

Trip Report: The Christmas Family Walk

Date: 30th December 2009

Group: Lesley (Day Leader), Mike, (Real Leader), Chris S, Jim Grant, Caryle, Lynn and Tony, Lucy and Gerry, Zoe, Jack, Sandra and Chris, Mike and Selina, Colin, Richard, Ian, **Dogs:** Tilly, Roxie, Fudge, Molly and Tess **Chippers:** Amanda, Anne and Neil and kids, Penny. Colin and Gaynor (were also at the start but personal circumstances conspired, once again, to prevent their walking with BUMS.)

Route: Moel Famau

Total Distance: 4 miles

Total Ascent: Unknown

Weather: Grey and drizzly in Bunbury, 6-9 inches of snow at start

Time: 3 hours

Some say BUMS are BUMS come what may; some say where there's no sense there's no feeling, some say listen to your leader.....well on this walk it was hard to know who the leader was.

Lesley (author), some would say, leader but is only ever the organiser for the day, had her real navigator along and brain behind the beauty - Mike. Due to adverse weather warnings plastered over TV and websites, forecasting severe snow over north Wales, Mike had decided the night before that we would assemble at 9.00 as planned and then take a judgement on where to go based on the turnout and knowing that Greg had told us NOT to get to the Dysart until 3.00. We have decided therefore to abandon North Wales and head for a real family walk on the Peckforton Hills.....until Lynn turned up and announced in a very convincing voice that 'oh no, there is no snow in Wales'. That and a few more chunterings persuaded the real leader to set off for North Wales, heading to Cilcain and a lovely walk which Bob had designed (Bob, who may well have been curled back up in bed after deciding at 8.30 not to go!!). The author was very uncertain as to the sense in this decision but her small voice was not heard. (Note to self, speak louder and more confidently).

On the road towards Loggerheads where we were to turn for Cilcain a family at the end of that road had built one of the biggest snowmen I have ever seen. Now I was really chuntering and signalled to the leader to STOP THE CAR. We decided as a group (except for the missing Chris and family) to go just a few yards down the road to Loggerheads. As we slewed to a stop in what might have been a car park, we then had another decisive discussion when we did collectively agree on a short walk beside the river. Trudging on Chris then phones to say they were on their way.

At last, the party together, we headed up river and despite slush, snow and mud managed to get the approaches of the Mountain (is it a hill?). By now the dogs were shivering, Molly was turning into an iceberg as we watched and Fudge was stuffed up Sandra's jacket, making her look for all the world about to give birth.....a first on a BUMS walk and taking feminism a little too far even for the author.

The snow was still falling and was up to my knees, so about 2 inches! No I would say 6 inches and getting like a blizzard the higher we went.

At the coffee stop, which was just after sense prevailed and the group decided to turn back with the day leader finally putting her foot down, we were treated to Richard's virgin mince pies and rum butter. (he had never made them before, hence the virgin).

Hot coffee in our bellies and the warming thought of retreating back to the cars the BUMS trudged onwards and downwards.

We soon made the car park to discover the kind man had swept the snow away and we could exit in the usual manor.

A frantic phone call to the Dysart informing them of our early arrival and we all arrived safely in the pub (except for Chris and Sandra who were assured by Zoe that they could not get to the pub before 3.30!!!). I am certain this must have been the author's fault somewhere.

All back safe and sound gobbling beer and chips we counted ourselves lucky that we had persevered, and, despite not summitting Moel Famau (maybe a hill, not a mountain) we had all enjoyed the day. In the pub Tony remarked that 5 years ago the BUMS had made an unsuccessful ascent of Mont Blanc, and now we couldn't even Moel Famau.

As we know, summitting isn't everything, it's the making the attempt that counts.

We will be back next year to try summitting Larkton Hill and nothing will stop us.

Well done everyone.

Lesley