

THE 'CAPEL- HUT WALK'. GWYNEDD COUNTY, NORTH WALES.

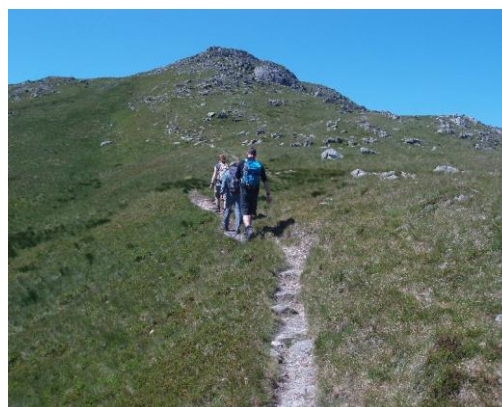
By Tim Smith

It was an auspicious start. One of those fresh, dry, sunny mornings that bode well for a day traversing high summits below an azure sky. It was mid-June 2017 and I had talked my fellow Ty Gwyn (LMC Hut) residents to join me on a walk that I had long had in mind; a linear route over the high Glyders, starting at Capel Curig and returning to the Hut. There are a number of such linear routes possible in the area and I have enjoyed several over the years, when having the opportunity of being dropped off at a remote starting point. From such places as Pen-y-Pass, Nant Gwynant and Nant Ffrancon a variety of good linear walking and scrambling lines may be taken.

On this particular morning, conditions could hardly have looked more promising as the four of us left the car at the rear of Joe Brown's shop at Capel and headed up the rocky ridge end of Cefn y Capel with improving views of the twin lakes of Llynau Mymbyr, then westerly, by the gently ascending grassy slopes of Bwlch Goleuni with fine vistas in the clear morning air, south-west towards the Snowdon massif and the skyline ridge of Crib Goch.



View towards Llynau Mymbyr



Approaching Y Foel Goch

The going became gradually more of a pull up on to the minor top of Y Foel Goch, followed soon after by the long, steep eastern flank of Glyder Fach. Dramatic views of Tryfan with its Heather Terrace to the right can be enjoyed during the climb, before topping out on to the extensive loose, flat rocky top. Once the top plateaux has been gained, the mood becomes more relaxed as the local features are examined; an obligatory gravity-defying photo on the Cantilever stone; a scramble over the 'Castle of the Winds'; finally a leisurely amble to the highest point of Glyder Fawr. There then follows a rather unpleasant long, steep, loose and dusty decent to the water of Llyn y Cwn, compensated for by extensive views of the line of hills stretching ahead. There followed a welcome respite at the Llyn in the building midday heat. Needing no encouragement, Ron and Hanna soon plunged into and swam in the cool waters of the placid lake, which sit in a high col above the Devil's Kitchen, above Cym Idwal.



Views south-west to the Snowdon massif



Looking north to Tryfan, Carneddau beyond



The Cantilever, Glyder Fach



Glyder plateaux – looking west towards Glyder Fawr

After leisurely refreshments we were on our way again, ascending steeply the slopes of Y Garn in fierce sun. We soon topped out and were enjoying the extensive panorama down into Idwal and Nant Ffrancon. Then follows a drop down to a further col and a further climb onto Foel goch, which may be avoided via a traverse path across its western slopes. Dropping steeply to the next col, alternative routes forward are presented; you could continue north-west over Mynydd Perfedd and Carnedd y Filiast, then descend to the upper power station lake of Marchlyn Mawr. We chose the more sporting line, swinging west to ascend Elidir Fawr (the closest high mountain to the Hut). From its rough rocky summit ridge we picked out the small path that descends to the much lower Elidir Fach where we encountered a goat herd and atmospheric sunset views across the Menai Strait to the Isle of Anglesey.

From Elidir Fach we dropped down into the top of the former Dinorwig Slate quarries, then picking up old tracks and stairways through the post-industrial grandeur, to arrive at the small road head (at OSGR 595612). This just leaves about 2KM of road walking to return to the Hut, where we reflected on a fine 16 Mile walk across some of the most spectacular mountain scenery in North Wales, one to be recommended.



Steep, loose descent from Glyder Fawr



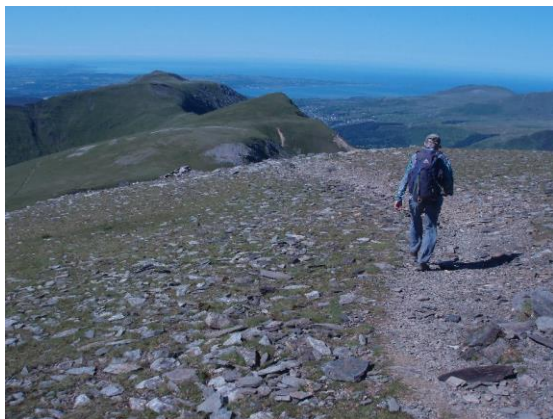
Scramble over the 'Castle of the Winds', Glyder Fach



Ron takes a dip in Llyn y Cwn



View down to Llyn Idwal and Llyn Ogwen, from Y Garn.



Heading north from Y Garn towards Foel Goch



Goats encountered on descent from Elidir Fach

Attendees:

Tim Smith (LMC)

Ron Crowe (LMC)

Hanna Watson (LMC)

Neil Hardy (guest of Ron)