

Trip Report: Snowdonia

Date: 21st March 2009

Group: Mike A (Leader) & Lesley, Jim G, Chris & Chrissie, Tony & Lynn, Jim & Jean, Selina, Caryle, Lynda, Ian & Graham, Lancasters x 4

Route: Tryfan (915m) - Bristly Ridge - Glyder Fach (994m) - Glyder Fawr (999m) - Devils Kitchen - Ogwen Cottage

Total Distance: 6 miles

Total Ascent: 3200 ft

Weather: Sunshine at start and finish - dense mist in between

Time: 8 hours

This had been designated a Memorial walk for Claudia as it was the last serious walk in which she participated as a BUM. Further research has revealed that it took place in May 2005 so we were repeating a walk from nearly 4 years ago. As we expected, there was a record turnout for what is a classic route and a challenging route for anyone without scrambling experience.

We congregated at 07.00 at the Pavillion, as is customary, and set off in 3 cars. Ian, Sue and daughters were meeting us at 08.45 in the designated parking spot. As anyone could have anticipated, there was a no show and 15 minutes later it transpired they had been parked in the first car park as opposed to the first lay-by on the left. Eventually our huge group got rolling up the Tryfan North Ridge. The sun was shining and great views unfolded as we threaded our way through the boulders. The beauty of this route is that you never do the same route twice. It is possible to throw in some tricky scrambles for fun and we managed to find some excellent opportunities to test the "virgins".

After an hour or so, we stopped for a coffee break by the "Cannon" rock. At this point Lesley produced from nowhere (her rucksack) 2 dozen fairy cakes as it was revealed that it was Chrissie's birthday that very day! A rendition of "Happy Birthday dear Chrissie" produced the required embarrassment and we set off onwards and upwards.

The next interesting scramble up through a narrow chimney caused great amusement as some of the ladies were removing rucksacks and clothing (I lied about the clothing) in order to squeeze through.

Caryle especially was having a struggle and at one point Jim W. and Tony had hold of an arm each and Caryle had no feet on the rock. Eventually she stabilised and Tony was giving sound technical advice. "Just one more push" was the instruction. Afterwards Caryle said she felt as if she was giving birth!

As we approached the summit, the mist was descending and there were

sadly no views to reward the effort.

Nevertheless, there is always a good atmosphere on the summit of Tryfan, and as usual there was someone on the summit rocks of Adam and Eve having their photo taken.

We then descended in the murk down to Bwlch Tryfan as a disorderly rabble caused by poor visibility and over enthusiastic leading from the front (guilty as charged). We regrouped at Bwlch Tryfan before tackling Bristly Ridge and at this point Selina offered to take Caryle up via the scree slope. Poor Caryle was feeling the pace and not looking forward to another scramble so she gratefully accepted.

Meanwhile the remaining group walked up to the gully which marks the start of the scramble. It is shorter than the Tryfan ascent but there are a few more difficult, unavoidable sections, which brought out the real BUMS teamwork required to get the party to the top. One or two interesting quotes were reported. Ian Langford who is actually a novice on this terrain was blagging like an expert. "Anchor onto me" he told Lesley. Is that a technical term? Even better was Jim G. who announced that on a difficult section where some of our vertically challenged ladies were struggling, that there were "excellent jugs" available!

We eventually reached the plateau below Glyder Fach, where Selina and Caryle had been waiting for 10 minutes and lunch was taken. By this time it was 13.30, and stomachs were rumbling. Star prize for unusual mountain fayre goes to Ian Langford who produced 2 packets of Monster Munch. I don't think it'll catch on. Ian Lancaster then left us for some fell running to complete his day out. He obviously felt that he was leaving his family in safe hands!

Next up was the daunting prospect of 17 BUMS crossing the Glyders in dense mist, the leader armed only with a map and compass. Fortunately, Jim.G produced his all singing and all dancing sat.nav., complete with OS map and tracking device. Apart from one temporary false trail, we successfully located Glyder Fawr which marked the start of the descent down the scree slope out of the mist to Llyn y Cwm. We managed to find the track down to Devils Kitchen at the second attempt and then it was only the long flog down the slab path to Llyn Idwal. We regrouped towards the end of the descent and at this point, with some of the troops visibly wilting, the leader together with Jim G. and Ian Langford generously offered to go on ahead and bring back some transport back to Ogwen Cottage Car Park.

Annoyingly, the cloud was now starting to lift and as we walked down the A5, we had a great view of the Tryfan ridge that we had ascended hours earlier. All the party were present at Ogwen when we returned and it was

then back to the Dysart for re-hydration. It was after 17.00 by now which ruled the Dysart out of bounds for some members who were running late for their evening entertainment. That didn't stop at least 10 sweaty BUMS rubbing shoulders with the early evening diners in their posh frocks.

Mike A