

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

**Date:** 4th-7th June 2015

**Group:** Colin, Amanda, Caryle, Lynda, Tony, Lynn, Selina, Mike W, Steve, Sarah Selina, Steve, Sarah, Dave, Ali, Mike and Les (and Lynda's sister Julie who arrived on Friday night)

**Routes:** Attempt on Scafell Pike (on Friday led by Ali and sub Lieutenant Hammond); Boot to and back on the Ratty train! Led by Tony on the Saturday

It had been some time since the BUMS were last at the Boot Beer festival so it was time to get "back on the bus". What could be better than a beer festival in the beautiful lakes with great Company and so it proved. (Well what could have been better was the weather, but who can control that?)

We booked the Brook House Inn again and were not disappointed, It's a great hotel, rooms are great and clean and the food is excellent. We ate there every night in fact. Lynda, Julie and Caryle were in the (incestuous) gay suite, the BUMS just keep raising that bar! Mike and Les were in Toni Bell and Dave and Ali were camping.

The festival itself is based over 3 pubs in or around Boot (ours, the Boot Inn and the Woolpack which is about a 10 min walk from the Brook House if you choose not to jump on the buses that are laid on for the festival. Each pub puts on one night of live music and in line with us having the best pub, and the best beer, we also had the best music, so Thursday night was a hoot with all of us p jumping around in a miniscule space.

I was organiser, not leader so happy to say for the Friday walk, Ali with help from Steve steered us up towards Scafell where the weather as not so kind to us.

Steve sent me the following report;

*The party comprising Ali, Dave, Steve, Sarah, Tony, Lynn, Lynda, Selina, Colin, Les and Mike A set out from Boot with a short drive up the valley to avoid a couple of miles of tarmac at each end of the day. Just before the road starts to ascend Hard Knott Pass a track leads off north following the River Esk and, after parking the cars, we set off up the valley in fine weather but with a blanket of cloud covering the highest peaks, including our objective - Scafell. Little did we realise at this point that the cloud would thwart our plans!*

*At Lingcove Bridge we paused for a breather (and to take photos????) before the path started to climb a steeper section. Soon we were crossing the flatter area of Great Moss looking over the Esk towards Cam Spout Crag and then, as we got closer to it, trying to spot a good place to*

get across the river. Once re-grouped on the far side without too many wet feet we found a sheltered spot for lunch, aware that we would soon be in the cloud.

A short bit of scrambling led up to a clear path and we climbed steeply in increasingly poor visibility. The walk description that I was carrying read at this point: "When level with the impressive bulk of Scafell's Eastern Buttress, proceed no further up the valley, but instead turn to the left where you will see a narrow gully with a stream / waterfall cascading down." Unfortunately, in the prevailing conditions, this didn't help much! And neither did referring to GPS and map or talking to a group coming down the path. Somehow the gully leading to Foxes Tarn eluded us and we found ourselves instead at Broad Stand. For the record here's a fine weather photo of what we were looking for!

With everyone now a bit sodden and disappointed it was decided to descend by the route that we had come up rather than persist with trying to get to Foxes Tarn and the summit of Scafell. We emerged from the cloud as we reached our lunch spot once again and from there we made it into a circular walk by returning on another path that eventually brought us to Scale Bridge and shortly afterwards to the road. And at the least the weather for the last hour dried out a few things!

So, that was Friday's walk for us and we regrouped with Mike H, Caryle and Amanda who had a lower level walk which in fact we would partly follow on Tony's walk the following day.

After dinner, we had enough energy for a beer and a jig at the Woolpack (with Sarah leading the way picking on some unsuspecting locals). This was the night that Amanda disappeared to have a bop after telling me the only thing in life she ever wanted was a Mona Lisa style picture of a sheep's head that was for sale at the pub. I duly bought it without telling her, presented it to her a couple of weeks later for her birthday and she had forgotten all about it! She still liked it though .... Phew!

And so to Saturday where happily the weather gods were smiling again and here's Tony's tale.

*Date : Saturday 6th June*

*Route : Boot to Ravenglass and back again (by "Lal Ratty")*

*Distance : 10 miles*

*Height : 250m*

*Party : Tony, Lynn, Colin, Amanda, Carlel, Steve, Sarah, Mike H, Lesley, Selina, Mike W, Lynda and Julie.*

*Weather : Overcast, light winds but no rain.*

*A nice not too early 10am start saw us leave Brookdale Inn hotel in Boot minus Ali and Dave who wanted a lie-in. We had all brought/bought sandwiches for this walk from Eskdale to the Cumbrian coast at Ravenglass all except Mike and Lesley who had mistakenly listened to me the night before in the bar and not brought any of their own. Sorry about that !*

*We set up the fells behind Boot heading for Blea Tarn with Mike W, Amanda and Caryle leading the way as they'd done the same route the day before, but this time it was different they could actually see something in today's relatively clag-free conditions.*

*Not too strenuous up to the top and an interesting stroll easterly stopping along the way for a late coffee break nearby the delightful Blea Tarn. Not sure what the name of the fell was as I'm writing this trip report in work and my OS maps are at home.*

*After an hour or so we descended through a forest and crossed the Eskdale and Boot railway line where on cue the little steam train was crossing the valley and by all accounts it looked like it was the Northern Rock - a 15" gauge 2-6-2 locomotive.*

*After descending from the fell we crossed the valley including some stepping stones across the river Esk and made our way to our Wainwright of the day (in fact our only Wainwright of the weekend...) and Muncaster Fell (231m). Another enjoyable climb to the ridge through wood and some bog (well I'm well known for it) and we made our way to the trig point summit after we'd stopped for lunch (including a sarnie whip-round for Mike and Les).*

*Well done especially to Amanda for overcoming her fear of heights and at the top we stopped for the usual trig-point photo opportunity and now we could see the sea, oh and Sellafield. Suddenly the fell was full of Horaces so we fought through the crowds and started our descent to Muncaster Castle near the coast.*

*The walk through the castle grounds was delightful and free and we headed for the shore-line but the leader had paid more attention to the train times and not the tide times and the route was blocked by the sea. But "omnes 'puteus quod desinit bene" as they would have said at the Ravenglass Roman baths which we would have missed if the tide had been out.*

*And now the highlight of the day/weekend/month : a ride on the Ravenglass and Eskdale steam railway back to Boot through beautiful if now rainy countryside back to the station near our hotel and a few real beers to finish off.*

*Heavenly day with a great bunch of friends.*

Nice report Tony... so following a few in the Brook House and another great dinner, all that was left for us to take in a few Ales at the Boot Inn for our final evening. It had changed ownership and probably the most disappointing of the three pubs but they had a guy doing his best in the beer garden after the mic failed and he was my "pal" as he did a rendition of "500 miles" aided and abetted by "moi" of course! In truth we were all a bit bushed so no persuasion necessary to have a relatively early night. And so our weekend had ended and a fabulous time was had by all. My own preference would be to have this event in the annual diary but I know that can't happen...maybe 2016??

Tony