

## Monday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2018, “Walking with the Ancients” with David and Rosie Conner

A day out on Dartmoor, one of my favourite locations for a walk. Our starting point was the picturesque village of Widecombe in the Moor. The weather looked promising, cloudy and cold but with good visibility as we set off along lanes up to Bonehill Rocks. Here we had a quick coffee break enjoying the flapjacks provided by David’s wife Rosie who was unable to walk with us but joined us at various points along the way. Refreshed we headed out onto the wonderful wilderness of the moor walking along footpaths beneath Chinkwell and Honeybag Tors.

We walked on through Natsworthy where one of our group who used to live in the area expanded on life as a child here with memories of being cut off in bad weather. Next we headed out towards Hamel Down with magnificent views in all directions, passing Highland Cattle on our way.



We paused at the RAF memorial stone erected in memory of 4 airmen who crashed into the hill during fog in 1941. Then we arrived at Grimspound with its impressive Bronze Age remains of an ancient settlement that had comprised of 24 stone roundhouses within a massive stone wall.





Here we had lunch taking in the magnificent views, the grazing sheep and cattle and the large scale of the settlement.

Saying goodbye to Rosie who had joined us for lunch we headed up to the trig point and cairn at Hameldown Tor with more panoramic views.



From here it was easy walking slowly downhill passing Hamel Down Cross, Broad Barrow, Single Barrow, Two Barrows, boundary markers and various Cairns including what is thought to be a kistvaen (see photo below) or burial tomb found in the centre of a cairn circle.



Fairly soon we could see Widecombe Church tower below us and thoughts of tea and cake ensured a rapid descent.

It was a lovely walk encapsulating the wild and bleak nature of Dartmoor along with many historic relics. We did indeed feel like we were 'walking with the ancients'. Thank you David and Rosie for taking us out on such an interesting walk.

Stella French