

Walgrave Wild Walkers in the White Peaks (20 September 2008)

On 13th September, Malcolm Campbell wrote: "White Peak walks - a good choice for some of you still not certain about what we get up to. These are easier/moderate walks".

The participants for this outing, Dee Marriot, Maggie Saxon, Malcolm Campbell and John Thompson, assembled at Chez Campbell for an 07:30 departure and stopped en route for breakfast in Baslow at 09:05 before proceeding to the walk-off point (Landranger 119 - SK 151754) in Tideswell. Our first ascent was to a viewpoint in the village where we were able to take in the beauty of the "Cathedral of the Peaks" (see right).



I've only walked 50 yards and I'm sweating already!



From this viewpoint, a brief and easy country lane walk took us to Litton – a really charming village reminiscent of rural France – where we departed the 'hard-top', via the first of many stiles, to enter Tansley Dale.

"Keep up lad!"

Our walk down Tansley Dale (above), which involved a few easy ascents, eventually brought us to Cressbrook Mill, recently converted for mainly residential use.

Malcolm displays his 'knowing look'.



From Cressbrook we crossed the river,

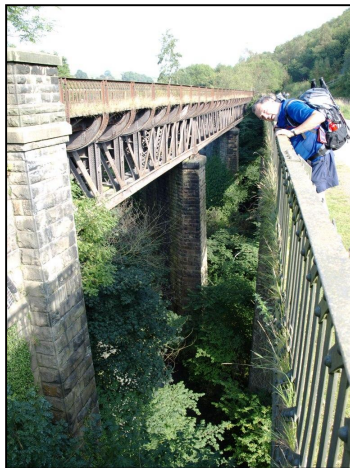
then followed the Wye in a south easterly direction, visiting a Water Jollie (above) on the way before climbing steadily to reach our highest point (290m), where we gained a magnificent view over Monsal Dale and stopped for a well earned lunch break (below).



This is what it's all about!

Adopting pose 3(b) on the Monsal Trail

A steady descent, down High Dale to Bull Tor, lead to a quite steep grassy path descending to Litton Mill, now converted (very tastefully) for residential use, where we crossed and re-crossed the Wye before heading in a westerly direction through Millers Dale along the Monsal Trail (the old railway track [see right] which served the many mines in this area) to arrive at the abandoned rail viaduct (below) where we descended to visit the old station.



Malcolm surveys the viaduct's corroding super structure, deeming it safe for us all to cross.

From here we walked for a short distance along the B6049 before climbing (another) stile to ascend to an information board describing Monks Dale, which was to be our final 'off road' section.

Monks Dale had been described by Malcolm as "difficult but one of those things you have to experience". It was not without trepidation that we set off, wondering why it was named 'Monks dale' along a pleasant and rather benign sheep track, leading to some very pretty water meadows (right), all of us enjoying the warmth of the afternoon sun.

*Blissfully unaware of what was to come!
Taking extreme care!*



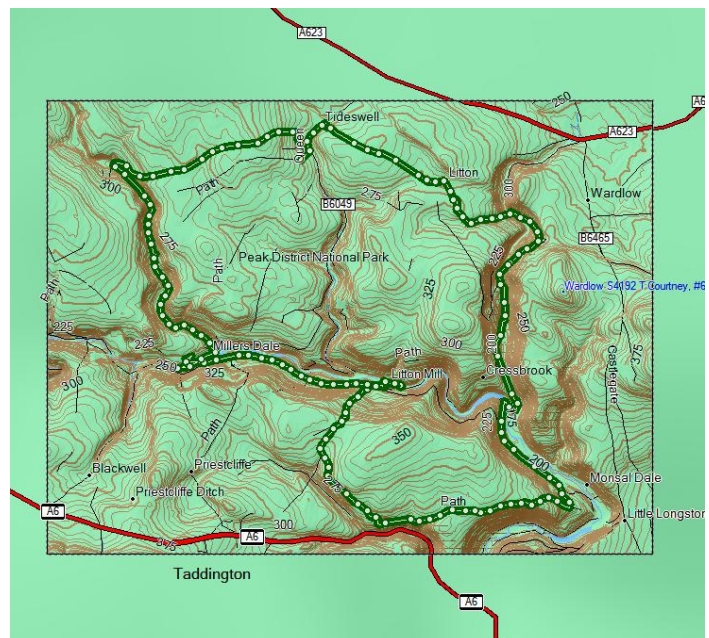


We then entered a rather gloomy forest section, where the temperature dropped a good four degrees, and we struggled over wet, slippery, moss-covered boulders (left) for around 30 minutes before emerging, with some relief, from the northern exit of Monks Dale.

We didn't see any monks, but one suggestion for its name was that, when the monks were not sufficiently chastened by wearing the hairiest of hair shirts, the abbot would send them on a walk through this particular dale!

Our return to the starting point was via a 2km section of 'black-top' leading to Tideswell Village, where we were rewarded with tea and cakes by our leader for the day (Malcolm). All agreed that this had been a most enjoyable walk. The weather had been really quite perfect, the company good, and with the possible exception of the famous Monk's Dale' section, a real 'pussy cat' of a walk.

It was generally agreed by those taking part today that more walks of this nature (meaning relatively easy), should be arranged in order to encourage the participation of those members of the Walgrave Wild Walkers that have not ventured out with us to date.



The Route taken (walked clockwise from Tideswell)

About the Walgrave Wild Walkers



Walgrave Walkers get Wild about farm gates

Walgrave Wild Walkers arrange ad hoc walks by email. We have 2 mountain leaders in the group with another working towards his leader qualification, so there is normally someone fairly experienced available to lead a walk. The only 'rule' that we have is that all suggestions, cancellations, inclusions etc. concerning walks is always emailed to the whole group.

Walks are not usually *unduly* strenuous as some of us are getting on a bit, but they are often in remote areas over rough ground - occasionally having to 'touch the rock'. However, to ensure that all tastes are catered for, and to encourage those that may be concerned that the walks undertaken by the group are perhaps too adventurous for them, we arrange walks classified as fairly easy, moderate or difficult. Members of the group can drop in or out of a walk at the last moment or suggest walks at any time.

Some of the WWW have yet to come on a walk (work commitments or some uncertainty as to how hard it would be) but we are slowly building up and we have had some excellent times in good company. We have even been known to end up at a pub!