

# Footprint June 2008

## Chairperson's column

### A GENTLE REMINDER

From 27th March 2007 under the terms of our new affiliate membership agreements with the YHA, the Group must hold and continue to hold civil liability insurance for its members at a cost of about £100 per year.

To comply with the terms of our insurance attendees on group weekends must be members. New members on trial weekends and social evenings are granted temporary membership and are therefore covered on group insurance. Lapsed members and guests of members who book themselves into hostels direct are not covered. Walk leaders and weekend organisers should be aware of this when leading walks and organising weekends away.

Lapsed members who wish to join in with activities on a BYHA group weekend away must pay a £10.00 fee for each weekend they attend. Members who have moved away from the Barnet area can apply for associate membership at 50% reduction of the full annual membership subscription. If you are not sure about the status of members or your guests please check with Julie or any other member of the committee.

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On a lighter note we need to increase our pool of walk leaders. If you are interested in learning or improving your navigational skills please do attend Dave La's Map Reading evening on 17th June.

To hone skills and build up map reading confidence we hope to build up a team of mentors and learners to team up on day walks and weekends away. Please do let me know if you would be interested in being a

"mentor/teacher" or if you wish to learn to map read and build up confidence in the field. I will be coming round to nag!

Ann

## Editor's column

Well this month we have another bumper issue. Thank you to Chris K (I think ?) for the headline photo of Malham. Write up's this month have been provided by Stuart, Andrew, Saeed, Alan, Linda and Georgina. I have a bit of a lack of photo's for this month's issue so get snapping for next month please !

The deadline for next month's issue is the 17<sup>th</sup> June.

Caroline, Editor

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## Out and About

### **Sunday Walk Boxhill Lead by Andrew C**

Present: Andrew C., Helen W, Sarah W, Liz B, Tracy, Graham and myself.

We met up at 10.00am and no one had forgotten to put their clocks forward. The walk started with a steep climb up to the top of Box Hill, and out into the sunshine to give views for miles around of the North Downs. The coffee stop was a welcome chance to get our breath back and enjoy the views.

The route carried on into the village of Headley, to stop at the Cock Inn for lunch. In the afternoon, more mud and sunshine along the paths to Mickleham churchyard and then back along the river valley to the starting point.

It was a long way to go for a walk, but very well worth the journey. Thank you Andrew for organising it and not losing anyone along the way.

Stuart M

### **Eyam Weekend 11th -13th April organised by Claire.**

Members on the weekend included Claire, Dave and Jane, Sue, Alex, Sarah, Norbert, Linda, Nazar, Saeed, Maja, Dave L, Malcolm, and myself and joined by Helen and Andrew (both days) and Louise on Saturday. Saturday morning was cold, damp and rather overcast as led by Dave, we headed out of the hostel steeply down to the plague village of Eyam past a field of Llamas.

We passed through Eyam, and its many cottages showing who was resident and who died during the plague. Through Eyam, we made our way to Stoney Middleton with Saeed and myself remembering the snowbound weekend at Castleton last February, still cold this time, but no snow!

After a little way on the main road, we branched off up Coombe Dale, taking us along a river to the open quarry. We had a short coffee stop and it started to hail. The quarry had very orange liquid mud, not suitable for our lunch stop, so we continued past and out onto open country where we found a nice dryish spot for lunch in Black Harry Lane. We were shortly aware of dark menacing clouds with the distant hills blotted out with hail or snow, so quickly donned wet weather

gear. Luckily it was all over in about ten minutes, and then some sunshine.

We headed back towards Eyam and the museum, teashop, or a visit to Dingly Dell, then back to the hostel to clean up and enjoy a very good evening hostel meal.

We must have been tired, as most were in bed by 9.30pm (YES 9.30!).

Andrew

### **Sunday, write up by Saeed**

After a hearty hostel breakfast by some of us (amongst a group of school kids from Brummie land) and the remainder of the group having had their self catering breakfast, we took our luggage to the cars down a steep descent.

After a quick deliberation, Sarah led the walk from the car park up a steep incline alongside the hostel which was very muddy and wet, to moorland.

This took us through Abney Clough where on route we stopped by a small stream to have elevenses, then onward march to Abney village after which we found a nice plain to flop onto and have a well deserved lunch, thereafter moving on to Bretton passing Bretton YHA.

In the distance there was a waft of someone's cooking, wonder who/what that was asked some of the trekkers, "Ah yes" it was the Barrel Inn serving up their Sunday roasts to their poor hungry punters who drove up there! unlike us poor walkers who had sarnies. To our surprise Helen and Andrew were already there having a few pints of I wonder what?

A few of the group popped in for refreshments whilst the rest of us took in the lovely views across to Foolow and Eyam. Thereafter we split up (some led by Sarah) went to Hucklow Edge and the rest went back on a shorter route to Eyam. For some a well deserved afternoon tea with cake (oh yummy) and scones at The Buttery Tearoom and craft centre. Then we departed about 16.45 to head down the M1 through some very heavy showers!

Thank you to Claire for organising this weekend at a nice cosy hostel, Dave and Sarah for leading the walks, and the car drivers.

Saeed

## Digging up old Romans

While the group was enjoying Beverly Priory & Whitby over Easter, I was staying at Greenhead YH and working on an archaeological dig in Vindolanda near Hadrian's Wall. If you enjoy peering into history & discovering things, then this is for you. Vindolanda is a Roman site which has given a great insight into how the ancients lived, especially the writings that have been found. Much of this is fascinating trivia like birthday invitations, shopping lists, recipes (fancy a stuffed dormouse for tea?) prayers for safe journeys for family, etc

To get onto the dig was very easy. All I had to do was to log onto the Vindolanda web site, pay them £50 and I could be an archaeologist for 2 weeks. I chose 1 week. We were greeted by Andrew, one of the resident archaeologists on the site, gifted with infectious enthusiasm. He was very supportive & was incredibly tolerant of dumb questions. I had found a flat roofing stone with markings. I thought that this was an amazing discovery – the first evidence of Roman noughts & crosses perhaps. 'Ah no' said Andrew with a grin, 'those are plough marks – probably 17th Century'. Later on I found a stone with similar marks, but on the underside. 'This can't be plough marks' I thought, 'must be Roman noughts & crosses'. 'Worm casts' said Andrew sympathetically. Ugh! Back to the trowelling. Archaeologists are a hardy breed. We were starting a dig, so our first job was to remove the top soil and skim the first 3 or 4 inches of soil. There was snow on the ground when we started, but that didn't stop us. The lure of a 'find' drove us on. Many of my fellow diggers had done this before. All had tales of aching muscles. One guy talked about being so stiff that he couldn't bend down to pick up the shower gel he had dropped. Despite this, he was back the next day. To make a discovery was all-consuming. I saw one young lady swinging a pick-axe on one of the other digs. She was camping nearby over that cold Easter. Underneath her good looks and sensuous curves, she was built of the same stuff that she was hacking her way through. We were excavating 4th & 5th century remains. Armed with spades & shovels, we dug down, & soon a structure was found. Andrew didn't what it was, but when I found some burnt clay, part of it might have been an oven. On to finer work with trowels and brushes, we found bits of pottery & nails. It was amazing how quickly your eye picked up artefacts. Even nails which were black & the same colour as the soil seemed to spring out and hit you. Between us, our best finds included a coin, a metal pen and a piece of Roman pornography. I'm not saying what it was, but the lady that found it got quite excited. The

world of 2000 years ago was coming to life! My best find was a shaped stone which Andrew said was used for grinding corn. I had no idea what it was; only that it was obviously man-made. Our efforts attracted the attention of visitors to the site, with a number of people looking over the fence asking what was were doing. One little old lady saw me struggling with a squeaky wheelbarrow full of spoil which had to be dumped. 'I know that it's an old joke' she said 'but the squeak should be quicker!'. I could just imagine her as a Roman slave driver shouting 'faster faster'.

As I drove to the site each day, I saw a road sign pointing to Vindolanda & the text underneath saying 'Excavations in progress'. There's fame for you - mentioned on a road sign.

So what will this dig find? As I said earlier, this excavation was started by us, so we won't know the full result until the end of the season. Watch this space!!

Alan

## Malham weekend 2nd – 5th May 2008 – organised by Chris K

Strangely, there were not many takers for a 19 mile walk through the best parts of the dales, so just after 8.40am myself and Liz set off up the path to Malham Cove. After crossing the stream, we climbed up the side of the Cove and crossed the limestone pavement to pick up the track to Malham Tarn.

From there, a path turned uphill across fields to Middle Houses, and joined a bridleway across the tops to Arncliffe. Here we met the prototype Smiler from Last of the Summer Wine. He was running the only pub in the village, and wasn't enjoying it!

The route from there went down the valley to Hawkswick and the over the ridge and down into Wharfedale, and a well-deserved break at the tearoom in Kettlewell. We took the Dales Way from there down the valley to Grassington. Liz's sat-nav told us that we had walked 18.6 miles by this stage, and there were still 5 miles to go - the decision was made to get a taxi back to Malham.

Our driver convinced us that Skipton is the centre of the universe, which explains why the route had got longer. Everything is moving away from the centre of the universe, and so Yorkshire must be expanding.

On Sunday evening, we went to the pub next to the hostel for a meal. We all enjoyed it, and I was looking forward to a succulent slice of orange when it disappeared with a cry of "You didn't really want that, did you?" Instead I had to make do with a piece of parkin.

Thank to Chris K for organising a wonderful weekend."

Stuart

### **Sunday May 4th Gordale Scar, Malham Cove and Malham Tarn**

Some of us sat down to a hearty hostel breakfast. Others shared an unusually quiet members kitchen. Once packed lunches were sorted and rucksacks packed we all set off on our walk. It was great to share the walk with members from the distant past. Louise, Paul and Mary.

As we set off down the road and into the village it unfortunately started to rain, on went the waterproofs. We crossed a small stream and headed across the fields towards Gordale Scar. Many of the group are familiar with this walk. I have done it many times, each time it is always a delight. We followed the path into a lovely wooded area, the steep rocks on our left covered with wild garlic. We reached Janet's Foss, a waterfall with a considerable amount of water tumbling into a pool below. A few photos were taken then we moved on, climbing the slippery rocks and out into the open. Crossing the road we entered the field full of traditional happy campers. The track followed the river into the spectacular Gordale Scar. Near vertical cliffs on both sides, the water tumbling over the limestone rocks at the end. Many of the group past and present have climbed up and down the rocks. Paul B. climbed up, down and up again just for fun. Louise and Mary decided to go up with him, planning to meet us Malham Tarn

The rest of us retraced our steps back to the bridge and followed a path upwards, then contouring round to the right side of Malham Cove. It is one of the most spectacular sites in this country. Great slabs of limestone eroded over thousands of years by water, forming limestone pavements. A sheer vertical drop loved by many rock climbers, leads down into the valley below. Malham Cove was once a waterfall, it could probably rival Niagra Falls in its day. We rested for a while on the side of the Cove to have elevenses. Sadly the rained continued making the pavements too slippery to walk on.

Refreshed we headed along the delightful dry stone valley. The grassy, sometimes rocky path climbed steadily upward. At one point having gained considerable height you could look back and see the stunning views. The path takes you through a gorge, which eventually opens out. We approached the 'sink holes' where the water disappears underground. In the distance we could see an ice cream van and three rather cold and wet ex Barneters' awaiting our arrival. At this point some of the walkers decided to find their own way back to the hostel. Several hot chocolates later the remainder of the group wandered over the open ground, past various herds of cattle to Malham Tarn. We walked around the Tarn stopping near the Field Study Centre for lunch. We all huddled together in a row on a large tree trunk. Then feeling refreshed we headed back round to Malham Cove. At this point their had been a possibility of extending the walk but most people were pretty soggy, so the shorter route home was chosen.

The approach to Malham Cove on the other side, was again quite delightful. We gradually dropped down until we reached the road that led us back to the village. No good walk in Malham can end without a visit to a teashop. We sat inside drinking lots of hot tea, elegantly wearing plastic bags on our feet. It had been a great day. Many, many thanks to Dave Li for organising the walk and everyone for their company.

Linda P.

### **Great Offley walk 27 April lead by Peter D**

Sixteen of us gathered at Great Offley a picturesque Hertfordshire village for the start of Peter's walk. We were greeted by sunshine, a promising start as rain had been forecast.

We left Great Offley heading towards Preston walking along varied footpaths and through woodland that had magnificent displays of bluebells with great swathes carpeting the ground.

Unfortunately the rain didn't keep at bay for long and soon the heavens opened so we quickly donned our waterproofs. Undeterred we continued on our way and pressed on to Preston for lunch. We stopped at The Red Lion where some had booked pub lunch with the appeal of hot food enticing others to join in - me included.

