

England

Summer 2017



Bob and Molly Hillery

From early June to early August we spent our now usual time in England, mostly at our nephew's apartment in Ilkley. During most of the stay it was our usual "home away from home" with almost daily walks to the shops for Molly, country walks and bike rides for Bob and excellent restaurant meals for both of us. In addition, we met with many family and friends, attended the local Church of England and spent many hours in our favorite coffee shop.

This year, however, the trip to England included two mini vacations in other parts of the country, three family reunions, visits by both our children and two of our grandchildren, several "special events" and a number of open air concerts on weekend afternoons at the bandstand in Ilkley.

Finally, although we were not directly involved, the same period included an unusual golf activity by our son-in-law Chris and five of his friends. In five days they "golfed" (hit a golf ball) across a stretch of Scotland from the East to the West Coast. The statistics for this adventure are amazing (terrain, strokes, lost balls, etc, etc) but the most heart warming is the amount of money they raised for their selected charity.

So, although our nine weeks stay was similar in many respects to those we have enjoyed over the past seven years, this trip was highlighted by a number of different experiences, each of which added to the fun of our time here.

In this journal we will detail only the "major" events of our stay and include the routine aspects in brief in an appendix.

England, Summer 2017



We left our home in Mason on Thursday June 8 and traveled overnight via Atlanta to Manchester, arriving in the early morning of June 9 on a Virgin Atlantic flight. We had never flown VA before (although we have had recent good experience with Virgin Australia) and found it to be very comfortable; the service and food were good and the staff were very pleasant and well-groomed.

We picked up our rental car at Manchester Airport and drove south for our first of two mini-vacations, this one in the beautiful southwest of England.

Friday June 9

It had been raining as we descended into Manchester but it cleared up as we drove south beyond Birmingham before stopping for coffee. We made one other stop at another motorway service area to take a nap for an hour. Unfortunately, it took us almost another hour to get out of the parking area and back on the M5. After that it was an easy drive to Haytor and the Rock Inn, where we arrived shortly after 4:30. For the most part it had been a dry and warm day (70F+) but it was cooler and more cloudy as we climbed up the hill to Dartmoor and the tiny hamlet of Haytor.

Dartmoor is an area of moorland in southern Devon, England. Protected by National Park status as Dartmoor National Park, it covers 368 square miles. The granite which forms the uplands dates from about 300 million years ago.

Dartmoor is known for its tors – hills topped with outcrops of bedrock, which in granite country such as this are usually rounded boulder-like formations. More than 160 of the hills of Dartmoor have the word tor in their name. The tors are the focus of an annual event known as the Ten Tors Challenge, when around 2400 people aged between 14 and 19 walk for distances of 35, 45 or 55 miles) between ten tors on many differing routes.

The highest points on Dartmoor are on the northern moor: High Willhays at an elevation of 2,037 feet and Yes Tor (2,031 ft). The best-known is Haytor (called Hey Tor by William Crossing) at a height of 1,499 feet above sea level.



*The Rock Inn
Haytor*

We unpacked and cleaned up before enjoying our first dinner at the Rock Inn – traditional fish and chips!

Saturday June 10

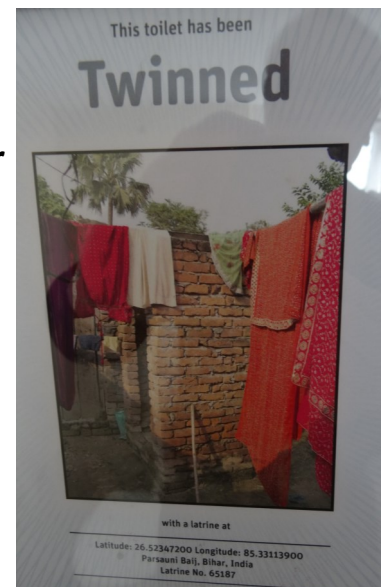
It was cloudy and a little wet as we ate breakfast before starting out for the day. We drove via Widecombe to Tavistock, where we visited the Pannier Market and a couple of shops on the High Street before having our late morning cup of tea.



Situated at the very heart of the historic town of Tavistock is the ancient Pannier Market. The Market was granted its Royal Charter in 1105 and has survived without a break for over 900 years.



*Typical
Dartmoor
Scenery
And
Typical
British
Humor*



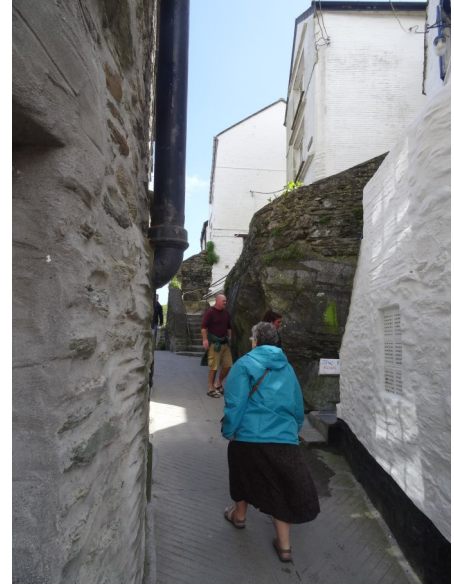
We then drove via Okehampton to Mortenhampstead where we once again climbed the Moor towards Haytor. We stopped at an overlook for a while but didn't see a great deal as it was very misty, windy and raining – as it had been much of the day. We returned to the Rock Inn around 5pm and had another very nice dinner at eight.

Sunday June 11

It was a much brighter morning as we set out on a circular drive to visit the eastern end of Cornwall. We drove via Morton-hampstead and Okehampton to Bude on the Atlantic coast. We stopped here for about an hour and had a light lunch. It was still quite sunny, although there were a few spots of rain, but the town was very quiet and many shops were closed.

From Bude we let the GPS system in the car take us to Looe on the south coast, still in Cornwall about 20 miles west of Plymouth. We went through Looe for another 4 miles to Polperro, where Elizabeth and family were expected to arrive today for a two day stay. We spent about 1 ½ hours in this very lively fishing village (where a week-long music festival had just started) but had to





Polperro



Quaint streets
Odd people
Lovely harbor



leave for our hotel before the Shepards arrived. We communicated via e-mail and eventually by phone when they reached their hotel. They seemed to be having a good time touring England.

We arrived back at the Rock Inn soon after 6pm and had another good 8pm dinner.

Monday June 12

Today we spent the morning in Exeter, doing a little shopping but mostly just strolling the main streets and admiring the old buildings – especially the cathedral.



15th Century St Catherine's Almshouses



Exeter Cathedral has existed for 1000 years.

This building is from 1400

We then drove back to Bovey Tracey where we picked up a self-guided walking tour brochure that explained about a dozen of the older buildings in the town. The walk took just an hour but was very interesting and we learned quite a lot about the town and its history, which dates back to pre-medieval times.

Bovey Tracey was an established Saxon community and takes its name from the River Bovey. The name first appears in Domesday Book as Bovi and possibly earlier as Buui. The town gained its second name from the de Tracey family who were lords of the manor after the Norman Conquest, and was first documented as Bovitracy in 1309.



Ancient Village of Bovey Tracey

We then drove further up the Moor and watched the ponies – and other animals – for another hour or more before returning to the hotel a little before 5:30. Dinner was once again at 8pm.



Tuesday June 13

It was an absolutely gorgeous morning as we set off via Widecombe and Ashburton to the lovely town of Totnes. We spent over an hour on the steep main street with its narrow lanes, shops, cafes and lots of tourists. We saw the 1000 year old castle and Guildhall as well as a beautiful old church – also dating from the 11th century.



Totnes



We had our morning coffee break in the town before driving through more beautiful Devon farm land to the estuary town of Dartmouth. We had approached the town by way of Slapton Sands, where the D-Day landings were planned and mock invasions took place in 1944. As we left this historic area we could see a large cruise ship off shore and later found out (by the number of Americans in Dartmouth) that this was a port of call for the Regent Lines Seven Seas Explorer. Apparently Dartmouth is now a popular stop for cruise ships and – as we know – would be a great spot for day trips to Dartmoor, Plymouth and a number of other scenic areas, in addition to Dartmouth itself.



We spent another 1 ½ hours here on a sunny afternoon, although the wind up the estuary was a little chilly. We then set off back to Haytor.

As we have on a number of occasions on this visit, we started the drive being guided home by the Sat Nav system in the car. This has proved very useful on the myriad of roads that exist in this area and we have seen many areas that we would otherwise have missed. On this drive home, however, we chose to switch off the system once we “knew” where we were and ran by the seat of our pants. Consequently, it took us about an hour longer than it should have and we traveled for miles along VERY narrow roads before eventually recognizing the name of Widecombe on a signpost.

Once through that village, we had our customary stop for a nap on the Moor and it was after 6pm by the time we arrived back at the Rock Inn. We had our final dinner there for this trip and retired about 10:30.

Wednesday June 14

We had breakfast and checked out of the Rock Inn about 10am. It was already warm as we set off for our relatively short drive to Bristol. We stopped for about an hour in Wells, admired the cathedral and strolled the market and main streets as well as enjoying a cup of coffee. We then drove the remaining 20 miles to our hotel in Bristol.

Tonight we met some old friends, Stephen and Penny Parsons, whom we have known since Stephen became a work colleague in the late 1980s. They live just south of Bristol and drove to a very nice restaurant a few minutes' walk from our hotel. We had a very nice evening and spent about 3 hours catching up on things since we last met – which none of us could remember exactly but has been several years.

This concluded our five day visit to the Southwest during which we saw some beautiful countryside, historic buildings and enjoyed some great weather. In addition we were able to have an evening out with two friends to end the visit.

On Thursday we drove to Ilkley and began our normal routine for stays in our nephew's apartment sitting on the edge of Ilkley Moor.

That routine lasted only a couple of days, however, as late on Saturday afternoon, Elizabeth, Chris and Cameron arrived to spend some time with us after their ten day tour of England.

Around 5pm on Saturday, Elizabeth, Chris and Cameron arrived at the flat and settled in for a few days with us. We had our first dinner together at the Busfeild Arms, a pub just a few miles from Ilkley on the opposite side of the Moor.

Sunday June 18

Molly and I were up by 7:30 and had finished our breakfast by 8:30. We ALL went to church at 11:45 and in the afternoon went for a drive to Grassington.



Grassington

Once again, it was a beautiful day and very warm. We had dinner at Piccolino where the “Best ribs in the world” were enjoyed by Cameron.

Monday June 19

After breakfast, four of us took an almost 5 mile walk to the top of Ilkley Moor via White Wells and returning down Keighley Road. It was very hot but there was a pleasant breeze on top and again we had some magnificent views. Chris took the opportunity to try out his golf club and balls in preparation for his adventure later in the week.



*The Top of
Ilkley
Moor
(1320 Feet)*





On Ilkla Moor baht 'at

In the afternoon, starting about 4pm, we had a total of 22 people in the flat for a family gathering to meet the Shepards. We had a buffet meal, plenty of wine, tea and coffee and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves despite the stifling temperature.





A wonderful Family Reunion



Most started to leave by about 6:30 and by 7:30 only Robert, from London, was with us so the six of us went for dinner at Piccolino. It was after 10pm by the time we got home.

Tuesday June 20

Chip left for his golfing adventure about 11am and the rest of us joined Robert for coffee at Caffè Nero around noon. Robert got his train back to London and the remaining four of us took the bus to Keighley. We spent almost 2 hours in town and got the bus back to Ilkley.

Tonight we ate at Quinta.

Wednesday June 21 (Our 52nd Wedding Anniversary)

We drove to York on a very mild morning, although it was a little overcast. We took the Park and Ride bus into town and went first to Jorvik to see about tickets. We were told that there was essentially no wait so we had breakfast at a local café and then went into Jorvik.

The Jorvik Viking Centre is a museum and visitor attraction in York, England. It was created by the York Archaeological Trust in 1984. Its name is derived from the Old Norse name Jórdík for York.

Between 1976 and 1981 prior to the building of the Coppergate Shopping Centre (an open-air pedestrian shopping center which now occupies the enlarged site), the York Archaeological Trust conducted extensive excavations in the area. Well-preserved remains of some of the timber buildings of the Viking city of Jorvik were discovered, along with workshops, fences, animal pens, privies, pits and wells, together with durable materials and artefacts of the time, such as pottery, metalwork and bones. Unusually, wood, leather, textiles, and plant and animal remains from the period around 900 AD, were also discovered to be preserved in oxygen-deprived wet clay. In all, over 40,000 objects were recovered. The trust then excavated part of Jorvik on the site, peopled with figures, sounds and smells, as well as pigsties, fish market and latrines, with a view to bringing the Viking city fully to life using innovative interpretative methods. The Centre opened in 1984

The site had been completely renovated after the floods of 18 months ago and had only re-opened in April. The ride "back in time" and the museum were pretty much as we remembered them and it was an interesting way to spend an hour.



We then walked up The Shambles, all the way around the Minster and then found a stretch of city wall that we could walk. By now it was well into the eighties and sunny so we were glad of a rest and a coffee in a cool basement café before returning to Ilkley.



Tonight we ate at the Moody Cow at 6:45 so that we could then spend some time watching the Ilkley Cycle Races. We saw the last laps of the women's race and all of the men's. There was a brief but heavy shower shortly after we arrived but it didn't appear to slow down the riders. The Ilkley Criterium, as it is known, is an approximate one mile circuit through town with a 100 feet elevation change in each of its 25+ laps. We returned to the flat about 10pm.



Thursday June 22

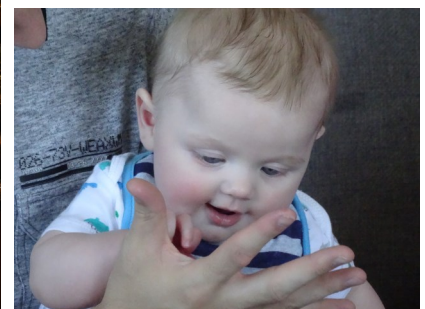
Elizabeth and I went for a walk around Ilkley after breakfast and then she and Cameron finished their packing. We had coffee at the local Caffe Nero and then drove to Manchester. We stayed at the Stockport Holiday Inn Express, which was perfectly adequate, and ate at our favorite local pub, the Plough and Flail. We had a glass of wine in the hotel bar before retiring.

Friday June 23

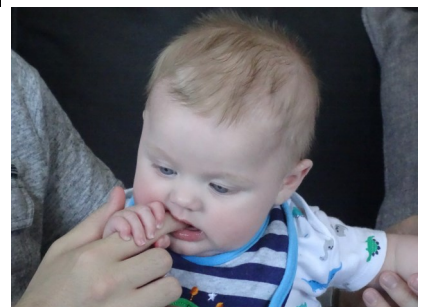
We were up about 7:30 and had a light breakfast in the hotel restaurant before driving Elizabeth and Cameron to the airport for their flight to Atlanta and then on to Cincinnati. It was raining as we said our good-byes and Elizabeth commented that this was one of only a very few times when they had seen rain on their entire two week visit. We dropped them off and Molly and I returned to Ilkley to resume our routine.

As Elizabeth and Cameron were heading home, Chris and his golfing buddies were completing their adventure in southern Scotland. After successfully hitting golf balls from east to west coasts and waving goodbye to his colleagues, Chris came back to spend a night with us in Ilkley before going home himself. Without stealing their thunder, all we will say here is that played over 3500 strokes, lost 232 balls, walked 75 miles and—most important—raised over \$6000 at last count. Well done!

Before our next family reunions in Ilkley, we had our first meetings with a four-month old baby boy. Jenson is the son of Catherine and Stephen who live about 20 miles from Ilkley. “Cat” was a barista at Caffè Nero in Ilkley until about two years ago and we became good friends. We first met her partner Stephen in 2016 and in the summer of that year they announced that Cat was pregnant. Jenson was born in March of this year and this trip was the first time we got to meet him. Actually we met twice: once at Caffè Nero in Skipton and a few weeks later he came (with his parents) to the flat in Ilkley. He is a happy and contented baby and seemed happy to be passed around to Molly and I at both our meetings. Obviously Catherine and Stephen are doing something right. Here is the happy little boy.



***Catherine, Stephen
and
Jenson***



Our next “non-routine” weekend was in early July when Fran, Alan, Robert, Molly and I met Richard and Elizabeth in Sheffield. We all convened at Elizabeth’s home for a “light” lunch before going to visit Richard. He was in good spirit and (as usual) in good humor and we had a very entertaining and enjoyable two hour stay. Afterwards, Alan, Fran and Robert joined us in Ilkley for another two days. We had two good meals together (at Emporio Italia and Panache) and spent Sunday afternoon listening to the Guiseley Brass Band at the bandstand on The Grove—as well as lots of laughs. They left for home on Monday (July 10).



On the following Wednesday (July 12) we were fortunate to have tickets to the Great Yorkshire Show in Harrogate, courtesy of our friends Keith and Zena.

Our tickets were for “Members” so we got preferred parking and entrance to grandstand and dining areas. It was a beautiful day and the showgrounds were crowded but we were able to see the show jumping, the cattle parade of winners, an excellent and entertaining quartet and we visited many exhibit areas. We both really enjoyed our day at our first GYS.

The Great Yorkshire Show (GYS) is an agricultural show which takes place on the Great Yorkshire Showground in Harrogate, annually from the second Tuesday of July until the following Thursday. It is organized and run by the Yorkshire Agricultural Society (YAS). Since the demise of the Royal Show the GYS has been the largest agricultural show in England. Within the UK it is surpassed only by both the Royal Welsh Show and the Royal Highland Show. The show is highly successful and the Society generated income of £9.6 million in 2016. A new Hall at the showground, costing £11 million, opened in 2016 and produced more than £1 million of income in its first year.

The history of the GYS is intimately connected with that of the Yorkshire Agricultural Society (YAS). At its foundation in 1837, the primary aim of the YAS was stated as "... to hold an Annual Meeting for the Exhibition of Farming Stock, Implements &c., and for the General Promotion of Agriculture."

The show has been cancelled only during both World Wars, as a result of Foot and Mouth Disease in 2001 and after one day of torrential rain in 2012. This year marks the 159th show.



"Tree" Scaling Competition, Military Band, Show Jumping, Lunch Outside, Entertainment and Cattle Parade. The Great Yorkshire Show has everything

When we got back to Ilkley we rested before dinner at Piccolino.

The week following the Great Yorkshire Show we spent a few days in the Lake District, during which we not only saw some more stunning scenery but also had an afternoon visit with Cousin Roy.

We left Ilkley around noon on Tuesday July 18 and drove via Skipton and Kirkby Lonsdale to Bowness. We stopped for lunch at Country Harvest near Kirkby and arrived at the hotel around 2:30. Our room was ready so we checked in and then walked into town to sit and watch the holidaymakers.

Bowness was very busy and the lake steamers in particular were doing a very brisk trade on a very warm (80F) and somewhat humid afternoon.

Tonight we walked back into town (only about 10 minutes) and had a good Italian meal at Villa Positano. It was an interesting restaurant with several rooms each housing 3 or 4 tables.



Lake Windermere from Bowness

Wednesday July 19

We walked to Costa for breakfast and sat outside overlooking the hills of Bowness. About 10 we left the hotel and drove via Keswick to Honister Pass where we stopped at the slate quarry - and gift shop. It was another bright day and still warm (over 70F) and the scenery was stunning.



After our stop we descended to Buttermere and then over another pass back to Keswick where we had lunch - once again sitting outside in the warm sunshine.

Rather than take the direct route back to Bowness we drove via Ulswater and the Kirkstone Pass, driving through more



magnificent lake and mountain scenery. Before reaching the hotel we stopped overlooking Lake Windermere and had a nap, after a beautiful day out.

Tonight we ate at Porto which we had known and enjoyed for many years as The Porthole. It has changed hands since we were last there a number of years ago but we had another good meal. My steak was a little tougher than I would have liked but the staff were very pleasant and accommodating.

As we said, the weather had been fine all day but between our return to Bowness and our walk down for dinner there was a long, loud thunderstorm with very heavy rain. Again, we were lucky in that it let up some around 7:30 and we saw

only a few spots on our way down to dinner and it was completely dry on our return at 10pm.

Thursday July 20

It was still overcast this morning but we managed to stay dry as we walked to breakfast at Costa Coffee.

About 10 we left to drive via Wrynose and Hardknott passes to Boot, where we had a light lunch, and then via another pass to visit cousin Roy at his home in Lindal.

On the way over Hardknott Pass we came across a Roman Fort. Molly had seen signs for it on previous visits but this was the first time that we actually got out of the car to explore the area a little. The excavations are quite extensive and the area covered by the fort is much bigger than I had imagined.

Hardknott Roman Fort

Built between about 120 and 138, the fort was abandoned during the Antonine advance into Scotland during the mid-2nd century. The fort was reoccupied around 200 and continued in use until the last years of the 4th century.

The Roman garrison here was a detachment of 500 cavalry of the 6th Cohort of Dalmatians from the Dalmatian coast.

The fort is square with rounded corners, 114 meters long externally, or 105 meters internally, the rampart wall being about 1.7 meters thick with ditches adding to the total width of the rampart. The low walls of the fort were "restored" some years ago, a slate course showing the height of the walls before their rebuilding.

The outer wall has four gates, at the center of each side, and lookout towers at each corner. Within the walls are the remaining outlines of several buildings: two side-by-side granaries, the garrison headquarters building and garrison commander's villa, or Praetorium. In addition to these stone buildings, timber structures would have housed barracks for the mounted auxilia.

Outside the square of the fort is the remains of the bath house (which has a rare circular sudatorium), and the levelled parade ground, which is considered to be the finest surviving example in the Western Empire.

