

Background to the May Bank Holiday Meet

Over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend this year Andy Burton has organised a Memorial Meet for Ed Bramley. I thought that members would like to have a historical background to this meet.

In 1993 the ABM Committee set up a subcommittee, chaired by Alasdair Andrews, to look at ways of retaining and increasing membership. It reported in 1994 and one of the many ideas was to introduce new Meets to attract more members. (*this is a problem that is still being mulled over 33 years later!*)

One of the new Meets was the Family Camping Meet. The Meet was added to the Meets Calendar in 1995 over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend with Ed as a new and keen Meet Organiser. The first weekend was located at Fearby, near Masham in the Yorkshire Dales.



The meet was quickly established in the Meets Calendar. For the next couple of years the meet grew in attendees and stayed in Yorkshire.

In 1999 Ed moved the meet to Callow Top, near Ashbourne in Derbyshire. The meet continued to grow in popularity.

In 2002 Andy Burton took on the role of Meet Organiser and the camping option slowly transitioned to bunkhouses and Hostels.

Attached is Eds first Meet report, taken from the 1996 Journal along with a few photographs from the Goodyer archive. I have also taken an extract from Report of the following years Meet.

MAY BANK HOLIDAY MEET - YORKSHIRE DALES – taken from 1996 Journal

Maybe it was beginners luck, but there seemed to be sunshine in abundance for this new meet, which took place at Fearby, near Masham in the Yorkshire Dales. There was a modest turnout of people for this camping meet, in the grounds of the Black Swan pub, but a good time was had by all. The site was well equipped with showers, as well as the pub serving bar meals, and not forgetting the local Black Sheep beer.

On the Saturday, the more adventurous went on a pleasant ramble through the local farmland into Masham, and back out again by a riverside walk. The mellow tranquil setting was just right for an al fresco evening barbeque, which was made even better by the local butchers' speciality spiced sausages.

On Sunday, we started the day at Brimham rocks, which gave the children a chance to climb their first guidebook routes. Faith and friction on the slabs were working well, but the gritstone handjamb will have to wait for another year. After returning to the campsite in the afternoon, we then had a



foray up to Slipstones, which is a delightful gritstone Crag, higher up the valley. Although the crag is generally only around 25 ft high, it contains a lot of quality routes, and the friction is superb. We soloed easier routes and climbed the more difficult, up to hard severe.

On the Monday morning, we went to Hackfall Wood, which is managed by the Woodland trust and overlooks the river Ure. The wood was full of bluebell carpets, and old follies added even more to the enjoyment.



At dinner time, we joined in the VE day celebrations at one of the local village pubs, complete with (another) barbeque, before winding a slow way home.



Next year, support permitting, there will be another camping meet centred at the Black Swan.

Report by Ed Bramley

Extract from the Meet Report of the 1996 May day weekend

The family theme was repeated on Monday, with a walk in the pasture and woodland in the Swinton and Ilton area, finishing at Ilton Temple in the middle of the woods. This is a Stonehenge shaped folly, build in the 1820s. complete with trilithons, monoliths and caves. The memory of the weekend must surely be the children around what looks like a sacrificial alter tucking into their dinners.



You may notice that Ed was already wearing his fancy choice in trousers!

Mike Goodyer, April 2026