

Tuesday 24th November 2015, Weston Mouth & the Donkey Sactuary with David Buss

"Beyond Sidmouth"

Our group of 12 made a pretty good job of filling up the car park on Salcombe Hill (which says more about our inability to car share than a particularly large turnout). The usual suspects were in attendance, plus two very keen walkers from Clitheroe who were visiting one of our number. From the start, we made a beeline for the coast path and a minor diversion to view a Toposcope (we didn't believe David either, but Google it and see).



ten happy smiling people, pix by david

Then we followed the coast path along to Weston Mouth for a coffee stop on the beach. My memories of this section were the multitudinous steps and in the words of Little Richard - slippin' and slidin' - on the mud. Chris kept the seat of his pants clean on this occasion, whilst Sue Buss did go down onto one knee but this didn't qualify as a fall according to the strict OVA definition, i.e., mud on bum. Views were romantically ethereal and claims of Portland Bill sightings were assigned to the 'and pigs can fly' category. Light rain caught up with us as we ascended from Weston Mouth and we walked through the village to find welcome shelter in the excellent café at the Donkey Sanctuary.



thirteen happy smiling people, pix by david

After lunch, the rain having passed on, our leader decided to warm up our muscles with a bit of 5-bar gate vaulting. It seemed strange that the gates were locked on a public footpath until we saw that we'd missed the footpath (wrong side of the hedge again, David), but no harm done. Proceeding into Salcombe Regis we stopped at the church and were informed that Norman Lockyer was buried there. This guy, Norman, was a big cheese in the area around 100 years ago. He founded, amongst other things, the astronomical observatory that now bears his name and discovered the element Helium through his spectroscopic analysis of sunlight. Suitably enlightened, a little bit of uphill through the stately pines of Salcombe Hill brought us back to the starting point. We were pretty much dried out by then and our leader had given us a good walk and made a decent effort with the weather. He also gave us loads of interesting info along the way, which I've forgotten already - no problem, it'll all seem fresh again on the same walk next year!

Jon Roseway
27th November 2015