

Another walk with the Master and, this time, his Whippet



Want to experience classic alpine powder snow conditions but the sinking pound seems to have wiped that off the list of “50 things to do-----“.

Fear not – all you need is a bit of luck and a guide to the Rossendale Way. The former was called Wednesday Dec 3rd and the latter is available from Rawtenstall Library!

That particular day was our 4th leg of this circular walk – a 45 mile tour of the heights around the Rossendale Valley.

Our first leg had taken us from Clough Head on the Grane Road via Musbury Heights and Bull Hill down to Stubbins on a crystal clear day. The next two Wednesdays were foul – we walked through the middle of Scout Moor Wind Farm and had a brief, ghostly glimpse of just one of the score or more of the giant edifices!

On the 2nd of these two days Derek cheered us up by falling face first into a bog. He was retrieved wet but undamaged!



Brown Wardle from Middle Hill

Then came December and what a day the 3rd was. You could have put crampons on before leaving the vehicle – a bit off putting for the rest of the passengers on the 464 Bus that the Master and his Whippet arrived on from Bacup!! It really was a day to savour - crisp snow, temperature never above freezing, no wind and brilliant sunshine.

Starting at Healey Dell, over Brown Wardle and Middle Hill the route only crosses one main road at Sharneyford before finishing near to the Deerplay Inn above Weir. The walk back into Bacup was all down hill. (Walker Tours had failed to spot that the bus into Bacup ran 20 minutes earlier on school days!!)

The 10th was another cold day with a lot of ice under foot but again sunny and we strung two sections together to finish at Rising Bridge. We also found a friendly and warm pub back in Bacup – the New Inn. Some web comments about pubs and their clientele in Bacup are far from re-assuring! - e.g. “The Queens – make sure you wipe your feet before leaving.”

The last section was only relatively short and a bit of an anti-climax to bring us back to the car-park at Clough Head where mince pies and a wee dram celebrated the end of a worthwhile walk. Yes I know the highest point was only around 400m but there was loads to see on the tour in an area probably few people consider as walking country but is well worth a visit.



Jim, Chris, Bob, Pete, Ian

Something else that makes this walk a bit different is the great 464 bus service that runs from Accrington to Rochdale every 10 minutes (!) and helps you avoid moving cars around on several sections. We even found a friendly traffic warden in Waterfoot who showed us where to park for free – even though the local chippy has a sign in the window banning them!

The three of us who completed the full round were joined on different sections by other stalwarts of the “Wednesday Wanderers” – at least one of whom was heard to say –“must come back to do the missing week”!!

Thanks to Bernard and Bob (aka the Master and the Whippet) for being out on all six days and to Peter, Ian, Derek, Jim, David, Tim and Arthur for their turnouts – some of whom walk at a reasonable pace!!

If you find yourselves with nothing to do on a Wednesday and want a walk, plenty of chat and a pint at the end contact any of us – but the most helpful will be Derek Miller –though plans are rarely hatched before Tuesday night.

The other rumour that you must have a bus pass is totally untrue – though eight of the nine above have!!

Chris W



Bob Tommason



On Brown Wardle



Chris Walker