



GET THE OUTDOOR HABIT IN 2005

**WEEKEND AT YOULGREAVE YHA
9th - 11th September**

By Charles Goodreid

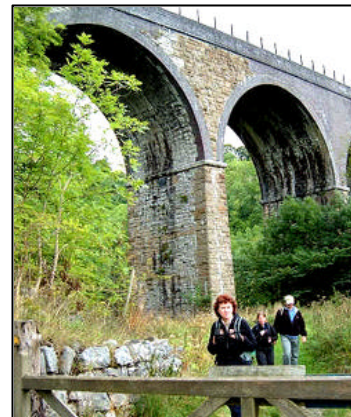
I arrived at Youlgreave YHA at about 21.00 on Friday evening and dropped my kit in the 'Savings & Investment' room which was the men's room on the first floor. At about 21.30, Nigel, Dawn, Hannah and John arrived in one car and then Norman, Jackie and Ray arrived in another car. We went to the Bull's Head Hotel next door for a drink and soon Ken,

Deanna and Betty pulled up after driving from Somerset. The hostel was a large impressive building which had been a Co-operative store and was renovated keeping this character style, with period food packaging on shelves in the dining room. After finding parking spaces in the small village streets everyone settled in although Ken, De and Betty stayed in a B&B in Hartington.



On Saturday, we assembled in the village centre, meeting Helen who was a friend of De and living in Buxton. It was raining quite heavily but not being deterred, we set off down the hill to Lathkill Dale and walked alongside the river Lathkill in a secluded valley which had been a limestone mining area. After about 6 miles, we came to the village of Monyash and stopped for lunch at the 'Old Smithy' café. Here they tolerated us eating our own food (as well as theirs) and allowed us to dry out a little. It had been raining all day but it was not cold. We then set off through Low Moor wood back to Youlgreave. After dumping the wet kit in the drying room, we went for the evening to the George Hotel where we had a large main course meal and varying amounts of beer.

On Sunday morning, all the men in our room rose at 8.00 except Nigel, who slept on until 9.00. We drove to Bakewell where we met Ken, De and Betty and parked in a town car park for the day at a cost of £4-20 ! Be warned. De & Betty went to meet Helen's parent's for the day and the rest set off along a disused railway line called the 'Monsal Trail'. This climbed gradually until we reached the hilltop at the Monsal Head Hotel, where we decided to stop for lunch and enjoy the views over the Wye valley. Below was a disused railway viaduct and the river Wye and after a long lunch break, we descended and crossed the river, walking along it passing an old mill house. We stopped for afternoon tea in a teashop which was run by a chap 80 years old, who was also a part time business lecturer, aids councillor and who made his own cakes which were excellent. We left and walked on, climbing into Endcliffe Wood and then dropped down into Bakewell where many bought tarts, named after the town.



Then it was on to the car park and back home.

TICKET TO RYDE

June 2005

By Dave Fereday

Now is it politically correct of me to refer to a story by Agatha Christie called Ten Little Niggers? This was the story where ten people got bumped off one by one and also where the name of the book was changed in this age when gollywogs are also a thing of the past. Well even if it isn't I will, because the build up to our Inter Hostel Isle of Wight trip was similar to the plot of that story as people pulled out for varying reasons. Though there were initially ten places booked only Dawn, Nigel and myself actually made the trip, though as far I am aware, none of the missing seven were actually bumped off.

The journey down to Portsmouth was very uneventful and the RAC Routeplanner was spot on for the bits we already knew, however the last half a mile was a nightmare as the road suggested to access the Hostel is now closed. The Hostel is the oldest building in Portsmouth and in the middle of a quiet residential area so we decided that we needed to purchase some reading matter to past the evening away. However,

when we reached the local branch of John Menzies, we discovered that it had been converted into a Wetherspoons, so we were forced to wile away a couple of hours there.

The following morning we were not able to have a breakfast at the Hostel as they had been let down by their food supplier. Rather than a boring urban walk across Portsmouth we took the bus to Southsea, where we took the hovercraft across the Solent. This of course was the first opportunity we had to ask for "a Ticket to Ryde please". After a brisk flight, as hovercraft crossings are officially termed, we had an Al Fresco greasy fry up on the promenade at Ryde, to provide the substance for the walk to Sandown.

This was a very pleasant coastal walk, at varying stages either walking on the beach by the waters edge, crossing a causeway or then climbing to the top of the cliff. It was also a bit nostalgic for me personally. Firstly we went through the village of St Helens, where I spent my last night on the Isle of Wight at Boys Brigade summer camp back in 1967 and then passed the Caravan Park where I spent a couple of pre school holidays with my parents in the early fifties. We also passed Bembridge Harbour where Christopher Cockerell invented the hovercraft.

On a section of the path away from the coast we came across a rather unusual tree with a rather strange metal looking trunk. Why was it inside a fence? It was actually a mobile telephone mast disguised as a conifer tree. Dawn actually described the walk as curveous, but it might have been a hint for Nigel and I to describe her similarly. As we approached Sandown we encountered an Obelisk on the headland at Culver cliff which appeared to dominate our walk all afternoon. It was stalking us like Paul Hogan stalking a crocodile in the Australian Outback.

When we arrived at the Sandown Hostel there was a surprise for Dawn as the Wardens were the husband and wife who were the Wardens at Kielder Water in Easter 2004. We were the only walkers staying at the Hostel, the other people staying there were attending the Isle of Wight festival and there was a strong Newport influence on the bill for that night as two of the acts were Feeder and Goldie Looking Chain.

However as the Festival was sold out, after our meal we were forced to abandon to nearest Hostelry to plan our walk for the Sunday, with the consolation of draught Hobgoblin.

So after a goods night sleep, as usual the male dorm was a snore free zone, we continued along the coastal path to Ventnor. It was a lovely sunny morning and the walking was excellent taking in cliff tops and then shaded woodland before entering Ventnor along the promenade. After a snack it was time for the second opportunity to ask for "a Ticket to

Ryde please". Now this was an interesting little ride to Ryde. We left Ventnor by bus and then at Shanklin transferred to a train, not any old train but an old train with a difference as the Isle of Wight Railway use redundant London Underground rolling stock.

After taking the hovercraft back to Southsea we decided to explore the old dockyard area of Portsmouth

and could see our destination the new Spinnaker Tower just 300 metres away. However that 300 metres was a nightmare due to the way the water cut between piers and various docks, in actual fact we ended walking well over a mile and took numerous wrong turnings and several times found our way blocked by a stretch of water with no way across. So when a policeman suddenly emerged from

an alleyway we decided we would ask him the way. But before he could tell us he firstly had to catch his breath and then radio the police station to advise where the criminal he had been chasing had disappeared. It certainly more a case of the Thin Blue Line than the Bill. For a change we caught the train back to Cosham from Portsmouth Harbour station. As the penultimate destination of that train was Newport it was tempting to

fall asleep for a couple of hours and relax home, but there was the slight problem of my car being parked at the Hostel.

All in all, a brilliant weekend with fantastic walking to match the fantastic weather. We certainly have to visit the Isle of Wight again, as the hostel stamp for Sandown is a map of half the island and the stamp for the other Hostel, Totland, is a map of the other half – not to mention a possible

visit, combining walking with music.

Dawn said she would stay in tune with that idea!

