



Ryedale Walking Group Easter 2010 Walking Holiday

22 runners and riders left their Ryedale stables early on Good Friday for a gentle canter, courtesy of the RYECAT minibus and leader Nigel Wildsmith, across the Pennines to their base in Morecambe, Lancashire and the start of a 4 day break. A varied itinerary had been put together and, as ever, diligently researched by Nigel and his wife Alison.

All 22 went to post that afternoon for an 8 mile walk along the beautiful Lune Valley. The going was reasonably good, the sun shone a little and apart from one filly who came home slightly lame all returned safe and sound to their comfortable stables on the Morecambe seafront that evening.

All runners relaxed in their stables with music and a little fun, the day's fresh air soon ensuring that they were asleep and fit for the following day's fray.

Easter Saturday dawned with the news of 3 non-runners who were put on a course of retail therapy. The remaining 19 went to post in Silverdale happy in the knowledge that the itinerary included some excellent feeding stations – most necessary given the intended 9 mile course. The first came after a short visit to an 18th century Tower, situate on the coast, which is the restored section of a copper smelting station. Wolfhouse Tearooms is well named judging by the speed at which cakes were consumed by the hungry runners who then proceeded hotfoot over the hills to the RSPB Reserve at Leighton Moss. After another feed, blinkers were removed and binoculars employed as the runners enjoyed the myriad of birdlife on show from the hides along the way. The pathway was well marked and there was no need for anyone to take on the water jump. All runners returned safely to their stables, enjoying some lighthearted entertainment provided by a couple of resourceful runners.

On Easter Sunday there were two non-runners and the 20 who went to post enjoyed the prospect of a visit to the Pepper Pot and Arnside Knott as part of another 9 mile course. The former, near Silverdale, was erected in 1887 to mark Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. It, and the 522ft high Arnside Knott, command magnificent views over Morecambe Bay and the surrounding countryside including the mountains of the Southern Lake District. The sun glistened on the snow-capped peaks as a dozen or so of the runners took the more difficult course up the Knott and the remainder of the field took the lowland route into Arnside. All met up in Arnside to take on liquid before returning to their stables.



Ryedale Walking Group on Arnside Knott

Nigel had organised some fine weather resulting in perfect going but he reserved his finest for last. Atlantic squalls enveloped the area on Sunday night into Easter Monday morning just in time to ensure that the runners' trip to Ingleton Waterfalls would live in their memories for ever. After one runner ran out early on, the 4.5 mile course took the rest up to two magnificent Falls which form part of the River Twiss which was in full spate – and then back along the River Doe which was equally magnificent. The weather had relented and only one water jump formed part of the course but all negotiated this without mishap and the runners pulled up at the conclusion of the course in Ingleton.

A short trip to Settle for some retail therapy – the perfect antidote for aching flanks and sore hooves – was followed by a final farewell feed at The Nelson Inn near Harrogate. All runners thanked Nigel and all who helped make the holiday such as success, including those who carried saddles or sourced or dished out hay and those who enlivened the evenings with fun and frivolity.

**Best Regards!
Mary
Publicity Officer
For Ryedale Walking Group**