

**Trip Report:** Arenig Fawr

**Date:** Feb 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**Group:** Steve (leader), Sarah, Mike A, Les, Jim G, Mike W, Selina, Mike H, Bob, Ian, Sue

**Route:** A circular route over Arenig Fawr

**Total Distance:** 8.7 miles

**Total Ascent:** 2150 ft

*To start with here's my learning point from this walk: no matter how many times you have climbed a hill it's always possible to be surprised on your next visit!*

Unfortunately, after planning to be there, Dave and Ali were unable to join us but we still had a good-sized group of eleven. And in fine weather we set out following a section of the disused Trawsfynydd-Bala railway line, which was closed in the 1960s when the the Llyn Celyn reservoir was created. After a short stretch of road we turned onto a track and climbed gently for a mile or so to Llyn Arenig Fawr. A very small bothy beside the lake provided a good reason to stop for some refreshment, even though the bothy itself could only take 3 or 4 bodies. Bob informed us that he has done time in the bothy and, judging from the stash of canned lager, it obviously gets used quite regularly!

We then started to climb more steeply following the established path to the south of the lake and by the time we reached the second of two fences we were just about into the cloud layer. At this point I took up the back-marker role, confident that those at the front knew how to get to the top. My pleasant surprise was that the way we followed to the top, essentially using the main path, was not the route that I had used on any of my 3 or 4 previous visits! Anyway, it wasn't long before we were all gathered in the substantial shelter on the summit, which was very welcome because of the chill wind at this exposed height (864m). The shelter contains a memorial to the 8 crew members of an American Flying Fortress that crashed nearby in 1943. It's usually a good place to linger because of the superb far reaching views but with the enveloping cloud it was a day for scoffing some lunch and moving on.

The descent route led us south over a minor summit and then gently down a wide reach with the benefit of a fence to follow. Quite suddenly, as we descended, we emerged from the cloud giving a view of the valley below lit by patches of sunshine. Across the valley the top of Moel Llyfnant was still hidden in cloud and it was enough to persuade us to leave that hill for another day. We soon made it to the head of a track that led us down the valley and out to the road, but not without a bit of bog trotting in a few places where the track was flooded.

A half-mile more walking on tarmac and we were back at the cars, and 90mins later in the Yew Tree.