

Annual Dinner 2015

Far back in the mists of ancient time, February 13th about 6pm in the evening if you really want to know, a great disturbance was felt in the Munrow as over 40 stoats trudged through the rain and dark hoping North Wales would be more inviting. Apart for one minibus starting their trip to NORTH Wales by going south everyone ended up in that pinnacle of luxury and class, the famed Eric's Bunkhouse! With obscene amounts of spooning on the cards everyone was very excited, but before snuggling down for the night a gaggle ol' gits came to disturb the peace even further. With the return of loud noises amongst others the catch ups and festivities continued far into the night, dashing everyone's hope of any sleep. Greg "well I'm hard" Jones made sure of that!

The traditional early start was given a bit more flare this year as we were disturbed from our sleep by the most lyrical melodies Eminem had to offer and before long a glorious day of climbing was unfolding before every sleepy stoat. That was until the group of single pitch climbers got hideously lost on their way to the crag, spawning some of the finest puntering the club has ever seen, only matched by the puntering exhibited by some of the old gits getting lost on exactly the same path 10 minutes later. Once the trad faff had been dealt with the club climbed to its heart's content in the wonderful February sun and a couple of brave climbers even did a route dressed as a cow and superman!

But of course the main event was still to come and a quick retreat to the ever increasing shower queue was in order. Unfortunately the eponymous Eric was not to be found and as such the 2 showers over the road stayed closed leaving one shower shared between over 50 people. Nothing a few garden hose showers couldn't fix and soon a brace of glamorous stoats were ready for the evening! This of course meant meanie in a brand new bin no less! With 2 people's birthdays on the Saturday night and one on the Friday this was never going to be a quiet trip but the evening was to prove that even the most experienced stoat can underestimate the power of meanie.

The meanie flowed and the pennies flied! It's hard to sum up the scene but I feel this does it justice.



Luckily everyone managed to make it onto the minibuses and into the hotel! Just John of Gear Cupboard reprised his role of a Labrador sticking its head out of the car window whilst having a very confusing history lesson on the previous presidents of the club. According to John, before Dan Geh it was Harry Thorpe who was President... The Royal Goat lived up to expectations and gave us a three course meal with all the trimmings and drinks. Contact at this point was also made with the MAM who had made their way to the hotel whilst preserving their style and dignity.

Notable moments from the evening included a stellar speech by Le Grande Fromage who embellished his speech with quotes from those great climbers across history (most notably Brian Taylor) and promises of drinks at the bar, a beautiful and elegant presentation of prizes by the social secs without any hic ups at all...

Annie scooped keenest fresher despite being the next room when it was announced, El got drunkest fresher, John L got most improved, the Nedtorious NED won 'most ne(d)farious' and Merlin got "should've been on committee". Luckily for us, this year we had an obvious winner of the coveted Ross Cooper award in Adam Wood!

A brief speech by Alek Kumar from the MAM concluded the formalities of the evening and before we could wake up mid chunder and have to be bundled into the girls toilets (prompting the most imaginative wardrobe change of the evening) the disco arrived!

It goes without saying that the evening descended into lots of enthusiastic dancing, long and deeply important but barely remembered conversations and nursing those feeling a little too worse for wear. The consistent musical streak within the club expressed itself with not just one but two pianos available! When the evening finally started to wind down, the stoats were bundled back home a minibus at a time for some much needed sleep.

As we all know trad climbing is the best hangover cure available and Sunday did not disappoint as an even hotter, sunnier day greeted our slightly delicate group. That didn't stop us though and before long the stoats were spread all over the beautiful rock at Tremadog and in some cases climbing some very non trivial stuff! We really were too lucky with the amount of sun we got and some took full advantage of this by going to the beach. But whether it was beach, single pitch, multipitch or lying in bed thinking very hard about their life choices, Sunday had to come to an end eventually and the marathon journey back began.

A quick stop in Llangollen for fish and chips perked up everyone but without an exception we all crashed into bed the moment we got back to Birmingham and finally rested.

A huge thank you has to be given to so many of the unsung heros who made Annual Dinner happen. The Committee for generally being badassess. Alek and Louise for acting as liasons to the MAM and Old gits respectively. A very special thank you to Dan Geh and Chris Stepanek for doing shuttle runs on Saturday night. Thank you to all our drivers, everyone who helped clean the hut afterwards and everyone who looked after those a little worse for wear on Saturday.

Until next year!

Jonny and Ellie xxx

