

## **BUMS Midweek Trip Report – Parkhouse Hill and Chrome Hill - Friday 27<sup>h</sup> January 2017**

**Location:** Longnor

**Weather:** Sub zero temperatures and thick mist

**Party:** Mike A (leader), Lesley, Mike H, Tony, Rob, Jeff, Ann, Lynda, Colin, Steve, Sue L

**The Walk:** Longnor – Hitter Hill – Parkhouse Hill (375m) – Chrome Hill (425m) – Hollinsclough - Longnor

**Distance:** 8.4 miles      **Total Ascent:** 2283ft      **Time:** 4.5 hrs

This was a repeat performance of a walk we did in January 2010 and it turns out this was the 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that inaugural Friday walk. 7 years ago we managed a turnout of 6 and this time there were 11, with a further 3 who provided sick notes at the last minute. So Friday walks have turned out to be a good idea!

The start point is the village of Longnor, which is less than 90 minutes drive, even in the rush hour. Pity about the weather, though, because we left Bunbury cold and clear and by the time we got to Longnor, there was the freezing fog to contend with, which became more freezing and more foggy as the walk gained height. Still, it could have been lashing with rain, so we should have been grateful. Anyway, Lynda was waxing lyrical about the conditions “so atmospheric”. You can make up your own mind when you see the photos.

The first part of the walk took us north east and downhill to cross the River Dove, which is fairly narrow at this stage in its life. At this point we were heading in the direction of the trig point at High Wheeldon which I had planned as a gratuitous climb, but only if conditions were suitable. Since you could not even see the 1500ft hill when we were so close, I decided to stick to the script and we turned north west heading towards Hitter Hill, avoiding a muckspreading farmer in one of the fields en route. From Hitter Hill we dropped down to cross a lane and a stream and find the path up Parkhouse Hill. We stopped for a coffee break below the summit avoiding the icy wind and enjoyed no view at all apart from fellow BUMS taking on refreshments. The ridge is very narrow, interspersed with rocky outcrops to make it more interesting and so the descent was quite treacherous in the ice. I had advertised the walk as being suitable for all and was reminded that there are a few members who would have found this totally unsuitable.

Fortunately, we lost no one and arrived safely at the foot of Parkhouse Hill, again crossing a track and searching for the path up our next target, which was Chrome Hill. Although slightly higher and longer than Parkhouse, Chrome Hill is not as steep but is nevertheless a shapely hill, if only you can see it. From the other side of Chrome Hill, we headed towards Stoop Farm, but navigation was extremely difficult in the clag and required intensive sat map usage to pick out the route. Eventually, Stoop Farm came into view, and we followed the track above and round to join a track leading to Booth Farm, where nearby we found a sheltered spot to take lunch, again with visibility restricted to the farm buildings and a few sheep.

From there we followed a track downhill, recrossing the River Dove and turning left at the hamlet of Hollinsclough. At last we had emerged from the clag, and although visibility was far from perfect, we could at least see where we were heading, plus the lower slopes of the 2 hills which we had previously climbed over. We could just about make out the hills but we couldn't see them clearly. You'll have to revisit on a decent day for a good look at them. We re-crossed the river a couple of times before heading south across farmland and finding a path taking us back to Longnor. Up to this point one of the good features of the walk was how clean it was walking on frozen ground. Sadly this last section provided the first and only bogtrotting of the day. It wouldn't have been a proper BUMS walk without mucky boots.

Rehydration in front of the roaring fire at the Yew Tree provided the perfect end to the day.

Mike A.