

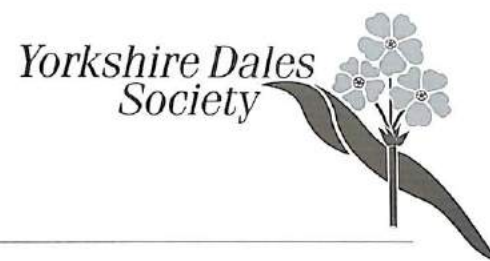
No. 101 Winter 2008

Yorkshire *Dales* Review



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Our Succession Strategy – and a New Agenda for the Society

The last year has been an immensely important one for the Yorkshire Dales Society, and we go into 2008 a stronger, and more effective organisation than we have ever been. We now have an excellent office, and a professional Administrator in the form of Anne Webster who is making a real difference to our ability to achieve our objects.

Whereas in the past too often it was a matter of us just keeping the wheels of the Society turning in a cramped office space with minimal staff resources, we have the physical space and an ideal location to make a real difference to the Yorkshire Dales. A new team of volunteers is beginning to make a major contribution to what we can achieve and the impacts we can have. We have already established the Dales & Bowland Community Interest Company as a means to deliver practical projects to benefit the local community and visitors in areas such as local transport and green tourism.

Whilst Anne's role has expanded during the year, our experience with the experimental appointment of a part time Chief Executive proved unsatisfactory. Colin Speakman has therefore agreed to continue his role as Consultant Secretary until the 2008 AGM.

The challenge is to ensure our policy work has that cutting edge of professionalism the Society needs to ensure its voice is heard. The YDS Council's response has been to establish a powerful new **Environmental Social and Economic Policy Sub-committee**, led by Council member Hugh Thornton. This will involve input from several very experienced existing members of Council, and we shall recruit new members with professional planning and environmental expertise whenever the opportunity arises. We shall also work very closely indeed with our sister organisations Craven and Wensleydale CPRE. The new body will closely monitor all new development control matters in the wider Dales area. It will respond to new Policy documents from the National Park Authority and other local authorities and Government agencies. It will also develop new policy ideas and initiatives in such key areas as local housing, local transport and sustainable forms of tourism to ensure the Dales economy achieves maximum economic benefit from its visitors whilst safeguarding a special and precious environment.

Parallel to this, under the watchful eye of Vice Chairman Chris Wright will be the **Events, Communications and**

Membership Sub-committee, which will look at the Society's events programme, its communication with its own members and the outside world. It will also develop our membership base, including that of our important Corporate Members. Already a small editorial working group has been formed to look at ways the Yorkshire Dales Review might develop, with new design and format ideas in mind.

Additionally the **Finance and Governance Sub-committee** under chairman and convenor Malcolm Petyt have had one meeting.

These are exciting changes, each with its own challenge as we seek to harness the energy and expertise of our own members. Unlike many larger National Parks Societies, we just don't have the resources to pay full time professional salaries. Yorkshire Dales Society Council members will therefore increasingly become "Portfolio holders" leading or making a major contribution to one or more element of our campaigning or educational work.

We are essentially a voluntary body, driven by the passion and commitment of the members as volunteers, yet achieving the highest professional standards. We need more people sharing that commitment to contribute to our work. This might be achieved by serving on one of the two key core sub-committees outlined above, or by helping Anne and the office team with a myriad of essential administrative and routine office tasks. We need help too with the organisation of events, with publicity, catering, attending local shows, leading guided walks, or being involved with practical projects including the work of the Dales & Bowland CIC for example with local bus services in both the Dales and the Forest of Bowland. People with editorial and website experience might also make a valuable contribution.

If you share our love of the Dales and would like to help us keep the Dales as unspoiled as they are – or would like to share your enjoyment of this special area with others – we'd love to hear from you. Speak to Anne or Colin at the YDS Office, or during one of our winter walks or events, or maybe by e-mail – info@yds.org.uk We'd so warmly welcome your support and help. And it can be enormous fun.

Colin Speakman

Incident at the Stepping Stones

A pleasant late October day – cool, soft light, perfect autumn colours. A small YDS **Sharing the Dales** group strolling down to the footbridge and Stepping Stones at Bolton Abbey, below the Priory. One of the best loved corners of the Yorkshire Dales, a few dozen people around, enjoying the quiet atmosphere around the water's edge.

As we approached the river, the stepping stones, not unusually, covered by water, we noticed a woman and a child in the centre of the river, on the stones, a youngish man with them. Was it some kind of stunt or exercise?

"No – it's for real," someone muttered. It didn't seem real. This idyllic place, that welcomes so many thousands of visitors every weekend, a place where most children, fascinated, want to hop between the stones.

Incredible as it seemed at first, this mother and her child were actually stranded on the stepping stones. Someone explained that a sudden freak surge of the river had, in a matter of moments, turned the once gentle and benign river into a ranging torrent, and the woman and her child at that very moment half way across, had not been able to move forward or back. Another visitor, himself a parent, realising the danger they were in, had struggled forward against the flood to reach them. He wasn't their father, who had already tried to reach them, but couldn't.

Suddenly the full horror dawned. This

was life threatening. The mother was gently rubbing the back of the little girl's pink T-shirt, reassuring her, trying to keep her circulation warm. The young man had braced himself against the stones as the river, ominously, was still rising, his body acting as a human shield to divert the full force of the river. Without this shield mother and daughter would almost certainly be immediately swept away.

Our small party stopped, transfixed. There was nothing we could do. As we watched, two men, bystanders, with lifebuoys and ropes tried to struggle out to the stones but were held back by the force of the water now around 4 feet high and moving with the speed and force of a tidal wave. Standing in the torrent, let alone swimming, was impossible.

We realised we could soon be unwilling witnesses to an unfolding tragedy. Should we continue to watch? Wasn't this an awful way of intruding on possible grief? But, rooted to the spot, we needed to know that there would be a happy outcome, as if by will power alone we could make that outcome happen. We couldn't simply walk away not knowing what was going to happen.

Thankfully the emergency services were soon on their way – the Fire and Rescue services from Skipton, Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue, running down the hillside with heavy equipment and ropes from parked fire tenders now brought down to the river from the

track by the Priory. Two firemen were preparing with lifejackets to enter the water, soon forcing their way against the current towards the stricken trio, as a team of bystanders, like a tug of war team, held onto the ropes.

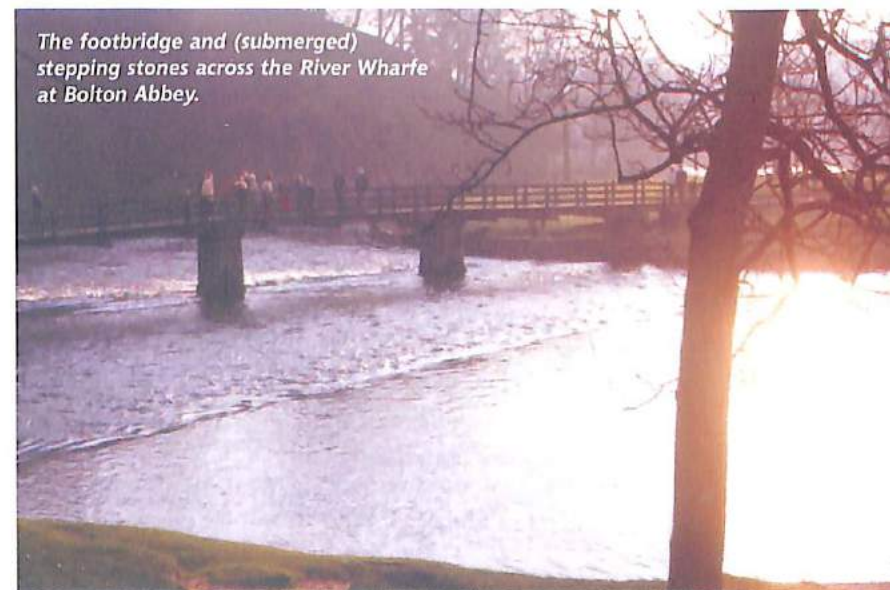
Then a sudden gasp of horror as one of the men, a burly fire-fighter, lost his grip on the rope and was hurled instantly, with huge force, like a cork bursting from a bottle, down the river, under the footbridge. Mercifully he was caught by a colleague as he swirled across the shallow gravel bank downstream.

It was clear that to rescue what were now four people, including the other fireman who had finally reached the group, the only way was via the footbridge. Rescue teams with ropes and lifejackets now clustered on the bridge, hanging ropes and lifebelts down. For a few moments nothing seemed to be happening, then suddenly, mother and child were hurtling towards the bridge, an audible moan from the crowd, anticipating the worst outcome. But somehow the fireman with them managed to divert their route towards the central stone pillars of the bridge, where they precariously held onto the stonework, to be followed by the first rescuer, now himself hanging grimly onto a rope.

Gradually, after what seemed to be an age, the group now holding on to suspended ropes, were edged around to the lee of the bridge pillar, away from the full, awesome power of the torrent. The child now held by her mother above the freezing water, was amazingly calm, though she was seconds away from death, as were all the group.

One by one each person was, agonisingly slowly, hauled out of the torrent, up the side of the pillar, with waiting hands to lift them over the bridge railings, rescuers working calmly, slowly, as if mentally, calculating every move of hand, foot or rope, recognising that if there was one false move or slip of foot or hand on rope, a life would be lost to the irresistible power of the river. The child first was hauled to safety, then her mother, the fireman

The footbridge and (submerged) stepping stones across the River Wharfe at Bolton Abbey.



and finally the first volunteer rescuer, now visibly suffering from cold. A sigh of intense relief and even half hearted, slightly embarrassed applause burst from the crowd for the rescue teams as the victims were bundled along the bridge to the warmth and blankets of waiting ambulances.

Within moments it was all over. Once again a peaceful, beautiful landscape returned into our consciousness, though the roar of the river below us was a constant reminder of just what we had witnessed. In a slight daze, along with the other hundred or so spectators, we could wander away, continue our walk, go back to our lives knowing that everyone was safe. We had been there, watching, about 45 minutes. It had seemed much longer, an emotional roller-coaster.

And our lasting impressions? Overwhelmingly the magnificent unthinking courage of those ordinary

bystanders and later the key rescue service members who, without a second's hesitation, had literally put their lives on the line, not for their own family, but to save another young family. The professionalism of the teams who had worked together quietly and efficiently, to prevent what would, without their presence, have been probably more than one certain fatality.

Can we ever pay our professional fire-fighters or reward our voluntary rescue teams enough? When we next walk past the collecting tins of the Upper Wharfedale Fell Rescue or the Cave Rescue Organisation even a token coin or note can't fully reflect what we should feel about their readiness to risk their lives to save others.

And also a recognition of just how what seems to be a gentle Dales landscape can change to something life-threatening in moments. Whether this was caused by a sudden heavy

storm high up on Cam Fell or water inadvertently coming over a sluice gate, it was an awesome reminder of the Wharfe's terrible reputation throughout history, known as it was since Celtic and Saxon times as "Guer", a swift and violent river, or by the Romans as "Verbeia", a cruel river goddess.

With all our sophisticated gadgets and gismos, we believe we control the natural world, but without warning, as that experience at Bolton Abbey was to remind us, the immense power of Nature can reassert itself with perhaps terrifying consequences. The beautiful Dales are also dangerous upland valleys, their hillsides, caves, crags, rivers and streams to be treated with the utmost respect. For those us who witnessed what happened that October afternoon, the Stepping Stones at Bolton Abbey will never quite seem the same again.

Colin Speakman

National Parks Societies Conference 2007 – Report

The 2007 National Park Societies Conference was hosted by Snowdonia Society – Cymdeithas Eryri – at the Plas y Brenin Centre in Capel Curig in Snowdonia National Park with 60 delegates attending. Wittily described as *'the mint with a hole'*, the Park excludes Blaenau Ffestiniog, the centre of the former slate mining industry, but this description does not do justice to the Park's spectacular mountain setting. The Conference's central theme focused on 'Inspiring Communities – National Parks in the 21st Century'. Its key session was given by Ruth Chambers (Head of Policy at the Council for National Parks).

Ruth gave a 'State of the Nation' review of current issues, and in particular of current attitudes within Government. She identified a number of issues, including economic considerations; political factors; what she sees as the current disarray in the planning system; current Government views, and funding – all of which hold dangers for our National Parks.

Economic Considerations

Every recent major Government policy announcement on planning, transport and energy issues seems to start from an economic viewpoint. At a regional level Regional Assemblies are to be merged with Regional Development Agencies, with the obvious dangers of a reduction in democratic oversight and influence at regional level, and the possibility that economic factors may be given precedence over planning considerations.

Political Factors

We are in a pre-election period, with all parties reviewing their policies rather than making firm commitments. Although the Government says that it wants to pursue a 'bottom up' approach, with the emphasis on community engagement, this is not consistent with the kind of centrally driven policies we are now seeing on housing provision and wind farms. These uncertainties and tensions are likely to have unpredictable results.

The Planning System

Current planning policies are being driven by an emphasis on the need for energy and other infrastructure, and a perceived need for quick results – in some quarters, the planning system is just seen as a barrier to progress. Ministers are just not in 'listening' mode. Crucially, for National Parks, there is a lack of clarity on the extent to which they will be allowed to reflect their own special circumstances in their plans and policies.

The Government View

There are both positives and negatives. Positives include evidence of joint working with regulators such as OFGEN and OFCOM, and an increase in funding for sustainable forms of transport from the Department for Transport. Negatives include pressure from the Ministry of Defence for intensification of the use of their land in Dartmoor and reluctance to acknowledge the importance of environmental safeguards and restrictions.

Funding

The latest Budget statement means real cuts in budgets for Defra and for Natural England. In this context, it becomes even more important to demonstrate that National Parks are valuable economic assets; that those assets depend on maintaining very high levels of environmental quality; and that they provide good value for money for Government expenditure.

Ruth summed up by making the point that in the context of climate change – which is dominating Government thinking on environmental issues – our Parks need to identify a new national purpose. What is their role in contributing to sustainable development? How do we influence national policy on how their landscapes should develop? In order to

Snowdonia National Park. Photo by Anne Webster.



put our message across effectively, we need to understand what is driving the political process.

Some Current Issues

General concern was expressed about the impact of changes in the system of rural support payments for hill farming. Professor Adrian Philips, Vice President of CNP and a Trustee of the National Trust, startled the meeting by pointing out that under the present regime, many of the farms owned by the Trust within the Lake District are likely to be running at a loss in five years' time. There will need to be some careful amalgamation of farm units, and it is not clear what the impact may be on the grazing regimes that maintain the landscape that is so valued by visitors.

Professor Philips argued that National Parks will need to develop a distinctive range of environmental services that agencies will be prepared to pay for. He identified a number of possibilities – providing refuges for nature; providing health and education for future generations; upstream water management to reduce flood risk; capturing carbon in peat bogs.

In nearly every case, there were concerns about the impact of wind farm developments – although not actually within Park boundaries, in many cases these were close enough to

have a significant visual impact on the views seen by Park users. The government needs to come up with a more sensible policy that takes account of the impact of such developments on the panoramas of the National Parks, and of their consequent effect on the enjoyment of the Parks by visitors.

Field Trips

Three of the field trips in particular illustrated the pressures on the Park associated with the numbers of visitors. To cope with the hundreds of thousands of walkers each year who take the paths up Snowdon from Pen y Pass, a 'Park and Ride' system has been implemented at Nat Paris, to try to ease congestion at Pen y Pass itself. In addition, the rebuilding of the Welsh Highland Railway from Caernarfon to Porthmadog, via Beddgelert will offer an alternative to car travel: the new platform at Beddgelert is about 300 yards long, apparently large enough to take a train with 12 carriages!

Penmachno, a former quarry village on the fringe of the Park, where the local community has formed a local regeneration company and constructed a mountain bike facility, is making the most of its natural assets, showing one way to encourage a percentage of tourists away from key honey-pot areas.

Involving Communities

Other conference sessions looked at various aspects of community involvement, including young

people and residents. There was a series of workshop sessions on the Sunday morning that looked at different dimensions – business communities; political communities (local, regional and national); 'hard to reach' groups; visitors; and local communities. The common theme was 'Inspiring Communities – What More Can We Do?'

The 'local communities' workshop concluded that it was not so much a question of inspiring local communities, as seeking to find common ground with them. In any National Park, there is not just one community, but a series of them – long-term residents, recent incomers and commuters all tend to have different viewpoints. In every National Park, the local communities could all benefit from better public transport provided for visitors; they all need more affordable housing; and they all need to maximise the local benefit to be gained from visitors, while minimising their environmental impact.

In all a highly worthwhile Conference, which was sponsored by RWEpower who operate a hydroelectric power station in the Conwy Valley on the Park's northern boundary.

Hugh Thornton

Cravenlink Flourishes – but Dalesbus Faces the Axe

Few people would disagree with the view that affordable networks of public transport are essential for local communities and visitors alike in heavily visited protected landscapes such as the Yorkshire Dales, if only on the grounds of basic equality of opportunity. Since when was the ownership or access to a car a pre-requisite to living in, visiting or experiencing a National Park? What about younger people, older people and families on low incomes who could most benefit from the health giving opportunities and spiritual renewal of our finest landscapes and open access?

As Gary Smith, Head of Conservation and Policy for the Yorkshire Dales National Park reminded us in an excellent talk on November 10, road transport by visitors and locals alike is the biggest single cause of CO2 emissions within the National Park.

So powerful reasons why the National Park Authorities should sustain high quality, affordable public transport networks, especially on the days of high demand when the greatest numbers of visitors are likely to use them, Sundays and Bank Holidays.

But at time of writing, owing to a freak combination of new EU tachograph regulations and the narrow Bolton Abbey arch – see the photograph on the back cover – the popular winter Sunday Dalesbus 805 will cease to operate in January. A replacement service 806, will operate on a route avoiding the arch via Cracoe, on just three Sundays between January and March, details on the Dalesbus website (www.dalesbus.org)

The only good news is that the popular and well used Sunday Cravenlink 784/884 between Ilkley, Bolton Abbey and Skipton, will continue until the end of March, thanks to the hard work of the YDS's Dales & Bowland CIC. Even better, the 884 will also operate on a

new scenic route between Embsay and Bolton Abbey via Eastby, Halton Heights, Barden Scale, The Strid and Bolton Abbey (main village green stop not the car park) to give better access into the National Park and compensate for the loss of 805. See the Dalesbus web site for full details, but key Sunday departure times from Skipton bus station for the 884 for Bolton Abbey and Ilkley are 1025, 1325, 1525 and 1725, and from Ilkley bus station 1145 and 1620. Service 784 goes direct along the main A65 from Skipton to Ilkley via Draughton at 0830 and 1855, and from Ilkley to Skipton at 0915 (connects at Skipton with the Settle-Carlisle line),

many overseas visitors, take their spending elsewhere, perhaps to the North York Moors with its excellent Moorsbus network, the Peak with its Wayfarer network or the Lake District with its Explorer buses. Want a car-free walking weekend in the Dales where there's no Sunday buses to return you home? Forget it!

Paradoxically this is at the very time national travel concessions are to be introduced for over 60s, allowing free cross boundary travel to and from the Dales and its major catchment communities. What one arm of Government giveth, the other taketh



Cravenlink bus at Bolton Abbey. Photo by Howard Handley.

1445 and 1820. North Yorkshire and Metro Senior permits are valid on both services. So please support YDS, and use Cravenlink for your winter walking in Wharfedale.

But from April onwards there could be no Sunday or Bank Holiday buses whatsoever, incredible as it might seem, in Malhamdale, Mid and Upper Wharfedale, Ribblesdale, Swaledale and most of Wensleydale, whilst fume-filled roads are gridlocked with traffic. And there will be serious economic consequences too for local businesses, as many visitors without cars, including

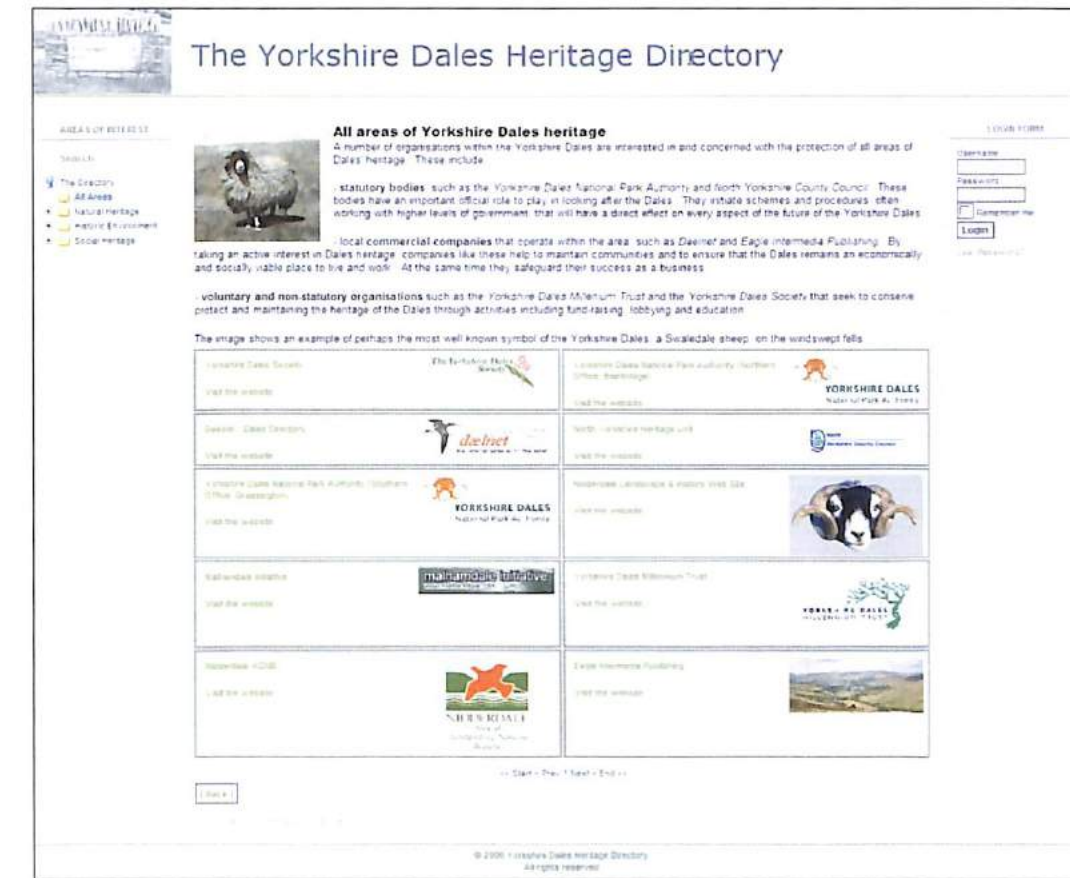
away. What's that about joined-up thinking?

The Yorkshire Dales Society and the Yorkshire Dales Public Transport Users Group will be working closely with the National Park Authority, Natural England, and local authorities to source the kind of major external funding required in 2008, if the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Nidderdale AONB are to be truly sustainable visitor destinations, available to everyone, not just those fortunate enough to have access to their own transport.

The Yorkshire Dales Heritage Directory Website

The new Yorkshire Dales Heritage Directory Web Site, (www.yorkshiredalesheritage.org.uk) commissioned by the Yorkshire Dales Society on behalf of the Yorkshire Dales Heritage Forum, and initially created for the Society by Stuart Willis and developed by Dr Ron Rennell of Ondev Ltd, YDS Corporate

Each category is prefaced by information putting the area of interest into the context of the Yorkshire Dales. Details of the organisations in each category then follow as electronic or virtual business cards (V-cards). For the general visitor to the site the V-card information is limited to the name of the



Member, was launched at the Dales Heritage Fair in Skipton on September 16th. Ron Rennell explains just what the Directory is, and how it is a powerful tool for all Yorkshire Dales Society members wanting to research any aspect of the Yorkshire Dales or make contact with a huge wealth of different organisations involved with Dales heritage.

The organisations listed within the Directory are statutory, voluntary and commercial in nature, the link between them being that they are actively concerned with the research, interpretation or promotion of any aspect of heritage within the greater Yorkshire Dales. They are divided into three main categories, *Natural Heritage*, *Historic Environment*, and *Social Heritage*. These are then further sub-divided into more specialised areas. Finally the site has a free text search facility providing another way of looking for information. The Directory makes finding organisations for particular areas of interest extremely straightforward. Depending on the breadth and scope of their interests, an organisation may appear in up to five different categories. A number of organisations within the Yorkshire Dales are interested in and concerned with the protection of all areas of Dales' heritage and they are also listed under the special *All Areas* category. The Directory currently lists 79 separate organisations.

organisation and a clickable link that takes you to its web site. For organisations that do not have a web site alternative contact details may be placed here. Approved users from organisations listed in the Directory and other approved visitors may logon to the site to access additional information. Once logged in and authenticated, site visitors can bring up a detailed view for any organisation showing:

- Contact names
- Postal address
- Telephone numbers
- Email links
- Supplementary information.

The web site has been designed with future expansion in mind. Additional types of information can be added to entries in the Directory and each new item may be shown in the public

view or restricted to logged on visitors as required. In its present form the site provides a universally accessible source of contact details for those with an interest in the heritage of the Yorkshire Dales area. To further promote communication and to increase awareness of a wide range of heritage activities, the site can be expanded to provide additional facilities. One possibility is an on-line Forum to discuss and share ideas across a range of interest groups. Another could be a document repository for the management and dissemination of common experiences relating to grant submissions and sources of funding. We would like the web site to become a valuable tool and resource for the community it aims to serve. We welcome any suggestions or ideas you may have.

Access to and listing on the web site is completely free – www.yorkshiredalesheritage.org.uk. If you are not listed and would like to be or need access to the more detailed information please contact the Yorkshire Dales Heritage Directory Administrator, c/o Yorkshire Dales Society, Town Hall, Cheapside, Settle, BD24 9EJ or info@yds.org or via the YDS's own website at www.yds.org.uk

A Few Thoughts about Stiles

Yorkshire Dales National Park is criss-crossed by footpaths, from parish tracks to three splendid long-distance routes – the Pennine Way, Dales Way and a middle section of Wainwright's Coast to Coast walk. Bill Mitchell, in his own inimitable style, asks us to consider, next time you walk a Dales footpath, the different ways by which you may conveniently pass from field to field.

My pal Bob approaches with special care the type of stile consisting of two upright pieces of stone or slate with a narrow gap in between. It is devised to allow the passage of an average-sized person but not a sheep or other types of domestic stock. Bob refers to it as Fat Man's Agony. The last time our little walking group, devotees of Wainwright, encountered such a stile was during a six-mile saunter from Redmire to Leyburn. (We returned by rail).

Being members of a pedestrian quartet known as the Geriatric Blunderers (president, Betty Wainwright), we like a touch of whimsy in our wanderings. A special interest concerns the various ways of getting from one field to another without pushing through a hedge or – heaven forbid – scrambling over a wall. Where there is a field gate, progress is easy, though a Leeds visitor to the Dales asked a farmer why he always put his gates in the muckiest part of the field.

Mention of Wainwright recalls encounters in high and lonely places in the Dales and Lake District and what we call a "Wainwright Gate", the survival of a boundary, usually associated with an important estate, that was originally marked by a barrier of wire or wire netting. You see the metal gate, set between two iron posts, from a distance. It is easy to walk round it, but convention decrees that it is opened and neatly closed again after use. (An iron gate stoop is seen by Coast to Coasters above Gunnerside Gill, in Swaledale).

We lament the passing of a special type of walkers' gate – a "welly gate" – the hinges being formed of soles from redundant wellingtons that were connected by nails from an upright to the gate. The springy hinge ensured that it would close behind a walker with a healthy *thwack*. The last time I saw a "welly gate" was in Dentdale. (On that same day, when Bob and I walked with Betty Wainwright – AW remaining in the car, parked at Dent Town – we encountered a farmer who wore one black and one green welly. We commented this was unusual. He replied: "Nay, my son's got a pair just t'same").

Fat Man's Agony.
Photo by Bill Mitchell.



The verdant floor of Wensleydale offers stiles galore. Near Redmire station, beyond the path that crosses the railway are mini-gates of solid wood, backed by springs as fierce as mouse-traps. Most stiles in the hedge country are of the wooden-step type with a vertical pole you might grasp for stability. Stiles set in hedges are inclined to be fringed by beds of nettles. I dislike ladder stiles, which tend to be too steep for comfort. There are two on the path traversing the edge of Buckhaw Brow. Another, on the riverside walk from Stainforth to Settle, twisted a few ankles before it was supplanted by a stile of flagstone.

On our walk to Leyburn, we "buttied" (had a snack) near a splendid wall, with a neatly masoned gap holding a wooden swing gate. Not long afterwards, at the Castle Bolton estate, we encountered a tall, benign version of what is often called a kissing gate. Usually associated with old estates, and made of iron, such a gate swings against an arc of iron railings.

The walker passes through by swinging the gate, taking advantage of a small standing space to swing the gate back, giving him egress. Anyone with a large rucksack who uses a small kissing gate incautiously becomes jammed. We freed a rambler who was held tight because the straps of his rucksack had become snagged by the ironwork!

There are squeaky stiles, low stiles and wobbly stiles. In the upper reaches of the dales, where fields tend to be small and stiles profuse, you may find yourself on stiles fashioned of "through" stones, protruding on either side, providing steps. Slate steps are inclined to be slippery when wet. I enjoyed visiting a quirky farmer near Hellifield. As we parted, he would say: "Let us pray". Whereupon three dogs leapt on to the steps of a stile and remained with bowed heads until the final triumphant Amen.

A large, well-masoned hole at the bottom of a wall is intended for sheep. Known as a cripple-oil – there are various names – it makes mixed grazing possible. Cattle, being large, are restricted to a single field; sheep may range more widely, using cripple-oils. The name may have originated with "creep-through-the-hole". On a Bowland farm, children were fond of capturing a donkey and riding on its back. The wise donkey rid itself of the nuisance by dashing towards a donkey-size cripple-oil. Wise children leapt from the animal before the wall was reached.

W R (Bill) Mitchell



Photos on this page by Colin Speakman.



Sixty Years of Campaigning

The Craven Branch of CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) has just achieved its diamond jubilee. David Joy, its secretary from 1966 until 2004, reflects on past endeavours.

It was in late 1947 that the great and the good gathered at Skipton's Red Lion Hotel for the inaugural meeting of CPRE's Craven Branch. The irony of assembling in 'smoke-filled rooms' to debate the green and pleasant world outdoors was probably never even considered. Among those present were such contrasting figures as pipe-smoking Harry J. Scott, founder of *The Dalesman*, and the immensely tall and aesthetic Sir William Milner, creator of today's Parcevall Hall. There were names that should be revered by all YDS members – Arthur Raistrick, Graham Watson and Eric Lodge. And there were remarkable artists such as Marmaduke Miller, the 'complete dalesman' who was also landlord of the Falcon Inn at Arncliffe. He was arguably eclipsed only by Reginald Brundrit, the supreme eccentric who once arrived at a Royal Academy dinner riding an elephant and blowing loud blasts on a trumpet!

They were heady days. Clement Attlee's reforming government had just passed one of its most enduring legacies – the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act. Shaun Spiers, CPRE's current chief executive, comments: "If you want one single reason why England's countryside and people have been largely spared the horrendous sprawl you

find in much of North America, Europe and – increasingly – the rest of the world, this legislation is it."

Back in the Dales, the newly formed Craven Branch quickly responded with zeal to the spirit of the times. Schemes were drawn up for tree planting, screening rubbish tips and painting rural phone boxes in green or grey instead of bright red, only this last proving to be ahead of its time. There was even direct action, as instanced by consternation over a wooden bungalow that in those pre-planning days had been built at the foot of Malham Cove. Mere protest did not suffice and instead it was bought and removed!

The founding fathers were merely flexing their muscles for what became the infamous 'Battle of Butterhaw', when in 1954 they took on the might of the quarrying industry and successfully defeated proposals to remove one of the unique limestone knolls between Cracoe and Thorpe. Conscious of being seen as purely negative and opposing everything, the Branch went on to offer positive support for the then controversial new chapel at Scargill in Upper Wharfedale. It is now widely seen as one of the few truly inspirational buildings to be constructed in the Yorkshire Dales in recent times.

Areas of concern varied enormously in succeeding years, ranging from electricity pylons to caravan sites and from massive road schemes down to green lanes under threat.



Engraving of Malham Cove, dating from the period when floodwaters would pour over the cliff top in what must have been an awe-inspiring sight. It was in this location some sixty years ago that the newly formed Craven Branch of CPRE took direct action by removing an unsightly wooden bungalow.

Dubious tax incentives in the 1970s and '80s led to a rash of schemes for blanket afforestation by serried ranks of Sitka spruce. A campaign that gave this writer great delight occurred in the 1980s when CPRE joined forces with many other bodies in a gargantuan effort to save the Settle to Carlisle railway from closure. In so doing, one could not help reflecting on the immense opposition that today would surely have met any proposal to drive a railway through the heart of a National Park.

As the years have rolled on, the glorious amateurism that prevailed in CPRE's Craven Branch in its pioneering days has had to give way to a more challenging and professional approach. It is a necessary response to a different world with its raft of ever-changing government policies that descend like confetti on a plethora of planners, consultants, quangos and sundry rural agencies. It is easy to be despondent and talk about 'death by a thousand cuts' but such gloom is invariably swept aside as the clouds part and shafts of sunshine reveal the Dales at their finest.

These thoughts were uppermost in my mind when in 2004 I

decided to retire as secretary of CPRE Craven Branch after thirty-eight years at the helm. It is for pens other than mine to cover more recent events, but I have been delighted to watch an enlarged committee go from strength to strength.

As a dalesman born and bred, I've moved sideways to try and further the cause of local folk and especially farmers who are rapidly becoming an endangered species. Policy so often seems to be put before people, but economic and social well-being should be part of what has been described as 'the big picture of a vibrant, prosperous and sustainable National Park'. Such views should not cause distress to CPRE members or any other conservationists, as the fact is that the landscape they have long campaigned to protect will otherwise come to resemble something midway between theme park and wilderness. It may be a cliché to say that a way of life that has endured for a thousand years will be lost but it is also a danger that is ever-more present.

Ken Willson Award 2008

We have pleasure in inviting applications for the fourth **Ken Willson Award** in 2008 jointly sponsored by the Yorkshire Dales Society and the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE Craven Branch).

Anyone may nominate a young person in the dales who they believe merits consideration for the award. The nominations for the 2008 Award will close on March 31st 2008 and the young person concerned must be less than 30 years of age on that date. He or she should live or work either within the National Park or Nidderdale AONB, or an adjacent community and have made an important contribution in one of five areas of activity:

- The protection and enhancement of the Dales' natural or built environment;
- The understanding and enjoyment of the landscape, natural history or cultural heritage;
- The cultural life of the Dales through the arts or related cultural activity;
- The local economy including upland farming or forestry;
- The care and social well-being of Dales' communities.

The award will be for £500 and will recognise the added value made by the individual to his or her chosen field of work or voluntary activity, and should also help to support and further the

Award winner's future career or chosen field of activity.

The nomination will also have to be sponsored by two other people who know the nominee. One of the three sponsors must be a member of a recognised voluntary body, local authority, educational institution or religious body.

Please send for **full details** and the necessary application forms to the Yorkshire Dales Society, The Town hall, Cheapside, Settle, BD24 9EJ. Nominations should reach the Settle office no later than March 31st 2008.

The Golden Eagle has Landed

Warmest congratulations to Honorary YDS Member Bill Mitchell who was recently presented with the prestigious Golden Eagle Award by the Outdoor Writers and Photographers Guild. The award is presented annually to mark 'distinguished or meritorious service to

the outdoors'. Bill's writing career has stretched over fifty years; his subjects invariably meticulously researched and his 160 books characterised by their highly informative and engaging style. The Guild also singled him out as one of the founding fathers of outdoor

writing. For forty years he was also on the staff of the *Dalesman* magazine and put his particular stamp on the publication during his twenty year tenure as editor.

GPS Trails and Geocaching

Lots of people will have heard about GPS, but they might not know what they are or how much fun you can have with one.

GPS actually stands for Global Positioning System which is a network

find Geocaches can involve people in exploring the countryside, learning about their environment and joining a fast growing pastime which is worldwide.

They are both basically a high-tech



of satellites and ground stations that provides a world-wide navigation system. The handheld GPS which people use for walking receives the satellite signals and lets you know your location down to a few metres. It works in any weather conditions, anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day and there are no subscription fees or setup charges to use one.

Using a GPS to follow GPS Trails or to

version of treasure hunting. Geocachers seek out hidden containers using GPS coordinates mainly posted on the Internet by those hiding the cache. The idea is for individuals and organisations to set up caches and look after them. They can be individual caches or ones that are grouped. You chose which ones you go for and how you get there.

GPS trailers use the GPS to take them around a very specific route and you

answer questions as you work your way round. These are like "virtual caches" and only things that are permanent features are used. Yorkshire Dales Guides have initially set up seven GPS Trails at the Dalesbridge Centre near Austwick, Slaidburn, Chipping, Bleasdale, Hornby/Wray, Abbeystead and Barley.

They are particularly designed to allow families and other groups and individuals to take part. These Trails are now documents which can be downloaded from the internet at www.yorkshiredalesguides.co.uk There will be more GPS Trails developed soon in the Three Peaks area of the Dales and other localities. The idea is to provide visitors with an interesting way to visit a new area and to learn about it through a new medium.

Yorkshire Dales Guides will also be running day events to introduce people to the basic skills in using a GPS as well as traditional map and compass skills. A GPS is not a substitute for a map as you still need to be able to interpret your route.

If you would like to try geocaching then the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority has created a number of groups of caches in the Malham, Upper Wharfedale, Dentdale, Hawes and Reeth areas, each based on a particular theme like geology or history. The caches are to be found in places like cracks and crevices or anywhere that keeps them hidden and doesn't involve disturbing or harming the natural surroundings to find them. These caches have proved to be very popular because they contain information which helps the finders to understand and appreciate the beautiful scenery and features around them.

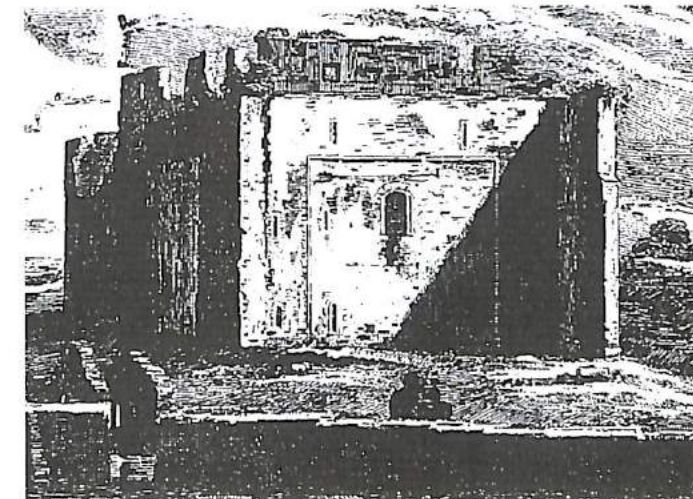
Many other people have created geocaches in our area and their locations can be found, along with clues as to their whereabouts at www.geocaching.com

Pam Hickin
Yorkshire Dales Guides

Book Review

THE EDEN VALLEY AND THE NORTH PENNINES by **W R (BILL) MITCHELL**, published by Phillimore at **£15.99** and available in most bookshops (ISBN 978-1-86077-450-8).

'The Eden Valley, opening out like a gigantic fan, merges imperceptibly with Carlisle's fertile flood-plain and, in turn with the marshland that flanks the Solway Firth...To the east and west are the north Pennines and the Lake District. Northwards lies the Roman Wall Country, and to the south is the Yorkshire Dales National Park. Eden, a clear river, flows through 67 miles of mainly pastoral country.'



With this splendid topographical opening, Bill Mitchell charts much of the area's history, its early settlements, industry, agricultural life and some of the region's rich tapestry which for centuries was often at the centre of key events, but increasingly came to be visited for its beauty and its very strong sense of identity.

Colonised by ancient Neolithic and Bronze Age peoples, burial mounds and burial circles are especially numerous in the south and western parts of the Eden Valley with the ancient dramatic stone circle known as Long Meg and her Daughters, near Little Salkeld so positioned as to be exactly in line with the midwinter sunset. But romantic thoughts of a name with possible roots in a Biblical Eden are doomed to disappointment, for the River Eden which gives its name to the region is actually derived from an ancient word for water.

Centuries later the border area to the North of Carlisle, became the scene of continual Scottish raids notorious for the Anglo-Scottish Reivers who regarded plunder as a way of life. Defensive *Pele towers were incorporated into many fine houses in the Eden Valley to withstand a possible siege with several still in

existence. Nicolaus Pevsner recorded 58 such towers in the Cumberland and Westmorland volume in *The Buildings of England* series. Doomed Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned in grim Carlisle Castle and later in Castle Bolton in Wensleydale.

The Eden Valley also has important links with The Pilgrimage of Grace, a northern rebellion against the Dissolution of the Monasteries under Henry VIII, with a thousand men marching on Carlisle, and a second rising which began in Kirkby Stephen and Appleby. Earlier farming practices are epitomised by the Drovers who originally travelled with their cattle down from Scotland before the coming of the railways. Unforgettable are the lead mining industry's little washer boys who helped to separate the galena from other material in a rush of water for fourpence a day. The celebrated poet WH Auden became fascinated with lead mining and was inspired to write poems on Alston and Allendale. Built in the 1870s, as an additional route to Scotland, the celebrated Settle Carlisle railway, a towering feat of engineering, was to become an icon of the region. Positioned about mid-way between Penrith and Sedburgh, Appleby's Horse Fair which received its charter in 1685, is still an eagerly awaited annual event for its horse dealing and tremendous atmosphere.

This is a gem of a book beautifully illustrated with archive photos and drawings: much will be new even to readers familiar with area.

Fleur Speakman

* There is an opportunity to visit an ancient Pele Tower on April 5th of this year, but Hellifield Peel interestingly uses the alternative spelling of Peel Tower.

Illustrations: Pendragon Castle (above); Staff at Crosby Garrett station in the heyday of the Settle-Carlisle (below). Both from "The Eden Valley and the North Pennines" by W R (Bill) Mitchell.



Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust and Yorkshire Dales Society sign Memorandum of Understanding

An important Memorandum of Understanding between the Yorkshire Dales Society and the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust was formally signed on November 27th by Dr Malcolm Petyt Chairman of the Society, and Mr

that the recently established Dales & Bowland Community Interest Company will neither compete nor duplicate the educational and conservation work of the Trust but concentrate on new areas of work, such as local transport, where

amenity, and how it will appear from the surrounding area. The ground within the site ranges in height from 160 to 219 metres (between 500 and 680 feet) above sea level. At 126 metres high (about 390 feet), the tops of the turbines will reach between 286 and 345 metres (890 to 1170 feet) above sea level.

This means that they will be very prominent from a large number of viewpoints in the surrounding hills, including sites within the Yorkshire Dales National Park and the Bowland Fells Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

These viewpoints would include Ingleborough, Rye Loaf Hill, Malham Moor and Great Whenside to the north; Rylstone Edge and Beamsley Beacon to the east; the Pennine Way route

from Widdop to the head of Lothersdale to the south; and Pendle Hill and the Trough of Bowland to the west.

The impact of the development will be influenced by the detailed layout and configuration of the turbines. The Yorkshire Dales Society supports renewable energy in all forms, including water, sun, bio and wind power, but our final decision to support or object to the application may be determined by the visual impact which these very tall structures will have on the landscape from key viewpoints within the National Park and the Forest of Bowland AONB, and what measures might be taken to minimise such impacts.

Brightenber Hill Wind Turbines

Brightenber Hill is about 4km (2½ miles) outside the National Park, on one of the glacial drumlins that create the gentle green hills of Craven, about a mile southwest of the hamlet of Conistone Cold on the A65. Before a formal planning application is submitted, the Yorkshire Dales have been asked for their view by applicants EnergieKontor.UK.

One of the major issues concerning the Yorkshire Dales Society will be the potential impact of the proposed development on landscape and visual

Mr Peter Charlesworth and Dr Malcolm Petyt sign the Memorandum of Understanding.



Peter Charlesworth, Chairman of the Trust. The two bodies share many of the same objects, namely to conserve and enhance the special natural and built environment and heritage of the Yorkshire Dales. It was felt essential therefore that we should formally recognise the need to work closely together, to avoid duplication of effort, whilst focusing on our distinctive and complimentary roles, the Trust with its funding raising and project management skills, the Society as a membership-based campaigning organisation. Wherever possible the two organisations will support each other's work, encouraging both donations and membership, agreeing regular meetings between the two bodies and maximise opportunities to co-operate. In particular it is agreed

Winter and Early Spring Events 2008



A chance to enjoy some varied winter and spring events in a number of different locations including the cathedral city of Ripon, Ben Rhydding (near Ilkley), whose station was named after the celebrated hydro and its water cure, and two Wensleydale heritage attractions - Hawes Creamery and nearby Gayle Mill. Our season concludes with a visit to the Hellifield Peel Tower. All walks will finish around 12.30pm. Lecture admission - for Members £2.00, or £3.00 for non-members.

SATURDAY JANUARY 19th: WALK ROUND RIPON. leader Andrew Hamilton. Meet at Ripon Market Place at 10.30am for a walk of around 3 - 4 miles. Bus 36 from Leeds 08.55. Harrogate 09.50; frequent return buses.
LECTURE: THE RIPON CARVERS - MAURICE TAYLOR at Thorpe Craven House, Ripon at 2.15pm. Host Anne Webster. (To find Thorpe Craven House, please stand in front of the Cathedral with your back to it, next go down the hill following the footpath right round.)

* **SATURDAY FEBRUARY 23rd: WALK ROUND BEN RHYDDING.** Leader Chris Hartley. Meet at Ben Rhydding Methodist Church at 10.30am for a 3 - 5 mile walk. Train from Leeds d. 09.32. Bradford d. 09.47 to Ben Rhydding (5 mins from Methodist Church Hall). Frequent return trains.
LECTURE: THE HISTORY OF THE SKIPTON-BOLTON ABBEY-ILKLEY RAILWAY. by Professor Mike Dixon, at Ben Rhydding Methodist Church Hall at 2.15pm. Host Chris Hartley.

SATURDAY MARCH 1st: VISIT TO THE WENSLEYDALE CREAMERY, HAWES. Meet at the Wensleydale Creamery, Hawes at 10.30am.
LECTURE: THE STORY OF GAYLE MILL. by Michael Thompson. As there is no parking at Gayle Mill, please meet outside the National Park Centre in the Old Station at

1.45pm and walk to the Mill - about 10 minutes. Gayle Mill at 2.15pm. Telephone YDS 012729 825600 no later than Wednesday 27th February for public transport information/lifts. Host to be arranged.

SATURDAY APRIL 5th: VISIT TO HELLIFIELD PEEL TOWER at 2pm. Host Chris Wright. The 12.49 train from Leeds arrives Hellifield 13.41. Please meet at 2pm in the public car park, Black Horse, Hellifield for a guided tour of the Hellifield Peel (as seen on BBC TV) by owners Francis and Karen Shaw. **£5 per head** including light refreshments. Please book via the YDS office not later than Thursday March 27th 2008, sending your cheque for £5 per head made out to the Yorkshire Dales Society, and heading your letter 'Peel Tower Visit', The Yorkshire Dales Society, The Town Hall, Cheapside, Settle, BD24 9EJ. Return trains from Hellifield 15:46 or 17:46 - check times in case of weekend engineering.

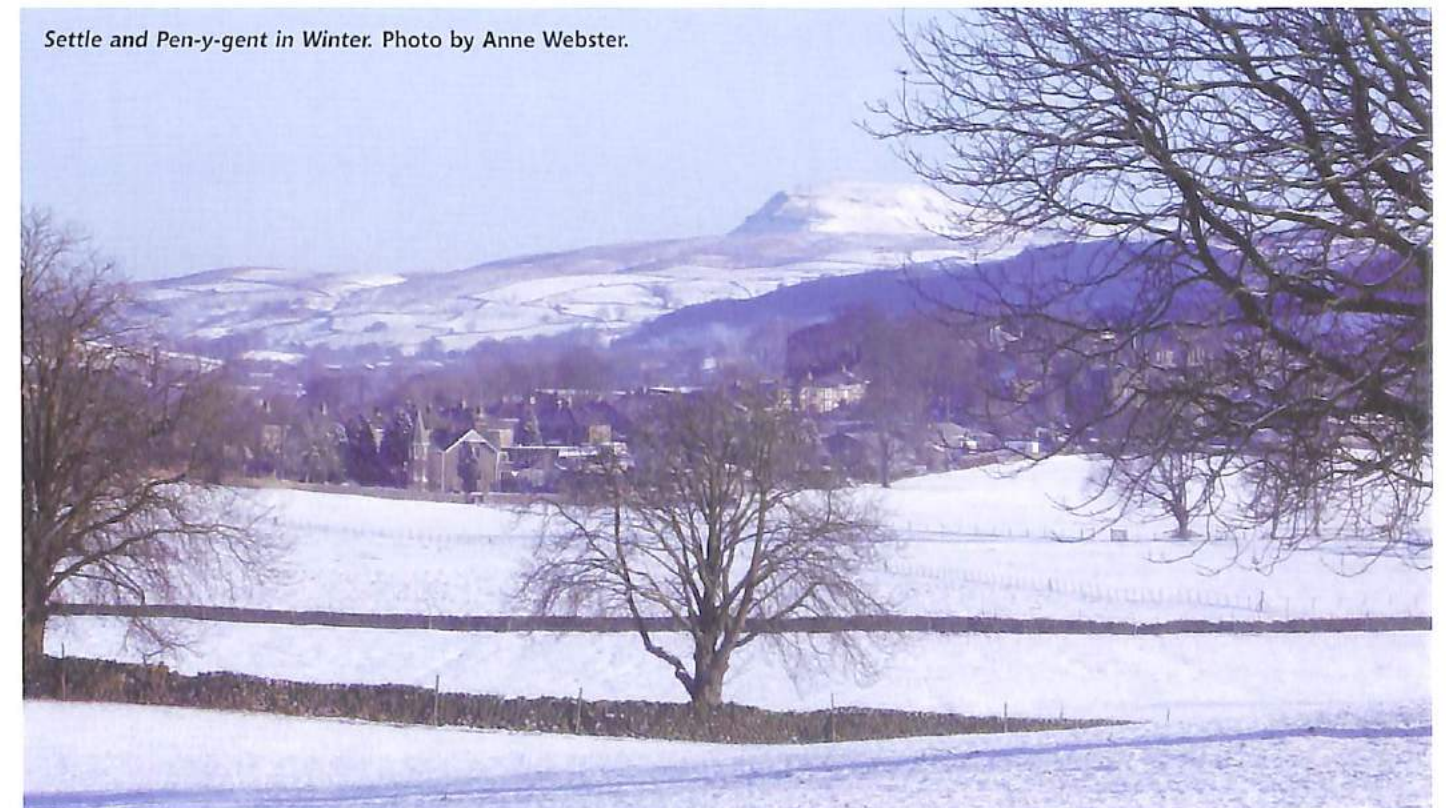
A NOTE FOR YOU DIARY

The Yorkshire Dales Society AGM will be on Saturday May 10th in Austwick at the Dalesbridge Centre. Speaker to be announced.

* PLEASE NOTE THAT OWING TO CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND OUR CONTROL, THE FEBRUARY BEN RHYDDING EVENT WILL TAKE PLACE ON SATURDAY FEBRUARY 23RD 2008 AND NOT AS IN THE YDS EVENTS PROGRAMME BOOKLET.

SPECIAL PLEA: Rainwear, walking boots, rucksack and packed lunch are usually essential on all YDS walks.

Settle and Pen-y-gent in Winter. Photo by Anne Webster.





Front Cover picture: A moody, wintry shot of Bolton Abbey.
Photo by Duncan Ward.

Back Cover picture: Goodbye 805 - Dalesbus negotiating the
Aqueduct Arch at Bolton Abbey. Photo by Duncan Ward.

Any contributions should be sent to the Editors at the Society's new
address opposite.

Yorkshire Dales Society NEW ADDRESS:

The Yorkshire Dales Society, The Town Hall, Cheapside,
Settle, BD24 9EJ.

Telephone/Answerphone 01729 825600.

www.yds.org.uk

See also –

www.yorkshiredalesheritage.org.uk

www.dalesandbowland.com

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