

Trip Report: The Tartan Walk

Date: 25th January 2013

Group: Jim W (leader), Selina, Lesley, Ann, Lynn, Colin, Jim G, Mike H, Jeff, and Mollie

Route: Leek to the Staffordshire Way and a circuit of Rudyard Lake

Total Distance: 11.45 miles

Total Ascent: 0 ft

Weather: Unknown

This being Burns Night all BUMS had been asked to wear some tartan about their person to celebrate the birth of the greatest poet the world has ever seen. To their credit everyone did and Colin took the prize for his 'See You Jimmy' headgear.

The weather conditions determined that a low level route be found and they don't come much more low level than this one. That said the slippery conditions underfoot, and the walking through snow, made this walk quite strenuous.

Two cars set out from the Pavilion at the sensible time of 9a.m. with Jim W driving 4 lady members and Colin 3 blokes and a dog. It was a considerable surprise to Jim W that the first topic of conversation chosen by the female contingent was football. The merits of Bradford City and Swansea were discussed at length and their respective chances in a forthcoming cup final debated. What was less surprising was the 4 back seat drivers asking for the car temperature to be regulated frequently.

The walk was quite straightforward, apart from a bit of faffing at the start where a number of paths converged to make the route choice not quite straight forward. However once underway we enjoyed greatly some nice scenery in snowy conditions. Rudyard Lake is picturesque and boasts some magnificent houses along its westerly shores.

Lunch was eaten at the water's edge, and being Burns night a rendition of 'To A Haggis' was given by the leader. In the absence of a haggis a pork pie was used. We also had fun feeding some of our lunch to ducks and watching them skate across the frozen lake to eat it. The Scottish fervour continued with the news that Andy Murray had won his Australian Open Semi Final coming through from those with I Phones. (Sadly he could not keep it going for the final).

The return leg follows for some of the route a narrow gauge railway where steam trains run from spring to autumn. Lynn took a leaflet for Tony, as birthday parties are available for those using the train.

The return car journey featured a phone call from the bloke's car to the predominantly female car informing that a decision had been made to rehydrate in the Yew Tree as opposed to the Dysart. There was a bit of protesting from the females, who were promptly informed that women do not have a vote when beer is involved! This was said by a brave, some may say foolish, person. Sadly for Jim W the topic of conversation chosen by the women this time was walking knickers, with some expressing the view that they had had a bad knickers day, whatever one of those is. Anyway the Yew Tree it was, and along with the beer, a log fire was enjoyed. Although there we discovered that Colin was in the dog house. Why? Well that's a leading question.....

A good day out, in an area we had not visited before, with fantastic walking in the snow

Jim W