

CEUNANT NEWSLETTER

April 2013

A few years ago when I stepped down as chairman I thought I might just get away with saying "I've done my bit for the club". However, like many before me I realised that I gain so much from membership of our club that giving a few hours of my time to the committee was a small price to pay. We are fortunate that there are people prepared to give much more time than that to make this club what it is today. My thanks to the previous committee and their chairman Ian Smith for leaving things in such good order.

I've just returned from our April Peak District meet, where the trad climbing season kicked off in style following a late return to winter at the end of March. We had amazing winter conditions in North Wales over Easter. The view towards Crib Goch from Nant Peris looked more like the Alps than Snowdonia. There were even a few keen skiers out and about on the mountains.

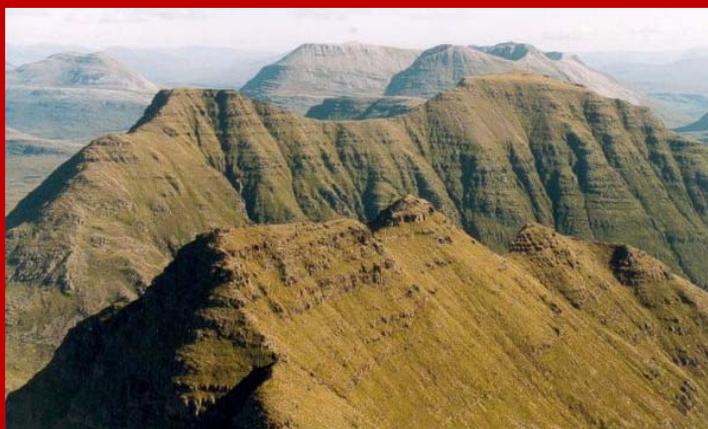
Hope you enjoy the newsletter, and whatever your plans for the spring I hope to see you out on a club meet soon. All the best. Kevin.



**Kevin
Devine**
Chairman

The **NEXT OUTDOOR** meet is **TORRIDON**

Here's a Brand new addition to the Ceunant calendar. Over the first May Bank holiday we will be camping in Glen Torridon, home to some of the finest Munros offering superb climbing, scrambling and ridge walking.



Keep an eye out on our Facebook pages for updates, impromptu gatherings, banter and invitations to meets.

facebook

Welcome to new members

Since our last newsletter we welcome one new prospective member **Sue Manns** and one full member **Phil Blaen**. We look forwarding to see you both at our next event.

Visit our web page at...

WWW.CEUNANT.ORG

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AGM Report – Fiona Devine



This year's AGM back in March was held on 16th March at the function room of the Vaynol Arms, Nant Peris. It was well supported with 48 members attending. Many of you sent your apologies too. **Mark Helliwell** wanted to attend but is recovering from an illness that saw him spend a fortnight in hospital. We all wish **Mark** a speedy recovery.

Ian Smith the Chair opened the meeting saying how vibrant the club was with membership being at an all time high. He thanked each committee member in turn making a special mention to **Maggie McAndrew** who has been our treasurer since March 2006 and Elly Holmes our Hut Secretary since March 2009, both are standing down. Special mention was also expressed to a number of non committee members - **Dave Balchin** for keeping the hut well stocked with cleaning materials...so we have no excuses for not cleaning up after our stay at the hut. Thanks also to **Kevin Devine** for **our new website** using monies secured from the BMC. Do take a look as it has lots of new features - Kevin has been busy scanning old newsletters back to the 1950's provided by **Bill & Val, Tony Mynette and John Pettet**.

We have a twitter account (@CeunantMC) and are followed by the BMC, Redpoint and Creation climbing walls. We heard that the committee completed the **Long Term Maintenance plan for Ty'n Lon**. Its aim is to move from a reactive to proactive maintenance plan for Ty'n Lon, the programme of works will extend beyond the next decade. The report is in 4 sections (i) External condition, (ii) Internal condition, (iii) Plumbing, gas and electricity and beds, and (iv) Renewable energy technology. For a copy of the executive summary please email secretary@ceunant.org.

Secretary & Membership report was presented by **Fiona Devine**. We heard that 2012 had been a fantastic year for recruiting new members with 12 full members joining - Claire O'Reilly, Magdalena Slupska, Richard Hubbard, Jo Wheatley, Ander Broadman, Kirsten Voelz, Serena Bacuzzi, Guilio Curioni, Michael Peerless, Phillip Blaen, Neil Colquhoun and David Simmonite. We also had 4 prospective members Luke & Natalie Perry, Tommy Neale & Sue Mann. Fiona finished by thanking everyone for promptly paying their subs and encouraged those still to pay to pay quickly.



Ian Smith, gives his chariman's speech.

We also heard from **Elly Holmes** our **Hut Secretary** that the use of Ty'n Lon by outside groups is as popular as ever, accruing £5665. They all like the new big room. She encouraged everyone to help out with the cleaning...the more hands the quicker it is done!

Our **Hut Warden John Beddard** expressed his thanks to everyone that attended the work meets, the team Richard Garbett, Carl Baker Bob Ellis and Gaz Hughes for all taking a week off from their day jobs in the Summer to tackle the big room revamp.

This coming year John plan's to lead volunteers in pointing the gable end, renew the sky lights that are broken, insulate the loft space, as well as the usual painting brigade.

The **Treasurer's Report** was delivered by **Naomi Walker** in Maggie's absence. First we heard about the Ty'n Lon Account having a healthy surplus up £2363 from last year. The continuation of our rates holiday from Gwynedd Council saving £1k and our reduced utility bill.



It is noted that income from members staying at the hut had gone down and this is perhaps due to members not being honest and paying hut fees? Please, please pay promptly! Then Naomi spoke briefly on the General Fund which relates to income and expenditure required for the wider club activities such as outdoor & social meets, paying the BMC club affiliation fee at £11.75 per member. Thanks were given to Holly Beckett and Stewart Moody for securing BMC club grant to develop our website £420 and Navigation & Climbing courses of £300. We have a Total Balance of nearly £19K. For further details and a copy the "Ceunant Mountaineering Club Statement of Accounts at December 31 2012" plus one page summary from our auditor Hazel Lewis, on 08/02/2012 Email secretary@ceunant.org

Outdoor Meets Report was presented by **Stewart Moody** - He opened by extending a big thanks to Emma Bastock for arranging the varied programme before stepping down in November due to work commitments. All meets were very well attended numbers ranged from 15 to 20 or more. Some meets took us to our favourite venues the Wye Valley and others to new places like South Devon. In Scotland we went to Arran, the CIC hut, and Lochnagar, In England we went to the Peak District, the Roaches, the Wye Valley, and Little Langdale. And in Wales we went to Llangollen, and South Pembroke (Tenby). We even organised a number of training courses: a first aid course in February which was very well attended; A Learn to Lead course in July and a Navigation Course in September. Do take a look at our meets reports on Facebook . Highlights include Naomi pushing her grade on D-route, on Gimmer crag, whilst Stewart bathed in the sun on a bomber belay only to find seconding a challenge and thinking "blimey! I'm glad I'm not on lead". The Glyder traverse with Emma in glorious weather on the same weekend. The surprised look on everyone's face when he absent-mindedly threw an empty bottle of meths onto the fire in Dartmoor – yes it went off with a bang.

The **Social Meets Report** delivered by **Holly Beckett** proved great fun. The programme was hijacked by triathlons. We extend our congratulations to all those that competed in the Llanberis - Slateman & Anglesey Sandman. To the teams - The Fab forties - Fiona Devine, Julie Ring & Emma Bastock; Gemma & Chris Aston, James Walker; Natalie Davies, Stuart Welsh & Neil Colquhoun and Heather Eyre, Alison Brady and Holly as the Ceunant Miss Bs. Individual - competitors included Andy Ring, Tony Millichope and John Beddard. Well done all! Our old favourites the bike meet over Kinver edge, summer BBQ and Christmas curry received really good support and this year we had a fabulous day at Ty'n Lon combining the Olympics and the Jubilee for the Jubolympics !! Ah such fun!!!! Holly ended by announcing that the social meets post is up for grabs this year and hope once again people will join together for these occasions as they really are great ways to mix with like minded people and have some jolly good times!

Awards

Before drawing the meeting to a close Ian made a couple of awards.

- First, the presentation of the member of year tankard went to **Richard Garbett**.
- Life membership was awarded to **John Pettet** who joined the club back in 1961 and still remains as active as he can.

AGM weekend in pictures – Stew Moody



Prior to the AGM a few members did half the Glyder traverse, offering some fine views of Llanberis Pass.



On Y Garn (L-R: Mike Peerless, Stew Moody, Phil Blaen, Kerstin Voelkel)



Holly and the girls draw the winners of the raffle.



The magic stone wall light show courtesy of Liam



Tucking into the hog roast in the marquee



The hog roast is wheeled out into the marquee, which proved to be the warmest room in Tyn Lon that night.



John Beddard and Dave Simmonite attend the ceremonial opening of the barrel



The morning after the night before. The troops rally and disassemble the marquee

A word from your treasurer – Naomi Walker

Hello All, I'd like to introduce myself as the Treasurer of our club. I've been supporting Maggie over the last year and she left the management of our accounts in excellent shape. I now have the enormous task of collecting monies from you for the range of activities that we undertake and I hope that you can help me, help you, help our club:



Did you know that every payment in and out is assigned a category so that the treasurer can report on sources of funds and how they are spent?

By far the easiest way to pay the club is directly into the club's account. If you do this, please send me an email so that I can work out who it is from and what it is for. A suitable reference such as 'hut fees' also makes life easier! Please don't use Facebook or text as I can't retain those messages.

Paying your annual membership by standing order means that you don't have to remember to pay! But you are responsible for checking/amending the value in your instruction to the bank. We still have a number of folks who don't pay the correct amount of £25. Membership fees for 2014 will be £25. We have a number of regular late payers of membership. Membership subscriptions are due in **January**. If you wait until after March, we can charge you 50% extra. If you wait until after June, the Committee can terminate your membership. First reminders have been sent out and there has been an excellent response. If there are extenuating circumstances, just let me know.

- If you choose to pay by cheque, please write on the back what it is for.
- Email the treasurer at Treasurer@ceunant.org
- Ceunant Mountaineering Club Account details are: Account number 00062519
Sort code 30 03 03
- Cheques are payable to 'Ceunant Mountaineering Club' and sent to Naomi Walker, 8 Broad Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham B27 7XE

Ty'n Lon Exclusive Booking – Holly Beckett

Please note that the committee have granted Jackie and Leo exclusive use of Ty'n Lon from Monday 20th May through to Friday the 24th. Members. Members wanting to arrive on Friday 24th for the weekend can do so from midday. This is exclusive use of the cottage through this period so members are kindly asked to respect this and not visit the cottage at all on these dates.

You can view all bookings on the Ceunant calendar on our website, www.ceunant.org→



No Ordinary Day – Stewart Moody

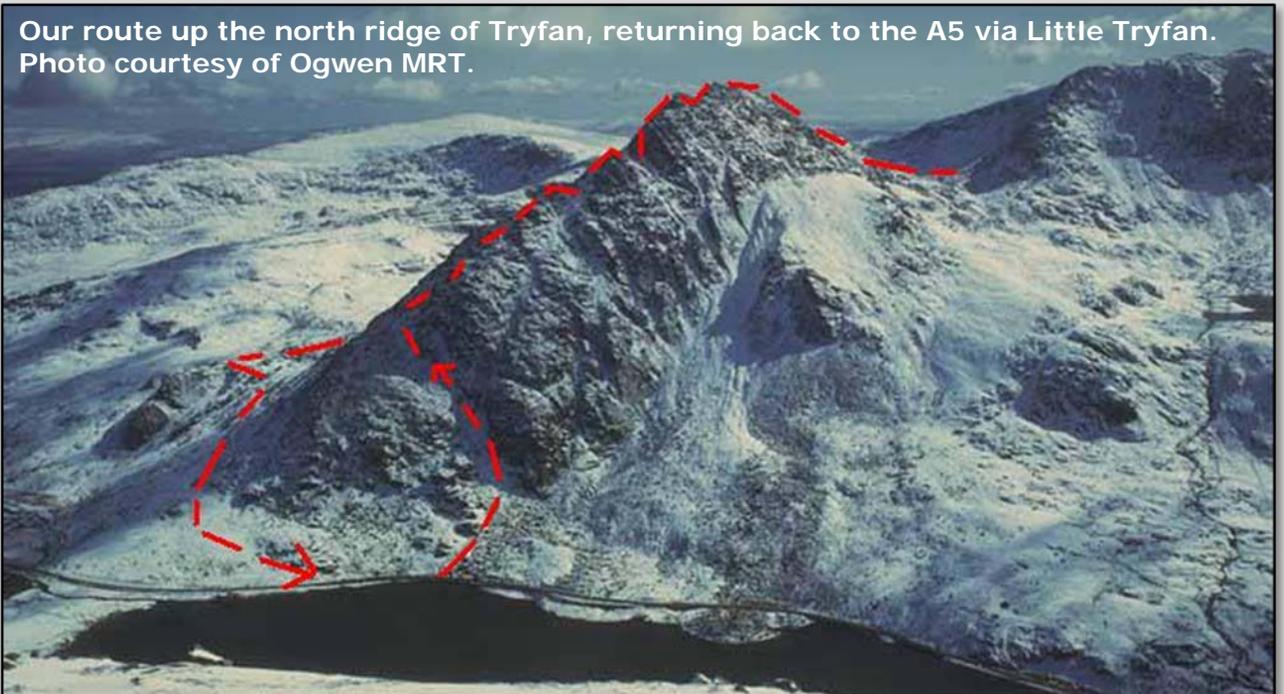
A day of winter mountaineering on Tryfan's north ridge in the fine company of Mr Luke Perry.

I'd never seen icicles defy gravity before. But these ones were pointing skywards. I suppose I shouldn't have been surprised, as 70mph winds and sub-zero temperatures had been blasting Tryfan's north ridge for several days. Today was Sunday, March 25th, and whilst we were half way up the mountain, much of north Wales was pretty much shut as the country was engulfed by some of the worst winter conditions on record.

Two days ago, Luke Perry and I had only just managed to drive through the snow drifts, abandoned vehicles and fallen trees blocking the A5. Tony Millichope hadn't been so lucky, and spent a night in his car near Llangollen and never managed to rendezvous with us. Before we set out up Tryfan the forecast for the day was 70mph gusts, -15° in the wind, and skies clearing throughout the day. The reality was different; winds relentlessly scoured the mountains with horizontally driven ice crystals and above the 200m contour visibility was never greater than the length of Ty'n Lon's garden.

My immediate concern was the next few moves to progress further up the ridge. I stood below a short chimney. It wasn't vertical, but it wasn't far off. My axes were working hard to find placements, but for all the powder snow and spin drift I couldn't see much. After a bit of searching one axe stuck, it felt bomber, and even though the other rattled a little I thought "that'll do – time to go". I pulled hard, got both my feet up, then reached up with my right axe again and got it hooked on a rock high above my head height and pulled hard. Progress eased and I pulled out of the chimney onto the gentler slope above; I was panting like a dog. I looked back down the chimney and saw nothing but a few rocks poking through the snow, and Luke Perry who looked like he was floating in empty white space. It was impossible to tell snow from sky which made the ridge feel more exposed than it actually was, but at the time that didn't register.

Our route up the north ridge of Tryfan, returning back to the A5 via Little Tryfan.
Photo courtesy of Ogwen MRT.



As I looked down some words Dan Ashfield once said to me on a similar route in Creagh Meagaidh rang in my head, "if you'd have slipped there, you'd have done well to live". I watched Luke climb up to me. I shouted the locations of my axe placements to him, but the words were lost in the howling wind. He didn't need any help though, he was climbing well and full of beans. I reckoned we were about half way up the mountain.

It had been a hard start; within ten meters of the A5 we were in waist deep snow. Every forward step was laboured. As we passed Milestone Buttress we'd donned helmets, crampons, goggles, and grabbed an axe each. A few hundred meters later we both grabbed our second axe as the terrain steepened. We didn't plan on roping up, so had left the rope and rack in the car.

There were faint footsteps ahead of us, and from time to time we saw a lone climber in twenty of thirty metres ahead of us. Luke said he looked like some kind of "snow ninja", dressed in black, swinging his axes like swords. We chose to follow in his tracks as he seemed to be picking a good line. Eventually we caught up with him as he drank some coffee. We passed a few pleasantries, and then pressed on ahead of him.



Through the thick white air emerged more and more short, steep rock obstacles. We climbed each one, then plodded through deep snow for a few meters, and then climbed another. Some climbs were easy, others proved quite testing. The sheer volume of powder snow made it nearly impossible to find solid axe placements. Brushing snow away with my adze just knackered me out, and I inevitably settled for less than ideal placements. If I was lucky I found a lump of frozen turf. The climbs kept coming and coming, and I was frustrated that I had no sense of how far up the ridge we were, I was jealous of Richard King's new altimeter watch he'd shown me at the AGM the weekend before. Visibility was no more than ten metres. At times I dropped to my knees when the wind gusted so strong that I thought I'd lose my footing.

We'd made good progress and the ridge had narrowed a lot. We arrived at a series of downward sloping ledges, like giant steps, that were covered in snow and ice. Luke was in front, a metre or so above me. He lost his footing, slipped onto his side and then, almost imperceptibly, started to slide back off the step. He can't have been moving at more than an inch or two per second, but there was nothing obvious for him to hook an axe onto. My mind started to race. I looked at Luke, and then looked at the drop beneath the step; there was nothing there. I search for a good anchor with my left axe so I could grab him with my right hand if he slid past me. Carefully, Luke moved his axe heads like windscreen wipers as he searched for something, anything, to latch on to. A moment later he came to halt. He composed himself, delicately rose to his feet, and pressed on for a second go at it.

And still the hurdles kept on coming; "how much further can it be?" I thought. A step across a narrow gap barred the way, not more than a few minutes from the summit. In summer it'd have been simple; a three metre down climb, four strides along a narrow path which was exposed on both sides to steep drops, and then a scramble up the other side. The problem was that the gap was submerged under a huge crest of wind sculpted snow with nothing to hold on to for those few crucial steps. The wind was howling and the snow was so soft that the possibility of slipping straight off the mountain was very real. The whole thing looked deadly and I didn't fancy it at all, but I felt pretty committed at this point and thought back tracking would more dangerous. Where the snow ninja had delicately trod was clear, so too was the remnants of the mini avalanche he'd triggered where one of his footings had slipped off the crest. His tracks were visible up the other side so we knew he'd made it across.

As I searched a 5 metres left and right for an alternative Luke tested the water, and in the process made it safely across. That settled it, I don't think he could have reverse those moves, so I cracked on with the down climb, and with my body weight on two solid axe placements got my feet positioned just above the snow crest. Delicately, I lowered my weight onto the snow and sunk by several inches until the snow's resistance finally took my weight. One by one, I lifted my axes from their placements, and turned to face the gap. "Slowly does it" I thought, taking baby-steps forward. I tested the stability of each foot before taking the next step. With an outstretched axe I latched onto the rock on the far side of the gap and started to breathe again. A few moments later we joined the snow ninja on the summit.

We spent no more than 3 or 4 minutes sheltering as best we could beside Adam and Eve, just long enough to snap a photo (the only photo of the day).

Summit photo of Luke and I stood by Adam and Eve. The weather was so appalling that this was only photo I took that day.



I couldn't see Bristly ridge, but knew it was out there somewhere. I checked my compass and we headed South off the summit. My aim was to reach the wall in the Col separating Tryfan from Bristly Ridge, jump the stile, and drop off to the East into Cwm Tryfan, a descent I'd done many times. But my confidence waned as we descended, I kept looking at my compass, trying to force a line south, but the way was often blocked and nothing looked familiar. I took a slip and ended up chest deep in snow, wedged between 2 submerged boulders. We tried another direction, then back tracked a little, then tried another direction, made some progress, and were then halted by a sheer drop. It was frustrating, and it was cold, and I was starting to worry. I reckon we'd been trying to descend for half an hour or more and just as I was getting seriously worried I saw our salvation in the distance. It was the stile, a little higher than us, no more than 10 metres away. The wall was not visible, it was completely buried. My heart leapt, "Safe!" I thought, "we're safe".



Big Jake's full English in Fitzpatrick's café, Bethesda.

We dropped straight down the East side of the col. Sometimes we waded up to our thighs, and then we just glissaded the rest of the way to the bottom when we thought our legs couldn't carry us any further. In the distance, to our left, we could see the top of little Tryfan and we headed for that. It was truly exhausting, like wading through treacle. I toppled over every 10 meters or so in knee, thigh or even waist deep snow. Getting back up expended a huge amount of energy. I started to lose my rag as Little Tryfan didn't seem to be getting any closer. It took us nearly an hour and a half to reach the car; I reckon on a good day we'd have done it in less than half that.

It was 3pm when we arrived back at the car. It had taken us over 5 hours to get up and down Tryfan, and I was totally spent. The A5 up to Capel Curig was shut, so we headed down Ogwen to Bethesda in search of a café. We found a place called Fitzpatrick's; it had a big motorbike in the window, and an even bigger all-day-breakfast on the menu called "Big Jake".

The following weekend was Easter, and whilst I didn't go, many of the Ceunant members headed to Ty'n Lon. Reports were that the climbing conditions were perfect. I felt a pang of jealousy. The conditions Luke and I faced were quite horrendous, but it was worth it for the sense of achievement alone.

BMC Training Courses and Skills

Navigation Skills: 14 - 15 September 2013, £75 (Peak District)

Outdoor First Aid: 2-3 November 2013, £75 (Patterdale, Lake District)

For course details click on the links above. To secure your place on a course please use our [online booking system](#).

Looking to improve your climbing? The BMC Climbing Movement Master classes are nationwide this April. Get expert movement tuition from top climber Naomi Buys. For people climbing in the grade range French 5 to 6b+. Two hour class with 6 participants, £26 for BMC Members. Full information www.thebmc.co.uk/masterclasses

Alpine dreams: Have you got the know-how? Discover essential alpine skills at a BMC Alpine Lecture by Tim Neill (British Mountain Guide) and Rob Greenwood (Alpinist). Excellent for any would-be alpine adventurers. Nationwide end of April. £5 BMC members, £3.50 for advance bookings of 10 or more. Full information www.thebmc.co.uk/alpinelectures

Ready to Rock ? The BMC has teamed up with Plas y Brenin, the national outdoor centre, to launch some new indoor-to-outdoor climbing courses. The Ready to Rock course is aiming to give people the confidence and skills they need to begin climbing outdoors.



No outdoor climbing experience, or specialist climbing equipment, is necessary. Check out the dates for one that suites you: 27-28 April 2013, 4-5 May 2013, 11-12 May 2013, 8-9 June 2013.

Ready to rock costs £60 non-residential, or £80 including bunkhouse accommodation and all food. For more details and booking click [here](#).

Claiming multiple membership refunds

Are you in more than one BMC affiliated club? Do you want to claim a multiple membership refund?

Click [here](#) to download the form, complete it and return it to the BMC. To qualify for a refund the BMC should receive your claim by the 30 June 2013.

For more information For more information contact Lynda Buckley at the BMC office on 0161 445 6111 or email office@thebmc.co.uk



Fiona Devine
Club Secretary

Changed Address?

Don't forget to tell us... ..if you've moved house or changed any of your contact details or you're not sure if we have your most up to date contact details. Please send your update to the Club Secretary – Fiona Devine – email secretary@ceunant.org.

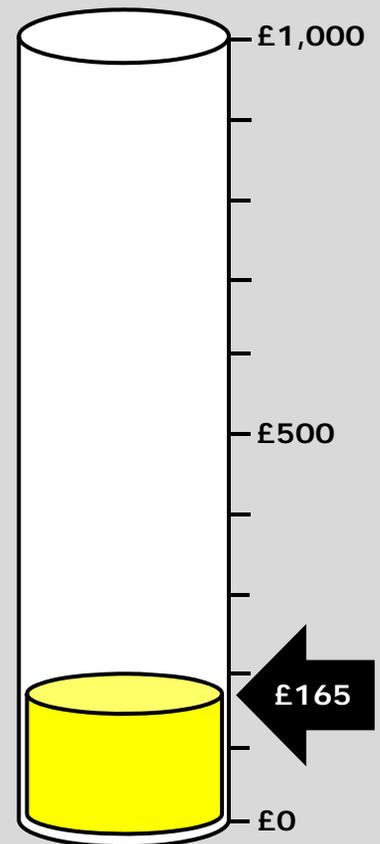
Ceunant Newsletter

Do you have good photo's, stories, reminders or exciting news you'd like to share in the Newsletter? We'd love to have your contributions. Please contact Stewart Moody by email vicechairman@ceunant.org or by Facebook .

A new garden gate for Ty'n Lon

The committee are looking to commission a new gate for the back garden of Ty'n Lon. One of our newer members, Luke Perry, a well established iron sculptor has produced some initial designs and estimated costs for a bespoke gate to really add a WOW factor to the cottage.

Luke's initial design for the new gate incorporates the original CMC logo and the mountains of Llanberis Pass



The estimated cost is £1695; a big financial commitment. The committee has proposed to hold fund raisers to raise £1,000, and the club would then contribute the balance. The aim is to have the new gate in place during the clubs anniversary in 2016 or before if fund raising efforts allow. Fund raising started with the raffle at the 2013 AGM party which got the ball rolling with £165.

See more examples of Luke's work in the Black Country at his web site:
www.industrialheritagestronghold.com

Val Beddard gets Nostalgic

Harry Richards, one of the older members of the club told me that when the club used the old Ceunant cottage, in Llanberis, there was no running water. So Mary Khan (the lady who originally loaned the club the money to buy Ty'n Lon) and her friend used to rise very early in the morning, go to the nearby stream, strip off, and wash themselves whilst no men would be up to watch them.

Please share your fond memories of years gone by. Email Stewart Moody by email vicechairman@ceunant.org or by Facebook .

The Hot Rock Virgin by Naomi Walker

**Costa Blanca, February 2013,
with David Simmonite.**

After a fantastic climbing year in 2012, what I really want to tick in 2013 was to climb abroad. I'd never done it, despite all the on/off years of climbing. On our first day climbing together David offered to take me climbing abroad (it must be the cheesiest chat-up line ever!) Sure to his word but after much fuff between us regarding the venue, we landed at Alicante airport.

Driving out of the high-rise hell of Benidorm I was taken aback by the breathtaking view from the Orange House in Finestrat. I'm sure that many of you have been there before but it was all new to me. The Puig Campana was calling.

So not only was I new to climbing abroad but I'm a trad climber; not really done much sport climbing. Exciting stuff for a hot rock virgin. First stop Sella but perhaps not a great introduction to sport given how polished the routes are. Next day was Echo 1.5 with its large selection of routes in my grade and several for David. What a day: a 5, 5+, 6a and seconded a 6a+. No Mr Sheen here and I loved it. I was very excited and wondered just how far I would be able to push my grade during this week.

Then came Castelletts and my confidence was shattered. Oposicion is a corner with lots of bridging and so it should be just up my street. David went first and he insisted that he left the rope in the first clip. I'd normally object to such chivalry but sensibly I didn't object this time. I run up the 6a the day before so this 5+ should be no problem! But this is a delicate route with not much for hands or feet; in many ways the hardest route I did all week. Despite the encouragement from David about my success in leading this route, I just didn't enjoy it. That happens sometimes, doesn't it?



**The author pops
her hot Rock
cherry in the
Costa Blanca.**

My absolute favourite of the week was the trip to Guadalest. Now I should add that this was also a holiday and not just a climbing trip, so we combined a touristy walk around the castle and various shops with a thoroughly enjoyable climb. Arc de Sant Marti gets two stars but surely deserves more. There's a lower off at 10m to give you a 4+ warm up and then goes onwards and upwards at 5+. Nothing particularly difficult, just steady climbing at the grade for about 30m. It is mentioned in the guidebook 'take care when lowering off ' but the guidebook doesn't tell you that a 60m rope is not long enough to get you to the ground.

Now I said that Sella is not a good introduction to sport climbing but that was before we went up to see the new bunkhouse and crag above it owned by Sam and Richard Mayfield. The view from that bunkhouse is, well, stunning. After a route on the new crag that they are developing (sharp rock and tough on the fingers) we went to Morro Carlos (get the topo from www.theorangehouse.co.uk). A warm up on a 4+ and then onto my biggest challenge: at 6+ Aunti Chris just looked worth a go and I couldn't resist the temptation to try. Some steep and delicate climbing on good rock up and along a thin crack led me to the crux. As often is the case I can see the move but just can't quite reach it. I learned something else that week: falling. I fell off several times on this route but kept going. How I don't know but I climbed through the crux and clipped to safety. Pretty knackered I saw the next bolt and the probable landing if I fell and decided against trying to finish the route. Lowering off I was proud of myself. Ironically, despite not finishing the route, I felt better about my achievement than the success at Castelletts.

In theory this was a hot rock trip but in reality, with most of Europe covered in snow it was just not quite as cold as the UK. So the Puig is still calling me. It looks amazing and one day we will climb it.

Next trip? Probably Turkey but please let it be warm ☺

