

## **Trip Report: The Boot Beer Festival**

**Date:** 9th-12th June 2011

**Group:** Mike A, Lesley, Jim G, Tony, Lynn, Lynda, Caryle, Colin, Amanda, Ali, Tina, Martin

**Route:** See below

**Total Distance:** See below

**Total Ascent:** See below

**Weather:** Everything

### **Routes:**

**Day One:** Harter Fell 6.33km (3.93 miles) 516m (1692 ft)

**Day Two:** Illgill Head and Whin Rigg 19.2km (11.93 miles) 782m (2565 ft)

**Day Three:** Sca Fell and Slight Side 15.6km (9.69 miles) 1038m (3405 ft)

**Day Four:** Ulpha Park 9.01km (5.6 miles) 247m (810 ft)

**Weather:** Sunshine, showers and hail

**Walkers:** Tony, Lynn, Colin, Amanda, Jim G, Mike, Lesley, Lynda, Caryle, Tina and Martin (and Ali).

Starting from an original idea mooted in the Dysart way back in September 2010 the BUMS finally made it to the famous Boot Beer Festival in Eskdale, Cumbria for four days in the mountains and four days tasting the finest draught beers the nation's real-ale brewers can offer.

### **Day One**

The Pensioners had an enviable steal on the workers and were able to slip up to the Lakes first thing Thursday morning. The weather was typically Cumbrian and as Jim's sat-nav had mischievously suggested a route to Eskdale via Hardknott Pass it made perfect sense for the superannuated crew to make for one of Wainwright's favourite peaks - Harter Fell. In spite of the wet weather by all accounts the walk was a success, and there was great rejoicing when the whole of the group eventually met up in the bar for fine ales and the Brook House Curry Night followed by dancing to a local duo.

### **Day Two**

With more showers than sunshine forecast for the day the group (minus Colin and Amanda who went off to find a local waterfall) spirits were still riding high as we crossed through Boot village on towards Burnmoor Tarn via Eskdale Moor.

Our aim was Illgill Head and with the rain still holding off we started our ascent. Destination reached, the promised precipitation arrived on queue

with raining turning to hail but at least it blotted out Sellafield from the top panorama.

We started to dry out with lunch on Irton Fell and as we moved on to the sylvan delights of Miterdale Forest spirits definitely started to soar in response to the improving weather.

From this moment on we appeared to enter a fairy-tale land with Hansel and Gretel Cottage and AA Milne's Pooh sticks

Navigation through the forest went a bit hay-wire and we ended up in the grounds of an Outwards Bound school. This was familiar territory for Lynda and she was able to explain to us the methods and challenges of the apparatus and how rubbish IT people were at this sort of task.

Now on the home straight all that remained was the simple crossing of the river Esk using stepping stones. Perhaps it was the end of a long tiring day or the rush to get back to the beer festival but Martin couldn't help taking a dip, just go to YouTube to see all the gory details.

A pint or two in the Boot Inn reminded us that in the Brook House we had chosen the best pub in the village for beer, and we wine and dined all night.

### **Day Three**

What's wrong with having kippers for breakfast I repeated to myself, with a glorious sunny day promised we planned for an Horace-free ascent of Sca Fell complete with Caryle. Not to be confused with Scafell Pike or even Scarfe L this peak may be a few feet short of the highest peak in England but the views are just as magnificent and we passed no-one all day along the beautiful Esk valley.

But before the ascent there was time for a coffee stop at Samson Stones

The scramble up Cam Spout was like a Grade 2A Dolomite Via-Non-Ferrata. Long but exciting, we passed the microscopic Fox's Tarn and reached the top with views all around second to none.

In best Wainwright-bagging tradition we moved on to Slight Side and relished the views on such a fine Lakeland day.

So followed the long descent back down to Boot and after bit of faffing with the cars we arrived back at our hotel and a few well-deserved pints.

The final evening of our trip was in the Woolpack Inn (the one with the campsite) a bus ride away up the valley. The pub was bouncing, the beer flowing, the BBQ food uncooked and old friends a plenty as we rocked our way away all night. As even Madame Chairwoman couldn't get everyone off the dance-floor and onto the last bus, we had to walk back, but with Bad Company ringing in our ears and bats flying over our heads we walked

back on a moon-lit night and nobody noticed the distance.

#### **Day Four**

After all the excitement of the last few days it was definitely a case of a gentle hike thorough the countryside followed perhaps by a visit to a tea-shop.

Driving on to Ulpha we did a circular walk past an old bobbin mill, a saw-mill and a creepy scarecrow on the edge of a quiet forest.

Tantric thing-ummy, repeating kippers, moving stepping stones, miniature steam trains, aging rockers, mountain views, pale-ales and cuckoos, this was a week-end to remember and definitely one to pencil in again for next year.

Tony