

Trip Report: The Roaches**Date:** 25th March 2014**Group:** Jim G (leader) Debbie, Mike H, Ann & Sue (Elie & Spot)**Route:** Danebridge-The Roaches-Hen Cloud-Lud's Church**Total Distance:** 10.8 miles**Total Ascent:** 1913 ft**Weather:** Overcast with occasional glimpses of the sun, windy**Time:** 5 hours 12 mins

The original plan was the High Mountain Classic of Tryfan North Ridge & Bristly Ridge but due to forecast high winds in Snowdonia (gusts of 50 mph!) the Leader scrubbed this route and instead opted for another Classic on the programme, The Roaches. The last minute change caused one withdrawal (Graham due to work!) but four additions due to easier route (Mike A, Lynda & Brian & Nicki). A bit of transport chaos at the Pavilion is resolved and 3 cars are used (the Chairperson is responsible for our poor Carbon Footprint).

A easy and short one hour drive sees us arrive at the start in Danebridge, just past a very attractive Ale House, The Ship and The Wincle Brewery. The route sets off along a clear path up past The Hanging Stone and onwards across moor land paths to Roach End. Here the path ascends to Bearstone Rock, where coffee break is taken sheltering from a strong westerly wind, there is very limited distribution of Lesley's excellent home mad Flapjack. The path now continues along the broad Roaches ridge and on to the summit trig point, Despite the very windy weather there are excellent and extensive views from the summit, indeed somebody spots the Cheshire Matterhorn in the distance. The route continues along the ridge, spotting the odd rock climber here and there, before a scrambly descent is made down past Rockhall to a flat col.

A short ascent then brings us to the summit of Hen Cloud, we retrace our steps back to the col before we set off north west and then north past Shawtop to reach some welcome tarmac (Ian & Colin would be in their element). We follow this minor road back to Roach End desperately seeking a sheltered lunch stop as the rumbling from Lesley's stomach is becoming deafening. We turn down towards Gradbach Wood and once in the trees we find a sunny sheltered spot down in dingley dell, where we enjoy our lunch in the warm sunshine, spoilt only by Tony taking a waz in full view of the whole squad!

A slightly boggy path takes to the top entrance of Lud's Church (the name is attributed to Walter de Ludank, a follower of Wiclif, who is said to have held secret services here in the 14th Century). A short grovel

down a dank green gully brings us down into this savage slit (created by a freak splitting of the hillside). It is an impressive place covered in green slime, mosses, lichens and other stuff (Mike H has a more comprehensive list) we wander down and through, stopping only a few minutes to allow Tony to try and retrieve two pence pieces embedded in a tree trunk. (he is now 4 pence better off).

Emerging out into the sunlight the path zigzags it's way down to the river Dane where we join the Dane Valley Way for a gentle stroll back to the cars, there is a strong urge to visit the Wincle Brewery but this is resisted and we head for home.

An easy journey back to The Yew Tree sees us seated and partly rehydrated, ready to watch the Six Nations Rugby. We watch the end of the Scots hammering by the Welsh. This is followed by the whole Pub (apart from Brian & the recently arrived Gerry) standing up for La Marsellaise in the forlorn hope that would do the English a favour (when did that ever happen)

Jim