

Six Days Only – Thursday 10th November 2022

As we get deeper into the autumn, the leaves are changing colour but it is still surprisingly warm and it is still excellent walking weather. We had 22 miles in front of us as we headed west up the steep High Street towards Westfield Lane. The walk route in contrast this week headed towards the city centre, rather than heading out to the more rural areas of the district. It is though surprising what Bradford has to offer, not just the large parks but also much green space and woodland, close to the city centre. We were ten in number, including newbies to the Thursday group, Eddie and Steve. Although we did not know it yet, one member of the group was going to end up in the water at Northcliffe Dike and it wasn't the person you would have imagined, wild water swimmer Madeleine, who kept warm and dry all day, but more of that later.

After the early brisk climb, we were soon into woodland high above Shipley, with extensive views across the Aire Valley - Salts Mill being a dominant feature on the landscape. We also got an early chance to view Idle Hill close up. It has been a long distance companion on many of our walks but today we followed a track just below the summit. There is a trig point at the top but unfortunately it is on private land, so could not be accessed by the group. We soon reached our first feature of today's walk, Bolton Woods Quarry. The size is impressive and although it appears there is very little stone left to be mined, there are always workmen down in the basin, digging away. Maybe they think there are diamonds hidden somewhere in the depths!!! It also gave me an idea for my third business venture of the series, I'll buy the quarry and turn it into a tourist attraction - A Water Park. I'm offering shares at £1000 each. This time next year we'll be millionaires!!!

Taking a detour this year, we headed to Bolton Old Hall. Built in 1627, before returning to the western edge of the quarry. Having walked near Elland Road, Leeds United's football stadium earlier in the series, we now had excellent views of Valley Parade, the home of Bradford City AFC. A team that is fighting for promotion, whereas poor old Leeds are again involved in a relegation battle!!! We then dropped down into Bolton Woods, picking up part of the new 42 mile Heritage Way, which runs from Bradford Cathedral to Ripon Cathedral. It was only officially opened in April this year and we followed the section along Bradford Beck into Shipley, where we had our midmorning stop on the seats in the market square. My mole tells me Ralph and Julia have been out recceing the Heritage Way and there is a plan to offer it as a group walk next year.

Departing Shipley, we headed to Northcliffe, dropping down into Northcliffe Woods, Passing the model railway station and tracks – that would have been the sensible thing to do, (pass the station, keeping to the path), but instead we decided to walk along the track and jump across the dike at the end of the track, back to the path. As I jumped over the dike, there was a splash behind me and I looked back to see Ian face down in the water!!! Unfortunately he had slipped and taken an early bath, I would though like to commend him on his swimming action and he was soon back on his feet and clambering onto dry land - he did though confirm despite the warm weather the water was cold!!! Chris obviously questioned the walk leaders risk assessment!!! We then cut up to Heaton Shay and the main feature of the walk - Heaton Royds Farm and the famous Six Days Only. The oldest date on the cottages, we could see was 1639. A member of the Salvation Army owned the premises in the early 1900's and sold fruit and vegetables, from the farm but would not trade on the Sabbath - hence the name **six**

days only. It is more remembered by the current older generation, for selling nettle beer from a serving hatch, which still remains. Trading from the middle of the 19th century, when the temperance movement was at its height until the mid, 1970's, nettle beer being a non-alcoholic beverage. It was popular with children in the 1950's & 60's and was served by an elderly lady called 'Nettle Nelly.'

We then walked down Pit Lane, passing the old Heaton Royds School to Redburn Drive picking up Red Beck, which we followed through Royds Cliffe Wood, to the adventure playground in Heaton Woods, where it proved too difficult for some members of the group to resist reliving their childhood by having a go on the swings - it was though agreed that no photographs of the event would be published – oops a couple slipped through!!! Departing Heaton Woods, we quickly reached Lister Park, via Park Drive, with its array of impressive houses owned by the glitterati of the Victorian period. Once in Lister Park, we viewed the recently erected Peter Pan statue before taking the path through the Mughal Water Garden to our lunch stop at the Refreshment Room, Jacket potatoes with a filling of baked beans and cheese being the popular choice this week. Suitably refreshed we walked through the gardens in front of the impressive Cartwright Hall before heading towards the Bandstand and cutting up through the botanical gardens, we exited the park in the direction of Lister's Mill which was built in the 1870's by Samuel Lister and was the largest Silk Mill in the world, at its height employing over 11 000 workers. Ralph being an employee for three years, towards its end, but despite paying him off in order to try and save the business, the mill eventually closed. It was developed into luxury apartments from 2004-2007 by Urban Splash but the financial crisis of that year put a halt to the completion of the full development and it still remains unfinished. We were now on the more urban section of our walk and headed down the vibrant Oak Lane towards our second park of the day, Peel Park just off Bolton Road, opened in 1853 and named after Sir Robert Peel, the founding father of the modern day police force.

We took the long climb up the eastern side of the park, where Bradford marathons of yesteryear finished, when after 26 miles the race organisers decided the runners needed a severe climb to the finish line!!! Both Ralph and Trevor having tackled the climb during these races. We left the Park by the Cliffe Road Gates on our way to the impressive Undercliffe Cemetery, where all the rich and prominent people from Bradford's prosperous years in the 1800's are buried, including mill owners and former mayors. It was also a location in the 1963 film Billy Liar starring Tom Courtenay and set in Bradford. From Undercliffe Cemetery we headed to the Bradford Industrial Museum, where we had our final stop of the day. The museum is classed as a 'Warm Hub' by Bradford Council, which is a place people can go to keep warm during the current economic crisis. Free hot drinks and biscuits were available and thus it became the highlight of the walk to most of the group. We had a quick look at the vintage cars - Jowett vans being prominent, these were made in Idle from the end of the First World War until 1954, when the company ceased trading. Famous owners of a Jowett car were Peter Ustinov and John Surtees as well as Father Clifford in the TV series Ballykissangel.

Leaving the Industrial Museum, we headed towards Eccleshill village and with it being Remembrance Day tomorrow, we paused at Eccleshill Cenotaph for a moment's reflection. We then quickly reached Eccleshill trig, (rumoured to be the highest trig point in the northern hemisphere!!!), on the way to the Enterprise five, shopping complex, which was the old

Jowett car manufacturing plant. We then headed over Idle Moor but not before passing the old Baron of Beef Hotel, where Barcelona, including Johan Cruyff stayed before playing Leeds United in the 1975 European Cup semi-final at Elland Road, it was also coincidentally, where Chris and Christine had their Wedding reception in 1983 - Elvis Costello was also staying that night, having played a concert at the local St Georges Hall, earlier that evening – or was Elvis a guest at Chris and Christine’s wedding? After all I believe 1983 was a good year for the roses!!! Emerging from the moor onto Westfield Lane there was a steady descent back to Idle village, this time passing the White Bear before we reached Idle car park, and despite the numerous ailments of some of the walkers, there appears to be nothing wrong with their hearing - Mike, Ralph. Roger. Ian and Trevor, could all hear the White Bear calling them and readily answered the call - their reward for completing another cracking Thursday walk or did they complete it? Leaving the walk within sight of the finish, I reluctantly classed them as DNF’s, - **did not finish**. The non-drinkers finished on the cusp of nightfall at 4.35pm – now if only the White Bear sold nettle beer, there might have been no finishers!!!

Next week sees us on our twelfth walk of the autumn series, this time heading east to the Blue Lagoon, I’m currently in negotiation with Brook Shield’s agent, to make a celebrity appearance!!! We will again be joined by our friends from South Pennine. Last year we lunched at the trendy Mill Kitchen in Farsley but this year, I’m planning a change of venue and. lunch is planned for The Loft coffee Shop.