

Trip Report: Liberty Hall

Date: December 4th, 2021

Group: Steve (leader) & Sarah, Ann & Neil, Chrissie & Chris Latter, Mike W, Mike H, Ian, Gerry, Colin, Andrea, Lesley, Ray (and Flora)

Route: A loop from Corwen up to Liberty Hall and back via the North Berwyn Way

Total Distance: 9 miles

Total Ascent: 1380 ft

Route Aerial Video: <https://www.relive.cc/view/v1Ow3AV9PXO> (thanks to Colin)

Following a few late changes in personnel, a group numbering fourteen - plus Flora as the only canine representative - gathered at the appropriate car park in Corwen. The pessimists in the group, myself included, decided that it would be a good idea to don waterproof overtrousers at the outset, with the weather forecast promising some showers.

Sarah and I had done most of the intended walk a few months previously, but not the first bit to get out of Corwen, and so some advice from a couple of locals was needed to set us going up the correct lane. Within a few minutes we were onto a footpath through woodland that led to the first viewpoint of the day, named Pen y Pigyn. Legend has it that at this point the Welsh prince Owain Glyndwr, in a fit of rage, hurled his dagger from the hillside with such force that it left its outline in a rock below. Unfortunately we didn't have time to verify this story!

Continuing to climb steadily we reached the edge of the woodland and climbed over a stile onto open moorland. We followed a clear path winding through the bracken and heather up to our highest point of the day known as Liberty Hall. Here there are ruins of a shooting lodge built about 100 years ago to take advantage of the stunning views. However, the lodge was difficult to service because of its location and was soon abandoned, except for some use by the Home Guard during World War II.

The cold wind at this exposed spot restricted our coffee stop to 10 minutes and, following a boggy track, we began to descend. Before long we were back in sheltered conifer forest and joined the North Berwyn Way. This followed a pleasant path winding through the trees and eventually emerged onto a wide, open track, then a narrow tarmac road. As we headed down the road towards Cynwyd I picked up one or two hints about the need for a lunch stop and, by a stroke of good fortune, we soon found that the road was running next to a deeply-cut stream that had a footpath access. The path was a bit dodgy because of the slope and abundance of wet leaves but we all managed to find a spot to sit and consume butties. And thankfully there wasn't anything or anyone that slid down into the stream!

From Cynwyd we picked up a path running close to the River Dee along the route of a disused railway line that, until 1968, used to carry freight and passengers between Ruabon and Barmouth. Now it provides another section of North Berwyn Way. We emerged at the bridge of the A5 over the Dee and followed the footpath the short distance back to the car park.

The showers promised by the Met Office never really turned up, but I was still grateful to my overtrousers for providing wind protection!

Thanks to all the walkers for your company. Steve



The squad, except for photographer Lesley (thanks Les).

A few more photos can be seen at <https://photos.app.goo.gl/FjBzP3Goirvwrh4H8> .