

Tong Village - Thursday 24th November 2022

Just to clarify, in last week's report, when I said, Ralph, Mike and Trevor were regularly seen in the White Bear with Saltaire Blonds, that a Saltaire Blond is the name of the beer, they were drinking. I hadn't realise at the time but I can now see it might have been interpreted in a way not intended by non-drinkers - leading to unintended consequences!!! I have sought legal advice and apparently divorce papers can be rescinded. Pendle Pete also wanted it making clear, he does not entertain Saltaire Blonds, he has a penchant for Black Sheep - again I apologise, I did not know he had Welsh ancestry!!!

After last week's walk on a rainy day, I was presently surprised, when I drew back my curtains this morning to see what appeared to be a promising day, weather-wise. Having fortified myself with a hearty bowl of porridge, I headed down to Idle village carpark, to meet the regular crew of Thursday walkers. Only six strong this week but we were joined by Sara, a South Wales LDWA member, up from Wiltshire. I assume last week's wet weather had disillusioned some of the regulars, I also noticed there were no Uruguayans out on the walk with us today - I guess they were all at home watching their World Cup match against South Korea!!! There was though an air of anticipation amongst the group as we headed down to Apperley Bridge, the Christmas displays at Tong Garden Centre, which was our planned lunch stop, would certainly get us into the Christmas spirit.

Using the Pegasus crossing to reach Parkin Lane, we headed south along Carr Beck, which becomes Fagley beck once you have crossed New Line, proceeding through Ravenscliffe, we eventually reached Lower Fagley and the now derelict Blue Pig pub, with echoes of Dr. Feelgoods, Milk & Alcohol still in the ether, there was a tear in Trevor's eye!!! Continuing to head south passing the old Calverley Hospital site, which is now an industrial estate, we could smell the freshly baked bread, from the Hovis bakery, which fortified us for the miles ahead. Crossing the Leeds/Bradford cycle superhighway - which is also the city limits, (known as Nutbush to the locals). We had now left the safe surroundings of Bradford and were entering the outskirts of Leeds!!! We soon reached Delph End and followed Tyersal Beck to the bottom of Tyersal Lane. There was then a long steady climb, passing Black Hey Farm, to reach Tyersal Hall, from here we took the footpath into Black Carr Wood. Dropping down through the woods to Bella Vista, we headed up Scholebrook Lane, through Scholebrook Farm, This year taking the more direct route up New Lane to reach our early lunch destination of Tong Garden Centre, just turned 11.00am.

The Christmas displays at the garden centre were impressive to say the least, the farmers Christmas market being a particularly popular display. It was too early for Santa to be in his grotto but we were able to leave our Christmas lists in his chimney - but just remember you must not be naughty before Christmas day or Santa will not bring you any presents!!! We then headed to Blooms Kitchen for what turned out to be brunch, coffee and cake being the popular choice today, although Chris had a Cornish scone, that's cream on top of the jam!!! Having had our spirits raised by the Christmas atmosphere, we departed the garden centre with a little sadness in our hearts but joyed by the season to come. We headed through Tong Village, passing Tong Hall. Tong has evidence of roman settlement and was also listed in the 1086 Doomsday book as being in the possession of the De Lacy family, De Lacy being an ally of William the Conqueror during the Norman conquest of 1066. He owned 162 manors,

which now forms the majority of the city of Bradford. At the time of the Domesday Book it was all listed as wasteland. – There is a theory, that over time everything comes full circle!!!

Leaving Tong, we descended Springfield Lane to Cockersdale. Taking the higher route towards Upper Moor Side before dropping down through Nan Withins Wood to Roker Lane Bottom. The footpath following Pudsey Beck north towards Troydale, is still out of action – it was closed in October 2021 and is not due to reopen until April 2023, so we took a diversion, following the road to Troydale Lane. We headed up towards Hough Side Road via Acres Hall. Crossing the main road, we took the quieter, Hough Side Lane, passing Pudsey Cong's cricket ground, we soon reached Pudsey Lowtown. Cutting onto the disused railway line passing Pauls Pond and Roger's Place, before going down 'The Lanes' and heading past Pudsey Grammar School, taking the bridge over the Stanningley bypass, turning into the Grangefield Industrial Estate. Following Grangefield Road over the Railway into Stanningley. A group photograph was taken at the Bridge, a piece of art produced by Pippa Hale in 2018, which represents the industrial past of the area. We crossed over the main road and cut through to the 'Nest' the home of Farsley Celtic AFC on the way to the town centre, where we decamped in the Samuel Marsden Memorial Gardens, for our afternoon stop. The Rev Samuel Marsden was born in Farsley in 1765, travelling to Australia in 1794 as a paying passenger on a convict ship, he set up a mission in Parramatta, New South Wales. He is recognised for having introduced Christianity to New Zealand in 1814.

It had been excellent walking weather until this point, but we got our forecast hour of heavy rain as we set off towards Calverley. Undeterred we headed up through the impressive Sunny Bank Mill complex, which is now the venue for the BBC TV programme, 'The Great British Sewing Bee.' Both Emmerdale and Heartbeat, have also used the mill in the past for filming. Passing the Old Woollen we exited onto Red Lane, just before Farsley cricket ground and headed through the community orchard before dropping down to cross the Leeds Ring Road to reach Priesthorpe Road, near Wadlands Hall Farm. Initially heading west we then turned onto Shell Lane, down to Calverley. Passing St Wilfrid's church, we took the public footpath at the side of Calverley Junior & Infant School, through Calverley Wood to the bottom of Calverley Cutting. We then cut through one of the numerous new housing developments to reach Greengates, and headed up through Thorpe Edge - where we were lucky enough to see a striking double rainbow, for our final climb, back to Idle village, arriving at 3.40pm, GPS's checked and 21 miles agreed.

Next week sees us on our final walk of this year's autumn series, technically meteorological autumn ends on Wednesday 30th November, the first day of winter being the 1st of December. I do though plan to run my autumn series of walks, each year starting from the first Thursday in September and finishing with the Christmas Tree Festival at Thornton Church, which this year runs from, Saturday 26th November until Saturday 3rd December. The start will be from Beckfoot Lane in Bingley **Not** Idle carpark. Lunch will be at the church café - hot roast sandwiches are available. There will be 50+ Christmas Trees on display, it is a charity event, so bring plenty of loose change.