



GET THE OUTDOOR HABIT IN 2005

BAGS OF TROUBLE –

Jersey May 2005

By Angela Bengur

Friday 13.5.05. We started our journey to Jersey early in the morning and Norman, never one to carry excess baggage decided to abandon his bag at Bristol Airport (no, not Jackie!) We took the bus to St Helier and here Dawn was posed a question 'Tony or not Tony?' However, we eventually did get our Tony Taxi to the hostel and what an impressive building it is. That night we went to Gorey harbour and partook of a wonderful 4 course meal and all totally bloated all rolled back to the hostel.

Saturday 14.5.05. We took a short walk to St Martins in a chilly temperature, had a tea stop and continued along the coast to Gorey for a Fete de la Mer – good music, good food and scallops for the brave! Here we split up, with Chris and Phil storming the castle, Norman, Jackie and Angela getting provisions, whilst Nick and Dawn disappeared together – we don't know what they did yet! Theme for the evening was Italian cuisine back at the hostel. After supper five of the group went pubbing at 'The Village Inn' in good NOG fashion.

Sunday 15.5.05. We set off at a brisk pace from the hostel to La Hogue Bie – an archaeological site with an impressive burial mound dating back to 3800bc. Here we think we must hold the record for the longest guided tour – supposedly 45 minutes that stretched to 2½ hours! Next, on to the wonderful Gerald Durrells Conservation Centre. That evening we sampled another of the Gorey harbour restaurants and we were all well satisfied.

Monday 16.05.05. Today we split up. Nick couldn't get the birds so ended up with crabs (the spider and fiddler varieties). Phil, Norman and Jackie as true NOGS do, decided to cross the island on foot (12 miles). After a bus ride back to St Heliers and a sumptuous full cream tea on the veranda of the De Vere Grand Hotel they hiked the remaining 5 miles back to the hostel. Dawn went back to the Zoo to bond with the gorillas and look for animals that had hidden from rain the previous day. Chris and Angela visited the War Tunnels encompassing the Underground Hospital which is a recommended must when in Jersey. They proceeded on to St Aubins for a guided walk of the village by the sea. That evening we settled down in the hostel for Hungarian Cuisine.

Tuesday 17.05.05. We again split into groups. Jackie Norman and Phil started at Greve de Lecq Beach with coffee, walked around the coastal bay of Plemont for lunch. Norman paddled (there is photographic evidence). They continued to L'Etacq via Grosnez point and chateau and then around the fortifications. Next a bus to St Ouens Bay for a sunbathing session (rare on this trip). Dawn and Chris went by bus to the zoo and walked from Bouley Bay to Bon Nuit Bay and on to Greve de Lecq for a walk on the beach. Next, a taxi taken around the NW of the

island and then back to St Helier. Here they saw the marina and new sculpture unveiled by the Queen on 5.5.05. Angela and Nick joined one of the walking weeks organized rambles around Bouley Bay with spectacular views from the cliffs. We learned a lot about the local farms and picked watercress to garnish our sandwiches. After a pub stop and a mile walk to the zoo, off we went with a new fellow walker friend to join in another organized walk around Gorey Village. Here we heard all the local gossip of the last 2 centuries. That evening we all met up at the Pottery Restaurant in the village, and then on to the local pub (it only took us 5 days to get to the pub nearest the hostel!)

Wednesday 18.5.05. The sun came out to see us off!

Memorable quotes

Chris:- 'Be careful about putting the wrong thing in the wrong place.'

Nick:- 'I can understand you wanting something cold and smooth after walking.'

Angela:- 'Is that an offer?'

Phil:- 'had a taste for Mary Anne

Nick:- admitted to enjoying loose women

FAREWELL BABBY

By Jackie Roberts

Why traipse all the way to the village of Badby near Daventry Northants for a weekend in a Youth Hostel? The mountains are non-existent, the coastline is far away.

The group last visited the picturesque thatched cottage about 2 years ago, though my memories go back a little further as it used to be a good base for taking the family and friends to Silverstone Grand Prix on an annual excursion. When we heard that it was to face the axe (metaphorically speaking as it is a grade 2 listed building) the Newport group booked a weekend there as a final farewell. Eight of us arrived earlyish on Friday evening. Angela, Dawn and myself with Bob driving and Lorna, Babs and Pat with Dave F driving. After enjoying hospitalities in the local pubs we all retired to our beds gratefully after a long week in work.

Nigel arrived quite a bit later having been on a school trip to Drayton Manor theme park and driven from Brynmawr at the end of an already long



day.

Saturday started off a little cloudy but this was not a bad thing as the sun soon broke through to give a very hot day, sun cream was definitely needed. After Bob had tried his first Su Doku of the day, Dave led a circular walk along the Nene Valley footpath and Jurassic Way via the Red Lion pub where refreshments were taken. The rolling countryside was glorious, very lush, haymaking had already begun. Aeroplanes in fluffy blue skies and crops in the fields gave us a summer view of England at its finest. We all ate in The Maltsters Arms that evening (paying for all meals!) and most had a good nights

sleep after enjoying the best kind of evening on one of these weekends. Sunday was bright and sunny and Dawn led another walk for us via Newnham where we visited a nuttery, the site of a hazel orchard. It was Angela's suggestion that we should take a quick look, perhaps there was a hidden message that we did not pick up on! For me the grand finale was the cream tea back at The Maltsters before we left on Sunday afternoon. It may not have been the best cream and Babs may only have squeezed one cup of tea, but we didn't really want to leave. Well I didn't. But we had to eventually.

Change is inevitable in the YHA, I don't think any of us are so naive as to think otherwise. Most of us choose to live in (and some relish) a capitalist society and therefore we have to accept this kind of change and 'go with the flow.' The idealists can throw hands up in the air and try to make a lot of fuss but in the long run it will not make a scrap of difference. Badby was the only Youth hostel In Northampton and the only thatched cottage Youth Hostel. It is very sad that it is being sold to a private owner and access will be denied to future generations of youth hostellers. But if you are ever in that part of the country it may be worth a quick visit to Badby just to reminisce on how good things used to be - especially the fluffy scones at the Maltsters Arms.

AND NOW - ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE ON THE BADBY TRIP

THE NOTORIOUS NINE

EXPLORE BADBY by Barbara Same

Angela, Pat, Dawn, Lorna, Jackie, Babs, Nigel, Bob & Dave, Accomplice - Colin the warden

It was a cool dry morning when the nine set out from the hostel in Badby, Northamptonshire to walk around the countryside surrounding the only thatched hostel in the UK. Some more about the hostel, it was built in 1686 and became a hostel in 1941 part of that time the thatch was covered over with a steel roof but then the thatch roof was restored. Sadly the hostel has been sold and will cease to be a hostel in two months time. It has been bought by a local lady and is a grade II listed building so any alterations will be limited. On the ground floor near the reception is an original leaded window which has to remain untouched throughout any changes. There is an orchard with pear, plum and apple trees and a garden, occupied by a solitary camper on the second night we stayed there, due to the influx of travellers wishing to make a sentimental journey before closure.

The church in Newnham has a woman priest and she and her husband gave us a very friendly and informative guide round the church, including the guy poking his tongue out carved into one of the pillars. Afterwards Nigel recounted the 'celebrity' anecdote which formed an underlying theme and a controversial topic of discussion throughout the weekend. We then walked on through Staverton, Lower Catesby and Upper Catesby on what turned out to be a beautiful summer's day, traversing Helidon and Charwelton. In the distance we could see a viaduct crossing the countryside and made our way over to it. A small plane circled slowly overhead in the blue sky. We stopped for a break and it was here that Angela did her impression of a lioness hunting prey on the veldt and disappeared completely

out of sight into the grass so that the rest of us briefly thought she had been left behind when we came to move on. Bob also engaged in one of his frequent sock explorations which at first I thought was a conscientious attention to keep them free from bits of grass picked up on his travels but later discovered he was taking a rest from his boots.

We eventually reached Fawsley Hall and Angela, Lorna, Pat and I went on an exploratory expedition around the house and grounds, it is now an impressive hotel with some lovely windows reaching the full height of the building and a view across the Northampton countryside to a lake. We joined the others who were taking a break by the side of the lake, Pat energetically washing the cowpat off her boot. Bob and Dave were reliant on Pat and my navigational skills at this stage and after some impressive deductions on our part using compass and map we set off on the next stage?? in a completely different direction! It would have been a different story if it had been foggy with limited visibility, conditions which our training had equipped us to deal with. Dave led the walk, initially 11 rising to 12/13 miles, via four pubs and approximately five churches, in the final stages leading us through some sneaky paths round the back gardens, et voila, bringing us out onto the church green directly by the hostel. We had, in the main, an excellent meal that evening in The Maltsters pub, less expensive than The Windmill pub the four of us had visited the night before, and promised to return after our walk the following day to sample the delicious scones cooked by the chef and recommended by the village WI.

The Sunday lived up to the forecast of a really hot sunny day, Dawn having volunteered to lead us on a shorter walk, after wishing good luck to Colin who was continuing his activity as a warden on a voluntary basis while he looked for another post. We took some pictures of the extremely picturesque hostel with the notorious nine tastefully posed in front of it. After breakfast in the lovely, fresh atmosphere of the garden we set off through the village enjoying a welcome ice cream before making for the Nuttery which held a host of trees and also some stinging insects. Around lunchtime we reached a handy pub, the cellar had been flooded the previous day including electrics which had made salvage work pretty dodgy but the landlord still rustled up an impressive curry for Nigel round which we all circled like a friendly flock of vultures. The highlight of the afternoon, apart from a prolonged but I'm sure tuneful harmony singing of "Where have all the flowers gone?",

was Jackie's Wonder Women impression when she sent a very large, round bale of hay careering down a field, it would have been rolling still if not for the tree in the hedge that broke it's flight and is now shamefully minus several branches!

We again walked by Fawsley Hall and several of us opted to have a break by the lake, Lorna and Dave decided to visit 'the Church in the Field' built by the inhabitants of the hall for their use, after a moment's indecision

Pat and I decided to follow them. This was a good decision as it was an absolutely beautiful church with ornate cream coloured, marble carved tombs featuring the Knightley family and some stunning stained glass windows.

It was time to enjoy our cream tea at the pub, as with a lot of things that have been hyped up the cream tea turned out to be a bit ordinary and overpriced, but despite this it was a great weekend in a far from ordinary hostel.

