

# CEUNANT NEWSLETTER

January 2015

Hi everyone, and welcome to the latest Ceunant newsletter. Hope you enjoy reading it and please keep your writing and photos coming in - without contributions the newsletter wouldn't be what it is.

**Stewart Moody**  
Vice Chair and Newsletter Editor



## The next outdoor meet is the Peak



On the 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> of March we'll be christening the camping season with a trip to the Peak. It might be on the chilly side but that only adds to the friction. The venue and details will be posted on the Ceunant Facebook page nearer the time. Hope to see you there.

Neil Colquhoun climbing at Bamford.

Visit our web page at...

[WWW.CEUNANT.ORG](http://WWW.CEUNANT.ORG)

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# Notice Board

## Membership News

We have had quite an influx of new members of late. Please welcome Richard Sandord, Marc Lloyd, Vicki Cox, Joseph Harris, Paul Stoker, Paul & Bonnie Donegan and Eileen McBride as prospective members and Caroline Maynard has been elected as a full member.

## SAVE THE DATE

AGM at The Vaynol Arms, Nant Peris at 4pm on Saturday the 21<sup>st</sup> of March. This is your chance to discuss the club and vote for the new committee. If you would like to raise an issue or want to join the new committee then please email [secretary@ceunant.org](mailto:secretary@ceunant.org)

Join us afterwards for food and good times in Ty'n Lon. Tickets will be on sale shortly at £15 from any member of the committee.

Are you on Facebook then check out BMC Midlands Area

[www.facebook.com/BMCMidlandsArea](http://www.facebook.com/BMCMidlandsArea)

The page is promotes area meetings and communicates information.

We can also use the page for advertising anything we have going on and can post pics of our meets to promote interest in the club.

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

**facebook**

## 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](mailto:secretary@ceunant.org)

# LUCK OF THE LOTTERY

## Extending Ty'n Lon

by Val Beddard

As the club has so many new members they will appreciate Ty'n Lon is a wonderful facility to be enjoyed and used by climbers for many years to come. In 1996 after a month of discussions by the committee and an extraordinary general meeting, the decision to go ahead and have plans drawn up and apply for funding was acted upon.

We had learned that a fund was available from a charity connected to the Littlewoods Pools – The Sport and Art Foundation. The club applied and were happy to receive approximately £35,000. With the help of Joe Brennan filling in all the paperwork we were finally successful in obtaining approximately £45,000 from Sports Lottery funding, to be paid in stages as the work progressed. Criteria – disabled toilet, somewhere for the disabled to sleep (the front room), and wheel chair access.

End of May 1998, Danny Mullane who lives in Nant Peris proceeded to do all the outside groundworks and put us in touch with great tradesmen, of course Bill, Cirhc and the occasional members helping. The old kitchen was demolished, ready for the new build.

The summer was very wet, the garden was like The Somme. If you look at the photos in the lounge you can see the size of the project. The back yard became the dining room, the gallery was a bonus. The club added the funds to buy the kitchen appliances. By the end of September a work meet was scheduled to point where necessary.

We were the first club to receive funding and also the only club to receive two grants. The BMC attended our opening party in November. They must have been impressed as they started to run seminars on how other clubs could obtain funding.



Thanks to the hard work of skilled and hard working folk like this Ty'n Lon continues to be one of the best climbers huts in the UK



# Payment of annual subs

Julie Ring - Treasurer

Thank you to everyone who has paid their annual subs. A few of you though still need to pay. Please, please pay as soon as you can. Why not set up a standing order for next years payment on 1<sup>st</sup> January now.

**Membership fees for 2015 are still £25**



If you do not pay by standing order, you can use the following options listed on the right; online payment is preferred or if you must, pay by cheque. Or fill out the standing order form attached at the back of this newsletter and send it to your bank, this is probably the easiest option for you and for the club.

## Late payments

In 2014 we continued to receive a substantial number of payments for membership long after March. This is unsatisfactory. You should be aware that payment of membership fees after 31 March may mean that you will have to pay additional fees, an extra £12.50 or ultimately your membership being terminated (if payment is not received before 30 June). If there are extenuating circumstances, you are advised to contact the Treasurer or the Chairman as soon as possible and these will be taken into consideration.



On line

Online payment into the Ceunant account, sort code **30 00 03**, account number **00062519**. Then email me at [treasurer@ceunant.org](mailto:treasurer@ceunant.org) with a brief explanation that the transfer is for.



By Post

Cheques can be made payable to **The Ceunant Mountaineering Club** and sent to:

**Julie Ring  
23 Valencia Road  
The Oakalls  
Bromsgrove  
B60 2SA**

## Autumn Work Meet – Jim Brady

Thanks to everyone who took part in the Autumn work meet on the 1st of November. A record turnout of volunteers all eager to paint, clean, build and polish. Plenty of jobs were done and much fun had by all. Special mention to the young gardeners for repairing the grass and planting bulbs. Andy and his helpers had a stunning result with the table polishing, the BBQ crew braved strong wind and rain to build the new BBQ. Lots of deep cleaning and painting done. Thanks to Emma yet again creating a lovely lunch and dinner, and who's spirited defence saved the DMM board from banishment upstairs. Though there was no such reprieve for the map of Anglesey. Many Thanks to all who contributed.

**In attendance** – Jim Brady, John Beddard, Kevin Devine, Fiona Devine, Andrew Ring, Julie Ring, Lucy Ring, Emma Bastock, Ellie Bastock, Bob Ellis, Carl Baker, Duncan Frisch, Mick Carr, Andy Gill, Pete Neale Caroline Maynard, Andy Bevan, Mike Deft, Bill Beddard, Stuart Moody, Vicki Cox, Joseph Harris, Anne & Tony Millichope, Holly Becket, Sophie John, Lyndsey Turner, Magdalena Slupska, Gaz & Steph Hughes & Paul Stoker. If we've missed anyone off the list we can't apologise enough.



# There and back again, a climber's tale

by ~~Billie Baggins~~ Dan Ashfield

"It's a dangerous business, stepping out of your door. If you don't keep your feet, there's no telling where you may be swept off to" Have you ever noticed the way big trips all start from a small idea, usually late at night in a pub after several beers? Then the idea warps and grows into a plan and suddenly you are off on an adventure? Well this time it all started during a spot of ice climbing...in mid-summer.....

The chilly melt-water dripped onto my bare skin as I bridged above the water-filled crevasse, making me shiver in my vest. The pockmarked surface above me overhung at 15 degrees and as I set to work hacking my way up the hanging wall, keeping toe-down pressure on my front points so as to not lose contact with the ice, a flash of desire/inspiration hit me. Arriving at the belay I said to Ryan "this weekend coming... Tasman?". Ryan looked over his shoulder in the direction of New Zealand's second highest (and possibly most beautiful peak) and with the brightest of grins, said "ok, it's a long weekend and maybe we could do that, or West face of Haidinger, or maybe have another go at Jungle Drums". I flashback to our failed ascent of Jungle Drums on Mt Spencer the previous year and shudder at how close we came to being badly hurt by rockfall. "Ok something like that then" I said.

The following day we are sat in kayaks paddling around a tidal lagoon. The water runs rust red underneath the boat, reeds and grasses flex in the gentle breeze whilst the rainforest hangs over edges of small cliffs and rocks. "So Ryan, are you really keen for Tasman" I ask, feeling the excitement rising. Ryan replied "yeah well we can have a look at the weather and try to get some feedback on the conditions and then decide on Tuesday". A lone crab scuttles under my boat as we float on the tide. I feel glum at Ryan's sensible answer.

The telephone rings a few times. "Hi, My names Dan and I was wondering if any of your guides have been up round Mt Tasman in the last few days". "Sure" says the receptionist at the guides office. "One of our guides was on Lendenfeld Peak this morning and reported good conditions, with some fresh snow". "Thanks very much" I say before hanging up. I ring Ryan with the news... "Ryan the weather forecast is really good and the guides say it's in. Are you game?" It feels like the answer takes an age. "Ok we drive Wednesday night, I will book the helicopter for Thursday".

Just three days after leaving the lagoon I whizz with practiced pace through the final winding hairpins of the West Coast rainforest, shaking Ryan from sleep in the passenger seat. It's the middle of Wednesday night and we are heading to Tai's place to sleep for a few hours before the flight. I take the racing line through another sharp bend "\$%&# get us there in one piece!" Ryan said, now fully awake. "Every minute counts Ry, we probably won't sleep much in the coming days". Actually I am really excited and the rapid driving is an outlet. I am too psyched to sleep anyway.

We didn't sleep much. After a good breakfast in the town of Franz Joseph we head to the little village of Fox and to the helipad. On the way we picked up an Argentine hitchhiker who

laughed all the way at our excited friendly bickering. We are both getting impatient to set off.

At the helipad, Ryan tries to deodorise for the last time for days but is foiled by a blocked nozzle. He uses his thumbnail to spray the uncapped deodorant from the can wedged against his knee, much to the amusement of a crowd of tourists awaiting a scenic flight. "That's the first thing that's gone wrong on this trip" I joke. "Let it be the last".

And so just four days after the inspirational ice climbing, Ryan and I flew above the glaciers once again heading to Pioneer Ridge. The full massif of Mt Tasman swings into view and we spy out a line. Mt Tasman, at 3497m is the second highest peak in NZ. The snow/ice ridgeline undulates for several Kilometres along the main divide of the Southern Alps. It is beautiful. The Maori call Mt Tasman 'Rarakiroa' meaning 'the long unbroken line'. In Maori folklore the mountain is one of the four sons of Raki (the sky father) and central to the story of Aoteroa's formation.

As my cramponed boot hits the snow beside the helicopter I feel another wave of joy. The neve is still hard frozen in the morning sunlight and conditions are perfect for rapid travel. We wave goodbye to the pilot and waste no time. Ryan dons his bush shirt and hat so that he looks like a lost 'Mick Dundee'. The sun is dazzling bright causing us to squint through our glacier glasses. I slip the ridiculous looking buff over my head as a sunhat and tie into the rope. Now the fun begins.

Several hours of uneventful glacier travel later and we are picking a careful way through the Abel Janzoon icefall, dodging sagging snow bridges and struggling over avalanche debris, sweat pouring off us, leaving braided patterns in the thickly applied sunscreen. Our canteens long emptied. As we climb to the col, Ryan and I joke about the hobbits at the end of Lord of the Rings: "I can barely recall the taste of water"... "Well I am not going to carry you so bugger off". The pack on my back is cutting off the circulation to my shoulders, I tell you - Samwise had it easy only carrying Frodo up the mountain!

We arrive at Marcel Col at mid-afternoon and set about cutting a platform out of the icy snow. The col is over 3000m and view is breath-taking, with Mt Cook and Mt Tasman staring down at us. Soon our little yellow home is pitched and we can settle down and melt snow to replenish our water supplies. Ryan sits on an exposed rock and manages the stove whilst I rest my head which has been pounding painfully for the last couple of hours. I down some drugs and drift off into an uneasy sleep for a while only to wake to find I am burning now the sun has crept round. There is no shade left on the ridge and we strip down to our undies in an effort to stay cool. Sitting in boxer shorts above 3000m, amongst the highest peaks of the land is a memorable situation. After dinner we crawl into the tent, confined uncomfortably close together, sweating with only a very light breeze providing some occasional relief. The daylight starts to fade and we eventually doze....

I am half awake. Whats going on? Where am I? The ground underneath me is rock hard and cold is radiating through the thin blue foam under my body. Ryans knee is trying to separate my shoulderblades and I cant move my feet. A little investigation reveals that this is because my sleeping bag has frozen to the floor of the tent. My eyes flick open as the full sensation of cold hits my aching body. Ryan unzips the tent and finds ice covers everything. The heat of the previous afternoon has been replaced by subzero and the snow outside is frozen solid. "Get up or I am going to drag you out!" a groggy Ryan says. It's too cold to stay put anyway so I wriggle out of the small tent and don every stich of clothing I have. I sort the rack and pack rucksacks whilst Ryan uses the last of our gas to heat sachets of porridge. We balance on the ridgeback and eat this meagre breakfast in the pitch black, eager to be climbing.

There is little moonlight and the many mountains surrounding us all appear stern and forbidding. In order to reach Mt Tasman we must first climb Lendenfeld Peak. We leave the col at 1am and launch up the steep but easy frozen snow, very quickly covering ground. It is airy but straightforward soloing above the endless black beneath our feet. I can see the glow of Ryan's headtorch bobbing away as he labours up the frozen snow, daggering his ice-axe picks as climbs. The snow is so well frozen that they may even hold were he to slip.

We make excellent time climbing Lendenfeld peak and arrive on the summit by 1:45am. Much earlier than anticipated. The ridge from here is a steeply inclined, unsupported snowslope, corniced at the crest. We start to solo across, trying not to look down at the black abyss. The snow is frozen harder still here and the slope angle makes walking uncomfortable. I turn my feet a little downslope to help the crampon points gain more purchase. My footfalls make reassuring crunch, crunch sounds in the night air.

The summit ridge of Lendenfeld peak ends with a steep snow slope and a descent of a couple of hundred meters down to Engineers Col. From the col we can finally see the North face of Mt Tasman towering in the dark, huge hanging seracs, ice cliffs glinting. The glaciated ridge is cleaved by gaping black crevasses and ramps of steep ice criss-cross, blocking our path. Ryan sets off into the night, climbing the ice ramps and working his way through these hanging crevasses. We are not talking or joking now, this is serious ground and we are both concentrating hard. I follow on Ryans heels and make swift progress through the crevasses and reach a 50 degree, smooth, hard ice face directly under the seracs. This is the most dangerous place on the route and we push on fast, solo ice climbing in a rising traverse along the base of the ice cliffs. We leave the ridge behind and work our way out over the 1000m drop from the face. Pitching here is unwise as protection is poor and a fall by either of us would likely pull the other from the face.

The two of us arrive safely across the traverse and pause for a break. It is only 2:30am and we have climbed half of the route including the objective crux in unexpectedly quick time. We start to climb the couloir which leads to Tasmans North-West ridge and rattle up the snow ice with renewed vigour, powered by sugary jelly sweets. We power along the broad ridge as the temperature plummets.


I check my watch and estimate the temperature is -10 in the light breeze. Hands and feet and faces are red and sore with cold in our thin summer gear. At 4:00am a massive crevasse/cave appears in the torchlight so we hammer a snow stake into the hilt and perch on the sloping ridge to discuss our next move. "Ryan I think we are moving too fast" Ryan agrees, estimating we must be only an hour from the summit. "we don't want to arrive in darkness in this cold" he says, flexing his gloved fingers in an effort to get the blood moving, "lets get in this crevasse".

We chop ice from the roof and walls of the crevasse and pack it into the bottom of the crack. We stay belayed to the ice stake and drop down into the hole dressed in down jackets. I turn off my headtorch and Ryan follows suit. The little bubble of light we have been shrouded in for the last few hours is replaced by a dazzling starscape stretching to infinity, the milky way stretching across the crystal clear sky. A breeze whips over the top of our shelter and we start to shiver in the dark. I shout "echo!" into the cave behind me. Ryan takes this as a queue to start singing and so we sit, two short, mad Englishmen shivering in the icy night in a crevasse on a ridge at 3300m, singing 'Akuna Mat Tata', 'With or Without you', 'Born to Run' and 'I am Disappeared' into the echoing ice cave.

My eyes flick open. Its dark and very cold but there are some stars overhead. Where am I? Ryan shouts suddenly "GET OUT". There is a boom deep within our crevasse and I am awake, oh so very awake. We levitate out of our hole fearing the ice bridge we are sitting on is about to give way under us. A bitter pre-dawn wind has risen and it whips our scared faces. I check my watch – 4:45am, time to continue.

By 5:00am we have reached the cheval. A horizontal knife edged arête of ice about 30m long with sickeningly steep sides dropping down into blackness. We solo carefully along, testing axe placements and footings, inching our way to the middle. Ryan chops the razor edged ridge into a saddle and we transfer to the other side of the cheval gingerly, swinging our tools too hard at the ice and struggling to retrieve the picks. Safely across this we are confronted with the final obstacle. Mt Tasmans 50 degree east face rises in a smooth icy plate from the glacier far below. Predawn light breaks in the sky and a deep red splits the horizon from the land. I lead off up the face, soloing carefully towards the ridge with Ryan close behind. The face is steep but solid and both of us feel at home on the bomber alpine ice. The colour of the world bursts upon us and the whole face glows red as my picks thud into the top of the summit ridge. We balance along the final narrow high ridge and I sink my axe into the summit dome as dawn cuts the sky.

On the summit we sat and reflected for a few moments in that ethereal light. I could see the east coast and the west coast and the whole Southern Alps spread before my feet. The climb had been a tentative passage. It felt like we were so insignificant as we respectfully moved along ice above unfathomable drops in the dark. Mt Tasman was the kind of climb that reminds you to be humble. So stood on the summit with my friend at 6:10am, we didnt whoop like adrenaline crazed idiots, we stood silently and soaked it all in.



Our descent followed the same route, with one abseil down the face and a rapid traverse back under the seracs in the growing daylight. As we climbed Lendenfeld Peak from Engineers Col the first icefalls of the day could be heard behind us, tumbling down Tasmans face where we had passes minutes before.

Ryan and I reached Marcel Col and our tent a little after 9:00am. We packed up and worked our way back to pioneer ridge in the heat of the day and arrived at 3:00pm once again sweating. In order to save money, Ryan suggested we walk down to Chancellor dome hut and flying out 1000m lower than Pioneer Ridge. I shouldered my heavy pack once more and followed the ex-guide down the glacier, trusting his knowledge of the terrain. Half an hour into our march we encountered the largest crevasse I have ever seen. A thin snow bridge offered the only apparent crossing and so I took a stance and Ryan scampered quickly across despite his heavy rucksack. He took a stance and I made to follow.

At that point I am pretty sure I heard Gandalf yell “you shall not pass!”, as my left foot punched through the snow bridge into the empty cavernous space and, falling, I watched as Ryan flung himself down the glacier in slow motion, bringing the rope taught and corking me in the bridge. I struggled out and we grinned stupidly at each other. That was a bit close....

#### Epilogue

Ryan and I made it to Chancellor Ridge and the lower helipad just in time to have a cup of tea with a guide and his party before catching the last Helicopter of the day back to the coast at 7:00pm. We stumbled into a bar 19 hours after setting out from Marcel Col, into the good company of Ryan’s old guiding comrades and into a pair of delicious pints (it comes in pints?!- I’m getting one!) in celebration of a truly perfect ascent of a beautiful peak. We joked about the title of this story and settled on ‘there and back again’ as a fitting tribute to all the awful hobbit jokes made during this climb.

#### Mt Tasman

3497m – 2<sup>nd</sup> highest peak in NZ

Northwest ridge route via Lendenfeld Peak

D-

Ryan Kercher and Dan Ashfield, climbed solo.

February 2014

# Peak District 10-12<sup>th</sup> October by Fiona Devine

Thanks to Emma's diplomacy we returned to stay at Carlswark Cottage in Stoney Middleton. Rich S was the first to arrive squeezing his van into the furthest corner ensuring everyone could park on the designated grassed parking area. We managed 6 cars, a van and a campervan.

On Saturday morning we awoke to cold misty weather and seeming like our big climbing plans were thwarted a new plan was formulated. A quick text to the Sheffield crew we all headed to Popular end at Stanage. Some via Outside for breakfast and the obligatory shop. True to its name popular end proved very popular with students groups from Birmingham & Bristol University.

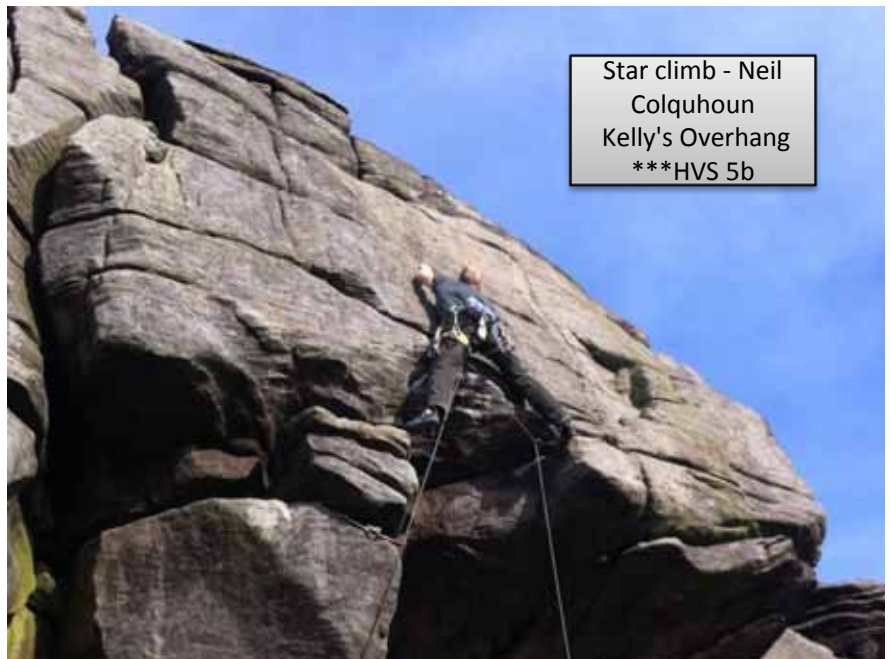
Rich and Rich set about ticking the many VS's, whilst others were happy to tag on the end of Steve or Duncan's rope or blitz the many classic vdiffs. Even Emma had ago and showed she hasn't lost her climbing prowess.

On Sunday we headed to Stanage again but to the less busy High Neb. Star climb of the weekend has to be watching Neil lead Kelly's overhang to then be seconded by Paul though new to climbing powered through the overhang with ease. A fantastic weekend was had by all.

**In attendance** – Fiona & Kevin Devine, Emma Bastock, Richard Sandford, Richard Greaves, Anne & Tony Millichope, Holly Beckett, Joe Harris, Ian Smith, Jules Cahill, Lyndsay Turner, Paul Stoker, Steve Coughlan, Duncan Frisch, Mick Carr, Meg & Dan Slatcher and Neil Colquhoun.



Photos by Holly Beckett top to bottom - Steve Coughlan on Eliminator \*\*\*HVS 5b, Duncan Frisch on Dry Rot E2 5b and Joe Harris on Inaccessible Crack \*\*\*VS, 4C



Star climb - Neil Colquhoun  
Kelly's Overhang  
\*\*\*HVS 5b





# P | H | O | T | I | O

Richard Greaves on  
Nifl Heim, Tremadog.  
By Neil Colquhoun.



# P | H | O | T | I | O

Luke Perry taking a dip  
on a Kalymnian beach.  
By Stewart Moody.



# P | H | O | T | O

Stewart Moody gets camera envy whilst watching David Simmonite compose a shot. By Vicki Cox.



# P | H | O | T | I | O

Jim Daly leading  
Boubolina (6b) at  
Arginonta, Kalymnos.  
By Stewart Moody.



# P | H | O | T | I | O

Bob Ellis in Ogwen on a fine Welsh winters day. By Bob's mate.

# OUTDOOR MEETS 2015

Jan 17th	<b>Burns Night Supper Ty'n Lon Snowdonia</b> Climb, hike or cycle during the day, then join us for a Burns night supper and party.	Hut
Mar 6th - 8th	<b>Hardhurst Farm Campsite, Peak District</b> The first club trip to The Peak in 2015 will be a camping meet, most likely near a great pub.	Camp
Mar 21st	<b>AGM &amp; Dinner Ty'n Lon Snowdonia</b> Have your say on how the club is run, vote in the new committee, and then join us for dinner and a party.	Hut
Apr 3rd - 6th	<b>Easter - Arran. Camping</b> Return visit to this wonderful Scottish island. Scotland in miniature with rock climbing, hill walking, cycling and epic mountain ridges. Oh, and a distillery and pub nearby of course.	Camp
May 1st - 4th	<b>Bank Holiday - Wasdale, Lake district</b> Join us for a few days in the birthplace of British rock climbing.	Camp
May 22nd - 25th	<b>Bank Holiday - Yorkshire Dales - Camping</b> Walking, Climbing - on gritstone or limestone, Cycling - (even potholing if that's your thing).	Camp
Jun 26th - 28th	<b>Avon / Cheddar Gorge</b> A new one for us. Spectacular climbing routes.	Camp
Jul 10th - 12th	<b>Wild Camping - Bochlwyd, Snowdonia</b> A wild camp by this beautiful mountain lake gives easy access to some otherwise tough to reach climbs. Or how about a backpack across the Glyders?	Camp
Jul 20th - Aug 2nd	<b>Italy — Dolomites</b> After last year's successful trip to France. We are off to the Dolomites for Trekking, Rock Climbing and Via Ferrata.	Camp
Aug 28th - 31st	<b>Bank Holiday - South Pembroke</b> Ever popular, and well worth the trip. Beautiful coastal climbing and walking.	Camp
Sept 25th - 27th	<b>Gower, South Wales - Camping</b> Great location for late summer climbing.	Camp
Oct 23th - 25th	<b>The Peak District – Carlswark Cottage</b> Some of you loathe 'em, most of you love 'em. The gritstone meets are here to stay by popular demand	Hut
Nov 20th - 22nd	<b>Work Meet – Ty'n Lon, Snowdonia</b> Help keep Ty'n Lon one of the best club huts. Free hut fees and food and drink on Saturday night.	Hut
Dec 4th - 6th	<b>Family Meet – Ty'n Lon, Snowdonia</b> Bring the kids to Ty'n Lon for the family oriented meet and help decorate the Ceunant Christmas tree	Hut

# THE CEUNANT MOUNTAINEERING CLUB



ESTD. 1956