

Ride2stride 2015



“Great walk leaders, so friendly and knowledgeable”

“Fabulous scenery. Crummackdale is now our favourite walk of all time”

“It was everything I hoped for – and more”

These are just some of the many comments from the 788 people who enjoyed the 2015 Ride2stride Festival of walks, talks and music along the Settle to Carlisle railway line.

Tuesday April 28th saw the start of the 4th annual Ride2stride Festival. It was a cold start with snow clearly visible on Pen-y-ghent as around 100 people gathered on Settle station to hear Mark Rand officially open the festival.



Ride2stride is co-ordinated by a small steering group made up of representatives of some of the participating groups. This year saw Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line, Friends of Dales Rail, Yorkshire Dales Society, Ingleborough Archaeology Group, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, Friends of A Dales High Way, RSPB and The Wainwright Society all taking part. As usual the music was organised by the 3 Peaks Folk Club.

People travelled from all over to attend the festival. One couple from Vancouver had seen a TV programme on railways and were so impressed with Settle Carlisle line and the Yorkshire scenery that they googled "Walking in Yorkshire", found Ride2stride, booked flights and a Settle hotel for the week and came to the festival to celebrate the woman's 50th birthday. She loved it and was out all week, both walking and at the music...her husband sang!

Others travelled from Chicago and Texas (both for the second year running), South Carolina, Australia, the Netherlands, Ireland and 2 groups from Germany. One woman from Germany had previously been on the Settle to Carlisle train, loved the scenery and returned for the festival with her friend from Colchester. She said it was everything she hoped for.

"Thanks to everyone involved in Ride2stride, brilliant event, great walks, really enjoyed my weekend of walking, good company and the leaders were excellent. Amazing to hear of the miles people travelled to enjoy God's Own Country!"

In the UK people came from Loughborough, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Wales, Chester, North Derbyshire, Newcastle upon Tyne, Glasgow, Colwyn Bay, Berwick, Morpeth (for the 4th time), Manchester, Colchester, Perth, Edinburgh, Bolton, Lancaster, Derby, Liverpool, Somerset, Peterborough, Birmingham, Wigan, Blackburn and Ross on Wye.

And more locally, from Bentham, Leeds, Settle, Langcliffe, Giggleswick, Halifax, Gargrave, Bingley, Shipley, Dewsbury, Huddersfield, Dent, Sedbergh, Ingleton, Skipton, Baildon, Bradford, Batley, Keighley, Wakefield and Harrogate.

Most people travelled by train or stayed in accommodation locally, bringing business to the area early in the season and increasing people's awareness of the use of the Settle to Carlisle railway line to access the Yorkshire Dales and Eden Valley. Visitors told us that on days they didn't walk they took the train to Skipton, Leeds and Carlisle.

"We stayed in Settle and our accommodation was very good"

"I didn't feel like walking so I let my friends go without me and went to Carlisle on the train instead and joined them in the pub for the music in the evening. We were all happy!"

Walks

This year there were 29 walks on the programme. Three of them offered both a longer and shorter version plus there was an additional Singers' Strideout which made 33 in all.

There was a great variety, from strenuous hikes over the high fells to easy circular walks around Settle or Appleby.



For the first time we offered the chance to climb the Three Peaks on consecutive days, something that's worth considering again as it proved very popular. A number of people commented on how knowledgeable all the walk leaders were with particular mention of the visits to places of interest; the Hoffmann Kiln, Ribblehead Viaduct shanty town and Mearbeck Farm.



"I thoroughly enjoyed the visit to the farm, we were impressed by the farmer's knowledge"

The weather played a large part as always with low numbers walking on the very wet Sunday and a high turnout on the scorching hot Bank Holiday Monday. The walk leaders (all volunteers) were fantastic, changing routes to cope with the weather conditions, splitting groups to accommodate slower walkers and always making sure everyone was safe, happy and having a good time.



“Thank you all so much for another great Ride2stride. Every year you manage to come up with great new walks. Always one of the high spots of my walking year. See you in 2016!”

Talks

There were 3 talks this year, all clearly linked to walks in the programme.

Dr David Johnson of Ingleborough Archaeology Group led a walk around the Settle Geology Trail then followed it with a very well attended talk on ‘Historical Roads, Routes and Lines of Travel’. Sheila Gordon talked about creating the long distance Lady Anne’s Way the evening before 2 walks took in parts of the route.

“We were pleased to visit some of the places mentioned in the talk”

Finally The Wainwright Society led a circular walk from Settle following one of Wainwright’s ‘Walks in Limestone Country’ before one of their members gave a presentation about the life of the legendary fellwalker.

“It was good to combine the walk and talk”

Music

Once again the singers and musicians were a highlight of the festival for many. There were more musicians than ever and the numbers grew as the week went on.

“More walkers stayed for music than in previous years....and more musicians than ever!”



Many people said the icing on the cake was the music. They had been to other walking festivals and after the walk and a meal there was nothing to do in the evenings and some felt very isolated.

"At Ride2stride there is something to go to socially and meet up with others from the walks, not just on that day but on walks done on other days"

"Meeting at the music we felt we made friends for the week."

"This was a huge attraction for coming to this festival."

Finance

Ride2stride is a free festival and everyone involved is a volunteer. The walk leaders, the speakers, the musicians, the people who distribute the programmes, the steering group - no one gets paid. We do have some costs though. We have a website www.ride2stride.org.uk and we design and print a programme. We are very grateful to Friends of the Settle Carlisle Line and Northern Rail for their cash contributions, to Briggs Bros of Cononley for reducing the cost of printing, to Welcome to Yorkshire for giving Ride2stride free membership and to Skyware Press for maintaining the website and designing the programme.

What Next?

Although the dates are not fixed yet if we follow the same pattern of ending Ride2stride on the first Bank Holiday Monday in May the festival will run from Tuesday April 26th to Monday May 2nd.

Some of the suggestions for next year include:

Put the singers' walk on the programme - *"We loved the musicians stroll from Kirkby Stephen. It was a great walk with songs at every water crossing."*

Climb the 3 Peaks slowly – *"Please offer both Pen-y-ghent and Whernside as moderate walks."*

Repeat the Ribblehead to Horton via Ingleborough, Gaping Ghyll and Studrige walk – *"What a cracking route!"*

Walk from Kirkby Stephen to Appleby via Brough Castle on Lady Anne's Way.

Watch the website www.ride2stride.org.uk for further information. See you next year.



The Numbers

Tuesday April 28		
Behind the Scenes	48	
Three Waterfalls Walk	18	
Decoding the Landscape	37	
Stainforth and Hoffman Kiln	29	
Historical Roads Talk	70	TOTAL: 202
Wednesday April 29		
Ribblehead Heritage Tour	17	
Appleby Circular via High Cup Nick	16	
Appleby Circular via Looking Flatt	11	
Apleby Circular via villages	35	
Lady Anne's Way Talk	50	TOTAL: 129
Thursday April 30		
Lady Anne's Highway	20	
Kirkby Stephen Circular via Pendragon	23	
Kirkby Stephen Circular via Heggerscales	17	
Landscapes of Upper Ribblesdale	13	
Musicians Stroll	12	TOTAL: 85
Friday May 1st		
Garsdale to Hawes via Mossdale (long)	10	
Garsdale to Hawes via Mossdale (short)	10	
Giggleswick Circular	20	
Conservation & Farming in Ribblesdale	22	TOTAL: 62
Saturday May 2nd		
Ribblesdale Heritage Tour	14	
Climb Three Peaks: Whernside	19	
Ribblehead Circular via Great Knoutberry	18	
Dent to Ribblehead via Blea Moor	39	
Ribblehead Circular via Colt Park	10	
Pennine Way Horton to Ribblehead	28	
Settle Circular via Langcliffe	15	
Wainwright Talk	32	TOTAL: 175
Sunday May 3rd <i>heavy rain</i>		
Climb Three Peaks: Ingleborough	5	
Ribblehead to Horton via Moughton Scar	8	
Horton Circular via Helwith Bridge	7	TOTAL: 20
Monday May 3rd		
Ribblehead Heritage Tour	25	
Climb Three Peaks: Pen-y-Ghent	29	
Highway to Ancient Woodland	32	
Horton to Settle via Crummockdale	29	TOTAL: 115

Total numbers on walks and talks: 788 plus musicians, locals and other visitors attending music in the evenings.