

Trip Report: Cynwyd to Llandrillo via Tegid Way

Date: Saturday 14th January 2017

Group: Tony (Leader), Lynn, Mike H, Sue, Neil, Ann, Colin, Mike W, Selina, Dave C, Rob and Jeff.

Route: First half of the Tegid Way from Cynwyd to Llandrillo in North Wales.

Total Distance: 8.5 miles

Total Ascent: 2400 ft

Weather: Cloudy and Snowy.

My original intention for the first BUMs walk of 2017 was to walk along the Berwyn summits from Pistyll Rhaeadr waterfall but the mountain weather forecast on Friday was for heavy snow and strong winds at 800m so I decided to walk instead along the western flanks of the Berwyns using the Tegid Way. Tegid is the Welsh for Bala (even though I can't help feeling Bala already sounds very Welsh) and the Tegid Way runs from Cynwyd (pronounced CunUd) to Lake Bala, I mean Llyn Tegid. The route goes about halfway up the Berwyns and the Denbighshire council guide promises excellent views of the Aran Mountains all along the way.

This would have to be a linear walk so it meant a bit of faffing dropping one car off at Llandrillo and leaving two at the start in Cynwyd. The snow was all around us when we arrived and after a hunt around for a place to park the cars we tramped off uphill with snow flurries and a foreboding sky.

As we passed a group going out to shoot pheasants a mile out of Cynwyd and they shouted to us - "Don't make a sound like a pheasant !" which was funny if a bit worrying.

The trail now was an easy ascent through woods and snowy hillsides and although we couldn't see the promised Aran hills because of low cloud, the views of the Dee valley and lower slopes looked as lovely as a Christmas card.

Stopping and sitting for a coffee break was a bit of a problem on snowy tuffets especially for Selina who kept slipping down the banks. With our eyes constantly on the dark skies we tramped on to the highest point of the route to a memorial stone at Pen Bwlch Llandrillo (500m) where from a cairn we could see the path to Berwyn peaks but as we were already in 3 inches of snow then this was high enough !

Strangely enough blue skies appeared for a bit but only for a bit and we started our descent down Afon Llynor valley towards Llandrillo. We were not the only ones on the hills that wintry day as we were passed by mountain bikes, motor bikes and a fleet of Land Rover 4x4s all helping to churn up our path with more and more mud. Time for a lunch stop and a sit down for Ann who for a moment looked whiter than the surrounding snowy slopes.

The route guide recommended not to miss the 3000 year old stone circle at Moel Ty-uchaf but with mutterings from the BUMs like "If it's been here that long then we see it next time we're out..." it took a bit to persuade everyone to march up the hill quite deep in snow and they were probably right as there wasn't much to see and we couldn't get close to it due to a flamin' barbed wire fence.

We carried on and soon arrived at Llandrillo and within a 90 mins or so we were back by the warmth of the Yew Tree log fire and the usual re-hydration therapy.