

PR Campaign by



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**Profile**

Have a Go News is Western Australia's premier lifestyle newspaper for the over 45s, with a readership of 188,000 per month.

Available from more than 1800 outlets it's main topics include travel, food & drink, active lifestyle and activities, and places to stay.

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[www.LakeDistrict2012.com](http://www.LakeDistrict2012.com)

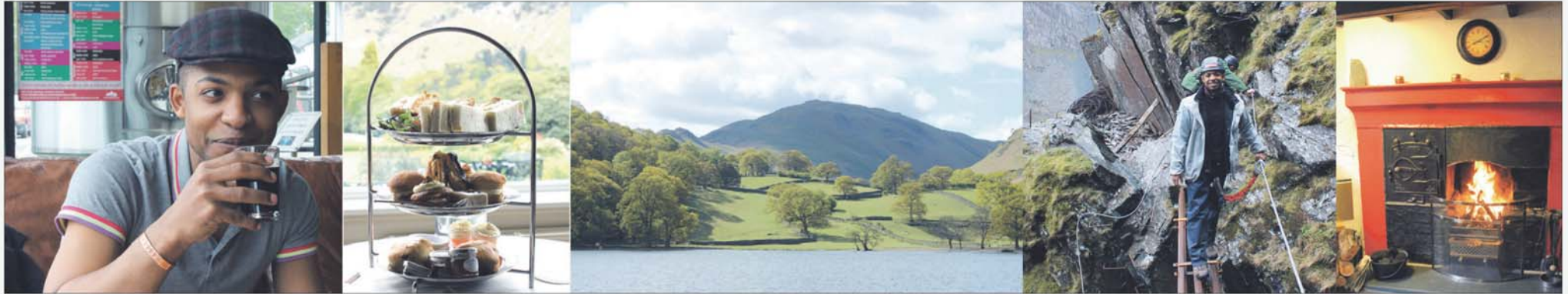


# let's go travelling

ADVERTISING FEATURE



## The call of the Lakes District - Part Two



From left to right; Enjoying a dark beer at Hawkshead Brewery - Cake Tier at Inn On The Lake - Fields and Hill Ullswater - Honister Slate Mine Via Ferrator - Fireplace at Honnister Cottage

by Jayson Mansaray

IT IS 6am and my specially programmed alarm woke me to the sounds of Gerry and The Pacemakers' song - *You'll Never Walk Alone*.

The effects of the extra two glasses of desert wine at the Gilpin Hotel made me feel a little put out by this rude awakening until I felt the luxurious pillows under my head and realised I was in a lovely part of the world: Gilpin Valley in The Lake District.

After a breakfast of had-dock and poached eggs at the Wild Boar Inn it was time to hit the lakes...literally.

Once known as the 'dark lake' and said to have monsters living below the surface, Ullswater is the second largest lake (after Windermere, which I crossed to 'Go Ape' last month).

The Ullswater Steamers operate a fleet of boats on the

Lake and it was aboard the Raven, (built in 1889), that I set sail from Glenridding East across the lake.

This must be the most beautiful lake in the country with Helvellyn Mountain on Southern reach and sun drenched fells and fields everywhere you look.

We also passed country houses on the shores and a celebrity haunt, 'The Sharrow Bay Country House', where Elizabeth Taylor and Laurence Olivier have stayed and where Sir Paul McCartney proposed to Heather Mills.

The lake's shores were the inspiration and place for William Wordsworth's famous poem 'Daffodils'.

The Steamers (now converted to diesel motors) run a taxi service to different points of the Lake so you can get on and off to explore or take the outward journey and do the long (but not strenuous) Fell

Walk back to Glenridding.

Robert, our skipper with a wealth of knowledge on the area, is very approachable - I recommend you ask him about Stone Circles if you catch up with him, as he has written a book on the subject, a point he kept quiet about.

Back on shore it was time for lunch at the Inn On The Lake which has 15 acres of lawn that reaches to the shore and includes the facilities to play mini golf (Pitch & Putt) and croquet. I skipped this though and focused my energy on a three-tier cake stand laden with an assortment of house-made cakes, biscuits, scones and sandwiches. Cucumber sandwiches and slightly more traditional surrounds made for a quintessentially English lunch, not forgetting their exclusive 'Striding Edge' beer to top it off.

From here it was off to a small mining village called

Seatoller, home to The Honister Slate Mine. It's recorded that The Furness Abbey monks mined metals here in 1643 and after a series of owners, in 1985 it was bought by Alfred McAlpine and eventually fell into disrepair. That was until Mark Weir, an enterprising man, flew his helicopter over the Barrowdale Valley with his grandfather John Taylor, who had worked in the mines when they were still operating. As they flew over he asked his grandson "why aren't the mines working anymore," and the rest as they say, is history: over a coffee a 29-year-old Mark negotiated a deal and bought the Honister Slate Mine.

From the conception of re-incarnating the mine, which involved long working hours, challenging local authorities, financial pressures and no prior experience in mining, to what it is today; a wonder-

ful Lake District experience, which I recommend highly particularly after devouring the its history and that of its enigmatic saviour.

Before heading up to the mine I stayed in the 400-year-old Honnister cottage, a real miner's cottage split over two levels with a big fireplace to sit at and a lovely way to wile away the hours with local ale.

Seatoller is a quaint, picturesque English village founded on the success of the mine and is a real step back in time with no mobile reception, very little internet and complete with a moss covered red telephone box.

After a very comfortable evening that included a long hot bath and the crackle of the fireplace, it was breakfast next door at the Yew Tree Café for a bacon and sausage 'butty' washed down with local roastery Carvetii Barrowdale Blend Coffee.

Then it was on to the steep winding narrow road that takes you up to Fleetwith Pike to Honister Mine, home to the Sky Hi Café visitor centre a gallery where you can buy slate products mined and made there and at the Via Ferrata, which is Italian for Iron Rod. Vie Ferrate was initially used in the First World War in the fiercely contested Dolomites as a way to transport heavy machinery and supplies to the treacherous parts of the mountain range. Miners adopted the method and now the wood ladders and ropes have been replaced with iron and cables. This was an amazing excursion crossing little gorges and skirting around the rock face all the while connected to the cable by carabiner.

Our guide Johny was a wonderfully personable guy with a very approachable demeanour and sense of humour that made me want to

be his best mate.

Also in tow was Jim, who was 70 years old and worth his weight in gold with a cheeky smile and daring mind that meant he was happy to regale about any subject us 'young'ns' brought up.

Truly rewarding was the view from the top 2,216 feet up! An absolute vista as you looked across the valley to the scree-patterned hillside or down the valley that you could see lead to the lake. And the air...fresh crisp wonderful!

After this it was a tour of the mine with Roland who explained that the slate is made from volcanic ash laid down with water nearly 400 million years ago and that Honister Green slate is of the highest quality, so high in fact it still lines the roof of The Houses of Parliament and Buckingham Palace.

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# travelling

let's go travelling

ADVERTISING FEATURE

## Grab your camera for Singapore Christmas Lights!



EACH YEAR George Booth from Integrated Tourism Services escorts a seven day Singapore tour departing Perth on Sunday 25 November to see the most colourful Christmas Light display in the region.

One of the main features of the tour is the open top bus tour that circles the 'lights' followed by the stroll through Orchard Street to photograph and 'soak up' the extraordinary light show.

Staying at the Swissotel Merchant Court Hotel, Clarke Quay offers an ideal location with access to China Town, the MRT station and a large variety of places to eat, from fast food to upmarket Asian dining.

The tour includes flying with Singapore Airlines (current airline taxes), six night's accommodation with full daily breakfast, lots of sightseeing and morning strolls plus a farewell dinner to top off the week.

It offers sightseeing, relaxation, good company and the oversight of an escort to ensure everything meets the expectation costs from \$1,920 per person twin share.

For information or bookings phone George on 9382 5049.

I overcame another fear of mine there: small enclosed spaces, and journeyed into the caverns of the mine that were like something out of *The Lord of The Rings*. What was also revealed was how hard miners had to work, and also sobering – how young some of them were.

Sadly Mark Weir was killed in a helicopter crash at the mine on 8 March 2011 and is survived by his wonderful wife Jan, their children and of course the Honister Slate Mine.

I met Jan and heard in person of the trials and tribulations, together with inspiration and sheer determination Mark endured and displayed to restore the mine: I cannot encourage you enough to get up there and hear this amazing story.

After a lunch of locally sourced food at the Café and truly inspired by the legacy and spirit of Mark's story, it was off to Ambleside to stay at the Nanny Brow Hotel.

Set high on Loughrigg the original house was built in 1903 by arts and craft architect Francis Whitwell. Now owned and operated by Sue Robinson, this is a truly luxurious family home style stay. Sue recommended a lovely walk path at the back of the hotel which lead me through semi ancient forest carpeted in bluebells to a look-out with picturesque views from Ivy Craig of Lake Windermere.

Nanny Brow is luxury ac-

commodation that has mastered the balance of antique, classic charm with all the modern conveniences.

As the evening set in, it was time for dinner at Lucy on a Plate, a contemporary restaurant in the heart of Ambleside. The restaurant has a feel good atmosphere and I was lucky to have Lucy herself quench my thirst with a gin and tonic to start.

After navigating the overwhelming menu that spoiled you for choice, I settled on the 'That's Shallot Quacker' (confit duck) served on Honister slate no less and Lamb Tagine. I was dismayed we were not to be in town for the 'Up the Duff' pudding night' so settled for the delicious Spiced Cumberland bread pudding with rum butter...yum!

Darren, Lucy and I, chatted and laughed until the restaurant emptied before heading to the sister venue Lucy 4 Wine Bar & Bistro and eventually, thoroughly 'pooped out', to the incredibly comfortable beds at Nanny Brow.

Sue prepared breakfast in the dining room with the lovely views. It was there I opted for the Full Lakeland Breakfast with Cartmel Valley bacon Cumberland sausages Black Pudding poached eggs and some!

Great service, great food, great view...great rooms!

I was excited for it was nearly time for some beer tasting but first we stopped at Lakeland Limited, a true family success story which began in the 60s selling plastic bags and is now the epitome of English homeware and so very British.

Half a million visitors a year flock to the store to get everything from cake tins to Jubilee themed street party gear...I don't know what

happened to me but I was suddenly overcome by the need for an ARGA cooker and a kitchen to fill.

Next stop was More? The Artisan Bakery for coffee and to ogle the patisserie and cheeses.

Patrick James Moore is a celebrated chef and the concept bakery has had huge success as an alternative to the mass produced products there. Be warned though...it is very hard to resist; I couldn't go past the More? Muddies, an indulgent chocolate brownie style affair, and the best I have had.

Just next door is the Hawkshead brewery where you don't need a booking to sidle up to the bar or walk around looking into the stainless steel fermenting vessels.

Thanks to the 'Progressive Beer Duty' introduced by former Prime Minister Gordon Brown and CAMRA

(Campaign For Real Ale) Hawkshead along with many micros has seen a major resurgence in 'real ale' popularity. Anne hosted a personal tour of this local craft brewery explaining the process and the types of hops used: UK, which had a lemongrass aroma, and USA hops, which had a lemon and...cannabis aroma. This assessment is not born of prior knowledge or a misspent youth, but true biology, because hops, as I learned, are part of the Cannabaceae family.

After this lesson on alchemy it was time for the serious business of tasting the platter presented with More? bread and five beers with matching food tasters. Interestingly beer and ale can be as particular to your meal as the wine you order.

Matt the master brewer explained why the light Windemere Pale Ale (served with

fish goujons) and the dark Lakeland Gold (served with braised beef) were similar in taste but not colour. My favourite was the Brodie's Prime, like a stout. Thanks to roasted barley this North West Champion Porter was served last with More? Muddies, which were so good I took my task very seriously and left none of the beer to waste (hiccup!).

Anne kindly packed a very merry *Have a Go News* columnist off with three bottles of the NZ PA (made with New Zealand hops) which has served as wonderful reminder, as I drink same with my evening meal in London, of a truly extraordinary adventure in the Lake District.

*The writer was a guest of English Lakes District Tourism.*

More information can be found at [www.visitenglishlakedistrict.com](http://www.visitenglishlakedistrict.com)

## FAST FACTS

### Ullswater Steamers

Fares very seasonally so check the prices on the website, there are also special packages too  
[www.ullswater-steamers.co.uk](http://www.ullswater-steamers.co.uk)

### Inn On The Lake

Full Afternoon Tea - £15.95  
 Accommodation and function hire information on the website  
[www.lakedistricthotels.net/inonthelake](http://www.lakedistricthotels.net/inonthelake)

### Honister Cottage

All year round: £600 for a short break or £1200 for the week.

There are other types of accommodation available too

[www.discoverparadigm.com](http://www.discoverparadigm.com)

### Honister Mine

Prices from £4.95 Child/£9.95 But check the website for the latest deals and prices  
[www.honister.com](http://www.honister.com)

### Carvetii

[www.carvetiicoffee.co.uk/](http://www.carvetiicoffee.co.uk/)

### Lucy on a plate

Confit Duck £6.95

Tunisian Tagine £15.95

Spiced Cumberland Bread Pudding with

Rum Butter £5.50

Plus drinks – but the atmosphere is on the house!

[www.lucysofambleside.co.uk/](http://www.lucysofambleside.co.uk/)

### Nanny Brow Hotel

Loughrigg, Wansfell & Brantwood

Festive Break £170

Low Season £120

High Season £140

I stayed in the Wansfell suite for more

rooms go the website

<http://www.nannybrow.co.uk/>

### Lakeland Limited

[www.lakeland.co.uk](http://www.lakeland.co.uk)

More?

### The Artisan Bakery

[www.moreartisan.co.uk/](http://www.moreartisan.co.uk/)

### Hawkshead Brewery

Brewery tour is £6.50 per person and includes either a pint or two halves at the end of the tour.

[www.hawksheadbrewery.co.uk/](http://www.hawksheadbrewery.co.uk/)

