

### **3 BRITISH PEAKS in ONE DAY**

The story begins in October of last year when Bro Andy Carter of my Acklam Lodge No 6248 suggested it might be time for the lodge to stage another outward bound challenge. We had previously completed the coast to coast cycle ride in Sept 06.

Needless to say it didn't take too much persuading, and with 2008 being my year in chair of the lodge we quickly got down to organising the event, and penciling in a few training runs.

Initial response from most people was one of skepticism and doubt that the challenge was achievable, but with careful planning going into the logistical side of the event we knew we had a real chance of completing the challenge, as long as the team taking part got themselves fit enough for the event!!!!

Early January came around and we started on our local training runs around Roseberry topping and on the Cleveland Way national trail. As the next few months came and went, we upped the anti and increased the pace. Training runs soon consisted of 15 mile up and down hikes with the last man finishing getting the round in!!

As Spring turned to summer, and the drop out rate increased we moved onto tackling the Yorkshire 3 peaks 12 hour challenge, which we tackled twice in 4 weeks, we were all now questioning each others sanity somewhere around this point.

Finally September inevitably came around and the squad was assembled.

17 walkers 3 drivers and 2 on the support team in another vehicle.

We met at 6am on Friday September 5th at the Bluebell Hotel in Middlesbrough, and set off for the long drive to Fort William near Ben Nevis.

Once there we had a light lunch, team talk, backslapping and photos before we got down to serious business and set the stopwatches at 3.30pm crossing the footbridge to climb the huge mass in front of us and give our fantastic 5 person support crew some much needed rest.

On the mountain itself everything went according to plan with the fine weather being kind to us and we reached the summit as a team easily within the 3 hr recommended limit, another round of backslapping, and we were heading back down the track before we really had chance to take all the fantastic views we had at our disposal.

We had been told by many a serious walker that the real challenge was not in the going up the hills but more the coming down them. This certainly seemed to be the case as by the time we reached the bottom 2 hrs later for our soup and pasta , muscles ached that we didn't even know we had!!

Still we had completed the highest of the 3 mountains on time, surely it was all plain sailing from here on in!

Despite the severe weather warnings we had received that had hit Wales and the north of England, we were full of confidence and left for Wasdale Head at 9pm.

Driving in awful conditions coming out of Scotland, our drivers did us proud in motoring through the 265 miles without a significant stop, arriving at Wasdale Head at the foot of Englands highest mountain- Scafell pike at around 2.30 am.

We were quickly on the move, donning our head torches and hit the mountain head on in pitch blackness and in the face of torrential weather

Teamwork really was the order of the day here as cramp threatened to take a grip of many of us and split the group up, luckily we all made it up the notorious scree path on to Mickledore and then to the pike itself on time, for the briefest of photo-shoots (and a backslap of course) before we quickly started the descent

Maybe tiredness kicked in at this point, or just complacency, but what we feared may happen happened and we

become disorientated and took a wrong turn in the complete darkness. An hour's worth of "squabbling"(and a bit of breaking daylight) seemed to do the trick as we eventually got back on track and started the descent.

Realising the clock was now firmly against us it was with heavy hearts that we set off for the 220 mile trip to Pen-y-pass at the foot of Mount Snowdon in Wales for the final climb.

If the drivers had done us proud coming out of Scotland then they saved the day going to Wales as they really hoofed it and somehow, despite the monsoon like weather, 2 of the 3 vehicles managed to make it to the start point just 20 minutes after the intended start time, fighting chance of completing the estimated 4hr trek.

With utmost haste we headed off up to the summit of Wales highest peak, regretting that the weather wasn't a little better so we could take a few more pics.

We reached the summit at around 1.45pm, had a quick turn round(and backslap) and headed off back to Pen-y-pass and to the finish line.

Determination at this point outranked aching and bruised limbs as we raced back down the mountain, resembling more an Olympic 100 metre sprint than a mountain rambling outfit as we all finished to rapturous applause from the support team, finishing between 2.45 and 3.25 pm.

With the weather being what it was we headed off to the "Luxury" "bunkhouse we had rented out for the night 12 miles away for a photo-shoot, and to reminisce about the weekends events before those left in the party, who could summon up what little energy they had left, headed off down to local pub to further carry on the celebrations.

Now the aches are a long forgotten memory and we are now thinking ahead to our next challenge, it has been suggested that we do a 24hr 3 pubs challenge!! Funny is that because the response to this one seems to be quite popular!!!!

We estimate that the Challenge will raise upwards of around £5000 for the masters local charities which are: Zoes Place Baby Hospice, Teesside Hospice, Great North Air Ambulance, and the Alice Kate Murphy Trust Fund

Stephen Hall WM Acklam Lodge No6248



Winding down after their great achievement from left to right W.Bro Mark Roberts (Acklam ) Bro Steve Clarke (De-Brus ) W.Bro Jim Sutcliffe (Vulcan ) W.Bro Steve Hall (Acklam ) Bro Denny McKibbin (Acklam ) and Bro Bob Lynch (Acklam )