

Trip Report: Yorkshire Dales**Date:** 29th June 2012**Group:** Lesley (Leader), Mike A, Jim G, Ann Bodfish, Ian, Mike H, Heather and John, Selina and Mike, Lynne**Route:** Simon's Seat starting from Barden**Total Distance:** 9 miles**Total Ascent:** Unknown**Weather:** Sunshine and showers**Time:** 4 hours 30 mins

Mike and Lesley were already holidaying in Leyburn and arranged to meet the rest of the Friday walkers at the start. Despite an unpromising start weather wise and the very slight late arrival of said leader (due to full English at Eastfield Lodge in Leyburn - <http://www.eastfieldlodge.co.uk/>) there were more BUMS than anticipated, thanks to good marketing. Leaving the cars, parked in a free layby and situated right next to Barden Bridge - a beautiful arched stone single carriageway road bridge- the party headed up stream through Strid Wood towards the infamous Strid gorge. Here it is said, many have perished, due to over confidence in their long jumping abilities. The narrow gorge forces what was today a very swollen river through the tightest of spots causing tremendous scouring of the rocks with its force. Today ironically there was such a lot of water that you couldn't see this astringent effect to the full. However I remembered being brought here as a child and seeing the pots and gullies carved out by the might Wharfe (and so does Mike H -and he even claimed to have jumped across). Anyway, enough of nostalgia and onwards towards the Cavendish Pavillion—the biggest tea shop every seen on a Bums walk. Across a wooden bridge towards the uphill section of the walk which climbed through The Valley of Desolation. In this lovely valley a variety of wild flowers grew but the Bums were keen to keep moving through to the coffee break. Several tree stumps had been felled for this purpose with a board explaining the flora and fauna.

As we approached the summit via a lovely grouse moor and stone path -a stone pile with trig point - Simon's Seat, the heaven's opened and a chill wind decided the party on a better lunch spot. Navigation, never the leader's strong point, meant we needed a reference via compass and Sat Nav, but soon our descending path came into view (thanks Mike A and Jim G).

As Ian says, you don't find the lunch spot, it finds you...and it did. After much layering up with waterproofs, then sweating as the sun came out we

stopped just in time on a grassy knoll for delayering and well- earned lunch break.

The leader had laid on the sun, though it did bring with it the midges, and then it was time to head down to a leisurely walk back along the Wharfe. The actual walk was over all too soon as by now the weather was bright and sunny. The leader, realising that everyone would need cooling down had organised an ice cream van near the cars—not any ice cream, real Yorkshire dairy ice cream.

As the Bums, now replenished ready for their long ride back for re- hydration at the Dysart, got back in their cars, the leader headed to Bolton Abbey for a trip down memory lane. Unfortunately on crossing the bridge at Bolton Abbey I lost my cap when a gust of wind blew it off! Anyhow, the cup of Yorkshire tea at the biggest café in the world restored us ready for a short trip back to Leyburn. I can recommend Eastfield Lodge most highly.

Lesley