

Trip Report: Franklin's Star Charity Walk

Date: 28th March 2015

Group: Jim G (Leader) Bob, Tony, Lynn, Mike H, Mike A, Lesley, Gerry, John, Heather, David Foster, Chrissie, Colin, Ian, Dave and 60+ guests! Probably a few dogs as well!

Route: Moel Famau

Total Distance: 3.8 miles

Total Ascent: 938 ft

Weather: Dry but gale force winds

This walk replaced the normal Friday walk as we were supporting Tara's Franklin's Star (Danny) Charity to raise awareness and money for Brain Tumour Research.

This was originally scheduled as a walk up Snowdon via The Llanberis Path, however due to a dire weather forecast for Snowdonia, above 500m winds of 50 mph gusting to 80 mph the Leader, in conjunction with Tara, made the decision on Friday to switch the walk to Moel Famau.

There was a lot of frigging and re-jigging to do as people were added in and pulled out right up to the last minute. I think "having a hair cut" is probably the feeblest excuse in Bum's history, well so far. There is always one, and today the award goes to Ian who forgot his boots!

Setting out from Bunbury at the leisurely hour of 9.30 we made the short drive to the car park at Penbarra. There we are few people milling about but no sign of Tara, I asked around and was told that Danny had tragically passed away at 6 o'clock this morning. I, and everyone else, were totally stunned by the news, lots of tearful people trying to take it in. Nobody was sure who would now be turning up and of course there was no mobile reception for people to ring me. We decided to wait until 11 and sure enough more and more people turned up and Sam Moore set up her Wardrobe "Pop Up" Tee Shirt shop to distribute the Franklin's Star sponsored Tee Shirts, doing a brisk trade. We decided to wait a little longer until 11.15 to catch any stragglers. Rounding them all up we placed Bob as the sweeper at the rear to ensure we didn't lose anyone, which worked to perfection.

We set off up the road to Bwlch Penbarra where, once out of the shelter of the trees, the full force of the wind was felt by all. We turned right onto Offa's Dyke heading for Moel Famau in an ever strengthening wind, but at least it wasn't raining. This big broad path, on which even Colin could not get lost (?) leads to the enormous Jubilee Tower that adorns the summit of Moel Famau. By this time the whole squad was strung out along the path, sweeper essential, and as they arrived in dribs and drabs

they fought their way onto the top and a bit of shelter in the strongly gusting wind. We hunkered down awaiting the last of the squad, Bob the sweeper managed to sweep up a couple who were not even in our Group! We drop down off the Tower to the leeward side where we could regroup out of the worst of the wind. Get everyone together for a Tee Shirt team photograph followed by a minutes applause, a fitting tribute to Danny, especially with all his football connections. We then set off down through Clwyd Forest, thankfully now out of the wind, a wide path takes down in no time at all back to the car park. People are now saying their goodbyes, the Bums decide to have a picnic lunch, before setting off home. This walk attracted a number of Bums firsts, the saddest walk, the shortest walk, the biggest group and the earliest arrival back in the Yew Tree where we raised a glass in remembrance of Danny.

Jim