

**Trip Report: The Long Mynd****Date:** 25th March 2011**Group:** Les A (Leader), Mike A, Chrissie, Lynne, Lynda, Heather Foster, Hugh**Route:** Start and finish: Little Stretton**Total Distance:** 8 miles**Total Ascent:** Unknown**Weather:** Sunny and warm**Time:** 4 hours 30 mins

It was with some trepidation that I opted for another ascent of the Long Mynd, once before undertaken by the legendary Jim W who managed to get us lost during the first 15 minutes. However with considerable research, two maps and a guide book (plus a 'mentor' navigational expert standing by in case of error, I considered that I would be hard pressed to repeat Mr Walker's mistakes.

The seven walkers left the 'informal' car parking, (two -the Arrowsmith's- clad in shorts—yes shorts in March), next to a brook just outside the Ashes Hollow campsite, a lovely spot to camp (well any where's lovely on such a beautiful sunny day).

I had promised daffodils and there was a host of them to the left of the start. The walk up the valley was described as beautiful, picturesque, gorgeous, etc etc. The superlatives were coming thick and fast as the leader basked in the accolades for a few minutes before mentor navigator told her that self praise was indeed no praise at all. Pop went the small bubble and down to earth she fell. As we passed cottage beside the brook at Ashes the leader, with some past but scanty knowledge related that there was a connection with the local novelist Mary Webb.

*NOTE: Mary and Henry Webb spent their honeymoon in this cottage in 1912. She wrote Precious Bane, The Golden Arrow and Gone to Earth plus poetry.*

Continuing up the lovely valley we were making good progress and the top came into sight relatively easily and swiftly. The leader was persuaded to stop for coffee by the (albeit very remote) single track road. Peaceful at first a whole class of year 10's suddenly appeared from nowhere. Just as well we were well behaved otherwise we'd have been in trouble.

Onwards we strode across the track that led very quickly to the highest point, Pole Bank. The views were good though hazy.

Following the road we had a pleasant stroll towards the gliding club then turned down the last valley towards Minton.

Once again the valley scenery was perfect and we picnicked beside the brook with several of the ladies dipping their toes in the water which was deceptively chilly.

Down the valley we passed a very run down farm which did blight the scenery a little but farmers undoubtedly know best how to manage the countryside(!!).

Within a short time we reached Minton and had a short road section where we arrived a little too quickly for the leaders liking back at the cars.

A short day enhanced by the unexpected weather which added to the enjoyment. There was no complaining, no dissatisfaction, no mutiny-very strange for a BUMS walk. Even Hugh's knee seemed better for the experience and he managed to get loads of advice from the medically experienced BUMS-you know who you are Dr's.

Lesley