

Castlehead weekend - 9th February 2019

Friday afternoon: Walk into Grange over Sands

Weather was best described as bracing but dry as we dropped down into an ever so slightly soggy Grange water gardens. The ducks and geese were very happy! Carrying on through Grange the weather brightened as we headed for the old lido at the west end of the prom. Now boarded up and a bit sorry for itself the hoardings displayed photos of it in its heyday. The wind, now sharper, made us realise that even on a good day the lido was built for a hardier generation. The walk back along the prom with the breeze at our backs, and brightened by the setting sun gave us fantastic views over the bay past Arnside Knott, Silverside and over to Morecombe and Heysham.



Then back to Castlehead to meet the rest of our group, quick wash and brush up and then tea ready on the table followed in the lounge by a roaring log fire, wine, beer, cheese and biscuits, choccies and the biggest bag of crisps in the world.... Oh and planning how to walk it all off the following morning!

Saturday: Walk from Torver on the Walna Scar road to Coniston

The weather forecast for the day was very windy with some rain so ten of us decided to do a low level walk of about 8 miles around Coniston.

We drove from Castlehead to Torver and parked up by the pub outside of which was a giant fish tank - which filled the inside of an old red telephone box! Great use of an outmoded facility.



We walked past the houses at Scarr Head onto a rough track which climbed for about a mile to the quarries. After going on a track between spoil heaps we came to a large old quarry which had a tremendous waterfall gushing into it.



We joined the Walna Scar Road and had a discussion about going to the top of the Old Man because the weather had turned out better than expected but decided that the timing wasn't right to add any extra to the walk. We turned right to walk down into Coniston with fabulous views of the Central Fells all the way down. After lunch in a park in Coniston we walked past Coniston Old Hall and then along the edge of the lake through the campsite and Torver Back Common. Just past the Torver landing stage we turned away from the lake and headed back to Torver and a welcome drink in the pub where we'd left the cars.

We passed fields of Herdwick sheep on this walk. One of the sheep had fallen on it's back and we watched for a while as it kicked it's feet in the air and tried to right itself which it eventually did just as we were wondering if we should intervene.

A great day out in the hills!

Sunday: Coastal walk from Arnside to Silverdale returning via Arnside Knott

Once again very lucky with the weather given the dire forecasts from last week. A beautiful clear day and wind easing down. Parked up along the quayside in Arnside. Tide was out revealing large areas of firm sand as we walked along the beach heading for Silverdale. Great views westward to Holme Island, Grange Over Sands and Humphrey Head. Headed inland to dodge the creek at New Barns and then around the headland at Frith Wood to Blackstone Point. The path followed close to the cliff edge around to Arnside and Park Points. Some of the group returned to the easier walking on the sands enjoying the wide sunny spaces and the invigorating breeze. Just before the caravan park at Far Arnside we met up again (along with some very bold Robins) for coffee, and the last of the sack of crisps! (Blackpool tower just visible with binoculars)

Briefly losing the sun it was back onto the beach for a while until the sand became too soft and we headed for dry land and the road toward Silverdale. Skirted inland just before the village and headed up toward King Williams Hill gaining some glorious views over the bay and the hills beyond. Headed through the woods toward Arnside Tower, stopping for lunch in the well-kept grounds of the Caravan Park. Sun still shining!

Refreshed, we headed down toward the tower where the view opened up to the east and the low lying Silverdale Moss wetlands. Then across to the Knott and a steady climb through the woods to a junction where the group separated, some of us heading on the more direct lower route back to Arnside while the remainder made for the viewpoint at the top of the wood. The effort was rewarded with magnificent panoramic views over the sun drenched Lake District hills including Coniston old man, the Langdake pikes and Helvellyn.

A fantastic walk and so lucky for early February. After that it was quite literally downhill to the quayside and a welcome coffee in a packed Arnside Old Bakehouse.



Contributions by Viv Kenwright and Ann & Steve Bimson