

Trip Report: The Peak District

Date: 22nd June 2008

Group: Mike A (leader), Lesley, Jim G, Frank, Chrissie, Selina, Mike W, Colin, Tony, Lynn, Caryle, Roxy, Tilley, Tess, Megs

Route: adybower Reservoir - Rowlee Pasture - Alport Castles - Birchinlee Pasture - Howden Reservoir - Derwent Reservoir - Ladybower

Total Distance: 10.5 miles

Total Ascent: Unknown

Weather: Dry with some sun but very windy

The day following mid-summer seemed like a reasonable time of year to plan a high level walk in the Lake District, however the Friday evening weather forecast for Sunday of severe gales set alarm bells ringing. This was confirmed on Saturday morning so a hastily rearranged itinerary saw the BUMS retreat to the safety of the Derbyshire Peak district.

There was a good contingent of 11 BUMS, 3 BUM dogs plus 1 guest dog; a good turnout under the circumstances, especially as Colin was suffering from a mystery bug which, following some investigation, probably was nothing more than alcohol deficiency.

We parked at Ladybower Reservoir to walk up above the Derwent Valley to Alport Castles and then drop down to the reservoirs and back on a low level walk. The plan seemed to work - as we ascended to Rowlee Pasture the howling south westerly made for difficult but not dangerous progress. In the language of the MIS web site there was "general buffeting". Conditions were totally unsuitable for coffee or toilet stops. This didn't stop some desperate members of the party making the latter! Some regretted their decision (Lesley and Lynn).

From Alport Castles we descended amongst the grouse butts, one of which turned out to be a good shelter for a coffee break. Continuing down to the valley we then walked alongside the Howden Reservoir to the dam, which according to Mike W. we would be able to cross. Unfortunately it would have meant crossing by clinging to the parapet and we didn't have the necessary mountaineering equipment so we continued to the Derwent Dam. Here we found a museum dedicated to the Dambusters. Those with long memories will recall that the Barnes Wallis bouncing bomb practices took place there during the war. Tony must have been very impressed as he regaled us with amazing facts for the rest of the walk.

We then crossed over to the east bank whilst cunningly avoiding a visitor centre by way of a nature trail. Yes, this was a walk for tough mountaineers and 11 cream teas would have given us a major credibility problem!

There was a brief interlude so that the dogs could have a paddle in the reservoir and it was then back to the bridge where we had parked. Surprisingly we agreed to rendezvous at the Dysart. There was a late drama when it emerged that Jim had contrived to lose his car keys somewhere, having left his car at the Bunbury Pavilion. Perhaps retirement isn't all it's cracked up to be. Not a walk for the hardcore BUM, but it wasn't a day for the high mountains and it turned out to be good alternative.

Mike A