

## **LDWA SUSSEX GROUP NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 13**

Welcome to the LDWA Sussex Group Newsletter for the purpose of communicating what activities the Group and individual members are participating in and also to raise general interest in walking associated activities. All contributions, comments etc. are very much welcomed.

We would like to know how many people read this newsletter so please help us by clicking this link: [I have read the newsletter](#)

### **GROUP NEWS AND MEMBERSHIP**

As at 30<sup>th</sup> June, 165 LDWA members (up from 130 as at 31/01/13) had elected Sussex as their Primary Local Group with 78 (29) nominating Sussex as their or one of their Associate Groups. Average attendance for our group walks for the first half of 2013 is 12 (10 for the whole of 2013).

Members of the Committee for 2013 are as follows:

- Chris Baines-Holmes (Chairman) T: 01273-772076 E: [chrisbainesholmes@btinternet.com](mailto:chrisbainesholmes@btinternet.com)
- Shirley Greenwood (Treasurer)
- Anthony Mitchell (Secretary) T: 01342 – 811361 E: [anthonymitchell@btinternet.com](mailto:anthonymitchell@btinternet.com)
  
- Gillian Aitken
- Kay Armstrong
- Trevor Beeston – (Walks Organiser and Newsletter editor) T: 07816-108373  
E: [beestont@aol.com](mailto:beestont@aol.com)
- Chris Coates
- David Hodge

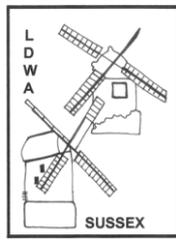
There still remain vacancies on the Committee. Should anyone like to join please contact the Chairman or Secretary.

### **CHALLENGE EVENTS**

#### **Past Event – South Downs Marathon 2013**

Firstly, the Marshal's Walk that took place on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March. The weather forecast wasn't good and given the 8am start (still in GMT) and the 28 mile route perhaps there was not the appetite for turning out on that day. The remnants of the previous week's snow were still evident. Although the fields were clear it gathered in the hollows and hid behind the hedgerows. Anyway, eight started and all went well reaching the half way point in reasonably good time. There would be a partial change of personnel for the second half despite rain being forecast for the afternoon. Finally prising themselves free of the warm embrace of the Trevor Arms the party set off across the A27 and headed for Firle. Through the village and onto the Old Coach Road, much improved these days but still white and slippery. Up onto the top of the Downs to join the South Downs Way (SDW), passing Bo-Peep, then Alfriston via Winton Street.

Up again, crossing the top of the Long Man and onto Folkington Hill with its view over Eastbourne. Down to Cranedown Bottom and a new route to avoid the mud filled ditch which is the Wealdway. New route = less mud but more stiles.



At some point the rain had started. The path from Jevington was still full of snow with a river running through and under it. At the top of Bourne Hill the SDW and the Wealdway were bid farewell as the route turned south west across the fields. The rain worsened and the fields – flat and on top of the hill - began to flood. The wettest/coldest/longest/most b\*\*\*\*y awful weather in living memory had saturated the ground.

The car park was finally reached and the bedraggled survivors headed home.

This marshal's walk is fated – last year it was cancelled due to – you've guessed it – bad weather!

### **Pathtrekker.**

How different the weather was on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April for the main event. It was glorious day and, for the participants, even eclipsed the conditions we had for the previous year. Feedback from last year's event was pretty positive so no need to change anything too much. Everyone that took part seemed to enjoy the day. This is reflected in the comments that were very gratefully received from those that took part some of which are below:

I must write to thank you for an absolutely outstanding event, one of the best I have ever done. Thank you to all the marshals and helpers - that one will be hard to beat. I will definitely aim to come back next year

*Thank you to you and your first class 'team' for another fantastic SDM. Great weather, lovely route, far reaching views (once the long climbs were behind us!), clear route description, and delicious home-made cookies as a treat when finished! What a day!*

*A brief but sincere THANK YOU to all of the LDWA team in organising and successfully staging this event.*

*A long day + a lot of 'homework' for you, and I look forward to next year!*

We would be hugely grateful if you could please pass on our enormous thanks to the organising team as well as the many marshals who looked after us as we walk/jogged our way around the course. You are so right it is an event not a race, and what a phenomenal event it is too. Someone asked me last night if this was a credible alternative to the Beach Head marathon in October and I burst out laughing – there is simply no comparison. Your event wins, hands down.

**Thank you and all the team for a brilliant event, despite my aching legs I really enjoyed the day; the course, the scenery, the marshals, the route description, the post race food and most importantly the weather! I look forward to similar next year!**

**I am really surprised that more people did not take part - perhaps I need to pen a eulogy for Strider?**

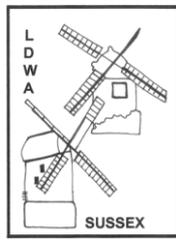
*Many thanks to you and your team of helpers for making this such an enjoyable day*

Thank you and all the Sussex Group for a truly wonderful walk. The weather was perfect, well done for arranging that! We carried a lot of extra food thinking that there was only going to be 1 check point and the others self clippers so it was a pleasant surprise to be offered a selection of biscuits. Hope to be able to join you for The Sussex Stride in September.

**Many thanks to all of your exceptional team for giving all us walkers and runners such a wonderful day on the Sussex Downs. Without your efforts 79 people would not be buzzing and having that feel good factor today.**

**Looking forward to a return in 2014**

*Thank you for organising such a wonderful event. Worn out and sore today but did enjoy it*



Thank you for organising such a lovely, successful event. And thanks to all the marshals and caterers - tea in the morning, sandwiches and maltloaf and tea at lunchtime, biscuits and water at checkpoints, and beans on toast on return were all very very welcome. Great job everyone!  
The good company and lovely weather made it all the more superb.

The Committee thanks everyone for their kind words. Just to pick up on one of the comments above (and which has also been made several times subsequently) is why did not more people enter. There were 95 entries and 79 starters. These numbers were down on last year when we had 103 starters.

The event has a modest limit of 150 and we would like to get a little closer to this. Therefore, if you took part and enjoyed this event we would be very pleased to see you again next year and would also ask that you pass the word around because if you don't use it you could lose it!

## **Future Event**

### **Sussex Stride 2013**

The Sussex Group's 51 miler, the Sussex Stride, returns on 21st & 22nd September 2013 – For full details, rules, how to enter plus entry forms see the Group's website - [www.ldwasussex.org.uk](http://www.ldwasussex.org.uk)

The route description will be available as a download via the website from 31/8/2013.

Don't forget that this event also forms part of the KSS Triple challenge.

### **LDWA South Downs Marathon 2014**

One for the diary - next year's event will take place on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> April.

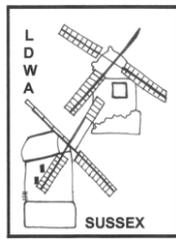
## **GROUP WALKS**

### **Past Walks – Half year review**

Following the wettest year on record, it was not surprising that our early February walk from Frant included a lot of slipping and sliding. For many this was probably the first chance of the year to get out and have a good walk. Our walk at the end of that month proved that if you stay on high ground you can avoid most of the poor conditions underfoot. This was definitely the case on the route from Devil's Dyke to Steyning and back - see report below.

The prospects didn't look so go for avoiding the mud on the "Mid Sussex Flat Earth Society Walk" (No hills normally mean lots of lying water and mud, particularly at this time of year). Also, parts of the route had been underwater when first walked out in November. However, on the day it wasn't as bad as feared. Perhaps the lunch stop at the Royal Oak at Wineham helped forget about the conditions!

Following the SDM Marshal's Walk – see above, it was decided that to review whether or not to hold it again next year or perhaps replace it with a slightly shorter version. Details to follow in due course.



The first walk in BST was the "Two Level Traipse" starting and finishing in Westfield. At last the sun was out and kept out for just about the whole walk. Lunchtime at Winchelsea was a welcome stop including a visit to the graveyard where Spike Milligan is buried – and to our (my) surprise the headstone does NOT read "I told you I was ill".

There was a good turnout for the "Lewes Loop" station from Lewes station. The day started warm and sunny with a climb out of the town up to Black Cap and then descending down to Plumpton and reaching Barcombe Cross for lunch. The rain moved in for the last hour or so but not enough to dampen the spirits. Fourteen walkers took participated on a sunny day at the end of May from Polegate station being the walk that was cancelled from last year.

June and the first of two walks this year starting at Whiteways Lodge (different routes with the second planned for September) took place on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> – see report below. This walk was followed two weeks later by Jerome's walk from Harting Down on a rather breezy but what turned out to be a predominately dry day and the 99<sup>th</sup> walk that Jerome has led for the LDWA over the last 10 years (His 100<sup>th</sup> took place the following weekend).

The forecast of a hot one on Day 10 of the so called July "heatwave" may have deterred some but those that did turn up at Herstmonceux were treated to a great walk and pub stop at Brownbread Street in conditions that could be described as ideal. The slight breeze always stopping the heat from becoming oppressive.

Thank you for all those that participated and particular thanks to all those that agreed to lead a walk and the work they put in to produce interesting routes.

**Trevor Beeston**

### **Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> February – Small Dole & Steyning**

The month and season had finally caught up with the weather, cold, wet, cold and wet, snow, wet snow, cold and wet snow.....

The intended route for this winter outing rapidly descended the north face of The Downs to Fulking, across the fields to Small Dole and thence along the Adur to Steyning. A reconnoiter a few days before the walk soon revealed the folly of this plan. Although the rain had retired for a refill the descent - on chalky paths -brought to mind that old Paul Simon song, not Bridge Over Troubled Water but Slip Sliding Away. The Bridge would have been useful at the bottom as it appeared that the sea had somehow got round the back of the Downs.

Reconnoiter abandoned followed by a slow and undignified return to the car

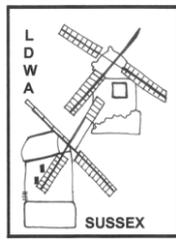
The day of the walk was sunny, cold and DRY and stayed that way. The weather had relented for a few days and the ground was better than expected. The route revised - out along the top, back along the top, at least no one would drown - we set out westward along the South Downs Way. There was mud aplenty in the dips but the descent from Truleigh Hill was good and even the banks of the Adur were not too soggy.

On to Botolphs and up through the vast piggery on Annington Hill. Despite protests from the good people of Steyning and others with welfare of the South Downs in mind, the piggery is on agricultural land the arcs are temporary structures so, for the time being, there it stays.

The route followed the SDW round the Steyning Bowl and dropped through the woods to the village. Lunch was taken at a variety of hostelryes, the Star proving very acceptable.

The return followed the lanes back to Botolphs to pick up the outward route along the SDW.

Walking the same path in the opposite direction, of course, opens different vista even if the mud is the same. The flint path between Truleigh Hill and The Dyke is some way from the edge of the escarpment, giving good views when travelling west but little variety in the



easterly direction. By taking a more northerly route along the escarpment edge the views to the north and east are extensive and spectacular. Despite this I think more people stopped to look at 'the weather', after the terrible winter the most enjoyable aspect of the day.

### **Pathtrekker**

### **Going to Graffham – Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

A hot summer's day was promised – the thirteen who met at Whiteways Lodge car park were so cold that extra clothing was required. We should have known.

Down the hill to the Arun and along the bank to the village of Bury, for hundreds of years the site of a rowing boat ferry on the route to Amberley. On to West Burton, a collection of large houses from many eras, some of them thatched. Next was Bignor with its Roman Villa. We are now on the Wessex 100 route, albeit going backwards. Sutton soon follows and then Barlavington. Here the path traverses the graveyard of St Mary's church, built in the early eleven hundreds in the Early English style.

The route crossed the lower slopes of Duncton Hanger, passing an old and deserted orchard. I have passed this way in Autumn, the branches groaning under the weight of the apples, all protected not by a fence but by the shoulder high nettles which grow beneath the trees. Lavington Park, home of Seaford College since 1945, was soon entered. Acres of pristine playing fields are seen, complimenting Lavington House atop the hill with its large pepper pot bay windows. Below it is a motely collection of school buildings, representing every architectural style since WW2. A small development of luxury houses is under way – not so many fee paying pupils these days perhaps?

And so to Graffham, a ribbon village, its church and school somewhat detached. Lunch is taken at the White Horse. A traditional hostelry with a bar menu and good beer. As we sit in the garden – it's supposed to be summer, after all, - the sun makes a fleeting appearance. Replete, we ascend the Downs to join the South Downs Way. We head east then south east through woods and open down, the sun appearing from time to time. Those flint laden chalk paths, that cause visiting Northerners such grief, get no softer.

Back at the car park, previously called Bury Hill, the Born Again Bikers have assembled. They stand or sit or lie around admiring their chromium steeds. From time to time scouting parties sally forth, no doubt to terrorise the Sunday drivers in the leafy lanes of Sussex. I go to the café for a large mug of (very good) tea and the most sugar laden Cherry Bakewell tart I have ever eaten. A fitting end to a good day.

**Chris Baines-Holmes**

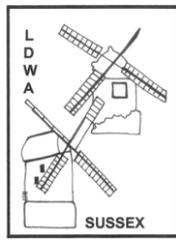
### **Future Walks**

The programme of walks to the end of the year is set out below and can be seen on the national LDWA website, the Sussex Group website and in Strider:

### **SATURDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> JULY - BLACK DOWN FROM COWDRAY PARK**

C18ml. 9.00am start from Benbow Pond c.p. GR [SU914223](#)  
Route via Bexleyhill to Temple of the Winds and Black Down.  
Return via Petworth Park and Lodsworth.  
Pub lunch at Lurgashall.

Leader: Paul Farrell 07974181697.



### **SUNDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST - STROLL THROUGH THREE COUNTIES**

20ml. 9.00 start from cp on De La Warr Road, East Grinstead. GR [TQ391384](#).  
A walk through Dormansland via Dry Hill to Hever. Pub lunch. Return via Mark Beech and Crippenden Manor.

Leader: Mary Davis

### **SATURDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST - SUSSEX STRIDE MARSHAL'S WALK**

51ml. Meet 8.00 am At Longhill School, Rottingdean. GR [TQ362038](#). For those marshaling on the main event only. Please ring if you wish to take part.  
**C:** Chris Baines-Holmes **T:** 01273 772076.

### **Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September - ROUND THE MILL**

20 ml. Start 9.00am from Whiteways Lodge c.p at the jctn of A284 & A29 , N of Arundel. GR [TQ002108](#). Route via Halnaker and Eartham.  
Lunch at Winterton Arms, Crockerhill

Leader: Anthony Mitchell

### **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October - CIRCULAR FROM BURWASH**

20ml. Start 08:30am from free CP behind Bear Inn PH in Burwash, East Sussex. TN19 7ET. GR [TQ674247](#). Circular walk from Burwash via Mayfield and return.  
Pub/Picnic lunch in Mayfield.

Leader: Chris Kennedy 07732 912678.

### **Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> October – GILLIAN'S BIRTHDAY WALK**

c16ml. Start 9.00am from Alfriston Long Term c.p. GR [TQ521034](#). (Note: bring change for c.p.). Figure of eight walk providing an option for a shorter walk (10 or 6 miles). Lunch and then tea at the end in Alfriston.

Leader: Gillian Aitken.

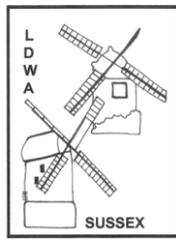
### **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November – ROEDEAN & RODMELL**

c17 ml. Start 9.00 am from Roedean Road car park (off the A259 coast road). GR [TQ347032](#). Frequent buses to and from Brighton. Route out via Racecourse, Bevendean, Kingston Ridge to Rodmell returning via Telscombe and the Undercliff walkway.  
Pub lunch at Rodmell.

Leader: Joan Wortley T: 07957 330455

### **Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November - LANCING RING**

15 ml. Start 9.15am from Lancing Ring CP - GR [TQ184063](#)  
Route outline: Steep Down, Steyning Round Hill, Small Dole (lunch), Tottington Mount, Cowbottom Hovel.



Leader: Kay Armstrong T:01273 673818

### **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December - CHRISTMAS WALK AND LUNCH**

9am from Alfriston Long Term c.p. (Note: bring change for the c.p.) LR 199, GR [TQ521034](#).  
Pub lunch and carols at the Cricketers, Berwick.

Leader: Helen Smith. Contact: Chris Baines-Holmes 01273 772076 to confirm place for lunch.

We are always looking for new ideas, routes etc. so if you are interested in leading a walk in your favourite area, please contact me on [beestont@aol.com](mailto:beestont@aol.com)

**Trevor Beeston**

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

#### **New Youth Hostel**

YHA's newest Youth Hostel, YHA South Downs, at Itford Farm was officially opened by the Rt. Hon David Laws MP, Minister of State for Schools, on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June. The former 13<sup>th</sup> Century Itford Farm is located on the South Downs Way next to Southease Railway Station and provides a 68-bed Youth Hostel and learning resource for young people to explore the South Downs National Park and enhance their learning education.

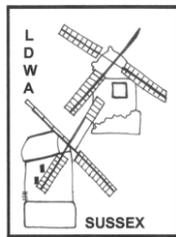
#### **The Return of the Kissing Gate.**

Over the years the furniture of the footpath has changed only a little. Those squeeze points with the tall, elegantly curved uprights which cater, I think, for horses, seem to be disappearing. The treads of the humble stile are often made of that grooved wood beloved of DIY stores and decking installers. Metal five-bar gates are also in decline, often displaced by their wooden counterpart – except on the estates of the nouveau-riche where they display their owner's shiny galvanised wealth.

One exception to this rural lack of innovation is the Kissing Gate. They were probably introduced by those arch organisers of the countryside, the Victorians. A few of the original iron ones remain. Perhaps the name derived from their design which allowed a couple, in those less promiscuous times, a little intimate contact as they passed through. Indeed, one can imagine a white shirted Mr. Darcy lingering in mid gate for a quick snog with whichever young lady was pursuing him at the time. Alas the etymology of the name is more prosaic in that the gate merely "kisses" (touches) the enclosure either side, rather than needing to be securely latched.

One possible reason for their spread is the speed at which the general (non-LDWA of course) public will sue the Local Authority when they slip off a wet stile. I myself have done so on more than one occasion, normally after the lunch stop.....slip not sue, that is.

**Pathtrekker.**



## **And Finally.....**

Back in 2011 David Hodge started out on the “big one” Lands End to John Groats finishing the first leg at Bath (almost). He has now returned after completing a second stage to get to Hebden Bridge:

### **LeJog 2013. Just South of Bath to Hebden Bridge. 274 miles.**

Got to the start from Bexhill by train to Bath, then bus to a small village called Great Elm. Walked the 2 miles north to Buckland Dinham where I finished in 2011. The B&B where I stayed 2 years ago was not available (owners on holiday) so I walked a further 3 miles north to Faulkland to stay the night at the Faulkland Inn, one of 2 places where I stayed that there was no one there overnight.

The next day my plan was to take a route east of Bath and pick up the Cotswold Way at Tormarton where I had booked a B&B. I headed off in the morning and got on the Colliers Way, an old railway route refurbished as a cycling and walking route. On this route is a tunnel just over a mile long (I found later it had only opened in April). The tunnel is lit and as you get near the middle a sensor detects you and spooky cello music plays, well worth a visit if you are down Bath way. There is a second shorter tunnel just after. I got so engrossed in an easy walk and the tunnels that I missed my turn off and finished up just to the west of Bath.

Fortunately the Cotswold Way starts on the west of Bath so I headed up that route to my B&B. It made for a long day of about 23 miles. The next day was also a bit long, next year I must start with a few shorter days.

I was carrying all my kit rather than using a bag carrier (This does exist on the Cotswold Way). One set of clothes on, one set in the pack, extra pair of socks, waterproofs, small netbook, various chargers, water in a bag in the pack (hydration reservoir)– I found this the best way as you don't have to stop to get a drink, I found small amounts and often the best way for me. One B&B washed all my stuff for me half way and I was able to wash and dry some items as I went.

Up the Cotswold Way then to Chipping Campden (I had done the whole route in 2010), using minor roads to cut off the corners and shorten the route where I could.

From Chipping Campden I headed north using the Heart of England Way as a guide. This and later paths are well marked and used but the vegetation either side can be up to shoulder height in places, not a route for shorts, and if it has rained at all your boots will get soaked. It does go through some nice places though, notably Alcester and Lichfield.

Further on I used the Staffordshire Way and Limestone Way to get onto the Tissington Trail. The Tissington Trail is another converted railway line (13 miles) and leads into the Pennine Bridle Way which went all the way to Hebden Bridge.

I do like the Derbyshire and Yorkshire Dales. Much more open scenery and views although the downside is that there are more hills to go up and down.

10 miles from Hebden Bridge I dropped down off the hills to the Rochdale canal and followed the towpath all the way to the finish.

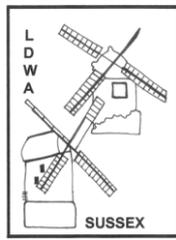
A few blisters early on, due to the wet boots and socks, but these hardened after a few days and gave no further trouble.

Spend on this section, using all B&Bs and small hotels and pubs for meals £1200.

I used the Harvey's maps for Cotswolds and Pennine Bridle Way and the OS GetaMap online map service for the bit in between, throwing away the printed pages as I went.

Next year Hebden Bridge to Milngavie (start of the West Highland Way).

**David Hodge**



## Yorkshire Dales Centurion Walk – April 2013

I was out voted 3 to 1 as to where to go for this years' annual weeks' walk. It would be Yorkshire. Over recent years I had completed the Dales Way, Dales Celebration Way, the Pennine Way plus several trips for day walks in the Dales. All great walking but what could be left?

Browsing the LDWA website we spotted the Yorkshire Dales Centurion Walk which is described as an adventure walk around the Dales and Howgills. It is also classified as "Very Challenging". There is no route description available, just a set of grid references and the names of the places to visit en route. Whilst I had previously visited a number of the places and "highlights", this would be a new route and we would have the opportunity of variants if necessary.

The official start is the Pen-y-Ghent Cafe in Horton-in-Ribblesdale, however given that this is a circular route we could really start anywhere on the circuit so we decided upon Ravenstonedale which is a small village in the Howgills. The main reason to start here was the easy access off the M6 given that we were travelling up by car. The village supports two pubs so there was no need to worry about somewhere to eat and drink.

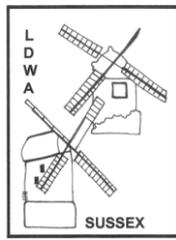
On paper, Day 1 would be a 15 mile trek to Tan Hill. It was raining when we set off on the first leg of around 5 miles to reach Kirby Stephen. Relatively straight forward. From there we would make our way to Nine Standards Rigg which would follow the Coast-to-Coast route. As we gained height the visibility declined. We had no views at all from Nine Standards. This would cause us a bit of a dilemma. The described "route" appeared to go due east across uncharted moorland to reach Tan Hill via Brownber Tarn. On balance we thought we ought to stick to some kind of path so we decided to take the C-C route via Whitsun Dale reserved for walkers to stomp across only between August and November to help reduce erosion. After the last year of poor weather the area around Nine Standards is very badly eroded.

Day 2 and it was a much brighter day as we set off from Tan Hill across Arkengarthdale Moor. Thinking that we had reached the high point of West Moor was a mistake because in fact we had climbed higher to reach the trig point at Water Crag. We were in the wrong place but at least we had great views. From here we got back on track and reached Arkle Beck and a path would take us Langthwaite for a pint and then to our destination of Reeth.

Day 3 would be the shortest day taking us to West Burton. Following a simple climb to Greet's Hill the route was straightforward via Castle Bolton and Aysgarth. Most of this would be the on the route of the Dales Celebration Way that I took several years previously only that time the destination was Thoraby which is only about a mile away from West Burton.

Day 4 and after two good days the weather closed in. Our aim was to climb up to Buckden Pike and then onto Great Whernside before dropping down to Kettlewell. Given the rain and strong winds and that we could not see the top of the hills, we decided that this would be senseless. It would be heads down taking a lower level walk of a mixture of footpaths and the road. This route did give us the opportunity of calling into the White Lion at Cray for a lunch stop and a dry out. A great pub that I had visited on the Dales Celebration Way which, if I recall, was also a very wet day. It brightened up slightly for the afternoon as we made for Buckden and then along the Dales Way to Kettlewell.

Having won the pub quiz at the Blue Bell Inn the previous night we set off from Kettlewell on the Monday morning starting with a steep climb up to Old Cote Moor Top before dropping



down to Arncliffe into Littondale. It was extremely windy and we were heading straight into it. When we reached Litton we decided that rather than keep on route to reach Foxup Moor we would take a bridleway that would take us to the southern face of Pen-y-ghent. We would climb this mountain from a different direction to the route description but at least we conquered it against the wind and a heavy hail storm. An evening was had in the Crown at Horton-in-Ribblesdale.

Day 6 was always going to be either the highlight or most difficult depending really on the conditions. Today we were heading for Dent via Ingleborough and Whernside and we were in luck. The wind had subsided and the sun had come out. We reached the top of Ingleborough in complete calm which was rather different from yesterday when we were nearly blown off the side of Pen-y-ghent. From here we made impressive progress up and down Ingleborough and therefore plenty of time to stop for beers at the Old Hill Inn at Chapel-le-Dale. Climbing Whernside in the afternoon proved a little harder after this but once on the top the views were spectacular and we could track where we had walked over the last few days.

The final day back to Ravenstonedale would be a tricky one. It started off OK with the first 5 miles or so to Sedbergh being straightforward and in the dry. From Sedbergh the aim was to climb up to The Calf via Winder and Brant Fell. We could see the skies getting darker in distance but it seemed clear at the moment so we set off. It was a steep climb up to Winder Hill before meeting the main path. Then the cloud came in. It got windier and wetter as we headed onwards and upwards until suddenly the trig point at the top of The Calf appeared out of the cloud. We didn't want to stay up here for too long so we headed off the top. Suddenly the next section of the route was clear ahead. A very steep sided hill called Yarside. There was no path on the OS map and no obvious route up although I am sure there must have been (this was later verified in a book titled "Walks in the Howgills"). We decided to give this climb a miss and take a path down to the road past Cautley Snout. From there we picked up a bridleway heading north to our final destination.

Whilst we didn't follow the route precisely to the book (well, grid references!) we completed the circuit to the best we could especially given the conditions on a couple of days. A worthwhile journey for anyone wishing to experience many of the natural highlights of the north Yorkshire Dales and Howgills.

**Trevor Beeston**