

Sternians Mountaineering Club Report 2013

The current SMC officers are Hugh Podger (President), Gordon Pitt (Chairman), Peter Everall (Secretary) and David Minnikin (Treasurer and Meet Secretary). Please contact the latter for details of meets (d.e.minnikin@bham.ac.uk or Jacky Garth, Threlkeld, Cumbria CA12 4RX; 017687 79164).

Spring Meet - Nant y Ddwlan, Rosebush, Pembrokeshire 3-9 May 2013

The Party: Hugh Podger, Peter & Liz Everall, Charles and Gill Lawrence, Mike & M Beckley, Marion Turner, David Minnikin, Alex & Tom Reynolds, Peter Minnikin & Helen Spring.

On a damp Saturday morning cars were left at Pontfaen in Cwm Gwaun. A woodland trail was taken along the south side of the Afon Gwaun to Llanerch and Pen-rhin farm. The advance party, comprising Peter Everall, Charles, Marion and M Beckley, ascended to the summit of Mynydd Carningli (347m) for lunch. Hugh, Mike, Gill and David took the gentle direct route up Carningli Common to arrive at the height of the Common (337m). Revealing views were enjoyed of all the adjacent coastline and surrounding hills, particularly the Preseli range. The united party migrated west over Mynedd Caregog to Bedd Morus, a stone tribute honouring the resting place of a local shepherd. Hugh, Mike, Charles and Gill descended the road to Cwm Gwaun and a return to Rosebush. The remaining gang of four headed west via Mynedd Melyn to explore Mynedd Dinas and scramble on Carn Enoch and Garn Fawr. The amazing retro Cwm Gwaun Duffryn Arms pub was visited. The junior faction of Alex and Tom Reynolds, Peter Minnikin and Helen Spring walked clockwise around Dinas Island (Head), observing dolphins playing in the sea near Needle Rock.

On a bright, but cloudy Sunday, Hugh, Charles, Gill, Mike and David repeated a clockwise circuit of Dinas Island. Later, Gill and Charles walked up Cerrig Llandron (468m) in the Preseli range, affording 360⁰ views. The principal expedition involved Peters, Everall and Minnikin, M Beckley, Helen and Marion took the Roced Poppit bus north to Poppit Sands. The spectacular and switchback 12 mile Pembrokeshire Coast Path was taken to Ceibwr Bay for a late lunch. The next feature was the collapsed cavern of Pwll y wrach (The Witches Cauldron). Glimpses of Dinas Island suggested that the end was nigh, but it was still a long haul to cars at Newport.

Bank Holiday Monday saw diverse activities. David, Marion, M and Mike Beckley Peters, Helen Alex and Tom walked eastwards, starting at various times, along the historic Golden Road over the Preseli Hills. This prehistoric track is considered to have been used to transport the Blue Stones from these hills to Stonehenge. The summits of Carn Siân and Carn Gyfrwy were visited before the various groups returned to the house and departures commenced.

Autumn Meet - Esk View, Boot, Eskdale, Cumbria: 27 September – 1 October 2013

The Party Hugh Podger, Gordon Pitt, Fary Afshar, Peter & Liz Everall, Charles & Gill Lawrence, David Minnikin & Marion Turner. Harriet Fraser, with Patrick and Rosa, joined us for Saturday.

On a Saturday of clear blue skies and not a breath of wind, affairs were centred on Eskdale Show. The major party, comprising Peter, Gordon, Charles, Gill, Fary, David and Marion, proceeded via Boot to Blea Tarn Hill to admire the scene. A descent to Blea Tarn and along the hill side eventually brought us to the showfield at Eskdale Green. Diverse activities were undertaken during the afternoon and returns were made along the south side of the River Esk to the house at Esk View. Harriet Fraser, with Patrick and Rosa, arrived late morning and conveyed Hugh and Liz to the Show. Appetites sated, the Podger faction walked from Dalegarth Station via Beckfoot Bridge up to Blea Tarn, from where the high level route was followed back to Boot.

On Sunday, the majority of the party set off to Green Crag via Doctor Bridge, Kepple Crag and Crook Crag. On reaching the col below Green Crag, Gordon and Hugh took the escape route down, past Low Birker Tarn and back to Esk View, eventually being overtaken by Peter. The remainder of the party, Charles, Gill, Fary, Marion and David, headed west from the col North of Green Crag to Bickerthwaite. A Green Way was followed north to the spectacular viewing platform at the head of Stanley Force. Gill and Fary descended by the footpath adjacent to the Force, but Charles, Marion and David took the bridleway, all being reunited by the stepping stones across the river by St. Catherine's Church near to Esk View.

Monday saw Hugh and Gordon visited Hardknott Roman Fort, with Gordon later taking a short walk to the rock platform above Stanley Gill Force. More ambitiously, Marion, Fary and Peter walked from Wa House to Scafell summit, returning via Burnmoor Tarn to Boot. On Tuesday, Hugh, Fary and Gordon departed. Marion and David drove to the Birker Fell road completed a clockwise circuit of Little Crag, Great Crag, Black Crag, White Crag, Far Hill and Little Worm Crag eventually achieving a first Sternian's ascent of Great Worm Crag!

In 2014, meets have been arranged at The Manor House, Plas Meini, Llan Festiniog, Snowdonia (4 nights from Monday 24th March) and Ashwood Lodge, Romaldkirk, Teesdale (4 nights from Friday 3rd October).



Party at Rosebush

Back: Peter Everall, Alex & Tom Reynolds, Liz Everall, Mike & M Beckley, Charles & Gill Lawrence, David Minnikin, Marion Turner.

Front: Peter Minnikin, Helen Spring (and Mollie), Hugh Podger.