

## LMC Arctic Norway - Lyngen

April 2010

### Goxheim Blogs

Sun 4<sup>th</sup> April

A classy breakfast before rafting to the shore, then that rare combination Skis, Skins and Seaweed. A hot climb in blazing sun. I have never sweated so much in my life. Birch scrub gave way to open slopes to the summit of Nordfjellet, for a sunny picnic with extensive views to all points of the compass.

<http://picasaweb.google.no/Goxsheim/DagensBilde2010#5459629532020708450>

*Bernard et al*

Mon 5<sup>th</sup> April

We hesitate to use too many superlatives about the aurora borealis last night just in case tonight's show beats it, but we watched for about an hour as fronds / veils / curtains of light weaved about the starlit sky at times stretching to both horizons.

Similarly yesterday's superlatives apply equally to our ascent of Vannkista (947m) from the scenic harbour of Vannvag. A cooling breeze countered the blazing sun and assisted our ascent but kindly dropped away completely for our picnic on the narrow corniced summit with island splattered views away to the empty north. We skied off swooping down steep sun softened southern snow slopes, skilfully swinging and swishing swiftly from side to side until a second skin up Suzannabakk lead to slopes descending directly to Goxheim and steaming scolding sumptuous soup.

<http://picasaweb.google.no/Goxsheim/DagensBilde2010#5459629697135044994>

*Nigel et Al*

Tues 6<sup>th</sup> April

As we climbed higher today imagine the electrifying atmosphere as first one and then others spotted, low down on the eastern horizon, almost obscured among the unbroken line of snow clad peaks, an indistinct small fluffy object. It is hard to convey the excited sceptical debate that ensued but eventually we all unanimously agreed that it was indeed a cloud. Almost as fast as it appeared it was lost to our vision but not before those with

better, more expensive cameras and telephoto lenses had captured the evidence to prove to the cynics back home our unique experience. The rest of the day far from being an anti-climax continued as we had been come accustomed with a brilliant ski down towards the convex horizon dropping into the sea, marvellous views and wonderful snow (Vanessa, eat your heart out). Descending through the birch scrub Christine saw an Arctic Badger but it hopped off with its long ears flopping before the rest of us could confirm the sighting. We glided to an eventual stop half a metre from the gang plank. A leisurely arctic dip for some was followed by a cruise on past spectacular scenery to our next anchorage. Cambridge had won the boat race, Emanuel university challenge, we had had Coal fish for supper, God is in His heaven and it does not get much better than this... or does it? Oh yes, and the Northern Lights were better still last night. We lay on our backs in the middle of the road as phantoms rose out of the silhouetted peaks and danced and swirled ethereally among the stars accompanied by Gustaff Holst's Planets, and then just when we thought it couldn't get any better "it went super critical and completely out of control; like an orgasmic amoeba exploding all over the sky" (Josie Smith).

<http://picasaweb.google.no/Goxsheim/DagensBilde2010#5459629859070255362>

*Nigel*

Wed 6<sup>th</sup> & Thurs 7<sup>th</sup> April

The connection failed so two days are compressed into one. After an hour of forest bashing brought sightings of sea eagles, but sadly no sign of the elusive Norwegian Blue. In compensation members of the party saw butterflies. But forest gave way to open slopes, with a choice of lines - including the diretissima to the summit. Which turned out to be three summits, all of these had to be visited, before swishing down perfect spring snow to the infamous forest - thankfully the skills of a Swiss Guide enabled us to follow a snow capped trail rather than climbing trees in our skis. A good dinner, too much wine, whiskey and Aurora lead inexorably to another bright sunny morning - is there any other kind?? But.... as we skinned towards the col before our summit, a Scottish weather front overtook us. Choices had to be made, and for once, we took a mountaineering decision to change our objective. A low summit, ice spicules in our eyes, frozen snow benieath our skis lead us in swooping curves to the spring snow in the valley - and right to the gangplank of Goxsheim. And so to dinner.... under clearing skies. Where will tomorrow take us?

<http://picasaweb.google.no/Goxsheim/DagensBilde2010#5459630005091797426>

*Dave*

Fri 9th April.

Skis on at the high tide mark at the back of sandy Oldervik beach was another first. The

now familiar struggle through the birch scrub lead into a steep stream valley, but once this opened out we could settle into rhythmic skinning on automatic and the mind could wander where it would go. My daydreams drifted back nearly forty years, stimulated by the Lyngen Alps across the light splattered fjords, their ridges picked out by the low diffuse sun, but their tops tantalizingly hidden by a strata of cloud. With a combination of: the fitness of youth, the enthusiasm from first experience and the unlimited daylight from the midnight sun, we scrambled all over those tops hailing one another from the summits with "taaaaa-xi" and our "aaaaaas-holes". Thus the foundations of a life long passion were cemented and friendships forged. For those forty years we've been promising each other we'd be back but now with: other friends and new ones made, another seven magnificent peaks in seven wonderful days, our sailing, gourmet, mobile hut providing ideal artistic foreground to our photos, the one certainty for us all is that it won't be another forty years before we're back.

<http://picasaweb.google.no/Goxsheim/DagensBilde2010#5459630104077665442>

*Nigel* - In memoriam David George aka DBG and Dave aka "Grot" from the 1971 visit