

## Away Weekend – Whitby - September 2019

Whitby was to be the venue for the Shamblers' very first organised long weekend away. This Yorkshire town has a lot to offer other than picturesque walks for walkers. Renowned for its fresh fish and numerous chip shops, blood sucking Dracula and unearthly ghost stories, its narrow alleys and yards once frequented by hordes of fisherman hold much history. A lot of planning and organisation went into providing a balance of enjoyable walks over the three days.



The total group number was 16 and it was the individual's choice as to which walks to participate in. There were five walks in all over the weekend.



Friday was a four mile walk from Hutton-le-Hole, about 9 miles from Pickering, which was the meeting point. This was a circular walk through farm meadows of steep and shady woodland glades, taking in the small hamlet of Lastingham for a rest and ice-cream at the Blacksmith's Arms.





This small village has an ancient church, St Marys, with ornately carved interior stonework and steep steps down into the Norman crypt below the church. Taking a steep road out of the village, the ascent was rewarded with spectacular views over the moorland of the southern edge of the Yorkshire moors. This panorama continued for the rest of our return to Hutton-le-Hole.

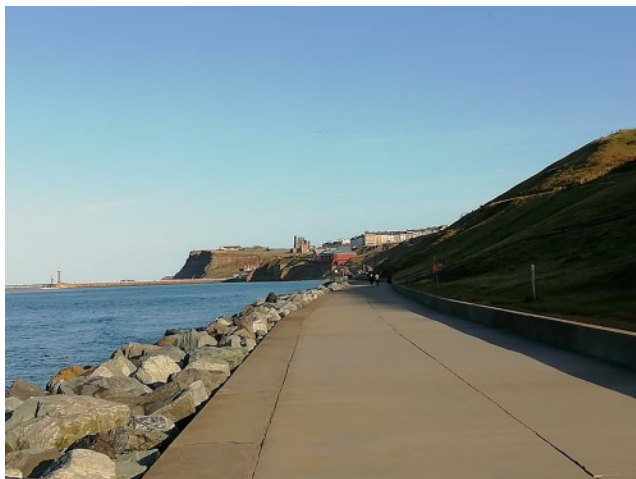


The Friday evening walk was to Sandsend, approximately three miles from Whitby. Starting at the Whalebone Arch in Whitby, the route passed along the Promenade, passed many colourful beach huts, and was expected to continue on the beach.



Unfortunately, the tide was coming in rapidly, so a prudent move was made to take an alternative, elevated route overlooking the sea. For the last few hundred yards, however, a walk along the beach was possible and enjoyed by all. A quick visit to the pub opposite the bus stop was a reward before returning by bus.





The walk on the Saturday was a linear one of just over seven miles from Whitby to Robin Hood's Bay. The day was well attended and the ascent of the 199 steps to the heights of Whitby Abbey was a good test for the legs.





Walking along the cliff top on the Cleveland Way was breezy and the sky was blue and devoid of clouds until one aberrant cloud formation was spotted that resembled a flying saucer or UFO.



Occasionally the path dived deeply into a rocky gulley where a stream flowed out into the sea. Many seals were spotted out to sea which caused much excitement. When Robin Hood's Bay was eventually spotted in the distance, many tired legs suddenly found the strength to speed up to finish the walk and enjoy well-earned food and drink. Later, the bus took the majority back to Whitby except for the lucky four who had a lift.



The Sunday morning was slightly overcast but no rain was forecast. The four mile morning walk was a circular one from Littlebeck via Falling Foss waterfall and tearooms, returning along Wainwright's coast to coast path through woods and Littlebeck Nature Reserve.





Half way we came across an Hermitage, a large gritstone bolder hollowed out to form accommodation for an eighteenth century hermit. A few latter day hermits had marked their names inside.



The Littlebeck Nature Reserve was well maintained, providing wooden walkways so that even the most unadventurous walkers would have access.



On Sunday afternoon, Scripps Garage, opposite the Goathland Hotel, was the meeting point for the afternoon walk. The Hotel is known as the 'Aidensfield Arms' as it was used in the production of the 70s TV Heartbeat. The three and a half mile walk was along a disused railway line, 'Goathland Bank top' opened in 1836, to Grosmont and returning on the North Yorkshire Moors steam train back to Goathland station, which became Hogsmeade Station in the first Harry Potter film. The afternoon had the only rain of the weekend but it did not deter the walkers from enjoying the walk.



On the Sunday evening we all met at the famous Magpie Café on Pier Road in Whitby. It is a very famous and popular fish restaurant, so our table had been pre booked as without an early reservation there is no hope of getting in. The menu is extensive with every species of fish usually available, and with an efficient and technological ordering system our meals soon arrived and we had a memorable feast. With toasts and speeches completed 14 tired bodies retired to bed.

It would be safe to say that this weekend away had been a great success in every way, and our thanks go to Finbarr for arranging all these wonderful walks for us to enjoy.