



50 Years of the  
Nantmor  
Mountain Centre  
1963 - 2013

# NANTMOR NEWS

## WINTER 2013

Issue 12

The newsletter of the  
Nantmor Mountain Centre.  
Group accommodation in  
the heart of Snowdonia.

Welcome to  
the twelfth  
edition  
of the  
Nantmor News  
in this, our 50th  
anniversary year!

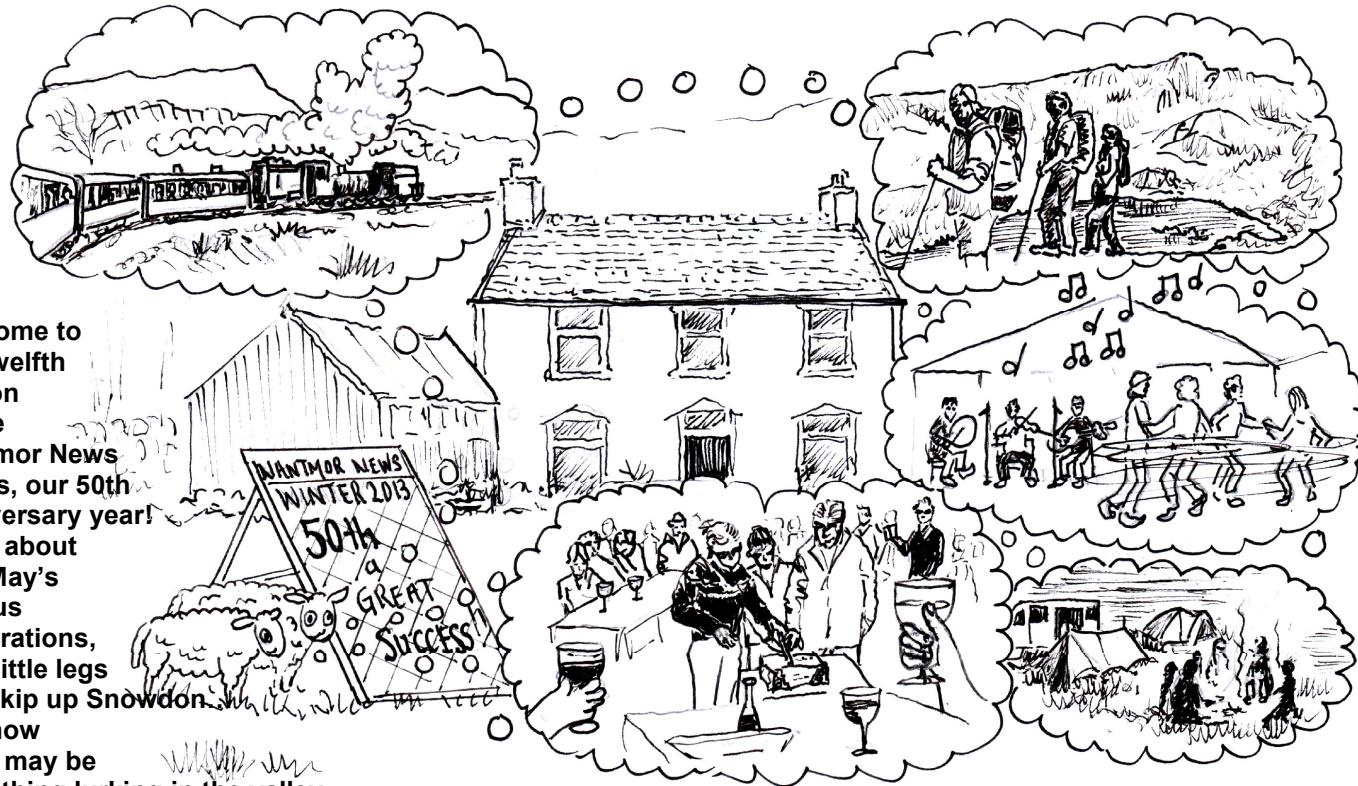
Read about  
last May's  
riotous  
celebrations,  
how little legs  
can skip up Snowdon  
and how  
there may be  
something lurking in the valley...

This year, the fiftieth year of the Nantmor Mountain Centre, has been a truly significant one, and not just because of the wonderful anniversary celebrations in May. Since then momentum has been gathering for major improvements to the centre both inside and out, and bookings have again increased. As well as several new club members we welcome St Peter's School, Tewkesbury, and we welcome back Reaseheath College, also Sarda's search and rescue dogs for a weekend of training their owners. Different family groups happily filled the centre for almost the whole of August, the Lloyd Family Reunion gathering branches from far afield to renew connections with both Gelli Iago and each other.

**But the highlight of the year for many has been last May's Anniversary celebrations**, a culmination of nearly two years' planning and a landmark in the history of the centre. The challenge of squeezing in and feeding 97 people, of siting a marquee in front of the house and holding a barn dance with live music seemed far fetched at one time, but it all went like clockwork (with a bit of winding here and there) From Friday night's gathering in The Goat, an emotional reunion of friendships some of which were kindled during the early days of the centre, to Saturday's lunchtime spread of food; from the brief formalities of speeches and ceremonial cake cutting to the blurred images of dancers stripping the willow, miraculously avoiding 'the lump' on the dance floor; from Monday's nostalgic walk to Twin Lakes by a group of veteran Mountain Leaders to an impromptu barbecue on the field that night by a few hardly campers who simply didn't want to go home, the whole weekend was a huge success. We were delighted to welcome founder members Colin McCall and Les Foden who brought with them historic tales of the very beginning, but sadly missed those who were unable to be there on the day. Everyone took home memories of an exceptional weekend, and maybe thoughts similar to those of Phil Coley, who has spent many distant, happy days at Gelli Iago:

*"I have been to a few but that must rank as the ultimate".*

Photos of the weekend can be seen on the website.



### A Message from Tony Tatford, Chairman of the Association Committee

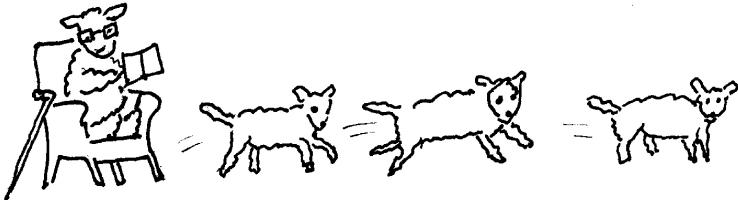
A few months on from the celebrations of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary there is still a strong sense of satisfaction and achievement amongst all our members. It truly was a memorable event that recognised and paid tribute to the many people who have, at some time, played a significant role in the 'Nantmor Story' and to all who have enjoyed a stay or two at Gelli Iago. A very big thank you has been said, and is repeated here with genuine meaning, to everyone who contributed so much in thought, work, energy, consideration and participation to the success of the weekend.

It was an especially rewarding event in that people came from far and wide with their own particular tales of recent visits or long-distant stays which gave rise to memories strikingly strong and obviously significant in a lifetime of experience. Equally poignant messages were received from many people who, for various reasons, would have wished to be present but were unable to attend. We raised a glass in your honour and wished you 'Good Health'. Thank you one and all.

Now, the committee has turned its attentions to addressing some of the concerns for the longer term security of Gelli Iago, as essential remedial work is being planned. Included in this, besides the obligatory care of the building fabric, is the consideration of how best to replace the classroom. Nearly fifty years old itself, this building is no longer fit for purpose and our Warden, Bob James, is investigating the prospects of replacement with something more modern but 'in keeping' with all our hopes and good intentions. Financial issues will have a significant impact with these plans and our search for grants and other such support will fill the time, and no doubt tax the patience, of many of our committee members.

If you think you could help in any way with ideas, contacts, or the time to help out with practical skills on a working weekend, please do make the offer. We are always keen to involve others and to build on the comaraderie and partnership that has united us all over the years.

This year's anniversary hasn't just been a good excuse for a bash, it's been excellent reason to look ahead and plan. NMC boasts over eighty members, with thirty two affiliated groups, yet we rely on just a handful to run the place. Truth is, though still sprightly and capable of some amazing feats, we're not getting any younger. That's why we'd love to have more fresh, young folk getting involved, and on the committee, so let us know if you'd like to help. And if you don't have time, then a bit of TLC whilst you're at Gelli Iago can be just as useful, as if the place was your own, which in a sense it is - ours to share.



### And in the same vein...

We've thankfully come a long way since the distant days of burning our rubbish, and tipping organic waste of every type into the stream, but things are still a bit different in this high Snowdonia valley. Having a wheelie bin doesn't mean there's a tipper lorry - they just can't fit up the narrow lane. So a smaller, open vehicle is sent and bags of rubbish are lifted in by the driver. Which is why the bags must be **strong and not too full or heavy** or they will burst open on lifting, and they need to be **securely tied at the top**.

It's worth considering what happens to the rubbish left by the hundreds of people who stay at the centre every year once it's hit the bin, and how easily it can turn into a gourmet picnic for foxes, badgers and rodents if only they can get at it...

**So please, please PLEASE** take note of instructions in the centre explaining exactly what to do with your rubbish. And woe betide anyone who upsets the Bin Fairy - she'll turn into The Little Witch if she has to re-sort bins and re-bag smelly rubbish, armed with marigolds and her Book of Curses!



**And an important safety snippet from warden Bob James**  
requesting that the front of the house is kept clear of parked cars at all times, to allow access by emergency vehicles.



Thank you to Maggie Reddish, Dan Edwards, Adrian Hobday, Michael Blake and Tony Tatford for contributing to this issue. If you have any items for the next issue, or photos which can be printed for display in the centre or on the website, please send to: [jane137@gmail.com](mailto:jane137@gmail.com).

The Nantmor Mountain Centre is a small and friendly organisation. It has charitable status and since 1963 has been active in providing simple but memorable farmhouse accommodation for groups in its stunning location between Nantgwynant and Nantmor village in the Snowdonia National Park. Our members include Schools, Colleges, Scouts and Rambler's groups. We welcome interest from new users of this most unusual and rare facility. If you would like to have a chat with one of us and discuss how it might suit you or your group then please contact:

The Warden: Bob James, 07889 570483 [bj13@btinternet.com](mailto:bj13@btinternet.com) or  
The Secretary: Jane Pedley, 01766 890673 [jane137@gmail.com](mailto:jane137@gmail.com)  
Also find us on our website: [www.nantmor.org](http://www.nantmor.org)

### Happy scampering up the hills...

For Dame Catherine Harpur's School's 7 - 11 years olds the centre feels like home, as told here by leader Maggie Reddish. "Our annual pilgrimage to Gelli Iago took place in June and was our best to date.. Having arrived, explored (for our first timers) and unpacked it took no time at all to feel right back at home once again. After tea we had a stroll up the path....which got the children all excited for our walk the next day.

Tuesday was a lovely, bright day that began with breakfast of cereal, porridge, toast and fry-up. That was going to require some walking off and with amazing Cnicht right above us we decided to search no further... There was a lot of happy scampering upwards before being brought to an abrupt stop under the last scramble for the top. The children behaved very sensibly and despite a couple of confidence wobbles prior to getting going they all made the ascent. Justifiably they felt amazing for having achieved the scramble. It was a starving rush back down for a hearty tea!"

And on Wednesday those same energetic limbs climbed Snowdon..

..starting in mist and reaching the top in bright sunlight. We were even able to pick out Gelli Iago from the top. On our way up we passed many tearful teenagers which made our 7 - 11 year olds very happy! It was another long and tiring day for little legs, and the children flopped gratefully into bed a bit later than planned after a much needed supper.

Thursday was wet...we had a gentle walk into Beddgelert for a much needed ice cream – an annual tradition for us that rain was never going to get in the way of! We were joined for the day by an ex-pupil who couldn't resist the urge to come back for the Gelli Iago experience. She posted her return on Facebook and had lots of past pupils wishing us well and wishing they were there, including one who lives in America now! We drove to Llanberis for tea in Pete's Eats then headed for the Beacon Climbing Centre just to make absolutely sure the children were as exhausted as possible. Our last night was yet another late one, but there were eight very happy and contented children. And seven very exhausted adults!

Yet another brilliant trip to Wales. We had some new parents with us this time and they fell under the Gelli Iago spell from the moment they clapped eyes on the farmhouse. The children are already talking and planning next year and I can't wait to be back there with them.

Thanks for letting us come back each year!"  
Maggie Reddish, DCHS

### Coming back for more...

**Dan Edwards, leading St Peter's High School's first visit**, reported that his Gold D of E students had "never been to anywhere like Gelli Iago before...really enjoyed it.. want to come back", and **Adrian Hobday** wrote "After several years of taking other people's kids to visit the centre, I finally took my own boys this summer along with my wife and some of our friends. We had a fabulous time as always and my kids are desperate to go back !!"

There isn't space here, but if you go to..

<http://www.dorridgescouts.org/snowdonia-mountaineering-trip>  
**Michael Blake tells how Dorridge Scouts** arrived at the centre to an unexpected challenge, yet still had a brilliant weekend and keep coming back for more...a lovely article, well worth reading!

