

Photography group trip to Hadrian's Wall (2024/06/04)

On a grizzly grey Tuesday morning a forecast-depleted photography group set off for Hadrian's Wall. We arranged to meet at The Sill, which is very close to where Sycamore Gap used to be (the gap is still there, if not the tree – more on that later). The Sill is a recreational centre from which “the delights of the Northumberland National Park can be explored”, and of course Hadrian's Wall “just a stone's throw away.” After invigorating ourselves with the Sill's coffee we repaired to the Steel Rigg Car Park, here we prepared to assault, well, at least look at the wall from the Scottish side. The weather wasn't looking good, but that provided an authentic murky and moody look to our photographs.



Intrepid members of the group had not come all this way not to scale the crag, which was duly scaled.



In the hollow, the base layers of Emperor Hadrian's wall were clearly evident, along with what might have been the remains of a turret from which his Romans Legions could keep watch for marauding Scots heralded by the dulcet tones of bagpipes – I'm guessing the latter at least was not widely appreciated by the lads from Italy.



Sadly, our temperate maritime climate precluded optimism for an extended photography session without interruption, and so it proved. After just three quarters of an hour, the threatening clouds delivered, and our mood moved firmly in the direction of the Twice Brewed Inn, for a very reasonable lunch. Being the pub closest to Sycamore Gap there were many beautifully arty pictures of the tree, sadly no longer with us, in snowy conditions, backed by northern lights, and silhouetted against a perfect sunrise. I was appreciating the wonderful photographs with the Inn's receptionist when, with a conspiratorial wink, she divulged secret evidence concerning the motivation responsible for the arboreal vandalism. Apparently, or should I say allegedly, a disgruntled landowner had been denied planning permission to develop whatever it was he wanted to develop by the Northumberland National Park Authorities. And in his case, revenge was best served with a chainsaw....we will see what transpires in the court case. It was still raining so we went home.

Pete Redgrave

Next Photography Group Meeting:

Tuesday 2 July : a trip to The North Yorkshire Moors Railway at Grosmont. We will plan to meet at the station tea room at 11-00. Parking is available at the station (YO22 5QE).