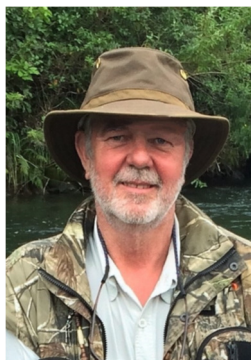




*The Grayling Society*

# *Newsletter*

*Area 9 November 2021 (No. 3)*



## Hello Again

Welcome to the third Grayling Society Newsletter for the Yorkshire Region.

This edition is jam packed as a lot has happened during October and November. The Yorkshire Grayling Day; The Grayling Society Symposium; Member fishing days on the Wharfe and the Rye .....it's been... busy,... busy ...busy.....but highly enjoyable. I am now on the lookout for other waters that will generously host a Grayling Society Day next year. So, if you think your Club would be willing, just drop me a line with the Secretary's contact details and I will take it from there.

Meanwhile, sit back and enjoy reading about events in Yorkshire.....

Kind Regards

*Peter Chambers*

**'Yorkshire Grayling Day'** came and went on October 10<sup>th</sup> in superb weather conditions and a perfect river height and colour. Shortly afterwards my inbox received a very pleasant surprise with an unsolicited write up from a long- standing attendee, John Edwards. Let him take up the tale.....

**Yorkshire Grayling Day – 'A Reet Good Time'**  
Graham Pawson and I have been going to the annual Yorkshire Grayling Day for a fair few

*years (not last year, of course) and it has become something of a tradition. Graham is the Honorary Secretary of the Derwent Anglers' Club (founded in 1839 and still going strong!) and "the opportunity to enjoy fishing some of the very best beats" (to quote from the notice of the event) on the Ure, provides us with a pleasant change from fishing 'our' own lovely little river.*

*This year, we took Paul Wood with us; I say 'took' as he did the driving – and he also provided the pork pies and the sausage rolls. The three of us live in or near to Scarborough so Graham and I were grateful to him for his efforts behind the wheel – particularly on the return journey. Paul is a newcomer to fly fishing, and he is on a steep learning curve. The secret (apart from aptitude and application!) is, I think, much to do with having reet good flies and good advice – which he gets from Graham. He has also invested in some reet good tackle and has become something of an Orvis aficionado.*

*The event, now in its 53<sup>rd</sup> year, only happens through the generous goodwill of the various riparian owners, clubs and farmers set along a six mile stretch of the Ure. The base, as usual, was the Three Horse Shoes in Wensley. This is a reet good venue (to use that Yorkshire dialect again) in a wonderful setting with the river just to the South, beyond the church and the graceful outline of Pen Hill on the other side of the valley, to the Southwest. We got there at about 9.30 am and the car park was already*

full. Lots of familiar (not to say old) faces among the assembled gathering. But a familiar face, conspicuous by its absence this year, was the one belonging to the fly fishing and fly-tying legend, Oliver Edwards. A regular supporter of this event and past winner of the Sam Turner Cup, he was not able to be with us on this occasion and so we wish him well.

The staff at the Three Horse Shoes were as helpful and friendly as ever, and the bacon butties and the beer were just as good as I remember them from two years' ago. The beer at this hostelry could, in fact, become a serious distraction and I do my best to resist its charms until after the event.



We were called to order at 10.30 am and it must be said that the new Grayling Society Area Secretary, Peter Chambers, did a reet good job (sorry) in getting across his message. No doubt he is used to addressing the troops from a previous career as a Regular soldier, but what he had to say was a timely reminder to us all, of the need to support the organisations which are concerned with fish and river conservation – all with scarcely a hint of hectoring, whilst he was on his hind legs!

I've noticed from before, that the assembled anglers very quickly melt away once this stage is over and the beats have been allocated. It is no longer a 'real competition' (to quote again from the notice of the event) but there is, I suspect, a competitor lurking within each

angler and most seem keen to get their feet in the water with rods at the ready for the moment Middy comes round. Graham, Paul and I were allocated onto Beat 2 (which is the beat from Lords Bridge, upstream to Batt Island) and we, too, went whizzing off as soon as we could to find the track near West Witton, which gives access to that section of the river.



We were blessed with the best possible combination of conditions: a lovely, warm settled Autumn day and the river at a perfect height for fishing. It had that amber glow about it, which a rain-fed river takes on when there has been some rain some time ago.

I was using my 14' Tenkara rod and on the end a nymph pattern which I call 'the Purple Warrior', which I get from John Emerson of Unique Flies. It is tied on a jig hook and its most obvious features are a bead – looking like a lustrous pearl – and just behind this, a sparkly purple collar with no hackle. I'm not sure you'll find anything like this coming down the Ure on an Autumn afternoon, but I think it fair to say that the 'lady of the stream' likes a bit of bling! I ended up with two brace during the session and I suppose one or two got off. I like to get them back where they belong as soon as I can, but that brief encounter each time a grayling comes to the net is a reminder of what a wonderful wild creature they are.

Four o'clock came round soon enough and it was time to head off back to the Three Horse Shoes for the raffle and the results. In first place was Andy Ralph – a worthy winner with a

tally of 18 grayling, runner up was Adam Fewtrell with 14. I'm told that 45 anglers took part this year and a total of 125 grayling were caught and safely returned to the river. The day raised £840 which was split in support of local S&TC branches and the various River Trusts in the region. Having a driver to take us back to Scarborough meant that Graham and I were able to get our share of that aforementioned delightful beer and, having previously planned to make a quick exit, we were, in fact, nearly the last to leave and this with some regret! The Three Horse Shoes is the sort of place where you could get well settled for the evening.

In conclusion, I should like to thank Peter Chambers & Duncan Courtney, on behalf of us all for their efforts in organising this most enjoyable event. The opportunity to fish in such lovely surroundings, bookended by gatherings in convivial company, is not to be missed and, if you've not tried it before, then I urge you to do so. I guarantee that you'll have a reet good day out!!

John Edwards

Well.....Thank You John, ..couldn't have put it better myself!

Remember, this most enjoyable event takes place each year on the **2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of October** so bookmark the **9<sup>th</sup> of October** for next year and come and enjoy a marvellous day out.

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### **Grayling Society 2021 Symposium and AGM**

This year's Symposium took place at the Casa Hotel in Chesterfield and was jointly hosted by both Area 5 and Area 8. As you may remember the Society should have held the Symposium there last year, but Covid restrictions forced us to cancel and rearrange for this year. Because

of Covid, the hotel had limited space to accommodate diners at tables so delegate numbers had to be limited.

In total there were 75 delegates, which was a little down on previous years, but this did not dampen the enjoyment of the weekend.

Speakers this year were Peter Hayes and Don Stazicker, (The new twosome after Edmonds and Lee or Goddard and Clarke) who gave an excellent talk on how fish take the fly. Shaun Leonard from the WTT unfortunately could not attend because he had to isolate, but his talk was given by Dr Chris Thomas from the GRT. The third speaker was Dr Jessica Marsh who gave an update on the GRT's work on the River Wylfe.

The last speaker of the day was our President Feargal Sharkey and, by way introducing himself, gave an excellent talk about his work over the years on his fight against pollution in our rivers.

(N.B.I would urge you to watch the recording of Feargal Sharkey's interview at the Symposium. Either from the web site or here at <https://vimeo.com/635227171> it really does emphasise what a driven and knowledgeable President we have)



There were the usual trade stands to spend your money at, this year we had Richard Haley, cane rod builder with Peter Arfield, Jack Perks with his natural history cards and calendars, Paul Morgan Coch Y Bonddu Books, Mark Hamnett with Fishing Matters, Stuart Wardle with The Durham Fly Fishing Company and Area 8 Secretary, Brian Clarke with Classic Fly-

tying tools and materials and Classic Trotting Floats.

That evening we all gathered for the Annual Dinner followed by the GRT Auction, which this year raised a massive £3100.00.

Sunday saw 45 anglers set off on various waters to try their best to catch grayling. Club waters which we were kindly allowed to fish were, on the River Wye, Cressbrook and Litton Fly Fishers Club Ltd and Peacock Fly Fishers Club. On the River Derwent we had the Waltonian Angling Club Ltd and Cromford Fly Fishers Club. We also fished three club waters on the River Dove, Leek and District Angling Club, 59ers Angling Club and one other which did not wish to have any publicity.

Many Thanks to Area 8 Secretary. Brian Clarke who pulled the busy weekend together.  
An Excellent Job!

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### **Society Day on the Wharfe – 14<sup>th</sup> November**

Courtesy of Ilkley Angling Association and their Secretary, Dave Martin, twelve Society Members had a very enjoyable day fishing a double bank, 1.5 mile stretch of the Wharfe at Ilkley. Those of you that know the Wharfe will appreciate that it is prone to rise very quickly if there is rain up the Dales. Unfortunately, this happened on the scheduled date of 31<sup>st</sup> October, and we had to revert to the fall-back date of 14<sup>th</sup> November. Many eyes were nervously watching the EA River Levels chart after a downpour on the prior Thursday when the river started rising. Fortunately, the Wharfe can fall as quickly as it rises and we were met with almost perfect conditions on Sunday morning, with the river falling and improving as the day wore on.

Over tea and bacon sandwiches Dave Martin gave a very comprehensive brief to the

assembled anglers and it was then ...'off to the river' situated literally 30m from Riverside Hotel where we had congregated.



.....maybe this one?

The River Wharfe at Ilkley is a classic Yorkshire freestone river, offering a mixture of pools, glides and riffles. Access is excellent, with paths running along both banks, plenty of parking, 3 bridges, and a set of steppingstones at the downstream limit. Wading is relatively easy over fine gravel and sand, becoming more challenging in places where the bed consists of cobbles and larger boulders. As their very informative website shows (<https://ilkleyanglingassociation.co.uk/>) the beats run literally through the centre of Ilkley town and so anglers must expect to share the bank side paths with walkers and families using the park, but none of this proved a problem.



The weather was perfect for fishing, dry with broken cloud and mild temperatures, the water was running clear and falling, it was only

the fish that refused to come out to play!  
However all but two anglers caught, with the nymphers having the better of those trotting or sticking to the dry fly –(although plenty were rising) – but everyone voted it a very enjoyable day, on an excellent stretch of water

For those unfamiliar with the IAA waters, I would urge you to take a day ticket (£11 or £7.50 over 65) and see what you are missing.

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### **Society Day on the Rye - 18<sup>th</sup> November**

Courtesy of Ryedale Anglers' and their Secretary, Simon Dench, eight Society Members enjoyed fishing the Yorkshire Rye at Harome, some six miles south of Helmsley. As with the Wharfe, we had to revert to a fall-back day as the river had risen considerably overnight on our first visit.



All was not wasted however because Chris Hartley, our Ryedale guide kindly used the day to walk the river highlighting salient points so that anglers were well prepared for when we returned.

Two weeks later we gathered again at Harome Church to be met by Chris, accompanied by fellow Club Member John Wilson, and they let us loose on their river.....and what a river! Totally changed from the brown flood waters of two week prior the river was running clear and at a perfect height



....the Rye in Summer

The underlying geology of the Rye is limestone, which yields clear alkaline water that is ideal for invertebrate life and the many varieties of flies that form a major part of the graylings diet. As a result, the fish in the Club's water are plentiful and grow to a substantial size: trout to 3 pounds are regularly caught and 5 pounds is usually bettered at least once per season. There is a good head of grayling throughout the water, the Club record hitting just over 3 pounds.

The weather was perfect for fishing, dry with broken cloud and mild temperatures, the water was running clear and falling, it was only the fish that played somewhat hard to get! (heard this before somewhere?) This time however everyone caught, with nymphing



being the most productive method. Dave Southall stole the day with 9 fish over 12”

Ryedale is flanked on one side by the North York Moors and on the other by the Howardian Hills. The river flows through idyllic

scenery including the landscaped beauty of Duncombe Park. The Club's water runs from Rievaulx Abbey, through Helmsley and on to beyond Harome. Fishing is open solely to Members and their Guests

<https://www.ryedaleanglers.org.uk/>

Perhaps it best I leave the last word to Society Member Richard Bentley, who kindly dropped me a line.....

### **A Real Yorkshire Gem**

*My anticipation levels were through the roof, like a child at Christmas. Yorkshire has some lovely grayling waters; the River Rye isn't perhaps the one on most people's radar. Its limestone enriched waters tumble off the North York Moors passing the world famous Rievaulx Abbey. The upper stretches are 'trouty'; but our efforts were concentrated on the beats between Helmsley and Harome where the river softens into glides and pools.*

*Firstly, enormous thanks to Peter Chambers for organising the day and to the Ryedale Anglers for allowing us the opportunity to experience their truly wild river. The lucky eight Grayling Society members were met at Harome by Ryedale Members Chris Hartley and John Wilson Following tactical discussions we were shown to our beats. Nymphing and trotting worm were the order of the day.*

*I thought I was in heaven, fishing the perfectly formed Rye with a renowned angler or two for guidance and support. Although on the day the larger grayling eluded us we all caught including a couple over the pound mark. Hats off to all; this is what the Grayling Society is about, camaraderie, extending horizons and charming the lady.*

*Richard Bentley*

So, as I said earlier a busy but very enjoyable launch into Autumn. I'm glad that the 20 Society Members who joined me on the Wharfe and the Rye enjoyed it so much and of course grateful to Ilkley Angling Association and Ryedale Anglers for generously allowing us to fish their waters.

If your Club could host a day for the Society do let me have contact details.

If I can, I will arrange another day's outing in January/ February – keep an eye out in the emails

Regards

*Peter Chambers*

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*"The charm of fishing is that it is the pursuit of what is elusive but attainable, a perpetual series of occasions for hope." John Buchan, circa 1936*

