

Trip Report: The Christmas Family Walk

Date: 28th December 2005

Group: Jim G., Colin + dog, Tony, Lynn & Rose Quinn + dog, Lesley, Mike, Sue Lancaster, Bob & Andrew Capes, Selina + dog, Rob, Carol & Louise Sinnot, Gerry O'Neil

Route: Blackstone Edge Hollingworth Lake, Littleborough to Blackstone Edge via Windy Hill and the Pennine Way returning by the Roman Road

Total Distance: 8.5 miles

Total Ascent: Unknown

Weather: Sunny with snow shower

Advertised as a family day out, there was almost a circus feel to the occasion with newcomers, BUM's wives, children and dogs making up 4 car loads that made a miraculous rendez-vous at 0800 to make the journey over to Littleborough on a very cold and frosty morning.

We were off to a great start with news that the parking ticket machines had been vandalised and there was free parking for all. There had been a light covering of snow in the area overnight so it really looked like we were in for a seasonal walk.

So we set off round the lake, heading south, and the first problem was finding a stile leading off the rugby pitches but with a mixture of good luck and judgement we found the correct path, eventually following the route of an ancient trans-Pennine cart track. This led to Windy Hill at the junction of the Pennine way and for the entire length of this section, we had the sights and sounds of the M62 about 500 metres away! A feature of BUM's walks is that we get away from the stress and noise of everyday life - until now!

So we joined the Pennine Way and crossed the footbridge over the M62 which was a first for everyone - and probably a last. We were now heading up to Blackstone Edge which is full of huge black gritstone boulders, where we found an ideal picnic spot. I need to mention that there were brie and cranberry sandwiches available in the Sinnot's hamper so I guess that elevates it into picnic status. We passed the trig point at 473m and then turned onto an old Roman road (allegedly), heading back down from the ridge. On the way down it started snowing and then rumours spread through the party that a dog had disappeared - namely Tilly Quinn. Could that be Silly Tilly?

Anyway, to cut a long story short, she had been sighted heading towards a pub where she presumed her master would be and then Tony found her at the aforementioned picnic site, scavenging for crumbs. If Tony wishes to issue a full report in his defence, it will be considered as evidence for

the hearing due to take place at the next meeting. There were grave mutterings from our esteemed secretary about never working with animals and children, however the story had a happy ending and all members of the party were reunited in time to return to the Dysart for chip butties and pints of foaming ale.

Mike A