

Fell walking Report May 2023 by Annie Clouston

Bob Tuddenham led this month's walk starting at Middleton-in-Teesdale, up along the Pennine Way then over Harter Fell, where we stopped off at the Trig point (653ms) and then across the moor to descend Holwick Scar, down to the south bank of the Tees by the Wynch Bridge at Low Force, and back along the well-defined path to Middleton.



Nine of us headed off from the Fountain at 10am on the most glorious of days, sunny, dry and not much wind. Walking conditions were good, no mud, easily fordable streams and the views, particularly from the Trig Point, were 360 degrees and fabulous. Lovely flowers, particularly by the river, and birdsong and curlew-mobbing characterised our progress. It was truly delightful.

We ate our snap perched on slabs of rock at Holwick, whose precipitous descent proved a little trying for the digestion. I am always intrigued by what walkers bring for their snap, the variety, the means of keeping it safe in the potential mosh-pit of a rucksack, the ritual of keeping up energy stocks when the need is great. I personally favour a really simple solution – a whacking great slab of Christmas Cake, calorie- and booze-loaded, easy to carry, easy to eat even when your hands are frozen solid, and definitely a mood-enhancer. Fell walking is the only time I allow myself (tightly disciplined in the naughty but nice department) to enjoy the fruits of my annual October labours. This way it lasts a whole year and seems to get better as the year wears on. My companions carry an array of their personal preferences – soup, very neat precision cut and packaged sandwiches, fruit (fresh and dried), kitkats, even vacuum packed chestnuts – now there's sophistication! Never underestimate the value of good snap!

On the subject of which, we ended our walk at the very hospitable Samuel James Deli café in Middleton, where because the sun was still shining, we were able to sit en masse outdoors. The whole day was special, so thank you to Bob and my excellent companions.

