**A Christmas Walk Inspired by a Victorian Clerk, Saturday 19th December 2015**

38 walkers, 18 miles – leader Keith Lane

"I thought a buzz was building up about my walk. I had a couple of texts from prospective walkers and when I got to Harrow on the Hill station at 08:45 there was a good sprinkling of the usual suspects. But nothing prepared me for the stream of LDWA members marching through the ticket barriers from the scheduled Marylebone train – a real jaw-dropping moment.

I am not sure if 38 is a record number in the annals of London LDWA but surely it has to be for a leader who has not led a weekend walk for the LDWA before!

We marched up the Hill to St Mary's church where I told anyone in ear shot all about Nathaniel Bryceson (he could not have thought his diary entry would have inspired such a gathering 169 years later).

Gordon volunteered to be back marker and we set off for the coffee stop although it was becoming increasingly obvious that ordering coffee would be totally impractical so I announced that it would be cancelled but we would go up to it as there are free toilets next to it. It didn't occur to me that being a Jewish cafe it would be closed on Saturdays and certainly not that the toilets would also be closed for the same reason. When we got to the next toilets at Hampstead Heath northern extension there was a sizeable queue.

Changing the lunch stop proved to be a blessing because of the variety of venues that could accommodate most tastes and numbers. A few members left the walk at the lunch stop and using side streets alleyways & courtyards it was an unproblematic walk into London until we hit the tsunami of shoppers as we tried to navigate our way across Oxford Street. The group was reduced to 10 members after we regrouped as some left and others got lost. This must be another record. However when we got to the crib at Trafalgar Square walkers who had made their own way appeared and others were in the pub.

Fortunately, contrary to our fears the pub wasn't packed and we gathered round a table with our very own Father Christmas and a festive time was had by all.

Photographs by Bola Baruwa and Keith Lane