

## 1940's Haworth – Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023

Five months since my last Walk Leader duties, I'm back with a cracker. The Thursday walkers making a rare appearance on a Sunday. Don't worry the rest of my walks are all on Thursdays as usual - just one a month this year, taking us all the way through to December. Ending with a couple of favourites, the Christmas Tree Festival and the Saltaire Brewery walk in Christmas week - hold on a minute, what's all this talk about Christmas, I hear you saying - we haven't had the summer yet!!! Enough said.

The group gathered eight strong for a prompt 8.00am start. A warm morning, with the promise of a sunny day ahead of us and we were not going to be disappointed. As we set off walking we were already in shorts and t-shirts, along with sun hats, sun cream was already being applied on this late spring day. Last autumn, we had three Prime Ministers and two monarchs during the series but this was a new venture today. On arrival at Haworth we would be back with King George the sixth as our monarch, and Winston Churchill would be our Prime Minister - we actually met Winston on the streets of Haworth but more of that later.

As the sun rose our adventure began, we had a long way to walk, all the way back to 1940, I was pleased to see Trevor had dressed in period costume, or so I thought and would certainly blend in once we reached our destination, but he assured me it was his usual walking attire of Khaki shirt and shorts, leather boots, woolly socks up to his knees and a gnarled wooden pole, with a vee for his thumb - the 1932, (I was there), Kinder Scout Mass Trespass badge on his metal framed rucksack was certainly impressive!!!

We made good time heading through Ruin Bank Wood, taking the lower, less well known path, which avoided an early steep climb up to the folly. Crossing Wilsden Road, we were soon into Goit Stock Wood and the impressive waterfall at Hallas Bridge. Heading up Hallas Lane, we reached Buck Park Wood, for our first stop of the day, overlooking the picturesque Milking Hole Beck. We were soon on the move again reaching Upper Bradshaw Head, before our long descent into Oxenhope, via Leeming Quarry and Dark Lane, crossing the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway, (KWVR) at Oxenhope Station. Picking up the Railway Children walk on the steep climb to Marsh Top and then following the Bronte Way into Haworth, arriving at 11.30am. We were greeted by 1940's swing music - in the Mood by Glen Miller, being a popular choice. American soldiers and Jeeps abounded, there were people dancing on every street corner and nylon stockings were freely available - no need to draw a seam, with tea leaves on your legs today girls!!!

It was nice to meet up with Vera & Phil in Haworth, along with Judi, who is well on the way to recovery from her accident last November, when she was knocked down by a car whilst out walking. She is hoping to join us on Thursday for the walking section of the Flying Scotsman

I thought all the 'nice' girls loved a sailor but the American GI's were certainly turning the heads of some of our group!!! Maybe they don't meet the criteria of the term 'nice'!!! All the cafes were busy, so we decided to split up and try to grab teas and coffees in smaller numbers and rendezvous at the Bandstand at 1.00pm. Lunch eaten and souvenirs bought, the code word for the meet-up being, 'there will be snow on the mountains tonight.' We all assembled

at 13 hundred hours with the exception of Trevor, who had misheard the instruction as, 'we'll meet at the snowy mountains' and was on his way to south eastern Australia!!!

We headed out of Haworth on the Worth Way to Mytholmes and Oakworth via Cackleshaw, dropping down Harewood Hill, (which has plans for a new housing estate!!!), to Damems Station. We then climbed up through Hermit Hole and Hainworth to reach Midgeham Flat, where we had hoped to see model airplanes, from the Keighley and District Model Airplane club in the skies above us but the only plane we saw was on the ground, only taking to the sky as we departed. Crossing Harden Moor, we were soon back into Bingley St Ives, which is undergoing some serious tree felling at the moment. Our final stop was at the picnic site opposite the Ivy Kitchen, before we headed back to our cars in Cottingley, for a 4.00pm finish. GPS's checked and we agreed, we had walked back 83 years to 1940 and returned to 2023, so I make that 166 years walked - or maybe it took us 166 years to walk 18 miles!!! Interestingly Ralph & Julia, had the highest mileage on their GPS's and we concluded, it was because they had left them on whilst they were dancing to the music from the bandstand in Central Park in Haworth. I've never seen anyone interpret the Lindy Hop in the way they did - I'm convinced they would have got a ten from Len!!!

Not long to wait for my next walk which is this coming Thursday. This time we will be on a vintage train ride, pulled along by the iconic Flying Scotsman. If you haven't already booked your ticket, then I'm afraid, they have all been sold. I sold my last ticket eight weeks ago and even though, the KWVR have put on extra trains, it has been fully sold out for a number of weeks. If you are disappointed to have missed this once in a lifetime experience, Trevor said he is able to offer a Tuesday walk, with the chance to ride on the Prince of Wales Express - he'll be more than happy to supply you with the details!!!