

Ullswater 'Steamers' THROUGH THE YEARS



Raven at Glenridding

Ullswater 'Steamers' have been sailing on England's most beautiful lake for over 150 years. Reflect a while on our story as we take you on a journey through time.

1849

A small iron steamboat started to run between Pooley Bridge and Patterdale.

1855

'Ullswater Steam Navigation Company' was founded.

1859

The paddle steamer Enterprise was launched on 13th August. She is rumoured to be sunk somewhere in the lake.

The main purpose of the Steamers was not only to carry passengers but also Royal Mail, provisions, slate from nearby mines and lead from the Greenside mine above Glenridding. During World War II the 'Steamers' even ferried soldiers down to Glenridding to be trained at the Ullswater Hotel (*now the Inn on the Lake*).

1877

Lady of the Lake was launched on the 26th June; she was designed by Mr Douglas Hebson of Penrith, built in Glasgow and transported in three sections by rail to Penrith then by horse drays to Waterside, near Pooley Bridge, where she was assembled.

1881

Lady of the Lake sank at her moorings and was re-floated by a team of divers. She sank again in 1958 in a severe storm. Then in 1965 she was badly damaged by fire and was out of service for 14 years. She was re-launched by William Whitelaw on 19th May, 1979.

1889

Raven was launched on 11th July. She was built by the same company as Lady of the Lake. Extract from the Cumberland and Westmorland Herald 18th July, 1889 "It is questionable if there be any boat to beat, or even equal this little craft on any lake in this country".

One of the shareholders Mr Thomas Cook was the reason behind the launch of a second vessel. When Lady of the Lake broke down at the height of the season, he complained there was no boat to transport his tourists.

1895

Raven was made a temporary royal yacht and her decks painted yellow to mark the visit of the German Kaiser, Wilhelm II to Lowther Castle, home to the 'Yellow Earl' - Lord Lonsdale.

1934

Raven was converted from steam and fitted with twin diesel engines. Lady was converted later in 1936. Today, Raven and Lady both have Cummins Engines, producing 310shp and 360shp respectively. Both cruise at 10mph (9 knots).

1954

Lord Wakefield of Kendal bought a controlling shareholding to prevent the company from being wound up. He became chairman of the Company. A three times Grand Slam winning England rugby captain, World War 1 pilot and Member of Parliament, his vision for the future of the 'Steamers' is continued by his family to this day on Ullswater.

1961

Manchester Corporation Waterworks Department promoted a parliamentary bill to turn Ullswater into a reservoir.

1962

Lord Birkett, a Law Lord, prevented an environmental disaster by defeating the parliamentary bill against the Manchester Corporation in the House of Lords. He passed away the next day, some say the happiest he had ever been. On the western side of the lake, a nameless fell was re-named in his memory; there is also a memorial plaque on Kailpot Crag visible only from the water.

2001

Lady Dorothy joined the fleet. She came from Guernsey and her arrival meant for the first time winter sailings were possible.

2007

Lady Wakefield was renamed in a recommissioning ceremony by HRH Princess Alexandra in April. Built in 1949 in Dartmouth, she had worked on the River Dart and Plymouth Sound before her arrival at Ullswater.



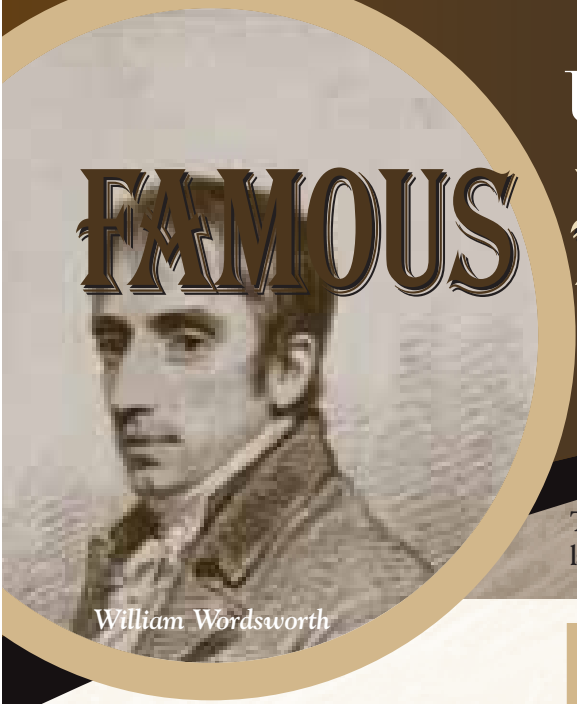
Greenside



Lady of the Lake

FAMOUS

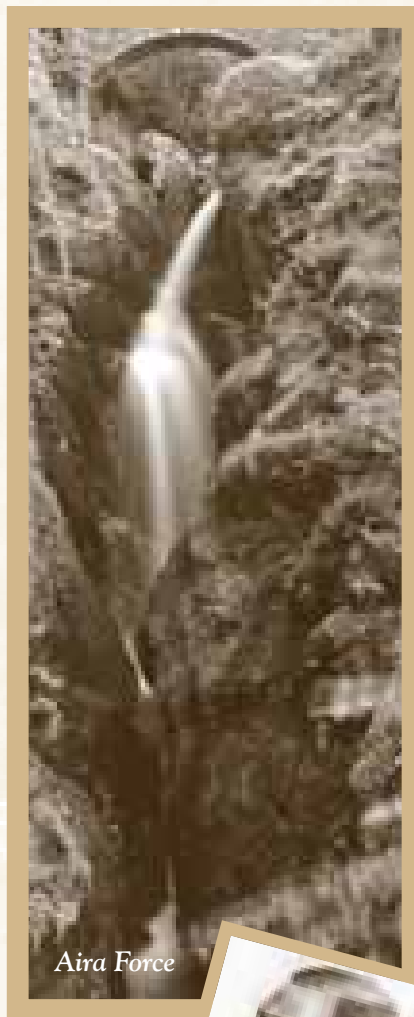
Ullswater 'Steamers' FACES AND PLACES



William Wordsworth

The Valley itself holds the secrets of many amazing achievements. It is no wonder that this landscape has influenced some of our most famous poets and writers for centuries.

- ☞ Glenridding was once one of the most important mining villages in Britain until its closure on the 31st of January, 1962. Galena was the chief ore mined at Greenside Lead Mine; it had an exceptionally high silver content around 15-30 ounces per ton of ore.
- ☞ Donald Campbell broke the world speed record on Ullswater on the 23rd July, 1955 in the jet powered Bluebird K7 travelling at 202mph. Lord Wakefield provided him with a slipway, boathouse and launching facilities at Glenridding. The original slipway can still be viewed adjacent to the pier house.
- ☞ Ullswater is known as the 'Dark Lake' and linked to Arthurian legend which recounts that a burial mound near our slipway at Waterside used to be the home of Sir Tristan (one of the Knights of the Round Table).
- ☞ In medieval times, monsters were believed to live in the dark waters which have a maximum depth of approximately 205ft (62m).
- ☞ William Wordsworth (1770-1850) first visited Ullswater at the age of 18 in 1788. One of his most famous poems 'The Daffodils' was inspired after a walk with his sister Dorothy beyond Gowbarrow Park on their way back to Grasmere on 15th April, 1802. To this day these wild daffodils (*Lenten lilies*), can be found in abundance on the lake shore in the Spring.
"When all at once I saw a crowd, a host of golden daffodils; Beside the lake, beneath the trees, ten thousand dancing in the breeze"



Aira Force

- ☞ Wordsworth also experienced the dark side of the lake when, as a young man, he stole a rowing boat one moonlit night and rowed out into the lake.
"A huge cliff Upreared its head. I struck and struck again, And growing still in stature, the huge cliff rose up between me and the stars, and still, with measured motion like a living thing, strode after me. With trembling hands I turned, and through the silent waters stole my way."
 The Prelude (Book 1 406-412).
 The huge cliff was either Place Fell or Black Crag.
- ☞ The area has also been popularised by the writings of A W Wainwright (1907-1991) who took his first Lakeland holiday in 1930. One of his favourite walks was along the lakeshore from Howtown to Glenridding.
- ☞ Aira Force, cascading 70ft over a dramatic gully, is linked to a tragic legend of a knight, Sir Eglamore, and his beloved, Emma, who haunt the path to the falls to this day.
- ☞ The name Ullswater may derive from its original name 'Ulf's Water' after a Viking Lord. Alternatively 'Ulf' is the Scandinavian word for wool; it is said that the Danes used the lake to clean their fleeces.
- ☞ During World War II Ullswater was used to test mini-sub and other naval craft.
- ☞ Gowbarrow Park and Glencoyne Park were once Red Deer Hunting Parks. Gowbarrow was owned by William Rufus, successor of William the Conqueror.



Wainwright

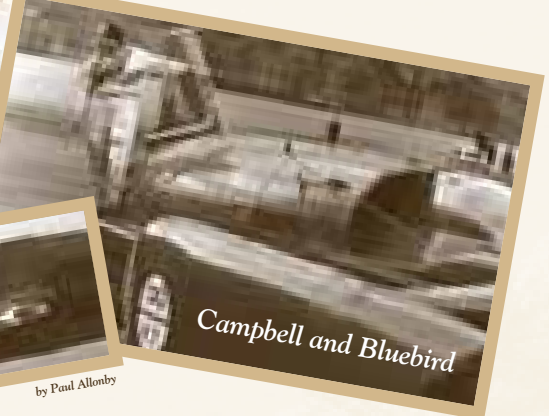
by John Burland



Lord Wakefield



by Paul Allenby



Campbell and Bluebird

Ullswater 'Steamers'

TOPOGRAPHY AND BIODIVERSITY

A valley that truly shows nature at its best, with its rich biodiversity of wildlife and striking landscape formed millions of years ago. We have pieced together just some of the amazing facts about this landscape and all those who inhabit it.

Schelly
Coregonus lavaretus

Ullswater is the second largest lake in the Lake District being approximately 7.5 miles (12km) long and 0.5 miles (0.8km) wide, with a maximum depth of approximately 205ft (62m).

The valley was shaped as it is today through glacial erosion and by years of turbulent geological activity. During a volcanic upheaval, approximately 450 million years ago, faults in the rocks allowed movement – Howtown is located on such a fault – which gives Ullswater its characteristic kink.

The valley today is dominated by three main groups of rocks which, along with faults, determine the characteristics of the landscape. These rock types are the Borrowdale Volcanics, Skiddaw Slates and Carboniferous Limestone.

Ullswater is a typical narrow 'ribbon lake' formed after the last ice age when the deepened section of the valley floor filled with meltwater from a retreating glacier.

At the head of the lake stands the Helvellyn range, approximately 9 miles (14.5km) in length and 4¼ miles (7km) wide. It is crowned by Helvellyn – at 3,117ft (950m) it is the third highest mountain in England.

There is a rich biodiversity in the area including a herd of wild Red Deer. The valley is also home to the endangered Red Squirrel and Fell Ponies can be seen roaming the Helton Fells.

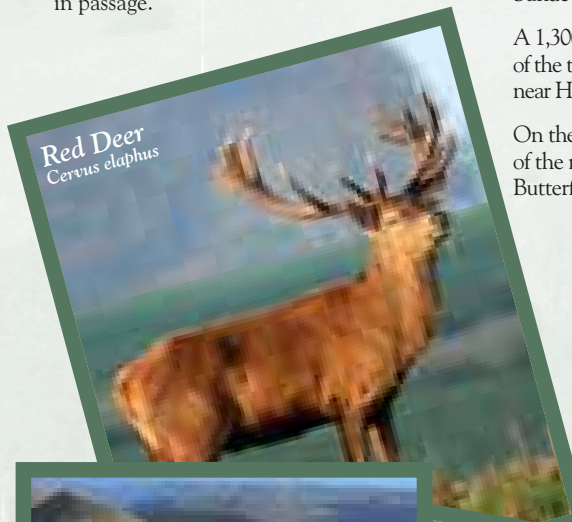
The ancient woodland and fells provide habitats for a variety of birds such as Greater Spotted Woodpeckers, Tree Creepers, Redstarts, Spotted Pied Flycatchers and Lapwings. Peregrine Falcons, Red Grouse and Ravens can be seen on the high fells. The bays are frequented by Mallard, Red-breasted Mergansers, Greylag Geese, Goosanders, Kingfishers, Cormorants, Dippers and Sandpipers. Ospreys have also been sighted in passage.

Trout and Perch inhabit the lake and an endangered species known as the Schelly thought to have been isolated by the last ice age. We believe that the Schelly is only found in two other localities, Haweswater and Red Tarn.

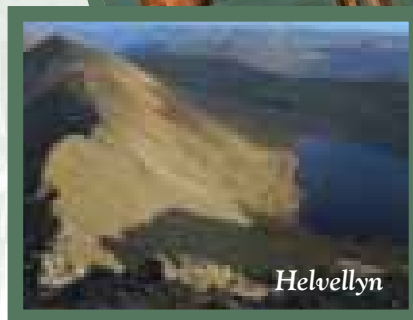
Abundant flora thrives along the lakeshore trails such as Bracket Fungus, Wood Cranesbill, Lady's Bedstraw, Pink Purslane, Bracken, Ferns, Wood Sorrell, Round Leaved Sundew and Butterwort.

A 1,300 year old Yew Tree resides in the grounds of the thirteenth century church of St Martin's near Howtown.

On the lower slopes of Silver Crag, the flowers of the mature Holly Trees attract Holly Blue Butterflies in the month of May.



Red Deer
Cervus elaphus



Helvellyn



Red Squirrel
Sciurus vulgaris



Holly Blue Butterflies
Celastrina argiolus



Red Breasted Merganser
Mergus serrator

OUR EFFORTS PAST AND PRESENT TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

In 1998 the Company introduced a visitor donation scheme with proceeds to the Tourism & Conservation Partnership. The purpose of this body is to bring together businesses involved in tourism with conservation organisations to promote sustainable tourism, raising much needed funds for conservation projects.

To date we have raised over £20,000 as part of this scheme. This money has been used to

fund access and conservation projects in the Ullswater Valley. As a business we continue to reduce our carbon footprint by putting into place work practices from the simplest tasks such as eco-friendly cleaning products to the more complex such as a fuel saving device and current inverters on each vessel. These convert 24DC to 240AC power, replacing the need to waste energy powering a generator.