

Summer in England

2019



England, Summer 2019

The daily account of our stay in our nephew's flat in Ilkley for the summer six week visit this year followed much the same pattern as any we have enjoyed over the past nine years. Walking, biking, visits with friends and family, daily shopping and—of course—sampling the fine restaurants in the town. As we have said many times, Ilkley is essentially a “Home away from Home” and, as such, doesn't merit much in the way of a vacation journal, despite the fact that we are, indeed, away from our home in Ohio.

Consequently, the majority of the following pages cover very briefly our daily routine with little more than a list of our activities for each day and is included only as a reminder and “for the record”.

We have expanded on two activities, however, and backed these with some pictures as well as providing a little more detail. The first, “Friends and Family” details a visit by two friends from America, as well as times spent with most of our family in England and with a growing number of friends we have in the local area.

The second, “The Great Yorkshire Bike Ride”, is an account of Bob's participation in a charity ride that took place a couple of weeks before the end of our trip and which had been first discussed during the summer of 2018.

So, those two segments contain the “unique” aspects of our stay but we have included the daily summary for completeness and because, quite frankly, it is a very enjoyable part of our vacation!

Friends and Family

As usual when we stay in Ilkley, we get together with friends and family for a meal and a chance to catch up on all the news. Sometimes we are fortunate enough to have some stay with us for a few days and this summer we had two planned visits before we arrived.

Two days after we landed here, two friends from Cincinnati, Kathy and Dave Wortman, were scheduled to arrive and spend four days with us before continuing their UK vacation in Scotland. Towards the end of our stay, we were looking forward to entertaining Molly's brother Robert at the flat and spending a little time with him in and around Ilkley.

In addition to these stays, we were expecting to meet other relatives and friends, including a short visit with Fran (Molly's sister) and Alan, as they began their narrow boat holiday on the Leeds-Liverpool Canal. Other, more local family and friends were on our schedule for a meal or a few hours together. In all, a good deal of our six weeks here would see us with company in one form or another, adding to the enjoyment of our stay.

Things didn't turn out exactly as planned, however, and even our first visitors' arrival was delayed. As we said, Kathy and Dave were due to fly to Manchester just two days after we had arrived there, giving us a chance to settle in and prepare the flat for their visit. However, on the afternoon of their flight, Kathy had suffered a cardiac problem while waiting to board in Cincinnati. Dave's initial e-mail told us of the event and that they were currently in a hospital emergency room—but the prognosis was good and maybe they would arrive just one day late. As it turned out, Kathy did recover very quickly and was given permission to fly but there were no seats available until two days later. We were all relieved to hear that Kathy was alright but the delay presented a problem for them in that they were already booked in at a hotel in Edinburgh for part of their stay, so their visit to Ilkley might be cut short or, as it turned out, done in two pieces.

Kathy and Dave arrived at the Ilkley flat around noon on the first Saturday of our stay. Kathy seemed to be fully recovered and they were both anxious to get out for a walk on what was a cool but dry afternoon. Three of us (Molly stayed home) walked across Wells road from the flat and up the path to White Wells, where we took a look at the old bath-house before climbing further. Rather than go up the steepest part to the moor top, we walked along the cliff side as far as the Cow and Calf Rocks. We then decided on a return walk via an alternative path.

I have to admit that, although I had walked these paths many times, I had difficulty in locating the easier route and we had a few false starts and "off path" attempts before we finally reached the well-trodden route that ended up at the tarn—in sight of home. From there it was an easy path home, except that we meandered off and followed a somewhat more tortuous track across a small stream. Unfortunately, less than a quarter mile from the flat, Kathy took a tumble—but no broken bones or after effects other than a bruise or two.

Once back home, we had some time to relax and catch up on some sleep (for our guests) before driving to the Square and Compass Inn for dinner.

We took the “back roads” via Denton and Slaidburn to reach the pub in North Rigton, where we had a very leisurely pub meal before driving back to Ilkley. By now it was almost 10pm but still fully light.

The next day, Sunday, dawned wet and windy as we ate breakfast in the flat. Despite that, Dave wanted to take another walk onto the Moor, so we donned our gear and set out soon after 10. It was very windy on top as we climbed the steps behind White Wells and made our way on the more exposed region of Ilkley Moor.

We had thought about walking across to the Dick Hudson’s pub for a quick drink before returning, but as we reached the decision point (go on for another 2 miles and then return four more—or turn right and do another three miles home—the decision seemed to be an easy one.



So, we paid a quick visit to the Twelve Apostles and then walked to the marker at the highest point on Ilkley Moor. At this point, and until we reached Keighley Road—we were walking di-

rectly into a strong westerly wind and the rain was driving horizontally into our faces. Obviously, we were soaked (but you can only get so wet!) and we remained that way as we now went down hill to meet Wells Road and back to the flat. Time to dry out and change clothes!





The Trig Point at the High Point on Ilkley Moor

402 Meters, 1319 Feet

Following a light snack, we set off on an afternoon drive into the Yorkshire Dales. We drove via Addingham to Bolton Abbey and then via Burnsall towards Grassington. By now it was a very pleasant afternoon with quite a bit of sunshine so we had a lovely drive past Kilnsey Crag to Kettlewell. Here we saw signs for the annual duck race (to be held on the next day) in which toy ducks are dropped into the River Wharfe here and (presumably) retrieved at some downstream finish line to determine the winner.

We passed straight through the lovely village and took the very steep (25% grade) road out of town to the north.



On reaching the high point after just a few miles we stopped to admire the views and to get a feel for the brisk air—with a stiff breeze blowing. We then turned around and went via the alternative (very narrow) road from Kettlewell to Grassington. Here we parked in

the National Park lot and walked into the village, taking a short, hilly route up and back—stopping on the way for afternoon tea at a small tea room.

From Grassington we drove via Pateley Bridge and the Nidd Dale until we ended up at Blubberhouses, from where it was a relatively short drive back to Ilkley. Our guests seemed to enjoy the drive, as did Molly and I, for whom it was a pleasure to repeat.

Tonight we ate at the local Thai restaurant, Pintoh. Molly and I have eaten there many times since it changed to new ownership some time back and we were pleased to see that it appeared to be doing a reasonably good trade. We all decided on several starter plates to share as well as a couple of mains—and two bottles of white wine, and some Thai desserts. We were very pleasantly surprised when we got the bill that the owners had selected to charge us for only one bottle of wine, as a “Thank You” for being “regulars” and as an enticement to return (which we did!).

We finished the evening at the flat with a nightcap before retiring.

On Monday Morning, Dave and Kathy had breakfast at the flat and then prepared to leave for their journey north to Edinburgh. They planned to spend some time at Hadrian’s Wall on their way so they wanted to get a reasonably early start. However, we (and hopefully, they) were looking forward to their return later in the week for another two days in Ilkley.



Indeed, our guests did return on Thursday. We had booked a special meal at one of our favorite restaurants, Quinta, where they were to hold a special wine-pairing meal, with wines selected from Argentina. So, it was with a little alarm that we received an e-mail from Kathy and Dave in the late afternoon saying that they were delayed (and very wet) during their repeat visit to Hadrian’s Wall and “should” arrive about 6:30. This left little time before our 7:00 dinner date but, fortunately, the traffic wasn’t too bad after leaving the A1 so they arrived few minutes before the anticipated time and were changed and ready to go before 7.

We had a very pleasant dinner and an interesting, if lengthy, explanation of the Argentinian wines (by a person who had spent many years as a buyer in that country) and I believe all of us enjoyed the evening. We retired to the flat for a reasonably early night.

The following day, Friday, was our day to spend as tourists in the city of York. We had breakfast at the flat again and then drove the 1 1/2 hours to the Park and Ride on the outskirts of York. Here we took the bus into the city and started our tour. We walked past Clifford’s Tower (right) and the Jorvik Centre (we



hadn't booked so decided to skip the lines and miss this attraction), up the Shambles (one of the oldest and most famous streets in York) and went into the Minster.



YORK
The Shambles
and
The Minster





We arrived just as a guided tour was about to begin so we decided to join the group. It turned out to be a very interesting hour of commentary by a middle-aged lady who, we later found out, did this tour just once a week. However, she was very knowledgeable about the cathedral and its history and was inti-



mately familiar with the events following the 1984 fire, which had caused considerable damage to parts of the facility. Many recall this lightning strike as a direct result of some perhaps unfortunate words by a visiting Bishop of Durham, but whatever the reason, extensive damage





was done to the east end of the Minster and, in particular, to its spectacular stained glass window. This had only recently been re-installed and was the highlight—and finishing point—for her tour.

In the hour she also pointed out many other elements of interest in the church and

its special relationship with the late Queen Mother and its association with the Royal Air Force and its association with World War II. She also spent a good deal of time describing the Chapter House and its many sculpted carvings, most of which had an associated story—and which we would have missed without our guide.



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On leaving the Minster, we walked back through the old streets of the city after having a light lunch in the square overlooking the cathedral. We walked for about 30 minutes on the ancient walls (Roman and medieval) before finding our way back to the Park and Ride bus stop and the trip back to the car.

We arrived back in Ilkley after a very interesting and informative day in York and finished the day with dinner at Piccolino.

The following day we once again had breakfast in the flat and After breakfast, Dave and I went for a 4 mile walk along the north ridge of the moor. We dropped down towards Addingham Moorside but couldn't find a walkway to the lower road, so we had a short, but tough climb back to the ridge. We got back to the flat after walking the last ½ mile in a slight drizzle.

The rhododendrons were in full bloom and Dave seemed very impressed with the displays as we took our walks around the area. So, here's a picture taken on the edge of Ilkley Moor on this final walk.

We then set out for Skipton, only about 1/2 hour away. It was drizzling as we arrived in the historic town but we still walked though the main street market and to the Leeds-Liverpool Canal. We saw a few narrow boats—tourist rides and vacation rentals—in the wharf just



off the main channel of the canal and then strolled towards the castle. We didn't have time for a visit here and, unfortunately, we didn't see Skipton at its best on a rather dreary day. Clearly, another visit is required!

We decided on lunch in the Castle Inn, a typical English pub, and then it was time to say farewell to Kathy and Dave.



They left us to drive to Manchester, where they would spend the night before their Sunday flight to Atlanta and on to Cincinnati. Molly and I drove back to Ilkley after saying good-bye, with a promised rendezvous with our friends in August at their summer home in Oregon.



As we have in the past few visits to Ilkley, we have made it a point to spend some time with a young friend, Catherine (Cat), who we first met several years back when she was a barista at our local Ilkley coffee shop. She has since moved on from there, has a great partner, Stephen, and now a two-year-old son, Jenson. We have kept in touch with this growing family over the years and we had scheduled another visit with them during this stay.



They were due to visit us in Ilkley on the day after my bike ride but had to postpone it until the day after, Monday, due to work conflicts. Nevertheless, Cat and Jenson arrived at the flat around 1pm (sadly without Stephen who was working nights that week and catching up on sleep). Jenson was all smiles as we opened the door and he immediately made himself at home in the flat; showing us his cars and other toys and spending time reading his books about Thomas.

We had a cup of tea and a snack before spending another half hour feeding the ducks in the small lake in the grounds of Wells House. Molly had prepared some bread for the visit so she and Jenson had a great time enticing the three ducks in residence to lunch.

It was a lovely time and, once again, we were very impressed with Jenson's behavior and "maturity" and we congratulated Catherine and Stephen on their child-raising abilities. It was great to see the two of them again on an all-too-short visit.

But, that wasn't quite the end of our time with Cat for this trip! About three days after their visit, we found two of Jenson's cars under the sofa in the flat; obviously they hadn't made their way all the way through the "tunnel" on their final pass. So, after contacting Cat, we made arrangements to return the toys to Barnoldswick on the following Monday afternoon. We arrived at their house on a wet and cool afternoon to find Cat babysitting Jenson, who was fast asleep on the sofa in their living room. It seemed a shame to wake him from his nap and, clearly, Cat herself had had a busy day, so we spent just a few minutes there, returned the beloved racing cars, and said our good-byes once again.

A brief, but very pleasant, extra visit.

On a number of occasions during our stays in Ilkley, we have been visited by Molly's brother Robert. He has a flat in London, a summer home ("The Hut") in Essex and, as of this past winter, a shared winter home in the south of France. Consequently, we were wondering whether or not he would find time to spend a few days with us in Ilkley this summer but were pleased that he planned to join us towards the end of our stay over our penultimate weekend there. This would be especially convenient as we had already arranged to meet Molly's sister-in-law, Elizabeth, during that weekend, so Robert, too, would be able to join us.

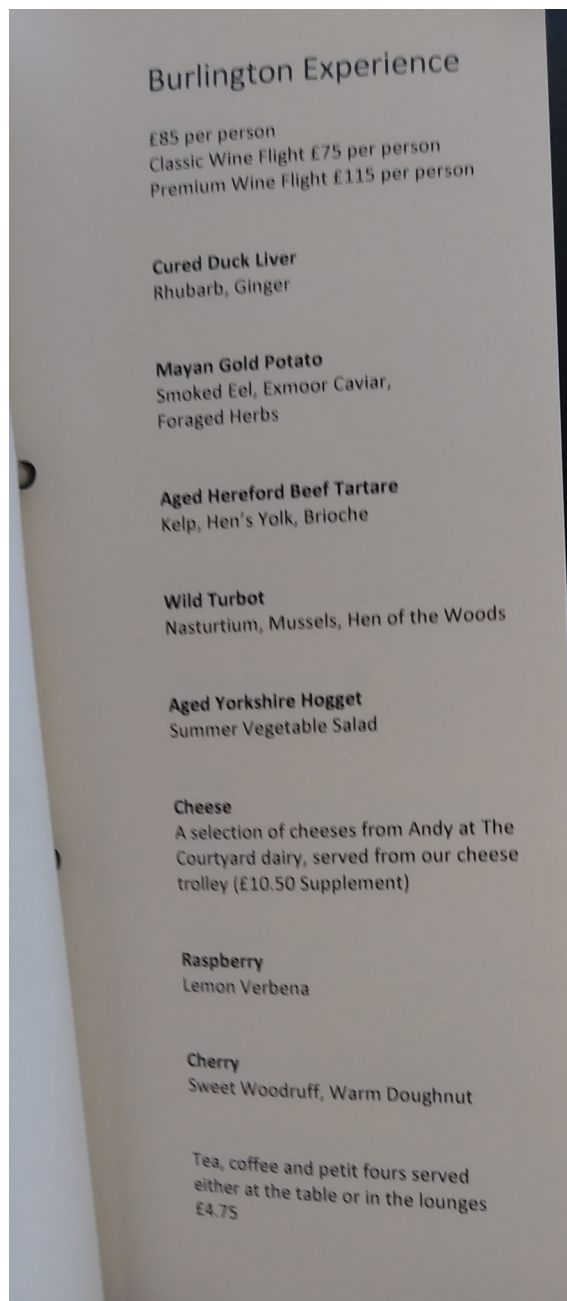
The best laid plans.....

Just a day before his scheduled arrival, Molly received an e-mail from Robert saying that he had recently developed a rash on his arm which had become much worse after applying an anti-itch cream. A subsequent visit with the doctor had resulted in prescriptions for antihistamines and additional topical medication, but he felt that traveling was not in the cards. He felt that he might possibly make the journey at the weekend but, sadly, that too was not possible as the medications were helping—but not sufficiently to make the journey. So, for the second time in this stay, guests had postponed—and, in this case, cancelled—visits to us in Ilkley and we were beginning to get a complex!

We have since learned that his rash and associated problems have disappeared but that he has indications of something far more serious—prostate cancer. The latest news is that there has been no metastasis to other organs so we are hopeful that the scheduled treatment will be effective and complete.

We were disappointed that Robert would not be visiting as we always enjoy his company, but health must come first. However, our complex was exacerbated shortly after we heard from him when we received another call from Joanne's husband Robert saying that they, too, must cancel a special anniversary dinner that we had scheduled for the next evening at the Devonshire Arms. Joanne had had several dizzy spells recently, often associated with headaches, and felt that a long evening of dining would

not be wise at this time. So, Molly and I fulfilled the reservation by dining alone at the Burlington Room. It was still a very special eight (plus) course meal but we missed our usual dining companions.



Main Course

Dessert



The lunch meeting with Elizabeth—and her son Matthew—did occur as scheduled, albeit without Robert. On our second last Sunday, we skipped church and took the train to meet Elizabeth and Matthew at a mutually convenient restaurant in Leeds. They travelled north from Sheffield and we had Sunday lunch at a very nice restaurant a few hundred yards from the train station.

We met at noon and spent a very pleasant and, at times, amusing (see example from his Facebook page), three hours with Elizabeth and her son. He has the sense of humor of his father and both he and Elizabeth are very good company. It was lovely to see them again and we agreed to meet at the same venue on our December visit.



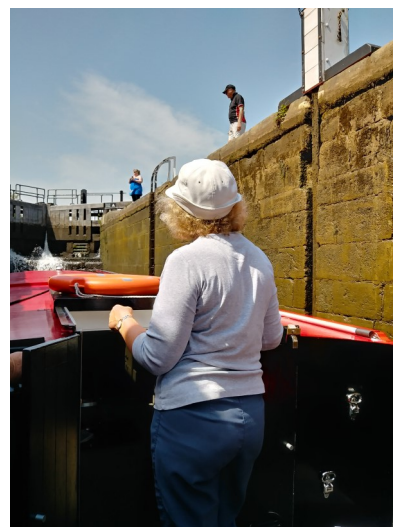
BLEEDING LOVE SCARBOROUGH!!! The diet can start tomorrow as having Fish & Chips on the North Bay Cliffs.
Also Yorkshire v Surrey. @ Scarborough Cricket Club (Official Club Site)



On our final weekend in Ilkley, Molly's sister Fran and her husband Alan were beginning a ten day holiday on a narrow boat on the Leeds-Liverpool Canal. They were scheduled to pick up their boat near Shipley on the Saturday before we left Ilkley, so arrangements were made for a brief rendezvous at the Apperley Bridge marina, the starting point of their vacation.

We arrived there on a very warm afternoon as Fran and Alan had just taken possession of their holiday home and were getting ready for their "training" session before being allowed to take full control. A part of the transaction is that the new operators of the boat must be accompanied by an experienced "trainer" in order that he can show them the operation of the locks and swing bridges, as well as the boat itself. This would take several hours and we were invited to go along for the ride and take a taxi back to our car at the marina.

We really didn't have time for the full period but finally compromised by accompanying Fran and Alan (and David the teacher) through the first swing bridge and the two-rise locks that immediately followed. So, we quickly had a cup of tea in the marina café and then boarded "Little Duke" for the ride towards Shipley. As David had told us, the first swing bridge was "just around the corner" and the locks were not much further along. In fact, after opening and closing the first bridge (electrically operated), Fran and David walked along the towpath to get the locks ready for our passage.





The “Training Session” and (below) later in the voyage



Since Fran did not normally drive, it was her job to jump off and on at each of the obstacles en route

and do the manual labor involved in opening the sluices and the enormous lock gates, while Alan maneuvered the boat along the canal and through the locks. We felt that Fran would be in pretty good shape at the end of their ten-day holiday, whatever her state of fitness now.

For Molly and I it was simply a lovely way to spend an hour; doing absolutely nothing except eating our teacake and admiring the skills of driver and mate. At the top of the second lock, we said our farewells and disembarked, leaving Alan driving westward and Fran jogging along the towpath towards the next training stop. Since Fran and Alan had experienced a number of narrow boat holidays, they felt that much of this training period was a waste of time (my words, not theirs, but Alan's comments suggested agreement).

Molly and I walked back along the towpath to the marina (only about twenty minutes) and retrieved our car for the journey back to Ilkley, where we arrived about 4pm. It had been a brief visit with Fran and Alan but a very enjoyable time nonetheless, and we would follow their progress westward over the next several days.

Other visits with friends and family on this trip occurred throughout our stay. We had dinner on two occasions with my sister Dorothy and husband David (below left) and we also joined them at a lunch towards the end of our stay with cousin Keith and his wife Eileen (below right).



We had dinner one evening with Keith and Zena (Keith a school pal of mine), another dinner with Linda (David's sister-in-law) and lunch with Susan (my late brother Geoff's sister-in-law). On this latter lunch, we were joined by our niece Joanne and her husband Robert, with whom we dined on other occasions and—as detailed elsewhere—who were the “instigators” of the bike trip. In addition, I had a couple of walks with Joanne; fewer than usual during a six week visit, but limited by other commitments and her dizziness problems. Finally, we should mention our friendship with Stephen and Joyce who are friends from the church that we attend in Ilkley and with whom we spent a very enjoyable evening meal during our stay.

It would be remiss of us if we did not mention our other friends and acquaintances in Ilkley who, perhaps not surprisingly, are associated with the catering businesses there. We dined at Monkman's, where

we count Mike and Joelle amongst our friends and with whom we have spent time on other visits away from their business. Diego, the owner of one of our favorite restaurants, Quinta, who greets us as old friends on every visit and always has a welcoming and farewell complimentary drink on each stay. Luigi and his wife, the cordial and lively owners of Emporio italia—a “Mom and Pop” central Rome trattoria in Ilkley. The new owners of Pintoh, a great Thai restaurant, who treated us to a complimentary bottle of wine on this trip and who seem to know our itinerary better than we do. The friendly staff at La Casita (great Tapas) and the superb cuisine and service of the Box Tree and the Burlington Room.



And we must not forget the baristas at Caffè Nero, especially Jackie and Vicki.

Finally, Anna. Anna is the banquet manager and hostess at the Ilkley Piccolino, a small Italian restaurant chain in England. Over the past few years we have come to know Anna very well and get the impression that she has “adopted” Molly as her “English mother” as a surrogate for her family in Italy. She greets us as relatives and has shared her life with us such that we feel part of the family. We smile with her as she tells us of her new baby nephew and are filled with anticipation as she announces her new-found friendship with a local boy, Andrew. On our last night in Ilkley, we dined at Piccolino after Anna had finished her day there but she arranged for a complimentary bottle of wine for us as a parting gift. She, and the rest of the staff at Piccolino, are special and we regard them almost as part of our extended family.



So, we met with lots of family and friends on this visit and were disappointed not to have Robert’s company on this visit. We look forward to seeing him—and every one else—on our next extended stay.

