

Tales from DalesRail Ingleborough Marian Strahan

DalesRail may not be operating in 2020 but that doesn't stop us sharing our many interesting experiences about our journeys. We hope you will share your interesting stories, favourite walks, fascinating anecdotes and pictures about DalesRail. Please send them to richard.watts.crl@gmail.com or simon.clarke.crl@gmail.com.

Marian Strahan 2015

There are several walks I have a preference for but to pick out a memorable one it would be this.

About 8 years ago, I was leader for a walk up Ingleborough with Keith Thomson as back marker. The route was from Ribbleshead back to Horton. A senior citizen on the train approached me, having seemingly found out I was leading, and said he had lived in Horton as a boy and climbed Ingleborough, once at age 17 yrs. He had always wanted to repeat the walk, and this was his last chance. He was going on 85 yrs. How fast did I intend to go? How long did I think it would take to arrive at the summit? A further issue was the weather which was looking decidedly greyer all the time.

However, a party of 15 left Ribbleshead and with stops and starts arrived at the last flight of steps to reach the cairn. The mist was so bad you couldn't see ahead of your arm, but the group voted to walk the last section having come so far. My advice was to hold the person's coat or rucksack strap ahead. I remember Alan Smith once saying; "the compass is never wrong"! This was to prove right and after about two miles descent towards Horton, the mist lifted, and the sun came out. Arriving at Horton Station, the elderly man was on the verge of tears with a profusion of thanks but perhaps the day's highlight came at about 9 p.m. that night when Howard rang me to say he had never expected us to complete the walk. What it proves is the necessity of a back-marker. Keith did a great job that day.



Ingleborough in better weather (Richard Watts)