

## **Sternians Mountaineering Club Report 2014**

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](mailto:d.e.minnikin@bham.ac.uk) or Jacky Garth, Threlkeld, Cumbria CA12 4RX; 017687 79164).

### **Spring Meet - Plas Meini, Llan Ffestiniog, Gwynedd 24-28 March 2014**

The Party: Peter & Liz Everall, David Minnikin, Marion Turner, Fary Afshar, Tony & Liz Barry, Charles & Gill Lawrence, Edward Armour, Mike & M Beckley.

On a bright Tuesday, the party motored to Pont Rhyd-y-Fen. A gentle road walk took us to beyond Pant-yr-Hedydd and a gravel road led to Llyn Arenig Fawr. A narrow ridge led west to a fence crossing and then a rising traverse to the ridge north east of Arenig Fawr and the summit. Clear, but cloudy, weather gave way to descending mist so descent via Craig y Hyrddod was initiated. Steepening ground eventually brought an extended party to a sheepfold and track back to the cars.

Wednesday involved two interlinked parties. The majority, excepting Peter, Fary, M and Marion, drove to Tanygrisau and embarked on an anticlockwise circuit of the lake. When passing above the power station we were entertained by the passing of a train on the Ffestiniog narrow gauge line, replete with two fine miniature steam locomotives. On proceeding down to the southern end of the lake, the aforementioned gang of four (Peter, Fary, M and Marion) were spied arriving at the lake. Pleasantries were exchanged and the meeting of the parties was recorded by photo. The main party headed for high ground above the lake and the minor faction set off for the north western lakeside traverse. The minority party had taken the footpath down through Plas Meini Estate to Rhyd-y-Sarn and crossed the road to Coed Cymerau Nature Reserve. A path through oak woods and over the Afon Goedol gave good views of waterfalls and led to open ground and a view of a train on the Ffestiniog railway. After observing volunteers at Dduallt station constructing a climbing loop, the railway was followed to meet remainder of party. Continuing round the north side of the lake, past Ffestiniog Power station, to Tanygrisau, a woodland route was taken back to Plas Meini.

Thursday saw a reduced party drive to Croesor car park and ascend Cnicht by the usual west ridge. The summit ridge was taken east, then after circling south, Croesor Mine was passed on the way back to the cars.

### **Autumn Meet - Ashwood Lodge, Romaldkirk, Teesdale: 3-7<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

The Party: Hugh Podger, Gordon Pitt, Mike & M Beckley, Charles & Gill Lawrence, Edward Armour, Tony Barry, Marion Turner & David Minnikin.

On a cloudy and damp Saturday, with a promise of a bright afternoon, Mike and David followed the Teesdale Railway Walk to Mickleton and returned by bus. David was breaking in a new left knee, the original having been ruined by being induced by

“Man” Martin at Junior House and “Ducky” James to launch a career of bowling off-breaks for over half a century!

The main party left Bowlees Visitor Centre and walked up past Low and High Force. Across Wynch Bridge, past Low and High Force up to a cross roads on Bracken Rigg. A short leg to the south picked up a “green” road along a reasonably flat ridge and (eventually) down to Holwick and back to start.

On a fine Sunday, cars were taken to Middleton-in-Teasdale and parked. David took the Teeside Way along the north of the river then crossed the splendid Low Beck Springs Bridge to the Blacksmiths Arms at Mickleton for refreshments and the old railway track was taken back to Romaldkirk. The main party followed the river then the railway to the viaduct and up to Grassholme reservoir. A walk up the south side of the reservoir came to a bridge and the Pennine Way was joined under Harter Fell leading back to Middleton-in-Teasdale. Hugh escorted daughter Harriet, her husband Rob Fraser and family to High Force from the Bowlees car park.

In a late start on a wet Monday, Mike, M and Ed walked down and crossed the Tees by Eggleston Bridge. The route then followed the left bank of the Tees rising to pass East Barnley farm then contouring round to near Low Shipley farm. Crossing the river, a route was found up towards Romaldkirk, where they met David out for a local walk. M joined David for the rest of his walk, where they encountered Marion who had walked the old railway to Mickleton, back all the way to Cotherstone then back to Romaldkirk.

In 2015, meets have been arranged at The Confluence Centre, Wharfedale (4 nights from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April) and [To be arranged] (4 nights from Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September).



Party at Romaldkirk

Back: Tony Barry, Gordon Pitt, M Beckley, Charles Lawrence, Ed Armour, Mike Beckley

Front: Hugh Podger, David Minnikin, Gill Lawrence