

# Yorkshire Dales Review

No.55 Summer 1996



- *CNP campaigning for natural beauty*
- *Three Dales fallacies*
- *ARC - The conscience of the Dales?*
- *Chairman's report*
- *Swaledale's railway manta*



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DALES  
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# Yorkshire Dales Review · No. 55 · Summer 1996

Journal of the Yorkshire Dales Society

Editors Colin and Fleur Speakman

## TIME FOR TALKING

On page 6 is an article by Pip Land, of the Association of Rural Communities, Yorkshire Dales National Park Area, which was written in response to our editorial in the Winter 1995 Yorkshire Dales Review.

The Dales ARC indicates that there is no direct link with the Northumberland ARC as such (and there are still differing stories of how that group came into being), and that they are not anti-National Park, but want to make the National Park more democratically accountable.

Many YDS members, reading Pip's article, will feel reassured. Some of the wilder statements about "no confidence" and demands for the abolition of the Park, were, she suggests, a result of "long pent-up grievances" of local communities expressed at public meetings and are not ARC policy, which is to work constructively with the National Park Authority.

This is something the Yorkshire Dales Society welcomes. Indeed, the YDS also believes in a fully democratic, fully accountable Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. Nor can we dismiss the real concern of local communities or allegations of double standards, officer arrogance, duplicity in either keeping information from Committee Members or only giving part of the story, of insensitivity to local interests and the needs of working farmers.

These are serious matters which everyone who cares about the Dales will agree must be looked into. However there is always a danger that mutual accusations become personal and personal animosities, for whatever reason, have no place in the debate.

The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority has just adopted the Earth Summit "Local Agenda 21" strategy to work for a sustainable Yorkshire Dales. This is highly commendable, but there is a huge difference between adopting a policy and implementing it. Local Agenda 21 is essentially a "bottom up" approach, and will only be achieved by working in partnership with local communities, not imposing views upon them. Like it or not, ARC is likely to

develop into a powerful voice within the National Park representing local community interests, and will be a key player in any Local Agenda 21 strategies.

It's time to start talking. Let's see where we share common interests with ARC, and can work together, for example over issues such as help for small farmers, Dales transport, housing, local shops - and ensuring that the National Park fully consults with everyone before taking action on major issues. We urge our own members living in the National Park to find time to get along to ARC meetings, to take part, and perhaps invite local ARC members to Daleswatch meetings.

At least when we find time listen to each other's point of view, we've taken the first step to finding solutions.

Colin Speakman

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## Council for National Parks - Campaigning for Natural Beauty

*Editors' note: For the 60th Anniversary of CNP, (The Council for National Parks) Colin Speakman was asked to write the following article which we think will be of interest to YDS members. We would also like to congratulate CNP on 60 fruitful years of campaigning and we wish them every success in the future.*

Politicians, nationally and locally, anxious to prove their green credentials, constantly boast of their achievements in the creation and protection of our eleven National Parks.

Reality is a little different. Our political masters, of all colours and persuasions, have over the last 60 years often found it expedient to find reasons not to pass the kind of legislation we need to protect our finest landscape areas, to resist their designation, and to cut their funding to the bone.

Some people, supported by military interests, developers, the road and motor sport lobbies, have used levers of power to delay, frustrate and damage the wish of the overwhelming majority of British people to protect our finest areas of natural beauty. Indeed in Scotland, the only nation in Europe (apart from Albania) not to have a single National Park, the unrepentant voice of these same interests still holds sway.

That we have National Parks at all in England and Wales is almost entirely due to the dedicated efforts and vision of a small number of individuals, who, with the support of a number of leading voluntary bodies, formed a small but very professional fighting force, now known as the Council for National Parks.

CNP is just sixty years old. It began life on May 26th 1936 as the Standing Committee for National Parks of the CPRE and CPRW, which in turn grew out of a resolution of a Conference of voluntary organisations a year earlier. The Standing Committee (SCNP) sought early implementation of the recommendation of the Addison Report, completed in 1931 which proposed the establishment of National Parks in Britain. Typically five years later, the Government had yet to take any action.

Norman Birkett QC, one of the founders of the Friends of the Lake District, was SCNP's first Chairman, and John Dower, architect and Rambler, its first Secretary. One of the first acts of SCNP was to persuade no less than 80 voluntary organisations

to write to a still recalcitrant Government to request action to create National Parks, and in 1938 Dower followed this with a well argued pamphlet "The Case for National Parks".

Outbreak of War delayed but did not stop the campaign for National Parks. Dower, now working for the Ministry of Town and Country Planning, was asked by the Ministry to write a report about National Parks. Another great SCNP campaigner, Tom Stephenson, journalist and Secretary of the Ramblers' Association, became Press Officer for the same Ministry. Dower, although seriously ill from tuberculosis, and working from a cottage in Kirkby Malham, in the Yorkshire Dales, published his report in 1945. This in turn was developed into specific proposals by the Hobhouse Committee in 1947, and these proposals were the basis of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Though there were serious weaknesses in the Act, it was a major forward-looking piece of legislation, establishing not only National Parks, but Long Distance Footpaths, Definitive Maps of public rights of way, and the National Park Commission (which later became the Countryside Commission.)

But even with the Act on the statute book, the SCNP's work was far from over. Between the passing of the Act and setting up of the ten National Parks between 1951 and 1957, (added to by the Broads Authority in 1989) there was a rush of major development proposals in the areas concerned, including hydro-electric schemes in Wales, and mineral extraction in the Peak and Yorkshire Dales. Though the SCNP were able to prevent many such schemes, vast quarry permissions rushed through in the early 1950s still remain in the Yorkshire Dales.

Over this period and the next few years the SCNP had to fight on two major fronts - to ensure that the promised Parks were actually designated, with their correct boundaries, often in the teeth of bitter opposition from County Councils who resented any interference in how they managed - or mismanaged - the countryside, and to prevent crass development proposals such as a motor racing

circuit in the Peak District, expanded military bases on Dartmoor, a funfair complex in the Brecon Beacons. These were victories, but there were also significant defeats for conservation including the massive oil refinery development at Milford Haven in Pembrokeshire, the A66 Keswick by-pass and the nuclear power station at Trawsfynydd in Snowdonia. Much of SCNP's work was, and continues to be, that of a firebrigade, supporting local societies or often leading campaigns to prevent huge, inappropriate developments, such as quarries, major road schemes, military firing ranges, leisure complexes in individual National Parks; but much effort also has gone into more positive policy work, commenting on or proposing better legislation, producing guidelines and policy statements, for national and local government and for the conservation movement generally, on such issues as roads and traffic, commercial afforestation, reservoirs, mineral extraction, pylons, road signs. Another important aspect of work was to ensure, through its many contacts, a sufficient number of high calibre people to serve on the new National Park Committees.

In 1977 SCNP became CNP - the Council for National Parks. It was soon a Registered Charity, appointed its first part time member of staff, expanding to a small full time team as resources allowed. During the 1980s, work grew steadily. The Council's own membership-based support group, the Friends of National Parks, was formed in 1981, and under the Directorships of Fiona Reynolds (1980-87) and Amanda Nobbs (1987 to present), there followed a steady stream of major campaign documents, policy papers, educational material, research, conferences, briefing meetings with key Ministers. These led eventually to the 1995 Environment Act, which established the stronger, independent National Park Authorities, as envisaged by Dower and Hobhouse. These have also been given wider objectives, including a concern for cultural and rural socio-economic issues.

In its Diamond Jubilee Year, what does the future hold for CNP? In some respects even more vigorous

campaigning. The Environment Act is a step forward, but still has serious weaknesses. National Parks have never been more popular, attracting at least 100 million visitors a year. Yet they have never been under more severe threat - from more traffic and new roads, mass tourism, suburbanisation, erosion, military activities, gigantic quarries, decline of hillfarming, or the subtle but pervasive degradation of landscape and wildlife habitats because insufficient resources are available to maintain essential infrastructure. Under its influential Presidents, Lord Hunt, the late Brian Redhead, Gerald McGuire and the current President, Sir Christian Bonington, CNP has managed to raise its profile and attract many more supporters, both through the Friends and through its many, broadly based environmental organisations.

Many more people in Britain belong to environmental groups than belong to political parties. CNP has become a focal point for that not-always-silent majority who believe that our heritage of natural beauty is a priceless national asset, something which in Brian Redhead's words is:

*"Not ours, but ours to look after..... Future generations will have inventions which we cannot even dream of, but with our help they will also have the National Parks that we know and love."*

Colin Speakman, Council for National Parks 1996



"Crackpot Hall" Near Keld.  
Photograph by John Potter L.R.P.S.

## Three Dales Fallacies



My worst fear is that the Dales will become one huge theme park - that a thousand year old tradition of indomitable, self-sufficient pastoral farming will become part of the show-biz. Will the time come when tourists will actually prefer "virtual reality" to the real thing? At a time when we are being bombarded with images and slogans, when thickets of brown tourist signs along the main roads rob a Dales trip of its sense of adventure, as well as littering the glorious landscape, facts are not being allowed to get in the way of a good presentation. In brochures, guidebooks, television productions and videos, Dales fallacies are re-cycled. Arthur Raistrick used to say that once a false idea gets into the popular mind, there's no shifting it.

**The Ribblesdale Fallacy:** How many navvies were to be found at Ribblesdale during the construction period of the Settle-Carlisle railway? The figure 2,000 has often been quoted down the years. It has bobbed up again, with the renovation of Ribblesdale station providing a topical tie up. Two thousand navvies were stated to have been associated with Batty Green, just one of the several so-called shanty towns. The figure is wildly exaggerated and represents a third of the total Settle-Carlisle labour force at its peak.

I think I have come across the first mention of that seemingly extravagant estimate of 2,000 men. A report dated September 1875 mentions that many of the huts on the moor had been removed but "there are many inhabitants between Thornton-in-Ribblesdale (this was surely Horton) and Dent Head. It is said that there are still, including the country people amongst the railway population, 2,000 inhabitants." So the estimate of 2,000 was for the total population in a swathe of country some ten miles long. Incidentally, this tract of "very wild and hilly country" was patrolled by only one constable, PC Walker, who lived in Horton.

**Cobblers at Thorpe:** When I visited the Raistricks at Home Croft, Linton-in-Craven, Arthur was usually in his little den, which could be curtained off from the rest of the house, and Elisabeth his wife busied herself in the kitchen. I was lucky now and again to call on baking day and was soon being provided with coffee and fresh scones. Elisabeth Raistrick was a fine local historian. We once discussed the hoary tales of the Cobblers of Thorpe, the tucked-away village near Burnsall, where (to judge by the old Craven tales) dozens of cobblers made footwear which was sold to the monks of Fountains or Bolton. Elisabeth researched and wrote me an article for *The Dalesman*, beginning with the words: "Traditions based upon fact tend to push events further and further back into history

(where the facts are more difficult to check), to increase the number and importance of the people involved, and to add frills and fancy work!"

Elisabeth considered the writings of Halliwell Sutcliffe, one of the best-known (and loved) authors in the Dales. His Dales reputation is based on his residence at the White Abbey, Linton, within living memory, and his romantic book *The Striding Dales*, which has gone into umpteen editions. Halliwell Sutcliffe wrote in 1909 that "every cottage in Thorpe" had a cobbler in it. He gave the number of cobblers as fifty two! Bailey J. Harker, an Upper Wharfedale writer, writing in 1869, had mentioned 40 cobblers, but when he included Thorpe in *Walks around Grassington*, he raised the number to sixty!

Elisabeth could find no evidence that in monastic times the cobblers of Thorpe were numerous, important or famous. In the Poll Tax of 1379 there was no cobbler in the whole parish of Burnsall. By the eighteenth and nineteenth century, cobblers were being noted, the vast majority of them living in places other than Thorpe. In 1740-59, eleven cobblers were named, one of whom lived in Thorpe with a possibility that two others lived there. Cobblers increased in number, thrived, declined with the fortunes of the lead mining industry. By 1880-99, of the four cobblers in Burnsall parish, none was to be found at Thorpe.

**The Barden Halberd:** Arthur Raistrick, legend-buster, was amused when I mentioned having been to the cafe at the former retainer's house by Barden Tower where I saw a halberd (combined spear and battle-axe) which was said to have been carried to Flodden Field (1513) by one of the bold Craven men mustered by the Shepherd Lord Clifford, who was particularly fond of Barden Tower.

Arthur referred to documentary evidence of the preparations to meet the Jacobite rebellion in 1745. At Barden Tower were 45 officers' pikes, and staffs, 30 halberds, 30 drums and 48 drumsticks "enough to lead a considerable number of tenants if they were called out." He thought the halberd I had seen was most likely part of these stores rather than, as is sometimes said, "part of the equipment of Flodden Field."

Other stories which were in vogue last century are flawed historically, but continue to give colour and romance to the dale country.

Bill Mitchell

*\* Editors' note: Our warm congratulations to Bill Mitchell, writer, editor, journalist and raconteur who is being presented with an honorary doctorate at Bradford University this month. Bill was elected our 6th honorary YDS member at the AGM in May.*

# ARC - The Conscience of the Dales?

*In the Winter issue of the Review no 53, we wrote about a new organisation in the Dales called ARC. Since then correspondence has been exchanged and a friendly meeting took place in which ARC were promised the right of reply in the Yorkshire Dales Review. We reproduce the article below.*

When Tom Knowles wrote a letter to his local newspaper - the Darlington & Stockton Times in July last year, he little realised he was about to start a grass-roots movement throughout the Yorkshire Dales National Park which would provide many small shopkeepers, farmers and other ordinary people with a chance to work together for greater democracy in the area.

He received so many replies in response to his letter that by September he organised the first meeting of the Yorkshire Dales Association of Rural Communities (ARC). At that meeting it was decided to hold a series of public meetings throughout the Dales to see how many people would be interested.

At Kirkby Malham in December Tom Knowles - whose family has been involved in farming in Wensleydale for over 100 years - reiterated: "I am not against the National Park Authority as such. I want to see this lovely landscape preserved so my grandchildren can enjoy it. But we want a say in the decisions which are made by the National Park Authority which affect our lives. It is this lack of democracy and accountability that, I believe, leads to many of the inconsistencies we see."

And at the open meeting at Hawes one man stated: "We live in one of the most undemocratic parts of the country." Neither Tom Knowles nor those who helped him organise the open meetings realised quite how these would be used by many to air their long pent-up grievances about the National Park. It was from the floor of the packed Kettlewell meeting in October that a vote of no confidence in the Yorkshire Dales National Park Chairman and officers was proposed and passed.

But over the following months as representatives from throughout the Yorkshire Dales joined the interim committee, the emphasis was upon building more constructive, positive policies that would give ordinary people a chance for their voice to be heard through such a group as ARC. The group has

been evolving over the past nine months and its constitution is just taking shape.

This states:

*The primary objective of the Association is to work for the economic and social well being of its members within the YDNP area by acting as a "watchdog" over the YDNP Authority's activities including, inter alia, actively to encourage greater democracy and seek a more competent level of planning in its widest sense."*

It has been the policy of the ARC almost since its inception that anyone could join if they lived or worked in the YDNP area - but YDNP committee members or officials could not be committee members of ARC. No-one has been refused membership, not even Mr Robert Heseltine, the chairman of the YDNP Committee, who was offered a membership form at ARC's open meeting at Burnsall on November 9th.

ARC is not an alliance of wealthy landowners who want to restrict public access to the countryside and see the National Park as a threat to their aspirations (Yorkshire Dales Review, Winter 1995) nor a group which fails to recognise that the Dales are part of the national heritage. But ARC does believe that those who helped to create such a beautiful landscape should be respected and listened to, and that those who want to make a reasonable living in the area shouldn't be undercut by the National Park Authority.

By 1997 the National Park authorities will be autonomous quangos with considerable power over the livelihoods of those living in the Parks. In such a situation there is always the danger that an emphasis on preservation could lead inexorably to the Dales becoming one large theme park with many small shopkeepers and farmers actually driven out of business by the additional financial pressures of living in such an area. So, as Richard Harvey, the National Park Officer, stated in November when discussing ARC: "It is always valuable to have a conscience."

*Pip Land (Ms)*

# Dales Summer Transport News

Since writing in the Spring Review, there is more news, some good, some bad.

Funding has now been agreed for the 807 service, which will run on Sundays with improved train connections to and from Hawes at both Ribbleshead and Garsdale, but the down side is the loss of the mid day connection with Dalesbus 800 at Hawes and two of the three trips into Swaledale.

Further improvements in the Settle and Carlisle train service include operation of the additional seasonal trains, 09.47 from Leeds and 15.19 from Carlisle on all weekdays throughout the summer, whilst the two Sunday trains to and from Lancashire now call at all stations in the Dales.

Additional buses supported by North Yorkshire County Council (Pride of the Dales service 899) run on Sundays until September 1st between Ilkley/Skipton stations (linking with MetroTrain services) and Bolton Abbey, Grassington and Buckden, as a result of which Service X50 will not be diverted via Bolton Bridge as originally planned. On Saturdays and Bank Holiday until 14th September Bibby's service 580 will link Settle Station with Malham and Ingleton, times planned to meet trains at Settle.

The "Fountains Flyer" is running again also on Sundays until September 1st from Leeds/Bradford, Otley to Pateley Bridge and Fountains Abbey, but as a result of a lack of agreement on funding, the Nidderdale network established last year has been lost and there is no Nidderdale Rambler service through Upper Nidderdale to Lofthouse and How Stean Gorge this year. On a brighter note, however, Harrogate & District are to be congratulated on extending their 24 service to run Harrogate-Pateley Bridge-Grassington on Sundays and Bank Holidays, offering a service to Stump Cross Caverns after a lapse of many years, and connecting with Dalesbus 800 at Grassington.

Brief mention was made last time of Keighley & District Dalesbus 804, Leeds-Malham-Hawes-Sedbergh. Apart from providing a through Leeds-Malham service for the first time, the 804, in conjunction with Dalesbus 800 opens up a wealth of new opportunities for walks, including Grassington-Malham-Settle, Malham-Helwith Bridge-Horton, Helwith Bridge-Pen-y-Ghent-Horton-Pennine Way, and the Dales Way which it meets at Gearstones and Sedbergh. I hope it proves a success, enabling me to include the service in the Dales Way Handbook for 1997.

*Alan J. Sutcliffe*

# Footpath Erosion - an Innovative Approach

The Yorkshire Dales National Park have shown their concern to halt footpath erosion caused by the popularity of Wainwright's Coast to Coast long-distance route, especially as it passes over Nine Standards Rigg between Swaledale and Kirkby Stephen where the ground consists of deep peat topped by fragile moorland vegetation.

The aim is to vary the Coast to Coast according to the time of year, to give different routes time to recover. There are now four different routes in the vicinity of Nine Standards. Over the winter, when the ground is at its most vulnerable, more durable routes are offered. The scheme is supported by both farmers and landowners. Infra-red stile counters will provide the National Park Authority with information on whether the scheme is working. We reproduce on the back cover the map showing the different routes, though unfortunately not in colour. For further details contact David Crabtree (Field Botanist with the YDNP) on 01756 752748.

# "Protecting Wensleydale from Mineral Madness"

*Wensleydale ..... in all its rich diversity and character is a new leaflet put out jointly by the CPRE and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT). Inside is an alarming aerial view of Whatley Quarry in the Mendip Hills with the question, whether we want something similar to happen in Wensleydale. Ancient woodlands, rare mosses, common, but delightful wild flowers are all under threat and the local residents, especially in Preston under Scar, will suffer from permanent dust in the atmosphere as will farm animals and wild life. Large scale quarrying has already been approved in the Yorkshire Dales up to the year 2046. YTW and CPRE are campaigning for a Judicial Review to tighten up the law. You can help by writing to the Secretary of State John Gummer and to your MP and perhaps by sending a gift to help fighting funds either to the CPRE, Hunton Mill, Bedale, North Yorkshire DL8 1LU or to YTW 10 Tofit Green, York YO1 1JT. Send an sae for the joint leaflet and fuller information.*

# Chairman's Report 1996

This year has found your Society looking at the influence on the Dales of activity on a national and even international level following major recent legislation. First we had the Rural White Paper published in October last year. It features some pretty pictures of sheep grazing by Derwentwater and people getting on a community bus in Devon. It also features low cost housing and the withdrawal of the right to buy from villages of less than 3000 people, but no funding or suggestions for increasing the current stock of homes. On farming the only suggestion is to look to Europe. The Paper also promises to "encourage good environmental practice among quarry companies". But there is no compulsion. In general you have colour coded statements of policy, but no vision and no element of investment. Of more immediate effect on the Dales was the Environment Act of 1995, in particular those sections of the Act which cover National Parks. Your Council has responded to both the original draft circular itself and the National Park's response. I cannot add to the masterly summary written by your Secretary in Focus in the recent issue of the Review. We expect the changed constitution of the new National Park Authority will start taking effect from October this year, but we will have to wait to assess the significance of the new Authority on the Dales when it takes over next year. More recently we have taken the opportunity to put forward additional names to the Secretary of State to represent the wider view of the community.

We have also given our full support to the Council for National Parks (CNP) which has of course been much involved in lobbying for the new legislation. We eventually sent eight delegates to the Conference for National Park Societies last November at Losehill Hall, National Park Centre, in Derbyshire. This was held on the theme of 'Sustainable Tourism', the title giving delegates much food for thought. Only four of the 72 delegates appeared to give some practical support by using public transport, and three of them were YDS members! All members enjoyed the excellent facilities and we all benefited from the discussions both within and outside the conference hall, though no single clear message came through. The benefits of shared experience of National Park Societies are obvious though the best method of communication between us awaits clarification.

As your Chairman, one of my most enjoyable experiences was at Muker Show on the occasion of

our first presentation of the YDS Trophy for the Best Bale of Hay. You will have read in the *Review* there was a slight hitch, as our worthy prizewinner, seven year old Sam Newborn, had to retire to bed with tonsillitis. Maybe there will be another opportunity for him next year. We would like to thank the members of the Swaledale Agricultural Society for making us so welcome and Charles Hepworth, our local council member, for his hospitality and assistance on such a successful day for the Society.

Our attempts to improve access by public transport as an alternative to the private car for visitors had some success last year with the Nidderdale Rambler being taken over on a commercial basis, and the introduction of the "Fountains Flyer". This was the first Sunday bus service into Washburndale for many years with easy access from Leeds and Bradford.

On five occasions the Society organised guided walks from these services and I would like to thank all who helped organise and lead the walks. In fact most of the large numbers of passengers attracted to the service seemed well able to make their own arrangements.

As an experiment, the National Park operated a free Park and Ride service on Summer Sundays along Upper Wharfedale from Grassington to Buckden, and Dennis Cairns led a walk using this service on what must have been the hottest day of a very hot summer. We have continued our usual pattern of summer events most based on public transport, helped by our own expert Alan Sutcliffe, with walks in Ribblesdale led by Hilary Baker, and a return visit to The Yorkshire Dales Railway at Embsay to see the exciting progress in extending the line to Bolton Abbey.

We have had a wide selection of topics for the winter season, including Cave Rescue, Alice's Story from Ripon, Yorkshire Dialect, Ancient Woodland, Yorkshire Mixture (some exceptional photographs) and the role of Fountains Abbey. Again can I thank not only the speakers and walk leaders for such a successful programme but in particular those who always help at such meetings, Rod and Judith Clough for suffering the vagaries of strange kitchens to always bring us excellent tea on time, and Sheila Marks for organising the venues and facilities with such efficiency. All our events and membership matters are handled by our

committee which include the above as well as Dennis Cairns, Eric Jackson and Chris Hartley under the chairmanship of Fleur Speakman. We would welcome any further ideas for an event which you may think would be of some interest, even if only to a minority of members.

Our main publicity medium as well as communication with the membership, is the *Review*. As it has now settled in its new format, we have had much praise from other bodies and individuals due to of course Colin and Fleur our joint editors, as well as continued help from our printer, John Mason and designer David Lightfoot of Skipton. May I remind you that we always need articles and photographs, particularly in black and white for the *Review*. With this in mind, under the leadership of Grace Cairns, we have launched a members' Photography Competition for pictures taken on events during the current year.

It never ceases to amaze me that so much of the work of the Society particularly in the office is performed by our volunteer helpers Brenda Parkin, John Blakeborough, Eric Jackson and Sheila Marks. There are still, however, many increasing costs to the Society, particularly in producing and posting the *Review*. Venues are also having to increase their prices to fund inevitable maintenance and improvements, particularly to kitchen areas. However, I am very reassured by the superb management of finances by our Treasurer David Smith, helped by Company Secretary Alan Pease. They have helped us to contain costs and avoid the need for increasing subscriptions since 1991. A modest increase in members after much hard work by Council, and by yourselves in your covenanted subscriptions and donations has also helped us. We hope we can depend on your continued support with our new arrangements which alas involve an inevitable increase in subscriptions.

Another area where there is much hard work is in our Daleswatch. Activities are presided over by Vice Chairman Jim Burton and our local convenors. We get increasing compliments on the *Dales Digest* produced with much hard work by Dawn Burton and superb value for all interested in Dales matters at an annual cost of £6 to cover printing and postage. We are pleased a Daleswatch group has been reformed in Dentdale. The Upper Wharfedale, Airedale, Ribblesdale and Upper Wensleydale areas being particularly active. We would like to thank the convenors for their hard work in a very important sphere of the Society's work.

Your Council has continued to meet within the

Dales area with new venues at Burnsall, Hebden and Settle, as well as Gayle. It has proved to be very valuable to have representation now from virtually all areas of a large region and as Chairman I would like to thank my fellow Council Members for their wonderful support and hard work, often involving much travelling. In particular I would like to thank my Vice-Chairman Jim Burton for all his help, particularly when I have had to miss meetings and events.

We have also had a long meeting with the National Park Chairman and his officers which has helped to further establish a good working relationship with the National Park Authority, particularly in view of impending changes in structure. I hasten to add, this does not mean we always agree with the Park Authority or its decisions but we are in a very strong position to put forward our points of view, often looking from the different perspective of our members who live and work outside the Park boundaries. In future we hope to assist the YDNP with an exciting project to twin up with the Low Tatras National Park in Slovakia, as well as to make a positive contribution to The Millennium Partnership which, it is hoped, will bring about closer partnerships between different interests as well as outside money.

Again the wide experience Colin and Fleur, our joint Secretariat, have brought to our affairs, has paid dividends in such relationships. We extend our gratitude for their proven dedication to the Society's interests.

This Annual General Meeting is the opportunity for you, the members who are the Society, to make your views known. I trust you feel the Society has had a successful year. I thank you all for your support and welcome your comments.

C.J. Wright Chairman



The youngest entrant at Muker Show.  
Photo taken by Chris Wright

# Swaledale Jottings

## SWALEDALE'S RAILWAY MANIA 1846-1912

Talk of resurrecting the Wensleydale Railway has revived interest within the Dales apropos alternative transport and railway branch lines in particular. In this connection Swaledale has its own modest railway history which merits reiteration.

The Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century spawned a complementary revolution in transport. Initially communication improvements focussed on roads and inland waterways. Towards the end of the 1700s demand necessitated a third network which was provided by the development of the steam locomotive. Rapid railway expansion followed over the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The first public railway to enter Yorkshire was a spur line of the pioneering "Stockton to Darlington" which reached Yarm in 1825. A proposal to continue the line to Richmond was thwarted by the cost of bridging the River Tees. A few years later another spur was completed to Middlesborough. In the late 1830s competition arose between the "Swaledale and Wensleydale" and "Richmond and Cleveland" railway companies to connect Richmond with the proposed Darlington to York line. Merger of the two rivals in the Citta Dilla and Croft Railway Company failed to produce any results. Finally, in 1846, the North of England Railway Company succeeded in connecting Richmond to the completed Darlington to York line. Hence rail reached the entrance to Swaledale but penetrated no further. The station at Back of Friars was the railhead for the dale's lead mining industry and the line profited primarily from the inward carriage of coal and outward carriage of lead ore and lime.

Local Yorkshire lines were eventually connected to the main north-south trunk lines, joining the county network with London and Scotland.

Trans Pennine routes linking the east coast, midland and west coast tracks followed.

In order to compete with the London and North Western Railway (LNWR) west coast line to Carlisle and Scotland, the "Midland" overcame enormous engineering difficulties to open the famous Settle-Carlisle line in 1875. This was the last great trunk route to be built entirely by navy muscle power. The line is currently much in the news as a tourist

attraction and with the forthcoming archeological excavation of the former Batty Green railway construction camp.

A progression of the trans-Pennine network was the probing of branch lines up some of the remoter Pennine dales, notably Nidderdale, Wharfedale, Wensleydale and Teesdale. These lines provided a local stimulus for the export of agricultural produce, quarried limestone and lead ore, and the import of coal and manufactured goods.

Richmond's rail connection, coupled with the later Nidderdale, Wharfedale, Wensleydale and Teesdale successes fermented a localised form of "railway mania" in Swaledale, lasting until 1912. The craze sparked at least six, different, abortive proposals for a Swaledale line above Richmond.

The case for a Swaledale line lay in the financial attraction of lead and quarrying exports coupled with the import of coal for smelting. The case against was made by the severe nature of the terrain, that would have imposed engineering difficulties of unaffordable immensity. It is not surprising that all proposals were abandoned in the planning stage. None would have been viable.

In the 1860s the North of England considered a line from Settle to Darlington, via Ribbleshead, Widdale, Wensleydale (Hawes and Leyburn) and Richmond in Swaledale. Allied with this was an unlikely proposal for a Swaledale line from Hawes to Richmond, burrowing under the Buttertubs.

About the same time an equally implausible scheme was mooted to continue the railway from Richmond to Kirkby Stephen via Arkengarthdale, passing over Sleighholme Moss, or up Swaledale by tunnelling under Tailbrig.

In 1868/9 a group of Swaledale speculators with mining interests failed to persuade the north Eastern Railway Company to lend support to their proposed Richmond and Reeth Railway Company.

In 1878 the "North Eastern" and "Midland" railway companies cooperated to complete the Hawes to Garsdale link, permitting rail traffic to pass both up and down Wensleydale. Hawes generated considerable milk and butter traffic.

In consequence, in 1881/2, two more Swaledale

schemes were put forward. The first to connect Richmond with the Wensleydale line at Leyburn via Downholme. The second to provide a route from Richmond to Garsdale Junction, passing up Swaledale and over the moorland divide to Hawes.

In 1885 a more pragmatic scheme for a light railway beyond Richmond to Reeth was promoted, primarily to export chert mined on Fremington Edge, but the North-Eastern Railway declined to provide the necessary support.

The concept of a light railway was reactivated in 1912 to boost the export of chert and lead ore, together with limestone for flux and gannister for furnace lining in the Cleveland iron industry. The track was to be laid south of the Swale to Marske where the river was to be bridged and then continue on the north bank to Low Fremington.

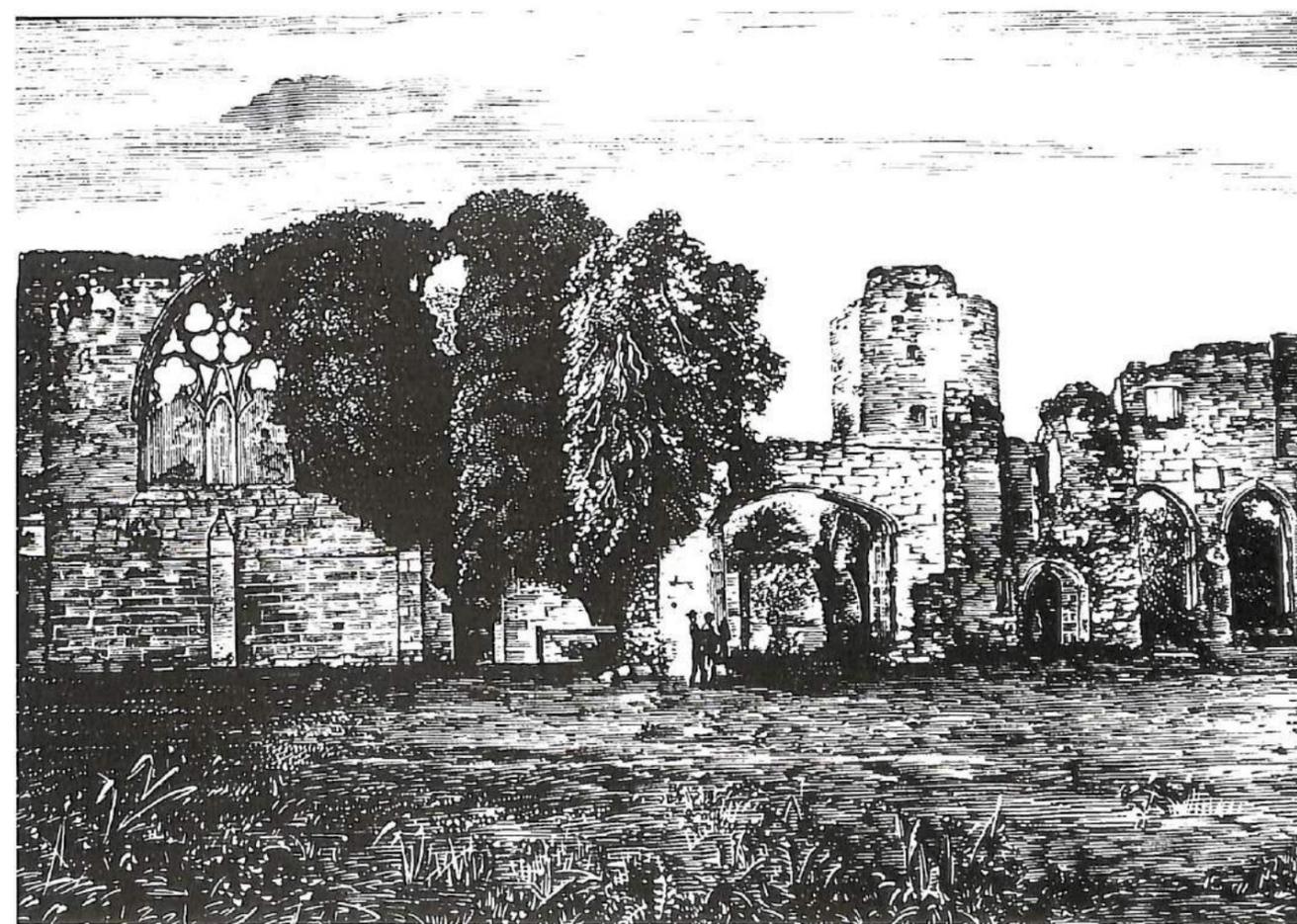
The would-be "George Hudson" or "Railway King" of Swaledale and the driving force behind the light railway schemes was a James William Close whose company mined chert deposits on Fremington Edge. His backing by local entrepreneurs was

varied, encompassing other mining concerns, local land owners and traders. Further support was sent by MPs, the clergy, North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and Reeth Rural District Council (Reeth RDC). Unsurprisingly the promoters failed to raise the necessary finance.

The First World War brought commercial railway speculation in Swaledale to a sudden and final demise. Rather, emphasis switched to military traffic serving the army camp at Catterick. To such an extent that Catterick was provided with its own station at Camp Centre, on a line built to the garrison from Catterick Bridge Station. Leave specials ran every weekend to most major cities until the end of National Service. The last train left Camp Centre on 26th October 1964.

Five years later, in 1969, the Darlington to Richmond branch line closed in the wake of the 1963 Beeching Report.

*Charles Hepworth*



Drawing of Easby Abbey

## Photography Competition

YDS Members are reminded about the Photography Competition to be judged in May 1997. Remember we are keen for you to photograph YDS events throughout the year either colour prints or black and white. The Rules are in the Spring Issue of the YDS Review. If you need any further details, please ring either Grace or Dennis Cairns on 01282 812956.

## Membership Urgent

The last quarter has been marked by considerably less renewals than is usual for this period and we are naturally very concerned. If members have forgotten to renew, please do so as soon as possible. If your last YDS Review posted out in early April went astray, please let us know about this or alternatively, if for some reason you did not receive your last magazine, but there was no reminder when there should have been, we would also like to know about it. Membership rates are still £8 Adult, Family/Couple £12, Single Retired £6, Student/Unwaged £6 and Retired Couple £9. Please send your subscription as soon as possible to the YDS office, addressed to: The Yorkshire Dales Society, The Civic Centre, Cross Green, Otley, West Yorkshire LS21 1HD. Telephone (01943) 461938.

## Refurbishment

The YDS Society will have undergone some essential refurbishment during June and July. We hope that the office will be disrupted as little as possible. Please bear with us if this causes members any problems. Our aim is to increase efficiency in the future.

## Farm Holidays

The Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group has a list of accommodation provided by FWAG members where many farms have a conservation area and short trails for use by visitors. The leaflet gives details not only of farm accommodation, but also self-catering and holiday cottages in a farm setting, caravan sites, B & B, camp sites, guest houses and hotels and a camping barn. Details from FWAG South Parade, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL7 8SL. SAE appreciated. Or phone 01609 783632 or Fax 01609 774985.

### STOP PRESS:

**Dales Diary with Luke Casey returns from July 1st - every Monday evening on YTV/Tyne Tees for 10 weeks. August 19th features Colin Speakman along the Dales Way.**

## Book Reviews

**THE THIRLWAY JOURNAL: A Record of life in early Victorian Ripon edited by Jean Denton and published by the Ripon Historical Society & Ripon and Harrogate and District Family History Group.** ISBN 1 872618 26 X. Available from Aldergarth, Galphay, Ripon HG4 3NJ. Price £7.50 + 85p postage UK, Europe £1.80, surface mail, + £1.50, airmail zone 1: + £3.00, airmail zone 2 + £3.50. Cheques payable to Ripon Historical Society.

What started initially as a young man's attempt to be a good Christian by keeping a diary primarily for religious reasons, has now been published to give the modern reader some fascinating accounts of many interesting facets of Victorian life. The building of the Leeds and Thirsk Railway, insights into the family printing, bookbinding, stationery and bookselling business, social conditions, family holidays and contemporary forms of entertainment are just some of the sections.

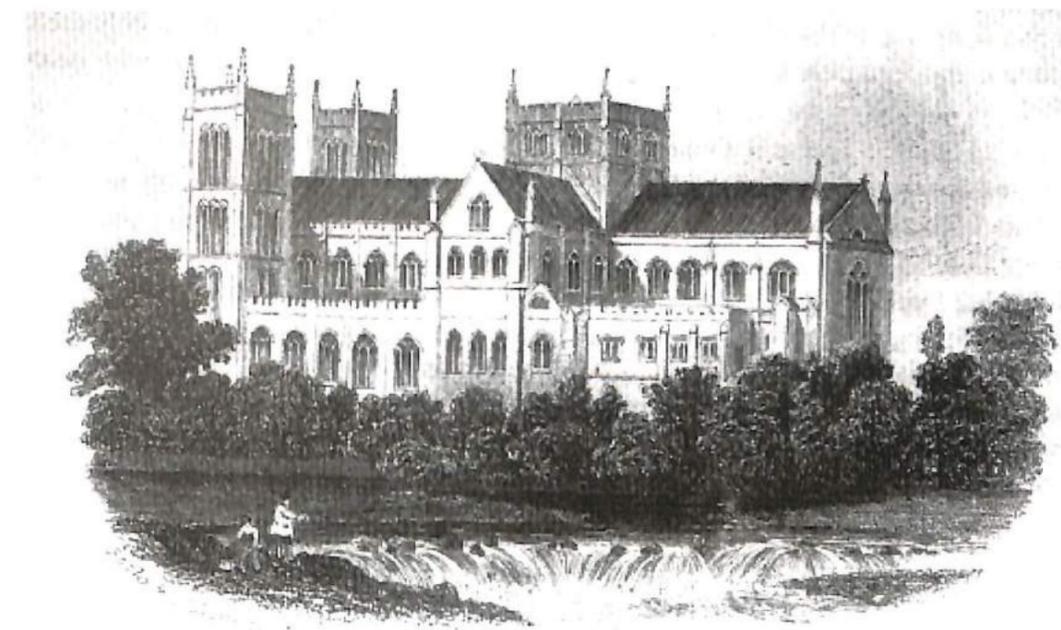
The Journal was written mainly between 1838-59 and at its best gives a vivid sense of immediacy to

such events as the near flooding of the shop cellar when one of the barrels of ink sprang a leak:

*December 29 1842: About 7 o'clock one of the barrels of ink in the cellar sprung a leak which was fortunately discovered soon after the mischief begun by Henry and John (apprentices) who called my father and I to it. The barrel was not emptied until several gallons were on the floor. The greater part was saved by lading it up with tins, saucers, sponges etc. The ink ran from the cellar under the shop down the steps into the pantry, but did no mischief.*

The notorious effects of the Potato Famine in Ireland and parts of Scotland, caused Queen Victoria herself to proclaim a General Fast on April 24th 1847, obviously a sincere reaction, but unfortunately large-scale practical measures might have had far more effect.

Interesting to hear that the newly fledged Mechanics Institute engaged the great actor Kemble in November 1845 to read *Hamlet* on one night,



Ripon Minster  
from 'The Thirlway  
Journal'

another book about an area which now has just too many walking guides. Though there are some less usual walks, several, inevitably given the need to find 25 walks, are walks which have appeared many times in many books,

and on the second night *Much Ado About Nothing* for which he was paid £40. While the description of the work on the railway and its attendant difficulties comes vividly to life when on one occasion a "great quantity of earth" had been tipped to form the embankment between the Ure and Magadalen's Chapel though as Thirlway pointed out "they make no progress, the land being boggy." The frustration comes over sharply to us over the years of the drain made to convey water off the land under the embankment which had blown out and was rendered of no use.

A rock harmonica made out of Cumberland slate is a new instrument intriguingly described at a concert in the Ripon Public Rooms and even on his honeymoon in Scotland, Thirlway's habit of observation makes him notice the women bringing huge bundles of washing to a drying ground, spreading it out and sitting there knitting till it dries.

*The Thirlway Journal* is conveniently divided into sections, with useful illustrations and a street plan of the sites mentioned in the journals. It makes highly enjoyable reading.

FS.

### 25 WALKS: THE YORKSHIRE DALES

Paul Hannon HMSO £7.95 ISBN 0-11-4957258

It's always a pleasure to review a Paul Hannon book - impeccably researched, extremely well written with maps that are a model of clarity, with some good, if generally small, photographs. The format is handy size for a rucksack pocket. Though they are all circular walks from the car, public transport information is given.

My reservation is that - excellent as it is - this is yet

and whose paths are now deeply incised in the ground. Perhaps we need to persuade publishers to have a moratorium on some of them. What about some more linear walks which are less car dependent? What about making more use of the glorious and still largely underused footpath network on the edge of the Dales?

So as long as you appreciate that you'll find lots of other people with a variety of other guide books (including the National Park's own leaflets) on these walks, this is as good a pocket guide as you'll find around.

CS

### YORKSHIRE'S ROOTS: Howard Beck SIGMA Press £7.95 ISBN: 1 85058 490 7

Many YDS members will know Howard Beck for his excellent *Gaping Gill: 150 Years of Exploration*, his lively magazine articles and his stunning photographs. *Yorkshire's Roots* is a highly readable look at prehistoric, Roman, Celtic and Saxon and Viking history in Yorkshire, with a strong focus on the Dales. Though extremely well researched, this is not an academic book, but essentially one which reflects a deep love and understanding of the countryside and outdoors, and the origin of the landscape. It is a practical book, almost a walkers' guide, though you need to look up the map references yourself and sort out the footpaths to access many of the features described. Some excellent photographs, from major aerial photograph collections, but also many of Howard's own, and excellent detailed drawings of key sites such as stone circles and iron age forts. A valuable reference book, as well as one that tells a fascinating story in its own right.

CS

# Daleswatch Report

Current Issues of Concern in the Yorkshire Dales National Park

## 1. The Grassington Hospital Site

Grassington Hospital was built some 70 years ago to cater for the then perceived best method of dealing with tuberculosis patients. This involved lots of fresh air and the complete isolation of patients, and required the provision of hospitals on sites located well away from inhabited areas and set in remote localities in the open countryside.

Since then the techniques of patient care have progressed, forms of treatment have changed, and many former tuberculosis hospitals have become redundant. The Grassington site was abandoned in 1985 and the deserted and crumbling buildings, which are located in a very prominent position, now form a disagreeable eyesore in one of the most beautiful parts of an especially beautiful National Park. Furthermore, money exists that would enable the buildings to be removed completely and for this site to be restored to its former usage (agriculture).

If no buildings were on the site, no one would think of developing a settlement in that locality. In a crowded island the countryside of the Dales is a rare and precious commodity. It is difficult to see how the historical accident of the existence of an incongruous set of redundant buildings can justify proposals for development on the site, whilst their situation in a remote and windswept spot (attributes essential to their former use) also points to the unsuitability of any such scheme. The buildings could be removed relatively easily. Only Mammon seems to stand in the way. A good solution should be possible.

## 2. School Buildings

The principle of sustainability has been defined by the Environment Minister as "not cheating on our children". And clearly temporary pre-fabricated school classrooms are not sustainable whatever their definition. But the fact that the National Park Committee has recently been compelled to approve the retention of two such unsuitable premises (at Threshfield and Embsay) as places within which members of the new generation will spend their formative years and learn their values, cannot be seen as less than cheating in the most blatant fashion. That this disgrace occurs in places

nationwide does nothing to mitigate the charge. The only way the Park Committee could have escaped their unwilling complicity would have been to do away with the classrooms altogether. It is easy to say, but "something" should be done. And quickly.

## 3. Traffic and Visitor Management

Possibly the greatest single problem facing the Yorkshire Dales is that caused by its success. It is such a good place to come to that a growing number of people do just that. Which is fine in itself. You can't blame them, nor should we want to stop them doing so. But it causes problems. And the problem of increasing traffic is possibly the most urgent of those currently facing the Dales.

As always, resources for meeting it are nowhere near enough. But they are improving. A series of meetings of the National Park's Transport Working Party recently published preliminary proposals for an imaginative **Traffic and Visitor Management Strategy**, and this has now been followed by an increase in the funding to be made available over the coming year. Such measures are only a start, but they point firmly in the right direction. Perhaps most important of all has been the insistence by the Working Group that urgent attention be given to the provision of a viable public transport system for the use of National Park residents. A significant number of the inhabitants of the National Park do not have direct access to a private car. They should not be disadvantaged by living there. Now is a time for those concerned for the long term future to pull together. The proposed strategy deserves and should get the enthusiastic support of all who love the Dales.

Jim Burton

## LIST OF DALESWATCH LOCAL CONVENORS

Airedale/Malhamdale Norma Galvin 01535 655169  
Dentdale Judith Newsham 015396 25486  
Nidderdale Jean Johnson 01943 880234  
Ribblesdale Hilary Baker 01729 840609  
Swaledale Charles Hepworth 01748 886397  
Wensleydale (Upper) Alan Watkinson 01969 667785  
Wharfedale (Lower) Peter Young 01943 466858  
Wharfedale (Upper) Ken Lord 01756 753202

# Events

*Enjoy the Dales by joining us on a longer summer walk or on an interesting visit.*

*Dogs are welcome on YDS walks but **must** be kept under control on a lead.*

*Our Saturday Walk and Lecture Series starts again in October. Admission to the lectures is £1.50 per YDS member and £2.50 per non-member. Morning walks will normally finish between 12 noon to 12.30pm in plenty of time for lunch.*

**SUNDAY JULY 14TH DALESBUS WALK IN SWALEDALE - REETH TO GUNNERSIDE.** Walk Leader Alan Sutcliffe, tel: (0144) 483326. Catch the 09.30 X97 Dalesbus from Leeds City Bus Station, 10.05 from Harrogate Bus Station, 10.35 from Ripon to Reeth for a 7-8 mile moderate walk along Swaledale to Gunnerside. Return by Dalesbus 803 at 17.40 to Harrogate, Leeds etc... Book an Explorer ticket. Pub or cafe lunch (or packed lunch) at Reeth before start of walk at 12.30pm.

**SUNDAY AUGUST 18TH VISIT TO BANCROFT MILL STEAM MUSEUM & WALK IN THE BARNOLDSWICK AREA.** Walk Leader Dennis Cairns tel: (01282) 812956. Meet 10.30 at parking area at Letcliffe Country Park, Barnoldswick off Manchester Road (B6251) G.R. 877 453. This is a 5 mile easy to moderate walk followed by a visit to Bancroft Mill Steam Museum (Admission £1.50 Senior Citizens £1). Please bring a packed lunch. Bus: Pennine Motors service 215 from Skipton Bus Station 0935 passes car park one mile beyond Barnoldswick.

**THURSDAY AUGUST 22ND GHOST WALK ROUND RIPON.** Walk led by Maurice Taylor. Meet on the raised area in the Market Place in Ripon at 7pm. The walk will finish at 9pm in time to hear the Hornblower. Bus service 36 Leeds City Bus Station d. 1745, Harrogate d. 1830 (return 2145). **Booking Essential**, maximum number 30. **Please**

**send your bookings plus cheque/PO to the YDS Office to reach us not later than August 19th at the very latest.** Cost £1.50 per person. Address: The Yorkshire Dales Society, The Civic Centre, Cross Green, Otley, West Yorkshire LS21 1HD.

**SUNDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER - WASHBURNDALE.** A walk using the Fountains Flyer Bus (802) from Blubberhouses to Otley via Timble and the Washburn Reservoirs - moderate 10 miles. Leader Colin Speakman (01943 607868). Catch service 802 d. Bradford Interchange 0900, Leeds Bus Station 0920, Headingley Arndale 0930, Otley Bus Station 0950. Book Blubberhouses single. Motorists should park at Otley where the walk will end around 1700. Bring packed lunch.

**SATURDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER - RAIL RAMBLE - CLAPHAM TO HORTON.** Walk Leader Alan Sutcliffe tel: 0144 483326. Catch 0817 train from Leeds (0856 Skipton) to Clapham for a 9 mile moderate walk via Clapham Village, Austwick and Helwith Bridge to Horton-in-Ribblesdale. Return by train from Horton to Skipton, Leeds etc. at 1555 or 1650. Pub or packed lunch at Helwith Bridge. Book Day Return to Clapham - ticket available for return from Horton.

**SATURDAY OCTOBER 5TH WALK IN THE ADDINGHAM AREA.** Walk Leaders Chris Wright tel: 0589 127754 (mobile) and Chris Hartley tel: 01943 873197. A 4-5 mile moderate walk with some hills, moorland scenery. Meet outside at Addingham Memorial Hall at 10.30pm. Metrotrain Wharfedale Line train Leeds d. 0908, Bradford FS 0857 to catch 784 Skipton Bus Ilkley from Ilkley Station at 10.10am (Day Rover ticket recommended); 762 Ilkley bus from Keighley at 0910. Packed lunch or pub or cafe lunch.

**Please Note: If there are any YDS events you would like to attend and there is no public transport available, we will try to arrange a lift for you, but this will not be door-to-door, but at an agreed pick-up point. We are happy to offer this service if you contact the YDS office and give us plenty of notice.**

The Office address is: The Yorkshire Dales Society, The Civic Centre, Cross Green, Otley West Yorkshire, LS21 1HD. A written communication is preferable to a phone message please for all relevant details. If you do need to phone, please speak very clearly after the tone, giving all relevant details slowly and carefully.

At the request of a number of Yorkshire Dales Society members and after full discussion in YDS Council, it has been decided that all dogs on YDS walks must be kept under control on a lead at all times. Leaders on Walks have the right to request that any dog that is not on a lead is supplied with one.





Front Cover picture: "The Celtic Wall" by Howard Beck, see book review on page 13 of Yorkshire's Roots.

Back Cover picture : Map indicating the proposed alternative routes for the Coast to Coast Walk over Nine Standards Rigg – see article on page 7.

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