

BUMS Walk – Saturday 18th January 2020

Location: The Berwyns

Route: Pistyll Rhaedr – Cadair Berwyn (830m) – Moel Sych (827m) – Pistyll Rhaedr

Weather: Cold and mainly sunny

Party: Mike A (leader), Lesley, Jim G, Mike H, Ian, Mike W, Neil, Ann, Colin, Richard, Della

Distance: 7 miles **Total Ascent:** 2200ft **Time:** 4 hrs 30m

There are those who want to put the Mountain back into the BUMs. By a stroke of good luck / good planning, the wind and rain had finally ceased and we set off from the pavilion, heading for the Berwyn Mountains in clear and icy weather. A few early dramas with sick notes being supplied by Selina and Cate but a decent squad of 11 made their way to Pistyll Rhaedr, the final few miles negotiating ice and potholes to the riverside car park.

The walk started by heading back up the road briefly before taking the path onto the hillside which provided a steady contouring rise on a broad grassy path with great views of the famous waterfall and the high ridge to which we were heading. First drama shortly after leaving the tarmac involved the loss of a glove. Not a great move with the prospect of sub zero temperatures to follow. Fortunately Mike H discovered he had some good mates and he was loaned a spare pair.

The path was becoming steadily icier and snowier as we ascended Cwm Nant y Llyn and it was clear to see up above that we were heading for a walk in the white stuff which must have fallen on Friday. We crossed the stream still following the path and then attempted to follow the prescribed route away from the main path which mentioned the easing of heather and bracken and a faint path.

The snow covering meant it was impossible to locate that route and it was abandoned in favour of the main path which we could see would lead us around the rim of Llyn Lluncaws. It was a stiff climb in the snow and the coffee break was called for, seated on the path above the lake. The tough walking continued up to the ridge where we emerged below the summit of Moel Sych which we would return to later. We followed the ridge to the north where we could see ahead the trig point of Cadair Berwyn. We passed a substantial shelter on the south top, perfect for 11 BUMS to return to take their lunch break after the obligatory photos on the trig point of the north top. At this point there was an option to continue out and back to the lower summit of Cadair Bronwen, a gratuitous flog in the snow of about a mile each way. The suggestion was met with an underwhelming response and therefore abandoned.

We retraced our footprints to the shelter and enjoyed our lunch out of the icy wind. Then we continued retracing our route back along the ridge to the aforementioned summit of Moel Sych which used to be the same height as Cadair Berwyn until Berwyn's south top was remeasured and found to be 3m higher. From here the southerly descent via Trum Felen proved to be quite a challenge in the conditions. A few of the squad including myself (twice) ended up in a horizontal position, but the landings were soft and wet so no damage was done (apart from pride).

We arrived at the stile leading to the top of the Falls and took the path down to take in the scenery from the top which was pretty dramatic with the amount of rain that has fallen during the previous few days. Then it was the final descent on a rocky path down to the bottom of the falls to complete the full Pistyll Rhaedr experience. As one of the seven wonders of Wales, the waterfall is the highest at over 70m.

The short walk to the car park concluded a great winter day out and rehydration by the roaring fire later at the Dysart didn't disappoint either.

As a footnote or should I say a hand note, Mike H who had been last seen retracing the start of our route with his eyes downward, was rewarded by finding the missing glove!

Mike A.