

TRICOUNI NEWS

EXTRA SUMMER EDITION 2015

NORTH WALES AND EAST SUSSEX



The North Wales meet was attended by Katie and Richard Stockwell, Joyce and David Clode, Kristina, Stuart, Raya and Iris Clode, Chris Wyatt and Karen Clode and John Caldwell.

David and Joyce Clode and Richard and Katie Stockwell arrived in North Wales on Thursday July 30th staying at a small cottage in Dinorwic near the SWMC hut in Deiniolen where they met up with Kristina and family and Chris Wyatt that evening to discuss options for the next day. There was a promise of some dry weather!

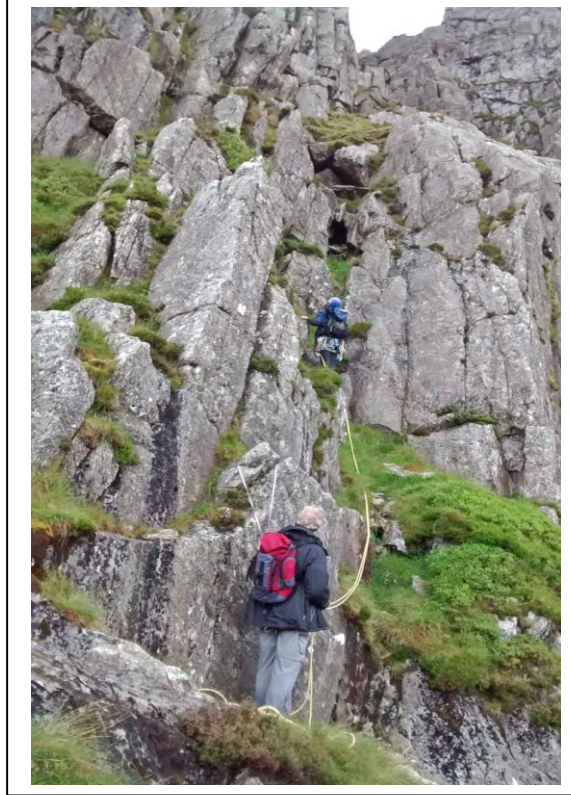
FRIDAY JULY 31ST

Chris, Stuart, David and Richard set off early to do some climbing.

The original plan was to drive round to climb some of the classic routes on Idwal Slabs, but it started to rain heavily as they approached the area in Chris's car and the idea of climbing on wet polished slabs did not appeal.

So Chris came up with 'plan B' which consisted of tackling Tryfan via the Heather Terrace that runs diagonally up the east face of the mountain, with the option of doing a route later high up on that face if the weather improved, bearing in mind that the rock up there dries quickly.

By lunchtime they had sweated their way up in the pouring rain to a position fairly near the top of the terrace, with Tryfan's summit about 600 feet above, and near the start of 'Gashed Crag', Chris's chosen route. With the weather indeed greatly improved, and after a hurried lunch, Stuart and David elected to descend together via Bwlch Tryfan, the col between Tryfan and Glyder Fach, to the Idwal Visitors' Centre, while Chris and Richard roped up for the route.



Now Richard's, (admittedly very old), guidebook only gives this route a grade of 'Hard Difficult', with newer ones suggesting 'Very Difficult', so they weren't expecting anything too challenging. After the usual broken start things got better with some nice moves on excellent rock. So far so good.

Then, moving up and right Chris reached the chimney, where he was out of sight. Here his usual rapid upward motion slowed.

Then stopped.

For a long time.

If the route was challenging Chris then things were looking a bit ominous for Richard! Worryingly, at base of the chimney a previous party had left a sling and karabiner in-situ. Evidently they had used this to bail-out by abseiling off the route!

The 'chimney' is more of an open V-shaped groove and has become extremely polished. (Think 'Wasdale Crack' polish on *Great Gable's Needle*.) When his turn came Richard changed from 'bendy' walking boots into rock boots, but even

they provided limited purchase and he only gained the ledge with a great deal of 'thrutch' and a goodly portion of hauling by Chris with a *very* tight rope! Lying on his diaphragm on the ledge, an already winded Richard found it difficult to breathe and took a couple of minutes to recover.

Then followed some more good quality ridge climbing on fine rock, until the final difficulty which consisted of a large block, split by a crack, forming the roof of a small cave. Here, once again, Chris took some time to solve the problem. When Richard's turn came, ascending to under the roof of the cave was not too bad, but he could find no way to exit from under the overhang out on to the face above.

So, after arranging a fresh belay to the South, Chris top-roped Richard up a couple of wet slabs, followed by some easy rock to the top.

Checking this route out on the Internet has revealed some controversy, both about its given grade, and indeed about the correct finish. While some have claimed it to be an 'easy' route, quite a few have escaped it by abseiling off, and a similar number have avoided the chimney by climbing the face to the right. And some too claim that the description of the finish in the guide book is misleading, and that the real finish doesn't involve the 'roof' at all but goes up a second chimney around the corner on the right!

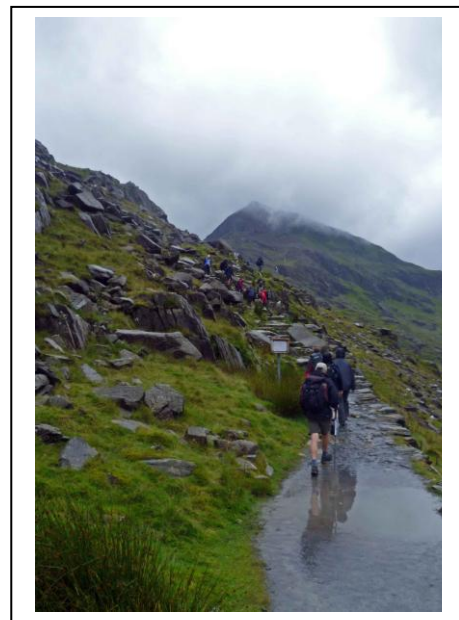
Be that as it may, Chris and Richard got to the top after about $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours, then after some very quick refreshment took in Tryfan summit, seeing as they were so close to it. Then they descended towards Bwlch Tryfan before separating, Chris to his car via the east face, and an exhausted Richard belatedly following Stuart and David down to the Idwal Visitors' Centre, where all met up again for the return to Deiniolen and Dinorwic.

Katie who was suffering from a torn Achilles was taking things easy and joined the party going to Portmerion which included Joyce, Kristina, Raya and Iris. On the drive down it started pouring with rain so they thought "this is not going to be a fun day out" but by the time they arrived the rain had stopped. But they did have some concerns for those who had gone climbing! They had a good visit to Portmerion searching for the 30 double-tailed mermaids which were hidden around the place, mentioned in the brief tour, travelling on the train and eating ice-cream in the sun. Karen and John had an awful journey up and did not arrive until 2030.



SATURDAY AUGUST 1ST

There was another promise of dry weather after midday today but this turned out to be a less reliable forecast than yesterday. John, Karen, David and Joyce and Kristina decided to climb Snowdon in the hope the weather was correct. They had to wait at the hut for the rain to stop and then headed to the park-and-ride after checking out the car park at Pen Y Pas, saving money as the pay machine was not working, they decided to get a taxi up and have chips and cheese in the cafe before starting out. They set off at midday on the Pyg Track with Karen, Kristina and John going on ahead to arrive at the summit shortly after the others had left on the train (see below). Conditions on the summit were awful, it was raining quite heavily by now so they headed back down meeting Joyce and David coming up, looking for food as they had left their lunch in Karen's car. So kindly lunches were shared and they all continued down the Miners Track to have tea at the cafe around 1600, getting the bus back to the car.



Richard who had had a tough day climbing on Friday, Katie, Stuart, Raya and Iris decided to get the Mountain Railway up Snowdon but the weather was not that great, mostly misty and rainy by the time they arrived at the summit, so not much of a view. Raya spent most of the journey giving Katie a new hairstyle! There were so many people in the cafe due to the weather that you had to fight to get through to get to the summit and fight to get back to the train! So lunch was eaten on the way down. They arrived back down at 1430 and decided that as the sun was peeking out, to go and explore the Padarn nature park looking for leaves for the girls' summer scrap books. They included a visit to the Quarry Hospital followed by an ice-cream at the Electric Mountain after which they headed back to the car via the playground. They must have been having so much fun that their mum heard them and tracked them down.



Chris Wyatt had arranged on the internet to meet up with John from Sheffield to climb at Castell-Helen at Gogarth in Anglesey. Unfortunately John left one of the ropes on top of the cliff as he abseiled off so they only had one rope to climb with but seemed to manage - climbing the Top Pitch of the Rap pitch 2 VS 5a, The North West Passage pitch 2 E1 and E1 5b and Atlantis/True Moments/Freebird E2. They had a successful day and enjoyed some sunshine with no strings attached just ropes!

SUNDAY AUGUST 2ND

Again the promise of a dry day but it was not to be.

Karen and John headed home as did Chris Wyatt.

Kristina, Stuart, Raya and Iris, Joyce and David and Katie and Richard all met at the Visitors centre at Llyn Idwal to walk around the lake. They started off in a clockwise direction from the Visitors centre but halfway around the lake the rain came and then more rain came, so spirits were truly dampened after the promise of a picnic in the sun☺ . Lunch was in the visitors centre whilst Kristina searched for dry clothes for the journey home. Katie, Richard Joyce and David headed back to the cottage to dry off.



MONDAY AUGUST 3RD

After 3 days of poor weather Joyce, David, Katie and Richard decided to head to the Llyn Peninsula in search of the sun. The weather started off as per normal but after tea at Criccieth they headed to Abersoch for a short walk and there blue skies returned. They had some proper August weather and a picnic in the sun near Morfa Nefyn before heading over to Anglesey to visit Plas Newydd, a National Trust property with an amazing interior with paintings by Rex Whistler.



TUESDAY AUGUST 3RD

More rain so a coffee in the pub before starting a linear walk from Rhyd Ddu to Beddgelert. This was quite an easy walk on a gravel path as Katie was unable to do much up and down but somehow they adapted the start and ended up on the moorland above the gravel path? but quickly found their way back. The path was along the old quarry railway and zigzagged near to the current railway line descending to Beddgelert where they arrived in time to catch the steam railway back to Rhyd Ddu. Walk distance around 7.5k.

They returned back to Hastings on Wednesday August 4th



FRIDAY AUGUST 7TH

Joyce and David Clode, Katie and Richard Stockwell, Colin and Barbara Priscott, Tony and Eve Reynolds, Peter Leigh and Lynn Leigh met at Birling Gap in glorious sunshine to walk on the South Downs Way over the Seven Sisters and down to Cuckmere Haven. They walked along the dyke to Exceat Bridge where they had lunch at the Cuckmere Inn. Kristina and the girls joined them for lunch before they continued along the road to the Exceat Country Park and back through the woods to West Dean, Friston Forest and Friston Place, then across the open downs to Went Hill and back down to Birling Gap, with a walking time of 4 hours 25minutes, distance 13.7 km approx 8.5 miles. They had tea and cakes at the cafe and decided to forgo the swim as the sea was now decidedly choppy.

