

SKIDDAW SKAMPER !!

Wednesday 9th July 2003

Group Members, Roy, Cyril, David and Popsie.

Time Taken 8 hours 30 minutes – Distance 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles.

Height climbed 3,800 feet – Average Speed 1.26 m.p.h.

Cyril's return to the fold was much appreciated after his hiking in the Swiss Alps, as was the advent of coffee and cake at the start ! Thank you Margaret ! Popsie also returned to the mountains, having been pronounced fit for the fells again.

We were missing Bill, who was preparing for his week's stay at Abbot Hall, where he is to lead a party interested in Lakeland's writers, including Graham Sutton who lived under the slopes of Ullock Pike. Trevor was away inspecting the small railways of Wales; I don't expect to hear that he's been to the summit of Snowdon by train !!

As usual, after David collected us we travelled via the motorway to Millbeck, having heard a weather forecast that said the weather would improve. We set off up the side of Carl Side at 9.30.a.m. and within half an hour we encountered fine rain and mist. As we continued the ascent visibility gradually reduced and by the time we had reached the summit cairn of Carl Side (2400feet) it was poor. This summit saw two records broken, it was David's 100th separate summit reached whilst walking with the group, and Cyril's first summit since passing his 81st birthday. We continued to our next summit on Longside Edge (2405 feet) and then on to Ullock Pike (2230 feet). By now we felt we had earned our elevenses and shortly after we arrived the weather improved and we saw views for the first time. Looking down to Bassenthwaite is magnificent and we were fortunate, as were the many other people we saw at this time, to get good visibility.



Cyril, David and Popsie on Ullock Pike.

Films taken and refreshed we set for for Skiddaw, retracing our steps to Carl Side col, before we began the scree ascent to the ridge. On this section, as company we had four young lads who were staying at Wasdale, and weatherwise this was their best day yet ! Near the top we walked into mist once again , but shortly after reaching the summit of Skiddaw (3054 feet) we had a couple of breaks which made it all worthwhile.



Cyril with summit of Skiddaw in background.

Cyril as usual in charge of refreshments, decided that we should continue further before having lunch, so we reached Skiddaw Little Man (2837 feet) just on 1.30.pm. where we sheltered and looked over the vast spaces around Skiddaw House and surrounding fells.

Duly fed and watered we continued on our way over Jenkin Hill to our sixth and final summit of the day Lonscale Fell (2344 feet), the weather now much improved, and Cyril going well despite his 'troublesome knees'. It seems that walking in Switzerland has given him extra stamina !

As we joined the path from Latrigg car-park to Skiddaw House we met once again a father and son we had seen earlier, and in passing they stated how sad it was that Skiddaw House was now closed, a fact we discovered on last week's walk. Shortly afterwards we met a man fully laden who was obviously doing The Cumbria Way. He said he was looking forward to staying at Skiddaw House and he thought it would be the highlight of the trip, and he even had a bottle to share with the warden ! I mentioned, did I do right ? that it was now closed which was obviously a great disappointment to him. After a few minutes thought and discussion he said that he would return home and thanked us for making him aware of the situation. I still feel guilty !

We duly reached Latrigg car-park and all we had to do now, was walk on the road to Millbeck. A chainsaw massacre had taken place on the road approaching the car-park and a vast area of woodland had been put to the sword ! There was no walking down a leafy lane in shade, but now in the hot glare of the afternoon sun, and Cyril had lost his sun hat earlier in the day !!!!!!!

We walked on and past a former hotel which is now holiday flats where we had been politely told some years ago that tea was not served to non residents. That was before we were converted to the hard stuff ! Shortly afterwards we met a young lady with her daughter having returning from a dam that was unknown to the group. She was certainly a character, with many items of jewellery being attached to different places and as she walked away from us we noted two tattoos on each side of her.....
(Remainder of sentence censored).

After a break near the Chapel we duly reached the car and motored on to a new refreshment stop, The Sportsman Arms, a very nice place and one I am sure we shall visit again. After sampling the drinks we returned safely to the Yorkshire Dales with another superb day held in our memories. The next couple of walks will take place on Thursday 17th and 24th July, with the first walk hopefully visiting Trevor's 'pile in the country'.



Bassenthwaite from Ullock Pike.