty'n Cornel (see above).

Contacts

Marilyn Barrack, Chair, 7 Azalea Close, Cyncoed, Cardiff, CF23 7HR tel:(0)2920 732 289

Bill Hine, Secretary 24 Brecknock Road, Knowle, Bristol, BS4 2DD tel: (0)1179 719 091



Dolgoch Hostel



Review

Changes

Following the the lessons learnt in poor conditions last year a lot of changes were put in place for Three Peaks Trial 2007. These included scrapping the anticlockwise route so checkpoints on Bloreng and Skirrid could be open for a much shorter period. Another change was the re-naming of routes. The most challenging physically and for map reading skills is now the Platinum Route, the traditional Three Peaks of Bloreng, Sugar Loaf and Skirrid is now the Gold Route and a new Two Peaks route was introduced. This route did Bloreng and Sugar Loaf.

On The Day

With the changes, 3PT 2007 was a success. 470 walkers arrived, 85 on Platinum, 335 on Gold and 50 Silver. There were no major mishaps to report, all counted out and all counted back in. The weather was mostly fine apart from a brief mega-storm including thunder and lightening. About 4pm within minutes the skies darkened, the wind picked up and down came the rain with a few lightening bolts thrown in for good measure! Also luckily no walkers or checkpoint marshalls got hit.

And of course the event's success was made by the enormous efforts of the COG team on the day. Checking in entrants when they arrive and checking them back in when they return, registering, collecting payment, kit checks, kitchen duties—preparing soup for 470 walkers, sorting tea, coffee soft drinks, cake and biscuits, washing up, issuing certificates, marshalling checkpoints, picking up walkers dropping out from injury/exhaustion, cleaning the hut at the end of the day after hundreds of dirty boots have made a bit of a mess, the communications desk liaising with checkpoints and walkers sorting problems as they arise—all of these required the efforts of COG members.



Walkers leaving the Hut at the start.



Walkers checking in the Hut at the end.

The communications desk had nearly half the calls from the 2006 event. This was partly due to the changes put in place and partly due to the weather.

Thanks

The other members of Three Peaks Sub-Committee did a huge lot of preparation work for the event. As well as attending a series of meetings Andy P. organised volunteers, Enid L.'s publicity work paid off with another excellent turn out and Julian L. organised communications for the day so any problems could be quickly dealt with. Also Martyn R. sorted all the pre entries, booking them on the database and posting out registration cards and walk details. This made my post of Three Peaks Co-ordinator straight forward so thanks to them.

Also thanks to team COG! As mentioned members helping on the day ensured that those walkers age 12 to 84 who came from far and wide, to do the evnt had a safe and enjoyable day. Many walkers came over to say thanks and not one complaint was made!

Amount Raised

There's still some expenses to pay out but we should know how much by early May.

Three Peaks Trial 2008

Next year's event is on Saturday 29th March so an early appeal for volunteers - keep that date free!

Debrief

This year's debrief will be on Thursday 10th May, Venue tba. If you have any thoughts on how the event can be improved please come along.

Chris Lewis Three Peaks Trial Coordinator



Bob N. under that hat on Bloreng checkpoint!



Enjoying the post event curry.

Useful Advice on First Aid Kits From *Trail Magazine*



First Aid is a vital skill that cannot be adequately taught through a magazine. It's strongly recommended all walkers do a basic first aid course (contact your local Red Cross or St John Ambulance for details). Even better do a hill walking specific course.

Don't Forget

Every walker should carry a first aid kit—permanently stashed at the top of their sack. However, many folk carry stuff they don't know how to use—costing money, adding weight and potentially putting an injured person in danger. It's also pointless having a kit that doesn't include items to help deal with the most common hill-walking injuries. That's why a DIY first aid kit can be a great compromise.

Life-Threatening Injuries

It's rare that an injury will be truly life-threatening; but should a fellow walker have a very bad fall, injure their back or head, have breathing problems or suffer a heart attack it's vital you seek qualified medical advice. Keep the injured person as warm and comfortable as possible, don't move them and follow our advice in the 'worst-case scenario' below.

Make Regular Checks

Hopefully, you'll never have to use your first aid kit, but should the worst happen you need to know all items are in a good condition. Prior to each walk take a few moments to ensure everything is okay. Check it hasn't got wet, or any items have been damaged. And, if anything has been used, replenish stocks accordingly. Also some items carry a 'best before' date—so check this and replace when needed.

Keep It Safe & Dry

Now you have your DIY first aid kit you need to look after it. Always keep it at the top of your rucksack where you can get to it easily, stashed in a dry bag (inside a second dry bag for total peace of mind).

Common Injuries

The most common injuries for a hill-walker are to the lower leg—cuts, bruises, sprains or breaks. While all will hurt to varying degrees, you're very unlikely to die if you keep yourself warm and get adequate attention. Here's how to deal with these injuries:

Cuts and gashes—stop the bleeding using pressure and a wound dressing, and wrap in a bandage while you get off the hill. Smaller wounds may just require a plaster.

Bruising—immediately apply a cold, wet cloth or—even better—ice. Raise the affected limb.

Sprains—get help from other walkers to take the weight off the injured leg. Slowly and safely make your way off the mountain.

Breaks—any broken leg is a serious injury requiring qualified medical attention. See 'worst case scenario' below for details on how to contact the Mountain Rescue.

Worst—Case Scenario

If the worst should happen you need to know how to react. First, check that you and the injured person are safe from further danger. Next think **ABC**. **A = airway**: is it clear and open? **B = breathing**: are they? **C = circulation**: is the patient's heart still beating? A course will teach you how best to deal with the situation. But if B and C are a problem you need to seek medical help urgently.

If these areas appear fine assess if you can get off the mountain safely. If so, do it. If not, think about whether you can overnight safely. If you're not in danger and you have the right kit with you, this is a good idea, giving you time to walk off the mountain the following day.

If neither option is a possibility, dial 999 or 112 on your mobile and ask for Mountain Rescue. Be ready to give details of your location (including a six-figure grid reference), predicament (including injuries) and details of group members. If you can't get a mobile signal, a member of your party should go for help. One person should stay with an injured party, except in dire emergencies. Whoever goes for help should carry a hand-written message with the grid reference, location description, name of casualty, injuries and next of kin's details if known. Another means of getting attention is to generate noise or light using items like a whistle, torch or camera flash. The international signal for 'help required' is six blasts/flashes in quick succession, repeated after a one minute interval. The signal for 'message understood' is three blasts/flashes in quick succession, repeated after one minute.

What to Take

You should always carry what's in your hand—in other words, if you don't know how to use a particular first aid item, don't carry it. Attempting to administer first aid without knowledge of the right procedure can put an injured person in more danger. Therefore this is what we recommend you take in a basic first aid kit:

Paracetamol—swift relief for moderate pain and fevers.

Medical gloves—recommended if someone else is bleeding.

Headtorch—it's essential to be able to see what you're doing.

Wound dressing—helps stop bleeding worsening.

Big bandage—used to hold a wound dressing in place.

Plasters—for small cuts and blisters.

Safety pins—for securing bandages.

Whistle—vital for attracting attention in an emergency.

Tape—will hold bandages or plasters in place.

- Plus it's vital you carry a **group shelter**. This will give you a much better chance of survival in an emergency.

Weekends Away



**May Day BH at Capel Curig YH,
Snowdonia 4th to 7th May**

This is to be a Snowdon for Softies weekend, the plan is to 'conquer' (at our own leisurely pace) Snowdon going up the Pyg Track (easier path) and down to Llanberis on the Saturday (8 mile walk - up to 6 hours) followed by some valley walking close by on the rest of the weekend. Swallow Falls in Betws a Coed is one option which is a short walk from the hostel. Capel Curig Hostel is a small hostel in the village with 3 pubs within walking distance it also has a fantastic view of the Snowdon Horseshoe. The cost will be approx £51 (2007 rates not yet finalised) per person for B & B on Friday, Saturday and Sunday 4, 5 and 6 May. Meals are available in the hostel also self catering kitchen.

Further details from contact Enid 029 2065 5253 or enid.lewis@ntlworld.com.



**Whitsun Weekend in Salcombe YH, Devon
25th to 29th May**

If you love the sea, Salcombe is the place for you. Test out your sea legs on one of the sailing packages available at the hostel or be brave and try your hand at a range of watersports. Safe sandy beaches are just a few minutes away, or venture further on the coastal path to Bolthead, Hope Cove and beyond. After a busy day, this Edwardian National Trust property set in six acres of semi-tropical gardens makes an elegant spot in which to recuperate. Salcombe is one of the best-known sailing centres in the UK. It is also a haven for both watersports and beach lovers. Walkers will enjoy the rugged coastal paths and secluded sandy coves. Wide selection of pubs and cafes in the town.

Facilities: Total number of beds: 51 Lounge; TV Lounge; Garden; Dining Room; Self catering kitchen; Meals Available; Drying Room. Cost £4 pppn B&B. Further details from Rhona Tel. 029 20860181.



**Weekend at Clun Mill YH, Shropshire
22nd to 24th June**

This sympathetically restored watermill was once a focal point in the tiny town of Clun and you'll see much of the old machinery still in situ. It now offers accommodation to walkers and cyclists wanting to explore the environmentally sensitive area of the Clun Valley. There's a generous helping of history too, with hill forts and castles nearby. Kitchen overlooks the spacious grounds and leads onto the dining room/lounge. Self catering only - well equipped kitchen. Solid fuel stove radiators in all rooms except washrooms. Library. Parking at Youth Hostel. Camping available. Cost £12 pppn. Further details from Jane O. Tel 029 2040 2571 or email jane_ormrod@btinternet.com

Future Trips:

**September -
Stow in the Wold YHA - Organiser: Sian**

**July - Weekend in Steepholm -
Organiser: Quentin C.**

**August BH - Camping Weekend -
Organiser: Lawrence T.**

**October - Elenith Working Party -
Organiser: Roger G.**

COG EQUIPMENT

COG have an array of camping and walking equipment available for use by members. To find out more phone Malcolm on 20387243



COG's summer trip this year is hiring a cottage in Northumbria. Here's a few things about the place.

This is the England you always wanted to find: A stunning region of country walks and strolls along a picturesque coast. An historic area of castles and magnificent gardens with heritage around every corner. A friendly county of country pubs and charming cottages. A relaxing England where you can take the time to savour every day.

Did You Know ?

The sword that was fit for a King... An ancient sword unearthed by archaeologists at Bamburgh Castle has been hailed as unique. The 7th century blade was probably made for the king when Bamburgh was capital of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria. A replica is under construction and will shortly go on display with the original.

Bamburgh Castle is probably the finest castle in England. It is perched on a basalt outcrop on the very edge of the North Sea . It commands stunning views of the Farne Islands, Holy Island and the Cheviot hills.

Top Ten Hit... Northumberland has been listed as a top ten holiday destination in Britain. Tourism experts in a "best of British" survey for a national newspaper charted the county as one of the all-time places to visit.

In Britain magazine editor Andrea Spain commended England's most northerly region for having an "amazing coastline where the beaches are empty – and there are always the heritage sites. – numerous castles– as well as the garden at Alnwick."

Following in the Steps of St Oswald... A new long distance walk named after one of the most celebrated Kings of Northumbria has recently opened. St Oswald's Way will stretch 97 miles from Holy Island right across to the other side of the county. It links sites associated with St Oswald, who was King of Northumbria during the early 7th century and brought Christianity back to the region.

Best Beach... Bamburgh beach was named the best in Britain in a recent national newspaper survey. "Despite the beauty of the beach, it is one of the few places where you will find yourself more inclined to look inland than out to sea because of Bamburgh Castle that overlooks it. Northumberland has numerous castles, but the view from the beach is unforgettable."

All Aboard... If you are visiting the glorious market town of Alnwick you can now get on board a road train which takes you from the famous Alnwick Gardens to Alnwick Castle.

Northumberland National Park

Northumberland National Park, the land of the far horizons - a landscape of limitless beauty from Hadrian's Wall to the Cheviot Hills. Spread over the hills and valleys at the very top of England, but right in the centre of Britain, Northumberland National Park has unspoilt treasures awaiting your discovery. Ancient pre-history and the rare red squirrel exist alongside traditional lifestyles with a thriving culture.

There are distinct characteristics within the landscape of the National Park. To the north there are the breathtaking rolling moors and grasslands of the Cheviot Hills, with their ancient hillforts and pure rivers. In the centre is the Upper Coquet Valley with the landmark Simonside Hills and the beautiful villages of Harbottle and Holystone. To the west are the valleys of the North Tyne and Redesdale, wild, inspiring and once home of the Border Reivers and still. In the south is the iconic ridge of the Whin Sill with Hadrian's Wall striding along its crest. Further details on the trip from Julian L. Tel. 20567013

OBITUARY—GORDON BROUGHTON (1915-2007)

Gordon Broughton was the original Chairman of Cardiff Outdoor Group when it was founded in 1944.

I first met Gordon in 1944 in Cardiff, where I was then stationed and where he had come to work with a group of Government scientists (mostly from Woolwich Arsenal) in the Armaments research department attached to the University. Our common interest was our recent discovery of the YHA and walking. We attended the inaugural meeting of the Group which was held at a chapel in Miskin Street, after a fall of snow which was three feet deep (yes) in the streets. People came walking through slit trenches - and the hall was packed! Quite soon he was Chairman of the Cardiff YHA Group which we set up and we both joined the Regional Council. This is when we discovered the delights of walking in what was to become the Brecon Beacons National Park.

On return to London we were both active in the former London Region and Gordon served on its Council (and of its succession bodies) for forty years. One of Gordon's many voluntary contributions was to act as administrator of "Non Food Sales" (NFS), ie the sale of postcards, badges and other items then popular in youth hostel "shops". This involved commissioning photographers, placing orders with manufacturers and liaising with wardens, many of whom became his friends. He was known by many for his friendly efficiency, an important bond between the paid staff and volunteers. On retirement he continued to live in Orpington until moving to Cirencester about 2000. Gordon's discovery of youth hostelling became a life long attachment, and in retirement he continued his interest in the countryside affairs and news affecting YHA, which included advising Matlock (National Office) of press cuttings and events which might affect the good name of the Association, as well as corrections to the Handbook etc!

In all his dealings Gordon was invariably courteous, good humoured, modest and considerate. In recent years we had a telephone conversation every week or so, updating one another on events affecting the Association to which we felt we owed so much. Gordon was a good democrat, a great friend and "a paid up member of the human race."

Len J Chapman 7.2.007 (Fellow COG Founder).



THE QUIZ—The Final Part!

After six attempts and no winner COG Quiz King Kevin Ham's question goes to a FINAL phase. As its now a lot easier the prize is **£5** for the person who can solve the riddle below. If no one gives the correct answer to Kevin by 30th June then the prize money will return to COG funds.



To recap.

Because I was on the walk 27 February, (now that's a rare event.) I was not on the summit of Pen y Fan for what was for some the longest day, but was for me the shortest day, not just of the year but also of my life. Nevertheless, I did get to see, the river river, the return of the king; and matter of death and life.

So tell me

The why, the when, the how, and the where.
What I did on the jaunt and what I did there.

When-The longest day was June 21.

How- It was the shortest day of my life because I flew eastwards to catch the sun. For me only fifteen hours had passed between local midnight and the next local midnight.

What I did on the Jaunt - On the flight, I watched The Return of the King.

Where - Well to have a significant time effect it had to be distant. Here you use the river river clue. It is the River Avon, Since Avon means River. Where are there Rivers Avon? There are not many options that are distant. There is one in Christchurch New Zealand.

What I did there - A little bit of hunting you will discover that Christchurch in June 2005 was the venue for the first British and Irish Lions Test match. So what is the connection with a Matter of Death and Life? This does require some research. But in the end you will find that in translation the haka starts
It is Life. It is Life. It is Death. It is Death

I have explained it all now except, Why I went to see that first test match, and why I would not have seen it, had I not been on Julian's walk of 27 February.

Did I rescue a Maori Princess? Did I impress a Welsh rugby player with my Game theory? You tell me. If you are not right. The most inventive answer will win the prize now reduced to £5. Well I have told you five sixths of the answer.

There is no restriction on the number of entries per person.

A Colour Version of 'The View' is Available from the COG website.

IF

you have any **Photos** from weekends etc, **Articles**, **Ideas**, **Comments** or **Letters** that could be used in future 'VIEWS' then Email them to
ch-lewis@cardiff32.freemove.co.uk

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Photographs, including those in The View may be used on the COG website. Any member not wishing to appear should tell the editor.