

Bala to Lake Vyrnwy - 17th July 2019

From Chris S...

I was at the **Lockside Café** on Wednesday morning where we had, I think, seven **Wednesday Riders** including **Graham** and **Vicky** on their tandem and **Brian** and **Glennys** on their e-bikes. I was very pleased to see that we were joined by around eleven **Pensarn Pootlers** including an e-bike and a tricycle. The **Wednesday Riders** were ready to go at 10:30am as planned but the Pootlers were just starting their breakfasts so I asked **Richard** to take the WR's while I waited for the Pootlers, who declared that they knew the way anyway, and were happy to make their own way when they were ready. **Jane** and **Charlie** phoned to say they would be along later and would catch up. I was feeling under the weather since I was still trying to shake off the 'flu so I was happy to wait.

In due course we set off and I led as far as the turning beside the lake. At this point I realised my pedal was no longer properly attached and that I must stop. At the first stopping point I found **Brian** and **Glennys** and assisted with some mudguard adjustments.

Everyone had gone by now, so I texted **Richard** asking him to take over and made my way back to my car, passing **Jane** and **Charlie** as I went. (I later found his phone was dead!) I had managed a total of three miles!

I felt a little despondent as you can imagine as I rode home, or at least back to the car, especially since one rider had commented that they thought the only reason we were doing a ride from **Bala** was because it was convenient for me, being near my caravan. I hope they felt better about it by the end of the day! I was more encouraged by the following comments;

From Jane...

"Thanks for a stupendous cycle/walking! route. Can't believe I've never been up those roads. Though I might need to consider disc brakes."

From John M... (Pensarn Pootler!)

*"A great ride with the Wednesday Riders from CUK Chester and North Wales. 10.30 start from **Bala** and then along the east (quiet) side of the lake to climb the **Bwlch y Groes** and the descent to **Lake Vyrnwy**. A short break at the café by the dam before returning via **Hirnant** and **Penybontfawr** where we found signs telling us that the **B4391 to Bala** was closed! Decided to press on as there was no practical alternative and to our relief found that*



the road was passable owing to the fact that the workmen had gone home mid to late afternoon."

The Pensarn Pootlers

From Chris S...(again)

The WR's took the classic return route over the Hirnant Pass whilst the **Pootlers** took the longer, but less steep route through **Hirnant village** over a completely different pass, that is also called the **Hirnant pass!**



I saw **Richard** today and learnt that one error, due to my lack of a recce, had occurred. The second cafe at **Llanwddyn** was closed, - no longer opening on Wednesday's it seems. The other cafe there was used but failed to impress..

This is the third year I have done this route with either the

Wednesday Riders or **Two Mills**, so perhaps we should give it a break next year - I do understand it's a long drive, but on the other hand, quite a lot of people, doing it for the first time, have reacted as **Jane** did above.

Text - Chris S

Photos - Glennys and Pootlers

Bwlch y Groes
Hen dirwedd hynafol a gwedd newydd y dyfodol
Old hags and new life

Oddi yma mae mynyddoedd yr Aran i'w gweld ac arnynt ddrifannau mawr sy'n berthau prin estyn hyn. Dyma ydy'r llinellau doon trechus ar y lluchweiddau - sylffon y mawrwydd sy'n britho' bryniau.

From here it is possible to see the Aran Mountains. The thick black lines on the side of the hills are the edges of peat bogs, which cover the hillsides - an increasingly rare sight these days.

Rydych yn sefyll ar y bwlch uchaf yng Ngorlledd Cymru, tua'r gogledd, gellir gweld Cwm Cynhwyl i'r mas Dyffryn Dyfi tua'r de.

You are now standing on the highest pass in north Wales. Towards the north, Cwm Cynhwyl is visible while the Dyfi Valley lies towards the south.

Bwlch y Groes oedd lwybr y parerffwr o Gogledd Cymru i Ddyffryn Dyfi. Fe gatodd y groes ei waed gan ymbellaeth i lawr y bwlch a gwyddodd mai hysbysu'n ffordd a chrydwr. Bwdai wedi rhoi cyssur i deithwyr uwch y gweddol canol. Yn 1969, fe osodwyd y groes sy'n sefyll yma heddiw yn lle'r un wreiddiol.

Bwlch y Groes was the pilgrim's route from north-west Wales to St. David's in the south. A little further down the pass is a cross, placed there as a symbol of faith and strength. It has comforted lonely travellers since medieval times. In 1969, pilgrims replaced the original cross with the one that stands there today.

Petlechi ch'n sefyll yma yn y 1520au neu'r 1810au, byddoch mewn perygl o gael eich tano gan gar Austin, gan fod y ffordd yn cael ei deimwyddio gan yr awyr Austin i bech'r ceir.

If you had been starting here in the 1520s or 1830s you would have been in danger of being run over by Austin's fast drivers used this road to beat the cars.

Fe abwddi rhyw Sais hwn yn Hellfire Pass, ond i rhododd y boblogaeth leol ei enw gwreiddiol yn ei llec, sef Bwlch y Groes.

An Englishman called the Hellfire Pass, but the local population returned it to its original name of Bwlch y Groes.