

Trip Report: The Roaches

Date: 22nd February 2013

Group: Jeff (leader), Mike H, Lynn, Lesley, Chrissie, Amanda, Roxie.

Route: Gradbach YHA to Lud's Church, the Roaches, and back via Hanging Rock, Danebridge and the Dane Valley Walk

Total Distance: 9.7 miles

Total Ascent: 1520 ft

Weather: Unknown

This was the Leader's first official BUMS fixture so an enjoyable outing with seamless organisation was the aim. Things showed early signs of going pear-shaped when it became clear that Dog of the Year Roxie had inadvertently been renamed in an e-mail. Things got worse when an early navigation error resulted in a left turn out of the Pavilion car park rather than a right.

However things began to improve and the Peak District car park near the Gradbach YHA saw the team ready for action in near freezing conditions. A further minor navigational glitch resulted in some athletic barbed wire vaulting completed with no reported clothing damage. Lud's Church was the first stop where the depth of the fault, moss covered sides and a selection of foot long icicles impressed. Its possible use as a place of worship by 14th century dissenters added to the interest.

We moved on to for a coffee stop just before the trig point on the Roaches, where the rocks provided welcome shelter from the cold wind. From there the walk continued along the Roaches ridge as far as Doxey's pool which legend has it as bottomless. The presence of six BUMS suggested this was not the case. The route took us back along the Roaches and entered a new phase when Lesley got a call confirming that her early retirement had been approved. This was the cause of enthusiastic celebration followed by congratulations from everyone. This is thought to be the first BUMS walk with a live voluntary redundancy celebration.

A lunch stop followed, sheltering from the cold behind the same rocks as before where the appearance of some low-flying grouse had the Chairman looking distinctly trigger-happy.

The route then went via the Hanging Stone with its two plaques and inscriptions, one commemorating a favourite dog, the other a Lt Col Brocklehurst who apparently introduced wallabies to the Roaches (?). On then to Danebridge where the group was offered the chance to visit the neaby Wincle Brewery visible across the River Dane. Strangely the group declined and opted to continue the walk for the remaining two miles or so

along the picturesque Dane Valley Walk (these are the upper reaches of the river which flows on to Congleton and joins the Weaver at Northwich.) .

Final rehydration took place in the Yew Tree finishing off an interesting, but cold, mid-weeker!

Jeff