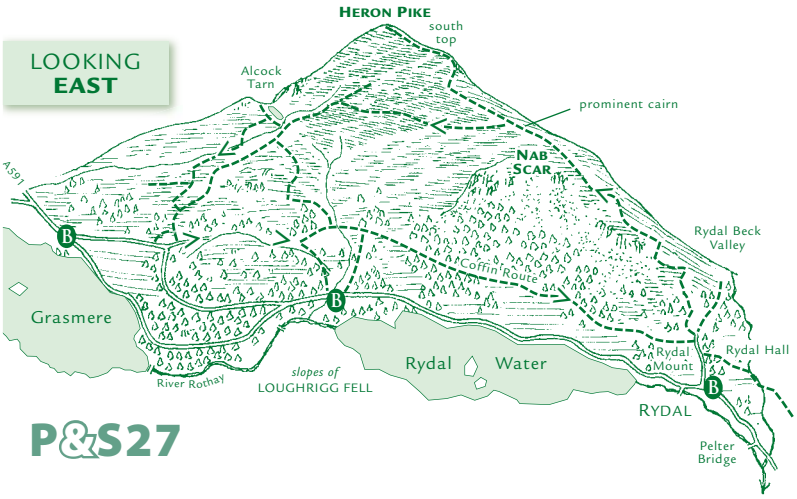
PARK&STRIDE
with Mark Richards
on BBC Radio Cumbria

27 Nab Scar
from Rydal

Dora's Field



henceforward this year all the Park & Stride walks will start and finish from given bus stops on the journey of this notable flagship service through the heart of the National Park — thus it might be more appropriate to call it **Ride & Stride**.

The LAKESLINK SERIES

distance : 6km/3¾ miles *time* : 3¼ hours
ascent : 410m/1350ft *grade* : energetic

MAPS (Harvey Superwalker) Central Lakeland
(Ordnance Survey) OL7 South–eastern area

BUS STOP Rydal (with bus shelter)

PARK Car-borne walkers can park in the secluded Pelter Bridge car park GR 365059 or, less likely, up the steep lane leading from the bus stop towards Rydal Mount.

Nab that view from The Lakeland Pathfinder

This season The Stagecoach Bus company has brought three new liveried buses into service on the 555 run from Windermere to Keswick. Each dressed up to proclaim one of three notable people whose contribution to the life and culture of Lakeland is immeasurable - Beatrix Potter, William Wordsworth and Alfred Wainwright. Supported by Cumbria Tourism, **The Lakeland Pathfinder** (the Wainwright bus) carries an image of the great man on the back, studiously scribing with his crow quill pen. Adjacent are adverts for Kendal Museum, home of the Wainwright exhibition; a motif recording that this year marks an important milestone, the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the Mountain Rescue Service in Lakeland; as well as a mention of this radio feature, as

The Route

Head up the lane directly from the bus stop. One might consider visiting St Mary's church with its Fleming Gallery and, walking on through the Millennium Garden via the kissing-gate, enter Dora's Field, which at this time of year is a delight abundant with daffodils – backtrack to continue. Rise above the entry to Rydal Hall (noting the inviting cafe sign) and Rydal Mount - former home of William Wordsworth which remains in the ownership of his decendants. Climb the concrete roadway passing up by a barn to go through a kissing-gate. Quickly the stone stair begins winding handsomely up with periodic wooden handrails. The path draws into a walled bottleneck with a sheep creep and ladder-stile, prefer the the latter as a means of progression. The lane opens as the path continues firmly set on

Rydal Mount

Key cairn off ridge

the stone-pitched climb to gain fine views back over the Rydal Beck valley and Windermere. Climbing higher ever more expansive views excite attention directly over Rydal Water to the Coniston Fells and the mighty mountains at the head of Great Langdale (*see images on sheet 3*). The path runs over grassy knolls to reach and cross a ladder-stile. A short rise and find a large cairn to the left on a definite crest. This is the summit of Nab Scar (455m/1490ft), duly nabbed! Pause and soak up the westward expanse of mountain Lakeland from Coniston Old Man round by Wetherlam, Crinkle Crags, Bowfell, Harrison Stickle and the greater Easedale skyline to Ullscarf.

The ridge path resumed continue north to a distinctive smaller taller cairn (*see above*) raised from the broken ridge wall. This is the key point of divergence. The ridge path hereon leads by Lord Crag over Heron Pike bound for Great Rigg and Fairfield, the western limb of the perennially popular Fairfield Horseshoe, encircling the Rydal Beck valley. An apparent path drifts half-left taking an easy line across and down the western slope, always in view back the landmark cairn, latterly dipping to a stile gaining entry into the walled Alcock Tarn enclosure. The sheet of undecorated water reflects the sky most beautifully. Created by the Victorian owner of The Hollens (now regional office of The National Trust) and stocked with trout - I only saw frog-spawn when I passed on Easter Sunday, the fish have fled.

An engineered path leads directly downhill from a gateway at mid-point, a cast-iron pipe frequently to be seen underfoot leading from the tarn to Hollens. Known as Brackenfell this hillside provides lovely views to Helm Crag and the Easedale circle of fells. Via various metal gates the path becomes a track winding on down and through woodland to meet the metalled road above How Top Farm, a convenient metal seat surveying a lovely view of Silver How - be on your metal! Turn left passing Heugh Folds with the craggy headland of Nab Scar directly ahead. Pass a flag iris-filled pool as the road becomes a rough tracked lane. A track also diverges half-right at this point leading down to the White Moss car park where there is a bus stop which might appeal to some walkers content with their day's achievements. However, the continuing Coffin Route well merits completing the round. The original main thoroughfare between Rydal and Grasmere, passing the green-painted Brock Cottage (from where a confined path also leads down to White Moss) pass through a hand-gate and embark upon this bridleway, a delightfully sylvan esplanade with lovely views across Rydal Water. Two further gates on notice the Resting Stone, set beyond a stone seat below the wall, itelf converted into a seat, this was used to give rest to pallbearers. A further gate and the path duly emerges at Rydal Mount.

After-walk refreshment

Rydal Hall has a very welcome walkers' cafe, a beautifully adapted former School Room set beside Rydal Beck, much to be recommended, Rydal Mount also has a cafe. Otherwise the village has one hotel, the Glen Rothay, with the Badger Bar a handy resort for the thirsty walker. Alternatively, you may simply hop aboard a 555 or 599 bus and find sanctuary and sustenance in either Ambleside (southbound) and Grasmere (northbound) with all the choice under the sun.

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Crinkle Crags and Bowfell from
Nab Scar overlooking Rydal Water

The Coniston Fells from Nab Scar