

BAMWAT Newsletter – Summer 2014

Accounts of selected trips

Kintail - October 2013

7 of us made our way to Ratagan YH, at the head of Loch Shiel a few miles east of Skye. The weather was unseasonal and unScottish, we were almost in the centre of an anticyclone and nearly all our time there was cloudless, windless, and pleasantly warm. On the first day we managed a few Munroes to help DavidB on his quest to climb them all.

We found beautiful summits with a thin covering of snow roughly above the magic 3000-foot mark. We also managed a handful of lesser peaks, a tour of the Knoydart peninsula, a visit to the outside of Eilean Donan castle, and another visit to the fishing village of Plockton with its huge, intricate natural harbour and grand views to the islands to the West.

Tony Cooper



Loch Shiel at Sunset



On the Sgurr Fhuaran ridge

Kington Rentahostel - January

About 30 of us took over Kington YH in Herefordshire near the Welsh border for our annual rentahostel post-Christmas weekend. As usual, it was a great success, with superb walks along Offa's Dyke and into Radnor

"Forest" (2000ft mountains/moorland). On the Saturday evening we had Herma's slideshow and Di's navigation quiz, both brilliant as ever. The cooking was masterminded by Debbie Jerome and was excellent.



Doing the quiz



On Offa's Dyke path

Andalucia - April

8 of us set up humble camp in the palatial Villa Aynadamar on the hillside overlooking Grenada and the Sierra Nevada. We had great weather and stunning views all week.

Walks included circular hikes around the western foothills of Sierra Nevada at La Zubia, the northern gorge of Camino de la Estrella, the southern slopes of the Alpujarras from Capileira as well an amazing day



The Gang

in the snow at the peak of Mt Veleta. We also explored the local walks around Viznar, which is reputedly the last resting place of the poet Lorca, and the source of a spring that feeds the Alhambra gardens. We also squeezed in a lovely evening visit to the Alhambra to follow the trail. Many thanks to Dave Fernley for planning and leading the walks.

Hilarie Sutlieff



In the Alhambra

Northern Ireland - Early May

Herma, Sonal and Chris P travelled out To Northern Ireland to stay with Ian at his family home in Banone for the first May Bank holiday. Fortunately we chose to do the Giant's Causeway walk first and we had some sun!!! So starting off at Carrick-A-Rede and walking west overlooking Larrybane Bay we walked through the Giant's Causeway marvelling at the basalt columns..How did they do that? And further along the coast.

We took a trip to Donegal hoping to marvel at the scenery of the Horn Head peninsula. Starting off along the huge stretch of sand dunes and along Tramore Beach we started to climb and the weather started to close in. It was evil. We struggled to the Horn Head

peak but no views were to be seen so we headed back. Drenched. Bonone has a beach of 7 miles of golden sands with a backdrop of mountain and cliff scenery and sand dunes. This was a lovely walk watching the water sports and pony and traps running in the waves. Over on the ferry to Donegal we had a wonderful coastal walk along the rugged coast. Back on the ferry and our trip was finished with a Guinness and steak pie and washed down with a glass of the famous Irish Stout.

On Monday we managed a lovely drive round the island in the sunshine before flying home. Lovely trip with no issues."

Ian Cooper/Chris Padoin



Herma on the Giant's Causeway



Carrick-A-Rede rope bridge

Brecon - Late May

Over the late May bank holiday a group of us went down to a small village outside Merthyr Tydfil called Pontsticill to enjoy the countryside in the adjacent Brecon Beacons National Park. We stayed in a bunkhouse that was in a nice location but rather lacking in some basic amenities (though it luckily had a very good drying room). The weather for the first two days was not great and limited the scope of the walks that were undertaken.



The gang by the Neuadd reservoir

On the Saturday we cut short the walk due to the weather and headed back at lunchtime, before heading down to the local pub in the evening. On the Sunday we walked in the national park over to the hills over the Talybont reservoir and then enjoyed a very nice home-cooked curry. On the Monday, we had glorious sunshine to accompany us on our horseshoe walk via the peaks of Pen y Fan, Cribyn and Corn Du. From the tops of the hills we had stunning 360 degree views over the Welsh countryside.

Matthew Stratful

Salzburg and Salzkammergut May-June

A week with 2 days in Salzburg, home of Mozart and of the Sound of Music; and 6 days in the Salzkammergut, Austria's lake district, with 2 days by the Attersee and 4 by the Hallstättersee. The 9 of us enjoyed mixed weather, but mostly the rain held off when we needed it to. The highlight of Salzburg is its city-dominating hilltop fortress, which needed a couple of



Hallstatt

hours to explore. The Attersee was beautiful in a restrained sort of way, but the highlight of the trip was Hallstatt and its lake.

The town nestles between the lake and a steep wooded hillside, so that the nearest its railway can get is the opposite side of the lake, with a short connecting ferry. We could easily have spent the whole week there. The mountain has been mined for salt for thousands of years, and still is.

The mine visit was a great tourist trap for a rainy afternoon. We finished the trip with an ascent of



Southern Attersee, just before a downpour

the Schneidkogel, 1000m above the town and with great views in the sunshine over the southern part of the lake.

Tony Cooper



Hallstättersee from Schneidkogel

Yellowstone - June-July

A group of 8 BAMWAT members signed up for a week exploring the wonders of Yellowstone National Park. The first challenge lay in getting there. Thankfully following literally hours of checking flights and mastering buying and listing on other carriers we all arrived (via 3 US gateways) into Jackson Hole as planned (7 of us without baggage!!) to start our adventure in Yellowstone National Park (and the Grand Tetons to the south).



The gang

Everyone has heard of Yellowstone, most having seen pictures of thermal pools, geysers and bison but where is it? Yellowstone is primarily in Wyoming, established in 1872 and is widely held to be the first national park in the world and spans an area 3,500 square miles.

A four bedroom house in West Yellowstone was our choice, in a quiet location on the edge of a wood. It offered us a chance to join in the 4th July celebrations with a parade, band and fireworks.

Our three most adventurous walks were to:

- Mount Washburn which provided extensive views of the park and features a watch tower where one guy spends all spring and summer looking out for fires while marmots lick the walls!

- Sepulchre Mountain, a 12 mile hike including views of Mammoth Hot Springs.
- Bunsen Peak and Osprey Falls - a 10 mile walk with 900 meter ascent.

We also explored the geyser area, including Old Faithfull which blows every 1.5 hours-ish and the amazing multi-coloured Grand Prismatic Lake.

Our drives were wild-life safaris in themselves with chances to spot bison, elk, coyote and bears (we saw two grizzly bears - thankfully in the car...us not the bear!). During the second week four of us stayed in the Grand Tetons enjoying the alpine scenery and lakes, some snowy challenging walks and the chance to meet a moose family



William at Grand Prismatic Lake

Christine Knight



Conquering Mount Washburn

Insurance Issues for BAMWAT Members

Arguably we all need three types of insurance cover for our trips, which normally have to be arranged separately

These are:

1/ Third-party cover for damages allegedly inflicted by us on others or their property. This is currently provided by the club via its affiliation to the BMC.

2/ Cover for emergency mountain rescue of self. This is **very strongly advised** for any mountain-walking venture outside the UK.

3/ Ordinary holiday insurance for theft, loss of money and valuables etc.

(1) is dealt with for us by BMC Insurance. As a benefit of our affiliation to the BMC, members of the club have a measure of insurance cover while on club trips. The policy covers BAWMAT, our committee and our members for any claim up to £5m made for civil liability arising in connection with mountaineering, social or other club activities due to negligence. The cover has no territorial limits and is not subject to an excess. It includes damage to others' property or injury to their persons, cross liability member-to-member,

trespass, libel, and slander. It excludes any competitive event (so probably the Sierre-Zinal marathon for example would be excluded), and also excludes supervision of, or advice or instruction given to non-members of the Club.

(2) is best dealt with by taking out a policy to that effect with one of the Alpine Clubs. One is available from the BMC; while such policies are included in the membership subscription to many of the continental Alpine Clubs, such as the Austrian, Swiss, German, French, Italian, South Tyrol, and Spanish. I use the Austrian Alpine Club as they have a thriving UK section and one can conduct all the business in English. The deal is miles better than the BMC's offerings, and provides (apart from the other benefits of membership) mountain rescue and repatriation

cover for anywhere on the planet apart from the polar regions and possibly Greenland, for £40/year. I can't vouch for the other clubs, but they are all similar mass-membership organisations, very different in nature from the BMC.

(3) Is straightforward. Most people do this routinely. Policies differ, and some cover hiking but it's often difficult to check what exactly is covered. "Mountaineering with ropes" is usually excluded, but as there is no firm dividing line between a route with a couple of metres of handrail-type rope and a vertical rock climb, it can be hard for them to decide and for you to know if you're covered. So be safe and take out a policy as above!

Tony Cooper

Future Trips

WHEN	WHERE	WHO	CATEGORY	DETAILS	COMMENTS
7-14Sept	Tre Cime, Dolomites	Chris Padoin	Medium	Based in Cortina d'Ampezzo.	. FULL
4-12 October	Crete	Bernadette Brady	Easy to Medium	Based in Vamos	FULL.
Oct 18-19	Navigation Training	Diana Topham		With Fri evening briefing at Concorde Centre	
Nov	Surrey hills	Will Blair	Easy	Day walk	
Dec	Berlin	Richard Dunnings	Easy	1 day walk and meet up with Doreen Weber	Weekend trip?
Jan 24-26	Beer YHA, Dorset	Debbie Jerome	Easy	Post Xmas Rentahostel	Details available in the Autumn.
Feb	Drakensberg SA	Chris Padoin		Week of day walks	
Spring	Spain	Hilarie Sutcliffe		Week of day walks	
April 3-5	Lake District	Diana Topham		2 day walks	
Mid June	Snowdon	Tony Cooper		2 day walks	
End June	Alps	Will Blair		Week of day walks	Chalet
Aug 9th	Sierre Zinal	Dave Barnard	Hard	Organised event (30km) + day walks	
Summer	Scotland	Diana Topham		3 peaks challenge walk Long weekend	
Summer	Transylvania/ Dalmation coast	?		Long weekend or week	
Summer	Massif Central, France	?		Long weekend or week	
Summer	Tatras, Slovakia	Tony Cooper	Medium/Hard	Hut to hut?	
Sep	Lechweg, Germany	Herma John		Hut to hut?	Flights to MUC
Sep	Yellowstone NP, USA	Debbie Jerome		Week of day walks	
FYI	Kilimanjaro			Anyone interested to join eg Exodus group	
FYI	Chengdu			Anyone interested to join eg Exodus group	

Newsletter edited by Tony Cooper.

Thanks to all the trip organisers, photographers and others who have contributed