

**Trip Report: The Peak District**

**Date:** 6th December 2008

**Group:** Colin (leader), Mike, Lesley, Tony, Lynn, Caryle, Ian, Graham, Jim G and Chrissie, Roxie, Molly and Tilly

**Route:** Stanage Edge and Burbage Rocks

**Total Distance:** 12.5 miles

**Total Ascent:** 2120 ft

**Weather:** Crisp, clear and sunny

**Time:** 6 hours 15 mins

A late call off from Selina, who decided to head off with her real mates, left us with a party of ten, but she missed a great day out.

Stanage is certainly one of the most impressive of the gritstone edges and the favourable, nay gorgeous, weather meant that the rock climbers were out in force and the views were excellent. By way of a side note the edge apparently currently has over 800 recorded rock climbs with more being invented every year. Names even I know such as Don Whillans, Joe Brown, Hugh Anstee and no doubt the equally famous Joe Simpson have cut their teeth here.

Having led the team along Baslow Edge last year I knew how to attract the less adventurous BUMs on a walk and I know many BUMs quite like flat walking, hence the good turn out (the chairman has noted a better attendance for the meetings than for recent walks!)

Three cars were required as Ian was under severe pressure to be back in Chester by 4pm to see his daughter on stage, so traveled under his own steam (with Graham). Jim G and I being other drivers. We eventually left the village about 7.45 with Caryle having a small domestic delay getting her own daughter to the train station. BUM life and family life are a difficult mix!

The journey to Hathersage (where incidentally Robin Hoods right hand man, Little John is said to be buried), was uneventful and we set out with the ladies looking pleased having located proper toilet facilities and we made our way up a very gentle incline. So gentle in fact, I don't think anyone was really aware we were climbing.

We eventually reached a point where the leader had to make a decision, but sadly having been so relieved he could identify our position with 100% certainty, he was hijacked by people reading maps (dooh!) instead of just following the instructions. A very short detour later saw us hopping over a dyke which the leader would have spotted if he had been allowed to read his guide book!

Onwards and gently upwards, we headed up to Stanage edge noting

numerous rock climbers talking a language the leader didn't understand carrying what looked like mattresses on their backs? Some started talking about doing Jeepers Creepers which I can only think is one of the climbs. I held back taking photographs (a leaders job is never done!) only to find my over enthusiastic followers could not resist climbing to the top of the Edge before they were supposed to. Not a major problem as we headed along the edge to Stanage End with great views across the Hope valley. After a pleasant coffee break called by the leader before the troops started to moan (more brownie points for the leader) we headed back to High Neb trig point the highest point on Stanage Edge where Graham was given a lesson on what trig points are for by Jim and Mike (think it went over his head though!).

Onwards and "alongwards" and we reached a very pleasant lunch spot above another of these climbs with fancy names, this one being Robin Hoods cave. Ever conscious of the need to get Ian to Chester on time, we kept lunch to a minimum although it was great to take in the views until we reached another trig point at eastern edge of Stanage.

At this point we decided to abandon Ian and Graham, so that we could extend our day by taking in Burbage rocks. I think they found the right path off the edge (there was only one) but I tried to get them to find another. I checked the obituary column this morning so presume Ian made it back in time! The rest of us then marched on and took in Burbage Rocks and now had to rely on maps as I had given my comprehensive instructions to Ian (I was aware Penny could be fierce so took no chances!)

All went according to plan as we took in the most beautiful old 17th century Packhorse bridge with great views looking back to Burbage Rocks and although we had a wee hiccup as we wandered off route so that we could trudge through a swamp (my sub lieutenants let me down but what can you do!), we eventually reached a road which was not only a road, but also a sheet of ice! We all got across OK except Caryle and Les, who were very nervous, particularly Caryle who falls over on the most gentle of non slippery terrain. A great site to behold was Caryle sliding gently down the road and not being able to do anything about it before somehow getting back to safety before a car came. Quite surreal. Lesley finally got her across and on we went past a beautiful mock-baronial miniature fortress called Scraperlow House (with electronic gates) until we found our way back to the car. A fine walk, in fine weather, in fine company capped by a few beers at Dysart, and late winner from Vidic to make my day!

Colin