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**Whatever happened to 'rational' holidays  
for working people c.1919-2000?**

**The competing demands of altruism and commercial necessity in the  
Co-operative Holidays Association and the Holiday Fellowship**



**Douglas George Hope BSc(Hons) DipTP MA FRGS MRTPI**

**A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the PhD  
University of Lancaster**

**August 2014**

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**ABSTRACT**

The focus of this thesis is on two pioneering organisations that were at the forefront of the provision of ‘rational’ holidays for the working-class during the early twentieth century: the Co-operative Holidays Association (CHA) and the Holiday Fellowship, founded by Thomas Arthur Leonard in 1893 and 1913 respectively. This research seeks to establish how these pioneers of recreative and educational holidays for working people dealt with the far-reaching changes in social, economic and cultural conditions during the period 1919-2000. It makes a significant original contribution to twentieth-century leisure and tourism history, especially that of the outdoor movement.

Utilising important original source material, the research analyses the continuities and changes in these two organisations during the period 1919-2000 and the linkages and differences between them. The thesis explores the way the CHA and Holiday Fellowship dealt with the often conflicting demands of altruism and commercial necessity as the twentieth century progressed and assesses the extent to which they drifted away from their original ideals in order to combat the challenges of consumerism.

The research takes a cultural history perspective, contextualising both organisations within a wider history of leisure, with specific reference to ‘rational’ recreation and the Victorian principles of respectability, co-operation and collectivism, and voluntarism. The research shows that the CHA and Holiday Fellowship were distinguishable from other ‘rational’ holiday providers; they had a distinct rural focus and the emphasis of their holidays was on healthy recreation and quiet enjoyment. They were almost unique in that they were equally attractive to women and men. However, both eventually served the middle classes rather than the working class for whom they were originally intended. Nevertheless, these pioneers of recreative and educational holidays unquestionably made a significant contribution to the democratisation of the countryside as a leisure space.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AALA	Adventure Activities Licensing Authority
BHA	British Holidays Association
BMC	British Mountaineering Council
BTA	British Travel Association
CHA	Co-operative Holidays Association/Countrywide Holidays Association
CCC	Clarion Cyclists Club
CTC	Cyclists' Touring Club
DART	Dartington Amenity Research Trust
FHA	Friendship Holidays Association
FoLD	Friends of the Lake District
FRCC	Fell and Rock Climbing Club of the English Lake District
GHS	General Household Survey
GMCRO	Greater Manchester County Record Office
HF	Holiday Fellowship/HF holidays
ILP	Independent Labour Party
LEA	Local Education Authority
NHRU	National Home Reading Union
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PSA's	Pleasant Sunday Afternoon associations
PTA	Polytechnic Touring Association
RA	Ramblers' Association
WTA	Workers' Travel Association
YHA	Youth Hostels Association (England & Wales)
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

## INTRODUCTION

*The concept of 'rational' holidays developed into a significant practical expression of the late nineteenth-century reaction against the trivial and commercially exploited utilisation of increased leisure time. The provision of cheap and simple accommodation sustained the growing popularity of active open-air recreation, giving momentum and a further institutional focus to the construction of the outdoor movement.<sup>1</sup>*

The above quote from Harvey Taylor's seminal work on the British outdoor movement provides an apt introduction to this thesis, drawing as it does on a number of its main themes. The study focuses on two organisations, both founded by Thomas Arthur Leonard, a Congregational minister in Colne, Lancashire in the 1890s, that were at the forefront of the provision of a type of 'rational' holiday during much of the twentieth century: the Co-operative Holidays Association (CHA) founded in 1893 and the Holiday Fellowship founded in 1913.<sup>2</sup> Their purpose was to provide '*simple and strenuous recreative and educational holidays*', which offered '*reasonably priced accommodation*' and promoted '*friendship and fellowship amid the beauty of the natural world*'.<sup>3</sup>

This study of these two organisations, utilising the hitherto under-exploited primary sources associated with them, forms an important contribution to a neglected aspect of twentieth-century tourism and leisure history, especially that of the outdoor movement. The main focus here is not on providing a business history of the two

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<sup>1</sup> H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside* (Edinburgh: Keele University Press, 1997), p.191.

<sup>2</sup> The CHA was re-named Countrywide Holidays Association in 1964 but was always known simply as the CHA. The Holiday Fellowship was re-branded as HF Holidays in 1982.

<sup>3</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making* (London: Holiday Fellowship, 1934), p.28.

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organisations. The study takes a cultural and social history perspective, seeking to extend the historiography of leisure and recreation in the twentieth century and also contribute to the wider debate on the effects of consumerism on leisure and recreation. It draws upon the concepts of rational recreation and respectability, co-operation and collectivism, voluntarism and modernity.

### **The aims of the study**

The origins and development of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship prior to 1914 have been explored in recent histories of leisure and tourism research. In addition to Harvey Taylor's detailed exploration of the early ideals and philosophy of the CHA and the role of the National Home Reading Union (NHRU), which gave strong support to the CHA in its formative period, Susan Barton highlights the contribution of the CHA and, subsequently, the Holiday Fellowship to the provision of 'alternative' holidays in her study of working class organisations and popular tourism.<sup>4</sup> Hanley and Walton consider that, although a minority tourism organisation, the significance of the CHA transcended mere numbers of participating guests. They suggest that, at the beginning of the twentieth century, with connections across a spectrum of related currents of thought, the CHA offers a window on the intersection between leisure, holidays, unconventional religion, class and politics.<sup>5</sup> They also make the important point that the CHA has not attracted the attention it deserves from scholars working in the cultural history field.

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<sup>4</sup> S. Barton, *Working-class organisations and popular tourism, 1840-1970* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp.144-145, 217.

<sup>5</sup> K. Hanley and J.K. Walton, (eds.), *Constructing Cultural Tourism: John Ruskin and the Tourist Gaze* (Bristol: Channel View Publications, 2010), pp.160-161.

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Robert Snape is perhaps alone in devoting attention to the significance of the CHA to the development of countryside leisure practice.<sup>6</sup> He concentrates on the period prior to Leonard leaving the CHA to form the Holiday Fellowship in 1913. In a similar fashion, Ben Anderson's more recent assessment of the role of domesticity in the practices of the CHA concentrates on the pre-First World War period.<sup>7</sup>

The subsequent development of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship has been largely ignored by cultural historians and their role in the developing outdoor movement warrants far more attention. There has been little substantive research into how these organisations, the pioneers of recreative and educational holidays for working people, dealt with the far-reaching changes in social, economic and cultural conditions from 1919 onwards. Likewise, there has been little examination of the linkages and differences between these two ground-breaking organisations. This research seeks to determine how these organisations dealt with the often conflicting demands of altruism and commercial necessity and to assess the extent to which they diverted from their original ideals and philosophy in order to combat the challenges of consumerism.

This thesis, therefore, aims to fill a neglected area of study and establish a greater understanding of the role of the CHA, and the Holiday Fellowship, in the provision of holidays for working people. This research will lead to a wider appreciation of the achievements of these pioneering organisations and of their contribution to the outdoor movement and to the history of twentieth century tourism.

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<sup>6</sup> R. Snape, 'The Co-operative Holidays Association and the cultural formation of countryside leisure practice', *Leisure Studies*, Vol.23 Issue 2 (April, 2004), pp.143-158.

<sup>7</sup> B. Anderson, 'Partnership or Co-operation? Family, Politics and Strenuousness in the pre-First World War Co-operative Holidays Association', *Sport in History*, Vol.33, No.3 (September 2013), pp.260-281.

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More specifically, this research explores the ways in which factors such as increasing affluence and consumer choice, and changing cultural attitudes and expectations affected their capacity to provide recreative and educational holidays. It examines in depth the changing nature of their membership in terms of class, gender, age and social inclusion and assesses their pursuit of friendship and fellowship in the context of the cultural changes taking place in wider British society. It analyses the impact of the popularisation of outdoor recreation and the proliferation of competing holiday providers, and the effect of shifting perceptions of place and accommodation standards.

The broader examination of these pioneering organisations is supported by a detailed case study of the role and influence of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in the English Lake District, the destination for T A Leonard's first holidays and the location of the first CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres. It assesses the contribution of these organisations to the place-myth of this iconic area, which has been a magnet for visitors for over two hundred years and is England's most popular national park. It will further extend our understanding of the cultural history of the English Lake District and the development of its tourist industry.

Whilst not central to the research, it will also increase our knowledge and appreciation of the cultural and social significance of the chief architect of co-operative and communal holidays, T A Leonard, who has been largely ignored in modern historical writing, when compared with campaigners for the 'freedom to roam' such as Tom Stephenson, Octavia Hill, Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley and H H Symonds.

**Historiography: Leisure, sport, recreation and tourism.**

There is now a wealth of highly researched literature on a range of leisure, sport, recreation and tourism history subjects.<sup>8</sup> It is, however, somewhat distorted since, unfortunately, earlier histories largely focused on the emergence of commercial entertainment, such as the development of the seaside holiday and seaside resorts, and much less on voluntary provision.<sup>9</sup> Where leisure provision in the voluntary sector has been examined, the emphasis has been on the growth of clubs and societies concerned with sport and recreational activities rather than with those that provided holiday accommodation such as the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.<sup>10</sup>

As Walton pronounces ‘The historiography of twentieth-century British tourism (as opposed to its treatment by other disciplines) is still in its infancy’.<sup>11</sup> This view endorses the earlier comment of Baranowski and Furlough that ‘Unlike sociologists, anthropologists, geographers and literary critics, historians have until recently not given tourism the attention it deserves’.<sup>12</sup> John Walton, in his introduction to a collection of essays on the history of tourism has more recently suggested that ‘the importance of the contribution of history to the understanding of tourism as an

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<sup>8</sup> See J. Walvin, *Leisure and Society* (London: Longman, 1978); E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd. 1<sup>st</sup> pub. 1963); N. Tranter, *Sport, economy and society in Britain, 1750-1914*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); J. Hill, *Sport, Leisure & Culture in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); M. Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambledon, 2004).

<sup>9</sup> For example: J.K. Walton, *The English Seaside Resort: A Social History, 1750-1914* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1983); J.K. Walton, *The British seaside: Holidays and resorts in the twentieth century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).

<sup>10</sup> For example: S.G. Jones, *Workers at Play: a social and economic history of leisure 1918-1939* (London: Routledge, 1986); R. Morris, ‘Clubs, societies and associations’, in F.M.L. Thompson, (ed.), *The Cambridge social history of Britain 1750-1950, Volume 3. Social agencies and institutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

<sup>11</sup> J.K. Walton, ‘British Tourism between Industrialization and Globalization’ in H. Berghoff & B. Korte, (eds.), *The Making of Modern Tourism: The Cultural History of the British Experience, 1600-2000* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), p.109.

<sup>12</sup> S. Baranowski and E. Furlough (eds.), *Being elsewhere: tourism, consumer culture and identity in modern Europe and North America* (Chicago: University of Michigan Press, 2001), p.1.

outstandingly significant current phenomenon.....is now beginning to gain recognition'.<sup>13</sup> The growing interest in the history of tourism lends support to this study of how the two organisations that pioneered the provision of accommodation for those people inclined towards simple and economical forms of outdoor recreation dealt with the changing social, economic and cultural conditions experienced during the twentieth century.

Moving closer to the subject of this research, the rise of 'picturesque' travel and mountain tourism within Britain in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has also generated a distinctive literature on perceptions, representations and experiences of landscape.<sup>14</sup> Wallace offers a valuable and detailed cultural history of walking in nineteenth-century England in his assessment of the forces that transformed walking from a fundamental way of life to a celebrated activity.<sup>15</sup> Solnit also delves into the story behind walking both as a practical means of transport and as a leisure pursuit.<sup>16</sup> The origins and emergence of the open-air movement are well documented, most especially in relation to rambling and the 'freedom to roam'.<sup>17</sup> Although such texts are most helpful in their analysis of the origins of the open-air movement, and the development of the early outdoor clubs, they pay only limited attention to the consequences for, and the role of, accommodation providers. The absence of such

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<sup>13</sup> J.K. Walton, (ed.), *Histories of Tourism: Representation, Identity and Conflict* (Clevedon: Channel View Publications, 2005), p.1.

<sup>14</sup> See W. Darby, *Landscape and Identity* (Oxford: Berg, 2000); C.E.M. Joad, *The Untutored Townsman's Invasion of the Country* (London: Faber and Faber, 1946); J. Lowerson, 'Battles in the Countryside' in F. Gloversmith (ed.), *Class, Culture and Social Change* (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1980); I. Ousby, *The Englishman's England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

<sup>15</sup> A.D. Wallace, *Walking, Literature and English Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

<sup>16</sup> R. Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (London: Verso, 2001).

<sup>17</sup> See F. Godwin, *Our Forbidden Land* (London: Jonathon Cape, 1990); S. Glyptis, *Countryside Recreation* (London: Longman, 1991); H. Hill, *Freedom to Roam* (Ashbourne: Moorland Publishing, 1980); R. Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); M. Shoard, *A Right to Roam* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999), T. Stephenson, *Forbidden Land* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1989).



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coverage strengthens the case for exploring the role of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in the outdoor movement.

This research is supported by a case study of the role and influence of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in the English Lake District. A number of texts deal with the early history of tourism in the English Lake District and provide a useful context for the detailed examination of the activities of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in this area.<sup>18</sup> However, these texts largely concentrate on such themes as commercial tourism and the growth of the hotel industry in the main towns of the region. Consequently, they are only of limited relevance.

Some attempt has been made by Walton & O'Neill to provide a substantive analysis of continuity, change and conflict in Lakeland tourism.<sup>19</sup> They examine the social and cultural histories of tourism in the Lake District, and the changing perception of the Lake District from 'wilderness' to national playground. However, they make only fleeting reference to the consequences of the increased accessibility and popularity of the Lake District, and the changing values and expectations of visitors, on accommodation provision for outdoor activities.

A more recent publication edited by Walton & Wood offers a more critical analysis of the relationships between history, heritage, landscape, culture and policy that underlie the activities in the Lake District National Park. It examines all aspects of the Lake

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<sup>18</sup> For example: J.D. Marshall & J.K. Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the mid-twentieth century: a study in regional change* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981); C. O'Neill, 'The Most Magical Corner of England: Tourism, Preservation and the Development of the Lake District 1919-1939' in J.K. Walton (ed.) *Histories of Tourism: representation, identity and conflict*; J.K. Walton & P.R. McGloin, 'The Tourist Trade in Victorian Lakeland', *Northern History* 17 (1981), pp. 153-82.

<sup>19</sup> J.K. Walton & C. O'Neill, 'Tourism and the Lake District: social and cultural histories' in D.W.G. Hind & J.P. Mitchell (eds.) *Sustainable Tourism in the English Lake District* (Sunderland: Business Education Publishers, 2004).

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District's history and identity and looks at current issues in conservation, policy and tourism marketing.<sup>20</sup> Two contributions to this publication, by Jonathon Westaway and by Mike Huggins and Keith Gregson, provide a useful context for the subject of this research.<sup>21</sup> Huggins and Gregson draw particular attention to the fact that 'the contribution of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship to the history of holiday provision in the Lakes has yet to be examined in detail'.<sup>22</sup> This research on the role of these pioneering organisations in the provision of accommodation for outdoor activities extends our current understanding of the continuities and changes in tourism and outdoor recreation in one of Britain's first national parks.

### **Concepts of 'rational' recreation, respectability, co-operation and collectivism, voluntarism and modernity**

The ideals and philosophy of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship draw on earlier concepts of rational recreation, respectability, co-operation and collectivism, and voluntarism.

#### Rational recreation and respectability

The ideals and philosophy of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship originated in the Victorian era when, as a number of historians have demonstrated, leisure activities were fundamentally transformed by the process of urbanisation and industrialisation

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<sup>20</sup> J.K. Walton & J. Wood (eds.) *The Making of a Cultural Landscape: The English Lake District as Tourist Destination, 1750-2010*, (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2013).

<sup>21</sup> See J. Westaway, 'The Origins and Development of Mountaineering and Rock Climbing Tourism in the Lake District, c.1800-1914' in *The Making of a Cultural Landscape*, pp.153-178; M. Huggins & K. Gregson, 'Sport, Tourism and Place Identity in the Lake District, 1800-1950' in *The Making of a Cultural Landscape*, pp.179-198.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.191-192.

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which, according to Borsay and Rojek, resulted in a major re-orientation in the perception of leisure and the use of space with the rise of the holiday away from home and the creation of imagined wildernesses and the desire to escape.<sup>23</sup> Under the combined influences of urbanisation and industrialisation, associated with an increase in leisure time and paid holidays, a rise in real wages and living standards and an improved rail network, the pursuit of commercial enjoyment (trips to the seaside, the music hall and sporting events) became more commonplace among working people.<sup>24</sup>

‘Rational recreation’ emerged as an ideal of nineteenth-century middle-class reformers that ‘leisure activities should be controlled, ordered and improving’.<sup>25</sup> Recreation was viewed as rational when it fostered self-improvement and self-enrichment. Ideally, rational recreation was an adjunct and complement to work; the creation anew of fresh strength for tomorrow’s work.<sup>26</sup> Peter Bailey provides an overview of the diverse forms of rational recreation that developed in the mid-Victorian period to ‘improve’ the well-being of the lower classes, which included the establishment of mechanics institutes, temperance halls and public libraries.<sup>27</sup> Enthusiasts of rational recreation, such as the Temperance movement, sought to provide a range of sport and recreational activities, instruction and education aimed at the ‘respectable’ use of increasing leisure time.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> P. Borsay, *A History of Leisure* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006) p.220; C. Rojek, *Ways of Escape* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993), p.9.

<sup>24</sup> See for example, J.K. Walton, J. & Walvin, (eds.) *Leisure in Britain 1780-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983); J.K. Walton, (1983) *The English Seaside Resort: A Social History, 1750-1914*.

<sup>25</sup> H. Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution, c.1780-1880* (London: Croom Helm, 1980), p.90.

<sup>26</sup> See P. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England* (London: Methuen, 1978), p.104.

<sup>27</sup> P. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, pp.47-67.

<sup>28</sup> See C. Rojek, *Ways of Escape*, pp.32-50.

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Although there were other initiatives, such as the Polytechnic Touring Association (PTA) and the Toynbee Travellers' Club, which also had their roots in the philanthropic ideologies of the period, according to Harvey Taylor, the NHRU was the real progenitor of the concept of rational holidays at prices within the range of working people.<sup>29</sup> The NHRU, established by Dr. J B Paton in 1889, organised summer assemblies, which included 'lectures, social gatherings and excursions' for the purpose of encouraging 'social intercourse and rational enjoyment'.<sup>30</sup> As Robert Snape recounts, it was Paton and the NHRU that encouraged Leonard to expand his initial holiday scheme at Colne.<sup>31</sup>

'Respectability' is a recurring theme in the development of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship. The meaning of 'respectability' has been the subject of re-interpretation by historians, with emphasis being variously laid on industry, self-reliance, self-restraint (not least in sexual conduct), sobriety, thrift, honesty, morality, cleanliness, domesticity, and orderliness.<sup>32</sup> An authority on the subject, F.M.L. Thompson, considers its origins were diverse and 'best seen as a bundle of self-generated habits and values derived from past customs and present responses to living and working conditions, rather than as being either imitative or imposed from outside or above'.<sup>33</sup>

Most recently, Huggins and Mangan have criticised historians for 'a too easily uniform commitment to respectability, authority, duty and religion' in the history of

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<sup>29</sup> H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p.195.

<sup>30</sup> NHRU, *Monthly Journal, Artisans' Section*, (April 1890), p.75.

<sup>31</sup> R. Snape, 'The Co-operative Holidays Association and the cultural formation of countryside leisure practice', p.146.

<sup>32</sup> See C. Davies, *The Strange Death of Moral Britain*, (London: Transaction Publishers, 2004), p.16; C.W. Masters, *The Respectability of Late Victorian Workers: A Case Study of York, 1867-1914* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), pp.4-5.

<sup>33</sup> F.M.L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society* (London: Fontana, 1988), p.355.

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the Victorian period.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, the concept of respectability was an important aspect of Leonard's original philosophy, reflected in the holiday regime that continued to be followed with little change until the mid-twentieth century. This included disciplines such as the rising bell and lights out at 11.00pm, morning prayers and Grace before the evening meal, a prohibition on alcohol, and a dress code for ladies.<sup>35</sup>

### Co-operation and collectivism

Co-operation, communal activity and collective discipline were also key themes in the development of the CHA and, subsequently, the Holiday Fellowship. The CHA was grounded in Congregationalism but it was also hospitable to socialists, even those with a secular viewpoint. As such, it was consistent with Morris's philosophy that natural healthy leisure was a human right and Ruskin's warning against the consequences of misguided recreation and the abuse of the new-found freedom.<sup>36</sup> Snape suggests that the CHA's collective form of holiday offered an opportunity to recreate, even if only for a week, Wordsworth's vision of a pre-industrial mountain republic and to live in a utopian socialist microcosm.<sup>37</sup>

Snape describes Leonard as a Christian Socialist and disciple of Matthew Arnold and John Ruskin.<sup>38</sup> The Christian Socialists did much to further education for working people and the social emancipation of women, ideals that resonated with Leonard's

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<sup>34</sup> M. Higgins and J.A. Mangan (Eds.) *Disreputable Pleasures: Less virtuous Victorians at play* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), pp.ix-xx.

<sup>35</sup> See 'Centre Information' in CHA Holiday Programmes of 1920s and 1930s, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/3.

<sup>36</sup> H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, pp.191-192. See also W. Morris, 'How I became a socialist' in: *Collected works of William Morris*, Vol. 23, (London: Longman, 1915), pp.277-281; W. Morris, *News from Nowhere and Selected Writings and Designs* (London: Penguin, 1962).

<sup>37</sup> R. Snape, 'The Co-operative Holidays Association and the cultural formation of countryside leisure practice', p.149.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p.148.

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aims. Edward Norman's study of Christian Socialism reveals the thinking of its most influential advocates, including Charles Kingsley and John Ruskin.<sup>39</sup>

Peter d'A Jones in his detailed account of the Christian Socialist Revival provides evidence of Leonard's involvement with the Christian Socialist Society in the early 1890s, and with the Labour Church founded in 1891 by John Trevor.<sup>40</sup> Leonard was a member of the fledgling Independent Labour Party (ILP) and a frequent lecturer at Labour Churches. Apart from their regular services, the main activities of the Labour Churches were educational and philanthropic, involving efforts to improve the condition of slums and providing shelters for the homeless;<sup>41</sup> a philosophy very much in sympathy with Leonard's approach to social improvement.

In their assessment of the influence of Ruskin on popular tourism, Hanley and Watson consider that the CHA was the most Ruskinian of organised holiday providers.<sup>42</sup> They point out that articles in early editions of the CHA's magazine *Comradeship* are suffused with Ruskinian references.<sup>43</sup> Hanley and Watson also highlight other Ruskinian associations: the influence of Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley, and the close contacts with the ILP and the Labour Church, whose principles had 'a clear expression of Ruskinian thinking'.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> E. Norman, *The Victorian Christian Socialists*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p.1-13.

<sup>40</sup> P. d'A. Jones, *The Christian Socialist Revival 1877-1914*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp.328-329.

<sup>41</sup> M. Bevir, 'Labour Churches and Ethical Socialism', *History Today*, Vol. 47, Issue 4, (April, 1997) pp.50-55.

<sup>42</sup> K. Hanley and J.K. Walton, (eds.), *Constructing Cultural Tourism*, p.160.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p.167-169.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.163-164.

Voluntarism

The decline in the twentieth century of the many voluntary organisations that emerged in the ‘golden age’ of Victorian philanthropy is a popular narrative, which also resonates with the history of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.<sup>45</sup> It is certainly true that other similar initiatives went by the wayside or were swallowed up by commercial enterprises. The Toynbee Travellers’ Club was wound up in 1913.<sup>46</sup> The PTA moved away from its close association with the Polytechnic in the 1930s to become known as “Poly Travel”, which merged with Henry Lunn Ltd in 1962 to become Lunn Poly, later to form part of the Thomson Travel Group.<sup>47</sup> The Workers’ Travel Association (WTA), formed in 1921 at Toynbee Hall, was the biggest provider of holidays at home and abroad for working people by the late 1930s. However, with the coming of the post-war consumer society, the name “Workers’ Travel Association” no longer appealed and in 1966 the WTA changed its name to Galleon Travel, after the emblem that formed part of its logo. Galleon Travel survived as a commercial company until 1984 when it became part of Trusthouse Forte.<sup>48</sup>

The declinist narrative is rebutted by Hilton and McKay, who contend that voluntary action has constantly reinvented and redefined itself in response to social and political change.<sup>49</sup> This study enables us to assess the extent to which the development of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship are examples of successful associational voluntarism.

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<sup>45</sup> Deakin Report, *Meeting the Challenge of Change* (London: HMSO, 1996); and G. Finlayson, ‘A Moving Frontier: Voluntarism and the State in British Social Welfare’, in *Twentieth Century British History*, Vol. 1, (1990), pp. 183-206.

<sup>46</sup> J.D. Browne, ‘The Toynbee Travellers’ Club’, *History of Education*, Vol.15, No.1, (1986), pp.11-17.

<sup>47</sup> See N. Matthews, ‘From philanthropy to commerce: the Polytechnic Touring Association’, in: E. Penn, (ed.) *Educating mind, body and spirit: the legacy of Quintin Hogg and the polytechnic, 1864-1992*, (Cambridge: Granta, 2013), pp.203-237.

<sup>48</sup> F. Williams, *Journey into Adventure*, (London: Odhams, 1960).

<sup>49</sup> M Hilton and J McKay (eds.) *The Ages of Voluntarism*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp.1-26.

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These pioneers of rational holidays, first for young workers, then families, also provided holidays for the poor with free and assisted holidays long before the coming of the welfare state. The subsequent development of the Youth Hostels Association (YHA), with which T A Leonard was closely involved, and the establishment of local authority outdoor education centres and adventure centres by charities such as Outward Bound and the Brathay Trust supplanted the original purpose of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. Even so, both organisations continued to fulfil an important role in providing opportunities for outdoor recreation right up to the end of the twentieth century.

In her exploration of associational voluntarism, Helen McCarthy draws attention to the fact that, prior to the First World War voluntary organisations were often structured along ‘homo-social lines with men and women inhabiting separate associational worlds’.<sup>50</sup> For instance, in addition to organisations such as the Boys Brigade, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, mountaineering and rambling clubs and many holiday camps were often single sex in the pre-First World War era. By contrast, from their inception, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship offered opportunities for social mixing, presaging the inter-war increase in opportunities for the social integration of young men and women in organisations such as the YHA and youth clubs.

## Modernity

Also of relevance to this study is the concept of ‘modernity’, characterised by imperialism, urbanisation, technological innovation, capitalism, secularisation,

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<sup>50</sup> H. McCarthy, ‘Associational Voluntarism in interwar Britain’ in M Hilton and J McKay (eds.) *The Ages of Voluntarism*, pp.47-68.



## Introduction

democratisation and mass consumerism.<sup>51</sup> Daunton and Rieger observe that ‘there is no generally accepted theoretical definition of modernity among scholars’.<sup>52</sup> Their collection of essays provides an array of methodologies to illustrate the diverse ways that modernity has been manifested; Peter Hansen, for instance, examines modernity in mountaineering.<sup>53</sup> Rojek quotes Baudelaire’s view of modernity as being riddled with change, opposition to tradition and illusion.<sup>54</sup> The increasing democratisation of outdoor recreation in Britain, illustrated by the consumerist growth in climbing, rambling, cycling and hostelling activities is argued here to be another example of modernity. According to Matless, outdoor recreation in the inter-war period became an important way for men and women to assert their citizenship and modernity through the ‘art of right living’.<sup>55</sup> This is a theme that resonates with the expansion of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in the period 1919-1939.

After the Second World War, the changing fortunes of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship can be argued to resonate with the culture of post-modernism expounded by Featherstone, characterised by a change from mass consumption to one of market segmentation and consumer demand for a wide choice of products.<sup>56</sup> According to Featherstone, in the post-modern world, clients are more individualistic, more sophisticated and more assertive. In relation to leisure and tourism, some seek nostalgia for the past, some simply wish to enjoy a change from home or business life in beautiful scenery and others are looking for a more active holiday, an adrenalin

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<sup>51</sup> For an overview of Britain’s transition to ‘modernity’, see H. Cocks, ‘Modernity and modernism’ in F. Carnevali and J-M. Strange (eds.), *20<sup>th</sup> Century Britain* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2007), pp.26-41.

<sup>52</sup> See M. Daunton & B. Rieger, (eds.), *Meanings of Modernity*, (Oxford: Berg, 2001), p.4

<sup>53</sup> See P.H. Hansen, ‘Modern Mountains: The Performative Consciousness of Modernity in Britain, 1870-1940’, in M. Daunton & B. Rieger, (eds.), *Meanings of Modernity*, pp.185-202.

<sup>54</sup> C. Rojek, *Ways of Escape*, pp.99-100.

<sup>55</sup> D. Matless, ‘“The Art of Right Living”: Landscape and Citizenship 1918-1939’, in S. Pile and N. Thrift (eds.) *Mapping the Subject: Geographies of cultural transformation* (London: Routledge, 1995), pp.93-122.

<sup>56</sup> M. Featherstone, *Consumer Culture & Postmodernism*, (London: Sage, 2002), p.83.

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rush. This study clearly shows that, as the twentieth century progressed, the more complex demands and expectations in outdoor activities and the diversification of provision provided threats to the survival of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

### **Research design: conceptualisation and the tourism life-cycle**

The story of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship is therefore one of continuity and change as modernisation transformed the social, economic and cultural life of Britain after the First World War. It is the aim of this research, through a detailed examination of the role and influence of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship during the period 1919-2000, to answer the following research question:

*How effectively have the two leading organisations that pioneered the provision of recreative and educational holidays for working people dealt with the far-reaching changes in social, economic and cultural conditions experienced during the period c.1919-2000?*

The study first of all examines the origins and emergence of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship and then deconstructs their original ideals and philosophy, an essential contextual element of the research (see Figure 1). It then assesses the overall impact of the changing demands of the twentieth century, more specifically the period 1919-2000, and of the proliferation of rival providers. The emphasis of this research is very much on the relationship between change and continuity within these institutions, through time. It focuses on the continuities and changes in:

- The accommodation provision in terms of quantity, distribution, type and facilities provided;

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- The recreative and educational holidays pursued, including the provision of holidays for school and youth groups, family holidays and holidays abroad;
- The constituency of both organisations, in terms of class, age, gender and social mixing; and
- The organisations' philosophy of friendship and fellowship, including the role of local groups.

in order to determine:

- How the CHA and Holiday Fellowship dealt with the conflicting demands of altruism and commercial necessity;
- The extent to which the CHA and Holiday Fellowship drifted away from their original ideals and philosophy; and
- The achievements of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship and the legacy of T A Leonard.

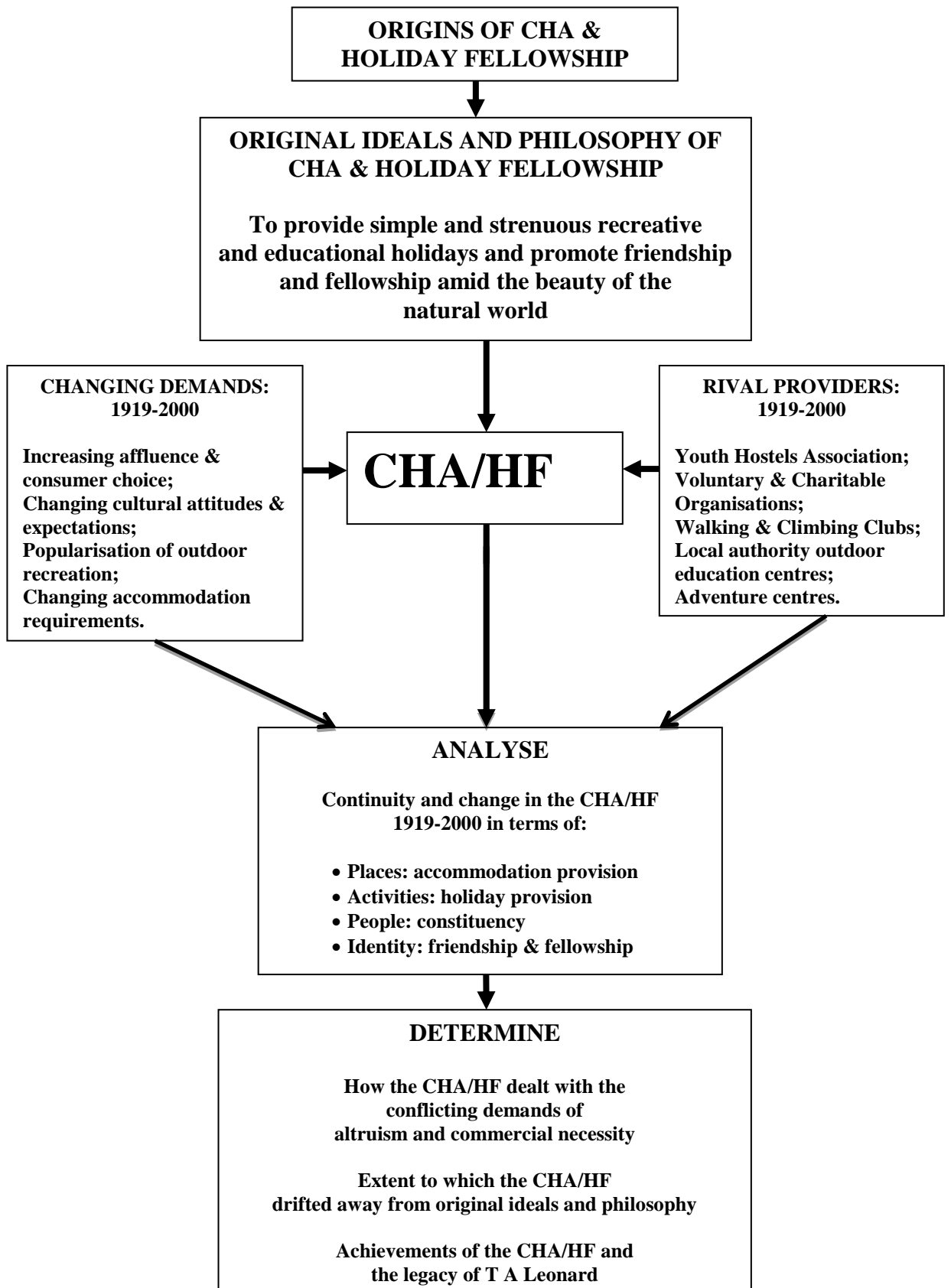
SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) is a useful tool here.<sup>57</sup> The principles of SWOT have been used in this study to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship and the opportunities and threats they faced at various stages of their development. The conceptual approach, however, is essentially an empirical one, based on a broad range of sources, including the detailed analysis of records available in the CHA and Holiday Fellowship archives. It draws on relevant theory where appropriate. According to Davies, such an approach leads to greater and more surely founded knowledge of the past.<sup>58</sup> The aim of this research, therefore, is to provide a greater understanding of the role of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship during the twentieth century in relation to the themes laid out above and shed light on their past.

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<sup>57</sup> The origin and principles of SWOT analysis are outlined in A.S. Humphrey, *SWOT Analysis for Management Consulting*, SRI Alumni Association Newsletter, (December 2005). See also, H.I. Ansoff, *Corporate Strategy*, revised edition, (London: Penguin Books, 1987). The relevance of SWOT analysis to tourism is set out in N. Evans, D. Campbell & G. Stonehouse, *Strategic Management for travel and tourism* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003), pp.196-201.

<sup>58</sup> Stephen Davies, *Empiricism and History*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p.vi.

Figure 1: Research design conceptualisation



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The history of institutions is where empirical history began, with the work of Alciato, Bodin and Baudouin in early modern France.<sup>59</sup> An empirical approach is most relevant here since both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship display typical features of ‘institutions’, being social organisations that co-ordinated the activities of a relatively large number of people in order to achieve a common goal.

The changes and continuities within the CHA and HF during the twentieth century can also be identified with life cycle theory, which is based on the product life-cycle concept first espoused by Raymond Vernon in 1966: invention-growth-maturity-decline.<sup>60</sup> Richard Butler’s Tourist Area Life Cycle (TALC) concept suggests that destinations also experience a ‘birth to death’ cycle where product sales are replaced by numbers of visitors.<sup>61</sup> More recently, his original model has been re-assessed to allow alternative futures, including rejuvenation as well as cessation.<sup>62</sup> Butler’s hypothetical evolution of a tourist area life-cycle has been adapted for British seaside holiday resorts by Cooper.<sup>63</sup>

It is possible to produce a similar life-cycle for the development of tourism/recreational accommodation providers such as the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. Various stages in their development can be identified, from the initial trips to the Lake District by T A Leonard and his Social Guild in 1891 and the early development of the CHA and foundation of the Holiday Fellowship prior to the First

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<sup>59</sup> Stephen Davies, *Empiricism and History*, p.59

<sup>60</sup> See G. Day, *The Product life-cycle*, Journal of Marketing, Vol. 45, (Autumn 1981), pp. 60-67.

<sup>61</sup> See R.W. Butler, ‘The concept of the tourist area life-cycle of evolution: implications for management of resources’, *Canadian Geographer* 24 (1), (1980), pp.5-12.

<sup>62</sup> See R.W. Butler, ‘Tourism Area Life Cycle’, *Contemporary Tourism Reviews* (Oxford: Goodfellow Publishers Ltd., 2011).

<sup>63</sup> C. Cooper, ‘Parameters and indicators of the decline of the British Seaside Resort’ in G. Shaw and A. Williams (eds.), *The rise and fall of British Coastal Resorts* (London: Cassell, 1997), pp.79-101.

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World War, to the peak of activity in the 1960s and early 1970s and the subsequent decline and restructuring at the end of the century (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2: CHA/Holiday Fellowship Life-cycle**

<b>Stage 1: Exploration</b> <b>1891-1897</b>	Initial trips by small groups of adventurous young workers attracted to unspoilt countryside. Leonard takes his Social Guild on short trips to the Lake District and North Wales. Establishment of voluntary committee, with support of National Home Reading Union, to organise trips to a wider range of destinations, with a broader clientele.
<b>Stage 2: Involvement:</b> <b>1897-1913</b>	Foundation of Co-operative Holidays Association as a legal entity with formal membership, a committee structure and permanent office bearers. Acquisition of first guest houses. Foundation of Holiday Fellowship in 1913
<b>Interruption of First World War, 1914-1918</b>	
<b>Stage 3: Development</b> <b>1919-1939</b>	Expansion of CHA holiday scheme with acquisition of cheap properties resulting in a rapid increase in guest numbers. Development of complementary organisation, the Holiday Fellowship, with its own membership, committee structure and office bearers. Expands at a faster rate than CHA and over-takes CHA in terms of holidays provided and guest numbers.
<b>Stage 4: Interruption of</b> <b>Second World War</b>	Requisitioning of properties for war purposes. Number of centres drastically reduced but holiday-making continued and recognised as a worthwhile contribution to war effort.
<b>Stage 5: Recovery</b> <b>1945-1960</b>	Demand recovers quickly but centres re-open slowly. Initial difficulties with furnishing and re-equipping properties due to material and staff shortages. Pace quickens in late-1950s.
<b>Stage 6: Consolidation</b> <b>1960-early 1970s</b>	Peak numbers of properties acquired and guests accommodated. Reluctance to change nature of holiday provision, a winning formula, in spite of increasing competition from rival providers.
<b>Stage 7: Stagnation</b> <b>early 1970s-mid 1980s</b>	Traditional holiday provision out-dated. Diversification of holiday provision to retain numbers, with varying degrees of success. Guest numbers begin to decline and an increasing number of properties become unviable and are disposed of.

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<b>Stage 8a: Decline Mid 1980s-2000</b>	CHA reduces property portfolio further as guest numbers continue to decline, in an attempt to maintain viability. Failure to attract new customers as traditional clientele declines results in increasing debt and eventual cessation.
<b>Stage 8b: Rejuvenation Mid 1980s-2000</b>	Holiday Fellowship rebrands itself, disposes of unviable properties and acquires more modern properties, re-positions itself in the market and stabilises its guest numbers. Concentrates on niche market.

This research focuses on the period after 1919; the inter-war expansion of both organisations, recovery and consolidation after the interruption of the Second World War, stagnation in the 1970s and early 1980s and the contrasting fortunes of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship from the mid-1980s onwards.

### **Primary sources, statistical data and surveys**

The CHA and Holiday Fellowship have their in-house historians. In addition to Leonard's own account of the early years of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship (up to 1934), a pictorial history of the CHA was published in 1993 in association with the organisation's centenary celebrations.<sup>64</sup> An 'authorised' history of the Holiday Fellowship was published in two parts in 1981.<sup>65</sup> More recently, a modern account of the history of the Holiday Fellowship has been published and up-dated to coincide with its centenary in 2013.<sup>66</sup> No comparable history has been produced for the CHA.

Whilst T. A. Leonard's *Adventures in Holiday Making* provides an insight into the origins and early development of the CHA and, subsequently, the Holiday Fellowship,

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<sup>64</sup> Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*; See R. Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays: 1893-1993*, (Manchester: CHA, 1993).

<sup>65</sup> D. Hardman, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship, Part One (1913-1940)*, (London: Holiday Fellowship, 1981); C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship, Part Two (1941-1980)*, (London: Holiday Fellowship, 1981).

<sup>66</sup> H. Wroe, *The Story of HF Holidays*, (London: HF Holidays, 2007, updated 2012).

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its potential value as a primary information source is diminished as a result of it being based on sketchy records and the memories of a seventy years old man (the CHA was reluctant to make its records available). Hardman's and Johnson's histories of the Holiday Fellowship, based largely on the organisation's annual reports and committee minutes, are of greater value. They provide a more critical summary of the activities of the Holiday Fellowship up to 1980 and act as a signpost to the primary source material. Harry Wroe's recent history of the Holiday Fellowship relies heavily on the material deposited within the HF Holidays archive and provides a popular, rather than scholarly, account of the many aspects of holidaying with the Holiday Fellowship.

This study therefore relies on two important but under-utilised original sources; principally archive material relating to the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. The CHA archive, held in the Great Manchester County Record Office (GMCRO), covers the life of the CHA from 1895 until 1994. It was deposited with the Record Office when the CHA disposed of its headquarters at Birch Heys in Manchester in 1996. The archive includes administrative and legal records, financial records, publications such as annual brochures, centre programmes, song books and the monthly magazine variously titled *Comradeship/CHA Magazine/CHA News/Countrywide News*, and a wide range of other material, including press cuttings, exhibition material, postcards and photographs. It also includes personal papers of T.A. Leonard, including private correspondence, obituaries and newspaper articles and drafts of his book.

Countrywide Holidays (the CHA was re-named Countrywide Holidays Association in 1964), which still exists as a legal entity although it no longer trades, has a valuable archive of the operation of the business from the mid-1990s until it ceased to operate



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as a holiday provider in 2004. The Countrywide Holidays archive includes administrative and legal records, financial records, annual brochures, centre programmes and other publicity material and photographs which complete the historical record of the life of the CHA. Access to this archive has been obtained and an inventory of the contents has been prepared. It is intended to donate the archive to the GMCRO to reside with the CHA archive.

The Holiday Fellowship archive resides at the HF Holidays centre, Newfield Hall in Malhamdale in North Yorkshire. It is still in its formative stages but includes a valuable collection of annual reports, annual brochures and centre programmes, the Holiday Fellowship's magazine *Over the Hills*, and a large collection of photographs, press cuttings and other memorabilia. It lacks any administrative, legal and financial records and committee minutes although a general account of the proceedings of most AGMs is included in the relevant issues of the magazine *Over the Hills*. Annual reports also include a copy of the annual accounts and balance sheet.

CHA and Holiday Fellowship annual reports, annual brochures, centre programmes and *ad hoc* surveys provide data on the membership of the organisations and on the scale, distribution, nature, capacity and use of accommodation over time. This has enabled trends in membership and the provision and usage of accommodation to be assessed against the changing social, economic and cultural conditions of the twentieth century. It has also allowed the performance of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship to be assessed against their ideals and philosophies.

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Annual reports and other textual sources, such as magazines, are also a primary source of more qualitative information on the issues that have faced both organisations. The CHA's monthly magazine, which ran from 1907 to 1994, and the Holiday Fellowship's *Over the Hills*, published two or three times a year from 1920 until 1983, include articles, reader's letters and personal reminiscences that provide an insight into the views of the membership on the changing fortunes of these two organisations.

Local groups were an essential constituent of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, and each organisation had over 100 such clubs in the 1980s. A history of the London CHA Club was published in 1965 and a number of clubs have recently published books in celebration of 100 years of existence, which provide an illuminating insight into their activities and social composition.<sup>67</sup> Contact has been made with six local clubs and the views of members of these clubs, in relation to their holiday activities and attitude to the changes that have taken place in both organisations over the twentieth century, have been obtained via informal interview at meetings and correspondence.<sup>68</sup> Interviews have also been held with a number of former and existing office bearers of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship to obtain the views of management on the issues affecting both organisations during the study period.<sup>69</sup> A semi-structured approach has been taken to interviews.

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<sup>67</sup> See *The London CHA Club: the first Sixty Years*, (London: London CHA Club, 1965); *Ramble Down Memory Lane: One Hundred Years of Bradford CHA Rambling and Social Club*, (Huddersfield: Jeremy Mills Publishing, 2003); *One Hundred Years of Rambling: York CHA & HF Rambling Club*, (York: York CHA & HF Rambling Club, 2008).

<sup>68</sup> The clubs contacted were Bolton CHA Rambling Club, Bradford CHA Rambling and Social Club, Crosby CHA Club, Manchester CHA Club, Newcastle CHA & HF Rambling Club, York CHA & HF Rambling Club.

<sup>69</sup> Meetings have been held with Robert Speake, long-serving committee member with the CHA, Brian Padgett, former General Secretary with the CHA, David Peacock, former Chairman and President of the CHA and Colin Doyle, the last Chief Executive of CHA; Harry Wroe, HF Board Member and archivist, Bob Gomersall, former Chairman of HF, Chris Bagshaw, former HF Walk's Leader and Steve Backhouse, present HF Head of Holiday Operations.

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In addition, a questionnaire survey has been undertaken of 100 members/former members of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship to obtain their views on their holiday experience and their attitude to change (see appendices 6 & 7). This survey provided a valuable insight into the views of guests, some of whom were long-standing members of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, on issues such as standards of accommodation, the types of holiday provided, the social activities organised at centres, the conventions of 'centre life' and the rewards obtained from a CHA and Holiday Fellowship holiday (see appendices 8 & 9). There is a remarkable consistency in the views obtained from this survey but also some interesting comparisons to be made between the CHA and Holiday Fellowship experience.

Information on other accommodation providers has been accessed to provide context for this research. The Friendship Holidays Association (FHA) was founded in 1922 by Henry White, a staunch Methodist. The FHA provided holidays on the same principles as the CHA and Holiday Fellowship until the 1960s but has received little or no attention from historians. There is no official archive of the FHA; all records are in the possession of the founder's grand-daughter. The records are not extensive but provide details of membership, guest houses and guest numbers and include a selection of annual reports, brochures and centre programmes, all produced in a similar format to those of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.<sup>70</sup> Following discussions with the holder of these records, it is intended to deposit them with the CHA archive in Manchester.

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<sup>70</sup> Representative copies of annual reports, brochures and centre programmes have been obtained from the holder of the records, Liz Brooking.

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The archive of the YHA, previously located at its headquarters in Matlock, now resides within the Cadbury Research Library at the University of Birmingham. It includes a wide range of national and regional records, reports, minute books, handbooks and other publications and photographs. The YHA's magazine variously named *Rucksack/The Youth Hosteller/ Hostelling News/YHA Magazine/Triangle* is a primary source of information on the issues that have faced the organisation. Prior to the transfer of the archive to Birmingham in 2010-11, the YHA's voluntary archivist was very helpful in providing detailed data on membership, hostel capacity and use from information included within annual reports published between 1931 and 2000.<sup>71</sup>

In relation to YHA activities within the Lake District, the Lakeland Group of the YHA produced its own magazine *Cumbria* in the late 1940s, and from the early 1950s to the mid-1970s there was a regular monthly 'With the Lakeland Youth Hostels' column in *Cumbria* magazine published by Dalesman Publications, with less frequent entries thereafter. The entries in *Cumbria*, which is available in the University of Cumbria Library, are an important source of information and views from the local area on the issues facing the organisation at the local level.

The British Mountaineering Council (BMC) provides a list of huts maintained by mountaineering and walking clubs. Several of these clubs produce journals and have extensive records of their history and activities. A number have produced books or booklets to commemorate either 100 years or 50 years of existence.<sup>72</sup> The Fell and Rock Climbing Club of the English Lake District (FRCC) has an extensive archive of

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<sup>71</sup> I have held a number of meetings with John Martin, YHA Voluntary Archivist.

<sup>72</sup> See, for instance, J. Beatty, *This Mountain Life: The first hundred years of the Rucksack Club*, (Hope Valley: Northern Light, 2003); *100 Years of Wayfaring, 1906-2006*, (Liverpool: The Wayfarers Club, 2006); M Fox (ed.), *K-Fellfarers and High House*, (Kendal: K-Fellfarers, 2009).

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journals, letters, notes of meetings and memorabilia held in the Cumbria County Record Office in Kendal. Contact has been made with the thirty clubs that have huts and are active in the Lake District and information has been obtained on the nature of the accommodation provided, membership and activities; the Achille-Ratti Climbing Club, FRCC, Climbers' Club, Wayfarers' Club, and K-Fellfarers have been particularly helpful (see Appendix 15).

Research by the Dartington Amenity Research Trust (DART) provides an exhaustive survey of the extent of group activity in the countryside and the accommodation used in the late 1970s. Published in 1980, this research is now largely forgotten and difficult to access.<sup>73</sup> The study provides detailed information on the full extent of the provision of outdoor centres, field study centres, hostels and other bases, including camp sites, which were regularly used for outdoor group activity of a recreational or educational kind, including CHA and Holiday Fellowship guest houses. It is a valuable resource in providing a perspective on the role of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in the 1970s within the wider outdoor community.

Beyond the DART study, little information is available at the national level about other providers of outdoor accommodation. The only recent information available emanates from the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA), established in 1996. Unfortunately, the AALA's inventory does not provide a full picture of the range of accommodation available to groups and individuals engaged in outdoor activities but it offers a guide to the scale of provision at the end of the century, both nationally and within the Lake District.

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<sup>73</sup> DART, *Groups in the Countryside*, (Cheltenham: Countryside Commission, 1980) is obtainable from the British Library, shelfmark: GPB-4299. The DART archive is held in the Devon County Record Office in Exeter.

**Chapter synopsis-summary of each chapter**

Chapter One explores the origins and evolution of the concept of ‘rational’ holidays. It reviews the relevant secondary sources, including books, journal articles, theses and dissertations, to assess the influence of the social and economic conditions during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, to trace the development of a recognisable modern leisure phenomenon and to chart the emergence of the ‘open-air’ movement and outdoor clubs. Against this background, the chapter examines the emergence of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship and their development prior to 1919.

Chapter Two utilises mainly primary sources to deconstruct the ideals and philosophy of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, against which their performance during the period 1919-2000 can be assessed. These are considered under the headings:

- the provision of recreative and educational holidays;
- the provision of cheap and simple accommodation;
- the constituency of the membership;
- the principles of friendship and fellowship; and
- the internationalist aspirations of both organisations.

Chapter Three assesses the impact of the changing demands of the twentieth century, more specifically the period 1919-2000, on the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. It reviews the relevant secondary sources, including books, Government reports, journal articles, theses and dissertations, to scrutinise the impact of changes in social and economic conditions experienced since 1919, and of changing cultural attitudes and expectations, on the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. It analyses the opportunities and

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threats posed by the popularisation of outdoor recreation and the proliferation of competing accommodation providers.

Chapters Four and Five utilise a broad spectrum of primary source material and secondary sources to analyse in considerable depth the continuities and changes in the CHA and Holiday Fellowship during the period 1919-2000. Set against the background of the ideals and philosophy of the two organisations, detailed in chapter two, and the broader context of the changing social, economic and cultural conditions set out in chapter three, these chapters explore the extent to which the CHA and Holiday Fellowship dealt with the often conflicting demands of altruism and commercial necessity, epitomised by the continuing tensions between the ‘traditionalists’ and ‘modernisers’ in both organisations.

Chapter Four, through an extensive analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, compares and contrasts how the CHA and Holiday Fellowship dealt with the opportunities and threats posed by the changing social, economic and cultural conditions. It examines the guest house accommodation used, in terms of quantity, distribution, type and facilities provided, and the changing directions in holiday provision, originally based on walking holidays, to include a wide range of other special activities. It charts the changing provision for youth and school groups, and families, and the involvement of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in holidays abroad. The analysis highlights the different approaches taken by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship to accommodation provision, to the nature of holiday provision, to the provision for youth groups and school parties, and to family holidays.

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Chapter Five similarly explores, in depth, the continuities and changes in the constituency of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, in terms of class, age, gender and social mixing, and of their traditional philosophy of friendship and fellowship. It compares and contrasts how the CHA and Holiday Fellowship dealt with the impact of the changing social, economic and cultural conditions. It explores how membership and guest levels have fluctuated, how social activities have responded to consumer demands, and the extent to which the CHA and Holiday Fellowship have implemented their founder's desire to enhance social mixing. The contribution of local clubs in the fostering of a sense of community is also examined.

The role of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in the English Lake District is a microcosm of the changes and continuities in the development of these organisations during the twentieth century. Chapter Six utilises secondary references and primary source material to analyse the draw of the English Lake District and its status as a tourist icon, and compares and contrasts the role of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in holiday making in the area. It then examines the lasting influence of these organisations on the perception of the Lake District.

The thesis concludes by answering the stated research question:

*How effectively have the two leading organisations that pioneered the provision of recreative and educational holidays for working people dealt with the far-reaching changes in social, economic and cultural conditions experienced during the period c.1919-2000?*



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In seeking to answer this question, the study examines their effectiveness in relation to the standard of accommodation provided, the nature of the holidays pursued, the customers they attracted and the maintenance of their original ideals of friendship and fellowship. In doing so, it touches on some of the key indices of effectiveness: for instance, leadership, clear goals, the ability to be proactive, and the ability to adapt to change and prioritise.

The study, therefore, focuses on how the CHA and Holiday Fellowship dealt with the often conflicting demands of altruism and commercial necessity and highlights the different approaches taken. It sets out the extent to which the CHA and Holiday Fellowship drifted away from their original ideals and philosophy. It assesses the contribution of these organisations to the outdoor movement, the achievements of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship and the legacy of T A Leonard. In the context of their activities within the English Lake District, it highlights the contribution of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship to the 'place-myth' of this iconic area. Finally, the thesis signposts further opportunities for research.

**CHAPTER ONE: THE ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF  
'RATIONAL' HOLIDAYS, c. 1875-1919**

*“Will yo’ come o’ Sunday morning,  
For a walk o’er Winter Hill.  
Ten thousand went last Sunday,  
But there’s room for thousands still!”*

*“O the moors are rare and bonny,  
And the heather’s sweet and fine,  
And the road across this hill top,  
Is the public’s – Yours and mine!”*

A song to commemorate a demonstration to assert the right of way  
on Winter Hill, near Bolton, in 1896 (anon.).

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The above song, written to commemorate the demonstration in September 1896 to assert a right of way on Winter Hill, near Bolton, which was closed because the factory-owner and landlord did not want the mill-workers of Bolton intruding upon his grouse-shooting, epitomises the struggle for the freedom of the Lancashire moors.<sup>1</sup>

This demonstration took place less than 30 miles [48kms.] from the small community of Colne where, in 1891, the founder of the Co-operative Holidays Association (CHA) and the Holiday Fellowship, a Congregational minister, Thomas Arthur Leonard, had sought to dissuade the young mill workers from going in their droves during ‘Wakes Week’ to Blackpool, Morecambe or the Isle of Man and introduce them instead to the wilds of Pendle Hill, Ribblesdale and the Lake District.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> One of several songs composed at the time of the demonstration, “Will yo’ come o’ Sunday morning” is taken from a dialect sketch written by Allen Clarke, alias Teddy Ashton of *Teddy Ashton’s Journal*. He produced Lancashire’s first Socialist paper, *The Labour Light*, in 1891 and then the *Northern Weekly*. The history of the demonstration at Winter Hill is fully described in a pamphlet first published in 1982, edited by Paul Salvesson, and re-issued in 1996 to commemorate the centenary of the mass trespass.

<sup>2</sup> T. A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.19.

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This chapter reviews the relevant secondary sources including books, Government reports, journal articles, theses and dissertations that provide a broader context for the subsequent analysis of how the two organisations that pioneered the provision of recreational and educational holidays for working people evolved during the twentieth century, particularly after the First World War. It begins by identifying those texts that provide an overview of the social and economic conditions pertaining during their formative years and those that trace the emergence of the modern leisure phenomenon. It then reviews those texts that explore the development of the ‘open-air’ movement. Against this background, the chapter examines the foundation and early development of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

### **Social and economic conditions during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries**

This literature review provides a summary of the most relevant texts that deal with the effects of changes in social and economic conditions on leisure in the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Until the mid-nineteenth century, the majority of England’s population lived in rural areas and worked on the land. According to Pimlott, the idea that a holiday was a waste of time meant by God or natural law to be devoted to the increase of wealth died hard.<sup>3</sup> However, by the mid-nineteenth century more than half the population of England lived in urban areas and by 1911 the figure had risen to 80 per cent; an unparalleled concentration of the population without easy access to the open air and the countryside.

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<sup>3</sup> See J. A. R. Pimlott, *The Englishman’s Holiday: A Social History* (New York: Harvester Press, 1976) p.142.

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This rapid growth of urban areas was the catalyst for an increasing demand for organised recreations and entertainments. James Walvin in *Leisure and Society* was amongst the first to explore the social and economic factors that led to the growth of popular leisure in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. According to Walvin, leisure activities were fundamentally transformed in the mid-nineteenth century by the process of urbanisation and industrialisation; when older, turbulent and often bloody games and sports gave way to more ordered and disciplined recreations that were consonant with the social and economic interests of contemporary society.<sup>4</sup>

Subsequent revisionist analysis has complicated the picture. According to current thinking, sport was more extensively played and watched in the mid-nineteenth century than earlier studies of popular culture suggest.<sup>5</sup> Neil Tranter has shed further light on the extent of sporting activity among the working classes in the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup> He concludes that whilst the most brutal and disruptive pastimes such as prize-fighting and animal blood sports were frequently condemned and declined, most of the sports practised by the labouring classes, like cricket and horse-racing, which were shared with the elite, offered no serious threat to the growing desire for 'respectability'.

The Victorian concept of 'respectability' cut across the social classes. According to F.M.L. Thompson, it not only applied to the various layers of middle-class society, including the lower-middle class clerks, small shopkeepers and schoolteachers, but also to skilled workers and artisans. The 'respectable working man' became a key

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<sup>4</sup> J. Walvin, *Leisure and Society 1830-1950*, p.161. Despite its age, *Leisure and Society* remains a useful summary of the causes of the rise of modern sport and leisure pursuits.

<sup>5</sup> M. Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport*, pp.1-19.

<sup>6</sup> N. Tranter, *Sport, economy and society in Britain, 1750-1914*, pp.3-12.

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mid-Victorian figure; hard-working, reliable, reasonably sober, a dependable family man who set great store by a regular job, paid their rents regularly and took pride in their homes.<sup>7</sup> According to Simon Cordery, who covers similar ground to Thompson, religious, educational and self-help bodies reinforced, or tried to reinforce, respectable behaviour.<sup>8</sup> The theme of ‘respectability’ would be a significant factor in the foundation and development of the CHA.

Thompson also explores the changing role of leisure in the working life of the working man from the decay and suppression of the traditional, rural recreations to the rise of the commercially provided mass entertainments.<sup>9</sup> By the turn of the nineteenth century, the pursuit of commercial enjoyment (seaside trips, music hall, brass bands and spectator sports) had become more commonplace among people whose parents and grandparents could scarcely have dreamed of such treats.<sup>10</sup> However, as Sue Glyptis comments in her study of the evolution and contemporary significance of countryside recreation, living and working conditions often deprived the new urban dwellers of the time, means and inclination for leisure. Holidays for most working class families were limited to four public holidays a year; provided for by Sir John Lubbock’s Bank Holiday Act of 1871.<sup>11</sup>

In northern towns, these public holidays were supplemented by less official annual ‘wakes’ weeks and ‘race’ weeks where worker pressure had forced major employers

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<sup>7</sup> F.M.L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society*, p.181.

<sup>8</sup> S. Cordery, ‘Friendly Societies and the Discourse of Respectability in Britain, 1825-1875’ in *Journal of British Studies*, Vol.34, No.1, (January 1995), p.37.

<sup>9</sup> F.M.L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society*, pp.274-306.

<sup>10</sup> For a general account of these processes, see J. A. R. Pimlott, *The Englishman’s Holiday: A Social History*; J. Walvin, *Leisure and Society 1830-1950*; and J. K. Walton and J. Walvin (eds.), *Leisure in Britain 1780-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983).

<sup>11</sup> S. Glyptis, *Countryside Recreation*, p.26.

to shut down their works.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, recreation for the majority was, at best, an escape to the urban parks and pleasure grounds established as ‘lungs’ of the cities, especially following the Open Spaces Act of 1877.<sup>13</sup>

The image of the countryside, with its clean air and lack of smoke and pollution, as providing a lung for urban dwellers is a significant factor in the subsequent campaigns for the preservation of the countryside and the ‘freedom to roam’.<sup>14</sup> In *Forbidden Land: the struggle for access to mountain and moorland*, Tom Stephenson gives a detailed account of the early battles to preserve access to the open moorlands around the towns of northern England and to protect ancient footpaths.<sup>15</sup> Much attention has been focussed on the Kinder Scout Trespass of 1932 but there were earlier, much less publicised but arguably equally important, instances of direct action to preserve the ‘freedom to roam’: on Darwen Moors in 1879; on Lattrigg outside Keswick in 1887; as well as on Winter Hill above Bolton in 1896.<sup>16</sup>

It was only when people of all classes secured more free time and spare money that they had the wherewithal to enjoy it. A rise in real wages of about 30 per cent in the last quarter of the century was a major contributor to the rising demand for mass leisure; people developed aspirations both for the new consumables available and

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<sup>12</sup> See R. Poole, ‘Oldham Wakes’ in J. K. Walton & J. Walvin (eds.) *Leisure in Britain 1780-1939*, pp.71-98.

<sup>13</sup> H. Jordon, ‘Public Parks, 1885-1914’, *Garden History*, 22, 1, (1994), pp.85-113.

<sup>14</sup> For a comprehensive list of early footpath preservation and access organisations, see W. Darby, *Landscape and Identity* (Oxford: Berg, 2000) pp.108-111; See also J. K. Walton, *Lancashire: a social history 1558-1939*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987) for an account of the importance of the neighbouring moors to the well-being of the population of northern towns.

<sup>15</sup> T. Stephenson, *Forbidden Land*, pp.57-73.

<sup>16</sup> H. Hill in *Freedom to Roam*, provides a comprehensive history of the battles for access. See also, H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, pp.119-150; R. Ellis, *The Keswick Trespasses: working class protest or gentlemen’s agreement*, unpublished MA dissertation, (University of Lancaster, 2008); P. Salveson, *The Winter Hill Mass Trespass of 1896*, (Bradford: Little Northern Books, 1982).

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towards the pursuit of pleasure.<sup>17</sup> According to Hobsbawm; ‘Probably the most rapid general improvement in the condition of the 19<sup>th</sup> century worker took place in the years 1880-1895, largely because of the fall in basic living costs which benefited the poor as well as the better-off.’<sup>18</sup> This theme is taken up by Susan Barton in *Working-Class Holidays and Popular Tourism 1840-1970*, which examines the links between the growth of working class organisations and popular tourism. She also emphasises the importance of the decrease in working hours matched, for many workers, by an increase in living standards, which was to foster a growth in leisure that would include, for many, visits to the countryside.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, this picture of rising standards of living and expectations can be overdrawn; for perhaps a third of the population the reality was of poor diet, health and housing and dependence on the charitable efforts of local churches, Sunday schools and philanthropists for material benefits of any kind.<sup>20</sup> Rising expectations of life and leisure, and urban poverty, therefore existed side by side.

This social and economic background provides the context in which Leonard, the future founder of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, enrolled at the Congregational Institute in Nottingham in the early 1880s and began his first ministry in 1887 at Barrow-in-Furness, a relatively ‘new’ iron town, still a turbulent urban frontier which pulled in large numbers of migrants.<sup>21</sup> Conditions were challenging, where, according to Trescaheric, there was widespread squalor, sickness and conflict between migrant

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<sup>17</sup> J. Walvin, *Leisure and Society*, p.61.

<sup>18</sup> E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire 1875-1914*, (London, Weidenfield & Nicolson Ltd., 1987), p.41.

<sup>19</sup> S. Barton, *Working-class organisations and popular tourism*, pp.133-178.

<sup>20</sup> J. Walvin, *Leisure and Society 1830-1950*, p.66.

<sup>21</sup> J.D. Marshall, *Furness and the industrial revolution*, (Barrow-in-Furness Library and Museum Committee, 1958), pp.353-366.

communities, together with intellectual and spiritual poverty.<sup>22</sup> There, Leonard attempted to improve the social as well as spiritual conditions of his congregation but struggled to reconcile his faith and ideals with the reality of life in this Victorian boomtown.

In 1890, he moved to Colne, the location for his experiment in ‘holiday-making’, which comprised a population of 26,000 persons in 1891 and possessed 30 cotton mills.<sup>23</sup> It was notoriously radical and, as we shall see later in this chapter, Leonard’s support for socialism brought him into conflict with the deacons of his church in Colne.<sup>24</sup> It did not, however, deter him from his desire to further his ideas for the social improvement of working people, particularly young people.

### **The emergence of a recognisable modern leisure phenomenon**

Peter Borsay’s analysis of the impact of urbanisation and industrialisation, and the broad processes that accompanied it, on leisure and the recreational use of space, covers a range of themes, including the influence of class and gender, an important consideration, as in this research.<sup>25</sup> Borsay also emphasises a conceptual and critical approach, which is the approach taken here, rather than a simple narrative history.

Also useful and relevant to the study of ‘rational’ holidays in the hills are the developing historiographies of leisure, the democratisation of travel and the

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<sup>22</sup> B. Trescaheric, *How Barrow was Built*, (Barrow: Hougenui Press, 1985).

<sup>23</sup> D. Harrison (ed.) *The History of Colne*, (Pendle Heritage Centre Ltd., 1988).

<sup>24</sup> Letter to Leonard dated November 1894 in GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16.

<sup>25</sup> P. Borsay, *A History of Leisure*, pp.8-9.



popularisation of tourism.<sup>26</sup> Urry's view that 'The mass tourist gaze was initiated in the backstreets of the industrial towns and cities in the north of England',<sup>27</sup> and 'What takes place in the countryside cannot be separated off from much wider changes in economic, social and cultural life, particularly those changes which occur within what might appear to be distant towns and cities',<sup>28</sup> provide a firm foundation for this study of leisure in relation to the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, two organisations that had their roots in the north-west of England.

Unfortunately, earlier histories of leisure have largely focused on the emergence of commercial entertainment, such as the development of the seaside holiday and seaside resorts, and much less on voluntary provision. In his studies of resort and tourism history and his classic account of the British seaside, John Walton has made a major contribution to our understanding of this well-known phenomenon.<sup>29</sup> His works constitute a valuable social, economic and cultural history of resort tourism, which offers stimulating comparisons to the approach of this study of outdoor recreation, through his analysis of the changes and continuities in the fortunes of the seaside resort, the variations in resort experience, who went there and why, and the conflicts over the relationships between different visiting publics.

Where leisure provision in the voluntary sector has been examined in some depth, the emphasis has largely been on the growth of clubs and societies concerned with recreational activities ranging from brass bands to organised rambles in the

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<sup>26</sup> See H. Berghoff & B. Korte, (eds.), *The making of Modern Tourism*.

<sup>27</sup> See Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, (London: Sage, 1990), p.16.

<sup>28</sup> J. Urry, *Consuming Places* (London: Routledge, 1995), p.228.

<sup>29</sup> See J.K. Walton, *The Blackpool landlady: a social history*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978); J. K. Walton, 'The demand for working-class seaside holidays in Victorian England', *Economic History Review* 34, (1981) pp. 249-255; J. K. Walton, *The British Seaside*; J K. Walton, *The English Seaside Resort*.

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countryside, rather than with those that provided holiday accommodation.<sup>30</sup> Peter Bailey suggests that the Temperance movement was the single most important agency of recreational improvement at this time.<sup>31</sup> The Temperance movement provided a range of ‘rational’ recreation activities; games, sports, instruction and education aimed at the ‘respectable’ use of increasing leisure time.

Others sought to get young people ‘from the breeding grounds of vice and hooliganism, the slum districts, and to husband smartness, good carriage and proper moral standards’.<sup>32</sup> For example, the Boys Brigade, founded by William Smith in Glasgow in 1883 aimed to teach working-class boys of 12 years and over ‘elementary drill, physical exercise, obedience to the word of command, punctuality and cleanliness.’<sup>33</sup> ‘Pearson’s Fresh Air Fund’, established in 1892 by Arthur Pearson, founder of the *Daily Express*, provided country holidays for city children.<sup>34</sup> This initiative provided the inspiration for the fresh-air philosophies of Baden Powell’s Boy Scouts and no doubt played some part in the CHA’s decision to establish its own Free Holiday Scheme in 1897, funded by the proceeds of its Fresh Air Collections.<sup>35</sup>

Holt implies that there was little working-class interest in the countryside. He takes the view that most male workers preferred the familiarity of ‘the match’ on a Saturday afternoon, and Sunday morning was spent sleeping off the excesses of Saturday night. In his opinion, a few might take the train or tram to the end of the line but how many of them ‘bothered to get off and explore the countryside when they got to the terminus

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<sup>30</sup> See S.G. Jones, *Workers at Play*, pp.62-86.

<sup>31</sup> P. Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England*, p.58.

<sup>32</sup> C. Rojek, *Ways of Escape*, p.38.

<sup>33</sup> F. Gibbon, *William A. Smith of the Boy’s Brigade*, (London: Collins, 1934), p.36.

<sup>34</sup> G. Pearson, *Hooligan*, (London: Macmillan, 1983), p.69.

<sup>35</sup> The CHA’s Free Holiday Scheme was the brain child of Fanny Pringle, one of the first women to take part in a CHA holiday in 1893, see R. Speake, *One Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.36.

was another matter'.<sup>36</sup> By way of contrast, Pimlott emphasises the importance of the burgeoning rail network to the development of working-class leisure. Pimlott considered that it was the railway excursion that launched the era of cheap holiday travel for the masses.<sup>37</sup> Some working-class organisations such as Mechanics' Institutes and Friendly Societies had organised excursions primarily for leisure purposes since the beginning of the Railway Age in the 1830s.<sup>38</sup>

The emergence of the culture of voluntarism and collectivism was, therefore, a significant factor in the provision of recreational holidays. Religious, philanthropic and secular organisations sought social change and demanded more leisure time for workers. Some, from the Chartists and the Christian Socialists to the Independent Labour Party and the Clarion Fellowship, saw entrepreneurs' manipulation of worker's leisure activities as a threat to an independent class-consciousness.<sup>39</sup> The process of urbanisation and industrialisation was, therefore, the catalyst for a whole series of working-class movements that rejected commercial values and spawned their own schemes of 'rational' recreation.

Other scholars have examined the factors that led to more fulfilling ways of using increased leisure time, often focussing in particular on the annual holiday. Walton points out that by the 1890s, "Wakes Weeks" were common; excursions and longer holidays away from home enabled by a proliferation of savings clubs and membership

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<sup>36</sup> R. Holt, *Sport and the British*, pp.194-202

<sup>37</sup> J. A. R. Pimlott, *The Englishman's Holiday: A Social History*, pp.90-95.

<sup>38</sup> S. Barton, *Working-class organisations and popular tourism*, pp.29-38.

<sup>39</sup> For an overview of the social utility of free time, see C. Waters, *British Socialists and the politics of popular culture, 1884-1914*, (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1990) pp.65-89. See also E. Norman, *The Victorian Christian Socialists*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

of the Co-operative Society.<sup>40</sup> In *Oldham Wakes*, Robert Poole has described how church-centred “Wakes Week” holidays became secularised and extended from a day or two to a whole week’s duration for cotton industry workers.<sup>41</sup>

According to Walton, whereas craftsmen and labourers in other regions spent their money on localised leisure activities and festivals, taking extended periods of time off-work to go on holiday to the seaside had become common amongst the Lancashire working class by the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>42</sup> Harvey Taylor endorses the view that excursions and longer holidays away from home during the “Wakes Weeks” were facilitated by a good rail connections coupled with relatively high incomes based on multiple contributions from family members.<sup>43</sup> Lancashire seaside resorts such as Blackpool led the way in the move from day-trip ‘excursions’ to popular holidays and were, consequently, the main focus of attention for the reformers of popular leisure such as the National Home Reading Union (NHRU).<sup>44</sup>

According to Julie-Marie Strange, working-class excursions and seaside holidays, with their jaunty environment, fostered a sense of cultural hedonism and carnival-esque ‘escape’ from urban life. Socialist and philanthropic organisations despaired at this escapist culture. They argued that the commercial seaside holiday fostered shallow pleasure at the expense of solid respectable values and communal ideals.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> J. K. Walton, *Lancashire: A Social History, 1558-1939*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), p.295.

<sup>41</sup> See R. Poole, ‘Oldham Wakes’, in J. K. Walton & J. Walvin (eds.), *Leisure in Britain 1780-1939*, pp.71-98.

<sup>42</sup> See J Walton, ‘The demand for working-class seaside holidays in Victorian England’, *Economic History Review* 34, (1981) pp.249-265.

<sup>43</sup> H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p.193.

<sup>44</sup> Blackpool was the location for the 1890 summer assembly of the National Home Reading Union, recognised as progenitor of the ‘rational’ holiday, at which it was decided to open centres for educational and outdoor activities.

<sup>45</sup> J-M. Strange, ‘Leisure’ in F. Carnevali and J-M. Strange (eds.), *20th Century Britain*, p.205.

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Rojek equates the origins of ‘rational’ recreation with the middle class desire from the 1860s onwards of ‘civilizing a rough’ through organised and edifying recreation. He cites the attempts by a Church of England curate, Samuel Barnett, and his wife, wardens of Toynbee Hall from 1884-1906, to bring art to the poor of London’s East End.<sup>46</sup> Toynbee Hall aimed ‘to provide education and the means of recreation and enjoyment for the people of the poorer districts of London and other great cities’.<sup>47</sup> It operated a philanthropic holiday fund for the less fortunate but also organised annual trips to Europe for students, linked to their studies. The Toynbee Travellers’ Club, as it became known in 1889, was mainly patronised by students, residents and associates of Toynbee Hall. It only survived until 1913.<sup>48</sup>

There were other ‘rational’ holiday initiatives. The PTA developed from the opportunities for recreation and travel which the philanthropist Quintin Hogg provided for members of his Polytechnic Institute in the 1880s. He had taken over the Royal Polytechnic Institute in 1881, renamed the Regent Street Polytechnic, and turned it into a young men’s Christian institute. He believed profoundly that young people were best educated by the combined endeavours of religion, travel and exercise.<sup>49</sup>

Robert Mitchell, the Polytechnic’s Director of Education, was a key figure in turning Hogg’s interest in foreign travel into organised tours for students and members.<sup>50</sup>

After 1890, UK holiday centres were acquired and by the mid-1890s, the PTA

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<sup>46</sup> C. Rojek, *Ways of Escape*, p.34-37.

<sup>47</sup> J.A.R. Pimlott, *Toynbee Hall: fifty years of social progress, 1884-1934*, (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1935), pp.6-7.

<sup>48</sup> J. D. Browne, ‘The Toynbee Travellers’ Club’, *History of Education*, Vol.15, No.1, (1986), pp.11-17.

<sup>49</sup> See E. Wood, *A History of the Polytechnic*, (London: Macdonald & Co., 1965).

<sup>50</sup> E. Wood, *Robert Mitchell: A Life of Service*, (London: Frederick Muller Ltd., 1934), p.23.

claimed to be ‘the pioneer of co-operative and educational travel’ in the UK. It had similar restrictions to the early CHA; no smoking, drinking or gambling.<sup>51</sup>

Local groups of Unitarians in Lancashire and Yorkshire, who were motivated by the same improving and co-operative ethos as Leonard, also provided facilities and activities for workers from the industrial towns. For example, from 1894, Unitarians in Halifax organised a scheme that provided inexpensive ‘rational’ holidays ‘aimed at those who labour by hand and brain’, based on a property in Windermere.<sup>52</sup> A larger scheme was initiated in 1901 by the Bolton-based British Holidays Association (BHA), another Unitarian organisation. Its first holiday venue was Grange-over-Sands with further centres at Ramsey, Llandudno, Scarborough, Chepstow and Ilkley.<sup>53</sup> Like the CHA, the ideology of the BHA was based on co-operative principles and CHA members also used BHA centres. The similarity between the BHA and the CHA was further reflected in its provision of free and assisted holidays for ‘recommended deserving people’.<sup>54</sup>

By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, both the co-operative movement and the trade union movement were becoming active in the creation of holiday camps, influenced by the philosophy of William Morris and Edward Carpenter and by the writings of Robert Blatchford, who started the *Clarion* newspaper in 1891.<sup>55</sup> It was one such *Clarion* cyclist, John Fletcher Dodd, also a member of the Independent Labour Party, who opened the Socialist Holiday Camp at Caistor, near Yarmouth, in 1906. The camp run

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<sup>51</sup> See N. Matthews, ‘Doing the Continental: Quintin Hogg’s Polytechnic at home and abroad, 1887-1911’, in Snape, R. and Swain, P. (eds.), *Recording Leisure Lives: Sports, Spectacles and Spectators in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Britain*, (Leisure Studies Association, 2013), pp.49-66.

<sup>52</sup> *Halifax Evening Courier*, 29 September 1894, p.5.

<sup>53</sup> H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, pp.207-209.

<sup>54</sup> See *Bolton Journal and Guardian*, 17 May 1907, p.8.

<sup>55</sup> C. Ward & D. Hardy, *Goodnight Campers*, (London: Mansell Publishing Ltd., 1986), pp.14-15.

by a committee, many of whom were trade-union leaders, organised socials, dances, lectures and debates, and was such a success that it was soon attracting a thousand people each summer.<sup>56</sup>

Initially, its clientele were from the working class but, by 1911, canvas was being replaced by huts and chalets and attracting a different clientele. Although the intention of the camp was to respond to the needs of working-class people wanting a holiday at an affordable price, a large proportion of the campers, especially after the replacement of tents by chalets, were white-collar workers seeking freedom from the regimentation of the seaside boarding house.<sup>57</sup> As we shall see later, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship faced the same problem of wishing to attract the working class but finding themselves appealing more to a lower middle-class clientele. This was the problem with many such ventures: they failed to appeal to the broad base of working-class holiday makers who preferred the commercial resorts.<sup>58</sup> One response to this was to run the holiday camps on a commercial basis with entertainments provided and the emphasis on enjoyment rather than improvement; a precursor of the commercial camps like Billy Butlin's first holiday camp established in Skegness in 1936.<sup>59</sup>

Others responded to the varied demands for travel for educational improvement. Exhibitions were a popular excursion destination for workers in the mid-nineteenth century. Inspired by trips organised by the Mechanics Institutes of Leicester and Nottingham to each other's exhibitions, Thomas Cook, a Baptist minister, organised his first railway excursion in 1841 from Leicester to Loughborough for a Temperance

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., pp. 16-17.

<sup>57</sup> S. Barton, *Working-class organisations and popular tourism 1840-1970*, pp.146-147.

<sup>58</sup> J-M. Strange, *20<sup>th</sup> Century Britain*, p.206.

<sup>59</sup> S. Barton, *Working-class organisations and popular tourism 1840-1970*, pp.148.

meeting.<sup>60</sup> Subsequent trips to Wales, Scotland and Ireland culminated in him taking over 150,000 people from the north of England to the Great Exhibition in 1851. This successful venture spearheaded trips to destinations at home and abroad.<sup>61</sup>

In her assessment of working-class organisations and popular tourism, Barton draws attention to other commercial tour companies such as Dean and Dawson, founded in 1871 by Yorkshireman Joseph Dean, who acted as travel agents for the Great Central Railway opened in 1899 and organised excursions for working people to seaside resorts.<sup>62</sup> Frames Tours, founded by John Frame, an ardent teetotaler and strong supporter of the temperance movement, started as a travel agent by organising a trip from Preston to the Temperance Festival at Crystal Palace in 1881. He branched out to organise tours all around Britain linked to the ever expanding railway network.<sup>63</sup>

This review of the relevant material has signposted the four principal factors that were key to the transformation of recreation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and which provide a context for subsequent consideration of the demand for ‘rational’ holidays:

- the desire to escape from the living and working conditions in the industrialised and urbanised towns and cities;
- increasing leisure time and paid holidays;
- a rise in real wages and living standards; and
- the improving rail network.

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<sup>60</sup> J. Pudney, *The Thomas Cook story*, (London: Michael Joseph, 1953) p.53.

<sup>61</sup> See Thomas Cook History, [www.thomascook.com/about-us/thomas-cook-history](http://www.thomascook.com/about-us/thomas-cook-history).

<sup>62</sup> S. Barton, *Working-class organisations and popular tourism 1840-1970*, pp.188.

<sup>63</sup> J.A.R. Pimlott, *The Englishman's Holiday*, p.169.



It also shows that a number of initiatives were being taken to develop 'rational' holidays as an alternative to the commercial seaside holiday during the period when T A Leonard was formulating his ideas.

### **The open-air movement and the early outdoor clubs**

The next section of this chapter examines how the desire to escape was manifested in the open-air movement and the establishment of the early outdoor clubs. A review of the early rambling clubs, the mechanics institutes, the early climbing and mountaineering clubs, and cycling clubs sets the context in which the origins and emergence of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship can best be understood.

The rise of 'picturesque' travel and mountain tourism within Britain in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has generated a distinctive literature on perceptions, representations and experiences of landscape, especially as gazed upon by the pedestrian.<sup>64</sup> The origins and emergence of the open-air movement are also well documented overall, most especially in relation to rambling, as well as on the related debates about land use, countryside access and the 'freedom to roam'.<sup>65</sup> However, with the possible exception of Taylor's *A Claim on the Countryside*, there is little attention in any of the texts that deal with the open-air movement to the consequences for, and the role of, accommodation providers.

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<sup>64</sup> See W. Darby, *Landscape and Identity*; C. E. M. Joad, *The Untutored Townsman's Invasion of the Country*; J. Lowerson, 'Battles in the Countryside' in F. Gloversmith (ed.) *Class, Culture and Social Change*, (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980); I. Ousby, *The Englishman's England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1990); J. Urry, *The Tourist Gaze & Consuming Places*.

<sup>65</sup> See F. Godwin, *Our Forbidden Land* (London: Jonathon Cape, 1990); S. Glyptis, *Countryside Recreation*; H. Hill, *Freedom to Roam*; R. Holt, *Sport and the British*; M. Shoard, *A Right to Roam*; T. Stephenson, *Forbidden Land*; H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*; H. Walker, 'The Popularisation of the Outdoor Movement, 1900-1940', *British Journal of Sports History*, 2.2 (1985) pp.140-153.

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In *Wanderlust*, Rebecca Solnit analyses in considerable depth the story behind walking both as a practical means of transport and as a leisure pursuit, stressing the close relationship between walking and thinking and walking and culture.<sup>66</sup>

According to Robin Jarvis, the modern cult of walking is linked to the Romantic Movement and to Wordsworth in particular.<sup>67</sup> However, as Tomlinson and Walker suggest in their analysis of the development of holidays for all, until the late nineteenth century the pastime of rambling through open countryside had been restricted, in social class terms, to those who not only had time at their disposal but also the financial capability to travel into rural areas. Ramblers were drawn principally from the upper echelons of Victorian society, mainly aesthetes, academics and members of the legal profession.<sup>68</sup>

Helen Walker stresses the gender constitution of the earliest rambling clubs, which were not only socially exclusive but also male-oriented rather than drawn from across the classes and from both genders.<sup>69</sup> They were what have been called ‘Gentlemen’s Clubs’, whose ranks came from the well-to-do. Members of one of the earliest clubs, the London-based Sunday Tramps, formed in 1879 by Leslie Stephen, a philosopher, agnostic and father of Virginia Woolf, were drawn from the legal, literary and political circles of Victorian London. In similar vein, the Forest Ramblers’ Club, formed in 1884 by a group of London businessmen with the objective of walking through Epping Forest ‘and reporting obstructions’, scorned the company of ladies on their walks. The exclusiveness of these, largely male, southern rambling clubs

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<sup>66</sup> R. Solnit, *Wanderlust*, pp.14-29.

<sup>67</sup> R. Jarvis, *Romantic Writing and Pedestrian Travel* (London: Macmillan, 1997), pp.89-125.

<sup>68</sup> A. Tomlinson & H. Walker, ‘Holidays for All’ in *Consumption, Identity & Style* (London: Routledge, 1990), pp.228-229.

<sup>69</sup> H. Walker, *British Journal of Sports History*, 2.2 (1985), p.145.

persisted until 1905 when the London Federation of Rambling Clubs was formed.<sup>70</sup>

Similar, male-dominated clubs were formed in northern England, such as the Sheffield-based Derbyshire Pennine Club, originally called the 'Kyndwr' Club, whose members were drawn from the ranks of leading industrialists. Not all clubs were a male preserve; the student teachers of the Birmingham and Midland Institute of Adult Education formed the Midland Institute of Ramblers in 1894 with male and female members.<sup>71</sup>

But as Hill describes in his assessment of the struggle for access to Britain's moors and mountains, there was a more proletarian rambling movement emerging in the industrial towns of the north of England. The rambling clubs of Lancashire and Yorkshire, such as the Liverpool Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) Rambling Club, formed in 1874, and the Manchester YMCA Rambling Club formed in 1880, were to spearhead the fifty years' struggle for access to the hills and moorlands of the north.<sup>72</sup> These walking groups were largely characterised by a membership drawn from the middle classes with no overt allegiance to either a political party or a religious denomination.

In contrast, Robert Blatchford and G.H.B. Ward, founder of the Sheffield Clarion Ramblers, 'believed strongly in the socially transforming power of open-air fellowship in the countryside'.<sup>73</sup> The loose federation of clubs and associations that grew up around the *Clarion* newspaper were more closely allied to the socialist principles of individual fulfilment through recreation and an appreciation of the

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<sup>70</sup> See A. Holt, *Making Tracks* (London: Ramblers' Association, 1985), p.11.

<sup>71</sup> H. Walker, *British Journal of Sports History*, p.146.

<sup>72</sup> H. Hill, *Freedom to Roam*, pp.24-25

<sup>73</sup> M. Tebbutt, 'Rambling and Manly Identity in Derbyshire's Dark Peak' 1880s-1920s in *Historical Journal*, 49(4), (2006), p.131.

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natural world, an ideal very similar to Leonard's philosophy and similarly influenced by the values espoused by Ruskin, Morris and Carpenter.<sup>74</sup> The *Clarion* newspaper had a mass circulation within the working class and its influence spread into their leisure time, leading to the formation of choirs, cycling and rambling clubs. The Clarion Cycling Club (CCC) gave many young people, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the chance to experience a holiday in the open air on cycling and camping trips in a comradely atmosphere. The Sheffield Clarion Ramblers, founded in 1900 under the *Clarion* banner by the redoubtable G.H.B. Ward, a former Sunday school teacher, combined in a way that no other club appears to have done at the time the need to "re-establish the sense of fellowship between men amid the objects of nature".<sup>75</sup> As with other groups, there was an emphasis on 'men', although three women went on the club's first walk. According to Ward it was the 'first Sunday workers' rambling club in the north of England'.<sup>76</sup>

The Religious Society of Friends had its own version of the rambling cult. Their involvement in the outdoors movement is rarely acknowledged by historians; neither Taylor nor Barton makes any reference to the Friends. Hanley and Walton include a fleeting reference to 'a distinct Quaker and pacifist undercurrent' to CHA philosophy.<sup>77</sup> Only Mark Freeman, in a recent article, records the involvement of the Friends in the various manifestations of the outdoors movement. He suggests that many features of the 'Quaker Tramp', which originated in Yorkshire in 1905, echoed

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<sup>74</sup> The *Clarion Field Club* formed by Robert Blatchford gave practical expression to his *Merrie England* notion, which promulgated a doctrine that combined physical exercise and social intercourse with educational and cultural activity, in a simple life communion with the natural environment which rejected the march of urban industrialism (see H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p.107).

<sup>75</sup> H. Hill, *Freedom to Roam*, p.31.

<sup>76</sup> See his history of the origins of the club in the *Clarion Handbook*, 1921-22.

<sup>77</sup> K. Hanley & J. K. Walton, *Constructing Cultural Tourism*, p.169.

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those of the Clarion Clubs and other groups, in particular a focus on the spiritual dimension of the outdoors and a belief in the power of homo-social fellowship.<sup>78</sup>

The mixture of tramping, lectures and discussions that characterised Quaker tramps was clearly mirrored in the philosophy of CHA and Holiday Fellowship holidays, where educational activities were combined with recreation. Through individuals such as Arnold Rowntree of the York confectionary firm, the first President of the Holiday Fellowship, the Friend's conception of social service and fellowship strongly influenced Leonard's own ideas and the early direction of the Holiday Fellowship. In fact, Leonard joined the Society of Friends shortly after the First World War, the absence of a rigid creed and the freedom for intellectual thought that it afforded appealed strongly to him.<sup>79</sup> The Friends' influence on the outdoor movement went much further. Several Quakers had prominent roles in the YHA, including its founding secretary, Egerton St. John (Jack) Catchpool, who would become a figure of considerable importance in the social history of philanthropy and voluntary action in the mid twentieth-century.<sup>80</sup>

Another mechanism encouraging the interest of townsmen in the countryside were the mechanics' institutes, first founded in 1823. Their original purpose was to produce more efficient workmen but, as Mabel Tylecote points out, their objectives came to include 'instruction of the working classes in the principles of the arts they practice and in other branches of useful knowledge, excluding party politics and controversial

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<sup>78</sup> M. Freeman, *Fellowship, service and the 'spirit of adventure': the Religious Society of Friends and the outdoors movement in Britain, c.1900-1939*, *Quaker Studies*, 14 (2009), pp.72-92. Although Quaker tramps usually involved both sexes, its founder, Neave Brayshaw, a Bootham, York schoolmaster, preferred men-only tramps.

<sup>79</sup> See obituary in *The Friend*, July 30, 1948, pp.635-636 and Quaker records for Colwyn Bay Monthly Meeting held in Friends' House, London, where he celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

<sup>80</sup> E. St. J. Catchpool, *Candles in the Darkness*, (London: Bannisdale Press, 1966).

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theology'.<sup>81</sup> They spawned botanical societies in almost every town and village in Lancashire and Yorkshire to study the area's natural history.<sup>82</sup>

Mechanics' Institutes flourished throughout the north of England. Philip Snowden, a student of the Burnley Institute in 1886 and a contemporary of Leonard, became the first Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer and was a visitor to the Holiday Fellowship's centre at Conwy during the First World War.<sup>83</sup> Ernest Evans, who became Natural Science Master at the Burnley Institute, worked as a cotton weaver for twenty years before being appointed to teach botany in 1889. He was a keen Rambler and took many of his students on field excursions in the surrounding area. According to Tom Stephenson, who studied under him, he was responsible for the popularity of rambling in north-east Lancashire.<sup>84</sup> Leonard, preaching only six miles away in Colne, was not alone in encouraging cotton workers into the great outdoors.

At the same time that rambling clubs were being formed in both southern and northern England, climbing clubs were beginning to flourish. Mountaineering in the 'Golden Age' of Alpine climbing in the mid-nineteenth century was largely driven by well-to-do professionals or the leisured upper-class.<sup>85</sup> The first British mountaineering club, the Alpine Club founded in 1857, was an informal dining club for 'gentlemen' alpine climbers. The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club was the second English, and third British, mountaineering club to be formed, in Leeds in 1892 (the Scottish Mountaineering Club was formed in 1889). It was also very much a 'gentlemen's club' and despite its

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<sup>81</sup> M. Tylecote, *The Mechanics' Institutes of Lancashire and Yorkshire before 1851*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1957) p.274.

<sup>82</sup> H. Hill, *Freedom to Roam*, p.28-29.

<sup>83</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.113.

<sup>84</sup> T. Stephenson, *Forbidden Land*, p.68.

<sup>85</sup> C. Wells, *A brief History of British Mountaineering*, (Mountain Heritage Trust, 2001).

name, the YRC was not a walking club.<sup>86</sup> In a similar fashion, members of the Climbers' Club, founded in 1898, were drawn from the professions and senior universities.<sup>87</sup> The Rucksack Club, founded in 1902, included an 'uncanny proportion of lawyers' together with a large number of academics from Manchester University.<sup>88</sup> The Wayfarers' Club, formed in 1906, comprised thirty 'adventurous spirits' from the Education Department of Liverpool University.<sup>89</sup> As with the membership of the early rambling clubs, the membership of these early climbing clubs was essentially male.

In contrast to these gentlemen's climbing clubs, the Fell and Rock Climbing Club of the English Lake District (FRCC) was far less exclusive. Not only was it unique in admitting membership to either gender from its inception in 1906-1907, it also encouraged working-class youngsters to join. Members were mainly local to the north of England although it attracted many of those climbers from the south who had frequented the Wasdale Head Hotel and other Lake District hostelries in the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless, the social background of most climbers, although broadening, was still largely middle-class and professional. It was also still overwhelmingly a male-dominated scene.

This review of the open-air movement cannot ignore the important contribution of the Cyclists' Touring Club (CTC). Helen Walker considers that, of the groups that spearheaded the outdoor movement, emphasis should be placed on the role of the CTC

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<sup>86</sup> See H. H. Bellhouse, *The Formation of the Yorkshire Ramblers' Club*, YRC Journal Vol.1, No.1.

<sup>87</sup> See C. Osborne, *Gender and the Organisation of British Climbing c.1857-1955*, unpublished PhD thesis, (University of Lancaster, 2006), pp.171-200.

<sup>88</sup> J. Beatty, *This Mountain Life: The first hundred years of the Rucksack Club*, (Bamford: Northern Light, 2003), p.9.

<sup>89</sup> *100 Years of Wayfaring, 1906-2006*, The Wayfarers Club (Liverpool:Wayfarers Club, 2006), p.14.

<sup>90</sup> An article entitled *The First Fifty Years* by F. H. F. Simpson in the 1956 edition of the Fell and Rock Journal traces the history of the club from its birth on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1906 at the Sun Inn, Coniston.

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in pioneering the provision of cheap overnight accommodation.<sup>91</sup> Founded in 1878, it flourished in the 1890s with a record membership of over 60,000 at the turn of the century. It attracted many members from the offices and factories of the industrial towns, for whom by the 1920s the bicycle was the principal means of getting to work. There was a proliferation of cycling clubs affiliated to organisations ranging from churches to political parties. They patronised their own network of cafes and modest bed and breakfast ‘digs’ listed by the CTC and the National Cyclists’ Union. As Helen Walker points out, the cycling community with its focus on youth was central to the broader movement, embracing all sections of the community which advocated the ideal of a simple life enjoyed in the open air.<sup>92</sup>

### **The emergence of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship**

It is against this background of the prevailing social and economic conditions, the emergence of the leisure phenomenon, and of the open-air movement and early outdoor clubs and organisations that, according to Harvey Taylor, the concept of ‘rational’ holidays developed into a significant practical expression of the late nineteenth-century reaction against the trivial and commercially exploited utilization of increased leisure time.<sup>93</sup>

### The role of the National Home Reading Union (NHRU)

In a recent paper on *An English Chautauqua*, Robert Snape suggests that insufficient attention has been given to the influence of the Chautauqua Assembly of North

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<sup>91</sup> H. Walker, *British Journal of Sports History*, p.146.

<sup>92</sup> H. Walker, *British Journal of Sports History*, p.147.

<sup>93</sup> H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p.191.



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America on British thinking on ‘rational’ holidaymaking in the late nineteenth century.<sup>94</sup> From the mid-1870s, the Chautauqua movement organised annual summer assemblies, which combined ‘rational’ holidaymaking with informal education. According to Snape, the success of the Chautauqua movement attracted leisure reformers in Britain such as J B Paton, Principal of the Congregational Institute of Nottingham, and led to an attempt to establish an English Chautauqua at an assembly in Blackpool in 1889. However, after initial success, subsequent assemblies in 1890 and 1891 failed to attract working-class holidaymakers and its emphasis moved to middle-class inland resorts, spas and county towns where it continued to combine leisure and study through educational visits, talks and social gatherings until 1909.<sup>95</sup>

J B Paton was one of the most influential Congregationalists of the late-Victorian period and was actively involved in various projects to improve the social and moral conditions of working people.<sup>96</sup> In founding the NHRU in 1889, he intended that it would operate on a similar model to the Chautauqua assemblies. Snape suggests that it was due to the failure of the assemblies in Blackpool to engage working-class holidaymakers that Paton turned his attention to Leonard’s initiative at Colne. ‘Why not do this for thousands.’ he is quoted as saying.<sup>97</sup>

The NHRU supported Leonard and the CHA after its establishment as an autonomous organisation in 1897. However, although members of the CHA were encouraged to join the NHRU, only 231 of 7,733 CHA guest house visitors in 1904 were enrolled with the NHRU. This adds weight to Snape’s view that the NHRU and the CHA,

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<sup>94</sup> R. Snape, ‘An English Chautauqua: the National Home Reading Union and the development of rational holidays in late Victorian Britain’, *Journal of Tourism History*, Vol.2, No. 3, (2010), p.215.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid*, p.224.

<sup>96</sup> See J. L. Paton, *John Brown Paton: A biography*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914).

<sup>97</sup> J. L. Paton, *John Brown Paton: A biography*, pp.228-229.

although partner organisations with similar objectives, drew from socially different constituencies.<sup>98</sup> Leonard consistently sought a working-class membership and openly criticised middle-class displays of consumption amongst members. Indeed, when he perceived that the CHA had become too middle-class, he founded the Holiday Fellowship in a renewed effort to provide ‘rational’ holidays of genuinely working class appeal.<sup>99</sup>

According to Snape, the success of the CHA was ‘not that it persuaded a playful crowd to become rational and respectable but that it offered rational and respectable holidays to those for whom the playful crowd held little appeal’. Whilst the difference between the pleasurable seaside holiday and the collective associations of the ‘rational’ holiday was partly drawn along the lines of social class, it was chiefly a cultural distinction in terms of morality, taste and respectability.<sup>100</sup>

#### The Reverend T. A. Leonard

An understanding of their founder, his origins, education, influences and beliefs provides further context for the foundation of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. In histories of his holiday movement, Leonard is described as the Reverend Thomas Arthur Leonard, a Congregational minister from Colne, Lancashire. Although Leonard is strongly associated with Colne, from where his first holiday trip originated,

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<sup>98</sup> R. Snape, ‘Co-operative Holidays Association’, p.225.

<sup>99</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in holiday making*, pp. 51-55.

<sup>100</sup> R. Snape, ‘Co-operative Holidays Association’, p.229.

he was the minister there for only four and a half years; from September 1890 to December 1894.<sup>101</sup>

A detailed examination of the Births, Marriages and Deaths Registers and Census Records shows that Leonard was born in 1864 in Finsbury, London, significantly a hot bed of radicalism and religious dissention; at 50 Tabernacle Walk, close to John Wesley's first chapel on City Road.<sup>102</sup> His father was a clock and watchmaker, his mother was the daughter of the eminent Congregational minister, John Campbell, minister at the Whitefields Tabernacle on Tabernacle Row just round the corner.<sup>103</sup> Leonard, therefore, inherited a Congregationalist tradition. Leonard's father died when he was five years old and Leonard and his sister were brought up by his mother. She had a considerable influence on the direction of Leonard's future career.<sup>104</sup>

The family moved to Hackney in 1869, where Leonard's education included trips to Heidelberg in Germany, an experience which sowed the seed for his interest in international relations.<sup>105</sup> Little is known about this phase of his life but census records show that by 1881, the family had moved to Eastbourne where his mother ran a lodging house.<sup>106</sup> Leonard was employed as a builder's clerk and it was at Eastbourne that he met his future wife, Mary Arletta Coupe, a Sunday school teacher.

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<sup>101</sup> For full biographical details of T A Leonard, see entry in ODNB: Douglas Hope, 'Leonard, Thomas Arthur (1864–1948)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, May 2013.

<sup>102</sup> GRO Births, Marriages and Deaths Index, St. Luke Registration District, Vol. 1B, Page no. 639; For a social history of Finsbury, see D.R. Green, *Finsbury: Past, Present and Future*, (London: King's College, 2009), pp.11-12.

<sup>103</sup> John Campbell (1795-1867) was a follower of George Whitefield and a very influential figure in the Methodist Church, see ODNB, Index Number 101004524.

<sup>104</sup> Conversation with Nancy Green, T. A. Leonard's great grand-daughter, 4 April 2012 (a photograph of his mother shows her to be a fierce some looking lady).

<sup>105</sup> T. A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.118; Also GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16.

<sup>106</sup> The movements of his family can be traced from the 1871 & 1881 Censuses and personal papers in Greater Manchester Record Office (B/CHA/HIS/16/1).

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It was whilst living at Eastbourne that his leaning towards the Congregational church led him to enrol in 1884 at the Congregational Institute in Nottingham, newly established by J B Paton, a pioneer of educational and social reform. After three years at the Nottingham Institute, Leonard took up his first pastorate at the Abbey Road Congregational Church in Barrow-in-Furness in 1887.<sup>107</sup> It was whilst at Barrow that he first took his congregation on rambles in the Lake District. In his memoirs, Leonard acknowledges the importance of his education at the Congregational Institute in Nottingham and the influence of Dr. J B Paton, ‘the man to whom our movement owes its being’, who subsequently became first President of the CHA.<sup>108</sup>

Whilst Leonard’s approach to holiday making was grounded in Congregationalism, it was also strongly influenced by contemporary social and political thought. Robert Snape describes Leonard as ‘a Christian Socialist and a disciple of Matthew Arnold and John Ruskin, both of whom he quoted in his sermons’.<sup>109</sup> The CHA magazine *Comradeship* contains a range of articles with Ruskinian connections.<sup>110</sup> He also gained inspiration from William Morris, Edward Carpenter, Henry D Thoreau and Charles Kingsley. The term ‘guest-house’ for the accommodation used by the CHA was adopted from Morris’s *News from Nowhere*, although the term ‘Gasthaus’ was in common usage in Germany.<sup>111</sup> As Robert Snape comments, the idealised pastoral vision of Ruskin and Morris and the rural imagery of Wordsworth and the Lake Poets were the foundations of the CHA’s guiding principles of fellowship and

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<sup>107</sup> Records of Minute of deacon’s meetings, Abbey Road Congregational Church, BDFCCE//6, Cumbria Record Office, Barrow.

<sup>108</sup> T. A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, pp.107-108.

<sup>109</sup> R. Snape, *Leisure Studies*, p.148.

<sup>110</sup> See GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB1/1 (Comradeship 1907-1912).

<sup>111</sup> T. A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.138.

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commonwealth, and the model for its holidays.<sup>112</sup> In their examination of the role of John Ruskin in the development of tourism in Britain, Keith Hanley and John Walton support the view that Leonard's ideas were strongly influenced by Ruskin.<sup>113</sup>

Leonard was also an enthusiastic member of the fledgling Independent Labour Party (ILP) in the 1890s and knew many of its leading figures. He shared a platform with Keir Hardie at a meeting in Colne in 1894.<sup>114</sup> Hubert Beaumont, who later became a Labour MP, regularly accompanied the family on holidays prior to the First World War and was elected to the General Committee of the CHA.<sup>115</sup> Ramsay MacDonald and his family were visitors to Leonard's home in Conwy before and during the First World War.<sup>116</sup>

A number of articles in the *Colne and Nelson Times* and *Burnley Express and Advertiser* during the period November 1892-November 1894 provide an indication of the breadth of his interest in social and political affairs, including the distribution of wealth, the educational well-being of his flock, liquor reform and gambling.<sup>117</sup>

However, as Henderson and Hardman point out in an obituary written following his death in 1948, Leonard was by no means uncritical of the ILP and Labour politics.<sup>118</sup> In attempting to 'express something of the debt tens of thousands of people owe to the life of T. Arthur Leonard', Henderson and Hardman had no doubt that his main objective, which stemmed from a deep religious conviction, was always to further his

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<sup>112</sup> R. Snape, *Leisure Studies*, p.148.

<sup>113</sup> K. Hanley & J. K. Walton, *Constructing Cultural Tourism*, p.163.

<sup>114</sup> See report in *Colne & Nelson Times*, 26 October 1894 (p.5).

<sup>115</sup> GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/1.

<sup>116</sup> Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.60 & pp.112-113.

<sup>117</sup> See *Colne and Nelson Times and Burnley Express and Advertiser*, November 1892-November 1894.

<sup>118</sup> J. Henderson & D. Hardman, *T. Arthur Leonard*, Over the Hills, No.81, New Year 1949, pp.2-3. At this time, John Henderson was the General Secretary of HF and David Hardman was Vice-President, later becoming President in 1962.

ideas for the social improvement of working people, particularly young people. John Lewis Paton, son of J B Paton, in his 'Introit' to Leonard's book, describes Leonard's holiday movement as 'a great piece of social engineering'. In a more scholarly tone, Taylor describes it thus:

*Leonard's pastoral work in Colne, adopted and suitably adapted from its origins in liberal philanthropic non-conformism, was informed by a Christian socialist ethos, coloured by the type of moralistic tone that was characteristic of a turn-of-the-century reforming intellectual milieu, which envisaged social progress through cultural reconstruction.*<sup>119</sup>

#### The early development of the CHA

In the next chapter, the ideals and philosophy of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship will be analysed and dissected in some detail. But, before doing so, it is necessary to briefly consider how the CHA, and subsequently the Holiday Fellowship, emerged and developed following Leonard's first trip with 32 members of the Colne young men's "democratic" Guild to Smallwood House, Ambleside in June 1891.<sup>120</sup> In his defining sermon on the philosophy of holidaymaking to his congregation at Dockray Square Congregational Church in August 1891, he urged his congregation to abandon Blackpool, with its brass bands and crowds, for purposeful holidays in the solitude of the countryside.<sup>121</sup> Following the success of the visit to Ambleside in 1891, the church's Social Guild spent a weekend in Caernarvon, North Wales in 1892.

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<sup>119</sup> H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p.202.

<sup>120</sup> See account of first holiday in Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.20 and in *Colne and Nelson Times*, 8 July 1891.

<sup>121</sup> *Colne and Nelson Times*, 7 August 1891.

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Holidays under the auspices of the NHRU to Ambleside and Keswick commenced in August 1893.<sup>122</sup> The first announcement of these holidays, travel arrangements, and detailed programme and timetable are replicated in Robert Speake's *A Hundred Years of Holidays 1893-1993*. They extol 'A Week among the Mountains!' and 'Better than Blackpool, Douglas or Skegness'.<sup>123</sup> The initial advertisement caused a stir in some quarters by inviting interest only from members of 'Reading Circles, P.S.As, Adult Classes and other men's societies'. In the event, eight women attended the first holidays to Ambleside and Keswick.<sup>124</sup>

Until the end of 1894, all the organising was done by Leonard from his study in Colne, the treasurer was John Lewis Paton, and bookings were distributed amongst seven "corresponding secretaries" living in different parts of the country.<sup>125</sup> However, with an increasing number of properties, Leonard resigned his ministry in Colne in December 1894 to run J B Paton's first Social Institute in Islington, London in order to devote more time to his holiday movement and pursue his wider social aspirations. He also felt that his ministry at Colne placed restrictions on his freedom to express views on the social and political changes that were enveloping the country at this time. Letters and other contributions to the *Colne and Nelson Times* illustrate the heart-felt sorrow of many of his congregation at his decision to leave his work at Colne and he did return on occasion during 1895 and 1896 as a visiting speaker and to perform christening and marriage ceremonies.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> See announcement in *Colne and Nelson Times*, 2 June 1893.

<sup>123</sup> R. Speake, pp.8-10.

<sup>124</sup> See F. N. Pringle, *A Week among the Lakes*, *The Independent and Nonconformist*, 31 August 1893.

<sup>125</sup> Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, pp.28-29.

<sup>126</sup> A number of articles in the *Colne and Nelson Times* during the period November 1894-November 1895 relate the circumstances behind the decision of Leonard to resign his pastorate at Colne and the attempts by his congregation to persuade him to reconsider his decision. They also provide an indication of the breadth of his interest in social and political affairs, including the distribution of wealth, the educational well-being of his flock, liquor reform and gambling.

By 1895, holiday destinations included Barmouth in North Wales, Tavistock in Devon and Portrush in Northern Ireland as well as Keswick. Leonard widened the publicity of his holiday scheme to include publications such as *Labour Prophet* and the *Clarion* newspaper. An article in *Labour Prophet* describes an open-air creed which reconciled Christian and Utopian socialist principles, quoting Edward Carpenter and claiming ‘a new reverence for God, a new conception of happiness, and a deeper realisation of the joys of living’.<sup>127</sup> During 1895, Leonard’s holiday scheme operated from his house in South Tottenham, London. Annual conferences began in the same year with a conference at Castleton Hall, Rochdale where J B Paton was elected as President, J L Paton as Treasurer and T A Leonard as Secretary, together with an organising committee of seven people.<sup>128</sup>

The lease of Abbey House, Whitby in 1896 provided Leonard with a permanent office, and Abbey House became a flagship centre for the NHRU and served the CHA well, continuing as a holiday centre for over 100 years. It was not until 1897 that it was considered that the movement required some form of legal status. Accordingly, at a meeting on 4 January 1897, in the Drawing Room of the Manchester YMCA, the CHA was formed as a limited company with assets of £6,000. Its objects were:

*To provide recreative and educational holidays by purchasing or renting and furnishing houses and rooms in selected centres, by catering in such houses for parties of members and guests and by securing helpers who will promote the intellectual and social interests of the party with which they are associated”.*<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> See *Labour Prophet*, July 1895, p.102; see also *Clarion*, 8 June 1895, p.183.

<sup>128</sup> Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.23.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.27-28.



New centres came and went in quick success prior to the First World War.

Ardenconnel on the Clyde met a widely-felt need for a centre close to the Highlands of Scotland. Keld in the Yorkshire Dales was opened in 1899 as a Spartan centre but only survived three seasons; some thought it “too simple”. Wharfedale was another experiment in ‘cheap and simple accommodation’. The purchase of Newlands Mill, outside Keswick, in 1904, maintained this ideal and stirred a demand for another strenuous mountain centre. Accordingly, Stanley Ghyll House in Eskdale was purchased in 1912. By 1913, the CHA had 13 British centres, accommodating some 13,670 guests, carving out a niche in the burgeoning leisure industry.<sup>130</sup>

Although foreign travel was not one of the CHA’s original objectives, once having experimented with a trip to St. Luc in the Valasian Alps in 1902, the CHA extended its operations across the channel in furtherance of Leonard’s ideals of peace and International brotherhood, with centres in Switzerland, France and Germany.<sup>131</sup>

#### The formation of the Holiday Fellowship

‘In the December of 1912 it was fore-shadowed; in March 1913 the news of it became certain’ were the words written for the CHA magazine *Comradeship* by Percy Redfern announcing the resignation of T A Leonard from the CHA.<sup>132</sup> In Leonard’s words, he felt that despite the working-class origins of the Association, it was becoming rather

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<sup>130</sup> See CHA Annual reports, 1908-1914, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>131</sup> R. Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.30.

<sup>132</sup> *Comradeship*, March 1913, (GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/1); the announcement of Leonard’s resignation from the Co-operative Holidays Association.

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middle-class in spirit and conservative in ideas.<sup>133</sup> Also, although the Association's holidays had become physically less arduous and there was a gradual retreat from simplicity, new members nevertheless rebelled against the disciplines of early rising, compulsory rambling and the Spartan conditions imposed by the CHA's ideals.<sup>134</sup> Modern historians consider that these tensions were the most significant factors in Leonard's decision to leave the CHA.<sup>135</sup>

It was in May 1913 at the CHA's guest house, "Woodbank" at Matlock Bath that Leonard and four other members of the CHA General Committee agreed to the establishment of 'The Holiday Fellowship' with the objective: "To organise holiday making, to provide for the healthy enjoyment of leisure, to encourage the love of the open air, to further the interests of education, culture and physical recreation and to promote social and international fellowships."<sup>136</sup>

So Leonard resigned from the CHA to form the Holiday Fellowship in a renewed effort to establish holidays that would be genuinely working-class in appeal and composition. He also felt that the CHA was not making the progress in International relations that he had hoped for. The CHA's guest-house at Newlands was sold to the Holiday Fellowship for the same value that it was purchased by the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship had the use of the CHA's German centre at Kelkheim, as a base for its foreign work. The Holiday Fellowship even had use of the CHA song-book.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.52.

<sup>134</sup> *Comradeship*, Our Letter Bag, February 1909, pp.47-48; December 1910; February 1911, (GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/1)

<sup>135</sup> See H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, pp.213-214; K. Hanley & J. K. Walton, *Constructing Cultural Tourism*, pp.169-170; R. Snape, *Leisure Studies*, p.154.

<sup>136</sup> Minutes of meetings held on 31 May/1 June 1913, HF Archive; D. Hardman, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship: Part 1*, p.28.

<sup>137</sup> Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, pp.53-54.

Leonard himself portrayed the image that the split was amicable. As Leonard states in his memoirs, ‘Not only had we the goodwill of the General Committee, but certain of its members joined our first provisional committee, and the circular announcing our plans and asking for financial help went out in *Comradeship*, to every member of the Association’.<sup>138</sup> In the words of the circular issued at the inception of the Holiday Fellowship, he states:

*The Holiday Fellowship is the outcome of a desire on the part of the General Secretary of the Co-operative Holidays Association to extend the work begun twenty years ago by that movement.....We want to bring our holidays within the reach of poorer folk and to this end to keep the arrangements as simple as possible.*<sup>139</sup>

The ‘official’ history of the Holiday Fellowship also claimed, ‘the CHA was in entire goodwill with the new movement under the leadership of Leonard’.<sup>140</sup> But this rhetoric does not tell the whole story. Records not only reveal Leonard’s growing dissatisfaction with the General Committee’s desire to improve the quality of centres but also a general irritation with the General Committee in relation to his involvement in matters of detail. In his letter of resignation, he makes his views clear:

*I have been conscious for some time that an important section of the Committee have lacked confidence in my judgement upon certain matters.....The questions upon which my advice has been passed over has reference to the appointment or otherwise of Manageresses, the selection of furnishings, provisioning and other arrangements at the centres.*<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.52.

<sup>139</sup> *Comradeship*, December 1912 (GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/1)

<sup>140</sup> D. Hardman, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship: Part One*, p.2.

<sup>141</sup> Letter of resignation, GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/3.

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However, a Special Inquiry set up to consider Leonard's reasons for leaving the CHA came to the view that 'such difficulties or friction as having arisen are due to Mr Leonard's having concerned himself in detailed matters of administration that are the proper sphere of the existing sub-committees of the General Committee'.<sup>142</sup>

The official version of the split with the CHA has recently been questioned by Rosamund Ridley, who suggests that Leonard's friendship with Ramsay Macdonald and other socialists, his opposition to the First World War, and his organisation of Anglo-German student exchanges caused hostility with the CHA hierarchy and a fall-out with his friend John Lewis Paton, who supported an Officers' Training Corps at his school, the Manchester Grammar School.<sup>143</sup> Ridley's assertions are based on a detailed examination of the CHA archive and other material but a number of her allegations do not stand up to serious examination. There is no doubt that Leonard was a convinced pacifist; he acknowledges as much in his memoirs and he became a Quaker shortly after the First World War.<sup>144</sup> However, in the chapter 'Some of our Friends' in Leonard's memoirs, J B Paton and his son, John Lewis Paton are both referred to in glowing terms and are both praised highly for their involvement in the foundation of the CHA.<sup>145</sup> In his introduction to Leonard's memoirs, John Lewis Paton refers to Leonard as 'my old friend'.<sup>146</sup>

The conclusion to be drawn from a detailed analysis of the events surrounding Leonard's departure from the CHA is that, whilst there may have been some

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<sup>142</sup> GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/4, Minute of General Meeting 26 March 1913.

<sup>143</sup> R. Ridley, *Dear Friends, Liebe Freunde* (Rosamund Ridley, 2010), pp.167-169. See also J. A. Graham & B. A. Phythian (eds.), *The Manchester Grammar School* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1965), p.101.

<sup>144</sup> Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.59.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid*, pp.107-108.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid*, p.16.

antagonism from a handful of CHA members to his relationship with ILP party politicians, and to his attempts to maintain peaceful relations between Britain and Germany, the main reason for his departure was a desire for more freedom from the constraints imposed by the organisation's administration to pursue his vision for 'rational' recreation.<sup>147</sup>

## **Conclusions**

This review of the relevant literature on the prevailing social and economic conditions, the emergence of a recognisable modern leisure phenomenon, and on the open-air movement and early outdoor clubs has identified the main factors contributing to the desire to escape from the expanding urbanised and industrialised towns and cities in the mid to late nineteenth-century. It has also shown that a wide range of organisations responded to this need to escape from the social conditions of the industrial towns and cities. It is against this background that the concept of 'rational' holidays as a moral and cultural alternative to commercialised leisure activities developed.

This chapter has highlighted the important yet often overlooked influence of Dr J B Paton and the NHRU on the development of 'rational' holidays in Britain, and in the establishment of the CHA, founded by T A Leonard in 1897. This review has drawn out the contexts in which the CHA emerged and has shown that T A Leonard was influenced not only by contemporary social and political thought but also by his experiences in early life. They all played an important part in shaping his desire to

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<sup>147</sup> See Letter of resignation dated 26 November 1912 and ensuing correspondence (GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/3).

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persuade his congregation at Colne to abandon the traditional seaside holiday for 'rational' and purposeful holidays in the countryside.

This chapter has examined the emergence of the CHA from Leonard's first trip to the Lake District with his church's Social Guild at Colne in 1891. It has charted the early development of the CHA, Leonard's split with the CHA and the founding of the Holiday Fellowship in 1913. In doing so, it has highlighted differences of interpretation amongst historians about his social, political and religious views but these do not detract from his vision for 'rational' recreation.

Leonard's vision can be summarised as follows:

*To provide simple and strenuous recreative and educational holidays at the lowest possible cost, by offering affordable accommodation, and to promote friendship and fellowship amid the beauty of the natural world.*

We shall see in succeeding chapters the extent to which this vision was achieved.

Firstly, the next chapter deconstructs in some detail the ideals and philosophy of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in terms of the key elements of his holiday scheme: the pursuit of recreative and educational holidays in the countryside; the provision of cheap and simple accommodation; social mixing; the encouragement of friendship and fellowship, and the pursuit of internationalism.

**CHAPTER 2: DECONSTRUCTING THE IDEALS AND PHILOSOPHY OF  
THE CHA AND HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP, AS THEY STOOD IN 1919**

*“I learned it in the meadow path,  
I learned it on the mountain stairs-  
The best things any mortal hath,  
Are those which every mortal shares”*

From the poem *The Best Things*  
by Lucy Larcom 1824-1893

**Introduction**

The last two lines of the above verse appear on Leonard’s memorial tablets, erected after his death in 1948, on Conwy Mountain near his home; on Cadair Ifan Goch, a small hill overlooking the Conwy Valley; and on the slopes of Catbells above Newlands Mill, near Keswick.<sup>1</sup> *The Best Things* was Leonard’s favourite hymn, written by Lucy Larcom, an American writer and Quaker poet. It became the Holiday Fellowship’s holiday anthem, a celebration of Leonard’s love of the open air and passion for the countryside.

The words ‘*The best things any mortal hath, Are those which every mortal shares*’ epitomise Leonard’s approach to holiday making and are reflected in the ideals and philosophy of the CHA and, subsequently, the Holiday Fellowship, both of which set out to provide simple and strenuous recreative and educational holidays by offering reasonably priced accommodation and to promote friendship and fellowship amid the beauty of the natural world. The choice of the hymn as a summary of his beliefs is the

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<sup>1</sup> The debate about a memorial for Leonard is extensively covered in the HF’s magazine *Over the Hills*, Nos. 81, 83 & 87.

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more significant since the singing of songs on rambles was an integral element of CHA and Holiday Fellowship holidays from the start. As Leonard himself remarked in his memoirs ‘From the commencement, we felt the need for a song, and I suppose that it was partly due to my school days in Germany that a good lilting chorus seemed to be an essential part of a tramp’.<sup>2</sup>

This chapter attempts to deconstruct Leonard’s ideals and philosophy. This is an essential foundational element of the research, for any assessment of the extent to which the CHA and Holiday Fellowship subsequently diverted from their original ideals and philosophy requires, first of all, a detailed analysis of the reasoning behind their initial formulation.

In undertaking this task, the secondary sources available are somewhat limited. Only T. A. Leonard’s *Adventures in Holiday Making* provides any real insight into his motives, and those of the other founders, in the foundation of the CHA and, subsequently, the Holiday Fellowship. Hardman’s *History of the Holiday Fellowship 1913-1940*, provides some further but limited assistance.<sup>3</sup> More promisingly, substantial primary sources survive, including T. A. Leonard’s personal papers, minutes of the early committee meetings of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship, and articles in the journals of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, *Comradeship* and *Over the Hills* respectively.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, local newspaper reports provide an invaluable

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<sup>2</sup> Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.118.

<sup>3</sup> David Hardman was involved with the HF from 1930 until his death in 1989 and was President from 1962 until 1967. He was the first Labour President of the Cambridge Union in 1925 and Labour MP for Darlington from 1945 to 1951.

<sup>4</sup> The CHA magazine *Comradeship* was first published in 1907 and the HF’s magazine *Over the Hills* in 1920.



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context in which to set events.<sup>5</sup> Together these sources allow a relatively thorough examination of the early ideals and philosophy of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship during a pivotal period of modern British history, the end of the Victorian age and the Edwardian era.

The first recorded text providing an insight into Leonard's philosophy is a local newspaper report on a sermon to his Colne congregation in August 1891 on "Laiking", a colloquial term of Old Norse origin meaning 'to play', in which he spoke at length about the benefits of taking holidays sensibly, sympathetically and sacredly in the countryside.<sup>6</sup> In doing so, he exhorted his congregation to reject the 'dissipations and extravagant frivolities' of the crowded seaside resorts and seek solitude in the wild places where 'God is more likely to speak than in the midst of brass bands and nigger minstrels'. He urged them to help others to enjoy their respite from the toil of work. He asked them not to forget God in their desire for enjoyment. There are strong references here to Thoreau's *Walden; or Life in the Woods*, a discourse on communing with the natural world that is one of the world's most revered texts concerning environmental and conservation issues.<sup>7</sup> Leonard was inspired by Thoreau's writings and indeed named his house in Marple Bridge, built in the arts and crafts style in 1910, 'Walden' after Thoreau's house in the woods.<sup>8</sup>

By 1893, when launching his holiday scheme more widely 'under the auspices of the NHRU', Leonard's vision had become more focussed on holidays among the

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<sup>5</sup> Leonard's activities in Colne are extensively covered in the *Colne and Nelson Times* for the period June 1891-December 1896 (on microfilm in Colne Library).

<sup>6</sup> See *Colne and Nelson Times*, Friday 7 August 1891, p.6.

<sup>7</sup> H. D. Thoreau, *Walden: or Life in the Woods* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1854, reprinted 1995).

<sup>8</sup> Leonard lived in 'Walden', Townscliffe Lane, Marple Bridge from 1910 to 1914 when he moved to the HF's guest house 'Bryn Corach' in Conwy.

mountains involving healthy recreation and bodily and mental enjoyment. The advertising poster, which was distributed widely well beyond the confines of north-east Lancashire, emphasises this aspect of the holiday scheme (see Figure 3). Members would spend their days ‘on tramp’ and the evenings in social intercourse, with music and chatty ‘lecturette’s’.<sup>9</sup>

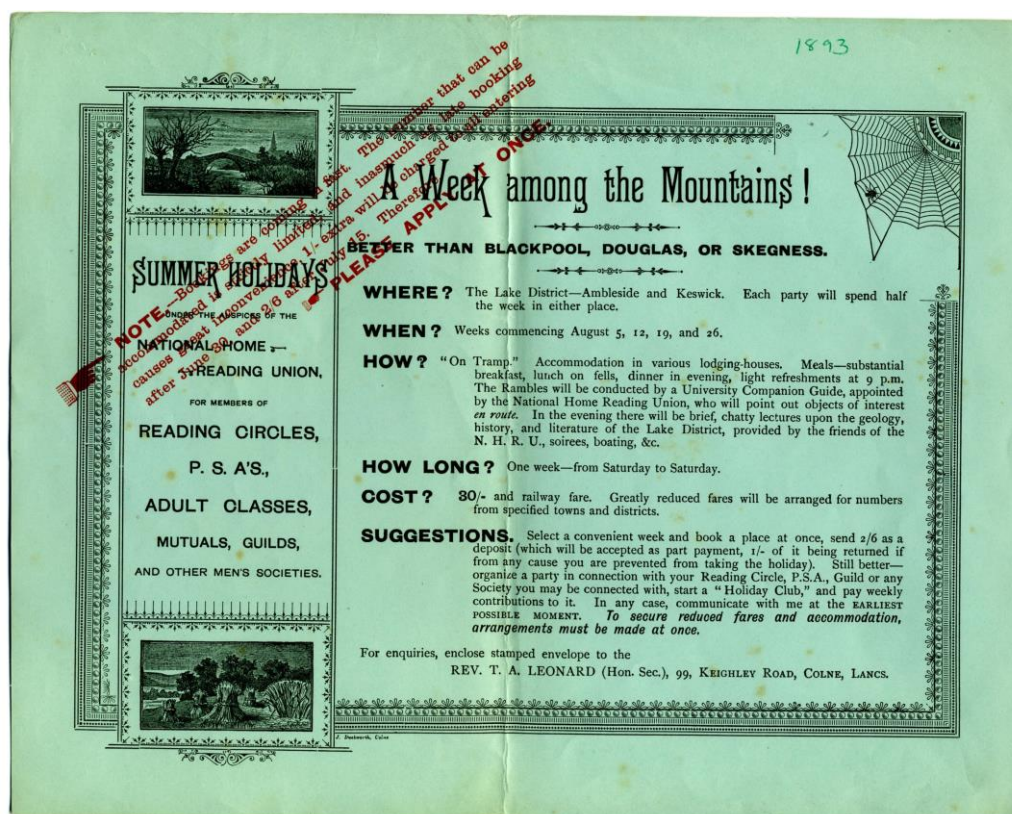


Figure 3: Poster advertising 1893 Summer Holidays (Countrywide Holidays Association)

Strongly influenced by J B Paton and the NHRU, it was envisaged that members would be drawn from “Reading Circles, Adult Classes, Pleasant Sunday Associations and other men’s societies”. Leonard intended that the holiday scheme would be based

<sup>9</sup> See announcement in *Colne and Nelson Times*, Friday 2 June 1893, p.4, and initial advertisement in GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/1. The expression ‘other men’s societies’, which stemmed from the NHRU involvement, was objected to by several members and in the event eight ladies are recorded as having attended the first venture in 1893.

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on the same values as the co-operative movement, which flourished in the north-west of England and would be comparatively inexpensive.<sup>10</sup>

On the founding of the Co-operative Holidays Association (CHA) in 1897, its objects as set out in the Articles of Association reflected Leonard's emerging philosophy.

They were 'to provide recreative, educative and health-giving holidays at the lowest possible cost; to organise excursions accompanied by competent field lecturers; and to furnish or rent, assist and support furnished guest houses in selected centres'.<sup>11</sup>

In essence there were a number of key features to Leonard's philosophy, which was based on a non-conformist morality and the principles of respectability. His education and early life, his experiences at Barrow-in-Furness and of the working and living conditions of his congregation in Colne, described in chapter 1, were all factors which influenced his approach to holiday making. Leonard's boyhood trips to Germany fostered his interest in internationalism. Leonard was well-read and contemporary social and political thought had a strong bearing on his ideas for the social improvement of working people through holiday making.

Leonard's choice of the countryside as the location for communal leisure was highly symbolic. Ruskin's theme of the spirituality of the landscape was deeply embedded within the CHA from its earliest days and its ideological outlook reflected Ruskin's

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<sup>10</sup> For a history of the Co-operative Movement in the north-west, dating from the Rochdale Pioneers in the 1850s, see A. Bonner, *British Co-operation: The History, Principles and Organisation of the British Co-operative Movement* (Manchester: Co-operative Union, 1961). See also J. Birchall, *Co-op: the people's business*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), pp.1-48; N. Robertson, *The Co-operative Movement and communities in Britain: 1914-1960*, Studies in Labour History (London: Ashgate, 2010), pp.1-22.

<sup>11</sup> See Memorandum and Articles of Association, GMCRO, B/CHA/LEG/1.

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contrast of the materialistic nature of urban leisure with the potential of the countryside as an alternative leisure space. A number of modern historians have drawn attention to the philosophical links between Leonard, Paton and Ruskin.<sup>12</sup>

There is a strong similarity between Dr. J B Paton's idea, which did much to shape the character of the CHA, that the wealth of a country was based on 'the strength, intelligence and virtue of the men and women whom it rears', and the core argument of Ruskin's *Unto this Last*, his radical critique of political economy.<sup>13</sup> Hanley and Walton also record that although the CHA was grounded in Congregationalism, it was also hospitable to socialists, even those with a pre-dominantly secular cast of mind.<sup>14</sup>

Fred Marquis, in his contribution to Leonard's memoirs, suggests that Leonard's initiative was the first organised effort to open up the countryside for the physical and spiritual refreshment of the town dweller who seemed to have lost the taste for nature.<sup>15</sup> Whilst Leonard's was not the only contemporary initiative, as we have seen, its importance cannot be over-stressed. Other academics have taken a similar view of Leonard; Pimlott, for example, ranks Leonard alongside Thomas Cook and Billy Butlin as one of the pioneers of holiday making.<sup>16</sup>

As Leonard's philosophy developed, the key elements of his holiday scheme emerged: the pursuit of recreative and educational holidays in the countryside,

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<sup>12</sup> See R. Snape, *The Co-operative Holidays Association*, p.152; K. Hanley & J.K. Walton, *Constructing Cultural Tourism*, p.163; D Birch (ed.) *John Ruskin: Selected Writings*, (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 68-71.

<sup>13</sup> See J B Patons' quotation in Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.35.

<sup>14</sup> K. Hanley & J.K. Walton, *Constructing Cultural Tourism*, p.164.

<sup>15</sup> See *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.198. Fred Marquis, MD of Lewis's Store in Liverpool, was associated with the CHA from before WWI and was a Vice-President from 1917. As Lord Woolton, he was President from 1945-1957.

<sup>16</sup> J.A.R. Pimlott, *The Englishman's Holiday*, p.170.

originally for working men, although women were soon welcomed (rather than being merely tolerated); the provision of cheap and simple accommodation; and the encouragement of friendship and fellowship through social intercourse. Although foreign travel was not one of the CHA's original objectives, it soon extended its operations across the channel in pursuance of Leonard's ideals of international harmony. The following sections analyse each of these in turn in more detail.

### **Recreative and educational holidays**

Leonard's desire to promote recreative and educational holidays stemmed largely from his education at the Nottingham Congregational Institute and the undoubted influence of his tutor Dr J B Paton.<sup>17</sup> J B Paton was an educational and social pioneer, and was instrumental in the establishment of Social Institutes, which provided venues for games, learning and other social purposes. Social Institutes were established in cities throughout Britain in the 1890s and Leonard ran the first Social Institute in Islington, London.<sup>18</sup>

As we have seen in chapter 1, Leonard was also strongly influenced by his experiences at Barrow-in-Furness and by the working and living conditions of his congregation in Colne. In *Adventures in Holiday Making*, he speaks of his first experience of the 'bleak upland township of Colne where the inhabitants were mostly hard-working mill folk', and where the annual exodus during Wakes week well-nigh emptied the town of its population into trains to Blackpool and Morecambe.

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<sup>17</sup> In *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.107, Leonard describes Dr. J B Paton as 'the grand old man of our movement'.

<sup>18</sup> See J L Paton, *John Brown Paton: A Biography*, pp.212-218.

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According to Leonard: ‘This kind of holiday led to thoughtless spending of money, the inane type of amusement and un-healthy overcrowding in lodging houses; moreover it made for vitiated conceptions of life and conduct and produced permanent effects on character’.<sup>19</sup>

In Colne, Leonard saw an opportunity to fulfil his desire to enrich the lives of the young folk: ‘the clerk chained to his desk and the worker weakened by the heat of the mill and workshop’.<sup>20</sup> John Lewis Paton, in his introduction to *Adventures in Holiday Making*, describes Leonard’s initiative as a Toynbee Hall of the open air.<sup>21</sup> This view is endorsed by an account of the first holiday to the Lake District, in 1891, by one of the group, Mr J Hacking, which illustrates how Leonard’s philosophy was put into practice. According to his article in the *Colne Times*: ‘It were champion’ was the verdict of the thirty-two men who spent this first holiday in the Lake District under the leadership of Leonard. They had walked the fells, heard talks on flowers and trees, and the nature of the land, listened to the poetry of Wordsworth and learned the pleasures of fellowship. Away from the smoke and grime of Colne, they had enjoyed a new kind of holiday, one totally different from the customary ‘Wakes Weeks’ in crowded lodging houses and among the artificial pleasures of seaside promenades.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.19.

<sup>20</sup> Colne and Nelson Times, *Sermon by the Rev. T.A. Leonard: The philosophy of holiday making*, 7 Aug 1891, p.6.

<sup>21</sup> Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.15.

<sup>22</sup> As described by one member of the group in a letter to the Colne and Nelson Times, 8 July 1891 (held in Colne Library and in GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/1). See also Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.20.

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Further confirmation of Leonard's efforts to improve the well-being of his flock and the wider community through recreational and educational initiatives appear in frequent reports in the local press. In addition to the usual church activities, such as floral and industrial exhibitions, sales of work, concerts and musical evenings, he organised programmes of lectures and gave talks himself on a range of subjects. He helped with fund raising for reading rooms and encouraged young people to attend science, art and technical classes. He was outspoken at public meetings on subjects such as liquor reform, betting and the suppression of the opium traffic.<sup>23</sup>

In furtherance of his beliefs, Leonard contributed regularly to the *Christian Socialist* and, according to Peter d'A Jones, was a frequent lecturer at Labour Churches, the main activities of which, apart from their regular services, were educational and philanthropic ones.<sup>24</sup> He advertised holidays in the *Clarion* newspaper and in *Labour Prophet*, a socialist journal established by John Trevor, a Unitarian Minister who founded the Labour Church, which thrived in the industrial heartlands of Lancashire and Yorkshire.<sup>25</sup> In fact, John Trevor joined one of the first CHA groups to visit Barmouth in 1894.<sup>26</sup> As Leonard strove to widen the appeal of his holiday scheme, he utilised a range of local and regional newspapers as well as the NHRU Newsletter and church magazines. All these avenues provided Leonard with opportunities for pressing his strong views on the value of recreation and education to the social well-being of working people.

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<sup>23</sup> See various press reports in the *Colne and Nelson Times* during the period 1892-1894 held in Colne Record Office (listed in bibliography). Similar reports appear in the *Burnley Express and Advertiser* of the same period (available from the British Newspaper Archive, [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)).

<sup>24</sup> P d'A Jones, *The Christian Socialist Revival 1877-1914*, p.328; M Bevir, *History Today*, p. 54.

<sup>25</sup> See *Labour Prophet*, June 1894, in GMCRO, B/CHA/16/1.

<sup>26</sup> See *Labour Prophet*, July 1895, p.104, in GMCRO, B/CHA/16/1.

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It is no surprise, therefore, that Leonard's pursuit of 'rational' holidays involved educational advancement as well as recreational activities. As Leonard records, 'The interest of the tramps was deepened by "field talks" on place names, rocks and plants and historical associations'. In the Lake District, Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley, a founder of the National Trust, was a regular host either at his Parish Room or his church at Crosthwaite outside Keswick.<sup>27</sup> He addressed Leonard's first parties to the Lake District and introduced them to the teachings of Ruskin and the poetry of Wordsworth, from which Leonard took the motto for the CHA "Joy in widest commonalty spread".<sup>28</sup>

Further evidence of the recreative and educational benefits of the holiday scheme can be found in Fanny Pringle's report of the first holiday held 'under the auspices of the NHRU' in 1893, which comprised 16 men and 8 women.<sup>29</sup> This report provides a detailed account of the itinerary, the guides, and the field talks and lectures 'illustrated by lantern-slides' given on Wordsworth, Ruskin, Coleridge and de Quincey and on the geology and landscape of the area, including the proposed new Manchester reservoir at Thirlmere. The calibre of the participating guides and lecturers and the wide range of subjects covered are, likewise, provided by the early CHA centre programmes.<sup>30</sup>

John Lewis Paton, the son of Dr. J. B. Paton, Leonard's tutor at Nottingham, was a guide from the inception of holidays with the NHRU in 1893 and was a lecturer and

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<sup>27</sup> See G. Murphy, *Rawnsley, Hardwicke Drummond*, ODNB, ref. 37884.

<sup>28</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.15.

<sup>29</sup> F. N. Pringle, *A Week among the Lakes*, *The Independent and Nonconformist*, 31 August 1893, p. 164 (GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/1).

<sup>30</sup> See CHA centre programmes in GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/2.



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regular leader of walks in the Lake District and North Wales between 1893 and 1924.<sup>31</sup> Field guides and lecturers were recruited from academia as well as the non-conformist church. In Edinburgh, Patrick Geddes, botanist, biologist and town planner, organised accommodation in the University and tours round the City. Peter MacNair, curator of Natural History at Glasgow and Alfred Rendle, curator of the Natural History Museum in South Kensington both lectured at CHA centres.

Hence, the CHA's commitment to education, inherited from the NHRU, was expressed most markedly through the education dimension to its walking holidays.

Another was the formation of reading circles, such as the one formed by the Manchester CHA Club in December 1912 in conjunction with the local NHRU, which charged 1s (5p) per annum subscription. Their first meeting discussed Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies*.<sup>32</sup> The London CHA also organised a reading circle which included the works of Ruskin within its programme as well as travel and science subjects.<sup>33</sup>

Also, through the pages of *Comradeship*, Leonard encouraged the educational function of the CHA, commending readers to the NHRU's reading list and reviewing recommended books, such as George Borrow's *Wild Wales* and Carlyle's *Past and Present*, nature studies and publications of the Fabian Society; an eclectic mix of romantic ruralism, science and travel literature. According to Leonard: 'Part of our CHA ideal is to create a fellowship of readers as well as a fellowship of trampers'.<sup>34</sup> Members were also encouraged to support the work of the Workers' Education

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<sup>31</sup> R. Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.38.

<sup>32</sup> See H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p.210.

<sup>33</sup> See S. Brown (comp.) *The London CHA Club: The First Sixty Years*, p.2.

<sup>34</sup> *Comradeship*, September 1910, p.3, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/1.

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Association and language groups. The study of foreign languages, including Esperanto, was promoted in various editions of *Comradeship*.<sup>35</sup>

As Leonard relates: ‘We were out for education in the widest sense of the term. We believed in conferences and lectures and we nearly always had with our parties someone who could talk interestingly upon the “ologies” and the common wayside interests of the tramps. Sometimes he bored us by dilating on mica-schist or glacial boulders on every excursion but there were other times when we got a good deal out of the talks, such as when dear old Lawrence Small held forth on “Leprechauns and other Things” on the slopes of the Cobbler’.<sup>36</sup>

### **Cheap and simple accommodation**

Until the end of the nineteenth century, accommodation in the countryside was concentrated on hotels and country inns, which were mainly beyond the means of working people. In essence, the CHA was founded to make working-class participation in holidays in the countryside possible by providing affordable accommodation. This lay at the heart of Leonard’s philosophy. The first trip to Ambleside in June 1891 cost 21s [£1.05], including the rail fare, the equivalent of a week’s wage for artisans and mill workers.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> See *Comradeship*, September, November & December 1910, GMCRO, B/CH/ PUB/1/1.

<sup>36</sup> Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.124.

<sup>37</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.20.

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The cost of this holiday compared favourably with the more common Wakes week holiday to the seaside well documented by Walton and others.<sup>38</sup> For example, a report on the annual escape to the seaside in the *Rochdale Labour News* explains that it cost a sum of £2 10s [£2.50] for a holiday at Blackpool or some other convenient watering place, ‘loitering on the sands by day and at night stewing in some suffocating place of amusement’.<sup>39</sup> The same newspaper enthusiastically advertised Leonard’s holidays to its readers as a ‘bargain’ at a mere 31s [£1.55] per week.<sup>40</sup> By comparison, the entry for Blackpool in the 1904-05 edition of *Seaside Watering Places* indicates that ‘The prices for lodgings and board at hotels, of which there are a large number, range from 8s [40p] upwards per day.’<sup>41</sup>

In publicising his holidays, Leonard was at pains to point out the superior nature of the accommodation provided as well as the added benefits of all-inclusive meals: ‘substantial breakfast, lunch on fells, dinner in evening and light refreshments at 9.00pm’. According to the press release in the *Colne and Nelson Times*, the holidays organised ‘Under the auspices of the NHRU’ to Keswick and Ambleside in 1893, which cost 30s [£1.50] plus the rail fare (12s [60p] from most towns in Lancashire), would be more elaborate than the previous holidays, with substantial meals, rambles conducted by a University companion guide, and evening lectures.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Walton, J.K. and Poole, R. ‘The Lancashire wakes in the nineteenth century’, in R. Storch (ed.), *Popular culture and custom in nineteenth-century England* (Beckenham: Croom Helm, 1982), pp.100-124.

<sup>39</sup> *Rochdale Labour News*, August 1899, p.2.

<sup>40</sup> *Rochdale Labour News*, June 1899, p.4.

<sup>41</sup> See *Seaside Watering Places 1904-05: West Coast*, (London: L Upcott Gill, 1904), p.189.

<sup>42</sup> See *Colne and Nelson Times* 2 June 1893, p.4.

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Leonard's entrepreneurial and marketing skills and business acumen are evident, even at this early stage of his holiday scheme. The circular advertising the first holiday sets out clearly the advantages of his scheme: 'Why simply exchange the clatter of the mill for that of a noisy seaside resort?' It compares the negative aspects of holidays at the crowded, bustling and expensive summer seaside resorts with the positive aspects of his holidays: healthy exercise in the bracing and invigorating air of the country.<sup>43</sup> In relation to the standard of accommodation, Leonard points out:

*We were content with very primitive arrangements, so long as they gave us the joy and freedom of the open fells. All we needed was food, beds and good fellowship.*<sup>44</sup>

Initially, a variety of lodging houses and small hotels were used, such as Smallwood House in Ambleside and Greenhow's Hotel in Keswick, but later the CHA acquired a number of its own properties. Abbey House in Whitby, leased in 1896, provided the CHA with its first permanent headquarters. It became the 'flagship' of the NHRU and the CHA, continuing as a guest house for over 100 years.<sup>45</sup> The first property to be purchased was Ardenconnel House at Rhu on the Clyde, discovered by members staying at Helensburgh, which served as a centre in 1896-1897. Ardenconnel became the CHA's headquarters from 1899 until 1902.

Although very satisfied with the acquisition of Ardenconnel for financial reasons, Leonard voiced some disquiet at the loss of intimacy, which the smaller centres had provided. He considered Ardenconnel an overly palatial residence, with its dressiness

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<sup>43</sup> See Poster in R. Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.8-10.

<sup>44</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.22.

<sup>45</sup> See Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.15.

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and easy-going excursions, and at odds with his philosophy, which was based on Wordsworthian ideals of plain living and high thinking, so other more simple centres were sought.<sup>46</sup>

Keld, in the Yorkshire Dales, was opened in 1899 as a Spartan centre at 18s per week where ‘we had to do all our own drudgery, wait at table and carry water from the village spring’.<sup>47</sup> Guests had to walk eight miles over the Buttertubs Pass from Hawes, luggage following in a farm cart. “The Keld Days” became a phrase denoting goodwill, the joy of service, and the love of simple strenuous living. Selina Cooper, a socialist cotton winder from Brierfield, near Bolton in Lancashire, who became a prominent women’s suffrage campaigner, ran Keld with her husband for a year in 1899. Her account of the rudimentary conditions experienced by guests, the routine chores and the hard physical work involved in running a centre for 70 people, in *Selina Cooper: The Life and Times of a Respectable Rebel*, provides an illuminating insight to this most Spartan of early CHA centres.<sup>48</sup>

Her autograph book held in the Lancashire Record Office in Preston provides an eloquent testimony to the attitude of guests to the simple-life experience provided at Keld and the extent to which they echoed the feelings, beliefs and ideals of Leonard and the early CHA. Many entries, borrowed from Victorian poets such as Wordsworth, Longfellow and Tennyson, captured their simple and optimistic faith. Ruskin’s prose was a favourite.<sup>49</sup> Many guests were educated people with an

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<sup>46</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.32.

<sup>47</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, pp.32-34.

<sup>48</sup> See the account of her involvement with CHA in J. Liddington, *Selina Cooper: The Life and Times of a Respectable Rebel*, (London, Virago, 1984), pp.67-68 & 81-87.

<sup>49</sup> The autograph book forms part of the Cooper Papers, Preston Records, DDX 1137.

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intellectual commitment to the co-operative holiday ideal. Although many came from the local area; Colne, Bolton, Burnley, Bradford and Keighley, middle-class visitors from the south outnumbered northern factory workers.<sup>50</sup> Keld only lasted three seasons. It appears that some thought it 'too simple' and 'not quite proper'; males and females too closely quartered in these 'wild Heathcliffian hills'. According to Leonard 'If this type of centre had survived, perhaps our movement might have been even more useful than it has been'.<sup>51</sup>

Leonard's determination to maintain the ideal of simple accommodation manifested itself in the purchase of Newlands Mill, near Keswick, in 1905 and its conversion into a 'simple-life guest house'. All accommodation was in dormitories. Washing was communal. The charge for the week was 22s 6d [£1.12½p] and you made your own bed, cleaned your boots and helped to wait at table.<sup>52</sup> The success of Newlands stirred a demand for another strenuous mountain centre and the Stanley Ghyll Hotel in Eskdale in the Lake District was acquired in 1912.<sup>53</sup> Wharfedale was another experiment in simple accommodation when a small centre was opened in Grassington in 1908. The success of this venture led to the purchase of land at Hebden, three miles down the valley, where a wooden bungalow was built with communal sleeping accommodation, dining and common rooms. It remained a popular centre until 1955 when a lack of basic facilities for guests resulted in its closure.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> J. Liddington, p.87.

<sup>51</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.34.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.40-42.

<sup>53</sup> See Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.40.

<sup>54</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, pp.45-46.

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However, it is clear from contributions to the CHA's magazine that not everyone took to the simple open-air life. Contributions to *Comradeship* indicate a growing conflict between the expectations of new members and the ideals of its founders caused by the recruitment of an increasing number of new members during the period leading up to the First World War; members who rebelled against the Spartan conditions imposed by the CHA's ideals.<sup>55</sup> Consequently, in leaving the CHA to found the Holiday Fellowship in 1913, Leonard and others sought to 'bring holidays within the reach of poorer folk', 'keep the arrangements as simple as possible' and 'set ourselves the problem of how, in spite of rising prices, to supply cheap holidays'.<sup>56</sup>

Another indication of the tension between Leonard's philosophy of providing cheap and simple holidays for working people and the practicalities of achieving this is illustrated by the competition from other providers. Although the intention was to provide holidays that cost less than a week's wage, the holidays organised by the CHA were more expensive than, for instance, the Young Men's Christian Association, which cost 7s [35p] per week in 1904.<sup>57</sup> Notwithstanding Leonard's intentions, it would seem that by the outbreak of the First World War, CHA holidays were priced at a level beyond the means of many working people. Nevertheless, as Snape suggests, to the emerging class of young professional workers, clerks and female teachers the CHA, which did not welcome children, offered an organised, active and affordable holiday that was particularly suited to educated single people.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> See *Comradeship*, February 1909, December 1910 & February 1911, April 1913, pp.66-67, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/1.

<sup>56</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.53.

<sup>57</sup> See advertisement in *Peoples Friend*, 16 May 1904.

<sup>58</sup> See R. Snape, *The Co-operative Holidays Association*, p.152.

## Constituency and social mixing

In keeping with Leonard's original intention of providing recreative and educational holidays for working people, early customers of the CHA were millworkers from the area surrounding Colne. As the holiday scheme widened out beyond the confines of north-east Lancashire, the range of occupation of its constituents broadened. Few records of CHA holiday groups are available but, as recorded in Leonard's scrapbook, one party, for example, included teachers, shop assistants, warehousemen and weavers, whilst another comprised a cotton mill holiday club, clerks, a carpenter, a dressmaker and two university lecturers.<sup>59</sup>

As mentioned in chapter one, at the inception of the CHA, J B Paton, the President thought of it as a young men's movement and warned Leonard that 'it was a "great moral responsibility" to allow women folk to join us'.<sup>60</sup> This view reflected the prime function of the early NHRU as a guiding influence on young working men and boys. However, Leonard was prepared to challenge the puritan values of the late Victorian era and allow, even encourage, women to participate in his scheme. It is no surprise, that Leonard's views on female emancipation were somewhat different to Paton's; his wife, Mary was an active member of the suffrage movement.<sup>61</sup> According to Leonard, his scheme provided the opportunity, under the thinnest veil of chaperonage in the form of Hosts and Hostesses, whereby young men and women could go away for holidays and get to know one another under easy and natural conditions.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> From *Echoes* (c. 1900), GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/1.

<sup>60</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.135.

<sup>61</sup> See E. Crawford, *The Women's Suffrage Movement in Britain and Ireland: A Regional Survey* (2008) p.58.

<sup>62</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.197.



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As Leonard widened his holiday scheme, many women came from middle-class backgrounds and from further afield. Fanny Pringle was the daughter of a Birmingham manufacturer and was instrumental in the formulation of the CHA's Free Holiday Scheme. Emily Smith was a school mistress and was active in the women's suffrage movement. Along with Mary Champness, the daughter of a Wesleyan Minister in Rochdale, and Annie Barlow, the daughter of a Bolton cotton manufacturer, these women were elected to the CHA General Committee at its first formal conference held in 1895 at Castleton Hall, Rochdale, the home of Mary Champness' parents.<sup>63</sup>

It is no surprise that women formed a large proportion of the CHA's membership. The early development of the CHA coincided with the spread of higher education and the changing status of women. Between 1881 and 1911 there was a ten-fold increase in the number of women employed in central and local government and a concurrent expansion of the teaching profession.<sup>64</sup> Typical photographs of early CHA groups amply illustrate the significance of women to the CHA. In a photograph of Barmouth in 1897 there is a 50-50 split between men and women.<sup>65</sup> At Parkhall, Hayfield in 1905, women are in the majority.<sup>66</sup>

So many women wanted to take CHA holidays that the General Committee decided as early as 1897 'not to allow the proportion of females to exceed two thirds of the entire

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<sup>63</sup> R. Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.36.

<sup>64</sup> See E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire*, pp.192-218; W.H.G. Armytage, *Four Hundred Years of English Education* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964).

<sup>65</sup> R. Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.12.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p.16.

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party' and in order to remove a possible hindrance to masculine bookings, the late booking fee arrangement for men was reduced from 2/6d [12½p] to 1s [5p].<sup>67</sup> This situation continued to cause concern, however, reflected in an article in the December 1912 issue of *Comradeship*, which reported that at some centres women outnumbered men by a ratio of two to one.<sup>68</sup> Women, however, do not seem to have been averse to the strictures imposed by the CHA's code of respectability, including a dress code that recommended woollen combinations and knickerbockers with no petticoats.<sup>69</sup>

In a bid to enhance social mixing, the CHA sought to provide subsidised or free holidays for people who could not afford its modest charges. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, a scheme known as The Poor Folk's Holiday Fund was established in Colne to send poorer people to the seaside during Wakes Week. This later became the Fresh Air Fund and it was Fanny Pringle who suggested at the 1897 CHA Annual Conference that Fresh Air Collections made during holidays should be used to enable 'poor men and women to spend holidays at our centres in the Spring and Autumn'.<sup>70</sup> This scheme became known as the Free Holiday Fund and through collections from guests on CHA holidays provided nominated families with free and assisted holidays long before the coming of the welfare state.

T A Leonard, nevertheless, bemoaned the fact that the CHA failed to reach the core working class constituency to which its founders aspired.<sup>71</sup> As the CHA expanded and broadened its appeal, it became more attractive to middle-class professionals, a

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<sup>67</sup> General Committee Minute, January 4/5 1897, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/1.

<sup>68</sup> *Comradeship*, Vol.V, No.5, (April, 1912), p.35, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/1.

<sup>69</sup> See CHA (1912) *Hints to Ladies on Holiday Dress etc.*, GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/2.

<sup>70</sup> Minute of Annual Conference, 4 January 1897, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/1.

<sup>71</sup> T A Leonard, *Adventures in holiday Making*, p.142.

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fate that also befell other similar organisations such as the Toynbee Travellers' Club and the Polytechnic Touring Association. This is also borne out by records of local CHA Rambling Clubs, which show that working-class people did not support the clubs.<sup>72</sup> Nevertheless, as Hill has pointed out, the CHA was 'one of the first movements to offer young Victorians of both sexes the opportunity, outside of churches and chapels, for meeting each other on a footing of equality and goodwill'.<sup>73</sup>

Both Taylor and Snape draw comparisons between the constituency of the early CHA and the contemporary Clarion groups, which also offered opportunities for collective access to countryside leisure, promoted equality of status for women and were grounded upon a socialist ideology.<sup>74</sup> Snape expresses the view that, although the social composition of the CHA and the Clarion walking groups was not that different, the more sober and polite behaviour that characterised the CHA contrasted sharply with the public house beer-fuelled singing parties that formed the social mainstay of the Clarion movement.<sup>75</sup>

However, although the CHA was popular amongst Pleasant Sunday Associations (PSAs), Bible Classes and Sunday Schools, reflecting its congregational associations, by the First World War it was slowly shifting its appeal and becoming more secular in nature. As membership of the CHA was increasingly drawn from a social stratum to whom spiritual independence and cultural and recreational individuality were central to personal fulfilment, tensions arose between the establishment and the new members

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<sup>72</sup> Bradford CHA Club, *Ramble Down Memory Lane*, p.10.

<sup>73</sup> Quote from H. Hill, *Freedom to Roam*, p.27.

<sup>74</sup> H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p.217.

<sup>75</sup> R Snape, *The Co-operative Holidays Association*, p.153.

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in relation to the strict codes imposed by the association.<sup>76</sup> Leonard and the General Committee fought strongly against these trends, as shown by the remonstrance in the 1908 Annual Report under the heading 'An Admonition':

*Your committee is careful to make plain on the circulars issued that the holidays are intended for those who enjoy long days of fairly vigorous exercise....Your committee believes that it is the energetic open-air life at our centres that keeps our movement healthy, and that to diminish this will tend to the lowering of the tone of our fellowship. We also recognise the necessity for rest and quiet, and therefore put in a plea that members should not clamour for exciting evenings after long days on tramp and count a local secretary or hostess as unprofitable persons if they do not organise elaborate entertainments every evening.<sup>77</sup>*

By the First World War the CHA had become a victim of its own success, attracting people to healthier recreation in the hills but, at the same time, attracting people with a more gregarious popular culture. This was a source of tension between Leonard's philosophy and the developing CHA. According to Taylor, the growing intrusion of rowdy behaviour represented the most patent example of the subversion of the objectives of the rational holiday movement.<sup>78</sup> As discussed in chapter 1, Leonard left the CHA to found the Holiday Fellowship, ostensibly, 'to bring holidays within the reach of poorer folk'.<sup>79</sup> In a contribution to *Comradeship* on the purpose of the new organisation, he also tellingly reiterates the theme of discipline and 'rational' behaviour:

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<sup>76</sup> See H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p.213.

<sup>77</sup> Annual Report, December 1907, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1/1.

<sup>78</sup> H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p.214.

<sup>79</sup> T. A. Leonard, *Adventures in holiday Making*, p.52.

*We want to enlist the sympathy and example of our members on the side of order and rational behaviour, and to prevent the recurrence of those happenings which led the Reference Committee after last season, very reluctantly, to take the extreme measure of requesting certain guests not to apply for admission to our centres again.*<sup>80</sup>

The establishment of the Holiday Fellowship was, therefore, an attempt to reassert Leonard's vision for the CHA in the face of changing social and cultural attitudes. The schism of the First World War and its aftermath would, however, test both the CHA's and the Holiday Fellowship's ability to accommodate the emergence of the 'New Leisure' of the inter-war period.

### **Friendship and fellowship**

The promotion of friendship and fellowship through social intercourse is a recurring theme in Leonard's writings and speeches.<sup>81</sup> Fanny Pringle, in the account of her trip in June 1893, emphasises this aspect of the holiday venture:

*The chief charm of the holiday lay in its pleasant and bracing companionships and helpful interchange of thought. We were of various sects and social degrees, but the utmost harmony and good feeling prevailed. We met with the intention of having a good time, and we succeeded beyond our expectations.*<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> *Comradeship*, April 1913, p.66-67, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2.

<sup>81</sup> See Sermon on philosophy of holiday making, *Colne and Nelson Times*, 7 August 1891; 'Summer Holidays', *Colne and Nelson Time*, 2 June 1893; *Comradeship*, Dec. 1907, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/1.

<sup>82</sup> See *A Week among the Lakes*, *The Independent and Nonconformist*, 31 August 1893, GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/1.

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Notwithstanding the wide variety of guest houses, from Spartan centres such as Newlands to country houses such as Ardenconnel, they were all run on similar lines with a Manageress in charge of domestic arrangements and staffed by young students. Leonard considered that the movement owed much of its success to the services of its manageresses.<sup>83</sup>

Fundamental to achieving the goals of friendship and fellowship were the appointment of the centre secretary and the host and hostess. The centre secretary was usually a student on summer holiday, who worked for their board and a small honorarium. Many subsequently became a host or hostess. The host and hostess were volunteers who had experience of communal holidays and possessed the ability to inspire guests to enter into the spirit of fellowship. There are parallels here with later holiday organisations, even commercial businesses such as Butlin's with its redcoats. Indeed, Pimlott goes as far as to suggest that the communal living approach of the commercial holiday camp stemmed from the 'experiments' of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in providing facilities for the poorest workers.<sup>84</sup>

The holiday programme at both CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres prior to the First World War followed a similar pattern. At CHA centres, guests were welcomed on the Saturday by the host and hostess, who were responsible for organising the excursions and evening activities. At Holiday Fellowship centres, social arrangements were administered by a 'House Committee' consisting of the host and hostess, the centre secretary and volunteer guests.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.127.

<sup>84</sup> See J.A.R. Pimlott, *The Englishman's Holiday*, pp.246-247.

<sup>85</sup> See 'General Notes' in CHA and HF centre guides in GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/2 & HF Archive.

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On Sundays, the main meal was served at midday so only a short morning walk was undertaken; attendance at church or chapel was optional. Leonard reconciled walking on a Sunday, which was not consistent with his religious leanings, with the inclusion of daily morning prayers, which were held after breakfast, and grace which was said or sung before meals, in the guest house routine. Full day walks were held on four weekdays with 'A' and 'B' (later also 'C') parties. The 'A' walk was always led by the resident Secretary, the 'B' and 'C' walks by the host and hostess. Wednesday was the day off when guests could make their own excursions to local places of interest. Lunches were carried by the men and divided up at the refreshment stops. This was intended to promote friendship and fellowship by keeping the group together.

Early holidays were publicised as providing 'daily exercise in the bracing and invigorating air of the countryside, and evenings in social intercourse with music and lecturettes'.<sup>86</sup> The Lecturers' Committee, formed in 1895, determined that these lectures were to be: 'of an informal character and consisting of extemporaneous talks upon natural science, history and literature illustrated by local examples'.<sup>87</sup> Guests were also encouraged to take part in sketches or play the ever-present piano. On the last day, a social evening culminating in the singing of 'Auld Lang Syne' was the Grande Finale to the week's holiday.<sup>88</sup>

It was common practice to sing songs on walks as well as in the evening. A simple broadsheet was produced in the early Colne days, which became a booklet of 38 songs by 1897. A new collection of 60 songs was brought out in 1898 called "Songs of

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<sup>86</sup> Advertisement for 'Summer Holidays' in Colne & Nelson Times, 2 June 1893.

<sup>87</sup> CHA Minutes of General Committee, 24 March 1899, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/1.

<sup>88</sup> See Whitby centre programme for 1899, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/1.

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Faith, Nature and Comradeship”. Succeeding editions appeared in 1901 (72 songs), 1905 (94 songs) and 1909 (101 songs), the latter edition including songs in French and German. In the first Song Books the emphasis was very much on hymns and traditional songs such as *John Peel* and *Strawberry Fair*.<sup>89</sup> When the Holiday Fellowship came into being, it shared the CHA Song Book until 1922 when it produced its own collection of 58 songs in a book called “Songs by the Way”.<sup>90</sup>

The purpose of the evening gatherings was to ‘weld the house party into a group of friends, irrespective of class, creed or colour’.<sup>91</sup> Their success was very much down to the organisational ability of the host and hostess and the enthusiasm and skills of the guests. The CHA’s communal ideal was further emphasised through the insistence that domestic helpers at the centres be treated as equals and encouraged to join in leisure activities with guests.

In accordance with Leonard’s views on ‘respectable’ morality, the founders of the CHA took a firm stand on the behaviour expected from guests. Leonard considered that the CHA had a definite mission to fulfil; namely the cultivation of character through comradeship, simplicity and reverence.<sup>92</sup> Consequently, centre guides laid down strict rules. Common room entertainment at all guest houses closed at 10.30pm and it was expected that guests would be in their own bedrooms and that absolute quiet would be observed after 11.00pm. No intoxicants were allowed in guest houses

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<sup>89</sup> Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.119.

<sup>90</sup> Lucy Larcom’s poem, titled *A Hymn of Fellowship*, is number 2 in the song book.

<sup>91</sup> A quote from H. Wroe, *The Story of HF Holidays*, p.74.

<sup>92</sup> See *The Co-operative Holidays Association: How it came into being and what it stands for*, CHA leaflet, c.1900, GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/2.



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and it was expected that guests would refrain from their use during the holiday.<sup>93</sup> A range of guest house notices provided advice on such matters as making beds and leaving rooms tidy, the use of lamps and candles in bedrooms, the economic use of water, the taking of hot baths, and the procedure for taking ‘comfort breaks’ on walks: ‘On excursions, immediately after lunch, Gentlemen will leave the ladies for a quarter of an hour, usually walking ahead. Attention to this matter is important where there is no “Ladies’ Cottage” at the lunch place’.<sup>94</sup>

This well-structured, almost regimental, approach to holiday making was most attractive to that element of the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century British society, which Chris Waters defines as ‘artisans already attuned to the message of self-help’.<sup>95</sup> However, the disciplines imposed by the rigorous routine from the ‘rising bell’ at 7.45am to ‘lights out’ at 11.00pm did provoke some complaints. One correspondent to the CHA’s magazine *Comradeship*, likened centre officials to ‘genial policemen’; another criticised the regimental style of rambles.<sup>96</sup> Clearly, some members’ expectations of holiday freedom was not easily accommodated within the routines laid down by the CHA. However, to the majority of the membership, the simplicity in lifestyle and standards of behaviour were a major element in the appeal of CHA holidays. According to Snape, the maintenance of the Association’s behavioural codes depended on a degree of self-discipline and was effected through a shared recognition of the boundaries of taste and behaviour.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> See sample guides in GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/1 and HF Archive.

<sup>94</sup> See selection of notices in GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/2.

<sup>95</sup> C Waters, *British Socialists and the Politics of Popular Culture*, (Manchester: MUP, 1990), p.76.

<sup>96</sup> See Letter from “Junius”, *Comradeship*, Vol. II (2), December 1908 and Our Letter Bag, Vol. II (3), February 1909, pp.47-48, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/1.

<sup>97</sup> R Snape, *The Co-operative Holidays Association*, p.150.

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As Anderson points out, the atmosphere of CHA holidays – the norms of sit down meals and afternoon tea; the ‘volunteer’ hosts and hostesses as parental figures; and the philosophy of mutual help both in the guest house and on rambles, has links with the culture of domesticity found in the late-Victorian period.<sup>98</sup> As a reporter on holiday at Park Hall, Hayfield in 1904 commented ‘everything that can be done to give a touch of home life to the place is done’.<sup>99</sup> There is no doubt that the domestic atmosphere of the CHA holiday, which encouraged largely un-chaperoned opportunities for social intercourse, challenged the late-Victorian practice whereby single men and women could only meet surreptitiously.

As Fred Marquis comments in his contribution to Leonard’s memoirs entitled ‘The Sociological Value of the Movement’:

*The fortnight’s holiday in the year seemed to have a lasting effect on people; it drew them together into local associations, rambling clubs and the like; reunion parties every year testified to the abiding nature of the interest it had created; the fact that in all sorts of towns there could be gathered together people who had been in all sorts of parties in all sorts of places during the year and that they should have one common interest and enthusiasm for this movement showed that the creators of it had achieved their purpose.<sup>100</sup>*

The CHA and Holiday Fellowship also provide excellent examples, within the leisure context, of what Harris describes as the growth of associational culture in the late-

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<sup>98</sup> See B. Anderson, ‘Partnership or co-operation? Family, Politics and Strenuousness in the pre-First World War Co-operative Holidays Association’, *Sport in History*, Vol.33, No.3, (Sept. 2013), pp.260-281.

<sup>99</sup> Article titled ‘Holiday Co-operation’ in *High Peak Advertiser*, 29 April 1904, p.29, in GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/1.

<sup>100</sup> T A Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, pp. 197-198.

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Victorian era.<sup>101</sup> The viability of the CHA, and the Holiday Fellowship, as a voluntary organisation as distinct from a holiday club depended on its shared values and sense of identity, and upon the ability of members to meet regularly beyond the annual holiday. Local groups were an essential part of the organisation. They arranged annual re-unions, weekend rambles and a range of other leisure activities, such as trips to the theatre and places of cultural interest, reading circles and evening talks, even amateur dramatics.

By 1913 there were 35 CHA Rambling Clubs in existence, with a heavy concentration in the north of England; 22 were in Lancashire and Yorkshire.<sup>102</sup> Manchester CHA Rambling Club was the first, founded in 1901, followed by Newcastle & District CHA Rambling Club in 1902. Bradford CHA Rambling and Social Club, founded in 1903 by local CHA members who had been on CHA holidays is a typical example of a northern club. It was formed ‘with the purpose of providing opportunities for walking, companionship and social activities’, reflecting the ideals of the national organisation.<sup>103</sup> The committee met in members’ homes and formed a rambling section, a cycling section and a social section. Analysis of CHA club activities shows that most had a cycling section, some had a tennis section and amateur dramatics played a huge part in club activities.<sup>104</sup>

More sophisticated clubs, not envisaged by Leonard, also began to be formed. The largest and most influential was the London CHA Club founded in 1901 at Gatti’s

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<sup>101</sup> J. Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain 1870-1914*, (London: Penguin, 1994), p.34.

<sup>102</sup> CHA 1913 Annual Report, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>103</sup> Bradford CHA Club celebrated its centenary in 2003 and published *Ramble Down Memory Lane*, a celebration booklet on one hundred years of walking.

<sup>104</sup> Based on discussions with Bolton CHA Rambling Club, York CHA & HF Rambling Club, Manchester CHA Club and Newcastle CHA Club.

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Restaurant in the Strand.<sup>105</sup> It maintained most of the original ideals of the CHA; it was a pioneer in arranging rambles in the London area for men and women, but it was the social side that distinguished it from its northern counterparts. Club activities blended popular events such as lectures, dances and teas with trips to promenade concerts.<sup>106</sup> From 1910, club premises were located in Red Lion Square, Holborn, where once lived Rossetti, William Morris and Burne Jones, a very appropriate connection with the philosophy of the founding fathers of CHA.<sup>107</sup>

### **Internationalism**

The CHA's expansion abroad after 1902 expressed, in practical terms, the internationalism that was a common theme amongst promoters of rational recreation at this time. Foreign travel, aimed at cementing the bonds of international friendship, was a common theme amongst promoters of rational recreation of varying political persuasion.<sup>108</sup> This ran counter to the dominant trend of late-Victorian Britain; that of isolationism based on a growing unease at the Boer War, the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the nationalist ambitions of Russia and Germany.<sup>109</sup>

The CHA's approach was based, therefore, not only on recreative and educational leisure trips abroad but also on a desire to bring foreign nationals in closer contact

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<sup>105</sup> See S. Brown, *The London CHA Club: The First Sixty Year*, published in 1965 in commemoration of its diamond jubilee.

<sup>106</sup> S. Brown, *The London CHA Club*, p.1.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.9-10.

<sup>108</sup> See H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, pp.209-210.

<sup>109</sup> See E.J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire*, pp.302-327.

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with British life in the interests of the ‘Brotherhood of man’, as Leonard put it.<sup>110</sup> In this respect, the CHA’s holidays abroad were different to the approach of other organisations such as the Polytechnic Touring Association, which focussed more on appreciating landscapes and townscapes than interacting with foreign inhabitants, and the Toynbee Travellers’ Club, which had a more formal academic and cultural interest in foreign countries.<sup>111</sup> CHA groups were not just voyeurs, they engaged with local people and their customs.

On the first trip to Kelkheim in the Taunus Region north of Frankfurt in Germany, in 1909, his group were welcomed by the Burgomeister and spent time tramping the hills with local guides, sight-seeing and boating on the Rhine. Evenings were devoted to lectures and music. Articles and photographs in the CHA archive confirm that they mixed with the local population; many spoke German.<sup>112</sup> They sang together and Leonard left behind a copy of the CHA song-book. Leonard records in his memoirs that after the First World War, British soldiers in the army of occupation heard children singing ‘John Peel’ and when asked where they had learnt the song, they produced the CHA song-book left behind many years before.<sup>113</sup> CHA holidays to the Taunus and to other destinations in Germany, Switzerland, and France continued right up to the outbreak of the First World War. A first holiday to the Austrian Tyrol in August was still being planned in May 1914.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> See article by E.D. Breul on ‘The Co-operative Holidays Association’ in *Modern Language Teaching*, Vol. VI (1910), pp.107-109.

<sup>111</sup> See E. Penn, (ed.) *Educating Mind, Body and Spirit*; J.D. Browne, ‘The Toynbee Travellers’ Club, *History of Education*, pp.11-17.

<sup>112</sup> See GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/1, B/CHA/PHT/3/99 & B/CHA/PHT/3/101.

<sup>113</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures*, pp.44-45.

<sup>114</sup> See ‘Pioneer Holidays’ column in *Comradeship*, May 1914, p.66, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2.

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Leonard's involvement in Internationalism went much further than organising holidays for CHA members. The first trip to Kelkheim brought him into contact with Dr. Max Walter, the headmaster of the Musterschule in Frankfurt, and Dr. August Lorey, teacher of English, both of whom helped with the visits.<sup>115</sup> This led to the formation in 1910 of a sister organisation, the Deutsch-Engleschen Fereinheimgemeinschaft, with a similar purpose to the CHA, of promoting International friendships through organised trips to Britain.<sup>116</sup> Parties of German members visited Britain in 1910, staying at centres in Derbyshire, North Wales and Scotland, culminating with a stay in London and a visit to the House of Commons to have tea with Ramsay MacDonald MP.<sup>117</sup> About the same time, John Lewis Paton, then High Master of Manchester Grammar School, was organising school trips to Germany. Leonard ensured that the CHA was involved in the exchange trips, CHA members acting as hosts. Subsequent exchanges involved German students staying at CHA centres such as Newlands Guest House, near Keswick.<sup>118</sup>

In leaving the CHA to found the Holiday Fellowship, Leonard wished to make more progress in international relations and the CHA centre at Kelkheim in the Taunus District of Germany became the Holiday Fellowship's first foreign centre. The Holiday Fellowship's summer 1914 bulletin advises that this centre 'provides fine opportunities for coming into contact with friendly Germans, nearly all of whom speak English fluently'. It also invites new members to play host to the next party of

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<sup>115</sup> See T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.94 and *Comradeship*, autumn 1909, pp.3-5 for a report of the first trip to Kelkheim in 1909, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/1.

<sup>116</sup> See August Lorey's article in *Comradeship*, April 1911, pp.73-74, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/1.

<sup>117</sup> The success of this trip is described by Hubert Beaumont a member of the CHA General Committee and future MP in *Comradeship*, Dec. 1910, pp.37-38, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/1.

<sup>118</sup> See report in *Nelson & Colne Times*, 17 November 1911.

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German schoolboys due to visit in July 1914.<sup>119</sup> Unfortunately, the outbreak of the First World War interrupted the friendly contacts built up at the Kelkheim centre but both the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship resumed holidays abroad in the 1920s.

There was a pacifist undercurrent to Leonard's approach to Internationalism. At Colne, in one of his many addresses in the years leading up to the First World War, he spoke of his grave fears of war between Britain and Germany.<sup>120</sup> Bryn Corach, the Holiday Fellowship's first centre, was located close to the Conwy Morfa (sand dunes) on which, during the First World War, there was a large army training camp.

Although Leonard was a convinced pacifist, Bryn Corach was opened up for use by soldiers and their families as well as refugees from Belgium. In his memoirs, he describes Bryn Corach as 'A haven of peace to many nerve-strained folk from the raided areas and for the soldiers in training and their friends, and not least to those peace-lovers who suffered for their principles in those days'.<sup>121</sup> Conscientious objectors were not unwelcome at Bryn Corach and other Holiday Fellowship centres. Indeed, the Holiday Fellowship had cards printed in December 1914 for members to distribute, headed 'The Fellowship Resolve' which stated:

*I resolve that I will work every day of this New Year to destroy in men's minds the idea of war. War is the devil that has crossed all the purposes of God since the beginning of the world. Peace is the message of the angels. Fellowship is the spirit of life. Without Peace and Fellowship, nations cannot evolve.*<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> See 'Concerning the Fellowship' column in *Comradeship*, May 1914, pp.79-80, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2.

<sup>120</sup> See article 'Former Colne Minister's Visit to Germany', *Colne & Nelson Times*, 17 November 1911.

<sup>121</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.113.

<sup>122</sup> See *Comradeship*, December 1914, p.16, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2.

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During the war years, Leonard had a number of visits from Ramsay MacDonald and other members of the ILP, which led some to believe that Leonard and the Holiday Fellowship had pro-German leanings, a belief that continued for many years after the war ended.<sup>123</sup> Nevertheless, his ideal of international harmony survived the “war to end all wars”, and the Holiday Fellowship was at the forefront of the movement to foster international understanding and friendship in the inter-war era by organising holidays in Europe for young people who were turning to the countryside and open air for their restorative powers.<sup>124</sup> We shall see how this developed in chapter 4.

### Conclusions

This analysis of the ideals and philosophy of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship confirms Taylor’s assertion that these organisations, which initiated the provision of simple accommodation and healthy and rational holidays, came to represent, during the late-Victorian and Edwardian periods, one of the most readily identifiable and directly influential manifestations of an outdoor idealogy.<sup>125</sup> It was a doctrine in which social reconstruction was combined with the increasingly important social role of leisure.

This deconstruction of the Leonard’s ideals and philosophy also supports the view of Hanley and Watson that the significance of the CHA, although a minority organisation, transcends mere numbers of participating guests; that, with connections

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<sup>123</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.59-60.

<sup>124</sup> See D. Hardman, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship: Part One*, p.5.

<sup>125</sup> H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p.191.



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across a broad spectrum of contemporary thought, the CHA offers a window on the relationship between leisure, holidays, unconventional religion, class and politics at the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>126</sup> It also confirms Robert Snape's assessment that in establishing the practice of providing simple, affordable and non-exclusive accommodation; welcoming women on the basis of equality; and promoting greater access to the countryside, the CHA laid the foundations of the spirit of fellowship that came to characterise rambling in the twentieth century.<sup>127</sup> In addition to pioneering holidays in the countryside, it also promoted rambling as a weekend leisure occupation and facilitated a wide range of other leisure activities through the establishment of local clubs. Although foreign travel was not one of the CHA's original objectives, Leonard's interest in international relations led the CHA, and subsequently the Holiday Fellowship, to involve itself in holidays abroad.

However, Leonard and the CHA's other patrons and promoters always lamented that the CHA failed to reach the core working-class constituency to which its founders aspired. As Richard Holt suggests, apprentices preferred a few days at the seaside in the company of their mates, drinking and chasing girls, to invigorating walks over mountains; and this was a substantial barrier to the CHA fulfilling its objectives.<sup>128</sup> It is difficult to argue with Taylor's assessment that Leonard and the CHA were largely preaching to the converted, providing a much wanted leisure facility for those 'respectable' people who already appreciated the joys of the open-air countryside.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> K. Hanley & J.K. Walton, *Constructing Cultural Tourism*, p.160.

<sup>127</sup> R. Snape, *The Co-operative Holidays Association*, P.155.

<sup>128</sup> R. Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History*, p.98.

<sup>129</sup> H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p.204.

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The ideals and philosophy of the CHA were, therefore, grounded upon the rejection of materialism, conspicuous consumption and rowdy behaviour, in favour of simplicity, affordability and a sober, interpretative and quiet enjoyment of the countryside.<sup>130</sup>

Leonard's view of 'rational' recreation sprang from a deep spiritual conviction and a desire to enrich the lives of ordinary mill workers. In the first instance, working people recognised the attractiveness of his 'rational' holidays, even if they weren't necessarily religious, and were prepared to comply with the accepted norms of 'respectability'. However, even by the First World War, the CHA had become too popular to sustain its original ideals, attracting people with a more gregarious popular culture.

The establishment of the Holiday Fellowship was an attempt to re-assert the ideals and philosophy of the early CHA. However, as Leonard would discover, founding principles do not necessarily survive, wholly intact, the diverse influences asserted by the rising popularity of an organisation that promotes recreation and social fellowship. The fracturing of the First World War and the social and economic changes that followed would place a range of demands on both the CHA and HF that would severely test their resolve to adhere to their original ideals and philosophy. These demands will be examined in detail in the next chapter.

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<sup>130</sup> From R. Snape, *The Co-operative Holidays Association*, p.156.

**CHAPTER 3: THE IMPACT OF THE CHANGING DEMANDS OF THE  
TWENTIETH CENTURY, c.1919-2000 ON THE CHA AND THE HOLIDAY  
FELLOWSHIP**

*Three great waves have broken across the face of Britain since 1800. First, the sudden growth of dark industrial towns. Second, the thrusting movement along far-flung railways. Third, the sprawl of car-based suburbs. Now we see, under the guise of a modest word, the surge of a fourth wave which could be more powerful than all the others. The modest word is **leisure**.*

From 'The Fourth Wave: The Challenge of Leisure' (Michael Dower, 1965)

**Introduction**

The above quotation from Michael Dower's 1965 ground-breaking report was a reaction to the rapidly growing demand for active leisure in Britain. Dower predicted a dramatic increase in leisure activity in subsequent decades as a result of increasing population; increasing disposable real income; reducing working hours and increasing holiday entitlement; growing mobility; widespread education changing the attitudes of youngsters towards active leisure; and an increasingly active older generation.<sup>1</sup>

The leisure wave perceived by Dower was not the first to impact on the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. All three previous waves Dower identified helped to shape their holidays; they originated, in part, as a response to nineteenth century industrialisation and urbanisation, and were strongly influenced by the expansion of the railway network and, later, by the surge in inter-war car-ownership, which opened up new holiday destinations.

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<sup>1</sup> M. Dower, *Fourth Wave: the Challenge of Leisure*, (London: Civic Trust, 1965), pp.123-125.

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Whilst the emergence of consumerism in the 1960s, combined with changing cultural attitudes and expectations, had a profound effect on the established providers of holidays in the outdoors, including the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, Dower's report over-states 'leisure' as a 1960s phenomenon. As we have seen in chapter 1, its roots stretch back much further. Many historians have argued that 'leisure' was a product of the Industrial Revolution.<sup>2</sup> John Clarke and Chas Critcher consider that 'It was during this period that what we have come to see as a discrete area of human activity called "leisure" became recognisable'.<sup>3</sup>

Leisure chronology, thereafter, is problematic. Historians generally take the view that leisure expansion after the First World War was 'mostly in reinforcement and extension of pre-war patterns'.<sup>4</sup> Whilst the seaside holiday consolidated its hold on the mass of the population, the inter-war years saw the rise of new forms of holidaymaking. Walton highlights the growth of holiday camps, caravan and camp sites, the decline of the spa resort and the development of countryside leisure.<sup>5</sup> Conversely, Borsay argues that neither the depression of the 1930s nor the Second World War significantly altered the established leisure patterns.<sup>6</sup> In relation to more recent changes, Jonathon Green, in endorsement of Dower's prediction, sees the 1960s as a 'pivotal decade' in the history of leisure.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See H. Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution, c.1780-c.1880*, (London: Croom Helm, 1980) p.12; P. Borsay, *A History of Leisure*, (2006), pp.8-9.

<sup>3</sup> J. Clarke and C Critcher, *The Devil Makes Work: Leisure in Capitalist Britain*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1985), p.58.

<sup>4</sup> P. Bailey, 'The Politics and the Poetics of Modern British Leisure: a Late Twentieth-century Review', *Rethinking History*, Vol.13, (1999), p.135.

<sup>5</sup> See J.K. Walton, 'Tourism and Holidays in Britain Between the Wars', in R. Snape and M Pussard (eds.), *Recording Leisure Lives: Histories, Archives and Memories of Leisure in Twentieth Century Britain*, Leisure Studies Association (2009).

<sup>6</sup> P. Borsay, *A History of Leisure*, p.16.

<sup>7</sup> J. Green, *All Dressed Up: The Sixties and the Counterculture*, (London: Pimlico, 1999), p.xiii.

According to Arthur Marwick, the “sixties” was: ‘of outstanding historical significance in that what happened during this period transformed social and cultural development for the rest of the century’.<sup>8</sup> More recently, Christie Davies has described the late 1950s as the moral turning point of the twentieth century. He defines the periods from 1850 to 1914, from 1919-1955 and from 1955 to the end of the century as the eras of the rise, reign and fall of ‘Respectable Britain’.<sup>9</sup> He equates this with the rise and fall of the fortunes of the traditional churches in British society and of voluntary institutions, which were a means of combining self-help with collective action, a key feature of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

The changing social, economic and cultural conditions experienced since 1919, the popularisation of outdoor recreation and the proliferation of outdoor holiday providers had both positive and negative impacts on the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. Drawing on information obtained from primary sources and from a review of the relevant literature, this chapter assesses these impacts on the changing role of these organisations.<sup>10</sup>

### **The overall impact of changing social, economic and cultural conditions during the period 1919-2000**

The general social and economic background underpinning British leisure in the twentieth century is now well-known. Julie-Marie Strange, for instance, provides an

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<sup>8</sup> A. Marwick, (1998) *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy and the United States, 1958-1974*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.5.

<sup>9</sup> C. Davies, *The Strange Death of Moral Britain*, pp.51-53.

<sup>10</sup> SWOT analysis is a structured method used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats involved in project management. The technique is credited to Albert Humphrey of the Stanford Research Institute (now SRI International) in the 1960s and 1970s.

overview of the shifts in leisure pursuits and provision in the first half of the twentieth century.<sup>11</sup> Others, such as Hennessy, Jones, Kynaston, Sandbrook and Stevenson & Cook, focus on certain periods of the century.<sup>12</sup> Whilst such works provide a useful source of background information on social and economic trends during key periods, the impacts of such trends on leisure pursuits is generally brought out less well.

Historians of leisure have pointed out that data on leisure economics, employment and participation are far less reliable than that on business and industry.<sup>13</sup> Studies have shown that both the Census of Production and the decennial census are highly problematic. *Social Trends*, is more useful in providing statistical information against which the performance of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship can be weighed.<sup>14</sup> The *General Lifestyle Survey* (formerly known as the General Household Survey) also provides statistical information on participation in a wide range of sports and leisure pursuits.<sup>15</sup>

### The inter-war years 1919-1939

Notwithstanding the mass unemployment of the inter-war period, this was a period of growth in travel. It is a period to which the origin of many of the post-war

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<sup>11</sup> J-M. Strange, 'Leisure' in F. Carnivalli & J-M Strange, *20<sup>th</sup> Century Britain*, pp.197-213.

<sup>12</sup> See P. Hennessy, *Never Again: Britain 1945-51*, (London: Vintage, 1993); P. Hennessy, *Having it so good: Britain in the Fifties*, (London: Allen Lane, 2006); S.G. Jones, *Workers at Play*; D. Kynaston, *Austerity Britain*, (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2008); D. Sandbrook, *Never had it so good*, (London, Little Brown, 2005); D. Sandbrook, *White Heat*, (London: Little Brown, 2006) and J. Stevenson & C. Cook, *The Slump*, (London: Quartet Books, 1979).

<sup>13</sup> See for example, M. Huggins, 'Quantifying Leisure Trends: the Problems and Possibilities of Census Data', in R. Snape and M Pussard (eds.), *Recording Leisure Lives: Histories, Archives and Memories of Leisure in Twentieth Century Britain*, Leisure Studies Association (2009), pp.21-40.

<sup>14</sup> *Social Trends* has been an established reference source since 1970. *Social Trends* is published annually and draws together social and economic data from a wide range of government departments and other organisations; it paints a broad picture of UK society and how it has been changing.

<sup>15</sup> The General Household Survey commenced in 1971.

developments of tourism can be traced. The development of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship during this period was influenced by six main factors: the changing employment structure; the rising standard of living; social changes and the ‘culture of democracy’; an increase in the numbers enjoying paid holidays; and improved public transport.

The 1920s and 1930s were once considered to have been plagued by industrial stagnation, mass unemployment and general gloom and pessimism.<sup>16</sup> In *The Slump*, Stevenson and Cook point out that, although mass unemployment gave the inter-war period its image of the ‘long weekend’, the thirties also saw a remarkable degree of economic and social advance, with new industries, economic growth, the development of prosperous suburbs and a rising standard of living.<sup>17</sup> White-collar employment grew as retailing and distribution trades expanded.<sup>18</sup> The broad appeal of hiking to such young ‘white-collar’ workers made the CHA and Holiday Fellowship attractive to this group, following a pattern experienced by the early rambling clubs.<sup>19</sup>

The average weekly wage for professionals, managers, clerks and skilled manual workers increased to almost £4 by 1935 but was nearer £2 in depressed industries such as coal-mining and textiles, emphasising the contrast between the prosperous south and the depressed regions of the north of England.<sup>20</sup> More importantly, retail prices fell throughout most of the 1920s and 1930s and the cost of living fell by a third.

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<sup>16</sup> S.G. Jones, *Workers at Play*, p.4.

<sup>17</sup> See J. Stevenson & C. Cook, *The Slump*, p.1.

<sup>18</sup> ONS Census of Production, commenced in 1907, provides information on output and employment; see also, C. H. Feinstein, *National income, expenditure and output of the United Kingdom 1855-1965*, Cambridge University Press (1972), p.140.

<sup>19</sup> A. Holt, ‘Hikers and Ramblers: Surviving a Thirties’ Fashion, *International Journal of the History of Sport*, Vol.4, No.1, (1987), pp.56-67; D. Prynne, ‘The Clarion clubs, Rambling and the Holiday Associations in Britain since the 1890s’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 11 (1976), pp.65-77.

<sup>20</sup> J. Stevenson & C. Cook, *The Slump*, p.17.

Consequently, average real wages rose by 15 per cent between 1930 and 1938, they were a third higher than in 1914.<sup>21</sup> According to McKibbin, for many of the middle classes, a group particularly attracted to the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, this period might have seemed like ‘a kind of golden age’.<sup>22</sup>

It is generally accepted by historians that the First World War led to major social changes; not least in the status of women who obtained the vote and equal rights in 1928.<sup>23</sup> The emancipation of women, and increasing female employment, led to greater individuality, mobility and to new ways of thinking, swelling the market for holiday providers such as the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. The inter-war period saw the expansion of the ‘culture for democracy’, a commercial culture based firmly on the mass consumption of popular music, newspapers, cinema, radio and advertising, which transcended boundaries of class, age and gender.<sup>24</sup> The mass consumption of new leisure by a widening social stratum challenged purveyors of ‘rational’ recreation such as the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, which were based on the enforcement of social and behavioural norms in accordance with a set of strict ‘rules’, a recurring source of tension within both organisations.

On the other hand, increasing holiday entitlements aided the expansion of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship; the numbers enjoying paid holidays increased from about 1.5 million in 1925 to 4 million in 1938, when 15 million people took a holiday;

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<sup>21</sup> See C.L. Mowat, *Britain between the Wars 1918-1940*, (London: Methuen & Co., 1968), p.493.

<sup>22</sup> R. McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951*, (Oxford: OUP, 2000), p.59.

<sup>23</sup> See C.L. Mowat, *Britain between the Wars 1918-1940*; N. Branson & M. Heinemann, *Britain in the Nineteen Thirties*, (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1971).

<sup>24</sup> D.L. Le Mahieu, *A Culture for Democracy: Mass Communication and the Cultivated Mind in Britain Between the Wars*, (Oxford: OUP, 1988), pp.227-229.



11 million without the entitlement of paid leave.<sup>25</sup> Whilst, in Europe, Government-led organisations provided opportunities for low-cost holidays, there were no similar organisations in Britain to co-ordinate ‘social tourism’. It was left to voluntary, non-profit making organisations like the CHA, Holiday Fellowship, PTA and WTA.<sup>26</sup> It should be no surprise, therefore, that the number of guests at CHA guest houses grew from 12,917 in 1919 to 28,872 in 1938.<sup>27</sup> The number of guests at Holiday Fellowship centres multiplied eight-fold from 5,241 in 1919 to 41,516 in 1938.<sup>28</sup>

Accessibility by public transport, particularly by rail, was significant in defining the distribution of CHA and Holiday Fellowship guest houses in the inter-war period. Bus and coach travel expanded greatly and rail travel reached its peak of popularity in the 1930s.<sup>29</sup> Taylor and others rightly draw attention to the importance of public transport in the development of countryside recreation and popular tourism.<sup>30</sup> The popularity of rambling and hiking was quickly recognised by the railway companies who offered cheap fares and excursions. Bank holiday specials ran from all the major towns, not just to seaside resorts but also into country areas. A concessionary service on Whit Monday took ramblers from Manchester and Sheffield into the Derbyshire Peak District. The GWR and Southern Railway both ran ‘Hikers’ Specials.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> S. Barton, *Working-class organisations and popular tourism*, pp.107-132.

<sup>26</sup> In fascist Italy the ‘Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro’ was formed in 1925 to modernise and rationalise people’s leisure and grant holidays to the masses. In the 1930’s, the French Popular Front Government and the German KdF (Strength through Joy) adopted many elements of the Italian model. See H. Berghoff & B. Korte, *The Making of Modern Tourism: the Cultural History of the British Experience, 1600-2000*, pp.173-174.

<sup>27</sup> See GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1, CHA Annual Reports for 1919, p.2, & 1938, p.7.

<sup>28</sup> C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship: Part Two*, p.135.

<sup>29</sup> For an account of the inter-war period from a tourism perspective, see V.T.C. Middleton, *British Tourism: The remarkable story of growth*, (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2005), pp.1-16.

<sup>30</sup> See H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, pp.235-236; also H. Walker, ‘The Popularisation of the Outdoor Movement, 1900-1940’, *British Journal of Sports History*, Vol.2, No.2, (1985), pp.140-153.

<sup>31</sup> See R. Graves and A. Hodge, *The Long Weekend*, (London: Cardinal, 1968), p.277.

The years 1939-1969

The Second World War inevitably restricted leisure activities and holidaying. Domestic holiday travel was actively discouraged with posters at railway stations asking ‘Is your journey really necessary?’<sup>32</sup> Large parts of the coast were out of bounds, with beaches mined or restricted by barbed wire fences. Whilst some inland resorts continued to function, many hotels and holiday camps were requisitioned for wartime uses, and a large number of CHA and Holiday Fellowship guest houses were requisitioned for use as Government hostels for workers and for military purposes.

As we shall see in Chapter 4, the CHA struggled to survive and only eight out of twenty-eight CHA guest houses and six out of thirty-three Holiday Fellowship centres remained open throughout the war. Nevertheless, they served an important purpose in providing a place of relative peace and calm from the strains of wartime. Although “holiday-making” came in for some criticism, leading members of the Government made it clear in Parliament that workers should be encouraged to take a rest and a complete change of life and surroundings provided that, in doing so, they did not impede the essential war effort in any way. The CHA considered this to be ‘a complete justification of our work during the war’.<sup>33</sup>

The impacts of the Second World War stretched beyond 1945. As Kynaston notes in his acclaimed *Austerity Britain 1945-1951*, immediately after the war, rationing was even more severe than it had been during the war and ‘Britain was undernourished,

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<sup>32</sup> See VTC Middleton, *British Tourism*, pp.18-19.

<sup>33</sup> See CHA Magazine *Comradeship*, Vol. XXXIV, No.1, Autumn 1942, GMCRO, B/CHA/ PUB/1/9.

dirty and class ridden'.<sup>34</sup> Unemployment rose from 400,000 in 1945 to 1.75 million in 1947 and, to combat absenteeism, sport was banned during the week.<sup>35</sup>

Nevertheless, both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship were positively encouraged although they encountered difficulties with rationing restrictions and the shortage of food and materials, and with the recruitment of domestic staff.<sup>36</sup>

The Holidays with Pay Act of 1938, which only really took effect after World War Two, had a more positive impact on the post-war development of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship by increasing demand. In 1948, 24.9 million people went on holiday, 66 per cent of the population.<sup>37</sup> By 1951, 66 per cent of workers were entitled to two weeks' paid leave, 28 per cent receiving one week. However, rationing continued in one form or another until 1954 and it was only in the late 1950s that personal incomes and leisure time increased in real terms as the economy recovered and expanded, allowing a greater proportion of the working population to take holidays.<sup>38</sup>

Two-thirds of holidays were taken at the seaside. The summer rush to the coast, predicted in a number of 1940s reports, became a mass exodus.<sup>39</sup> Increasing use was made of holiday camps, whose visitors exceeded 1.2 million by 1949.<sup>40</sup> It was during the late 1950s and 1960s that the British seaside holiday, boarding house and holiday

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<sup>34</sup> See D Kynaston, *Austerity Britain*, p.296-299.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p.201.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, CHA Annual Report for 1947, p.4, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>37</sup> NCSS, *Holidays: a study made by the National Council for Social Service*, (London: NCCS, 1945), p.3; S.G. Jones 'Trade Union policy between the wars: the case of holidays with pay in Britain', *International Review of Social History* 31, 1 (1986), pp.40-67.

<sup>38</sup> D. Sandbrook, *Never had it so good*, pp.99-100.

<sup>39</sup> D. Chapman, *Holidays and the state*, (London: Fabian Society, 1949), p.6.

<sup>40</sup> S.T. Dawson, *Holiday Camps in twentieth-century Britain: packaging pleasure*, (Manchester: MUP, 2011), pp.122-128.

camp reached their peak in popularity.<sup>41</sup> As the British seaside holiday boomed, CHA and Holiday Fellowship holidays, which were competitively priced, also grew in popularity for those who desired a contrasting style of holiday in the countryside. Whilst camps such as Warners Holiday Camp on the Isle of Wight charged £5 10s [£5.50] per person per week in 1951, a week's holiday at a CHA or Holiday Fellowship guest house cost between £4 and £5 10s [£5.50].<sup>42</sup>

The CHA and Holiday Fellowship were also able to take advantage of the surge in motoring as petrol rationing ended in 1950 and private car registration doubled from 1.8 million in 1946 to 3.5 million in 1955.<sup>43</sup> Motorised transport widened geographical horizons and allowed more families to escape into those parts of the countryside relatively remote from the conurbations, such as the national parks, where many CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres were located. At the same time, the rise in car ownership led to a new trend for more frequent travel and shorter trips to new attractions with more modern facilities, a serious threat to the traditional week's holiday provided by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.<sup>44</sup> It also opened up new opportunities for holiday-making, such as caravanning and self-catering independent holidays, that later threatened the very existence of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

The 'swinging sixties' was characterised by the liberalisation of British society. Christie Davies identifies the late 1950s/early 1960s as a moral turning point in

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<sup>41</sup> See J. Demetriadi, 'The golden years, 1950-1974' in G. Shaw and A. Williams (eds.) *The Rise and Fall of the British Coastal Resorts* (London: Cassell, 1997), pp.55-58.

<sup>42</sup> S.T. Dawson, *Holiday Camps in twentieth-century Britain: packaging pleasure*, pp.177-183; See CHA and HF holiday brochures for 1951, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/7 & HF Archive.

<sup>43</sup> D. Sandbrook, *Never had it so good*, pp.113-114.

<sup>44</sup> V.T.C. Middleton, *British Tourism*, p.23.

### Chapter 3

attitudes towards religion, respectability and deviance.<sup>45</sup> It was also a time when the moralising influence of clubs and associations gave way to individualism, and the changing perception of ‘rational’ recreation would have a profound impact on the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

Strong economic growth and increasing personal incomes and leisure time in the 1960s fuelled the desire to travel.<sup>46</sup> The take-off of modern mass tourism presented both opportunities and threats for the future development of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. On the one hand, the demand for domestic holidays continued to grow, although at a slower rate than in the 1950s, creating the opportunity for the further expansion of established holiday providers such as the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. On the other hand, it resulted in the phenomenal rise of cheap package holidays abroad, which posed a threat to the continuing development of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship as well as to the traditional seaside resorts, some of which experienced their first declines in the annual summer holiday.<sup>47</sup>

In response to changing consumer tastes and attitudes and to competition from holidays abroad, the standard of holiday accommodation was transformed in the 1960s. In the 1950s, unlicensed hotels and guest houses, mainly built in the nineteenth century, provided the bulk of holiday accommodation. Hot and cold running water in bedrooms were luxuries. More usually, one bathroom catered for up

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<sup>45</sup> C. Davies, *The Strange Death of Moral Britain*, pp.51-53

<sup>46</sup> See D. Sandbrook, *White Heat: A History of Britain in the Swinging Sixties*, (London: Little, Brown, 2006), pp.184-185.

<sup>47</sup> See C. Cooper, ‘Parameters and indicators of the decline of the British seaside resort’ in G. Shaw and A. Williams (eds.) *The Rise and Fall of the British Coastal Resorts*, pp.83-87.

to 25 or more guests and one or two toilets were commonplace.<sup>48</sup> Similar conditions applied in CHA and Holiday Fellowship guest houses, which had dormitory accommodation and shared facilities. One of the many CHA notices dating from the 1950s proclaims “HOT BATHS: Applications for hot baths should be made to the Manageress, and the key of the hot tap be returned direct to her immediately after use.”<sup>49</sup> From the 1960s onwards, holiday accommodation slowly but gradually improved with the provision of en-suite facilities. Government subsidies facilitated the development of hotel chains built to a standard formula with en-suite bedrooms, swimming pools and gymnasias.<sup>50</sup> The dual requirements of maintaining reasonable holiday charges and improving the level of comfort and facilities at centres in response to the demands of its clientele would be a major challenge for the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

All the above factors increased the existing tensions between the ‘traditionalists’ who considered that the CHA and Holiday Fellowship should concentrate on providing the well-tryed weekly ‘house-party’ holidays at reasonable charges and the ‘modernisers’ who wished to respond positively to the requirements and expectations of an increasingly affluent society.

### The years 1970-2000

The period 1970-2000 saw an overall decline in domestic holiday travel to traditional resorts. It also saw a restructuring of the domestic holiday industry with the

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<sup>48</sup> See V.T.C. Middleton, *British Tourism*, pp.70-71.

<sup>49</sup> The CHA archive, GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/2, contains a plethora of similar centre notices.

<sup>50</sup> V.T.C. Middleton, *British Tourism*, pp.76-77.

development of alternative attractions such as theme parks and heritage centres, and budget hotel accommodation. The self-catering sector, for decades considered to be a down-market operation, modernised with chalets replacing static caravans and the sector rebranded itself as a provider of second homes. Nationally branded chains for letting holiday cottages thrived in the 1990s.<sup>51</sup>

Although the early 1970s experienced economic restraint and high unemployment with the global energy crisis and 3-day working week, holiday-making continued to increase; outdoor activities flourished and outdoor centres proliferated.<sup>52</sup> The estimated number of holidays of four nights or more taken in Britain by the British population peaked at 40.5 million in 1973/1974. Holidays to sunspots abroad rose to 8.25 million in 1974.<sup>53</sup>

The growth of car ownership from 3.5 million in 1955 to 13.6 million in 1974 was responsible for a rise in self-catering, independent holidays and, in 1979, nearly half of all holidays spent in Britain were self-catering.<sup>54</sup> Self-catering provision provided value for money and also freedom from the relative regimentation and constraints of serviced accommodation. It also posed a threat to the CHA and Holiday Fellowship with their well-regulated communal holidays.

Increased motorisation, from motorcycles to cars and caravans, was a powerful force for the diversification of holiday making in the 1970s and 1980s. More dispersed

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<sup>51</sup> See V.T.C. Middleton, *British Tourism*, pp.81-88.

<sup>52</sup> S. Glyptis, *Leisure and Unemployment*, p.10.

<sup>53</sup> See BTA, *The British on Holiday 1951-1972* (London: BTA, 1973) & BTA, *Digest of Tourist Statistics 1971-1997* (London: BTA, 1997).

<sup>54</sup> J. Benson, *The Rise of Consumer Society in Britain, 1880-1980*, (Harlow: Longman, 1994) p.86.

accommodation became available since accessibility by rail no longer determined the distribution of holiday destinations. The 1980s saw the rapid development and expansion of budget hotel accommodation not only in the cities but also in the remoter areas of Britain.<sup>55</sup> Such choices provided would-be CHA and Holiday Fellowship guests with viable alternative accommodation.

Consumer interest in most recreation and leisure pursuits grew throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Although it was a period of price inflation, rising incomes and affluence linked to house price increases fuelled a 'feel good' factor for many and increased expenditure on holidays was a natural response.<sup>56</sup> However, the range of providers of accommodation for outdoor activities also mushroomed, providing further competition to the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, as we shall see later in this chapter.

Also, from the 1980s onwards, more and more people spent less, and shorter, holidays at home and the number of holidays of four nights or more in Britain fell from its peak of 40.5 million in 1973/1974 to 32.5 million by 1990. British consumers increasingly looked abroad for both short weekend breaks and longer holidays and by the end of the century, more holidays were taken abroad than in Britain (30.5 million abroad as opposed to 28.0 million at home).<sup>57</sup> As a consequence, both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship were forced to consider a more flexible approach to their holiday provision.

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<sup>55</sup> H. Berghoff & B. Korte, *The Making of Modern Tourism: the Cultural History of the British Experience, 1600-2000*, p.175.

<sup>56</sup> See V.T.C. Middleton, *British Tourism*, pp.26-29.

<sup>57</sup> The figures on holidays in Britain and abroad are taken from the British National Travel Survey (BNTS), started in 1951 by the British Travel and Holidays Association. It is the longest series of data available on British Tourism.



Towards the end of the century, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship faced competition from commercial holiday providers as diverse as Ramblers Holidays, Warner Leisure, Shearings Holidays and SAGA Holidays, organisations that occupied the market area that the CHA and Holiday Fellowship were moving into. As well as constituting a threat to the survival of both organisations, they also provided opportunities for partnerships and joint marketing initiatives.

As we shall see in Chapters 4 and 5, the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship, whose holidays were originally based on simplicity of lifestyle, week-long compulsory walking holidays, communal social activities and a well-structured, almost regimental, approach to holiday making, were seriously challenged by this democratisation of holiday provision.

### **The popularisation of outdoor recreation during the period 1919-2000**

The growth of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship during the inter-war period was strongly related to the significant expansion in the pursuit of outdoor recreation, particularly rambling. Taylor devotes a whole chapter to the inter-war outdoor movement and its social and political ramifications. As he remarks, the motivation for the adoption of countryside leisure pursuits by a large section of the urban population ranged from a simple desire to escape its crowded complexity and enjoy social fellowship to high minded ideals and a reforming political *raison d'être*.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p.233.

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In *Rambling and Manly Identity in Derbyshire's Dark Peak, 1880-1920*, Melanie Tebbutt explores how this 'wild' moorland area was more than a focus for physical activity and was a place where 'the elating intimacy of open space gave expression to the masculine anxieties of the era'.<sup>59</sup> In *Healing Landscapes*, Tebbutt focusses on the role of the rural environment during the 1920s in healing and recovery from the shock of the First World War.<sup>60</sup> Contributions to the CHA's magazine *Comradeship* seem to endorse this view, and testify to the joys of CHA holidays in the aftermath of the First World War.<sup>61</sup> One such contribution explains:

*I went to Eskdale weary and dusty.....In Eskdale, everything helped one to regain that fundamental contact with deeper things by which we live and have our being; Communion with nature; communion with God; the joy of comradeship; sparkling humour; all helped to free the spirit.*<sup>62</sup>

By the 1930s, approximately two thirds of the population lived in the seven British conurbations of over one million people and, as Pimlott asserts: 'These imprisoned millions needed little persuasion to escape when they could'.<sup>63</sup> The vast majority wanted low cost holidays in popular resorts, escaping from their living and working environment to places of pleasurable enjoyment, reflecting Rojek's notions of 'escape from' (the monotonous obligations of daily life) and 'escape to' (a dream-life where our hopes and desires can be satisfied).<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> See M. Tebbutt, 'Rambling and Manly Identity in Derbyshire's Dark Peak, 1880s-1920s', *The Historical Journal*, 49, No.4 (2006), pp.1125-1153.

<sup>60</sup> M. Tebbutt in 'Healing Landscapes: Psychology and the Outdoor Movement in the 1920s' in D. Day (ed.), *Sport and Leisure Histories*, (Crewe: MMU Cheshire, 2013), pp.1-18.

<sup>61</sup> See for example, 'A Host's Impressions', in *Comradeship*, Vol. XI, No.1, October 1919, pp.10-11; 'Holiday Memories', *Comradeship*, Vol. XII, No.1, Nov. 1920, pp.10-11, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2.

<sup>62</sup> 'Manna in Eskdale', *Comradeship*, Vol. XI, No.1, Oct. 1919, pp.4-6, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2.

<sup>63</sup> J.A.R. Pimlott, *The Englishmen's Holiday*, p.213.

<sup>64</sup> C. Rojek, *Ways of Escape*, p.9.

Others wanted holidays that embraced fresh air, exercise and communing with nature; the ‘Cyclists and hikers.....day excursionists, refugees from cursed towns’ in C. Day Lewis’s *The magnetic mountain*.<sup>65</sup> According to Melanie Tebbutt, freedom, exploration and the romance of the open road, long identified with the English countryside, became key motifs of inter-war tourism, as visitors tramped, camped, trespassed and claimed places that, geographically, would once have been far beyond their reach.<sup>66</sup>

#### The nature of the inter-war outdoor phenomenon

David Prynne suggests that the outdoor phenomenon was characterised by the tens of thousands of walkers ‘seeking relief from idleness or dull work and dreary surroundings in the conurbations of northern England’.<sup>67</sup> According to the philosopher and social commentator C.E.M. Joad, throughout the inter-war period, rural England was subjected to an ‘invasion of the untutored townsman’.<sup>68</sup> A contemporary of T.A. Leonard, Joad witnessed the large escape at weekends of young people from Manchester into the Peak District. A similar exodus took place on Clydeside in Scotland, where men from the shipyards would escape each weekend to the Loch Lomond, Arrochar and beyond, sleeping in barns, bothies, caves and camps.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> C. Day-Lewis, ‘The magnetic mountain 32’, in R. Kelton (ed.), *Poetry of the Thirties*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964), p.50.

<sup>66</sup> Taken from M. Tebbutt in D. Day (ed.), *Sport and Leisure Histories*, p.1; see also C. Brace, ‘Rural Mappings’, in P. Cloke, *Country Visions*, (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2003) p.51-53.

<sup>67</sup> Quote from D. Prynne, ‘The Clarion Clubs, Rambling and the Holiday Associations in Britain since the 1890s’ *Journal of Contemporary History*, 11 (1986) p.70.

<sup>68</sup> C.E.M. Joad, *The Untutored Townsman’s Invasion of the Country*, pp.15-17.

<sup>69</sup> See A.C. Borthwick, *Always a Little Further*, (London: Diadem Books, 1939, Reprinted 1993)

In the north of England, workers from Lancashire and Yorkshire took advantage of improving public transport to explore the Yorkshire Dales and the Lake District, using bed and breakfast accommodation, farmhouses and camping in fields. Although information on such independent working-class travellers is more difficult to access than the organisational records of clubs, examples can be found. Alfred Wainwright, whose story is well known, is a prime example; a clerk from a working-class background who travelled by bus from Blackburn to the Lake District in the 1930s to walk the fells, appreciating the landscape of the Lakes, its history and natural environment.<sup>70</sup> There are other examples: Fred Butterfield cycled, with friends, from Keighley in West Yorkshire to the Yorkshire Dales or the Lake District at the weekend, and occasionally for a full week, in the 1930s, forming the Keighley Road Cycling Club.<sup>71</sup> David Buck hitched lifts from Norwich to the Lake District in the 1930s to walk and climb, staying at youth hostels but also camping out, eventually moving to the Lake District to live and work.<sup>72</sup> There is also an interview with a man from Blackburn in the Kendal Oral History Archive, who travelled to the Lake District in 1933 on his motor cycle to climb with friends each weekend.<sup>73</sup> These examples show that there was an unquantifiable number of independent working-class travellers, who shunned walking groups and club philosophy but were, nevertheless, engaged in 'rational' recreational activity in parallel with those who joined organisations such as the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

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<sup>70</sup> See A. Wainwright, *Ex-Fellwanderer*, (Kendal: Westmorland Gazette, 1987).

<sup>71</sup> See Photographic Collections of Fred Robinson Butterfield (1905-1999), Lancaster University Special Collections.

<sup>72</sup> See Transcript ME, Ambleside Oral History Group Archive, Ambleside Public Library.

<sup>73</sup> Interview number 0230, Kendal Oral History Group Archive, Kendal Public Library.

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Hiking, a term that entered the English language in 1927 from the United States, began to enjoy a boom in the 1930s, facilitated by increased affluence and leisure time, and cheap and readily available transport.<sup>74</sup> A parallel between hiking in Britain and in Germany is often drawn. Stevenson and Cook suggest that the popularity of outdoor pursuits in Britain between the wars was part of the European keep-fit craze that spilled over into cycling, rambling and hiking, physical training and naturism.<sup>75</sup> Taylor considers that the inter-war outdoor movement in Britain has been too readily identified with contemporary movements in Europe, particularly with the German *Wandervögel* and ‘Strength through Joy’ movements.<sup>76</sup>

The *Wandervögel* youth movement originated in about 1900 and had its origins in the Central European “Wanderlust” tradition, which represented a rebellion against all the conventions of the time, a breakaway from military regimentation, from the domination of parents, a reaction to the artificiality of life in the cities.<sup>77</sup> It was only in the 1930s that its ideals were appropriated by the Nazi Party and transformed into a spirit of exclusive nationalism, regimentation and uniform wearing.<sup>78</sup> The British rambling movement does not seem to have been particularly closely linked to what was happening in Germany.<sup>79</sup> It was more the threat to the enjoyment of the British countryside from urban developments such as road improvements, ribbon development, reservoirs and pylons, and from the restrictions placed on access to large areas of moorland and forest that manifested itself in the ‘freedom to roam’

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<sup>74</sup> R. Graves and A Hodge, *The Long Weekend*, p.271.

<sup>75</sup> Stevenson & Cook, *The Slump*, p.26.

<sup>76</sup> H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, pp.227-228.

<sup>77</sup> O. Coburn, *Youth Hostel Story*, (London: National Council of Social Service, 1950), p.9.

<sup>78</sup> A. Holt, ‘Hikers and Ramblers: Surviving a Thirties’ Fashion’, in *International Journal of the History of Sport*, Vol.4, No.1, p.58.

<sup>79</sup> A. Holt, ‘Hikers and Ramblers: Surviving a Thirties’ Fashion’, pp.58-59.

campaigns of the 1930s. These issues are well covered by Stephenson, Hill and Shoard amongst others.<sup>80</sup>

The CHA and Holiday Fellowship were not prominent in contemporary access campaigns such as the ‘Kinder Trespass’ but they lent ‘political’ support for countryside access and for the designation of national parks. They were both represented on the joint committee of open-air organisations set up in 1932, which established the Standing Committee on National Parks in 1935 to fight for national parks.<sup>81</sup> Both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship were affiliated to a range of organisations including the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, Council for the Preservation of Rural Wales, Association for the Preservation of Rural Scotland and the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society.<sup>82</sup> Through these organisations, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship influenced the future direction of planning policy on the preservation and enjoyment of the countryside.

The ‘hiking’ craze brought additional membership to the established rambling clubs, as well as increased media attention and political muscle. Tom Stephenson traces the organisation of rambling clubs into regional federations and, subsequently, into a national organisation.<sup>83</sup> It is a reflection of T.A. Leonard’s standing in the outdoor movement, and the undoubted influence of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, that he was asked to chair the meeting at Longshaw, a Holiday Fellowship centre in the Peak District, in September 1931, when it was resolved to form a National Council of Ramblers’ Federations. Leonard continued as Chairman until 1935 when the

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<sup>80</sup> T. Stephenson, *Forbidden Land*; H. Hill, *Freedom to Roam*; M. Shoard, *A Right to Roam*.

<sup>81</sup> A. Holt, *Making Tracks*, (1985), London: The Ramblers’ Association, pp.12-13.

<sup>82</sup> See lists in CHA and HF Annual Reports for the 1930s.

<sup>83</sup> T. Stephenson, *Forbidden Land* (1989) pp.80-81.

Ramblers' Association (RA) was formed and then became its first President, a role he held until 1946.<sup>84</sup>

Similar factors to those that resulted in the 'hiking' phenomenon, also led to increased participation in climbing and mountaineering; leisure time, money, and access.<sup>85</sup> The wider availability of motorised transport (motor cycles were very popular amongst the climbing fraternity) and the expansion of the club hut system meant that climbers could roam around the UK's mountain areas.<sup>86</sup> However, to be a member of a climbing club during the 1920s still usually meant you were more likely to be a doctor, a lawyer or a university lecturer than a factory worker, miner or plumber, and male. Not to be outdone, wives of members of the Rucksack Club established the women only club, the Pinnacle Club, in 1921.<sup>87</sup>

It was not until the 1930s that working-class participation in climbing took off. In the Lake District, Bill Birkett, a Langdale quarryman began climbing in his working clogs before using more conventional nailed boots. Bill Peascod, a Workington miner, climbed in Buttermere, cycling to the crags after a nightshift to swap coal face for rock face. In Kendal, two employees of K Shoes, Sid Cross and Alice Nelson made a formidable team.<sup>88</sup> They subsequently married and took over the Old Dungeon Ghyll Hotel in Great Langdale and created the famous 'Climber's Bar', which became one of the key base camps for the post-Second World War climbing activity.

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<sup>84</sup> Ann Holt in *Making Tracks*, pp.10-17, provides an excellent summary of the foundation and early years of the Ramblers' Association and the influence of T A Leonard.

<sup>85</sup> Carol Osborne in 'Gender and the Organisation of British Climbing c.1857-1955', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Lancaster (2006), pp.370-375, provides a detailed assessment of the factors that led to the widening participation in climbing and mountaineering in Britain in the inter-war period.

<sup>86</sup> See A. Hankinson, *The First Tigers* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1972).

<sup>87</sup> See C. Osborne, *Gender and the Organisation of British Climbing, c. 1857-1955*, pp.150-160.

<sup>88</sup> See C. Wells, *A brief history of British Mountaineering*, p.51-55.

The origins of the Preston Mountaineering Club testify to the inter-relationships between contemporary organisations in the outdoor movement at this time. When founded in 1933, the membership was drawn from the local rambling club and local members of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.<sup>89</sup> The history of the Tricouni Club and the CHAmois Mountaineering Club also illustrates the undoubted, but perhaps unintentional, influence of the CHA in the development of climbing and mountaineering. A CHA Mountaineering Club was formed in 1930 by a group of walks leaders with a more adventurous spirit.<sup>90</sup> However, after a fall out with the CHA management, the club broke away from the CHA and was renamed the Tricouni Club, which still exists today. In 1964, the centenary of Leonard's birth, the CHA General Committee unanimously agreed to revive the CHA Mountaineering Club (the CHAmois Club), which continues to function with its own club hut in Snowdonia.<sup>91</sup>

Cycling, which had taken off as a recreational pursuit in the 1890s, became ever-more popular during the inter-war period. Membership of the CTC never surpassed its 1899 peak of 60,449 but there was a proliferation of cycling clubs affiliated to organisations ranging from churches to political parties and by 1938 membership of cycling clubs stood at over 60,000.<sup>92</sup> The CCC, with a membership of 7,500 in 1936, had a particular socialist dimension.<sup>93</sup> Members of the CTC patronised their own

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<sup>89</sup> See L. Conway, (ed.), 'The Early Days', (1983) *PMC: 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Journal 1933-1983*.

<sup>90</sup> See *Report of the Proceedings of a meeting of CHA Members at Hope on November 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> 1929 to consider a proposed scheme for the formation of a mountaineering club within the CHA*, Countrywide Holidays Association Archive.

<sup>91</sup> See history of Tricouni Club at [www.tricouniclub.org](http://www.tricouniclub.org); and history of the CHAmois Club at [www.chamois.org.uk](http://www.chamois.org.uk).

<sup>92</sup> *CTC Gazette* (April 1938).

<sup>93</sup> *Clarion Cyclist* (August 1936), p.23.



network of cafes and modest bed and breakfast ‘digs’.<sup>94</sup> Many CHA and Holiday Fellowship local groups had their own cycling section and cyclists were welcomed at CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres.<sup>95</sup>

#### Post-war participation in outdoor activities

The changing pattern of outdoor activities after the Second World War had a major impact on the performance of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. Whilst participation in a wide range of outdoor activities mushroomed and membership of outdoor recreational organisations such as the RA increased, membership of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship stalled. The concerns of the leadership of the Holiday Fellowship about the performance of that organisation are reflected in Charles Johnson’s official history of the Holiday Fellowship as follows:

*The remarkable growth of the HF in the twenties and thirties and the speed with which this was achieved came to a halt at the outbreak of war. At that time, the demand for open-air holidays and, more especially, walking holidays during the summer season was far greater than the accommodation available, so establishing a situation which led to a discipline, regulations and conditions being applied to those wishing to book to ensure that only “the right sort of people” were accepted. We had the largest organisation of its kind in Britain and we were very happy with what we had!*

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<sup>94</sup> The CTC Handbook for 1930 lists hotels, farmhouses, B&Bs etc. providing accommodation for cyclists. There were over 100 such premises in each of the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland.

<sup>95</sup> See for example, Bradford CHA Rambling Club publication, *Ramble Down Memory Lane*, p.8 and Bolton CHA Rambling Club programme for 1920s.

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*It was different after the war, some of the regulations and restrictions had to go; people had had enough of them in their everyday life. But HF had built up a tradition and few were prepared to accept change of any kind. The Fellowship became older in more ways than one and the sense of adventurous pioneering had gone, and so had the attraction for young people. We were slow to respond to the challenge, or unwilling to accept that it was a challenge. Others came along with more adventures to offer, and with the same fast growth in numbers which we had experienced some 40 years earlier.<sup>96</sup>*

These views reflect the concerns of many members at this time that the Holiday Fellowship, which in its early days had been a pioneer of 'rational' holidays with radical ideas, was being neglected by later generations. It also shows that the type of holiday offered, with its strict regulations and 'codes of practice', was no longer attractive to young people, who sought other outlets for their adventurous activities.

Few official surveys of active recreation were undertaken prior to the mid-1960s, when geographers in Britain first began to investigate how land was used for outdoor activities. J.T. Coppock at Edinburgh University used information available from outdoor clubs to obtain evidence of outdoor recreational activity.<sup>97</sup> Burton and Wibberley undertook similar work at Wye College, University of London.<sup>98</sup>

However, these studies only scratched the surface of the outdoor activities scene. The *Pilot National Recreation Survey*, undertaken by the University of Keele on behalf of the British Travel Association (BTA), provides the first guide to the national pattern

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<sup>96</sup> Taken from C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship, 1941-1980*, p.58.

<sup>97</sup> See J.T. Coppock, 'The recreational use of land and water in rural Britain', *Tijdschr. Econ. Soc. Geogr.*, (1966), 57, pp.81-96;

<sup>98</sup> See T.L. Burton & G.P. Wibberley, *Outdoor Recreation in the British countryside*, Studies in Rural Land Use Report No.5, (1965), Chapter 3, pp.21-29.

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of recreational activity in the 1960s.<sup>99</sup> The BTA acknowledged the weaknesses of this pilot study, based as it was on an analysis of a very small sample, but it established for the first time a base-line for the levels of participation in outdoor recreation pursuits.

Out of 30 recreational pursuits listed in the survey, seven had been experienced by over a third of respondents, including camping and hiking. The category 'hiking' was defined as walking five miles or more but excluded hill and fell walking, rock climbing, mountaineering and pot-holing, which together had been experienced by 10 per cent of respondents.<sup>100</sup> This survey showed that hiking was one of the most popular, if not the most popular, outdoor activity in the 1960s, and confirmed that there was no shortage of potential clients for the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

There are few texts on the changes in outdoor recreation activity in the latter half of the twentieth century. Harrison provides an overview of the trends in outdoor recreation and provision post-1960 utilising the limited statistical information available at the time. This assessment shows that throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s, outdoor recreation continued to grow at a spectacular rate resulting in countryside recreation becoming a major arena for the Labour government, which saw the rising tide of leisure as an opportunity for all people to enjoy a better life as part of its broad programme of social reform, an aspiration similar to that pursued by Leonard in his foundation of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> The survey reports were published in two parts, see BTA, *Pilot National Recreation Survey – Report No.1* (BTA, 1967) and *Pilot National Recreation Survey – Report No.2* (BTA, 1969).

<sup>100</sup> BTA, *Pilot National Recreation Survey – Report No.1* (BTA, 1967), Table 1/1, p.9.

<sup>101</sup> C. Harrison, *Countryside Recreation in a changing society* (London: TMS Partnership, 1991) pp.40-44.

The institutionalisation of outdoor recreation from the late 1960s onwards manifested itself in a plethora of statistics published by the Countryside Commission. Regular surveys carried out by the Countryside Commission throughout the 1970s and 1980s provide statistical information on a wide range of outdoor recreational activities.<sup>102</sup> During the late 1970s and early 1980s the Countryside Commission continually updated its digests of countryside recreation statistics.<sup>103</sup> The 1979 digest shows that:

- Membership of the Camping Club increased from 14,000 in 1950 to 178,000 in 1978;
- Membership of the Caravan Club increased from 11,000 in 1951 to 193,000 in 1978;
- Membership of the RA increased from 8,778 in 1950 to 32,331 in 1978;
- The number of climbing clubs affiliated to the BMC increased from 25 in 1944 to over 200 in 1978; and
- Membership of the CTC rose from 20,000 in 1965 to 32,000 in 1978.

The Sports Council's annual digests of sports statistics were largely based on the findings of the General Household Survey (GHS) prior to 1987.<sup>104</sup> These digests provide information on the general trends in participation levels in outdoor activities but the data on particular pursuits suffers from methodological changes in the GHS

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<sup>102</sup> See Countryside Commission, *Trends in tourism and recreation 1968-78*, CCP 134 (Cheltenham: Countryside Commission, 1980); Countryside Commission, *Participation in informal recreation: a comparison of two household surveys of informal countryside recreation*, CCP 152 (1982); Countryside Commission, *National countryside recreation survey 1984*, CCP 201 (1984); Countryside Commission, *Access to the countryside for recreation and sport*, CCP 217 (1986).

<sup>103</sup> See M. Fitton, 'Countryside Recreation-The Problems of Opportunity' in *Local Government Studies: July/August 1979*, Vol.5, No.4, (1979), pp.57-90.

<sup>104</sup> The Sports Council's digests made use of the General Household Survey (later known as the General Lifestyle Survey). The GHS contained questions on leisure only in certain years prior to 1987 (1973, 1977, 1980, 1983 & 1986). A number of methodological changes in the 1987 GHS meant that its results are not comparable with previous years and prevents using this data in any trend analysis.

over time and a lack of standardisation of data collection.<sup>105</sup> The Sports Council commenced the production of its own digests of sports statistics based on club membership and *ad hoc* surveys in 1983.<sup>106</sup> These covered over 70 sports, ranging from angling to yachting, and showed that membership of outdoor organisations related to walking, mountaineering and cycling continued to grow and that novel recreational pursuits such as hang-gliding, hot-air ballooning and war games (paint ball) were making new demands on the countryside. These digests show that membership of the RA more than doubled from 32,000 in 1975 to over 80,000 in 1990. Individual membership of the BMC increased six-fold from less than 1,000 in 1975 to 6,500 in 1990. Affiliated clubs numbered over 250, representing approximately 30,000 members. Membership of the CTC rose from 32,000 in 1978 to over 40,000 in 1990.

At the same time, the number of guests at CHA guest houses fell from 26,800 guest-weeks in 1950 to 24,000 guest-weeks in 1980, having peaked at 31,000 in 1961.<sup>107</sup> The number of visitors to Holiday Fellowship centres in 1950 and 1980 were very similar, at 50,000 guest weeks, having peaked at 60,000 in the 1960s.<sup>108</sup> Bookings at CHA and Holiday Fellowship guest houses stagnated and alarm bells rang amongst the management teams of both organisations.<sup>109</sup> Throughout the 1980s, both organisations struggled to respond to the rapidly changing pattern of outdoor activities

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<sup>105</sup> See Centre for Leisure Research, *A Digest of Sports Statistics for the UK, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition*, London: Sports Council, 1991).

<sup>106</sup> The Sports Council's Digests of Sports Statistics (1983, 1986 & 1991) utilised statistics provided by the relevant sport's national governing bodies; the Ramblers' Association, BMC and CTC.

<sup>107</sup> See CHA Annual Reports for 1950, p.11. & 1961, p.11, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1 & 1980, p.16, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>108</sup> See HF Annual Reports for 1950, 1961 & 1980, HF Archive.

<sup>109</sup> See CHA Annual Report for 1981, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2; C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship, 1941-1980*, p.78.

and deal with the problem of how to maintain the loyalty and support of existing members whilst at the same time attracting new customers.<sup>110</sup>

### **The proliferation of competing accommodation providers during the period 1919-2000**

The CHA and Holiday Fellowship, together with the PTA, pioneered the provision of 'rational' holidays before the First World War. As detailed in chapter 1, there were other 'rational' holiday providers such as the BHA, based in Bolton. The co-operative movement and trade unions were active in the creation of holiday camps. A limited number of other organisations, such as the Boys Brigade, Boy Scouts and YMCA provided holidays for young people.

#### Inter-war expansion

The CHA, Holiday Fellowship and PTA were joined by the WTA in 1921 in the provision of 'rational' holidays. The original aims of the WTA, founded by Cecil Rogerson who had been a Holiday Fellowship host, were the promotion of lasting international peace through the provision of low-cost holidays abroad. However, as a result of its early successes in the provision of foreign holidays, it extended its operations to facilitate holidays at home.<sup>111</sup> Its publicity material stressed the proletarian nature of the WTA and its international interests, which overlapped with those of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> See for instance, CHA Annual Report for 1986, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>111</sup> See S. Barton, *Working-class organisations and tourism*, pp.157-160.

<sup>112</sup> F. Williams, *Journey into Adventure*, (London: Odhams Press limited, 1960), pp.11-22.

Nevertheless, however low the WTA managed to keep its charges, they were still too high for most of the industrial workers it wanted to serve. Like the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, it faced the problem of balancing success with retaining its essential character; the spirit of comradeship and fellowship that gave the WTA its special appeal to its clientele. The WTA eventually reconciled itself ‘to the unfortunate habit of so many, of wanting a holiday to be a holiday and to leave politics and social problems at home’.<sup>113</sup> There are interesting parallels here with the development of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship, detailed in chapter 4.

In 1921, Government legislation empowered local authorities to provide school camps during holiday periods and, by 1928, fifteen education authorities were running “camp schools”, at the same time as the Holiday Fellowship was experimenting with youth camps at Conwy and Staithes.<sup>114</sup> The Civil Service Clerical Association opened the first ‘modern holiday camp’ for its members in the 1920s and the National Association of Local Government Officers opened its first holiday camp in Devon in 1931.<sup>115</sup> These camps attracted largely white-collar clerical workers, the same occupational sector that was attracted to the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. Manual trade unions such as the Derbyshire Miners Association built their own camps and negotiated special reduced fares with rail companies. Such camps were a boon to the working-class family since the commercial ventures, such as Butlin’s, were too expensive for many working class families on limited budgets.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> F. Williams, *Journey into Adventure*, p.58.

<sup>114</sup> See J. Hunt, *In Search of Adventure* (Guildford: Talbot Adair Press, 1988) p.25.

<sup>115</sup> S. Barton, *Working-class organisations and popular tourism*, pp.148-152

<sup>116</sup> S.T. Dawson, *Holiday Camps in Twentieth-century Britain*, (Manchester, MUP, 2011), pp.50-110.

Social historians generally acknowledge that, by far the most successful manifestation of the desire for cheap and simple accommodation during the inter-war period was the establishment of the YHA. According to Hanley and Walton, it was the acceptable face of the working-class 'hiking' fashion.<sup>117</sup> Leonard considered that the YHA could trace its inspiration from the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, and was the most important holiday development of the inter-war period.<sup>118</sup> Leonard was a firm advocate for the establishment in Britain of a similar organisation to the German *Jugendherbergen* originated by Richard Schirrmann, a schoolteacher who opened the first youth hostel in Germany in 1910, accommodation that had been popular with British students after the First World War.<sup>119</sup> He argued the case, in ignorance of the emerging Nazi appropriation of the pastoral dream of the *Wandervögel* movement:

*If only we had something of the social sense they had in Germany, we might manage to give our young people the experiences they ought to have in Germany....The simplest accommodation is all that is looked for, just good clean sleeping rooms with blankets, somewhere to eat and a place to shelter from inclement weather.*<sup>120</sup>

It is no surprise, therefore, that Leonard chaired the special meeting in December 1929, called by the Liverpool and District Ramblers' Federation, which formulated the idea of a local youth hostels association with the purpose of providing youth hostels in North Wales. Maurice-Jones and Porter in *The Spirit of YHA* describe the subsequent tortuous negotiations which led to the acceptance in June 1930 of a national structure for the organisation and to the establishment of the YHA England

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<sup>117</sup> K. Hanley & J. K. Walton, *Constructing Cultural Tourism*, p.173.

<sup>118</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, pp.130-132.

<sup>119</sup> O. Coburn, *Youth Hostel Story*, pp.9-11.

<sup>120</sup> HF Magazine, *Over the Hills*, Spring 1930, p.5.



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and Wales in 1931, with T A Leonard as one of its four Vice-Presidents.<sup>121</sup> The Executive Committee included representatives of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

The objects of the YHA, which were “To help, especially young people of limited means, to a greater knowledge, love and care of the countryside, particularly by providing hostels or other simple accommodation for them on their travels”, mirrored the original ideals and philosophy of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.<sup>122</sup> In his memoirs written in 1934, Leonard was unequivocal that the YHA was closer to the original ideals of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship than the two organisations themselves, in providing cheap and simple accommodation for young people.<sup>123</sup>

The YHA established a network of hostels across Britain for the use of young people and the 1930s saw a phenomenal growth in the membership of the YHA and the number of hostels available.<sup>124</sup> By 1939, membership exceeded 80,000 people generating over 500,000 overnight stays at almost 300 hostels.<sup>125</sup> Although this figure cannot be compared with the 7 million visitors who stayed in Blackpool, the epitome of the other end of the holiday spectrum, the YHA filled the role of providing simple inexpensive accommodation in the outdoors for people of all ages, which the CHA and Holiday Fellowship had attempted to do prior to the First World War.<sup>126</sup>

Other organisations providing similar holidays to the CHA and Holiday Fellowship included Christian Guild, formerly the Wesleyan Methodist Guild, and Christian

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<sup>121</sup> H. Maurice-Jones, & L. Porter, *The Spirit of YHA*, (Youth Hostels Association, 2008), pp.15-25.

<sup>122</sup> H. Maurice-Jones, & L. Porter, L. (2008) *The Spirit of YHA*, p.45.

<sup>123</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.132.

<sup>124</sup> See O. Coburn, *Youth Hostel Story*, pp.22-28.

<sup>125</sup> See 1939 YHA Annual Report, YHA Archive, Ref. Y440001, Univ. of Birmingham.

<sup>126</sup> See H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, pp.252-253.

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Endeavour. Christian Guild originated in 1894 in Leeds and established its first guest house at Kent's Bank, near Grange over Sands during the First World War. By the end of the 1930s, there were twelve guest houses scattered throughout England, Wales and Scotland, some accommodating over 100 guests. They were organised along very similar lines to the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, with morning prayers and guests sharing in the domestic chores, and were originally provided to enable young people to enjoy Christian fellowship and country life.<sup>127</sup> Christian Endeavour, a Christian holiday movement founded in Canada in the 1880s, developed holiday centres in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s in similar locations to CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres. The holidays were promoted as providing spiritual refreshment and included walking and special interest holidays similar to those provided by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. The Christian ethos was maintained through morning prayers and evening devotions, paralleling the original ideals of the CHA.<sup>128</sup>

A real rival to the CHA and Holiday Fellowship has received little or no attention from historians.<sup>129</sup> The Friendship Holidays Association (FHA) was founded in 1922 by Henry White, a staunch Methodist and astute businessman. The FHA provided holidays on almost the exact same principles as the CHA and Holiday Fellowship with hosts, hostesses and walks leaders, evening socials and reunions, and even a 'Free guest week' scheme. The content and layout of its holiday programmes replicated those of the CHA. Indeed, the CHA took exception to the organisation, particularly to its original name (the Guest Houses Association), at which point it was changed to Friendship Holidays Association.

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<sup>127</sup> See [www.wesleyguild.org/wesley-guild-history](http://www.wesleyguild.org/wesley-guild-history).

<sup>128</sup> See [www.christianholidays.co.uk](http://www.christianholidays.co.uk).

<sup>129</sup> All records of the FHA are in the possession, meantime, of the founder's grand-daughter, Liz Brooking, the intention being to deposit them with the CHA records in Manchester.

Commencing with a guest house at Penmaenmawr in North Wales in 1922, the FHA quickly expanded with sixteen centres by 1931 and twenty-one centres by 1939 in similar locations to the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, accommodating some 10,000 guests per annum.<sup>130</sup> There is little doubt that this Association deprived the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship of a considerable number of guests, providing, as it did, very similar holidays based on the ideals of friendship and fellowship

Mention should also be made of two organisations founded by T A Leonard. In furtherance of his ideals of Internationalism, Leonard played a leading role in the establishment of International Tramping Tours in the 1930s to promote educational holidays to the continent.<sup>131</sup> International Tramping Tours continued to provide study holidays for young people under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) into the 1950s.<sup>132</sup> In pursuit of his ideals of social service, Leonard was instrumental in the foundation of the Grey Court Fellowship in 1935 to provide holidays for the wives of unemployed workers from north-east Lancashire.<sup>133</sup> In parallel with the CHA's and Holiday Fellowship's provision of free holidays for those that could not afford them, the Grey Court Fellowship continued to provide holidays for disadvantaged people at its house at Arnside on Morecambe Bay throughout the twentieth century.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Based on copies of FHA brochures, *Friendship* magazines and other material obtained from Liz Brooking, 22 May 2013.

<sup>131</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, pp.141-142.

<sup>132</sup> See UNESCO's International Handbook of Fellowships, Scholarships and Educational Exchanges, Vol. 5 (1953), Paris: UNESCO.

<sup>133</sup> See [www.greycourt.bimserver2.com/history-of-grey-court](http://www.greycourt.bimserver2.com/history-of-grey-court).

<sup>134</sup> See [www.greycourtholidays.co.uk/](http://www.greycourtholidays.co.uk/).

Proliferation after the Second World War

After the Second World War, outdoor providers proliferated, giving a new impetus to the outdoor adventure concept. The publicity and dramatisation of wartime adventures glamorised activities such as climbing and mountaineering, canoeing and sailing. Much of the pioneering work of establishing the value of outdoor pursuits in education was done by people like Kurt Hahn, who founded Gordonstoun in 1923 and went on to establish the first Outward Bound School at Aberdovey in North Wales in 1941.<sup>135</sup> Outward Bound went on to establish mountain schools in the Lake District and a sea school in Scotland.<sup>136</sup> Francis Scott, the epitome of the Victorian business magnate founded the Brathay Hall Trust in 1946 to provide multi-activity holidays for school-leavers.<sup>137</sup>

The BMC was formed in 1944 to promote the interests of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers. High on its agenda was the provision of accommodation; huts and hostels in climbing areas.<sup>138</sup> The Central Council of Physical Recreation, founded in 1935, did much to foster the development of outdoor pursuits through the establishment of Plas-y-Brenin in Snowdonia in 1956, which was to become the leading mountain training centre in England & Wales. Shortly afterwards, in 1959, the Scottish Council of Physical Recreation established Glenmore Lodge in the Cairngorms.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> See K. Ogilvie, *Roots & Wings: A History of Outdoor Education and Outdoor Learning in the UK*, (Lyme Regis: Russell House Publishing, 2013), pp.237-240.

<sup>136</sup> See D. James, *“Outward Bound”*, (Routledge and Keegan & Paul,1957).

<sup>137</sup> See M. Dybeck, *A Broad River*, (Brathay Hall Trust, 2005), p.37-40.

<sup>138</sup> For a detailed account of the foundation and history of the BMC, see *The First Fifty Years*, (BMC, 1997).

<sup>139</sup> See J. Hunt, *In Search of Adventure*, p.30.

Following the introduction of the 1944 Education Act, which placed a duty on local authorities to provide facilities for “recreative activities”, Derbyshire County Council established the first year-round residential outdoor education centre near Buxton in 1951.<sup>140</sup> The 1950s and 1960s saw a substantial but un-coordinated increase in the provision of outdoor centres and by 1976 there were over 300 outdoor education centres in England and Wales, mainly local authority centres.<sup>141</sup> In addition, there were some 300 field study centres and over 500 other outdoor centres provided by voluntary, charitable and commercial organisations. In addition, numerous huts, cottages, disused railway stations, former village schools and camp sites had been acquired by individual schools and youth groups.<sup>142</sup>

Membership of the YHA expanded dramatically in the immediate post-war period from a pre-war figure of 80,000 to over 200,000 in 1950. Overnight stays more than doubled from 500,000 to over one million during the same period. Following a period of stagnation in the 1950s, the 1960s and 1970s saw renewed growth with membership increasing to 300,000 by 1980 and overnight stays almost reaching two million.<sup>143</sup>

Research by the DART, commissioned by the Department of Education and Science, in association with the Countryside Commission, provides a detailed and exhaustive survey of the extent of group activity in the countryside and the accommodation used

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<sup>140</sup> L. Cook, ‘The 1944 Education Act and outdoor education: from policy to practice.’ *History of Education*, 28(2), (1999), pp.157-172

<sup>141</sup> See Tables IIIA6 & IIIA7 of the 1979 Countryside Commission Digest (CCP86).

<sup>142</sup> HMI Survey, (1980) *Learning out of Doors*.

<sup>143</sup> Based on information from YHA Annual Reports (see appendix 5).

in the late 1970s. Published in 1980, this research is now largely forgotten and difficult to access.<sup>144</sup> The study sought to establish the full extent of the provision of outdoor centres, field study centres, hostels and other bases, including camp sites, which were regularly used for outdoor group activity of a recreational or educational kind, including CHA and Holiday Fellowship guest houses, and YHA hostels. A total of 2,548 centres were identified in England and Wales. Only 14 per cent (364) were managed by Local Education Authorities (LEAs). There were many other providers, including the voluntary sector, independent non-profit making operators and private commercial companies.<sup>145</sup>

The DART report found that over 90 per cent of the 2176 centres surveyed had come into operation since 1945, with over 65 per cent post-dating 1965. Over half of the surveyed centres (1,149 centres) were located in, or within a ten mile zone of, national parks. The study highlighted the great variety in the types of outdoor centre in use (82 per cent had been converted from existing properties) and the wide variation in the standard of accommodation and the facilities provided. Many centres surveyed were beset by financial difficulties as costs rose and the prices that user groups could afford were restricted. The report also highlighted the great variation in the quality of the outdoor experience obtained at centres and the quality of leadership being offered.<sup>146</sup>

In addition to these challenges, the Education Reform Act of 1988 marginalised outdoor education and placed future local authority provision in jeopardy. According

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<sup>144</sup> DART, (1980) *Groups in the Countryside*, is obtainable from the British Library, shelfmark: GPB-4299. The DART archive is now held in the Devon County Record Office. See also K. Ogilvie, *Roots & Wings*, p.593, Table 23.1 for a summary of the DART survey.

<sup>145</sup> See Chapter 5 of DART, *Groups in the Countryside*, pp.5.1-5.11.

<sup>146</sup> See Chapter 5 of DART, *Groups in the Countryside*, pp.5.22-5.40.

to Ogilvie, 'LEA-owned outdoor education centres were suddenly impelled into the world of business management where the agenda was about budgeting, cash flow, marketing and pricing the 'product', profit and loss, balance sheets and cost-effectiveness'.<sup>147</sup> Similar issues threatened the involvement of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in provision for school and youth groups. There has been a transformation in LEA provision since the 1980s and by 1994 the number of LEA outdoor centres had reduced from 364 in 1980 to 172 in 1994.<sup>148</sup> At the same time, the involvement of private commercial companies has grown considerably. Some occupy former CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres as well as former LEA outdoor education centres.<sup>149</sup>

No overview of the provision of outdoor activity centres or the groups that use them has been carried out since the publication of the DART Report. The only information available on the national scale and distribution of outdoor centres emanates from the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority (AALA), established in 1996 as a result of the growing concern over the health and safety of the increasing number of groups undertaking outdoor activities and the ever increasing number of providers.<sup>150</sup>

The Adventure Activities Licensing Regulations came into force in April 1996 as a mechanism for the regulation of the providers of outdoor activities for young people. Unfortunately, the regulations do not apply to all outdoor centres. For instance, voluntary associations (non-profit making organisations such as the CHA and Holiday Fellowship) do not require a licence to provide activities for their own members or to

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<sup>147</sup> K. Ogilvie, *Roots & Wings*, pp.507-511.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., Appendix 5, pp.761-762.

<sup>149</sup> See [www.activity-centre.com/](http://www.activity-centre.com/) and [www.glaramara.co.uk/](http://www.glaramara.co.uk/) for details of the Newlands Adventure Centre and the Glaramara Centre.

<sup>150</sup> J. Bradford, *From Lyme Bay to Licensing-the development of current regulation of outdoor adventure activities*, (AALA, 2000).

the members of another voluntary association. The regulations do not apply to centres that cater only for people aged 18 years and over.<sup>151</sup>

When the AALA was established, it was estimated that around 1,500 providers would fall within the regulations but only some 900 providers were registered with the AALA in 2000.<sup>152</sup> There are a number of “grey areas” in the interpretation of the regulations and difficulties in licensing have resulted. Consequently, the AALA’s inventory does not, by any means, provide a full picture of the range of accommodation available to groups and individuals engaged in outdoor activities.<sup>153</sup> It does show, however, that by the end of the century, outdoor recreation had diversified into a myriad of hill and mountain, forest, river, air, sea and water-based activities and that the CHA and Holiday Fellowship were just two of the many hundreds of outdoor holiday providers.

## Conclusions

This review of the relevant literature on the social, economic and cultural changes underpinning British leisure during the twentieth century has examined the changing demands placed on the CHA and Holiday Fellowship as a result of increasing affluence and consumer choice; changing cultural attitudes and expectations; and the popularisation of outdoor recreation. It has charted the growth in countryside

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<sup>151</sup> See [www.hse.gov.uk/aala](http://www.hse.gov.uk/aala)

<sup>152</sup> See AALA Annual Report 2008/2009.

<sup>153</sup> In 2010, a review of health and safety legislation, called *Common Sense, Common Safety*, included the recommendation to abolish the AALA and replace licensing with a code of practice. Following a period of consultation, it has been decided to retain the present system meantime.



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recreation and the diversification of outdoor activities, and the development of rival outdoor holiday providers.

This review has confirmed the significance of rising wages and increasing free time and the importance of public transport in the development of countryside recreation and popular tourism during the inter-war period. The thirties saw a remarkable degree of economic and social advance, with a rising standard of living and an increasing number of workers securing paid holidays, reflected in the growth of ‘rational’ holiday making.

After the Second World War, as soon as the economy began to grow, a new age of mass tourism emerged, facilitated by almost universal holidays with pay for those in full-time employment and by an explosion in car ownership. As the century progressed, the increase in car tourism was reflected in an expansion in caravanning and self-catering holidays, and holiday making shifted away from the traditional guest house holiday exemplified by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. From the late 1960s onwards, there was a phenomenal rise in holidays abroad and towards the end of the century, the emphasis at home was on shorter and more specialised holidays.

From the late 1950s/early 1960s onwards, the perception of ‘rational’ recreation changed and the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, whose holidays were originally based on well-structured, week long walking holidays and communal activities, were seriously challenged by the changing social, economic and cultural conditions. In seeking to diversify the nature of the holiday provision, they faced stern competition from commercial holiday providers. However, as well as constituting a threat to the

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survival of both organisations, these other providers offered opportunities for partnerships and joint marketing initiatives.

In reviewing the statistics available on countryside recreation, the chapter has demonstrated the extent to which outdoor activities diversified during the twentieth century. The inter-war period was characterised by the popularisation of outdoor recreation and the ‘freedom to roam’ campaigns. Participation in rambling and hiking, climbing, and cycling expanded considerably. Holiday providers such as the CHA and Holiday Fellowship flourished and new organisations were established, such as the YHA and Outward Bound.

The Second World War gave a new impetus to the concept of outdoor adventure. Outdoor pursuits became a fundamental component of education and outdoor activity providers proliferated under various guises. Participation in a wide range of outdoor activities mushroomed and the membership of organisations such as the YHA and RA increased dramatically. In contrast, the number of guests at CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres peaked in the early 1960s and thereafter declined.

Towards the end of the century, the range of accommodation available included not only the traditional outdoor holiday providers such as the CHA, Holiday Fellowship and YHA but also a wide range of other voluntary and charitable organisations, local authorities and private commercial companies. Improving standards and diversification were key issues in maintaining financial viability and as we shall see in chapter 4; the CHA and Holiday Fellowship were not immune from these financial pressures. Consequently, both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship struggled to

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maintain their traditional values and the loyalty of members whilst seeking to adopt the commercial disciplines of an efficient organisation.

This chapter, together with chapters 1 and 2, provide the context for the detailed examination of the continuities and changes in the CHA and Holiday Fellowship during the period 1919-2000. Chapters 4 and 5 provide an analysis of how these organisations dealt with the social, economic and cultural changes that took place from 1919 onwards in relation to their key attributes: the accommodation provision, the recreative and educational holiday activities; their constituency in terms of class, age, gender and social class; and their identity in terms of the philosophy of ‘friendship and fellowship’.

**CHAPTER 4: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE CHA AND THE  
HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP, c.1919-2000: ACCOMMODATION AND  
ACTIVITIES**

**Introduction**

In founding the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship, Leonard aimed to provide simple and strenuous recreative and educational holidays in the countryside, by offering reasonably priced accommodation, and to promote friendship and fellowship amid the beauty of the natural world.<sup>1</sup> The ideals and philosophy of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship drew on earlier concepts of rational recreation, respectability, co-operation and collectivism, and voluntarism. Each of these would be a source of tension between the ‘traditionalists’ and the ‘modernisers’ in each organisation as modernity transformed the social, economic and cultural life of Britain after the First World War.

In order to determine the extent to which the CHA and Holiday Fellowship remained true to their original ideals and philosophy in the face of these challenges, this chapter provides a detailed analysis of the continuities and changes in the accommodation provided, and the recreational and educational activities pursued, during the period 1919-2000. This analysis will be set in the context of the study’s earlier coverage of their evolving ideals and philosophy and the broader context of the social, economic and cultural changes that took place during this period, including increasing affluence and consumer choice, changing cultural attitudes and expectations, the popularisation of outdoor recreation and the proliferation of outdoor holiday providers.

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<sup>1</sup> See T A Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.28.

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This chapter contrasts and compares how the CHA and Holiday Fellowship dealt with these, often conflicting, demands in terms of

- (i) the accommodation provision in terms of quantity, distribution, type and facilities provided; and
- (ii) the recreative and educational holiday activities pursued, including the provision of holidays for school and youth groups, family holidays, and holidays abroad

To establish the extent to which the CHA and Holiday Fellowship drifted away from Leonard's philosophy, the first part of the chapter is concerned with an analysis of the changing quantity, distribution, type and quality of accommodation provided over the period 1919-2000, including an analysis of the cost of the holidays. The second part examines the changing nature of the holiday provision at home and abroad, from compulsory walking holidays to a wide range of special interest holidays, holidays specifically designed for school children and youth groups, and family holidays.

This examination is largely based on the substantial primary sources; annual reports, committee minutes, brochures, centre guides and magazines, available within the extensive CHA archive, which resides in the GMCRO, and within the less voluminous HF Holidays archive located at its centre Newfield Hall, Malhamdale in

the Yorkshire Dales.<sup>2</sup> Reference is also made to material that remains in the possession of Countrywide Holidays, and within the Leonard family archive.<sup>3</sup> This primary source material has been augmented by oral and written testimony from past and present office bearers of both organisations, a selection of local CHA and Holiday Fellowship local groups and a sample of past and present members of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

## **The changing nature of accommodation provision**

### Introduction

CHA centres came and went prior to the First World War, some 39 different centres being visited by guests. In 1913, the CHA had 13 British centres, accommodating 13,670 guests; four were owned by the Association: Ardenconnel House at Rhu on the Clyde; Newlands Mill, Keswick and Stanley Ghyll House in Eskdale, both in the Lake District; Hebden in Wharfedale, Yorkshire; and Abbey House, Whitby was held on a long lease.<sup>4</sup>

The holiday programme for 1913 shows that only three of the centres were open all year round; 'Woodbank' at Matlock Bath, Ardenconnel House at Rhu and Abbey House, Whitby.<sup>5</sup> The predominant holiday season lasted from late May/early June to

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<sup>2</sup> The archives in the Greater Manchester County Record Office will shortly be relocated to Manchester Central Library.

<sup>3</sup> The Countrywide Holidays records, temporary held in store in Windermere, are to be deposited in the Greater Manchester County Record Office with the CHA archive; Personal records relating to the activities of T.A. Leonard are in the possession of Nancy Green, T.A. Leonard's great-grand-daughter.

<sup>4</sup> See CHA Annual Report for 1914, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1

<sup>5</sup> See CHA 1913 Summer programme, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/1.

the end of September. For the rest of the year, most of the properties lay vacant and unused, the economic implications of which feature strongly in the future development of the CHA.

The CHA continued to function throughout the First World War with only a slight reduction in the number of British centres, surprising, given the cataclysmic events taking place in Europe. The argument in defence of taking holidays for rational recreation during this time is set out in an interesting discourse on ‘Holidays in War Time’ in the May 1915 issue of *Comradeship*, which proclaims that:

*It has always been claimed that the CHA, in promoting and providing simple and rational holidays of a social character, was making a positive, if small, contribution to our national life, and that it stood for more than mere transient and superficial enjoyment, good as that may be in itself. We may ask whether those things for which it does stand are of any less value to those not called to active service at a time of national crisis than under normal conditions, and we are disposed to answer that so far from being of less value they are of even greater importance.<sup>6</sup>*

Such holidays were therefore seen as a source of morale-boosting enjoyment as well as a provider of rest and relaxation. Although guest numbers at the eleven CHA guest houses declined to less than 7,000 in 1916, they rose thereafter to almost 9,000 in 1918.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> See *Comradeship*, Vol. VIII No. 5 (May 1915), GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/1.

<sup>7</sup> See CHA Annual Reports 1914-1919, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

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As related in chapter 1, T A Leonard resigned from the CHA in 1913, with a handful of like-minded committee members, to form the Holiday Fellowship. Undaunted by the impending conflict, in addition to the centre at Newlands inherited from the CHA and its headquarters at Conwy, the Holiday Fellowship acquired centres at Ingleton in the Yorkshire Dales and Portpatrick in Galloway, Scotland in 1914 (to be replaced by a centre on the island of Arran in 1917). These centres accommodated some 3,000 guests per season during the war.<sup>8</sup>

War-time issues of the CHA magazine *Comradeship* illustrate how both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, which had a regular column in the CHA's magazine until it commenced its own magazine *Over the Hills* in 1920, continued to function as a provider of holidays in Britain.<sup>9</sup> Centre arrangements were largely unaffected although appeals to members and friends to volunteer for duties as hosts and hostesses, secretaries and domestic staff are a recurring theme.

### Overview of accommodation provision 1919-2000

Since the First World War, the CHA has made use of some 45 British & Irish centres (see Figure 4 & Appendix 2).<sup>10</sup> These have been spread throughout Britain and Ireland from Grantown-on-Spey in Northern Scotland to Perranporth in Cornwall with 31 per cent located in the north of England and 40 per cent in the south (see Figure 6 below). They have included centres in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, Eire and on the Isle of Man.

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<sup>8</sup> See Annual Reports 1914-1919, HF Holidays Archive, Malhamdale.

<sup>9</sup> See CHA magazine *Comradeship*, issues Vol. VII, No. 1 (October 1914) to Vol. XII, No. 1 (October 1918), GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/1 to 1/2.

<sup>10</sup> From CHA Annual Reports, also summarised in Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.83.



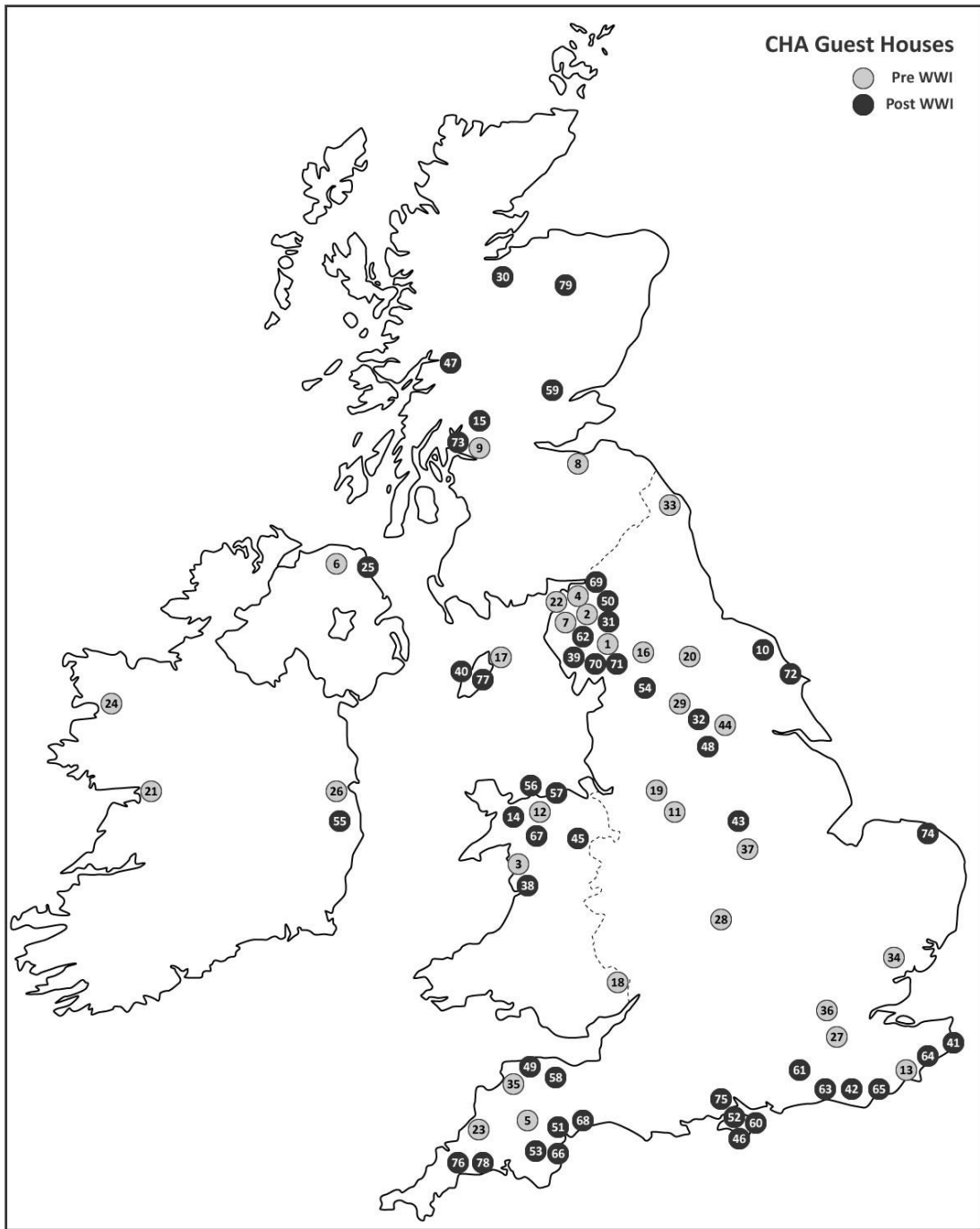


Figure 4: Distribution of CHA Guest Houses 1891-2000

Reflecting Leonard's original intention to provide holidays by mountain, moor and sea, two-thirds of the CHA guest houses used in England and Wales were located

within or in close proximity to a national park. Many others were located within areas designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty for their attractive and well-preserved landscapes. Over half were situated on or very near to the coast.

The type of accommodation has ranged from Spartan centres such as Wharfedale, a wooden bungalow and Lledr Hall, a timber former Eisteddfod pavilion to college premises and university halls of residence.<sup>11</sup> The majority have been converted country houses catering for 50-70 guests in large bedrooms capable of accommodating 10-12 persons (in single sex dormitories), with kitchen and rudimentary shared bathroom facilities. Two centres were purpose built – Moorgate Guest House in Derbyshire and Glaramara Guest House in the Lake District.

The Holiday Fellowship has made use of a much larger number of centres since its foundation in 1913 (see Figure 5 and Appendix 3)<sup>12</sup>. The vast majority of its 120 centres have comprised converted country houses but more use has been made of seasonal rented accommodation, particularly during the 1970s and 1980s. Centres used have included university halls of residence and hotels. The above total also includes hostel and camp accommodation specifically used for school journey parties and youth groups, including such accommodation as the purpose built Wall End Farm, Langdale centre in the Lake District.

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<sup>11</sup> The word 'Spartan' is first used by Leonard to describe the Keld Guest House, which provided accommodation prior to the First World War. Leonard does not define the term 'Spartan' but goes on to describe Keld as a simple-life guest house providing the minimum of comfort and convenience. He was no doubt using the word 'Spartan' in the literal sense in relation to the standard of accommodation; meaning simple and austere. He was probably also referring to the type of holiday provided, which required rigorous self-discipline, an important Spartan attribute.

<sup>12</sup> From H. Wroe, *The Story of HF Holidays*, pp.80-81.

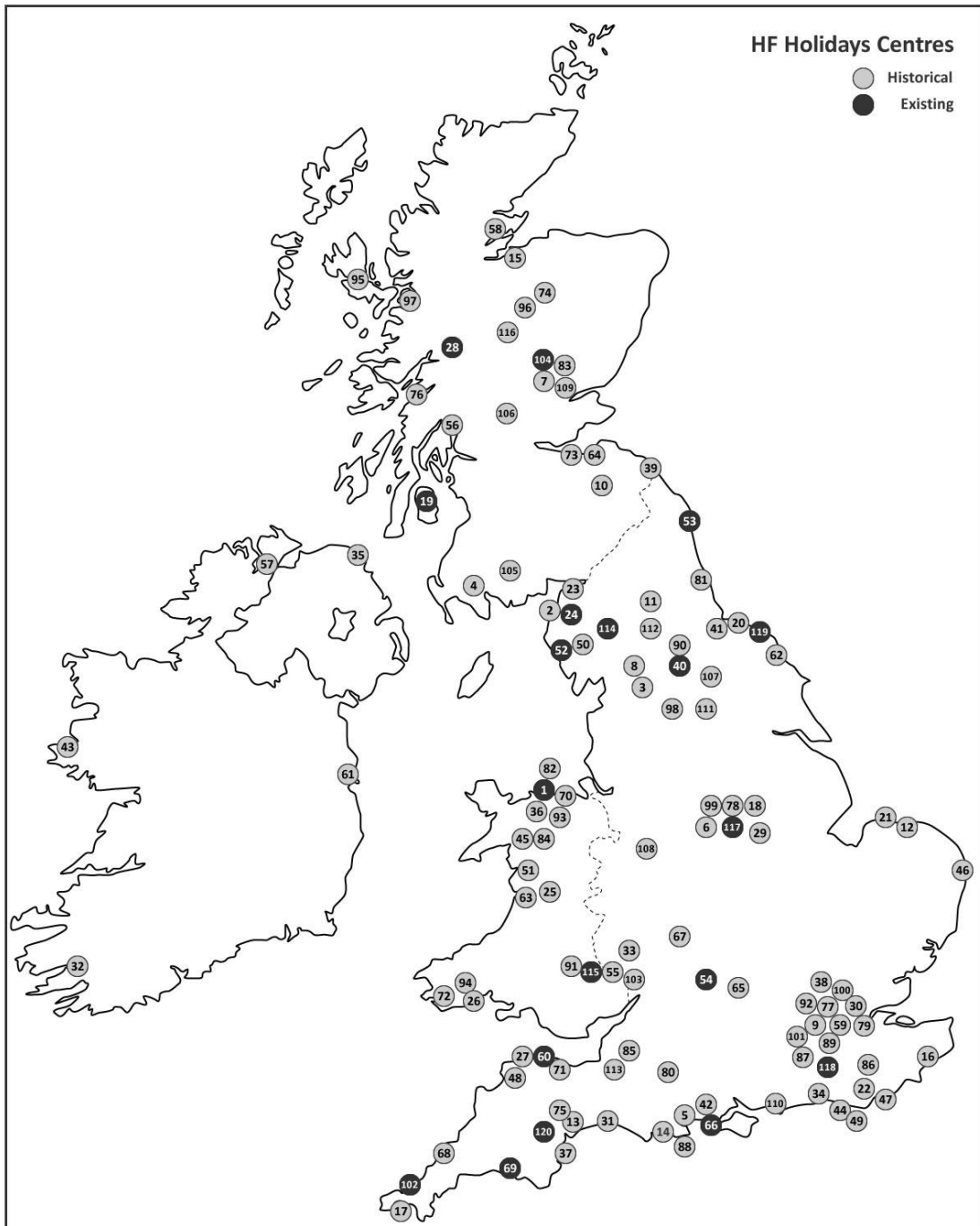


Figure 5: Distribution of HF Centres 1913-2000

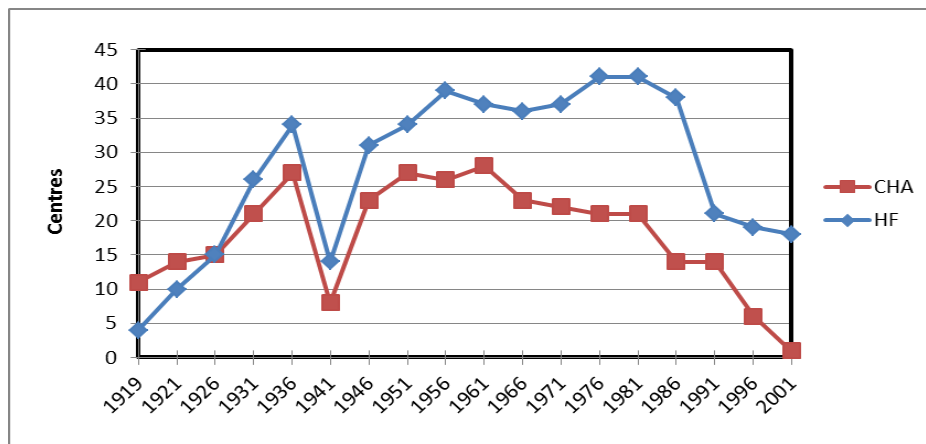
These have also been spread throughout Britain and Ireland with an equally large proportion in southern England (40 per cent) but with a lower proportion in the north of England and a greater proportion in Scotland (see Table 1 below). Compared with

the CHA, a smaller proportion of Holiday Fellowship centres were situated within or in close proximity to a national park (only half the centres), although others were located within areas designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. A similar proportion, half, were situated on or very near to the coast.

**Table 1: Distribution of CHA and HF British & Irish centres 1919-2000**

Region	CHA Guest Houses	HF Centres
Northern England	14 (32%)	29 (24%)
Southern England	18 (40%)	49 (41%)
Scotland	6 (13%)	21 (17%)
Wales	5 (11%)	16 (13%)
Northern Ireland	1 (2%)	1 (1%)
Eire	1 (2%)	4 (4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>120</b>

The following graph, based on information obtained from CHA and Holiday Fellowship annual reports, shows how the number of centres has fluctuated since 1919 (see Figure 6). After the First World War, the number of CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres grew slowly through the 1920s and more rapidly through the 1930s to reach a peak of twenty-seven and thirty-four centres, respectively, in 1936.



**Figure 6: CHA and HF British centres 1919-2001**

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Following the interruption of the Second World War, when the number of CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres was reduced to eight and six, respectively, there was a slow recovery at first, and then growth, through the 1950s. The number of CHA centres peaked in 1961 when 28 were used, following which there was a slow decline through the 1960s and 1970s. There was a steady rationalisation of centres throughout the 1980s and by the early 1990s, only 13 remained open. Further restructuring in the 1990s led to the sale of the remaining properties and to the termination of the CHA as a holiday provider in 1999 when the last property, Stanley Ghyll House, Eskdale in the Lake District was closed.

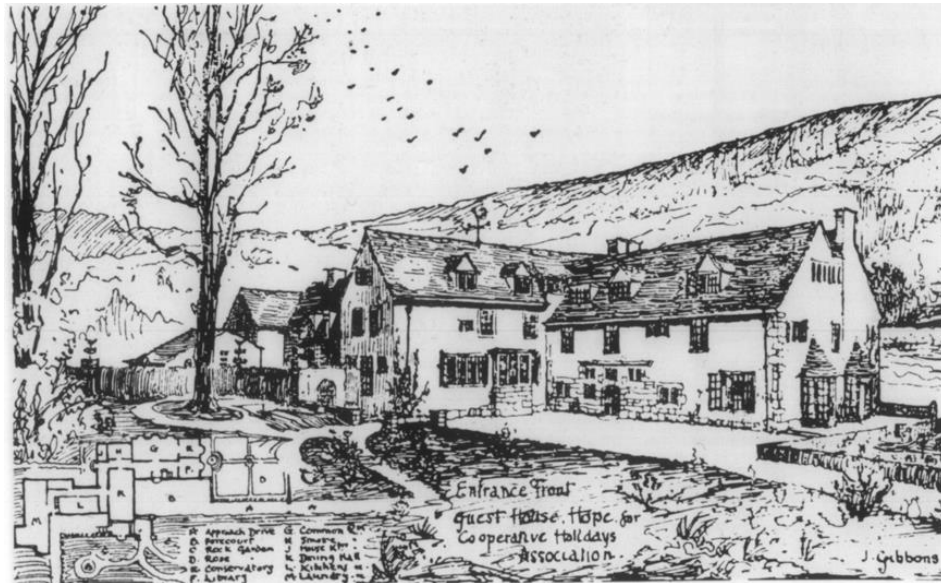
The number of Holiday Fellowship centres reached 37 in 1961 and remained around the 40 mark until the mid-1980s when the Holiday Fellowship re-branded itself as HF Holidays and un-profitable centres were disposed of. The number of centres was almost halved by 1991. At the end of the century, the Holiday Fellowship continued to operate 18 British centres; seven in northern England, six in southern England, two in Wales and three in Scotland.

### The challenges of the inter-war period

Only eight of the 13 pre-war CHA centres survived the First World War. With the return to normality in 1919, the number of guest-weeks rose to almost 13,000 at eleven centres, including a new purpose - built centre at Hope in the Derbyshire Peak District, built in the Arts and Crafts style (see Figure 7 below).<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Although not opened until 1916, Moor Gate Guest House was commissioned by Leonard prior to his leaving the CHA and the Arts and Crafts style of the building clearly reflects the influence of William Morris on Leonard's thinking.



**Figure 7: Architect's drawing of Moor Gate Guest House, Hope.  
(Speake, A Hundred Years of Holidays, p.54.)**

In contrast to the older country house centres, the Hope guest house was designed 'to insure the most suitable arrangements for the comfort of the guests and convenient working of the staff'.<sup>14</sup> This new guest house possessed a dining room to accommodate 80 guests and a Common Room measured 45ft by 18ft, with three large recessed bay windows, which provided plenty of light and air and extensive views on all sides. Off the Common Room was a conservatory measuring 14ft by 13ft, available for smokers in the evening. There was a Library and Writing Room and a separate Smoking Room. In contrast to existing centres, the sleeping accommodation comprised single-sex bedrooms, designed in the main for two beds and in no instance for more than three, rather than dormitories. The building was centrally heated, with a coal fired boiler and open fireplaces in the public rooms.

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<sup>14</sup> See *Comradeship*, Vol. VIII No. 2 (December 1914), p.9, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2.

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By 1919, as a new era dawned, the CHA looked forward enthusiastically to the challenges ahead.<sup>15</sup> However, whilst bookings rose dramatically by 50 per cent, there was not enough accommodation available to meet the peak summer demand. The CHA's 1919 Annual Report exclaims that:

*Never before have our centres been so heavily booked for the early weeks of the summer; in fact it is doubtful whether ever before have our available resources as regards accommodation been so heavily taxed. Our chief regret of the season has been that it was impossible to get a number of additional centres ready in time, for we could have easily filled them.*<sup>16</sup>

A successful first "Peace" summer was followed by an even higher demand for accommodation; bookings increased from 12,900 to 17,500, and an exceptionally busy 1920 forced a search for more centres. During the 1920s and 1930s, many country houses came on the market with the decline in landed wealth due to changes in inheritance tax and insolvency caused by the depressed supply of cheap labour and the drop in commodity prices.<sup>17</sup> Both the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship acquired a wide range of accommodation cheaply; the CHA 15 properties and the Holiday Fellowship over 20 properties (see appendices 2 & 3).<sup>18</sup>

However, the type and quality of accommodation provided during the inter-war period varied enormously. The CHA's accommodation included Spartan accommodation such as The Bungalow at Hebden in Wharfedale, a single-storey

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<sup>15</sup> See *Comradeship*, Vol. XI No. 4 (March 1919), GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2.

<sup>16</sup> See CHA Annual Report 1919, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>17</sup> See D. Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, (London: Penguin Books, 2005), pp.88-138.

<sup>18</sup> See CHA and HF annual reports for period 1920-1938.

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wooden structure with three dormitories accommodating up to 70 guests. It closed in the 1950s due to the lack of adequate facilities.<sup>19</sup> Lledr Hall, near Betws-y-coed in North Wales, was primitive, there being no gas or electricity. The men's accommodation was detached from the main hall, in wooden huts. It closed in 1962.<sup>20</sup> More luxurious coastal resort accommodation was provided at Landguard Manor, Shanklin on the Isle of Wight and Torridge House at Westward Ho! in Devon.<sup>21</sup> Such accommodation provided higher quality lounge and dining facilities, smaller bedrooms, still single-sex, and better kitchen and bathroom facilities.

The opportunistic purchase of country houses during this period signalled the start of the drift away from the original ideals of the CHA. The acquisition of such properties, often with limited kitchen, toilet and bathroom facilities, also stored up problems for the future as guest's expectations increased and fire and safety regulations were introduced.

The Holiday Fellowship's acquisitions included centres at Malhamdale, Swanage and Torquay, where Watcombe Park, designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel for his own use, was considered to be the grandest centre owned by the Holiday Fellowship.<sup>22</sup> Typical of such houses was Hawse End, close to Derwent Water in the Lake District. Newlands Guest House, purchased from the CHA in 1914, continued as a Spartan mountain centre but Hawse End, leased for ten years from 1927-1937, catered for the 'not-so-young'. As Leonard explains in *Adventures in Holiday Making*:

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<sup>19</sup> See R. Speake, *A Hundred years of Holidays*, pp.26-27.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.68-69.

<sup>21</sup> See GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/7/78 & B/CHA/ADM/7/89.

<sup>22</sup> See HF Annual Reports 1920-1937; also H. Wroe, *The Story of HF Holidays*, p.20.



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*Hawse End gave rise to some strong criticism. Only a quarter of an hour's walk from Newlands, it was a sort of antithesis to all that the latter, and the Fellowship as a whole, was supposed to stand for. A stately residence standing in exquisite lovely grounds, it was so costly to upkeep that we had to charge the top figure on our list. To attract the elderly folk who could afford to pay, we basely deserted our principles by allowing excursions to be optional, abandoning our boot cleaning and bed making customs, and giving an extra course for dinner – biscuits and cheese!!!<sup>23</sup>*

This comment illustrates the tensions emerging as early as the late 1920s between those members who had departed the CHA to found the Holiday Fellowship in a renewed effort to provide cheap and simple holidays and the more progressive newer members who wished to attract a wider clientele. It also shows the declining influence of Leonard, now retired from his position as General Secretary, on being taken by the Holiday Fellowship.

The Holiday Fellowship did establish a number of mountain centres, such as Wall End Farm in the Lake District, where conditions were Spartan. A contributor to the Spring 1926 edition of *Over the Hills* describes Wall End Farm Camp thus:

*This consisted of wooden chalets and a communal building containing the kitchen, common room/dining room and, originally, only one bath and shower [for up to 30 campers]. There was one hot tap, otherwise one used cold water from the jugs and basins in the chalets. A wind-up gramophone in the common room was fixed to the wall because the floor bounced too much when people were dancing.<sup>24</sup>*

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<sup>23</sup> T A Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.80.

<sup>24</sup> HF Magazine *Over the Hills*, Spring 1926.

By 1931, the CHA operated 21 British centres and the Holiday Fellowship 26 British centres (see Appendix 4). Both organisations continued to expand during the 1930s, notwithstanding the well-documented industrial unrest and mass unemployment of the period, reflecting the fact that the thirties nevertheless saw a remarkable degree of economic and social advance and, for many, a rising standard of living.

**Table 2: CHA British & Irish centres in 1938 (with date of opening)**

Centre	Date of opening
10. Whitby(R)	1896
15. Rhu (Ardenconnel)	1899
32. Wharfedale	1909
38. Barmouth(R)	1911
39. Eskdale	1912
40. Peel	1913
43. Hope	1916
45. Llangollen	1920
47. Onich	1921
49. Westward Ho!	1923
50. Grasmere	1925
52. Shanklin	1927
53. Totnes	1928
54. Kirkby Lonsdale(R)	1929
55. Bray	1929
56. Llanfairfechan	1930
57. Graiglwyd Hall	1932
58. Porlock	1932
59. Kinfauns	1933
60. Ryde	1934
61. Hindhead	1934
62. Borrowdale	1935
63. Eastbourne(R)	1935
64. Folkstone(R)	1935
65. Bexhill-on-Sea(R)	1936
66. Newton Abbot(R)	1936
67. Lledr Valley	1936

The CHA's forty-fifth annual report proudly states that, in 1938, its members had the choice of no less than 27 British centres (see Table 2 above).<sup>25</sup> The vast majority were situated close to a station for rail travel was the preferred mode of transport for the majority of guests. The accessibility of centres by rail also reflects the fact that

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<sup>25</sup> See CHA Annual Report 1938, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

the railway network was extensive in the 1930s, providing access to the remotest locations in Wales and Scotland.<sup>26</sup> In 1938, over half the 27 CHA guest houses were located within walking distance of a railway station, only six were located more than 3 miles from a station; Borrowdale (8 miles) and Grasmere (6 miles) in the Lake District, Wharfedale (12 miles) in the Yorkshire Dales, Porlock (6 miles), near Minehead, Hindhead (4½ miles), near Haslemere and Peel on the Isle of Man, which was located 12 miles from the port of Douglas (see Table 6).

**Table 3: HF British & Irish centres in 1938 (with date of opening)**

Centre	Date of opening
1. Conwy	1914
2. Newlands	1914
10. Melrose	1918
11. Alston	1919
15. Inverness	1922
16. Hythe	1923
17. Penzance	1923
18. Froggatt	1924
19. Isle of Arran	1925
20. Staithes	1925
21. Cromer	1926
22. Bexhill-on-Sea	1926
23. Langdale	1926
24. Hawse End	1927
25. Devil's Bridge	1927
27. Lynmouth	1928
28. Glencoe	1929
29. Longshaw	1929
30. London	1929
31. Lyme Regis	1929
33. Wye Valley	1930
35. Ballycastle	1931
36. Snowdon	1932
37. Torquay	1932
38. Wycombe	1933
39. Berwick-on-Tweed	1933
40. Malhamdale	1934
41. Marske by the Sea	1935
42. Milford-on-Sea	1936
43. Clifden	1936
44. Crowlink	1936
45. Harlech	1936
46. Kessingland	1936

<sup>26</sup> The CHA's Centre programmes provide details of travelling arrangements, including railway information. Bradshaw's Guides provide comprehensive details of the railway network.

By 1938, the Holiday Fellowship had 34 centres in Britain & Ireland (see Table 3 above). Over 60 per cent were located within walking distance of a railway station (see Table 6). Only six were located more than 3 miles from a station; Hawes End (4 miles from Keswick) and the Langdale Camp (13 miles from Windermere), both in the Lake District, Wye Valley (6 miles from Monmouth), Snowdon (15 miles from Caernarvon), Milford-on-Sea and Crowlink, both 4 miles from the nearest railway station. These centres included established centres but also many short-season tenancies, which were open for only a few weeks during the summer holidays. Marske, Milford and Kessingland accommodated families.<sup>27</sup>

Looking back in 1934, Leonard comments in *Adventures in Holiday Making* that the outstanding feature of the holiday movement he had helped to pioneer had been the youthfulness of its membership and the low price it had been able to offer at its guest-houses. However, he expressed a note of caution about the future:

*In the early days it has been shown how we believed in very simple ways and fairly strenuous ones, offering cheap holidays and discouraging dressiness and unnecessary expenditure on excursions. The CHA fell away somewhat from these ideals, for middle-class folk joined it and demanded more expensive standards – which we gave them. It was chiefly on this account that the Holiday Fellowship came into being: to revive fading ideals and get back to the old ways. Looking at our centres today, we of the Fellowship appear to be falling away as seriously as did our Mother organisation. Here, I suggest, is the danger that lies ahead for the movement.*<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> See HF Annual Report 1939.

<sup>28</sup> T A Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.142.

In concluding his '*Story of the Rise and Development of a People's Holiday Movement*', Leonard postulates that 'Nothing would be easier than to settle down to the comfortable routine of taking desirable mansions in various parts of the country (and how many there are standing empty) and to furnish and equip them to receive the crowd of eager folk who love that type of guest-house so long as we provide plenty of amusement and the excursions are not too strenuous'. But Leonard visualised a very different future. He looked for more 'adventure' type centres, similar to Newlands, as a link between the simplicities of the new youth hostels, the inspiration for which he traced to the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, and the country house style adopted at many centres. He also wished to see more youth camps, such as Langdale, developed as well as family centres.<sup>29</sup>

#### The impact of the Second World War

During the Second World War, many centres were commandeered for accommodation for the armed services and for use by the Ministry of Supply to house workers. Only eight CHA guest houses and six Holiday Fellowship centres remained open, accommodating less than 30,000 guests per year between them (compared with 69,000 guests in 1938).<sup>30</sup> Annual reports repeatedly refer to difficulties with the recruitment of domestic staff; cooks, kitchen helpers and house staff, as well as resident secretaries, due to men being called-up for active duty and women being

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<sup>29</sup> T A Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, pp.215-220.

<sup>30</sup> See CHA and HF Annual reports for the period.

required to work in factories or on the land. A plea was made to guests to help in every possible way by:

*Cleaning their own boots and making their own beds and, in particular, by ensuring that when bedrooms are left in the morning they are left in a tidy condition, boots and shoes being put away and clothing hung up.*<sup>31</sup>

Throughout the Second World War, both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, along with the WTA and the YMCA & YWCA, managed large hostels for those workers transferred from their own areas to Royal Ordnance Factories located outside towns. The CHA managed seven hostels of between 500 and 1,000 residents each.<sup>32</sup> The Holiday Fellowship managed ten hostels, the largest outside Hereford accommodating 1,650 residents. This hostel covered 25 acres with sleeping blocks, large dining room, recreation unit and concert hall, a sick bay and staff blocks. The sleeping blocks comprised small rooms with two bunk beds and hot and cold water. Toilet and shower facilities were communal. The dining room was continually in use from 4.30am till midnight. The recreation unit had reading, writing and games rooms and the concert hall accommodated 1000 people.<sup>33</sup>

The CHA and Holiday Fellowship helped in the planning, supervision and management of these hostels, recruiting staff in the local area. The occupants comprised mainly young men and women transferred from the bombed cities but also older people. Efforts were made to develop a community life to make the hostels as

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<sup>31</sup> See *Comradeship*, Vol. XXXII, No.3, (Spring 1941), GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/9.

<sup>32</sup> See Annual Report for 1941, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1 & B/CHA/ADM/8/17.

<sup>33</sup> See C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship*, pp.8-9.

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homelike as possible with the provision of entertainment and social activities. The residents were encouraged to develop their own social activities but help was provided by the Workers' Educational Association and ENSA. Activities ranged from drama, music and art to cookery classes and gardening.<sup>34</sup>

The CHA also undertook the management of 21 hostels for agricultural workers, each for 30-50 residents, in Lancashire, Cheshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire.<sup>35</sup> The Holiday Fellowship managed 19 hostels for agricultural workers in Devonshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire and a number of Welsh counties.<sup>36</sup> These hostels mainly comprised requisitioned properties in remote parts of the countryside, providing accommodation for men and women working the land where no other accommodation was available.

This commitment to managing Government hostels was welcomed, without question, by members of the CHA as 'a social duty they ought to undertake and, in view of their long experience in social work, one which they ought to be able to carry out successfully'.<sup>37</sup> They saw it as an opportunity to enhance the social wellbeing and spiritual welfare of workers at this time of crisis. However, one area of concern was the Ministry of Labour's insistence that alcohol be available for purchase. Although the CHA opposed this, when it was suggested that the residents might run their own bars, it decided that the CHA would be in a better position to control the alcohol sold and thus prevent any possible abuse.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> See Annual Report for 1944, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1

<sup>35</sup> See *Comradeship*, Vol. XXXIII, No.2 Winter 1941, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/9

<sup>36</sup> See C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship*, pp.20-21.

<sup>37</sup> See Annual Report for 1941, p.7, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p.8.

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However, contributions to *Over the Hills* show that the Holiday Fellowship's decision to undertake the management of Government hostels, particularly those for munitions workers, caused much conscience searching by certain members.<sup>39</sup> This reticence to get involved in the management of Government hostels may indicate that the pacifist views of Leonard and the Quaker founders of the Holiday Fellowship still resonated with some members of the General Committee. On the plus side, it was believed by the majority of members that the introduction of large numbers of industrial workers to the Holiday Fellowship ideals would create a fund of goodwill which might be of value after the war.<sup>40</sup>

The contribution of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship to the war effort has not received much publicity but there is no doubt that both organisations made a valuable contribution to the national effort. It also brought the two organisations to the attention of a group of people who might otherwise have remained unaware of their existence. However, the extent to which it encouraged new members to experience the CHA and Holiday Fellowship brand of holiday making is not known.

### Post-war recovery and expansion

As the post-war era dawned, centres re-opened and guests returned in large numbers as travelling conditions improved. The CHA had 23 British centres opened by 1947; the Holiday Fellowship had 31 centres (see Table 4 below).<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> See *Over the Hills*, Spring 1941; also C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship*, p.6.

<sup>40</sup> See particularly, the report of the HF Annual General Meeting held in Nottingham on 3 January 1942 in C. Johnson, *History of the Holiday Fellowship, Part Two: 1941-1980*, pp.8-9.

<sup>41</sup> See CHA Annual Report for 1947, GMCRO/B/CHA/FIN/1; HF Annual Report 1947, HF Archive.



**Table 4: CHA and HF British & Irish Centres and guests (guest-weeks), 1919-2001**

Year	Centres		Guests	
	CHA	HF	CHA	HF
1919	11	9	12,917	5,241
1931	21	26	24,327	31,555
1938	27	34	28,872	40,000
1941	8	6	13,305	15,800
1947	23	31	29,622	40,000
1951	25	34	26,604	50,000
1961	28	37	31,065	60,000
1971	22	37	26,552	60,052
1981	20	41	23,797	50,000
1991	14	21	13,506	30,000
2001	1	19	nil	24,000

However, the de-requisitioning of property by the Ministry of Supply did cause problems. For example, a CHA guest house in North Wales was requisitioned during the war but when it was handed back, it was in such a poor condition that the Association could not afford to reinstate the property.<sup>42</sup> After considerable efforts to find a purchaser, it was eventually handed over to the British Asthma Association for a nominal sum in 1957 after lying empty for over ten years.<sup>43</sup>

CHA annual reports for the immediate post-war period provide an insight into other difficulties experienced by the Association. Firstly, problems were encountered in obtaining furnishings and equipment for new centres to replace those lost as a result of requisitioning, due to the short supply of goods immediately following the war (rationing continued until 1954).<sup>44</sup> Secondly, the recruitment of trained domestic staff was a major issue. Before the Second World War, the CHA relied on friends and relatives of members to supply new domestic staff through the ‘Domestic Helper

<sup>42</sup> Graiglwyd Hall, near Penmaenmawr, North Wales.

<sup>43</sup> See CHA Annual Report, 1957, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>44</sup> See CHA Annual Report, 1948, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1

Scheme'. This source of supply dried up after the war and the CHA had to advertise for staff (at realistic wages!). The 1949 Annual Report records that:

*Whilst we have recruited some very good staff in this way, it is also to be recorded that we have had failures, and it sometimes happens that the type of person obtained in this manner only stays a few weeks and then moves on to other employment. We feel that the time has come when our membership ought to feel a personal responsibility in trying to recruit domestic helpers from amongst the people they know.....The true solution of the staffing problem will be found in securing staff who feel an enthusiasm for the work of the Association and who as a result stand by it out of a sense of loyalty.<sup>45</sup>*

The recruitment of domestic staff remained an issue throughout the 1950s. Even in 1958, the social conscience of members was being pricked and they were requested 'to encourage some of their younger friends to apply for domestic staff appointments'.<sup>46</sup> It was not until 1961 that the CHA finally bit the bullet: 'Your Committee has reviewed the whole position regarding domestic staff and a scheme for improving staff accommodation has been prepared and, for next season, there will be a much higher rate of pay for all grades. This will result in a considerable increase in expenditure which will have to be met by increased charges'.<sup>47</sup> The issue of balancing costs with charges would bedevil the CHA for the rest of the century.

The demand for domestic holidays recovered quickly after the Second World War and increased from an estimated 15 million in 1951 to 25 million by 1955; the British

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<sup>45</sup> See CHA Annual Report for 1949, GMCRO/B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>46</sup> See CHA Annual Report for 1958, GMCRO/B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>47</sup> See CHA Annual Report for 1961, GMCRO/B/CHA/FIN/1.

seaside holiday boomed and commercial operators such as Butlins expanded their operations.<sup>48</sup> However, the fortunes of the CHA slackened in the 1950s, largely as a result of difficulties in staffing, which led to the partial closure of some guest houses, and the difficulties encountered in obtaining approval for improvements to properties (building licences were limited). Even where building works were approved, the shortage and cost of materials caused delays in effecting improvements.<sup>49</sup>

The main concern of CHA members was the desire to maintain holidays at a reasonable price, which could only be achieved by extending the holiday season beyond the customary months of July and August.<sup>50</sup> The General Committee expressed repeated concerns that whilst guest houses were full to capacity during these months, there was a considerable amount of empty accommodation in May, June and September, when guest houses were running at a loss. The 1951 Annual Report identifies this as the greatest obstacle to the provision of cheap holidays:

*The relatively poor usage of bed capacity during the months of June and September has meant that the working overheads have had to be borne by fewer guests than need have been the case with the result that the cost of holidays has been greater than was necessary.*<sup>51</sup>

Despite the writing of a letter to all members indicating that an increase in charges would be inevitable if better usage was not made of the available accommodation, there does not seem to have been any appreciable change in holidaying habits, for

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<sup>48</sup> VTC Middleton, *British Tourism*, pp.18-22; also BTA, *The British on Holiday, 1951-1972*.

<sup>49</sup> See CHA Annual Report 1949, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>50</sup> See the post-war editions of *Comradeship* and *Over the Hills*.

<sup>51</sup> See CHA Annual Reports 1951, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

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attendances at CHA guest houses did not increase during this period and similar concerns continued to be expressed well into the 1960s. However, there was no enthusiasm, at first, for increasing charges.<sup>52</sup>

As a consequence, attendances at CHA British centres, having peaked at 29,000 in 1947, remained static around the 27,000 mark during the 1950s with a low point of 23,956 in 1955 due largely to the decision to shorten the season by the later opening and earlier closing of centres.<sup>53</sup> However, in recording a second annual increase in attendances from 24,252 to 27,730 in 1957, the CHA's Annual Report claims optimistically that the increase "indicates the extent to which we are fulfilling our fundamental purpose in introducing still more people to the refreshing atmosphere of holidays in the countryside in friendly companionship".<sup>54</sup>

The Holiday Fellowship recognised, more clearly, the opportunities arising from the increase in individual leisure time and the threat from the commercial holiday industry that was growing in terms of the provision of travel, accommodation, entertainment and advertising.<sup>55</sup> It was much more proactive in expanding its operations to overcome the problem of inadequate provision during the peak period. The Holiday Fellowship acquired new properties; 14 new centres were established in the late 1940s and early 1950s compared to the CHA's four new centres and it rented short-season accommodation in popular resorts. As a result, attendances increased throughout the 1950s; from 50,000 in 1951 to 60,000 in 1961.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> See CHA Annual Reports 1948-1950, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>53</sup> See CHA Annual Reports 1948-1960, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>54</sup> See CHA Annual report 1957, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>55</sup> See HF Annual Report, 1956, HF Archive.

<sup>56</sup> See HF Annual reports 1947-1956, HF Archive.

During this post war period both organisations also faced a new challenger in the outdoor holiday market; the YHA, which had seen phenomenal growth in the 1930s. Founded in 1931, the YHA had over 80,000 members and provided some 300 hostels catering for over 530,000 over-nights by 1939.<sup>57</sup> According to its Annual Reports, after the upheaval of the Second World War, the YHA recovered from a minimum of 330,000 overnights at 170 hostels in 1941, its apogee, to peak at one million over-nights in over 300 hostels in 1951. Thereafter, the number of hostels fell as a result of rising costs and a lack of enthusiasm to raise fees, which did not happen until 1955. It was 1962 before the number of over-nights grew again, reaching almost 2 million by the mid-1970s, largely as a result of the expansion of School Journey Parties, which commenced in the early 1950s and comprised over a quarter of the over-nights by 1971.<sup>58</sup>

#### The 1960s: Consolidation

The number of British centres provided by the CHA and the number of guests peaked in 1961 when over 31,000 guests visited 28 centres (see Table 5 below).<sup>59</sup> Only three CHA centres remained open throughout the year; Grasmere, Hindhead and Hope. The vast majority only opened between the end of May/early June and the end of September/early October. A small number opened at Easter.<sup>60</sup> Ten of these centres were classified as being in mountain country with strenuous excursions: the five Lake District centres, the centre at Hope in the Derbyshire Peak District, the Welsh centres

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<sup>57</sup> See YHA Annual Report for 1939, YHA Archive, Ref. Y440001, University of Birmingham.

<sup>58</sup> See H. Maurice-Jones & L Porter, *Eighty Years of Youth Hostelling*, pp.62-63.

<sup>59</sup> See CHA Annual Report 1962, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>60</sup> See 1961 CHA holiday brochure, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

at Barmouth, Llangollen and Lledr, and the Scottish centre at Onich. Eighteen centres were located either on or very close to the coast, many in established seaside resorts such as Cromer, Dawlish, Shanklin and Westward Ho!<sup>61</sup> In fact, all the new guest houses opened during the post-war era were located on the coast and, although some of the coastal centres were located in hill country, the emphasis had clearly shifted from simple accommodation in remote locations to more comfortable accommodation in established holiday resorts.<sup>62</sup>

**Table 5: CHA British & Irish centres in 1961**

Centre	Opened	Closed
10. Whitby	1896	2000
15. Rhu (Ardenconnel)	1899	1982
38. Barmouth	1911	1982
39. Eskdale	1912	2002
40. Peel	1913	1963
43. Hope	1916	1999
45. Llangollen	1920	1970
47. Onich	1921	1982
49. Westward Ho!	1923	1982
50. Grasmere	1925	1999
52. Shanklin	1927	1995
53. Totnes	1928	1965
55. Bray	1929	1971
56. Llanfairfechan	1930	1995
58. Porlock	1932	1995
59. Kinfauns	1933	1995
61. Hindhead	1934	1970
62. Borrowdale	1935	1999
67. Lledr Valley	1936	1962
68. Dawlish	1938	1982
69. Bassenthwaite	1942	1964
71. Ambleside	1944	1997
72. Filey	1947	1982
73. Cove	1948	1964
74. Cromer	1950	1995
75. Barton-on-Sea	1956	1989
76. Perranporth	1961	1991
77. Ramsey	1961	1982

<sup>61</sup> See 1961 CHA holiday brochure, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

<sup>62</sup> Based on an analysis of CHA holiday brochures, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

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A large number were still accessible by rail since the closures of the 1960s brought about by the Beeching cuts had not yet taken effect.<sup>63</sup> In 1961, only eight CHA guest houses (25%) were located more than 3 miles from a railway station (see Table 6). In comparison, 15 Holiday Fellowship centres (40%) were located more than 3 miles from a railway station compared with six centres (18%) in 1938, including Lynmouth, Glencoe and Thurlestone Sands which were all over 15 miles from the nearest railway station.

**Table 6: Distance of CHA and HF centres from a railway station**

Distance	1938		1961/65	
	CHA	HF	CHA	HF
< 1 mile	15	21	13	17
1-3 miles	6	7	7	5
> 3miles	6	6	8	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>37</b>

This shift to more comfortable centres in seaside locations was emphasised further with the closure in the 1960s of guest houses at Bassenthwaite, Cove, Lledr and Totnes and the opening of a new centre at Fowey in 1968. As Speake remarks in relation to the sale of Totnes in 1965, “Totnes lies well inland. Common knowledge has it that this period was one of constant demands for houses (centres) by the seaside and to accommodate this, Follarton House, Totnes was disposed of”.<sup>64</sup>

Economic growth, rising real wages and shrinking work times combined to fuel an unprecedented tourist boom in the 1960s and in an attempt to attract a wider clientele,

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<sup>63</sup> See Dr. R. Beeching, *The Reshaping of British Railways*, (1963) London: HMSO. The Beeching Report identified 2,363 stations and 5,000 miles (8,000 km) of railway line for closure, 55 per cent of stations and 30 per cent of route miles

<sup>64</sup> R. Speake, *A hundred Years of Holidays*, p.49.

and move away from the working class attachments of the co-operative movement, the official name of the CHA was changed to Countrywide Holidays Association in 1964. However, this rebranding of the CHA did not lead to any appreciable improvement in the fortunes of the organisation. In fact, the number of guest declined throughout the 1960s, reaching a low point of 26,500 at the beginning of the 1970s before stabilising.<sup>65</sup> As highlighted in the 1966 Annual Report; “without more accommodation any really significant expansion was all but impossible”.<sup>66</sup> Nevertheless, the CHA made little effort to expand its operations and no additional centres were acquired after Fowey in 1968 until the purchase of a hotel in Grantown-on-Spey in 1991.

A recurring problem for the CHA was that of an over-demand for accommodation during the summer peak in July/August, when many applications for holidays had to be declined, and the under-use of centres in May/June and September. Each year, pleas to members to take earlier or later holidays were made in the *CHA Magazine* but little attempt was made to advertise more widely.<sup>67</sup> The CHA considered that whereas vast sums were spent annually on advertising holiday facilities by the commercial operators, such advertising did not sit easily with its ideals and in any event, it could not afford it. It therefore relied heavily on the personal recommendations ‘of our own enthusiastic members’.<sup>68</sup> In contrast, although the Holiday Fellowship also relied mainly on personal recommendations from guests, it recognised that ‘we may not be reaching all those people who would enjoy a HF

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<sup>65</sup> See CHA Annual Report 1971, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>66</sup> See CHA Annual Report 1966, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>67</sup> See *CHA Magazine*, Vol. LII, No.1, Summer 1960-Vol. LV, No.1, Summer 1964, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/13.

<sup>68</sup> See *CHA Magazine*, Vol. LV, No.2, Winter 1964, p.4, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/13.



holiday'. More effort was therefore put into advertising in the national and local press. In 1967, the Holiday Fellowship spent three times as much on advertising as the CHA (£6,600 compared with £2,100).<sup>69</sup> This is another illustration of the more proactive approach taken by the Holiday Fellowship.

Through-out the post-war period the Holiday Fellowship out-performed the CHA in terms of the number of centres opened and the number of guests accommodated. By the early 1960s, the number of guest-weeks at Holiday Fellowship centres had risen to over 60,000 at almost 40 centres, compared with the CHA's 31,000 guest-weeks at its 28 centres, and remained at this level until the 1980s.<sup>70</sup> Five centres remained open throughout the year; Derwent Bank, Gomshall, Scarborough, Stratford-upon-Avon and Colwyn Bay.

For the Holiday Fellowship, the 1960s saw a period of consolidation. Whilst the CHA attempted to persuade its members to make better use of existing centres, somewhat unsuccessfully, the Holiday Fellowship maintained its guest numbers by opening new centres at locations such as Stratford-upon-Avon, Newquay, Thurlestone Sands, Colwyn Bay and Edinburgh (see Table 7 below). By the mid-1960s, only five centres were graded as mountain centres with strenuous excursions; Derwent Bank and Conistonwater in the Lake District, Strathpeffer and Loch Leven (Glencoe) in Scotland and Conwy in North Wales, compared with the CHA's ten centres. Holiday Fellowship accommodation was concentrated in country houses, the majority of which were situated close to the coast and established holiday areas.

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<sup>69</sup> See HF Annual report for 1967, HF Archive.

<sup>70</sup> Based on an analysis of information obtained from CHA & HF Annual Reports.

**Table 7: Holiday Fellowship British & Irish centres in 1965**

Centre	Opened	Closed
1. Conwy	1914	still open
2. Newlands (YGH)	1914	1988
16 Hythe (YGH)	1923	1973
17. Penzance	1923	1986
19. Isle of Arran	1925	still open
20. Staithes (YC)	1925	1987
21. Cromer	1926	1985
23. Langdale (YC)	1926	1965
25. Devil's Bridge (YC)	1927	1984
27. Lynmouth	1928	1979
28. Glencoe	1929	still open
31. Lyme Regis	1929	2000
33. Wye Valley (YGH)	1930	1985
36. Snowdon (YGH)	1932	1984
40. Malhamdale (YGH)	1934	still open
41. Marske-by-the-Sea	1935	1974
42. Milford-on-Sea	1936	1983
44. Crowlink	1936	1983
24. Derwent Bank	1937	still open
51. Towyn	1939	1982
52. Conistonwater	1945	still open
53. Alnmouth	1947	still open
54. Bourton-on-the-Water	1947	still open
55. Glasbury	1947	1978
56. Minard (YGH)	1947	1966
57. Rathmullan	1947	1967
58. Strathpeffer	1947	1987
59. Gomshall	1947	1974
14. Swanage	1947	1995
60. Selworthy	1952	still open
62. Scarborough	1954	1998
63. Aberystwyth	1955	1976
66. Freshwater Bay	1956	still open
67. Stratford-upon-Avon	1961	1982
68. Newquay	1962	1986
69. Thurlestone Sands	1964	still open
70. Colwyn Bay	1964	1974

The newly acquired Hotel Belvedere at Colwyn Bay, renamed Belvedere House, overlooked the sea and was comfortably furnished, with a television room and games room. All bedrooms had 'deep sprung mattresses and hot and cold water'. The Resthaven Hotel at Thurlestone Sands, renamed Thurlestone Sands House, was acquired to replace Watcombe Park, Torquay, considered the grandest centre owned by the Holiday Fellowship in the 1930s but, in the 1960s, considered out-dated and

inadequate. Thurlestone Sands House, 300 yards from the bay, was also ‘comfortably and tastefully furnished, with a television room’.<sup>71</sup>

Such acquisitions reflected the Holiday Fellowship’s policy of investing in new property and improving the level of comfort and facilities at its centres in response to the demands of its clientele and show it clearly moving away from its original ideals. Annual reports of the 1960s provide detailed accounts of the investment in property maintenance and improvements; in addition to expenditure on general repairs and maintenance such as external painting, re-wiring and plumbing, improvements included the installation of oil-fired boilers (to replace coal-fired boilers), improvements to kitchen facilities, the sub-division of bedrooms to form single and double bedrooms, provision of hot and cold water to bedrooms, provision of additional toilets and bathrooms and the acquisition of new furnishings and furniture (including beds and mattresses). In 1969, the amount spent on building improvements and furnishings totalled £43,000.<sup>72</sup> CHA annual reports for the period record similar accounts of property maintenance and improvements. The CHA spend for 1969 on building improvements and furnishings totalled £45,000.<sup>73</sup>

#### The challenges of the 1970s and 1980s

Between 1951 and 1973, real disposable income per head doubled and by 1978 almost half the manual workers were entitled to at least three weeks holiday.<sup>74</sup> Benson’s research indicates that the number of private cars multiplied eightfold between 1950

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<sup>71</sup> See 1965 HF Summer Holidays brochure, HF Archive.

<sup>72</sup> See, for example, HF Annual Reports for 1964/65-1969/70, HF Archive.

<sup>73</sup> See, for example, CHA Annual Reports for 1967-1969, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>74</sup> See S. Glyptis, *Leisure and Unemployment*, p.10.

and 1974, contributing to a rise in self-catering, independent holidays and caravanning.<sup>75</sup> The CHA and the Holiday Fellowship sought to tap into the rapid growth in tourism by opening more centres through the winter and extending the season at others. To illustrate this, the CHA's 1977 Annual Report proudly proclaimed: "Your committee's policy of opening more houses throughout the winter and extending the season at others by the installation of central heating is proving effective".<sup>76</sup> Until the late 1960s, the installation of central heating was not considered a priority, and was not practicable until the older inefficient coal-fired boilers were replaced by oil-fired boilers.

By the middle of the 1970s, the number of CHA centres had been reduced to 22 houses with the closure of centres considered unsuitable for improvement. In addition, six short season centres, mainly university halls of residence were used for the period mid-July to end of August. Only six guest houses were classified as mountain centres, four in the Lake District, Hope in the Derbyshire Peak District, and Onich in Scotland; 14 were located on, or within close proximity, to, the coast. The Holiday Fellowship closed long-standing centres at Lynmouth (after 50 years), Marske (after 40 years) and Glasbury (after 32 years) for similar reasons but continued to operate some 35 centres, including youth centres and camps, family centres and five short-season centres (see Figure 8 below).<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> See J. Benson, *The Rise of Consumer Society in Britain, 1880-1980* (Harlow: Longman, 1994), pp.92-93.

<sup>76</sup> See CHA Annual Report 1977, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>77</sup> See CHA Holiday Brochure for 1976, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5; HF Holiday Brochure for 1975, HF Archive.



Figure 8: Holiday Fellowship British centres in 1975

Fifteen of the 20 guest houses and three of the four family centres were located on or near the coast. Short season centres were located in University towns and cities; only the youth centres were concentrated in the mountain areas (five out of seven). This distribution further illustrates the clear shift on the part of the Holiday Fellowship

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from Leonard's vision of a simple type of centre, run with the "minimum of comfort, convenience and good order".

The growing use of short-season accommodation led to concerns from some members that the Holiday Fellowship was simply providing hotel accommodation and moving even further from its original philosophy of keeping arrangements as simple as possible and promoting fellowship. At the 1976 AGM, two motions which considered that the Holiday Fellowship should not compete with the hotel industry but should concentrate on its traditional house-party holidays were both carried, as was one disapproving of the introduction of alcoholic drinks at guest houses and the use of licensed premises for short season centres.<sup>78</sup>

However, the approval of such motions did not commit the General Committee and the management continued to pursue improvements to centres and the relaxation of its rules. For instance, the introduction of television sets at guest houses was not to the liking of many members and a motion requesting their removal was carried at the 1978 AGM by 104 votes to 73 votes. Members also objected to the introduction of tea-making facilities in bedrooms, which they considered detrimental to the communal philosophy of the organisation.<sup>79</sup> However, the General Committee felt that the views expressed by guests should also be taken into account and, in a survey, 70 per cent supported television sets in centres, 90 per cent also wished to see kettles provided in rooms.<sup>80</sup> Subsequently, it was decided that television sets should be

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<sup>78</sup> See report of 1976 HF Annual General Meeting, HF Archive.

<sup>79</sup> See report of 1978 HF Annual General Meeting, HF Archive.

<sup>80</sup> See HF Magazine, *Over the Hills*, Vol.2 No.37, Spring 78, p.5.

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retained but located in such a way as to cause minimum intrusion on other guests enjoyment, kettles in rooms became common-place.

These examples illustrate the divisions and friction between the management of the Holiday Fellowship (the General Committee) and a proportion of the membership that came to the fore in the 1970s as the Holiday Fellowship attempted to modernise. It also shows that the membership was not necessarily representative of the guests using the accommodation provided. The management's view, however, was unequivocal:

*There can be no doubt that our organisation is steeped in tradition and it is right that we should continue to have due regard to the opinion of members who have supported us down the years. Yet we must progress, we must accept the inevitable onward movement.<sup>81</sup>*

This would be a recurring theme in both the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship through the latter part of the twentieth century. However, these tensions would prompt differing approaches from the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

In 1981, the CHA accommodated about 24,000 guests at 20 British centres; the Holiday Fellowship operated twice that number attracting over 50,000 guests. The CHA still, publicly, prided itself in “providing recreational holidays at reasonable prices at home and abroad, for people of all ages, creeds and backgrounds, with a

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<sup>81</sup> Extract from Leader in *Over the Hills*, Spring 1979, p.5, HF Archive.

special emphasis on walking and enjoyment of the countryside".<sup>82</sup> But this was more rhetoric than reality.

By the early 1980s, the UK was suffering from rising unemployment and economic recession. Increases in international competition were forcing change and decline in much of the traditional manufacturing economy of large parts of the UK. The Miner's strike of 1982-83 is seen as a turning point that speeded the inevitable process of British industrial decline.<sup>83</sup> Nevertheless, incomes and leisure time, especially in the more affluent south and south-east, continued to increase.<sup>84</sup>

The dual requirements of maintaining reasonable holiday charges and meeting the demand for improved facilities and modern standards put a strain on the CHA's finances resulting in increasing debt from 1980 onwards; reports to the General Committee in the early 1980s record that expenditure exceeded income by over £140,000 per annum (10% of turnover).<sup>85</sup> Although there was some improvement during the late 1980s, following the disposal of a number of unviable centres, there was little attempt to grapple with the underlying issue of a declining clientele and the overall trading loss in the period 1980-1989 exceeded half a million pounds.<sup>86</sup>

Throughout the 1980s, the CHA struggled to deal with the problem of how to maintain the loyalty of its members yet adopt the commercial disciplines of an

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<sup>82</sup> See CHA Annual Report 1981, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>83</sup> See M.J. Oliver, 'The retreat of the state in the 1980s and 1990s' in F. Carnevali and J-M. Strange, *20<sup>th</sup> Century Britain*, pp.262-278; see also C. Wrigley, 'Trade unions: Rise and Decline', pp.279-292.

<sup>84</sup> See V.T.C. Middleton, *British Tourism*, pp.26-27.

<sup>85</sup> See Balance Sheets and Report of Accounts for 1980s, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>86</sup> See General Committee Minutes 1980-1989, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/27-33.



efficient organisation.<sup>87</sup> The management structures of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship were broadly similar until 1982, with a General Secretary, General Committee and committee's responsible for such matters as finance, property, marketing, holidays abroad and personnel. However, the General Committee of the CHA was composed mainly of well-meaning amateurs with a social, philanthropic attitude, but with little financial awareness, who were willing to rely on the existing traditional membership than attempt to attract new customers.<sup>88</sup>

By contrast, the Holiday Fellowship was much more proactive at examining ways of dealing with the challenges it faced. The Holiday Fellowship disposed of out-dated properties more readily, acquired more modern houses and made use of rented properties on short-term leases.<sup>89</sup> In 1982, the Holiday Fellowship rebranded itself as HF Holidays, appointed marketing consultants and extended the range and diversity of its holidays in order to widen its appeal. It would also seem that the management of HF Holidays, comprising a Chief Executive and Board of Directors who had business acumen, was far better equipped to face the challenges ahead than the CHA, which was still organised around a General Secretary and a General Committee.<sup>90</sup>

There had always been a close relationship and friendly rivalry between the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. Discussions on the possible amalgamation of the two organisations were first initiated by the General Secretary of the Holiday Fellowship in November 1968 and a number of meetings took place between the respective

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<sup>87</sup> See Minutes of CHA Annual General Meetings in 1980s, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>88</sup> This is the view of Brian Padgett, General Secretary of CHA from 1975-1980, interview dated 2 April 2012.

<sup>89</sup> See HF Annual Reports for the 1980s. An analysis of the respective annual reports shows that the HF made use of 27 new properties in the 1980s (see Appendix 3).

<sup>90</sup> Conversation with Bob Gomersall, former HF Chairman, 26 May 2012.

General Committees during the following year. However, the minutes show that the CHA's General Committee were not convinced that a merger would be of any benefit financially and the approach was summarily dismissed at the CHA's 1970 AGM.<sup>91</sup>

The economic situation in the early 1980s prompted HF Holidays to consider another attempt at a possible merger with the CHA.<sup>92</sup> However, although the matter was discussed at the CHA's AGM in 1983, no response was made to the approach by HF Holidays. The reasons are not fully explained in the Minutes of the 1983 AGM or in the minutes of the subsequent meetings of the CHA's General Committee. From discussions with office bearers at the time, now retired, it would seem that the CHA Committee Members were concerned that the 'merger' would be a 'take-over' and, perhaps reflecting the more traditional and less commercial approach of the CHA at the time, the General Committee decided to take no action.<sup>93</sup>

Nevertheless, the desire, on the part of HF Holidays, to unite the two organisations was still very strong in 1989 and another approach was made to the CHA. On this occasion, the CHA was more receptive and agreed to the setting up of a Joint Working Party to consider the merger.<sup>94</sup> Detailed records of meetings of the Joint Working Party show that, although a majority of the membership of both organisations was supportive of a merger, there were insurmountable financial issues

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<sup>91</sup> See Minutes of CHA General Committees 12 November 1968-24 January 1970, Countrywide Holidays archive [Frank Wright, the CHA's General Secretary was very scathing about the HF's intentions].

<sup>92</sup> See Minutes of 1983 HF Annual General Meeting in HF Magazine *Over the Hills*, Spring 1983.

<sup>93</sup> Based on interviews with David Peacock, former CHA President, 4 July 2012, and Bob Gomersall, former HF Chairman, 26 May 2012.

<sup>94</sup> See Report of HF AGM, 4 March 1989; letter to members from Chair of General Committee dated 11 March 1989 and Minute of CHA AGM, 8 April 1989, Countrywide Holidays Archive.

associated with the merger of a company limited by guarantee (the CHA) and an industrial and provident society (HF Holidays).<sup>95</sup>

The records of these meeting also show that there were obvious ideological differences between the more traditional approach of the CHA and the commercial attitude of HF Holidays. In particular, the CHA representatives expressed concerns that the merger would amount to a take-over of the CHA; the merged organisation would require only one chief executive and it was fairly obvious who would take this position - the HF holidays chief executive. Also, there was a fear on the CHA's part that, in those instances where both organisations had a centre in the same location, it would be the CHA centres that would be dispensed with. For the purposes of this study, it is suffice to say that, following protracted negotiations over a two year period the project was abandoned and both parties went their separate ways.<sup>96</sup>

The decision not to merge with HF Holidays was a pivotal period in the life of the CHA. In response to the combination of falling numbers of guests, changing patterns of holiday making and competition from other providers, there was a steady rationalisation of CHA centres in the 1980s and the CHA's property portfolio was reduced by a third (from 20 to 13 centres - see Table 8 below) with the closure of centres at Barmouth, Dawlish, Filey, Onich, Ramsey, Rhu and Westward Ho!, which were considered remote and unattractive; between 1981 and 1991, the number of bed spaces available declined from 1400 to 800.<sup>97</sup> A new centre was opened at Grantown-

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<sup>95</sup> See Minutes of CHA/HF Merger Working Party, July 1989-September 1990, Countrywide Holidays Archive, to be located in GMCRO CHA archive after May 2014.

<sup>96</sup> See Minute of CHA General Committee, 1 December 1990, item. GCF90/12/4, in Countrywide Holidays archive.

<sup>97</sup> See CHA brochures for 1981 and 1991, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

on-Spey in 1991, the first to be opened since 1968. It was described as having style and comfort, en-suite rooms, a residential licence and television in every room.<sup>98</sup>

This purchase epitomised the great distance the CHA had travelled from its origins and was, perhaps, a desperate attempt to remain a viable holiday provider. In hindsight, this would appear to have been ‘too-little-too-late’.

**Table 8: CHA British centres in 1991**

Centre	Opened	Closed
10. Whitby	1896	2000
39. Eskdale	1912	2002
43. Hope	1916	1999
50. Grasmere	1925	1999
52. Shanklin	1927	1995
56. Llanfairfechan	1930	1995
58. Porlock	1932	1995
59. Kinfauns	1933	1995
62. Borrowdale	1935	1999
71. Ambleside	1944	1997
74. Cromer	1950	1995
76. Perranporth	1961	1991
79. Grantown-on-Spey	1991	1995

By the beginning of the 1990s, although more guests were staying at CHA centres, the average length of stay was falling and the CHA’s trading deficit increased; from £237,000 in 1991 (10% of turnover) to £495,000 in 1992 (20% of turnover).<sup>99</sup> In an effort to re-establish a trading surplus, holidays abroad were suspended in 1992 and the CHA concentrated on its core UK product. A small number of centres were significantly upgraded and identified as ‘Premier Houses’.<sup>100</sup> Nevertheless, the trading deficit exceeded £500,000 per annum for the next three years.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>98</sup> See CHA Annual Reports for 1990-1993, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>99</sup> See Annual Report and accounts 1992, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>100</sup> See CHA holiday brochure for 1992, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

<sup>101</sup> See Annual Report and accounts for 1993, 1994 & 1995, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

The 1980s saw HF Holidays undertake a wholesale rationalisation of its properties with the closure and sale of older and less popular centres. In 1988, changes in schools' requirements led to the decision to withdraw from the operation of youth centres. Investment was concentrated on improvements to the organisation's 'Country Houses', with the installation of showers and en-suite bedrooms. By 1991, the number of centres had been reduced from 41 to 21 in ten years and the number of guests declined to 30,000.<sup>102</sup>

#### Re-structuring at the end of the twentieth century

The early 1990s was a crucial period for the CHA. The collapse of the merger discussions, mounting debts and poor management prompted the appointment of a Chief Executive in September 1992.<sup>103</sup> His first annual report brought the gravity of the situation to the attention of the membership:

*All reserves built up over 100 years of trading had been lost. It was important that members understood how this had come about. No action had been taken by General Committee to stop the rapid rise in costs and the fall in turnover. General Committee had been badly advised by their officials but had themselves not been ruthless enough to intervene. As Directors they had an obligation to control the actions of the CE and other officials... ..The Association needed to consider very carefully the disposal of property/assets, as the business could not continue to finance a debt of £2m.<sup>104</sup>*

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<sup>102</sup> See Minutes of 1992 HF Annual General Meeting.

<sup>103</sup> See Minute of Extraordinary General Meeting, dated 17 January 1992 and Minute of General Committee, dated 25 June 1992, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/35.

<sup>104</sup> See Minute of General Committee, dated 20 February 1993, Countrywide Holidays archive.

Following unsuccessful attempts to form partnerships with a number of like-minded organisations such as Ramblers Holidays, the CHA embarked upon a three year plan to restructure its finances.<sup>105</sup> A number of centres, including Grantown-on-Spey only purchased in 1991, were disposed of in 1995/96 and its headquarters at Birch Heys in Manchester was put up for sale. By 1997, a hundred years after its foundation, only six centres remained: four in the Lake District (Ambleside, Grasmere, Eskdale and Borrowdale), Abbey House at Whitby and Moorgate at Hope in the Derbyshire Peak District.<sup>106</sup> Nevertheless, this rationalisation only delayed the inevitable until 2002 when the last property, Stanley Ghyll House in Eskdale, was disposed of.<sup>107</sup> The holiday operation, licensed to Shearings Holidays Ltd in 1999 for a period of five years, was sold to Ramblers Holidays in 2004 and the final AGM of Countrywide Holidays (the last re-incarnation of the CHA) was held in November 2004 at Gisburn, not far from Colne where the organisation had originated.<sup>108</sup>

At the end of the century, HF Holidays continued to operate nineteen British properties, marketed as country houses but referred to as hotels within the organisation. These provided holidays for some 35,000 guests (the equivalent of 25,000 guest weeks) (see Table 9 below).<sup>109</sup> All were owned by HF Holidays apart from Conistonwater, which was leased from the National Trust. These country houses had en-suite bedrooms and a range of facilities, including indoor and outdoor

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<sup>105</sup> See 1993 CHA Annual Report, GMCRO, B/CHA/ FIN/2.

<sup>106</sup> See 1997 Countrywide Holidays Annual Report, Countrywide Holidays Archive.

<sup>107</sup> See 2002 Countrywide Holidays Annual Report, Countrywide Holidays Archive

<sup>108</sup> See 2004 Countrywide Holidays Annual Report, *Countrywide Companion 2004*, p.2, Countrywide Holidays Archive.

<sup>109</sup> Information obtained from Steve Backhouse, Head of Holiday Operations, conversation on 11 October 2012.

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swimming pools, ballrooms, Jacuzzi spas and Wi-Fi. Most were only open from March to October and at Xmas/New Year but a handful were open all year round.

The majority (fourteen) of the centres were in England; seven in southern England and seven in northern England, with three in Scotland and two in Wales. Locations ranged from seaside resorts such as Freshwater Bay, Thurlestone Sands and St. Ives to the moorlands of the Lake District, Yorkshire Dales and Dartmoor. Over half the English centres could be found in national parks.

**Table 9: HF British centres in 2000 (with date of opening)**

Centre	Date of opening
1. Conwy	1914
19. Isle of Arran	1925
28. Glencoe	1929
40. Malhamdale	1934
24. Derwent Bank	1937
52. Conistonwater	1945
53. Alnmouth	1947
54. Bourton-on-the-Water	1947
60. Selworthy	1952
66. Freshwater Bay	1956
69. Thurlestone Sands	1964
102. St. Ives	1986
114. Sedburgh	1989
115. Brecon	1990
117. Dovedale	1991
118. Abingworth	1994
104. Pitlochry	1995
119. Whitby	1998
120. Haytor	1999

### What happened to cheap holidays?

The provision of cheap and simple accommodation lay at the heart of Leonard's philosophy. In advertising his first holidays, Leonard's desire was to provide a holiday that cost no more than a week's wage but this was not the over-riding principle. Greater emphasis was placed on the provision of accommodation that

fulfilled the basic needs of guests. Nevertheless, Leonard considered that the cost of his first holidays was cheap: “Thirty shillings [£1.50p] for the week and railway fare. Surely that is low enough.” he is quoted as saying in relation to the first holidays under the auspices of the NHRU in 1893.<sup>110</sup> By way of comparison, average wages for tradesmen in industry ranged from 32s [£1.60p] to 36s [£1.80p] per week.<sup>111</sup>

Reflecting the relative stability of wages and consumer prices, the cost of holidays increased little prior to the First World War.<sup>112</sup> In 1913, the CHA’s magazine *Comradeship* advertised a week’s holiday during the summer period at its Spartan guest houses, Newlands Mill and Wharfedale, for 25s [£1.25p]. At more comfortable guest houses, such as Ardenconnel on the Clyde, costs ranged from 28s [£1.40p] during the winter period to 35s [£1.75p] during July and August.<sup>113</sup> Pricing reflected the varying quality of the accommodation provided. A week’s holiday at the HF’s first centre, ‘Bryn Corach’ at Conwy, cost 32s 6d [£1.62½p] per week.<sup>114</sup>

The suspension of the Gold Standard at the outbreak of the First World War led to prices doubling and, by 1921, charges at CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres had increased to £2 12s 6d [£2.62½p] per week during the summer months. Prices fluctuated during the 1920s and 1930s but, overall, there was little overall increase in the cost of a week’s CHA holiday during the inter-war period and Holiday Fellowship charges actually fell slightly during the 1930s after a small increase in the 1920s.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> See Colne and Nelson Times, 2 June 1893, p.4.

<sup>111</sup> See the Board of Trade Report, Cd. 3864 (London: HMSO, 1908).

<sup>112</sup> For an overview of wage and price index changes since 1750, see ONS Research paper 02/44, dated 11 July 2002, House of Commons Library.

<sup>113</sup> See CHA Magazine *Comradeship*, Vol.6, No.5, April 1913.

<sup>114</sup> See H. Wroe, *The Story of HF Holidays*, p.8.

<sup>115</sup> See respective CHA and HF summer programmes, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/1-4/5 & HF Archive.



Prices rose during the Second World War but the increase was less marked than during the First World War; charges at CHA centres were £3 in 1946. By way of comparison, charges at Holiday Fellowship centres were £3 7s 6d [£3.37½p] for Grade A centres such as ‘Bryn Corach’ at Conwy and £2 15s [£2.75p] for Grade B centres plus 2s 6d [12½p] per week for non-members (see Table 10).<sup>116</sup>

**Table 10: CHA and HF Accommodation charges 1913-1999**  
(Summer peak)

	CHA Whitby	CHA Eskdale	HF Conwy
1913	£1 12s 6d	£1 7s 6d	£1 12s 6d (1914)
1921	£2 12s 6d	£2 12s 6d	£2 12s 6d
1931	£2 15s 0d	£2 15s 0d	£2 15s 0d
1938	£2 12s 6d	£2 10s 0d	£2 13s 6d
1946	£3 0s 0d	£3 0s 0d	£3 7s 6d
1951	£4 10s 0d	£4 0s 0d	£5 10s 0d
1961	£7 10s 6d	£7 7s 0d	£9 15s 0d
1971	£14.00	£14.50	£15 12s 0d
1981	£90.80	£77.00	£103.60 (inc. rail fare)
1991	£200.00	£175.00	£229.00*
1999	£270.00	£260.00	£344.00*

\*includes excursion transport

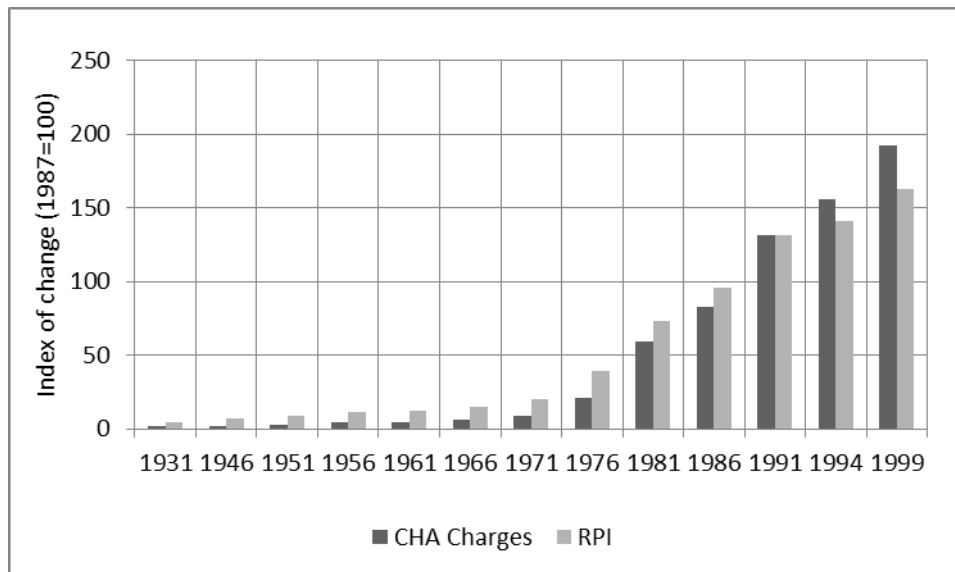
Through-out the 1950s and 1960s, inflation continued at an average of 3 per cent per annum and CHA charges mirrored this increase in prices. However, in the period 1974 to 1981, inflation was above 10 per cent per annum and prices more than tripled in eight years. Despite lower inflation rates in the 1980s and 1990s, prices rose by some 62 per cent between 1988 and 2001.<sup>117</sup> As a result, CHA charges jumped from £14 per week in 1971 to between £80 and £90 per week in 1981 and more than doubled in the 1980s to almost £200 in 1991 (see Table 10).<sup>118</sup> After 1991, charges

<sup>116</sup> See 1946 CHA and HF holiday brochures.

<sup>117</sup> See see ONS Research paper 02/44, dated 11 July 2002, House of Commons Library.

<sup>118</sup> See CHA holiday brochures for the 1970s and 1980s.

outstripped inflation as the CHA fought to balance the books with a declining clientele (see Figure 9 below).



**Figure 9: CHA Accommodation Charges and inflation 1931-1999.**

These statistics suggest that, although the CHA prided itself in ‘providing recreational holidays at reasonable prices’, as an essentially non-profit making body, it was continually faced with the dilemma of either increasing charges to produce a surplus to be used to improve centres or providing holidays at the lowest possible cost and reduce the benefits available to members.<sup>119</sup> Annual reports throughout the 1970s and 1980s report on the constant requirement to maintain and upgrade guest houses through painting and decorating, rewiring and improving lighting, installing central heating and showers, sub-dividing bedrooms to provide single and twin bedded rooms and providing new furniture, as well as kitchen improvements.<sup>120</sup> Holiday Fellowship Annual reports reveal similar requirements.<sup>121</sup>

<sup>119</sup> See CHA 1980 Annual Report, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>120</sup> See CHA Annual Reports for the 1970s and 1980s, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>121</sup> See HF Annual Reports for 1970s and 1980s, HF Archive.

Furthermore, compliance with new fire precaution regulations, introduced in 1972 following a number of major hotel fires in the late 1960s, involved both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in a considerable amount of capital expenditure on property, particularly as many centres were designated as historic buildings. Compliance with the new regulations required, amongst other things, partitioning to be built across previously open galleried landings, fireproofing of many doors and door frames, removal of combustible material, and installation of a fire alarm system.<sup>122</sup>

In some cases these requirements led to the closure of centres for some or all of the summer season, resulting in the loss of revenue. For instance, Glaramara, the CHA's Borrowdale centre was partially closed in 1975 and 1976 to allow for major alterations to the existing building to meet the new regulations, convert dormitory bunk-bed accommodation into single rooms, install central heating and new baths, toilets and showers, and construct a new bedroom wing.<sup>123</sup> Similar work was carried out on another twenty CHA centres over the following four years.<sup>124</sup> However, reflecting its traditional approach, the 1981 Annual Report records that:

*It has always been the Association's aim to give our members the opportunity to escape to the freedom of the countryside, and to engage in activities in the great outdoors, by staying at our holiday centres at reasonable prices. During 1981, we have sought to produce an honest-to-goodness value holiday that costs around £80 per week including meals; a figure which is, incidentally, at least 20% less than the national average weekly wage.<sup>125</sup>*

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<sup>122</sup> See Fire Precautions Act 1971 (SI 1972/238), London, HMSO.

<sup>123</sup> See CHA Annual Reports for 1975-1976, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>124</sup> See CHA Annual Report for 1978, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>125</sup> See CHA 1981 Annual Report, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

To achieve this, the CHA considered that it was unreasonable to finance the improvement of centres through additional holiday charges but through loans, which was eventually the undoing of the organisation. In contrast, the philosophy of HF holidays is encapsulated in its 1987 Annual Report:

*We do not aim to be cheap but to provide the level of service that our members seem to require, to portray a new forthright image, helping to counteract the popular misconception that HF means old, out-dated, run down and religious.*<sup>126</sup>

As figure 18 above shows, charges at Holiday Fellowship centres increased at a faster rate than the CHA's charges from the Second World War onwards, reflecting the different philosophy of the two organisations. The cost of a week's holiday at the Holiday Fellowship's Conwy centre was over £100 in 1981 (a comparable week at the CHA's Whitby centre cost £90.80); more than doubling to £229 in 1991, when a comparable week at the Whitby centre cost £200).

Therefore, whilst the CHA sought to maintain reasonable charges and turnover increased from £500,000 in 1970 to nearly £1.6m in 1980, this increase failed to match the increase in costs on maintaining and servicing the Association's properties. Trading surpluses at the beginning of the 1970s became trading losses by 1980 and, although there was a slight recovery in the late-1980s, trading losses exceeded £200,000 in 1991 (10% of turnover) and continued to increase up to 1995.<sup>127</sup>

Borrowings increased substantially over this period in order to meet the recurring

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<sup>126</sup> HF 1987 Annual report, Minute of General Committee Meeting, 27 March 1987, HF Archive.

<sup>127</sup> See Annual Accounts forming part of CHA Annual Reports for period 1970-1995, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

deficit and eventually the Association was forced to dispose of its guest houses to reduce its borrowings.<sup>128</sup> The Association's attempts at maintaining 'reasonable prices' through the 1970s and 1980s, therefore, played an important part in the final demise of the Association.

Although the number of guests at Holiday Fellowship centres also fell during the 1970s, turnover in 1980 was nearly £3m, due to increased charges, generating a trading surplus. Whilst financial losses were recorded in the early 1980s, prompting the discussions on the merger of the two organisations already referred to, by the early 1990s HF Holidays was again in surplus with a turnover of £5.5m, in sharp contrast to the CHA, which experienced a deficit of over £500,000 on a turnover of £2.5m. HF Holidays generated a significant operating surplus every year in the 1990s and by the end of the century turnover was almost £13m.<sup>129</sup>

At the end of the century, compared with the cost of a week's holiday at the CHA's centre at Whitby of £270, a week's holiday at Conwy cost £344, including excursion expenses, still less than an average week's wage.<sup>130</sup>

### **Activities: the changing nature of holiday provision at home and abroad**

The pursuit of recreative and educational holidays in the countryside was a key element of Leonard's philosophy and was enshrined in the original objects of both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. In founding his holiday movement, Leonard sought to

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<sup>128</sup> See 1993 Countrywide Holidays Annual Report, GMCRO, B/CHA/ FIN/2.

<sup>129</sup> See HF Annual Reports for period 1970-1999, HF Archive.

<sup>130</sup> See H. Wroe, *The Story of HF Holidays*, p.66. According to the ONS Annual Survey of hours and earnings, the average wage for full-time workers in April 2000 was £18,488 (£355 per week).

provide holidays that were more meaningful than the wasteful consumption associated with the annual exodus to the seaside, aptly described by Robert Poole in *Oldham Wakes*.<sup>131</sup> His initiative also coincided with the emergence of the rambling phenomenon in urban Britain, especially in the northern industrial towns, which led to the founding of clubs throughout the country.<sup>132</sup>

Strongly influenced by contemporary social and political thought, Leonard sought to open up the countryside for the physical and spiritual refreshment of working people through recreative and educational holidays. The initial provision, therefore, set out to provide this special type of holiday and the first CHA holidays were composed of compulsory daily rambles supplemented by ‘field talks on place names, rocks and plants and historical associations’ and evening lectures (see chapter2).<sup>133</sup>

### Walking holidays

The CHA centre programmes for the 1920s set out the basic principles of the holiday programme under the heading ‘WHAT WE STAND FOR’. This proclaimed that ‘*Days are spent in tramping or climbing, and mountains, moors and the countryside are preferred to the conventional holiday resorts. Wayside talks on natural history, literary and social topics are a feature of the excursions.*’<sup>134</sup> However, by the early 1930s, the field talk had disappeared from the holiday programme. As Leonard

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<sup>131</sup> See R. Poole, ‘Oldham Wakes’, in J. K. Walton & J. Walvin (eds.), *Leisure in Britain 1780-1939*, (Manchester: MUP, 1983) pp.71-98;

<sup>132</sup> There is a wide-ranging literature on the early years of rambling and rambling clubs, and the ‘freedom to roam’ movement. See, in particular, H. Hill, *Freedom to Roam*, T. Stephenson, *Forbidden Land* and M. Shoard, *A Right to Roam*.

<sup>133</sup> T A Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.23.

<sup>134</sup> See, for instance, CHA Centre Programme for Ambleside for 1920, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/2.

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records in his memoirs written in 1934: 'there is no longer the interest taken in outdoor science, which seems a pity.....Happily, our centre life gains stimulus from discussions arranged in the evenings upon topics of social and other interest'.<sup>135</sup>

The nature and length of the daily walks at each centre varied depending on the location of the individual guest house. At the CHA's Grasmere guest house in the Lake District, the daily rambles included ascents of Bowfell, Fairfield, the Langdale Pikes and Helvellyn, all involving strenuous and demanding climbing. Lower level excursions were made to Tarn Hows and Blea Tarn in Little Langdale. The total distance walked in a week exceeded 50 miles.<sup>136</sup> At more lowland centres such as Shanklin on the Isle of Wight and Westward Ho!, walks involved less climbing. Nevertheless, they could involve fairly strenuous rambles over Downs and along cliff paths involving the negotiation of steep ascents and descents.<sup>137</sup>

The walks programme was managed by the centre Secretary, up to the 1960s usually a University student but thereafter more often a voluntary retired member of the organisation. Walks were classified 'A', 'B' or 'C' according to length and climbing involved. The centre Secretary led the 'A' walks, the more strenuous walks, and the host and hostess led the less strenuous 'B' and easy 'C' walks where these were arranged. They had little or no professional training in outdoor activities but were expected to have some experience of hill walking, navigation skills and first-aid. The mid-day lunch and afternoon tea were carried by the men in 'light' rucksacks and the centre programmes made it clear that 'each gentleman is expected to take his turn in

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<sup>135</sup> T A Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.125.

<sup>136</sup> See CHA Centre Programme for Grasmere for 1920, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/2

<sup>137</sup> See CHA Programme for all Centres 1930, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/3.

carrying one of these'. The women handed it out at the selected stopping point.<sup>138</sup>

This practice of mutual help epitomised the CHA's communal philosophy. It also fostered mixed-gender social intercourse, an ethos established at the beginning of the CHA through the intervention of Fanny Pringle and others, women who became an integral part of the management of the organisation, a subject examined in some detail by Ben Anderson in his investigation of domestic cultures in outdoor leisure.<sup>139</sup>

Holiday Fellowship holidays of the period were based on similar programmes of walking excursions and offered similar advice linked to gender stereotypes of the period.<sup>140</sup> A useful insight into how excursions were organised well into the 1960s is provided by the following transcript of part of a letter from a volunteer secretary at the Holiday Fellowship's centre, Derwent Bank, near Keswick:

*In 1946, I went to Derwent Bank as Secretary (leader). Joyce Blake, I was then and stayed till 1948. I got £1 per week boot money. I loved the life. The excursions were compulsory and guests had to sign each evening for the following day, A. B. or C party. Lunch each day was 2 meat, 2 savoury, 2 jam sandwiches packed on tin trays for each party placed in ruck sacks and carried by volunteer men from each party. Tea was usually a huge slab of fruit cake to be divided between 70 odd people, all parties generally met at the tea place. I got really expert at cutting the cake!<sup>141</sup>*

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<sup>138</sup> See CHA Centre Programmes for 1920s & 1930s, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/2-3.

<sup>139</sup> B. Anderson explores the culture of domesticity within the CHA in his article *Partnership or Co-operation? Family, politics and strenuousness in the pre-First World War Co-operative Holidays Association*, *Sport in History*, Vol. 33, No. 3, (September 2013), pp.260-281.

<sup>140</sup> See HF Programmes for 1920s & 1930s, for example, Newlands Programme for 1926, HF Archive.

<sup>141</sup> Extract from letter in HF Archive (Derwent Bank file) at Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.



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This short extract from one lengthy letter, provides an illustration of the voluntary, communal and collective culture of the Holiday Fellowship. It also hints at the restrictive nature of Holiday Fellowship holidays, reflecting Leonard's philosophy, based on a non-conformist morality and the principles of respectability.

Following the Second World War, concerns about the regimentation of holidays, expressed by a proportion of the membership of both organisations prior to the war, re-surfaced. This came at a time when there was a major shift in attitudes and expectations towards leisure and recreation; new forms of leisure were emerging and the ideals of 'rational' recreation were being seriously questioned.<sup>142</sup> The length of the walks involved and the necessity to keep to a strict time-table came in for particular criticism. Such views had been voiced by CHA members as early as 1924 when secretaries were remonstrated for setting too fast a pace.<sup>143</sup> Concerns were still being expressed in 1951 prompting the General Committee to set up a sub-committee to consider the whole question of excursion arrangements because of complaints against some secretaries who: 'were forgetful of the fact that the guests are on holiday and more interested in the beauties of the countryside through which they are walking than in the actual length of the walk undertaken'.<sup>144</sup> Subsequently, guidelines were issued on the organisation of excursions, including the route to be taken and the time required.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> See M. Cohen, *The Eclipse of 'Elegant Economy'*, (London: Ashgate, 2012).

<sup>143</sup> See letter from "Old Crock" and entry 'Pace on Excursions' in *Comradeship*, Vol. XV, No. 4, May 1924, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2.

<sup>144</sup> See CHA Annual Report 1951, p.3-4, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>145</sup> See Resident Secretaries instructions, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/7/17.

The debate on compulsory participation in excursions was also re-ignited but the CHA was reluctant to relax its position. Brochures of the 1940s still emphasised the obligatory nature of excursions at most of its centres:

*We are essentially a walking and climbing organisation. Our excursions, be they strenuous twenty-mile tramps over mountains or easy ten-mile ambles along Downs, we regard as the essential and distinguishing feature of the holiday. It is for this reason that excursions are obligatory at most of our centres.*<sup>146</sup>

However, by 1956, excursions were compulsory at only three centres and in 1961 excursions became optional at all CHA centres, marketed under the title *Go as you Please*.<sup>147</sup> The Holiday Fellowship reviewed its position in 1935 and decided to allow optional excursions at three of its centres.<sup>148</sup> In 1951, the Holiday Fellowship extended its *Go As You Please* holidays to all centres. Nevertheless, brochures continued to encourage guests to participate in excursions:

*For some time past a limited number of centres have been organised on the basis that participation in excursions would be optional on the part of individual guests. In 1951, this principle will be extended to all our centres. Experience has shown that, in the past, the great majority of the guests at the optional centres have, in fact, taken part in the excursions, and the present experiment is being made in the expectation that this will continue to be the case and that the modified arrangement will remove any possible feeling of undue regimentation.*<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> See CHA Summer Holidays brochure for 1946, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

<sup>147</sup> See 1956 and 1961 Holiday brochures, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

<sup>148</sup> See Minutes of January 1935 AGM, HF Archive.

<sup>149</sup> See 1951 HF Summer Holidays brochure, HF Archive.

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Throughout the 1980s, the CHA extended its range of walking programmes with the inclusion of more strenuous long-distance walking and scrambling holidays, both of which became popular recreational pursuits in the 1980s, and introduced training weekends for its excursion leaders, as the secretaries were re-named, in order to improve standards and re-assure intending guests that they were in safe hands.<sup>150</sup> The title ‘secretary’ had become out-dated and redundant by the 1980s and the system of using University students had become un-tenable. Few students, with the falling level of University grants, could afford the luxury of a virtually unpaid holiday job. Excursion leaders from the 1980s onwards were mainly recruited from the membership of the CHA.<sup>151</sup>

However, it was the early 1990s before the CHA gave serious consideration to requiring all those involved in leading walks to obtain nationally recognised professional qualifications in order to satisfy the emerging health and safety regulations.<sup>152</sup> A new training and grading scheme was agreed in 1992 but, due to other more pressing matters relating to the financial viability of the organisation, this never came to fruition.<sup>153</sup> Indeed, from the 1990s onwards, the CHA placed more emphasis on special interest weeks than led-walking holidays.<sup>154</sup>

The Holiday Fellowship, rebranded as HF Holidays, restructured its walking operations in the 1980s. Again illustrating a more proactive approach than the CHA, HF Holidays established a Walking Department in 1985 and a system for assessing

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<sup>150</sup> See CHA Annual report for 1987, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>151</sup> See CHA General Committee Minute, May 1987, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/32.

<sup>152</sup> See CHA General Committee Minute, May 1994, Countrywide Holidays Archive.

<sup>153</sup> See CHA General Committee Minute, September 1995, Countrywide Holidays Archive.

<sup>154</sup> The Minute of the General Committee dated June 1992, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/33, reports that the number of special interest holidays had overtaken the number of walking holidays.

and selecting walks leaders based on walking experience and leadership skills.<sup>155</sup> At the end of the century, HF Holidays had a panel of some 700 leaders, and undertook monitoring and performance assessment and continuous training. The majority of leaders were aged 50+, and came from a variety of backgrounds. Two-thirds of leaders were men, which is interesting bearing in mind that two-thirds of the guests were women. Also, whilst the CHA largely depended on its members as the source of supply of its excursion leaders, more HF Holidays walks leaders came from outwith the Holiday Fellowship community than within.<sup>156</sup>

At the end of the century, 60 per cent of HF holidays guests attended guided walking holidays. Guided Walking Breaks were available at all centres and provided up to 3 walks each day in one of five graded categories. On Freedom Breaks, the successor to *Go as you Please* holidays, walking was an optional extra. No longer were the men expected to carry the sandwiches but a choice of packed lunches was now available.<sup>157</sup>

### Special interest holidays

As participation in outdoor recreational activities grew during the post-war period with the increase in personal incomes and leisure time, a wide range of other leisure interests also expanded. Historians such as Sandbrook, Hill and Roberts have identified this period as one where much of British social life and leisure was organised around clubs, large and small, that provided opportunities for a wide range

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<sup>155</sup> See H. Wroe, *The Story of HF Holidays*, p.51.

<sup>156</sup> According to Steve Backhouse, Head of HF holiday Operations, conversation on 11 October 2012.

<sup>157</sup> See HF Holidays, *Walking & Outdoor Holidays*, 2001.

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of leisure interests.<sup>158</sup> They covered a range of sport and leisure interests, including amateur dramatics, amateur operatics, archaeology, arts and crafts, astronomy, badminton, bell-ringing, chess, dancing, flower arranging, natural history, singing, tennis and wine-making. For example, the 1959 official guide to the London suburb of Woodford boasted 142 different clubs and associations in an area of 61,000 people.<sup>159</sup> Glossop, a textile town south east of Manchester with a population of 20,000 people, had around 100 voluntary associations in 1959.<sup>160</sup>

In a bid to capitalise on the explosion of interest in a wide range of sports and pastimes and also maximise the accommodation available at centres, both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship diversified into special interest holidays. Although the CHA experimented with what were called ‘Cultural Holidays’ in the 1940s, which were devoted to subjects such as Art, Literature and Music, it was the early 1960s before ‘Special Interest Holidays’ were developed to include a wider range of activities. For instance, the CHA’s 1966 holiday brochure had over 20 special interest weeks in its programme, with themes such as chess, dancing, drama, painting and photography, as well as outdoor activities such as rock climbing, pony trekking and sailing.<sup>161</sup>

The Holiday Fellowship followed a similar course and introduced special interest holidays in its 1955 Holiday Brochure. It published its first brochure solely dedicated to “Holidays that are different” in 1959, which included a very similar programme of

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<sup>158</sup> See D. Sandbrook, *Never had it so Good*; J. Hill, *Sport, Leisure and Culture in Twentieth Century Britain*; K. Roberts, *Leisure in Contemporary Society* (Wallingford: CABI Publishing, 2006).

<sup>159</sup> See D. Sandbrook, *Never had it so Good*, pp.120-121

<sup>160</sup> See J. Hill, *Sport, Leisure and Culture in Twentieth-Century Britain*, pp.135-136.

<sup>161</sup> The 1967 CHA Annual Report reports the success of the special feature holidays, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2; see also 1966 Summer Holidays brochure, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

indoor and outdoor activities to those provided by the CHA. Indeed, the brochure indicates that many of the activities were provided in association with the CHA.<sup>162</sup>

Nevertheless, differing views were expressed within the Holiday Fellowship in relation to the continued expansion of special interest holiday weeks at the expense of the traditional walking holiday. An article by the General Secretary in the 1965 issue of *Over the Hills* summarised the arguments and lent support to the move.<sup>163</sup> It concluded that:

*There is a recognition that, on the basis of the objects, there is ample opportunity to meet the differing requirements of members because of the variety and wide choice of holiday and centre offered. There is no disadvantage to the HF because rather different arrangements are made for younger and older members, or for those who prefer a less active holiday at the coast to a more vigorous one in the mountains, or for those who, on occasion, prefer painting to walking. The HF's ability to provide such variety and choice contributes to its strength and increases its attraction, both of which are desirable.*

By 1969, the HF had some fifty different special holidays available, including archaeology, ballroom dancing, bridge, drama, floral art, folk dancing, free-lance writing, geology, golf, landscape painting, music, orienteering, painting, photography, sailing and Scottish country dancing.<sup>164</sup> The range and diversity of special interest holidays provided by the Holiday Fellowship expanded further during the 1970s,

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<sup>162</sup> See 1959 HF Summer Holidays brochure, HF Archive.

<sup>163</sup> See article 'The leisure explosion and all that...', *Over the Hills*, Vol.2, No.19, Winter 1965/66, pp.4-5, HF Archive.

<sup>164</sup> 1969 HF brochure *Holidays that are Different*, HF Archive.

reflected in the changing mood and style of the magazine *Over the Hills*.<sup>165</sup> The essays and photographic competitions, humorous anecdotes and poems of former editions were replaced by more serious articles and by features and advertisements about special interest holidays at home and abroad.

For instance, the Spring 1976 edition includes articles on a creative writing holiday at Penzance, a canal holiday, a coach tour around Dorset and Wiltshire, an architectural heritage holiday on the Isle of Wight, garden visiting in the Cotswolds, photography in the Lake District and bird watching with the Holiday Fellowship. Only two out of ten articles relate to walking holidays.<sup>166</sup> This emphasis on special interest holidays led Harry Wroe, a member of the General Committee to express the view that, if you were reading the magazine for the first time, you would have assumed that special interest holidays were what the Holiday Fellowship was all about, walking was seldom mentioned.<sup>167</sup>

Even though the CHA had been the instigator of special holiday weeks, it lagged behind the Holiday Fellowship in developing its holiday programme. Nevertheless, the holiday brochure for summer 1981 lists some forty 'Discovery' and 'Special Interest' holidays devoted mainly to outdoor activities and special study weeks on a range of social, educational and creative subjects based at St. Martin's College, Lancaster. These offered 'a rare opportunity to combine a relaxing vacation with expert tuition in a wide range of studies from an intensive week's course in German to an introduction to Japanese Silk Flowers'; a reminder of the original philosophy of

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<sup>165</sup> See 1975 HF brochure *Holidays that are Different* and *Over the Hills*, Vol. 2, No.30, Spring 1971, HF Archive.

<sup>166</sup> See *Over the Hills*, Vol.2 No.35, Spring 1976, HF Archive.

<sup>167</sup> See H. Wroe, *The Story of HF Holidays*, p.39.

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recreative and educational holidays.<sup>168</sup> The 1981 Annual Report claims: ‘having led the way in organising walking holidays, your Association is now also the market leader in the arrangement of special activity holidays and feature weeks’.<sup>169</sup>

However, it is clear from the debates taking place in the CHA’s General Committee in the 1980s that dubious management and inadequate marketing led to the failure of the CHA to build on its position as a ‘market leader’.<sup>170</sup> A great deal of time during the 1980s was taken up by the merger discussions with the Holiday Fellowship, which coincided with the loss of a number of influential committee members and the appointment of a new General Secretary. It was not until 1987 that the General Committee belatedly examined the introduction of mid-week and weekend breaks and the production of a separate pull-out supplement for special interest holidays in its holiday brochure.<sup>171</sup>

Following the appointment of a Chief Executive in 1992, after which it was decided to withdraw from providing holidays abroad and concentrate on the home market, special interest holidays were expanded. The ‘all inclusive’ Summer 1994 brochure included over 70 special interest holidays in addition to offering *Go as you Please* holidays and ‘Led Walking’ holidays.<sup>172</sup> Even in 1999, when the CHA’s property holding had been reduced to six properties, over 30 Special Interest weeks were on

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<sup>168</sup> See Countrywide Holidays Summer 1981 and Winter 1981/2 brochures, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

<sup>169</sup> See 1981 CHA Annual report, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>170</sup> See discussions in General Committee Minutes of the 1980s, GMCRO, B/CHA/1/28-33.

<sup>171</sup> See CHA General Committee Minute, May 1987, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/33.

<sup>172</sup> See 1994 Countrywide Holiday brochure, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5; this followed the appointment in 1992 of a Chief Executive, Colin Doyle.



offer in addition to its *Go as you Please* and ‘Led Walking’ Holidays (see figure 10 below).<sup>173</sup>

**Figure 10: CHA Special Interest Holiday subjects, 1999**

Mozart’s Weekend Workshop  
Singing for Pleasure  
Orchestral Music Making  
Opera workshop  
Music Week  
Gilbert and Sullivan Paradise  
Scottish Country Dancing  
Folk Dancing  
English Country Dancing  
English Heritage  
Painting (Watercolour and pastel week)  
Painting (Landscape in oils)  
Vampire week (Whitby)  
Drama  
Off-road cycling  
Ramble and cruise (Derwentwater)  
Mini-coach touring  
Railways of the West Country  
Railways of Mid-Wales  
Literature  
Photography  
Scrabble for fun  
Bridge  
Wine tasting

Many of these special interest subjects had been carried on for decades, some were new. Scottish country dancing had been a favourite since before the First World War but new additions included the chance to enjoy a creepy weekend at Abbey House, Whitby at a time when interest in Dracula and Murder Mysteries was on the increase. However, this scatter-gun approach does not seem to have attracted sufficient guests and the holiday operation was taken over by Shearings Holidays Ltd in 1999. As the President of the Countrywide Holidays Association (CHA) remarked at the 2000 AGM:

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<sup>173</sup> See 1999 Holiday Brochure, Countrywide Holidays archive.

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*CHA as our fathers knew it, owning a chain of guest houses where walking holidays were held, is a thing of the past. Now we have no properties and our holidays are operated by a commercial tour company.*<sup>174</sup>

In contrast to the demise of the CHA, the Holiday Fellowship extended the range and diversity of its holidays in 1982, as part of its rebranding as HF Holidays. Five different holiday brochures were produced: 'Wayfaring Holidays', 'Hobby holidays', 'Young World Holidays', 'Harmony Holidays' and 'Holidays Abroad'. There were some 126 different 'Hobby holidays' on offer in 28 different UK Centres.<sup>175</sup>

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the range of activities provided by HF Holidays was continually refined and updated as the popularity of one type of holiday declined and new interests arose, the views of customers being obtained through annual satisfaction surveys.<sup>176</sup> There was an increasing emphasis on providing opportunities for couples or friends to enjoy different holidays at the same time, for instance, one guest doing a landscape painting course whilst their partner went walking.<sup>177</sup> In 1996, the Special Interest brochure contained over 500 holidays, twice the number of ten years previously.<sup>178</sup>

Nevertheless, based on information obtained from HF Holidays Head of Holiday Operations, walking remained the predominant activity on HF holidays at the end of the century. Sixty-six per cent of booked holidays were devoted to walking, although

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<sup>174</sup> See Minute of Annual General Meeting, 14 October 2000, Countrywide Holidays archive.

<sup>175</sup> See 1983 HF brochures, HF Archive.

<sup>176</sup> See summary of results of 9000 holiday questionnaires in Members Newsletter, Autumn 1992, HF Archive.

<sup>177</sup> See 1993 HF brochure, HF Archive.

<sup>178</sup> See 1996 HF brochures, HF Archive.

there was no compulsion to take part in the led walks every day. Thirty-three per cent of holidays involved other leisure activities.<sup>179</sup>

#### School journey parties and youth groups

Prior to the Second World War, CHA holidays were exclusively for over 18 year olds. Programmes stated unequivocally: ‘The Co-operative Holidays Association seeks to unite within its membership, men and women of widely different tastes and circumstances, for the promotion of the rational and enjoyable use of leisure’ and ‘holidays are not designed for children’. However, for many years the Association donated to various children’s holiday funds and the 1931 Annual Report lists over twenty such holiday funds, mostly connected with industrial towns in the north of England but also including Birmingham and Glasgow.<sup>180</sup> This was seen as an essential part of the social service function of the CHA: ‘To envisage the CHA only as an organisation which owns or rents a number of charming houses, and which provides holidays is to seize the shadow and miss the reality’.<sup>181</sup>

With the gift in 1932 of a large house, Graiglwyd Hall, near Penmaenmawr in North Wales, complete with furnishings and standing in five acres of land, the CHA saw an opportunity to provide holidays for children ‘and other necessitous young people’ from the poorer districts of Manchester and Liverpool. It provided accommodation for about fifty children until the Second World War.<sup>182</sup> It was after the coming into force of the 1944 Education Act, which placed a duty on local authorities to provide

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<sup>179</sup> According to Steve Backhouse, Head of HF holiday Operations, conversation on 11 October 2012.

<sup>180</sup> See 1931 CHA Annual Report, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid, p.3.

<sup>182</sup> See *Comradeship*, Vol.24, No.1, October 1932, p.8.

outdoor recreational activities, that the CHA became involved in the provision of holidays off-season, mainly at Easter, for ‘School Journey Parties’.<sup>183</sup> School Journey Parties, organised through the Schools Journey Association, comprised groups of children aged 11-18 under the supervision of a responsible leader. In deciding to be involved in this initiative, the CHA considered that it had a duty to introduce young people to a love of the countryside but it also had other motives. The CHA’s 1952 Annual Report expresses the hope that: ‘Among some of these young people, after they have left school, we look for future members of the Association and believe that brought into the Association in this manner, they will prove worthy upholders of our CHA tradition’.<sup>184</sup>

From 1950, the CHA’s centre Lledr Hall, near Betws-y-coed in North Wales, a Spartan ‘mountain’ centre since 1936, was devoted to school journey parties for the whole season except August and continued to be used for school journey parties and youth groups until its closure in 1962 when it was sold to Lancashire County Council.<sup>185</sup> It was subsequently taken over by Salford City Council as an outdoor centre.

Following the Albemarle Report in 1960 into ‘the contribution that the Youth Service of England and Wales can make in assisting young people to play their part in the life of the community’ and the CCPR report into “Sport and the Community”, the CHA sought to expand its involvement in the provision of holidays for school groups and

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<sup>183</sup> See L. Cook, *The 1944 Education Act and outdoor recreation: from policy to practice*, History of Education, 1999; 28(2), pp.157-172.

<sup>184</sup> See CHA 1952 Annual Report, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>185</sup> See R. Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, pp.68-69.

young people.<sup>186</sup> A special leaflet was produced and more centres were made available for school parties and for longer periods.<sup>187</sup> With the closure of Lledr Hall in 1962, the CHA opened its centre at Llanfairfechan as a Youth Guest House and 90 per cent of guests in 1962 were under 25 years of age. Llanfairfechan continued in use as a youth guest house until 1978 when it was extensively modernised and transformed into a 'country house' centre.<sup>188</sup>

Annual reports of the 1960s record the demand for accommodation for School and Youth Groups and report that: "It is most gratifying to see the programmes followed by some schools and to realise how great is the concern of their teachers that children should learn to live with and appreciate the countryside".<sup>189</sup> During the 1960s and early 1970s, over 4,000 school journey parties were accommodated at CHA centres each year (out of a total of 25,000 guest-weeks).<sup>190</sup> However, the CHA's approach was rather half-hearted given that it considered that young people were the future life blood of the movement. After the closure of Llanfairfechan as a youth guest house in 1978, CHA brochures simply indicated that:

*The Association is anxious that young people should have the opportunity of enjoying community holidays under the same conditions as its adult members, and is therefore prepared to make special facilities available at certain centres for School Journey Parties and recognised Youth Groups accompanied by competent teachers or leaders.*<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> Sir John Wolfenden, who chaired the Central Council for Physical Recreation committee that produced the report "Sport and the Community" was President of the CHA from 1958-1963.

<sup>187</sup> See CHA Annual Report 1960, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>188</sup> See GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/7/42, Llanfairfechan youth guest house 1959-1981.

<sup>189</sup> See CHA 1967 Annual Report, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>190</sup> See CHA Booking Returns 1962-1978, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/16/1 & B/CHA/ADM/16/2.

<sup>191</sup> See CHA Summer brochures for 1976, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

There is little mention of School Journey Parties in holiday brochures or in annual reports from the late 1970s onwards as the focus of the CHA turned to its survival as a viable organisation for the provision of holidays for its adult members.

The Holiday Fellowship was first involved in the provision of holidays for schoolchildren and young people as early as 1920 when former army huts on the Morfa at Conwy were acquired and refurbished. That summer, according to a report in the Holiday Fellowship's magazine *Over the Hills*, parties came from schools, Life Brigades, Girl Guide and Boy Scout Troops, Young People's Welfare clubs and other clubs, involving twenty-five boys' and nine girls' groups, a total number of 1202 children.<sup>192</sup> In 1923, the Staithes youth camp on the Yorkshire coast north of Whitby was established, followed by a new camp at Kessingland, near Lowestoft, in 1933.

After the interruption of the Second World War, there was much discussion in the Holiday Fellowship's General Committee about the desirability of encouraging more school journey parties and youth groups, the main attraction being the financial advantages arising from this business. The Holiday Fellowship was more enthusiastic than the CHA and six adult centres were given over to school and youth groups in 1950.<sup>193</sup> Newfield Hall, Malhamdale, which was acquired as a guest house in 1933, was also used entirely as a youth centre from 1956.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> See *Over the Hills*, No.2, Winter 1920, HF Archive.

<sup>193</sup> See Youth Camps and School Journey Centres 1954 brochure, HF Archive.

<sup>194</sup> See Newfield Hall, Malhamdale brochure 1956, HF Archive.

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Youth Camps and School Journey Centres catered primarily for organised parties of girls and boys between the ages of 10 and 18 years of age, under their own leader. As detailed in the brochure “Youth Camps and School Journey Centres 1954”:

*Camps are composed of large, well-built timber buildings (plus a few tents at Kessingland), centres are large houses.....At Kessingland and Staithes, the main sleeping huts accommodate from about 30 to 60 young people and there are separate cubicles or rooms adjoining for the accommodation of leaders. In the centres, most of the children and a few leaders are accommodated in the main building in rooms taking varying numbers between 2 and 10. At Devils Bridge, the accommodation for children and leaders is in garden houses.<sup>195</sup>*

A substantial increase in bookings at youth camps and guest houses followed. By the early 1960s, the seven school journey centres and three youth camps provided by the Holiday Fellowship accommodated some 15,000 young people per annum, almost 26 per cent of the total of 58,000 guests staying at British centres (see Table 11).<sup>196</sup>

**Table 11: HF Youth Centres and camps 1962**

<b>Centre</b>	<b>Accommodation (beds)</b>
Hythe	80
Malhamdale	70
Minard Castle	75
Newlands	140
Snowdon	30
Wye Valley	50
Devil's Bridge	50
Kessingland	500
Langdale	37
Staithes	320

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<sup>195</sup> See Youth Camps and School Journey Centres 1954 brochure, p.6.

<sup>196</sup> See C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship*, (1981), p.66;

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An article in *Over the Hills* acknowledged the importance of young people to ensure the progress of the Holiday Fellowship in the future.<sup>197</sup> It also recognised the demands of the younger generation for changes in centre practices and customs that had remained unchanged for forty years and for more modern facilities. Accordingly, Kessingland Camp, in Suffolk was disposed of in 1965 and became the site of a holiday camp. The Langdale Camp was removed in 1965. It had accommodated over 22,000 guest weeks over a forty year period and there were many who bemoaned its passing.<sup>198</sup> Minard Castle, on Loch Fyne in Scotland, was sold-off in 1966.<sup>199</sup> Nevertheless, whilst Holiday Fellowship guest numbers, overall, stagnated in the 1960s, the use of young people's centres and youth camps by school journey parties and youth groups expanded to meet an increasing need. In 1970, guest weeks by youth groups topped 19,000 (the equivalent of 76,000 bed-nights).<sup>200</sup> This compares well with the CHA's 4,000 guest weeks (16,000 bed-nights) but is dwarfed by the 500,000 bed-nights provided by the YHA for school groups in 1975, which amounted to 29 per cent of total bed-nights.<sup>201</sup>

One of the least publicised ways in which the Holiday Fellowship practised its object to "further the interests of education" was to make available Freshwater Bay, Glasbury and Selworthy guest houses for the winter months for use by Oxfordshire County Education Authority. Four week residential courses for secondary school pupils were held at these guest houses throughout the 1960s until education cuts

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<sup>197</sup> See *Over the Hills*, Winter 1965-66, pp.4-5, HF Archive.

<sup>198</sup> See *Over the Hills*, Winter 1965-1966, pp.22-23 for an appreciation.

<sup>199</sup> See HF Annual Report 1965-66, HF Archive.

<sup>200</sup> See HF Annual Report 1970-71, HF Archive.

<sup>201</sup> Obtained from an analysis of YHA Annual Reports 1950-2000, YHA Archive, Ref. Y440001, University of Birmingham.



ended the scheme.<sup>202</sup> Alnmouth guest house was used as a teacher training facility for student teachers during the winter months from 1968 to 1973. Such initiatives, as well as reinforcing the ideals of the Holiday Fellowship, also contributed to the financial viability of the organisation at a difficult time.

Even so, correspondence in the magazine *Over the Hills* displays the concerns of some members that such provision was not the responsibility of the Holiday Fellowship, notwithstanding the fact that ‘to further the interests of education and culture’ was within its objects.<sup>203</sup> Minutes of Annual General Meetings reveal that many members felt that the only justification for continuing with the school journey parties and the youth programme was the financial surplus it provided. There was downright objection to School Journey Parties at adult centres at any time other than the winter.<sup>204</sup> As a result, the Holiday Fellowship did not put as much effort into developing youth centres in the 1970s as it might but simply did the minimum to sustain the levels it had already achieved; this, at a time when the interest in outdoor activities amongst the younger generation was burgeoning.<sup>205</sup>

School Journey Parties used older centres maintained with lower standards and the minimum of investment, and when the Education Reform Act 1988 introduced changes in schools’ requirements, the Holiday Fellowship withdrew from the operation of youth centres.<sup>206</sup> The restructuring of the Holiday Fellowship in the early 1980s was the catalyst for the closure of older centres that required major investment

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<sup>202</sup> See C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship*, (1981), pp.59-60.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*, p.78.

<sup>204</sup> See for instance, report of 1979 AGM in *Over the Hills*, Spring 1979, pp.30-31.

<sup>205</sup> See J Hunt, *In Search of Adventure*, p.35-36.

<sup>206</sup> See Chapter 8 in D. Gillard (2011), *Education in England: a brief history*, [www.educationengland.org.uk/history](http://www.educationengland.org.uk/history).

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on improvements, including four youth centres.<sup>207</sup> The youth camp at Staithes, which comprised wooden huts, was sold in 1988. The youth centre at Newlands, which the Holiday Fellowship had inherited from the CHA in 1913, was also closed and disposed of in 1988, and is now run as an outdoor adventure centre.<sup>208</sup> The remaining youth centre, Newfield Hall in Malhamdale, was refurbished and extended in 1991 to provide 32 en-suite bedrooms for adult use.<sup>209</sup>

### Family holidays

Prior to the Second World War, there is no mention in CHA brochures of any specific provision for family holidays or, indeed, of any encouragement for adults to take their children with them on holiday. CHA holidays at this time were demonstrably aimed at adult men and women and the survey of guests at British Centres referred to in the 1937 Annual Report relates solely to men and women.<sup>210</sup> It was only after the Second World War that the CHA made the decision to provide accommodation for families and the CHA's only dedicated Family Centre was opened at Filey in June 1947.<sup>211</sup> A former hotel, it was situated on the promenade. It is somewhat ironic, bearing in mind the ideals of T A Leonard, that this centre was not in the countryside but in a seaside resort where Billy Butlin had established a holiday camp a few years earlier.<sup>212</sup> The Filey centre attracted some 1,000 guests each year but its popularity waned in the late

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<sup>207</sup> See HF Annual Report 1982, HF Archive.

<sup>208</sup> See HF Annual Report 1988, HF Archive.

<sup>209</sup> See HF Annual Report 1991, HF Archive; H. Wroe, *The Story of HF Holidays*, p.58.

<sup>210</sup> See CHA Annual Report 1937, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>211</sup> See CHA Annual Report 1948, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>212</sup> See [www.bygonebutlins.com/filey](http://www.bygonebutlins.com/filey).

1970s, as did British seaside holiday resorts generally, and it closed in 1982, interestingly just a year before Butlin's holiday camp experienced the same fate.<sup>213</sup>

CHA annual reports from the 1950s onwards report that families were accommodated at a number of centres and 'except for an occasional incident we found that the inclusion of a few children in the parties at most of the guest houses worked satisfactorily'.<sup>214</sup> By the mid-1980s, in response to the market, the CHA had become much more enthusiastic in relation to attracting families. Brochures expounded:

*There are endless things for families to do in the countryside and Countrywide Holidays warmly welcomes families at each and every one of its houses throughout the year. If your children are looking for company, our reservations team can tell you if other families are staying the same week.*<sup>215</sup>

In addition, the CHA provided dedicated 'Family Weeks' geared solely to families.<sup>216</sup> Nevertheless, the continued expansion of family holidays, the special interest, activity and study holidays failed to avert the inevitable decline of the CHA.

From its inception in 1913, the Holiday Fellowship endeavoured to allow children into its centres where possible. In 1921, a children's hostel (a converted army hut) was attached to the Swanage centre providing bunk dormitory accommodation for about a dozen children, boys and girls between the ages of five and eleven years.

Illustrative of the attitudes towards children during the inter-war period, they were

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<sup>213</sup> See G. Shaw & A. Williams (eds.), *The Rise and Fall of British Coastal Resorts*, pp.83-92.

<sup>214</sup> See CHA Annual Report 1954, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1; CHA Summer 1966 brochure, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

<sup>215</sup> See CHA Summer brochures from 1986 onwards, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

<sup>216</sup> See CHA *Countrywide News*, Summer 1986, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/2/2; CHA Annual Report 1986, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

looked after by ‘aunties’. On arrival at the centre, children were immediately taken to the adjoining hostel building and handed over to the ‘aunties’ and for the rest of the week the parents were not expected to see the children for more than a brief quarter of an hour morning and evening.<sup>217</sup> This hostel continued until 1934 when the Swanage centre closed.

The Holiday Fellowship acquired its first dedicated family centres at Marske-by-the-Sea on the North Yorkshire coast between Redcar and Saltburn, and at Milford-on-Sea on the Solent in Hampshire in 1935.<sup>218</sup> After the Second World War, a further centre at Towyn in North Wales was acquired and by 1950 there were five centres providing family holidays.<sup>219</sup> Most other centres could accommodate a limited number of children aged twelve years and over.

At family centres, walks involving distances of 8-15 miles were organised for parents, and children over nine years old were encouraged to take part. Shorter walks were organised for younger children. Other activities, such as children’s sports with obstacle, egg and spoon, three-legged and sack races, were also organised. There were strict bedtime rules: children under ten years of age were expected to be in bed by 7pm, those aged between ten and twelve by 9pm and those aged between 13 and 15 by 9.30pm. Children over eight years of age were not usually expected to share a bedroom with parents or others of the opposite sex.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> See *Over the Hills*, No.4, Autumn 1922.

<sup>218</sup> See HF Annual Report 1935, HF Archive.

<sup>219</sup> See 1952 Summer Holidays brochure, HF Archive.

<sup>220</sup> See 1962 HF Summer Holiday brochure, HF Archive.

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In the 1970s, in order to boost attendances at centres, the rules were relaxed and children of all ages were welcomed at any centre, with special ‘Family Weeks’ at a range of locations, in hill and mountain areas as well as on the coast. In the 1990s, in response to challenges from other outdoor providers, these holidays developed into “Family Adventure” holidays where parents went walking while the children took part in a range of activities such as canoeing, rock climbing, abseiling and archery under the guidance of ‘Activity Leaders’.<sup>221</sup>

HF Holidays continued to provide a wide range of family holidays during the Easter and summer holidays up to the end of the century. In addition to walking and cycling, activities provided for children, under the supervision of an experienced leader, included climbing, abseiling, caving, canoeing and archery.<sup>222</sup> Although not competing with the privately-run outdoor adventure centres in the provision of holidays for school and youth groups, HF Holidays therefore continued to provide supervised adventure holidays for children as young as eleven years of age.

### Holidays abroad

As detailed in chapter 2, the CHA’s involvement in holidays abroad stemmed from Leonard’s desire to promote international friendship, a desire that was shared by a number of outdoor organisations in the years leading up to the First World War. In founding the CHA, Leonard postulated ‘the help our movement could render the international movement in bringing our own folk and those from abroad together

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<sup>221</sup> See HF brochures for 1990s, HF Archive.

<sup>222</sup> See HF Holiday brochures for 1990s, HF Archive.

## Chapter 4

under conditions in which frank interchange of thought and sympathy could take place'.<sup>223</sup> By 1913, the CHA visited seven foreign destinations including Dinan in Brittany; Fionnay and Finhaut in Switzerland and the Taunus and Wolfach in Germany.<sup>224</sup> Inevitably, foreign trips were suspended during the First World War and did not re-commence until 1920 with trips to Brittany and Switzerland.<sup>225</sup> By 1931, there were eight destinations abroad.

The CHA organised trips were part of a popular movement in the 1930s, what Burdett and Duncan term 'politically curious travel' motivated by geopolitical forces.<sup>226</sup>

These trips provided not only the opportunity to experience the grandeur of the landscapes of the country visited but also its social and cultural life, its institutions and architecture. In 1938, the number of attendances at the CHA's European centres amounted to 2,974 guest-weeks (10 per cent of the total number of guest-weeks). Members had the choice of 14 centres in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France and Holland, although the German annexation of Austria in March 1938 curtailed activities in Austria and Germany.<sup>227</sup>

It would appear from contributions to the CHA's magazine *Comradeship* that the outbreak of war was received with great regret, which is not unexpected given the internationalist ideals of its founder. In looking back at the summer of 1939, the Annual Report proclaims: 'Even at that stage it seemed unbelievable that another European War would come to pass, but during the latter part of August it became

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<sup>223</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.96.

<sup>224</sup> See CHA Annual reports, 1908-1913, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>225</sup> See CHA Annual report, 1921, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>226</sup> C. Burdett & D. Duncan (eds.), *Cultural Encounters: European Travel Writing in the 1930s*, (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2002).

<sup>227</sup> See CHA Annual Reports for 1938, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

obvious that a conflict was becoming more probable'.<sup>228</sup> Like many people in Britain, the CHA could not bring itself to recognise the inevitable. [Germany invaded Poland on September 1<sup>st</sup> 1939 and war was declared on September 3<sup>rd</sup>]

After the Second World War, the CHA's exploits abroad did not recommence until 1947 when visits to Norway, Holland and Switzerland were arranged. By the mid-1950s, the number of guests going abroad had returned to pre-war figures and the CHA opened new centres in Austria, in addition to established centres in Norway, Switzerland, Holland, France and Germany. In response to the liberalisation of air travel through the development of charter air flights and overseas package holidays in the 1960s, the CHA expanded its Holidays Abroad programme using accommodation in popular resort destinations in Italy and Spain.<sup>229</sup>

In 1968, the CHA entered the commercial holiday market and acquired 'Adventure Tours', which led to a significant increase in bookings (see Table 12). The profits obtained greatly help with maintaining the viability of the CHA.<sup>230</sup> By 1980 the CHA offered over 70 holidays to more than 30 European destinations ranging from mountaineering in the Dolomites, walking in Iceland and Lapland, to cruising the Adriatic. During the 1980s, the overseas programme was expanded to include tours to Israel, Yugoslavia and even a trip along the Trans-Siberian railway. The CHA's

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<sup>228</sup> See CHA Annual report for 1939, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>229</sup> See J.K. Walton, 'British Tourism between Industrialization and Globalization' in Berghoff & Korte, *The Making of Modern Tourism*, pp.121-122; see also H. Ritchie, *Here We Go*, London: Hamish Hamilton (1993). See also CHA Annual Reports for 1947-1971, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>230</sup> Conversation with Brian Padgett, General Secretary of CHA from 1975-1980, interview dated 2 April 2012; see also CHA Annual Reports from 1968-1975, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

worldwide brochure included long-haul holidays to Kenya, India, New Zealand, Australia and Canada.<sup>231</sup>

**Table 12: CHA holidays at home and abroad (guest-weeks), 1913-2001**

Year	British & Irish Centres	Abroad	Total
1913	13,670	2,291	15,916
1920	17,415	716	17,486
1931	24,327	3,449	27,776
1938	28,872	2,199	31,071
1947	29,622	301	29,932
1951	26,604	2,362	28,966
1961	31,065	2,852	33,917
1971	26,552	2,549	29,101
1981	23,797	3,093	26,890
1991	13,506	1,415	14,921

Notwithstanding the undoubted success of the Holidays Abroad programme in the 1980s, the General Committee of the CHA decided to cut the programme even though it had been the only sector of the business that made a profit. According to Brian Padgett, who was instrumental in the expansion of the programme in the 1970s, the clientele for foreign holidays were generally less involved with the organisation of the CHA than those who took holidays at British centres; none were represented on the General Committee. Consequently, the foreign holiday programme was tolerated rather than welcomed by the membership and when the financial affairs of the CHA ran into difficulties, Holidays Abroad was the first area of business to be cut.<sup>232</sup> As a consequence, the overseas operation began to run at a loss from 1988 onwards and, as the CHA concentrated on survival and restructuring, it ceased in 1992, just as the Holiday Fellowship's programme was expanding.<sup>233</sup>

<sup>231</sup> See CHA brochures for 1980s, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

<sup>232</sup> Conversation with Brian Padgett, General Secretary of CHA from 1975-1980, interview dated 2 April 2012.

<sup>233</sup> See minutes of General Committee November 1987-January 1993, Countrywide Holidays Archive.



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When leaving to found the Holiday Fellowship in 1913, Leonard considered that “we were not making the progress in international work we had hoped for and to develop this seemed to need a new organisation consisting of young, forward-looking people strongly influenced by the International outlook”.<sup>234</sup> The international work of the Holiday Fellowship built on the links established by Leonard before the First World War with the Musterschule in Frankfurt and the Fereinheimgemeinschaft.<sup>235</sup> The Holiday Fellowship was branded with pro-German leanings when the First World War ended but, according to David Hardman, a member of the Holiday Fellowship from 1930 and its President in the 1960s, its views reflected the hopes of many young people in both Britain and Germany; ‘The Jugend – the new spirit’, who were determined to make another war impossible and who turned to the unsullied life of the open air and the love of natural beauty.<sup>236</sup>

On splitting from the CHA in 1913, the Holiday Fellowship used the CHA’s German centre at Kelkheim, near Frankfurt, as a base for its foreign holidays. Following the interruption of the First World War, holidays recommenced in Germany, Switzerland, France and Holland. In 1926, a party went to the USA and Canada, and a visit to Russia was made in 1931. During the depression years of the early 1930s, the range of holidays fell to four destinations, three in Switzerland and a tour in Norway. However, by 1938, the number of holidays had expanded to 22 centres abroad, including destinations in Yugoslavia, Poland and Czechoslovakia.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>234</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.53.

<sup>235</sup> See Leonard, *Over the Hills*, December 1926, HF Archive.

<sup>236</sup> See D. Hardman, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship: Part One*, p.6; ‘Jugend’, which is translated as ‘youth’ was the title of a German art nouveau magazine that became a symbol of youth culture in the 1920s and 1930s; Rolf Gardiner’s YOUTH at Cambridge was symptomatic of the views stirring in British Universities.

<sup>237</sup> See HF Holiday brochures for 1930s, HF Archive.

After the interruption of the Second World War, the Holiday Fellowship's holidays abroad expanded throughout the 1950s and reached a record total of 6,998 guest-weeks in 1961, compared with the CHA's 2,852 guest-weeks. More than 50 different types of holiday abroad were arranged, the most popular located in Switzerland, Italy and Spain, including the Costa Brava and Ibiza.<sup>238</sup> Articles in the HF's magazine *Over the Hills* show that holidays abroad differed little from the holidays provided by many commercial operators and meant very little in the way of international contact; most trips comprised self-contained groups with little contact with local people.<sup>239</sup>

In an attempt to further expand its overseas operations, in the face of intense competition from the "package holiday" operators, the Holiday Fellowship took over the Wayfarers Travel Agency Ltd, a private company, in 1966 and from that date holidays abroad were operated by this company on the Holiday Fellowship's behalf. However, the company ran into financial difficulties and was sold by the Holiday Fellowship in 1974. The 1974 Annual Report records that 'The HF Holidays Abroad programme which left Hendon [Holiday Fellowship Headquarters] in 1966 with 5,972 bookings, came back with less than 1,000 and, once again, the Officers had the task of endeavouring to rebuild this important side of our work virtually from scratch'.<sup>240</sup>

It was 1989 before the Holiday Fellowship provided a comprehensive programme of European holidays with ten locations. For the first time, a small programme of 'Worldwide' holidays was offered in 1991. In the 1990s, cheap air travel transformed

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<sup>238</sup> See C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship: Part 2*, pp.60-61.

<sup>239</sup> See *Over the Hills*, Autumn 1961,

<sup>240</sup> See 1974 HF Annual Report, HF Archive; C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship: Part 2*, pp.112-115.

the opportunities for foreign holidays and by the end of the century, HF Holidays was offering walking, sightseeing tours and city breaks throughout Europe and worldwide; in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, USA and South America.<sup>241</sup> At the end of the century, a third of the holidays provide by HF Holidays were spent abroad.<sup>242</sup>

## Conclusions

This chapter has explored in depth, through an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data held in the CHA and HF Holidays archives and through structured interviews with former and present leading members of both organisations, the continuities and changes in the accommodation provided and the holiday activities pursued by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship during the period between 1919 and 2000.

The analysis of the accommodation provided by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship over the period 1919-2000 has identified how the quantity, distribution, type and quality of accommodation changed in response to increasing affluence, changing cultural attitudes and expectations, and the effects of competition. It has demonstrated the extent to which the emphasis of accommodation provision shifted from the ‘Spartan and simple’, extolled by the founders, to the more comfortable ‘country house’ style, desired by society in the middle and late twentieth century. At the same time, established practices such as domestic duties, the “rising bell”, Grace before the evening meal, no intoxicating liquor and lights out at 11.00pm gave way to a more liberal approach to holiday making.

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<sup>241</sup> See HF Holidays Abroad brochure for 1999, HF Archive.

<sup>242</sup> According to Steve Backhouse, Head of HF holiday Operations, conversation on 11 October 2012.

This analysis has highlighted the tensions that arose between the traditionalists and modernisers in the two organisations and the different approaches to accommodation provision taken by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. The CHA was less reactive to the social and economic changes taking place, it retained more of its older properties, acquired relatively cheaply in the inter-war period, and sought to improve them; the Holiday Fellowship was more pro-active and more readily disposed of its older properties and acquired more modern hotels. It made more use of short-season rented properties at times of peak demand.

The CHA had a much more cautious and conservative approach to marketing its holidays than the Holiday Fellowship. The CHA considered that commercial advertising did not sit easily with its ideals and relied heavily on personal recommendations. The Holiday Fellowship, whilst also relying on personal communication, engaged in a range of advertising initiatives, nationally and locally.

When challenged with the demand for improved facilities in the 1970s and early 1980s, the CHA sought to fund the necessary improvements through borrowing against the value of its properties rather than increase charges. However, as guest numbers declined, property had to be disposed of, resulting in less income. Although the CHA eventually increased charges, it failed to attract new guests. As a consequence, further rationalisation and restructuring led to the closure of un-economic centres and eventually to the winding-up of the CHA as an accommodation provider.

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In contrast, the Holiday Fellowship rebranded itself, appointed marketing consultants and increased charges to fund improvements. It more readily disposed of loss making properties in remoter locations and acquired more modern properties that could be brought up to standard at less cost. As a consequence, it was in a better position to deal with the decline in guest numbers towards the end of the century by concentrating on a reduced number of viable properties.

The conclusion to be drawn from this analysis of the changing nature of accommodation provision is that the CHA failed to build on the pioneering work of T A Leonard and its founders and the advances made in the inter-war and immediate post-war periods. In contrast, the Holiday Fellowship had a more progressive and pro-active approach to the challenges it faced and it survived to the end of the century, albeit with a greatly reduced number of centres. The Holiday Fellowship outperformed the CHA throughout the post-war period in terms of the number of centres in operation and the number of guests accommodated. In a sense, it could be said that the CHA 'rested on its laurels' whilst the Holiday Fellowship, with its more business-like approach, reacted more positively to the changing demands of society.

There was also a significant shift in the nature of the holiday provision. In response to the concerns expressed by members about the regimentation of the traditional compulsory walking holidays both the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship introduced 'Go as you Please' holidays after the Second World War. Reflecting its more proactive approach, the Holiday Fellowship led the way in relaxing its position on compulsory walking. It also adopted a more professional approach to the assessment, selection and training of its walks leaders.

The Holiday Fellowship also led the way in developing an extensive range of special interest holidays and short-break holidays in order to attract a wider clientele when the demand for walking holidays declined. Throughout the twentieth century, the CHA lagged behind the Holiday Fellowship in diversifying its holiday programme and it was the late 1980s before the CHA belatedly introduced short-break holidays and the mid-1990s before it expanded its special interest holiday programme.

Although two thirds of holidays provided by HF Holidays at the end of the century were walking holidays, compulsory walking was no longer a requisite part of any holiday. Short break holidays and, more recently, 'Freedom Breaks', which provide little more than bed and breakfast accommodation, illustrate the extent to which HF Holidays had moved away from its original ideals in an attempt to remain financially viable.

This examination has shown that the CHA and Holiday Fellowship followed very different approaches to the encouragement of youth groups and school parties. The CHA made some attempt to cater for young people at its centres but not to the extent envisaged by TA Leonard. The Holiday Fellowship had a much more proactive approach to youth and school groups and established a number of dedicated centres for youth groups and "School Journey Parties". However, changes in school's requirements and increasing legislation resulted in the Holiday Fellowship withdrawing from the operation of youth centres in the 1980s.

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In a similar fashion, the Holiday Fellowship had a much more proactive approach than the CHA to the provision of family centres. Although the CHA ran a family centre at Filey from 1947 to 1982, and increasingly allowed families with young children to stay at its other centres, family holidays were not the main focus of its activities. In contrast, the Holiday Fellowship established a number of dedicated family centres and positively welcomed children of all ages at its centres from the 1970s onwards. It now provides a range of “Family Adventure” Holidays for children as young as eleven years of age at a number of its centres.

Both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship developed holidays abroad. Whilst the CHA developed a wide-ranging programme of destinations, it failed to capitalise on the growth in demand for foreign holidays and ceased holidays abroad in 1992. Holidays abroad with the Holiday Fellowship reached its peak in 1961 but attempts to expand holidays overseas in the 1970s and 1980s failed and it was the late 1980s before the Holiday Fellowship developed a comprehensive programme of overseas holidays.

Such holidays, fed by the globalisation of tourism as Asia, Latin America and the Pacific became more accessible, provided the opportunity to experience the social and cultural life of new countries as well as their physical attributes. Although Leonard would have been disappointed that the emphasis of these holidays was very much on enjoyment, the increased knowledge of other cultures gained from such holidays is entirely in sympathy with Leonard’s desire to promote international understanding in the context of the late twentieth century.

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To conclude, T A Leonard did not favour the idea of the CHA, or the Holiday Fellowship for that matter, becoming: “a movement for merely running boarding houses, driving excursions and afternoon strolls, mixed up with pleasant sensibilities”. Nevertheless, from this analysis of the changes and continuities in accommodation and holiday activities, it is apparent that, in the face of changing economic and social conditions after the Second World War, and the changing pattern of demand brought about by increasing affluence and consumer choice, both the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship drifted away from their original philosophies in order to combat the challenges of consumerism.



**CHAPTER 5: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE CHA AND THE  
HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP, c.1919-2000: CONSTITUENCY AND IDENTITY**

**Introduction**

As discussed in chapter two, in founding the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship, Leonard aimed to provide ‘simple and strenuous recreative and educational holidays’ for working people, as a moral and cultural alternative to the seaside resort, and to ‘promote friendship and fellowship amid the beauty of the natural world’.<sup>1</sup> His philosophy drew on earlier concepts of respectability, co-operation and collectivism, and voluntarism. As the CHA and Holiday Fellowship developed, each of these would be a source of tension between the ‘traditionalists’ and the ‘modernisers’ in each organisation as modernity transformed the social, economic and cultural life of Britain after the First World War.

In order to determine the extent to which the CHA and Holiday Fellowship remained true to their original ideals and philosophy in the face of the social, economic and cultural changes that took place during the twentieth century, chapter four provided a detailed analysis of the continuities and changes in the accommodation provided, and the recreational and educational activities pursued, during the period 1919-2000.

This chapter analyses, in similar fashion, the continuities and changes in the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in terms of:

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<sup>1</sup> See TA Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.28.

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- (i) the constituency of both organisations, in terms of class, age, gender and social mixing; and
- (ii) the organisations' philosophy of friendship and fellowship, and social activities, including the role of local clubs.

This examination is largely based on the substantial primary sources; annual reports, committee minutes, brochures, centre guides and magazines, available within the CHA archive, which resides within the Greater Manchester County Record Office, and within the Holiday Fellowship archive located at its centre Newfield Hall, Malhamdale in the Yorkshire Dales. It also draws on additional archive material still held by the Countrywide Holidays Association and in Leonard's family archive. It is further augmented by oral and written testimony from past and present office bearers of both organisations, from a selection of CHA & Holiday Fellowship local groups and of a representative sample of past and present members of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

### **The changing constituency of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship**

#### Overview

In founding the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship, Leonard provided the opportunity for thousands of workers to enjoy the great outdoors beyond a day trip to the countryside. An analysis of CHA Annual Reports shows that some 3.0 million guests

visited CHA guest houses during its lifetime.<sup>2</sup> The Holiday Fellowship accommodated over 3.5 million guests during the period 1913-2000.<sup>3</sup> Whilst this is far fewer than the numbers taking holidays with commercial operators such as Billy Butlin or Thomas Cook, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship outlived other important Victorian pioneers of ‘rational’ holidays such as the Toynbee Travellers’ Club, the Polytechnic Touring Association and the Workers’ Travel Association.<sup>4</sup>

Before examining the changes and continuities in the constituency of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in some detail, it is worth pointing out at this stage that comparisons between the two organisations are made challenging for a number of reasons, not least because of the different bases for statistics on the membership of the organisations and the users of their guest houses/centres. From its establishment as a limited company in 1897, members of the CHA joined the association not through the payment of an annual fee but automatically by taking a holiday at one of its guest houses. The statistics obtained from annual reports are based on attendances at the guest houses run by the CHA. These are measured in ‘guest-weeks’ up to the 1980s, since the ‘traditional’ holiday pattern was based on a week’s walking holiday. From the mid-1980s onwards, when more and more guests began to take short break holidays, guest-week equivalents have been calculated.

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<sup>2</sup> Based on information in CHA Annual Reports 1919-1993/94, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN1 & FIN/2; CHA records post 1993/94, including Annual Reports, are in temporary storage in the care of Countrywide Holidays (to be donated to the GMCRO in 2014).

<sup>3</sup> See HF Annual Reports, HF Archive; See address to 2010 AGM by Chief Executive, Brian Smith, HF Archive.

<sup>4</sup> See J.D. Browne, ‘The Toynbee Travellers’ Club, *History of Education*, pp.11-17; N. Matthews, (2013) ‘From philanthropy to commerce: the Polytechnic Touring Association’, in: E. Penn, (ed.) *Educating mind, body and spirit: the legacy of Quintin Hogg and the polytechnic, 1864-1992*, Cambridge: Granta, pp.203-237; F. Williams, *Journey into Adventure*, (1960), London: Odhams.

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The Holiday Fellowship's definition of membership was different. It was registered as a society under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1883 with membership subject to the taking up of a minimum £1 share in the capital of the society and to attendance at a centre at least once in three years. There is, therefore, a clear distinction between membership (shareholders) numbers and the number of guests using its centres, which were also measured in terms of 'guest-weeks' up to the 1980s.

Attendances at CHA guest houses, at home and abroad, recovered rapidly after the First World War, from less than 13,000 guest-weeks to almost 28,000 guest-weeks by 1931 (see Table 13 below).<sup>5</sup> Notwithstanding the effects of the 1930's recession, guest numbers rose to over 31,000 prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. Annual variations in guest numbers during the 1930s act as a barometer for the economic health of the country during this time. Guest numbers fell in 1932 and 1933 as unemployment reached 3.5 million (22 per cent of the population) but recovered in 1934 and then continued to rise until 1938.<sup>6</sup> There are parallels here to attendance figures in other leisure forms. Attendances at sports such as horse racing, greyhound racing and football matches increased during the inter-war period.<sup>7</sup>

The number of guests attending CHA centres declined to less than 15,000 during the Second World War but as the post-war era dawned, centres re-opened and guests returned in large numbers. By 1947, guest numbers had returned to pre-war levels as travelling conditions improved. The number of guest-weeks fluctuated throughout the 1950s reaching a peak of almost 34,000 guests in 1961. Guest numbers stagnated

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<sup>5</sup> Based on respective CHA and Holiday Fellowship annual reports (guest-week figures are guest totals, including holidays abroad and not just at British centres).

<sup>6</sup> See CHA Annual Reports for the period 1919-1938, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1

<sup>7</sup> See S.G. Jones, *Workers at Play*, p.38.

during the 1960s and 1970s; there was a period of decline during the 1960s, followed by a period of stability and then partial recovery in the early 1970s before terminal decline set in after 1980.

**Table 13: CHA & HF guest-weeks and membership, 1919-2001**

Year	CHA (guest-weeks)	HF (guest-weeks)	HF (shareholders)
1919	12,917	5,241	1,862
1931	27,776	31,555	12,400
1938	31,071	45,169	20,096
1941	13,305	15,800	22,439
1947	29,932	45,512	32,418
1951	28,966	54,703	39,500
1961	33,917	65,335	56,593
1971	29,101	60,052	68,537
1981	26,890	52,209	80,914
1991	14,921	30,000 (equiv.)	22,914
2001	nil	25,000 (equiv.)	30,000

Membership of the Holiday Fellowship grew rapidly after the First World War and reached 12,000 by 1931 and 20,000 in 1938. Membership continued to increase, surprisingly, through the Second World War and reached 40,000 in 1951. It increased continuously in spite of periods of social and economic difficulties to reach 60,000 in 1964 and 80,000 in 1980. However, by 1987, of the 84,000 members, nearly 40,000 had only a £1 share and many had moved and lost contact with the HF (it was assumed that a proportion may well have died).<sup>8</sup> Following a review of the shareholding structure in 1987, the minimum shareholding for membership was increased to £25 for new members and existing members were requested to either increase their shareholding to £25 or donate their shares to the company. As a consequence, the number of shareholding members had reduced to a little over 22,000 by 1991; by the end of the century, this number had grown to almost 30,000 members (see Table 13 above).

<sup>8</sup> Minute of Special General Meeting, April 1987, HF Archive.

Attendances at Holiday Fellowship centres in the inter-war years outstripped the membership and by 1938, the Holiday Fellowship's 34 British centres and 22 centres abroad accommodated over 45,000 guests (almost 50 per cent more than the CHA's 27 British centres and 14 destinations abroad) (see Figure 11 below).<sup>9</sup>

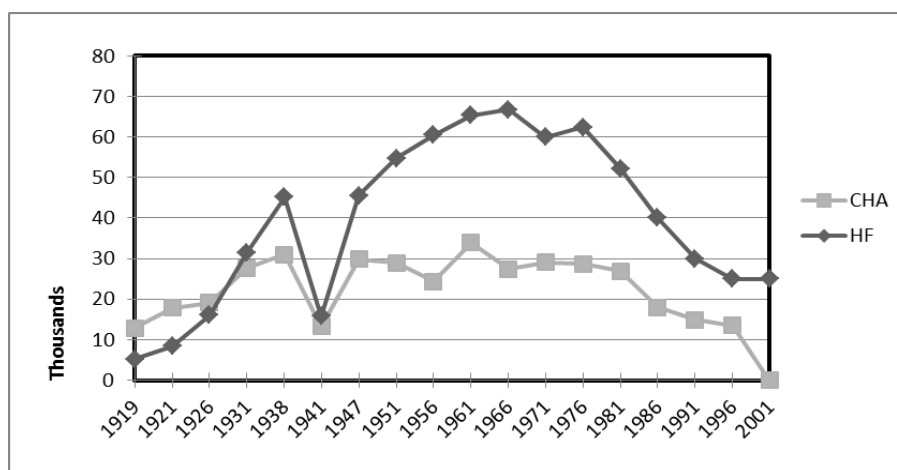


Figure 11: CHA & HF guest-weeks, 1919-2001

Following the interruption of the Second World War when holidays abroad ceased and guest numbers at a reduced number of British centres dropped to below 16,000 guest-weeks, the number of guests at Holiday Fellowship centres recovered rapidly to over 45,000 by 1947 and almost 55,000 by 1951. Guest numbers reached a peak of over 65,000 in the early 1960s (double the CHA figure) and then, mirroring the performance of the CHA, there was a period of decline during the late 1960s, followed by a period of stability and partial recovery in the early 1970s before further decline set in after 1980. At the end of the century, HF Holidays had stemmed the decline and provided accommodation for 35,000 guests (25,000 guest-week equivalents) at its 18 centres.

<sup>9</sup> See HF Annual Reports for the period 1919-1938, HF Archive.

Class

The original intention of Leonard's holiday initiative was to facilitate rational holidays for working class men. However, as detailed in chapter two, as the holiday scheme developed beyond the confines of north-east Lancashire, it drew on a wider client base, including women, espousing the values of respectability and taste rather than social class.<sup>10</sup> Whereas, low incomes and poverty shaped working-class leisure during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it was more often the middle classes, generally un-constrained by poverty, who had sufficient disposable income to give them viable opportunities for taking part in leisure activities.<sup>11</sup> It was the values conventionally associated with the respectable middle classes; hard work, thrift, capital accumulation, saving, moral rectitude, sobriety, and religious commitment, that were associated with the initial clientele of the CHA.

'White-collar' employment and increasing bureaucracy provided large numbers of young professional workers, teachers and clerks in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.<sup>12</sup> The CHA proved attractive to these 'white collar' workers, following a pattern established earlier by mechanics' institutes and other rambling organisations. Anderson cites anecdotal evidence from records of early holidays that routinely praises the mixed social backgrounds, and genders, of guests, which included lower-middle class professionals such as teachers and clerks.<sup>13</sup> As Snape points out, 'the indeterminate social composition of the CHA was not necessarily unusual, for walking tended not to be moulded by rigid social formations, but

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<sup>10</sup> R. Snape, *The Co-operative Holidays Association*, p.151.

<sup>11</sup> See P. Borsay, *A History of Leisure*, pp.74-106.

<sup>12</sup> See J.Harris, *Private Lives, Public Spirit: Britain 1870-1914*, (1994) London: Penguin.

<sup>13</sup> B. Anderson, 'Partnership or co-operation?', *Sport in History*, p263.

displayed a tendency to bring together people of differing social classes through mutual interest'.<sup>14</sup>

It is not surprising, therefore, that the gradual middle-class take-over of the CHA prior to the First World War and the subversion of its original ideals of 'simple and strenuous' recreative and educational holidays became increasingly contentious issues with Leonard and other founders of the CHA.<sup>15</sup> Although, perhaps not the main driving force behind Leonard's departure from the CHA, they were contributory factors to Leonard leaving to found the Holiday Fellowship in 1913 in a renewed effort to establish holidays that would be genuinely working-class in appeal and composition (see chapter 1, pages 64-68). However, by 1934, Leonard, somewhat reluctantly, acknowledged that the Holiday Fellowship was just as guilty as the CHA in falling away from its original ideals.<sup>16</sup>

Clearly, the social class element of the membership of both organisations changed during the twentieth century mirroring, at least in part, changes in the wider society. Stephen Brooke makes the point that there was a clear shift in the balance of class during this time: 'Between 1900 and the 1940s, the country was a working-class nation, with around three-quarters of the population classified as working class. After the Second World War, the percentage of the labour force identified as working class decreased to 60.6 per cent in 1962 and then rapidly in the 1970s and 1980s to a figure

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<sup>14</sup> R. Snape, *The Co-operative Holidays Association*, p.153.

<sup>15</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.53-54

<sup>16</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.142-143.



of 38.4 per cent in 1991.....Britain has become a more middle-class nation as the century wore on'.<sup>17</sup>

However, any attempt at assessing the extent of the changes in the social class of the membership of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship, and the users of their guest houses, is fraught with difficulty given the distinct lack of specific information on member's and guest's occupations; a reflection, perhaps, of the ethos of both organisations of appealing to people of all classes, creed, age and gender. For the social historian, recourse must be made to the articles and letters pages of the organisations magazines, *Comradeship* and *Over the Hills*. The narrations of the holiday experience and the social attitudes expressed towards rules and regulations and established practices provide a tentative indication of the social background of members and guests. However, as a measure of the social composition of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, such contributions must be treated with some caution since they are likely to be weighted in favour of the more articulate guests of the two organisations. Other surrogate measures have been employed in this study. The extensive collection of group photographs taken during each week's holiday at every centre also provides a tantalising hint of the social constituency of guests, as well as their age and gender, through the interpretation of dress and general attire.<sup>18</sup>

In attempting to assess the social constituency of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship after the First World War, class and respectability are strongly related. A scan through the 1920s editions of *Comradeship* provides an insight into the attitudes of

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<sup>17</sup> S. Brooke, 'Class and Gender' in F. Carnivali and J-M. Strange, *20<sup>th</sup> Century Britain*, pp.42-57.

<sup>18</sup> See range of CHA group photographs in GMCRO, B/CHA/PHT/3 and at HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

the more respectable members to behaviours deemed inappropriate.<sup>19</sup> Topics included behaviour on walks, activities on Sundays, lateness for meals and standards of dress, amongst men and women. This encouraged the CHA to issue Guidelines on a variety of subjects. The CHA's guideline on 'Sunday in the guest houses', for example, prepared following growing requests to allow the playing of cards and other quiet games, made its Sabbatarian position entirely clear:

*The practice of holding morning prayers and the customary evening service is an essential part of CHA centre life and **must** be maintained, and whilst attendance at either is a matter of free choice any other official or arranged activity must not be allowed to encroach upon these services. Sunday ought to be regarded as a day of different activity, although not necessarily a day of restrictions and opportunity should be taken to lay emphasis upon the spiritual and cultural background of the Association.*<sup>20</sup>

Accordingly, hosts and hostesses were not encouraged to organise activities on Sundays unless 'wet weather or dusk falling early made such organisation desirable'. In such case, play readings, brains trusts, the popular quiz, discussions or talks were preferred to party games. Table tennis, only recently becoming fashionable, was allowed only where the peace and quiet of other guests was not disturbed.<sup>21</sup> Playing the piano was allowed but only after tea.

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<sup>19</sup> See 'If I were Secretary of the CHA' in *Comradeship*, Vol.XVI, No.2 (Dec. 1924), pp.12-14; *Comradeship*, Vol.XVI, No.3 (March 1925), pp.9-11; 'Clapping at Meal Times', *Comradeship*, Vol.XXIII, No.1 (Oct. 1931), p.20; *Over the Hills*, Spring 1922; Minute of 1935 AGM, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/6, also referred to in D. Hardman, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship*, pp.67-69.

<sup>20</sup> See Note: 'Sunday in the guest houses', GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/5.

<sup>21</sup> See J. Riordan, 'The Hon. Ivor Montagu (1904-1984): Founding Father of Table Tennis', *Sport in History*, Vol.28, No.3, (2008), pp.512-530.

Class and respectability also came together in the debates over ladies' dress on walks, which dominated the letters pages of both the CHA's magazine *Comradeship* and the Holiday Fellowship's *Over the Hills*. Both organisations issued pamphlets entitled 'Dress Hints for Ladies' which provided advice on the proper attire for walking, both outer-wear and underwear, and for wearing in the guest houses during the evening and on Sundays.<sup>22</sup> Subsequently, dress hints for men were issued, which included advice such as: 'It is recommended that gentlemen sport a necktie for the evening meal'.

Clearly this advice was not followed by all members of the Holiday Fellowship for an entry in *Over the Hills* in 1937 by the General Secretary included an admonition giving 'friendly' advice to readers on what he believed to be 'decent' and 'decadent' in society:

*As the season is approaching I want to utter a friendly remonstrance regarding the growing custom, especially at the strenuous centres, of our young stalwarts (of both sexes) disregarding the ways of decent society by coming to the evening meal not merely in their shirts and shorts but with unwashed bodies. I know the Fellowship is not conventional in its ways but surely there are sanitary limits. And dare I mention another matter? I know it is risky but it is time the subject should be referred to. A few of the girls have taken to the nasty habit of lipstick. Some of them say it is because the boys like it. As a fellow, and knowing something of what other fellows say, this is not so. It is often remarked that the girls of the Fellowship are nice precisely because they do not make up and adopt the ways of a decadent society.<sup>23</sup>*

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<sup>22</sup> See *Hints for Ladies on Holiday Dress 1920*, GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/2-3.

<sup>23</sup> See *Over the Hills*, Summer 1937, HF Archive.

During the inter-war period, both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship tried to represent themselves as open to all. For example, a leaflet issued by the CHA entitled ‘What is the CHA?’ points out that ‘We are not working class, nor middle class, nor professional class, we welcome every companionable sort of person who likes our way of spending a holiday’.<sup>24</sup>

References in articles and the letters’ pages of the CHA’s and Holiday Fellowship’s magazines and other relevant sources that have been trawled during the course of this study provide some indication of the range of occupations held by guests. An account of a first CHA holiday at Abbey House, Whitby in 1938 by four young teachers is typical of many such reminiscences.<sup>25</sup> The autobiography of Theodore Armstrong, European Manager for NCR in the 1940s, records the impact on his future approach to life of his first holiday at Newlands in the 1920s in the company of fellow clerks from the Co-operative Wholesale Society in Manchester.<sup>26</sup> In his autobiography, George Hitchin describes the struggles of an unemployed Durham miner with no formal education in the difficult 1930s, who experienced a Holiday Fellowship holiday, went on to be engaged as Secretary at several centres which ‘rescued him from mental creeping paralysis’, studied at evening classes and gained a degree at London University. After the Second World War, he became a teacher and story teller.<sup>27</sup>

A later description of the membership of the Bolton HF Walking Club provides another perception of the Holiday Fellowship in the period before 1939:

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<sup>24</sup> CHA leaflet ‘What is the CHA?’, GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/5.

<sup>25</sup> From an article by Dorothy Dewhurst in the April 1938 issue of ‘The Dalesman’.

<sup>26</sup> See T. Armstrong, *No Primrose Path*, (1952), pp.57-58.

<sup>27</sup> See G. Hitchin, *Pit Yacker*, London: Cape, 1962; also *Over the Hills*, Autumn 1962, p.26.

*Shop, office and factory have been well represented among members, and the teaching profession and local authority have for some reason always provided a high proportion. In the early days, when there were some 30,000 people employed in cotton in Bolton, it can be assumed many members were drawn from what was once the town's main industry. Today, there are only a handful of mills working.*<sup>28</sup>

In the south, the London CHA Club was more cosmopolitan in its constituency, and its outlook, than most other clubs and with over 800 members exhibited a diverse range of talents. It was founded on a cultural mix, which blended popular events such as dances and teas with sorties into the fringes of 'high culture', such as Henry Wood promenade concerts.<sup>29</sup>

References to social class and occupation are less prominent in contributions to the CHA's and Holiday Fellowship's magazines after the Second World War. An exhaustive search has revealed few such references. One exception is an article on a first CHA holiday in 1960 and the trepidation felt at meeting unknown people in strange surroundings: 'Would these people be insufferable? Could I bear to spend a week with them? Should I go away again on my own?' the writer contemplates on the train journey from London to Devon.<sup>30</sup> In the article, fellow guests include a stage designer, physiotherapist, upholsterer, dentist and entomologist as well as teachers. A description of a Holiday Fellowship holiday in 1974 includes an overheard remark from other walkers describing Holiday Fellowship guests as "That lot that dress like

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<sup>28</sup> B. Jones & D. Leeming, *Bolton HF Walking Club: The first eighty years*, (1983), p.54.

<sup>29</sup> See S. Brown (comp.), *The London CHA Club: The first sixty years*, (1965), p.3

<sup>30</sup> See A.P. Cochrane, 'Tellers of Tales', *CHA Magazine*, Vol.LI, No.1, (Summer 1960), pp.9-10.

tramps and talk like Oxford Dons”.<sup>31</sup> The impression gained from these and other references certainly support the notion that the CHA and Holiday Fellowship welcomed ‘every companionable sort of person who likes our way of spending a holiday’.<sup>32</sup>

The impression that social class was not a subject worthy of attention is further illustrated by the omission of questions relating to class or occupation in the regular surveys carried out by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, which did include questions regarding age and gender.<sup>33</sup> As the end of the century approached, the CHA prided itself on organising recreational holidays for people of all ages and backgrounds.<sup>34</sup> The Holiday Fellowship catered for ‘all ages, abilities, cultures and nationalities’.<sup>35</sup> Neither organisation saw themselves tied to any particular social class.

In order to gain some indication of the social composition of the two organisations in the latter half of the century, the questionnaire survey of 100 members/former members of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship did include a question relating to occupation as well as age and gender (see Appendix 6). This survey of members/former members, many of whom have been guests at CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres over a period in excess of fifty years has shed a little more light on the social composition of these organisations. The overwhelming majority of those who responded were, or had been, in the academic profession; teachers at primary and secondary schools, or lecturers at college or university. Other respondents were

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<sup>31</sup> See ‘My kind of Holiday’, *Over the Hills*, Spring 1974, pp.11-12.

<sup>32</sup> CHA leaflet ‘What is the CHA?’, GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/5.

<sup>33</sup> See for example, ‘Would you believe it’, *Over the Hills*, Spring 1978, p.5; see also results of 1992 HF guest survey in HF Members Newsletter, September 1992, p.5, HF Archive.

<sup>34</sup> See Countrywide Holidays Association Annual Report for 1993, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>35</sup> See HF Annual Report, 2000, HF Archive.

mainly in the professional, managerial and clerical professions, including civil servants, local authority and health board employees. Technical and trade occupations were in the minority (see Appendix 8).

### Age and Gender

J B Paton, reflecting the prime function of the NHRU, supported 'rational' walking holidays for young men.<sup>36</sup> Leonard, more influenced by the emerging movement for the emancipation of women, allowed women to join and eight ladies took part in the first holiday organised 'Under the auspices of the NHRU' in 1893. According to John Lewis Paton, J B Paton's son who was a leader on the trip: 'They were ahead of the climbing party. The stragglers were the men'.<sup>37</sup> Women rapidly became an integral part of the management of the CHA and, by 1897, held key positions on the General Committee.<sup>38</sup>

The CHA's acceptance of women on a basis of equality reflected its communal ideology.<sup>39</sup> The function of the CHA as a meeting ground for young people of both sexes was a strong factor in the CHA's appeal and, by the First World War, the majority of the CHA's membership was female.<sup>40</sup> As Snape remarks, several personal accounts of CHA holiday romances that led to marriage lend justification to its sobriquet of the '*Catch a Husband Association*', although it could not have been

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<sup>36</sup> See T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.135.

<sup>37</sup> See J.L. Paton, 'Memories of an Aborigine', *Over the Hills*, Summer 1937, HF Archive.

<sup>38</sup> R. Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.36.

<sup>39</sup> See R. Speake, *One Hundred Years of Holidays*, pp.36-37; 'Obituary of Fanny Pringle, *Comradeship*, Vol.V, No.5, (April, 1912), p.69; 'Miss Emily Smith: an appreciation, *Comradeship*, Vol.XXVIII, No.2, October, 1936), p.3.

<sup>40</sup> See 'From the General Secretary', *Comradeship*, Vol.II, No.5 (1909), p.65.

that easy with odds of two women to every man.<sup>41</sup> However, as Anderson suggests, the attendance of women was not only based on the promise of a respectable atmosphere in which to meet a partner; not every women was interested in marriage but was attracted by the opportunity to explore the possibilities offered by a more assertive femininity.<sup>42</sup>

On the foundation of the Holiday Fellowship in 1913, particular emphasis was made on the requirement that the simple type of centre envisaged should be equally as attractive to women as to men.<sup>43</sup> It was also decided that at least two of the nine members of the General Committee should be women.<sup>44</sup> The mixed-gender sociability of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship after the First World War was reinforced through the marketing of the holiday programmes. Brochures of the inter-war period consistently represent athletic-looking men and women together in companionate mode in a variety of active contexts, most usually cycling, walking and climbing. The rural backdrops vary but include mountain, moor or sea. These brochures show how the CHA and Holiday Fellowship wished to represent themselves to the public at this time; an image of simple and strenuous holidays in the idealised pastoral vision of Ruskin and Morris (see Figure 12 below). In part, too, they reflected the general movement for physical culture throughout Europe at this time, exemplified by the German *Wandervögel* and ‘Strength through Joy’ movements and manifested in the Women’s League of Health and Beauty founded in 1930.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> R. Snape, *The Co-operative Holidays Association*, p. 153.

<sup>42</sup> See B. Anderson, *Sport in History*, 2013, p.263-264.

<sup>43</sup> See T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.53.

<sup>44</sup> See C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship: Part Two*, p.117.

<sup>45</sup> See H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, pp.227-228.





Figure 12: HF Holiday Brochure covers of the 1930s

After the First World War, women regularly outnumbered men at CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres. In a survey of guests attending CHA British centres in 1937, 34 per cent were men and 66 per cent were women, illustrating the continued popularity of the CHA with women.<sup>46</sup> Comparative figures are not available for the Holiday Fellowship but the low proportion of men guests at centres was a recurring issue for discussion at annual general meetings.<sup>47</sup>

Group photographs taken at the beginning of each week's holiday provide a huge resource and provide an illuminating insight into the age and gender constituency of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. In any one year, photographs of perhaps twenty different groups would be taken at each centre. This extensive record shows an eclectic mix of guests, in terms of age, the mix varying over time and from centre to

<sup>46</sup> CHA 1937 Annual Report, pp.3-4, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>47</sup> See for example, Report of 1935 AGM in *Over the Hills*, No.65, Spring 1935, HF Archive.

centre. Over 100 photographs have been examined and any assessment of age must be treated with caution since people aged quicker in previous decades.

The records show that whilst the holiday brochures indicate a strong emphasis on attracting young people, photographs of parties in the 1930s show that, in reality, both organisations attracted a wide cross-section of age groups across the various centres. Photographs taken at CHA mountain centres in the Lake District and at Hope in the Peak District largely reflect the same image of an active, young, mixed clientele as that portrayed in contemporary handbooks.<sup>48</sup> For instance, in the photograph taken at Glaramara in the Lake District in 1935, there is a fairly even proportion of, mainly, young men and women casually dressed in shorts, reflecting the ‘simple and strenuous’ nature of this guest house (see Figure 13).



Figure 13: CHA guest house, Glaramara, 1935.

<sup>48</sup> Speake's *A Hundred Years of Holidays* includes a number of photographs taken in the 1930s, which illustrate the constituency of the CHA's clientele, for instance, p.53, p.55 & p.63.



**Figure 14: CHA guest house, Porlock, 1939.**

In contrast, photographs taken at the majority of CHA centres present a more relaxed image of a middle-class society in the outdoors. The photograph taken at Porlock, a coastal centre near Minehead in Devon, in 1939, provides a typical example of a house-party at a ‘country house’ style guest house in a more formal pose. It shows some 64 guests, only 20 of which are male, illustrating the CHA’s undoubted attraction to women (see Figure 14 above).

Photographs of Holiday Fellowship holiday groups show similar variations; contrast the 1938 group at Newlands (Figure 15 below), a strenuous mountain centre in the Lake District, which shows an almost even distribution of men and women with the more mature group, where women outnumber men 2:1, at the Fairlight centre in East Sussex (Figure 16 below).



**Figure 15: HF Group photograph taken at Newlands in 1938.**



**Figure 16: HF Group photograph taken at Fairlight, East Sussex in 1938.**

Photographs taken immediately after the Second World War show similar variations; the photograph taken at Glaramara in the Lake District in 1949 shows a CHA party, comprising a relatively young age group with an even gender balance (see Figure 17 below).



**Figure 17: CHA Group photograph taken at Glaramara in 1949.**

Contrast the CHA Glaramara group with the Holiday Fellowship group at Conwy in 1950, which is dominated by women and comprises a much wider age group, and is much more casually dressed (see Figure 18 below).



**Figure 18: HF group photograph taken at Conwy, North Wales in 1950.**

## Chapter 5

It is difficult to make judgements from these examples alone but the photographs of the immediate post-war period show that the CHA and Holiday Fellowship continued to attract young and old. Photographs of the 1960s and 1970s (group photographs ceased to be taken after 1980) and anecdotal evidence would suggest that from the 1960s onwards, the membership of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship gradually aged as younger people found other outlets for their activities and other providers of outdoor accommodation for young people came to prominence. According to Robert Speake, an active member of the CHA from the late 1940s until the 1990s, from this time onwards the CHA failed to attract new, particularly young, members.<sup>49</sup>

Conversations with a long-standing CHA member and Chairman have confirmed the difficulties encountered in replacing the younger generation.<sup>50</sup> Brian Padgett observed the changing constituency over many years in the 1960s and 1970s and suggests that, as sons and daughters accompanying their parents grew older, CHA holidays became less attractive; they were unable to offer the excitement of foreign holidays or the camaraderie of other outdoor activity centres. He also makes an interesting observation that, having been formed more than 20 years before the HF, the CHA was probably the first to suffer from the effects of an ageing population.

A detailed analysis of the CHA's annual membership lists for the 1960s and 1970s shows that throughout this period 60 per cent of guests were female and 40 per cent were male. However, more interestingly, 54 per cent were single people, of which

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<sup>49</sup> Conversation with Robert Speake, 19 June 2009; See also his autobiography, R. Speake, *Recollections*, (Hanley: Robert Speake, 2008), pp.140-155.

<sup>50</sup> Conversation with Brian Padgett, 1 April 2012.

almost 70 per cent were female. Unmarried females therefore outnumber unmarried males by more than 2:1, a proportion that had changed little since the 1930s.<sup>51</sup>

Little statistical information is available on the structure of the Holiday Fellowship's membership through the 1960s and 1970s apart from one or two *ad hoc* surveys. The results of a survey in 1978 indicate that HF holidays attracted far more women than men and two-thirds of guests were over 40 years of age; one third were aged 40-55 years and one third were aged 56 years and over. There were almost twice as many single women at HF guest houses as single men.<sup>52</sup> When debated at the 1979 AGM, it was observed that the 20-40 age group, in particular, was under represented at guest houses and that non-white people were generally absent, which reflected badly on the ideals of HF holidays, which were based on the spirit of friendship and fellowship to all people, regardless of class, creed and age.<sup>53</sup>

This analysis shows that the CHA and Holiday Fellowship failed to retain its younger membership in stark contrast with the YHA, which attracted young people from its inception.<sup>54</sup> In the 1930s, 70 per cent of members were under 25 years old. Annual statistics show that, whilst the proportion of young members slowly declined during the post-war period, the majority of members were consistently under 21 years of age. The proportion of the membership under 21 years of age was over 60 per cent in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, reducing to 55 per cent in the 1980s and 51 per cent in the early 1990s. A change in the membership classification in 1994 shows that the proportion of members aged 18 years and under stood at 43 per cent.

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<sup>51</sup> See GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/16/5

<sup>52</sup> HF Annual Report 1978, *Over the Hills*, Vol.2, No.37, (Spring 1978), p.5, HF Archive.

<sup>53</sup> Report of 1979 AGM at Eastbourne, *Over the Hills*, Vol.2, No.38, (Spring 1979), pp.30-31.

<sup>54</sup> See YHA Annual Reports 1931-2000, YHA archive, Birmingham University.

In relation to the gender balance, whilst the membership of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship was predominantly female (66 per cent) throughout the twentieth century, the YHA attracted more men than women, mirroring the dominance of men in outdoor activities generally. Prior to the Second World War, the YHA was very much a male-oriented organisation and it was only from the 1960s onwards that the proportion of women moved towards parity. In the 1960s, 60 per cent of the membership was male, reducing gradually to 52 per cent by the end of the century, reflecting the increasing participation of women in outdoor activities during the latter twentieth century.

By the end of the century, in stark contrast to the constituency of the YHA, and to other organisations such as the Ramblers' Association, the CHA catered for a predominantly middle-aged clientele. The photograph of guests preparing for a walk after the final AGM in 2004, held at Gisburn not far from Colne, shows a group of predominantly middle-aged, and older, people and amply illustrates the extent to which the CHA had lost its attraction to a younger, more active, generation (see Figure 19 below). According to the *Countrywide Companion*, the final AGM was:

*.....tinged with sadness but reflecting over what had been achieved over a century, the AGM and the weekend were enjoyable as well as memorable. At the parties on the Friday and Saturday evening, guests enjoyed the mix of pen and paper quizzes, games and dancing. Then on the Sunday, many guests enjoyed an exhilarating seven mile walk, taking in Pendle Hill.*<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> See Final Edition of *Countrywide Companion*, November 2004, Countrywide Holidays Archive.





**Figure 19: Group photograph taken at Stirk House Hotel, Gisburn in 2004.**

These sentiments, more than any other, provide a perfect illustration of the extent to which the CHA had become captured in a time-warp. They confirm the impressions gained by Darby in her experiences of a holiday at the CHA Centre at Glaramara in the English Lake District in the 1990s, where the group was composed of mainly over-60 year olds who had been going on CHA holidays for decades. Only two people were under twenty-five, the activities manager (secretary) and a friend. According to Darby: “The gentle walks and familiar games provided traces of their individually remembered pasts and gave the impression of belonging again”.<sup>56</sup>

In contrast, there was a noticeable influx of new members to the Holiday Fellowship in the 1990s, coinciding with a number of public service re-organisations resulting in an increase in early retirees.<sup>57</sup> As detailed earlier, the number of guests stabilised in

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<sup>56</sup> W. J. Darby, *Landscape and Identity*, p.237.

<sup>57</sup> Conversation with Harry Wroe, HF Holidays Archivist, 16 June 2009.

the mid-1990s and HF Holidays moved to concentrate its activities on its core business; the not-so-young couples and singles (the A, B & C1 social groupings and the over-50 market). As a consequence, HF Holidays continued to attract people in their 50s and 60s and, at the end of the century, the vast majority of guests were aged 50 years and over and the gender balance remained, unchanged, in favour of women.<sup>58</sup> According to its Head of Holiday Operations, HF Holidays catered for a group of people who have similar interests and are happy to take part in communal activities, eat communally and socialise communally.<sup>59</sup>

Although the development of the YHA, with which T A Leonard was closely involved, and the establishment of local authority education centres and outdoor activity centres have, to some extent, supplanted the original purpose of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, both organisations continued to fulfil important niche roles.

Firstly, they attracted more women than men, and this contrasted strongly with other similar organisations and walking and mountaineering clubs, which have generally been a male preserve. Secondly, they accepted women on a basis of equality and provided a safe haven for single women, young and old. Thirdly, both organisations catered for the more mature man and woman. Although in sharp contrast with the founder's original concept for the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, the provision of recreational and social activities for the older-aged section of the community is very much in tune with Government advice.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> See 2000 Annual Report, HF Archive.

<sup>59</sup> Conversation with Steve Backhouse, HF Holidays Head of Holiday Operations, 11 October 2012.

<sup>60</sup> See BHF, *Guidelines for the promotion of physical activity with older people*, (2006), London: BHF.

Social mixing

The CHA and, subsequently, the Holiday Fellowship, sought to enhance social mixing through the provision of subsidised or free holidays for people who could not afford even their modest charges. This was entirely in accord with Leonard's Christian socialist principles and his belief that the CHA and, subsequently, the Holiday Fellowship had a wider social responsibility to the poorer sections of the community. It built on the CHA's Fresh Air Fund, commenced at the instigation of Fanny Pringle to give poor urban children the opportunity of a trip to the seaside.<sup>61</sup>

Collections from members at centres and donations funded these holidays. Each week, at every centre, usually after the Sunday service, a collection would be taken from all guests and annual reports suggest that guests strongly supported the free holiday scheme and gave willingly.<sup>62</sup> Applications came from CHA and Holiday Fellowship members on behalf of other family members or friends. Local groups also nominated persons for free and assisted holidays.

Originally known as the 'Free Holiday Fund', the CHA's scheme provided free holiday weeks at selected centres for between 500 and 800 persons each year throughout the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>63</sup> Even during the difficult years of the 1930s, CHA annual reports refer to the tremendous response from guests in contributing relative large amounts (for instance, £1,700 in 1936) to fund free and assisted holidays for

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<sup>61</sup> See R. Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.36.

<sup>62</sup> See for instance, CHA Annual Report, 1936, pp.6-7, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>63</sup> CHA Annual Reports include a section on the Free Holidays (Invited Guests) Scheme.

deserving people.<sup>64</sup> According to the CHA's annual report for 1937, during that year 808 people had been provided with a free holiday at eighteen special weeks at seven centres, from which they returned not only invigorated, but '*with joy and happiness in their hearts and cheered by the human kindness which they had experienced whilst at the centres*'. Sixty-three guests were "helped on their way" with assisted holidays at the normal 'house-parties'.<sup>65</sup>

The Association constantly reminded its members of their duty to seek out needy cases for nomination for free and assisted holidays.<sup>66</sup> The free holidays were provided at special 'guest weeks' either in the spring or autumn outwith the normal opening season. Assisted guests were accommodated during the normal 'house-parties' when the management made every attempt to conceal the fact that from members that an assisted guest was present in any party.

Free holidays were curtailed during the Second World War, when the CHA and Holiday Fellowship concentrated on running Government Hostels. The CHA did not resume the free holiday scheme until 1949, a reflection of the austerity that prevailed in the immediate post-war years and the number of guests enjoying free holidays remained low until the mid-1950s because of difficulties raising sufficient funds from collections.<sup>67</sup> The number fluctuated between 250 and 500 per annum throughout the 1950s, depending on the demand for places and on the level of donations and collections made at guest houses. The number of assisted guests averaged about 50 persons per year. References were regularly made to the lack of use of the assisted

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<sup>64</sup> CHA Annual Report 1933, pp.8-9, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>65</sup> CHA Annual Report 1937, p.5, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>66</sup> See for example, *Comradeship*, Vol.XXIII, No.3, (February 1932), p.3, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/5.

<sup>67</sup> See particularly, CHA Annual Report for 1952, pp.5-6, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

holiday provision: ‘As we have often pointed out, we believe that there is a real need for holidays to be provided under this section of the Scheme but the needy cases are more difficult to discover’.<sup>68</sup> Annual reports stressed the need for members to find suitable people who would ‘wish to avail themselves of the opportunity of enjoying the much needed rest, change and good food toward which they would only have to make a small contribution’.<sup>69</sup>

In a bid to reinvigorate the free and assisted holiday schemes, in response to the falling-off of nominations, particularly from members residing in the south, the CHA’s scheme was re-named the ‘Invited Guest ‘ Scheme in 1960 with more formal nomination and assessment procedures. However, from the 1960s onwards, with rising costs, voluntary collections did not always meet the cost of providing free and assisted holidays, and the continued need for the scheme was regularly debated.<sup>70</sup> So in 1977, the Invited Guest Trust (IGT) was established as a separate charity to place this provision on a more secure footing. However, it continued to form an important part of the CHA’s social responsibilities and the 1981 Annual Report records that: “thanks to the willingness of members on holidays in Britain and Abroad, and members at Clubs, to contribute generously to the cost of providing holidays for the less fortunate, 321 guests have had the holiday of a lifetime”.<sup>71</sup>

The work of the IGT continued throughout the 1980s but at slowly declining levels of activity. Only four centres provided holiday weeks for invited guests in 1990,

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<sup>68</sup> See CHA Annual Report for 1954, p.6; CHA Annual Report for 1955, p.6, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1

<sup>69</sup> See 1961 CHA Annual Report, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>70</sup> See discussions in CHA Annual Report for 1969, p.8; CHA Annual Report for 1970, p.8, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>71</sup> See 1981 CHA Annual Report, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

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accommodating 136 guests, including 64 children, and by the mid-1990s the numbers of recipients had declined to around fifty guests.<sup>72</sup> By 1998, the Chairman of the IGT was reporting disappointment at the level of collections at house-parties and attributed this to the reduction in CHA properties and to the complex and disparate nature of the guests as holiday provision diversified away from the traditional house-party and attracted non-member guests. As a consequence, the decision was made not to reserve weeks at guest houses for 'Invited Guests' because this blocked other bookings, but accommodate invited guests on brochure holidays.<sup>73</sup> In 1998, thirteen guests were accommodated at Whitby during the normal house-party holidays.

The emphasis of the IGT had always been on the provision of holidays for families with children rather than adults only. In continued pursuit of the original ideals of the IGT, it was decided, in 1999, to redirect the Trust's efforts towards offering subsidies to established educational groups and a weekend trip to the Hope guest house was organised for twenty-four young carers from Merseyside. This trip signaled a change of emphasis of the IGT and a move towards providing holidays for educational groups, particularly primary school children. Links were forged with Lancashire Education Authority and other similar organisations.<sup>74</sup>

Following the demise of the CHA in 2004, the Invited Guest Trust continued to operate, with the emphasis on providing holidays for children who are disadvantaged or from deprived areas in the North-West and enabling them to take part in environmental education and residential countryside activities. In so doing, the Trust

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<sup>72</sup> See Minute of IGT, March 1995, Countrywide Holidays Archive.

<sup>73</sup> See Minute of IGT, March 1998, Countrywide Holidays Archive.

<sup>74</sup> See Minute of IGT, March 2001, Countrywide Holidays Archive.

claimed that it was continuing the philosophy of TA Leonard and “*interpreting his original vision with contemporary relevance to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century*”.<sup>75</sup>

The comparative Holiday Fellowship scheme was called the ‘Goodwill Fund’. Within the Holiday Fellowship leading figures called it ‘the social conscience of the Fellowship’.<sup>76</sup> Records show that between 1913 and 1980, over £250,000 was raised through weekly collections and nearly 40,000 guests were provided with either free or assisted holidays during this period.<sup>77</sup>

The scheme was originally born out of compassion and adversity, the thought for others in the difficult economic and social times of the late-nineteenth century. Although two world wars completely changed attitudes to social responsibility, the pleasure that the scheme gave to both recipients and those who nominated them remained, as illustrated in the following extract from a letter to *Over the Hills*, which illustrates the generosity and kindness provided by such holidays.<sup>78</sup> It was written by a young member in the 1960s:

*When I was in my late teens, my Saturday job was serving on the forecourt of the local filling station. Opposite was a terrace of rather old, dingy cottages and I soon became aware of the “little old man” who sat outside one of them on a kitchen chair every day, usually in his slippers, watching the traffic go by. His name was Cyril, and he would often venture across the road to join me on the forecourt, simply to have someone to talk to.*

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<sup>75</sup> Report of 2004 AGM in final *Countrywide Companion*.

<sup>76</sup> Conversation with Harry Wroe, 16 June 2009.

<sup>77</sup> See C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship: Part Two*, p.132.

<sup>78</sup> See *Over the Hills*, Winter 1963/1964, HF Archive.

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*My parents had introduced me to HF in the womb, and we'd listened to "Goodwill" talks and contributed to the collections on all our family holidays over the years. Of course, I knew nothing of Cyril's personal circumstances but I was certain that nobody deserved a free holiday more than he did, and I asked his permission to nominate him. I have to admit, as I filled in the form, I was unsure how he would get on. I needn't have worried.*

*Cyril was accepted and as I saw him off at Leeds Station on his journey to Scarborough I knew he was looking forward to being with other people. When he returned a week later there were tears of thanks in his eyes, for he'd quite literally had the time of his life.*

The Holiday Fellowship's scheme catered for between 500 and 600 guests each year throughout the 1950s and 1960s, considerably more successful than the CHA's scheme, but from the late 1960s onwards there was a marked fall in the number of nominations, mirroring the CHA's experience. Johnson put this down to the 'more selfish nature of society' and to the provision of free holidays by local authorities and other organisations 'so that the requirements of the potentially needy are more easily satisfied'.<sup>79</sup> Present day Holiday Fellowship leading officials put this down, in retrospect, to the economic and social changes taking place; the development of cheap package holidays, and the increasing provision of holidays for disadvantaged people by local authority social services and other charitable organisations.<sup>80</sup>

In the Holiday Fellowship's case, it became difficult to spend all the money raised.

At the same time, there was an increasing recognition of the threat to the environment

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<sup>79</sup> C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship: Part Two*, p.132.

<sup>80</sup> Conversation with Harry Wroe, 16 June 2009.



posed by the growth in recreational walking in the 1970s, particularly in relation to the erosion of footpaths, and the emphasis of the “Goodwill” Scheme was altered towards the provision of grants for improvement work to footpaths, stiles, footbridges and stone walls and, in 1998, the fund was re-named “Pathways”.<sup>81</sup>

To sum up, the initial purpose of both the CHA’s ‘Free Holiday Scheme’ and the Holiday Fellowship’s equivalent ‘Goodwill’ Fund was to enhance social mixing through the provision of holidays principally for the old and the un-employed, although they soon included families with children. These holidays were more sight-seeing than walking holidays but they were run along the same lines as the normal house-party holiday with a full social programme. However, whilst the holidays provided were no doubt of immense recreative and educational value to the recipients, as instanced by the responses from guests who benefitted from such holidays, it is debateable whether they enhanced social mixing.<sup>82</sup>

The free holidays took place during specified weeks in the spring and autumn when centres would otherwise be empty and there was no contact between the recipients of the ‘free’ holidays and the general membership of either the CHA or Holiday Fellowship. Unfortunately, it is not possible to assess the extent to which recipients of ‘free’ holidays subsequently became members of either organisation or were otherwise integrated into organisations.

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<sup>81</sup> See *The Story of HF Holidays* by Harry Wroe, p.35.

<sup>82</sup> The minutes of the annual meeting of the CHA’s Free Holiday Committee, 1925-1962, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/2/8, provides references to the many letters of appreciation of such holidays received by the CHA during this period. GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/3/4/15 contains correspondence received during the period 1983-1987.

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There is little information about the constituency of the recipients of free and assisted holidays. Sporadic references in annual reports refer to the fact that guests: ‘were not always old, or even middle-aged, as is sometimes supposed’ but also included many young men and women.<sup>83</sup> Group photographs taken during the 1950s and 1960s suggest that ‘free’ holidays were mostly taken up by the older generation until the latter part of the century when children were particularly targeted.<sup>84</sup> A series of photographs taken at the CHA’s Whitby guest house from the 1950s to the 1980s show a predominantly elderly (over 60 years old) constituency with a preponderance of female guests (see Figures 20 & 21 below).<sup>85</sup>



**Figure 20: Group photograph of CHA IGT holiday at Whitby, Spring 1963**

<sup>83</sup> See CHA Annual Reports, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1 & B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>84</sup> See GMCRO, B/CHA/PHT/3, photographs 1893-1991.

<sup>85</sup> Whitby Guest House was used annually for ‘free holidays’ from the inception of the scheme in 1897 until its closure in 2000. A series of Invited Trust holiday photographs taken during the period 1950-1983 is available in the Countrywide Archive.



Figure 21: Group photograph of CHA IGT holiday at Whitby, Spring 1977

### Foreign visitors

Although foreign travel was not one of the CHA's original objectives, the CHA extended its operations across the channel prior to the First World War in furtherance of Leonard's ideals of peace and International brotherhood. Leonard's involvement in Internationalism, and that of the CHA, went much further than organising holidays abroad for members, based on a desire to bring foreign nationals in closer contact with British life in the interests of the 'brotherhood of man'. It expressed the internationalism that was a common theme amongst promoters of rational recreation in the years leading up to the First World War and during the 1930s, also a key part of the inter-war socialist movement.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> See S.G. Jones, *Sport, politics and the working class*, (Manchester: MUP, 1988), pp.164-190.

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From its inception, the CHA drew guests from Europe; from Holland, France, Sweden and Germany, in small numbers.<sup>87</sup> There is little hard evidence of the specific numbers of foreign visitors to CHA British centres after the First World War but there are occasional references in annual reports. For instance, the 1938 Annual Report, in describing a trip to Holland, which ‘provided opportunities of seeing the educational and social life of the country and some of its institutions and architecture’, points out that ‘In return we were very pleased to welcome parties of Dutch friends at our Barmouth and Hope Guest Houses’.<sup>88</sup>

After the Second World War, a more concerted effort was made to attract foreign visitors and the 1947 Annual Report records that ‘During the course of the summer we were able to bring parties of guests from Holland and Switzerland to spend a holiday in our own guest houses....Our own guests welcomed the opportunity which this presented of meeting interesting people from other parts of the world’.<sup>89</sup> The 1955 Annual Report records the co-operation of the British Tourist and Holiday Association in publicising the CHA’s type of ‘social holiday’ on the continent.<sup>90</sup> However, subsequent references in annual reports to foreign guests are infrequent and there is little way of assessing the success of this initiative. The 1967 Annual Report refers to the membership list for 1966, which shows that members had come from many European countries and also from as far afield as Pakistan, Canada, USA, Australia and South Africa but does not specify numbers.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> See CHA Annual Reports for period 1908-1913, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1; *Comradeship*, Vol.6, No.5, (April 1913), p.66.

<sup>88</sup> See 1938 Annual Report, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>89</sup> See 1947 Annual report, p.4, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>90</sup> See 1955 Annual Report, p.4, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>91</sup> See 1967 Annual Report, p.6, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

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In the early 1970s, links were forged with like-minded organisations in Europe. Reciprocal arrangements were made with the Fnac Val d'Europe in France and with the German ERF (Evangelischer Reise-und-Ferendienst) based in Frankfurt, both of which ran guest houses on similar lines to the CHA.<sup>92</sup> The 1976 Annual Report indicates the success of this initiative with an estimated 8 per cent of guests coming from abroad.<sup>93</sup> The number of foreign guests continued to increase during the 1980s, particularly from Germany and France and a link with the European Ramblers' Association attracted a large number of overseas guests during the 1990s. In 1995, 14 per cent of guests came from abroad; Germany, France, Netherlands, Portugal and the United States, a not inconsiderable proportion of a declining clientele.<sup>94</sup>

When leaving to found the Holiday Fellowship in 1913, Leonard considered that "we were not making the progress in international work we had hoped".<sup>95</sup> Early Holiday Fellowship Annual Reports record visitors from abroad staying at various centres.<sup>96</sup> In a bid to provide accommodation in London for guests from overseas, as well as guests from other parts of the UK (the "provinces"), the Holiday Fellowship leased a property in Sydenham Hill, south-east London, in 1927.

'Hitherwood' provided accommodation for 50 guests. However, it never lived up to expectations although it did attract 1,288 foreign guests in 1937 from a wide range of countries, the most popular being Germany (115) and Holland (91), and

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<sup>92</sup> See 1975 Annual report, pp.6-7, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>93</sup> See 1974 Annual Report, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>94</sup> See *Countrywide Companion*, Jan 1996, Countrywide Archive.

<sup>95</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.53.

<sup>96</sup> See HF Annual Reports for 1920s and 1930s, HF Archive.

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Commonwealth countries such as India (98) and East Africa(63).<sup>97</sup> The outstanding event in the history of ‘Hitherwood’ was the visit in 1931 of chiefs and others from the East African colonies, who came to London to give evidence before a commission of inquiry into the better government of Uganda, Tanganyika and Kenya.<sup>98</sup> Early in the Second World War, “Hitherwood” was damaged on two occasions by bombing and remained un-occupied. By the end of the war, it was in a sorry state and lay semi-derelict until it was demolished in the fifties.

There is little mention in Holiday Fellowship annual reports of foreign visitors to British centres. There are, however, a few exceptions, such as the reports of Hungarian refugees who were accommodated at Kessingland Camp in 1957 and of the Hythe Youth Centre, which was given over to the British Council in 1979 to house Vietnamese “Boat People”. Both are good examples of the Holiday Fellowship’s ideal of promoting international understanding.<sup>99</sup> Although there is otherwise little mention of foreign visitors staying at British centres, it is reasonable to assume that a proportion of guests at British centres came from abroad since the Holiday Fellowship developed a growing number of overseas “correspondents” and local groups in Europe and in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada and the USA.<sup>100</sup> Indeed, according to HF Holidays, Head of Operations, at the end of the century, 10 per cent of guests were from overseas, mainly Europe and Canada.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> See C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship: Part 2*, p.109-111.

<sup>98</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.97-100.

<sup>99</sup> See HF Annual Reports for 1957 and 1979, HF Archive.

<sup>100</sup> See C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship: Part 2*, p.129.

<sup>101</sup> Conversation with Steve Backhouse, HF Holidays Head of Holiday Operations, 11 October 2012.

Though the CHA and Holiday Fellowship had some success in attracting foreign clients, this paled in comparison with the YHA. Foreign visitors to YHA youth hostels grew from 10 per cent of total guests prior to the Second World War to 30 per cent by the late 1960s and remained at that figure until the end of the century.

Reflecting the close associations between the YHA and the German *Jugendherbergen* in the 1930s, Germany was consistently the origin of the largest number of foreign visitors to UK hostels, followed by France and Holland. Australia and the United States also figure highly as the origin of foreign visitors to UK hostels and more recently, Japan has provided a large number of foreign hostellers.<sup>102</sup>

### **Identity: the pursuit of friendship and fellowship**

On the first CHA holidays, which were composed entirely of compulsory daily walks, the daily rambles were supplemented by ‘field talks on place names, rocks and plants and historical associations’ and evening lectures.<sup>103</sup> After World War One, the after-dinner evening sessions had been broadened out to include not only lectures and discussions on subjects ‘of a non-controversial nature’ (not politics or religion) but also communal singing, dancing and games.<sup>104</sup>

Fundamental to achieving the goals of friendship and fellowship were the appointment of the host and hostess and the centre secretary. The host and hostess were volunteers who had experience of communal holidays and possessed the ability to inspire guests to enter into the spirit of fellowship. The centre secretary was

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<sup>102</sup> Calculated from information obtained from YHA Annual Reports 1931-2000, YHA archive, Birmingham University.

<sup>103</sup> T A Leonard, *Adventure in Holiday Making*, p.23.

<sup>104</sup> See CHA Centre Programmes in GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/3.

usually a student on summer holiday, who worked for their board and a small honorarium. They organised the weekly programme of excursions and led the ‘A’ walks (the more difficult). The host and hostess led the ‘B’ and ‘C’ walks and organised the social activities.

The following quote from an inter-war CHA summer holiday programme is typical of CHA and Holiday Fellowship holiday guides of the time:

*We have informal gatherings most evenings of the week – songs, games and dancing, with an occasional lecture or discussion. You are asked to help in any way you can with musical items, readings, recitations or sketches. Please do let the Host and Hostess know what talent is available early in the week. Suggestions from anyone able and willing to lead a discussion will be welcomed.*<sup>105</sup>

#### Social activities on CHA & Holiday Fellowship holidays

The purpose of the social gatherings was to ‘weld the house party into a group of friends, irrespective of class, creed or colour’.<sup>106</sup> The success of the evenings was very much down to the organisational ability of the host and hostess, who were responsible for drawing up the programme of evening entertainments, and the enthusiasm and skills of the guests. The weekly social programme offered by the Holiday Fellowship during the inter-war period followed the following rough timetable:<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> CHA Centre Guides, 1936-1939, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/5.

<sup>106</sup> A quote from H Wroe, *The story of HF holidays*, p.74.

<sup>107</sup> See D Hardman, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship: Part One, 1913-1940*, p.10-12.



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- Saturday evening: The host and hostess would introduce the week's events. The Secretary would describe the excursion programme. These administrative procedures would be followed by a sing-song in the Common Room. Communal singing always proved a popular way of bringing relative strangers together.
- Sunday evening: Supper would be followed by a talk on some political or social topic current at the time.
- Monday evening: A get-together for dancing or quiet draughts, dominoes, whist or chess in the Quiet Room. By the 1930s, ballroom dancing as distinct from the interminable Scottish reels or Morris dancing had taken over.
- Tuesday evening: The entertainment would have a "drive" of some sort as its main base with small prizes.
- Wednesday evening: Guests having taken an "off-day" with excursions or visits tended not to want an organised programme. Alternatively, trips were arranged to local theatres or pier-head shows, depending on the location.
- Thursday evening: Was the play-reading evening. Centres carried copies of the popular plays of the day, usually the half-hour classics that preceded full length plays – known as curtain raisers.
- Friday evening: The traditional Grand Finale. Dancing of all types, sing-song and concert items, usually in fancy dress.

Centre guides also laid down strict rules, another illustration of the influence of the concept of respectability, and the spiritual and cultural background of these organisations. Morning prayers preceded breakfast and grace was sung before evening meals every day. Common room entertainment at all guest houses closed at 10.30pm and it was expected that guests would be in their own bedrooms and that absolute quiet would be observed after 11.00pm. No intoxicants were allowed in guest houses and guests were expected to refrain from their use during the holiday.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> See sample centre guides for 1930s in GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5 and HF Archive.

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The increasing secularisation of society was reflected in the recurring discussions on religious observance at centres. As early as 1938, motions were being proposed at annual conferences that: ‘religious talks, hymn-singing and grace before meals should be confined to those guests who wish to take part in them, in view of the fact that very many are not accustomed to religious observance at home’.<sup>109</sup> The motion was lost but was illustrative of the changing attitudes within the Holiday Fellowship.

Guest house life during the 1940s is described in a contribution from Robert Watson to a Countrywide Holidays publication celebrating one hundred years of holidaying with the CHA:

*My own memories of CHA go back to the late 1940s, a time when the format of the holidays had changed little since the inter-war heyday of the holiday associations. For a true flavour of a CHA holiday in those days, one need only cast a glance over the ‘Summer Holiday Brochure’ .....The preamble began sternly: ‘Bookings for these holidays are only accepted on the understanding that guests will participate in excursions and in the full social life of the centre.*

*Centre programmes informed us that ‘Intoxicants are not allowed in the guest house and guests are requested to refrain from their use on excursions’. Morning prayers were held each day and although the centre programme informed us that ‘attendance is optional’, the general feeling was that it was not quite the done thing to abscond.*

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<sup>109</sup> Minutes of 1938 AGM, HF Archive.

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*By today's standards, the accommodation was Spartan in the extreme; dormitory accommodation being standard. Even married couples had to split up and share separate dormitories. Communal ablutions were often the order of the day. Such accommodation was always welcomed by youngsters such as myself, as it provided ideal locations for midnight parties with one's peers. However, only the most daring souls sought to smuggle 'intoxicants' into the rooms past the wary eyes of the formidable maiden lady manageress!<sup>110</sup>*

This holiday format remained largely unchanged until the early 1980s. In-depth interviews with long-standing members of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship show, however, that whilst the rules were clear, the extent of their observance varied. The results of the questionnaire survey of 100 members/former members of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship indicate that, although the more mature guest probably played by the rules, the younger guests were more liable to flaunt them. A number of respondents to the questionnaire testified to 'illicit alcohol' in dormitories, in their teenage years, long after lights out.<sup>111</sup> They confirm that it was not unusual for the younger members to smuggle alcoholic beverages into bedrooms and continue parties long after lights out (in some centres where electricity was provided by generators, lights out really meant lights out when the host turned off the generator).

These matters stimulated debate within both organisations, more so in the Holiday Fellowship. They were the subject of regular discussion at annual conferences through the 1960s where strongly opposing views were expressed on discipline,

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<sup>110</sup> An extract from a contribution to an unpublished book *A Hundred Years of Holidays at Abbey House, Whitby, 1896-1996*, written by Terry Firth, Countrywide Holidays Archive.

<sup>111</sup> Questionnaire respondents 22, 46, 48, 58, 69 & 92.

religious observance, temperance and ‘mechanical music’ at centres.<sup>112</sup> Whilst older members were content with the traditional arrangements, they were of less appeal to the younger generation. Questions were raised about conventions such as Common Room evenings, Thursday concerts, ‘lights-out-at-eleven’, only water with meals, tables for 6 or 8 people at mealtimes, grace before meals and excursion arrangements. The difficulties raised by these questions are evident in the tone of the General Committee’s request to the membership:

*Frankly, your Committee finds the formulation and presentation of suggestions in this field to be a very difficult problem. Changes down the years have occurred and changes in the future will be inevitable; it is vital that they are not left too late. But the Committee cannot act alone and it is essential that we effectively tap membership opinion and thinking on these matters. Therefore, your Committee looks forward to a growing body of positive suggestions from members and supporters for its guidance and consideration.*<sup>113</sup>

At the subsequent 1969 AGM, the Holiday Fellowship agreed that the “rising bell” would not be rung and grace would not be said before meals.<sup>114</sup> The CHA continued to stick to its principles and it remained a more traditional organisation, a factor that may well have contributed to its lack of popularity and to its eventual demise. It was 1975 before the CHA finally discontinued the “rising bell” in all guest houses. Television sets were installed but located where they did not cause intrusion upon other guest’s enjoyment. The growing reluctance of hosts and hostesses to sing grace

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<sup>112</sup> See Reports of HF Annual General Meetings 1962, 1965 & 1966, HF Archive.

<sup>113</sup> See article on ‘Future Policy’, *Over the Hills*, Winter 1967/1968, pp.2-3.

<sup>114</sup> See Minute of 1969 AGM, HF Archive.

led to the phasing out of this formality by the 1980s, much to the disdain of many traditional members.<sup>115</sup>

The licensing of guest houses was a major issue for the CHA. When it was suggested at the 1960 AGM that one guest house should be licensed for a trial period there was outrage from the majority of members and no one dared raise the issue again for many years.<sup>116</sup> Guests going to the pub in the evening rather than staying on for the evening's social gathering was a recurring issue. Brian Padgett, who acted as host during the 1960s, always made the first evening's social a riotous occasion so that when those that had escaped to the pub returned and found out what they had missed, they came to the evening socials thereafter.<sup>117</sup> The CHA resisted the temptation to license its guest houses until late in the 1990s. Even by 1996, only two of its six centres were licensed.<sup>118</sup> In contrast, issues with guests going to the pub in the evening persuaded the Holiday Fellowship to, first of all, allow drinks with meals and to, subsequently, commence a programme of installing bars in centres from the late 1970s onwards.<sup>119</sup>

The diminution of the social programme, combined with the diversification of the holiday programme detailed in chapter 4, were a continual source of tension. Motions submitted to the 1983 AGM of the Holiday Fellowship illustrate these tensions; one deplored the decrease in the number of traditional walking weeks in the 1983 brochure and the expansion of 'Go-as-you-please' holidays, which were not

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<sup>115</sup> See debates at 1982 CHA Annual General Meeting reported in *CHA News*, Summer 1982 and 1981 HF Annual General Meeting.

<sup>116</sup> See Minute of 1960 AGM, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/17.

<sup>117</sup> Conversation with Brian Padgett, 1 April 2012 (see also communication dated 29 May 2012).

<sup>118</sup> See CHA Holiday Brochure for 1996, Countrywide Holidays Archive.

<sup>119</sup> See Annual Reports from 1977 onwards, HF Archive.

considered conducive to socialising at centres; another urged the return to the founding principles with social activities every evening on all walking and other holidays.<sup>120</sup>

The proposers of these motions all expressed concern that the Holiday Fellowship was changing its character simply to compete with commercial holiday organisations and that the principles of ‘fellowship’ were being diluted. These motions were carried at the AGM but they had very little effect on the General Management Committee, and there was a continual drift away from the traditional walking week with its social evenings towards special interest and short break holidays and week-end breaks.

Nevertheless, the social evening at Holiday Fellowship centres continued in a muted form to the end of the century, organised by activity leaders (the term ‘host’ and ‘hostess’ was phased out in the 1990s). Country dancing remained a favourite form of evening entertainment along with pen and paper quizzes and games. Guests were still encouraged to participate in sing-songs. Another popular event was the ‘Caption Competition’ in which a photograph or picture is displayed and guests are invited to add a humorous or edifying caption.<sup>121</sup>

These different approaches to change adopted by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship may well reflect the fact that, whilst the CHA was predominantly a northern organisation (with its headquarters in Manchester), more authoritarian and more traditional in character, the Holiday Fellowship was predominantly a southern

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<sup>120</sup> See Minutes of 1983 AGM, HF Archive.

<sup>121</sup> Conversation with Harry Wroe, 16 June 2009.

organisation (with its headquarters in London after 1925), which had a more progressive attitude to change.

The culture of the Holiday Fellowship holiday has evolved, therefore, from one of compulsory communal socializing to a more diverse, informal and voluntary arrangement. At the end of the century, guests met for afternoon tea in the lounge and for a glass of wine before the evening meal; shared a dining table for 8-10 persons; met in the bar afterwards with games and quizzes in the lounge on offer to those who wished to participate. Guests, therefore, had the opportunity to relax with fellow guests but unlike the past, where the organisation controlled all socializing, it was discretionary.<sup>122</sup>

The promotion of friendship and fellowship was a principal aim of Leonard when founding the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship. Both organisations strived to retain this essential element of the holiday whilst undertaking major structural changes to the holiday provision. Although the social life of holidays changed considerably during the period under consideration, to the majority of guests, they continued to offer a friendly, relaxed, communal atmosphere with organised entertainment in comfortable surroundings, in stark contrast to the comparable guest house and budget hotel accommodation.

In the questionnaire survey of 100 CHA/Holiday Fellowship members who have been guests at CHA and HF centres over the past 50 years, the majority ranked 'friendship and fellowship' as the most important aspect of their holiday experience, ahead of the

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<sup>122</sup> Conversation with Steve Backhouse, Head of Holiday Operations, HF Holidays, 11 October 2012.

recreational opportunities and the countryside experience (see Appendix 7). Extracts from a selection of responses to the survey are provided in Appendix 9. The following extract is indicative of the view held by a large proportion of respondents:

*Absolutely Amazing; Wonderful company; meeting new friends (still in contact); although many of the old traditions have gone the wonderful fellowship remains. The surprising thing is that despite all the changes that have occurred over the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the experience of the HF holiday-the feel of it and the pleasure derived has changed little: a tribute to its founder.*<sup>123</sup>

Nevertheless, tensions remained between the traditional member, those on an inclusive holiday, be it guided walking or some other leisure activity, and the more independent guest, who was less likely to feel part of the HF community and less likely to wish to participate in communal social activities. According to HF Holidays current Head of Operations, ‘To the member, the Holiday Fellowship is a holiday club; to the non-member with no emotional ties, it is simply a holiday company like many others’.<sup>124</sup> For traditional members, the properties are still known as ‘guest houses’ whilst they are marketed as ‘hotels’ to the general public.

#### Annual re-unions and local groups

As Snape records; ‘The viability of the CHA as a voluntary leisure association as distinct from a holiday club depended not only on its shared values and sense of identity, but upon the ability of members to meet regularly beyond the annual

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<sup>123</sup> Quotation taken from questionnaire response No.31, Appendix 9.

<sup>124</sup> Conversation with Steve Backhouse, Head of Holiday Operations, HF Holidays, 11 October 2012



holiday'.<sup>125</sup> Both associations organised centre reunions, usually during the autumn and winter in different parts of the country, mainly in the larger cities but also in a variety of smaller towns (see Figure 22). The proceedings would include speeches by holiday leaders, music and songs, lanterns slide shows of last season's holidays and refreshments. They would be organised by a local group secretary and offered guests the opportunity to renew holiday contacts and make plans for the following year.



Figure 22: CHA New Year Reunion brochure for 1921

National reunions were organised by the CHA in London and Manchester from the 1930s until the late 1960s when they were replaced by a residential conference associated with the AGM, which was attended by between 500 and 800 members up

<sup>125</sup> R. Snape, *The Co-operative Holidays Association*, p.154.

to the late 1980s, when the AGM was reduced to a one day event as interest in the annual conference declined. The last annual conference held in Manchester in April 1991 was attended by 400 members. Thereafter, the AGM attracted some 200-250 members each year.<sup>126</sup>

The Holiday Fellowship instigated a Grand Autumn Reunion in the Royal Festival Hall, London in 1951, which continued until 1973. Rising costs led to the cessation of the event at this location and the motivation for national reunions dwindled in the late 1970s.<sup>127</sup> Re-unions were also a feature of the annual gathering at the AGM, organised by the local group and consisting of a programme of film and slide shows and dancing.<sup>128</sup> Re-union Dances were attended by over 500 members until the 1980s when attendances began to drop and the re-union dances were discontinued.

This decline in the interest of national re-unions reflects the increasing distancing of the membership from the management of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship as these organisations became more commercial in their approach to holiday provision. In the pre-war years both organisations depended entirely on the membership, but as holiday provision diversified from the 1970s onwards with the development of 'Go-as-you-please', special interest and short-break holidays, active membership became less of a prerequisite for guests on a CHA and Holiday Fellowship holiday.

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<sup>126</sup> See reports of AGMs in CHA Magazine 1953-1980, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/11, B/CHA/PUB/1/12 & B/CHA/PUB/1/13; CHA News 1981-1986, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/2/1; Countrywide News 1986-1994, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/2/2.

<sup>127</sup> See C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship, Part Two: 1941-1980*, pp.130-131.

<sup>128</sup> For instance, see programme for 1970 AGM at Birmingham in *Over the Hills*, Winter 1969/1970, p.10.

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As early as the 1970s, annual reports of both organisations began to express concerns about the distancing of the management from the membership. Leading figures in both organisation proposed that consideration should be given to closer co-operation between the membership and head office. A survey of Holiday Fellowship guests in 1977 showed that less than half were shareholding members.<sup>129</sup> The Holiday fellowship, in particular, suffered further weakening of the ties between the membership and the organisation's management through its changing management styles, with the rebranding as HF Holidays in 1982 and the replacement of the General Committee by a Board and the General Secretary by a Chief Executive.

So, to a substantial extent, local groups were the main vehicle for maintaining the spirit and purpose of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship. Through representation on the parent organisation's liaison committee, they strengthened the ties between the members and the management of the parent organisation by acting as a vehicle for the communication of views and concerns regarding the running of centres and holiday activities. Many members of the General Committees of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship came from the organising committees of local groups.<sup>130</sup>

Reflecting the ideals of the parent organisations, local groups had two main purposes; recreational and social. They organised rambles and other forms of leisure activity such as tennis, talks and slide shows, reading circles, dances and even dramatic societies, which attracted both members and non-members of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. Through these groups, the influence of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship

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<sup>129</sup> HF Annual report 1978, HF Archive.

<sup>130</sup> For instance, Brian Padgett, President of the Bradford CHA Rambling Club in the 1960s, was elected to the General Committee of the CHA in 1968 and became Chairman in 1971/72.

therefore spread beyond the membership to a larger constituency of outdoor enthusiasts. They, therefore, played an important part in introducing the urban population to the benefits of the countryside. Many acquired their own weekend huts and cottages and became active in the protection of local rights of way and the preservation of the countryside.

Local groups also played a valuable role in the CHA and HF's philosophy of assisting those people who could not afford it, to benefit from a 'rational' holiday in the countryside. They raised money for the financing of the free and assisted holiday schemes and nominated deserving persons for the holidays. They were also a vehicle for spreading the ideals and principles, and the benefits of membership, of the parent organisations within their local communities. Most local groups organised group holidays at CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres at least once a year.<sup>131</sup>

Local groups formed readily prior to the Second World War and by 1938 both the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship had some 80 local groups each. Throughout the post-war period they had over 100 registered local groups each, 40 of which were joint CHA/HF clubs (see appendices 10 and 11).<sup>132</sup> Local groups were spread through the UK but CHA groups were more concentrated in the north of England where 50 per cent were located. Prior to the Second World War, Holiday Fellowship local groups were similarly concentrated in the north of England but the dominance of the north declined after the Second World War as more southern groups were formed and northern groups were disbanded. In 1961, forty out of ninety Holiday Fellowship

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<sup>131</sup> See GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/11.

<sup>132</sup> CHA and HF local groups are listed in each annual report.

local groups (45 per cent) were located in the north of England but by 1981 only 39 per cent were located in the north; 41 per cent were in southern England and 15 per cent in the Midlands. There were three local groups in Scotland, and one each in Wales, Northern Ireland and Eire.<sup>133</sup>

As the century progressed, many local groups became more independent of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship although maintaining their affiliation. This trend is indicated by discussions at a meeting of local groups at the CHA's 1982 Annual Conference, where concern was expressed at the number of local group members who did not take CHA holidays. The Chair of the meeting suggested that "if all local group members were to take one week's holiday each, the Association would solve its financial difficulties".<sup>134</sup> At this time there were 110 CHA local groups with an estimated 16,000 members, less than half of which holidayed with the CHA.

By the time the CHA was wound up in 2004, only 34 local groups remained affiliated to the association.<sup>135</sup> Although this affiliation has now ceased, it is a reflection of the original strength of the ties between the CHA and its local groups that a number of walking and rambling clubs retain 'CHA' in their name thus continuing the link with their past.<sup>136</sup> At the end of the century, the Holiday Fellowship had 170 affiliated activity clubs, of which 54 clubs were long-standing local groups.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> See 1961 and 1981 Annual Reports, HF Archive.

<sup>134</sup> See note of meeting of CHA Clubs, CHA News Summer 1982, GMCRO, B/CHA/ PUB/2/1.

<sup>135</sup> See Countrywide Holidays Annual Report 2004, Countrywide archive.

<sup>136</sup> For example, Bradford CHA Rambling Club, Manchester CHA Rambling Club, Newcastle & District CHA & HF Rambling Club & York CHA & HF Rambling Club.

<sup>137</sup> See HF list of Activity Clubs, HF Archive.

Local group activities

A number of local groups have recently reached their centenaries and published celebratory publications.<sup>138</sup> These publications and oral evidence from a selection of local groups have revealed a number of common threads to the changing fortunes of CHA and Holiday Fellowship local groups.<sup>139</sup>

The 'raison d'être' of most local groups was to provide a programme of rambles all year round for its members' enjoyment, supplemented by social evenings, including an annual reunion, to enliven the winter months. In the 1920s, rambles were generally held on Saturday afternoons for Saturday mornings formed part of the working week and Sundays were strictly reserved for attending church or chapel. Many groups also arranged mid-week rambles, usually on or Wednesday; half-day closing in most northern towns. Sunday rambles commenced in the 1930s as attitudes became more relaxed and soon became the mainstay of CHA and Holiday Fellowship local groups.

In the 1920s and 30s, there was complete reliance on public transport to convey members to the starting point of rambles for very few people owned motor cars. Corporation tramcars ran to outlying termini in northern towns and cities, subsequently replaced by buses, and railway branch lines provided access to more remote locations.<sup>140</sup> The growth of membership after the Second World War generated extra funds to allow groups to contemplate private coach hire and longer

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<sup>138</sup> See for example, *One Hundred Years of Bradford CHA Rambling and Social Club* and *One Hundred Years with the York CHA & HF Rambling Club*.

<sup>139</sup> Meetings have been held with representatives of six clubs; Bolton, Bradford, Crosby, Manchester, Newcastle and York.

<sup>140</sup> For an account of the changing modes of transport used over the century, see *Rambles Down Memory Lane: One hundred years of Bradford CHA Rambling and Social Club*, (2003), pp.75-92.

distance trips. As branch lines closed and popular destinations became inaccessible, some groups even bought their own coach. The Bradford CHA Rambling and Social Club even rose to national fame when it purchased a coach in 1968 when British Rail withdrew the early Sunday train to Skipton, denying the club access to the Yorkshire Dales.<sup>141</sup>

Brian Padgett, the instigator of the purchase of the coach and the driving force behind many other initiatives at the club, relates how the purchase of the coach galvanised members to hold a range of social activities to raise funds to pay for the running-costs and maintenance; treasure hunts, barbeques, cheese and wine evenings, a “200” club.<sup>142</sup> It also required voluntary drivers and a ‘bus maintenance and cleaning crew’, and thus plenty of enthusiastic volunteers, all part of the ‘fellowship’ ideal.

Unfortunately, EEC Regulations put paid to the club running its own coach in 1976 and since then private coaches have been hired.

In addition to the regular weekly, fortnightly or monthly rambles, group weekends grew in popularity after the Second World War. Local groups used both CHA and Holiday Fellowship guest houses, drawing little distinction between the two. The weekends largely replicated the annual group holidays at guest houses with a variety of walks and home-spun evening entertainment. They cemented the sociability and communality of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

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<sup>141</sup> see *Rambles Down Memory Lane: One hundred years of Bradford CHA Rambling and Social Club*, pp.76-77.

<sup>142</sup> Conversation with Brian Padgett, interview dated 2 April 2012.

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In addition to organising rambles, local groups carried the ideal of ‘friendship and fellowship’ into their activities by hiring a suitable room or hall on a regular basis throughout the winter months. A typical programme in the ‘20s and ‘30s would comprise talks on local subjects with lantern slides, with a New Year Party comprising dancing, party games, and sketches. The annual re-union would be held at the beginning of the programme in September or October to reminisce about the summer holiday and make plans for the following year. At the Bolton HF Walking Club, social evenings were well attended throughout the 1950s and 1960s. These would include play readings, concerts and dances. Revues would involve men dressing up as chorus girls or ballerinas. Pirate Nights, Spanish Nights, Lancashire Nights would be enjoyed by large audiences. Other activities included whist drives, beetle drives, quiz nights and cheese and wine tasting. However, from the mid-1970s onwards attendances began to decline.<sup>143</sup>

It is a common theme amongst local groups that the social programme reduced in the 1980s to monthly meetings, usually slide shows by members or guest speakers from the locality, and a Christmas/New Year dinner/dance. Indicative of this trend is the observation of the president of the Bolton HF Walking Club at the March 1984 AGM that: ‘It appears to me that many of the new members are only interested in the rambles and not in the social side of the club. I think this is a pity but we have to accept it.’<sup>144</sup> At the end of the century, support for the Christmas Party and New Year dinner/dance had declined to such an extent that they could no longer be sustained in

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<sup>143</sup> Chapter 7 of the booklet *Bolton HF Rambling Club: The First Eighty Years*, (2002) provides a detailed account of the social activities of a typical HF Club, HF Archive.

<sup>144</sup> See *Bolton HF Rambling Club: The First Eighty Years*, (2002), p.62.



the traditional manner, to be replaced by a Ceilidh Night with dancing, singing and entertainment by members in true CHA and Holiday Fellowship style.

The availability of suitable accommodation was an important factor in determining the social programme provided by clubs. The Newcastle CHA & HF Rambling Club has changed premises eight times since 1919 as premises have become unavailable, too expensive or not 'fit for purpose' due to the lack of facilities or because of increasing numbers of members.<sup>145</sup> The Newcastle club continues with a winter programme of weekly Saturday afternoon socials, comprising talks, beetle drives and quizzes, that are well-attended. These are a means of integrating the Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday rambler members, which total 170 persons.<sup>146</sup> At the York CHA & HF Rambling Club, the regular round of talks, dances, visits and festive parties was enjoyed by about 30 regular attendees during the 1970s and 1980s. Given the total membership was around 200, support for the socials could only be viewed as disappointing, and this number was sufficient to make the occasions viable only because the accommodation was provided free.<sup>147</sup>

#### Constituency of local groups

The constituency of local group membership has very much reflected that of the parent organisations. Information obtained from discussions with selected groups shows that some members only stayed with a group for a year or two, whilst many

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<sup>145</sup> See *One Hundred Years of Newcastle & District CHA & HF Rambling Club*, (2002), pp.8-9.

<sup>146</sup> Oral evidence from Secretary of Newcastle & District CHA & HF Rambling Club, 10 March 2012.

<sup>147</sup> See *One Hundred Years with the York CHA & HF Rambling Club*, p.79.

boast a length of membership extending forty, fifty or sixty years.<sup>148</sup> Some joined because they enjoyed a walking holiday at a CHA or Holiday Fellowship guest house and wished to carry on walking in the companionship of other members throughout the year. Others joined because they wanted to take up walking seriously but be guided by others. It was not unusual for members to belong to other outdoor organisations such as the YHA and the Ramblers' Association. Some were more interested in the social side of club life; there have been many marriages between CHA and Holiday Fellowship members.<sup>149</sup>

Information obtained from six selected local groups reveals that membership has fluctuated throughout the century, mirroring the fortunes of the parent organisations. In general terms, membership grew during the inter-war period and for some groups these were the 'halcyon days' of their existence.<sup>150</sup> Many suffered during the Second World War and the post-war period of austerity but recovered with the end of rationing, the enabling of the shorter working week and the increase in living standards. Increasing membership meant that groups flourished from the late 1950s onwards. The growth in membership meant financial security and rambling and social calendars settled into a tried and trusted pattern that remained untouched until the 1980s. Since that time, CHA and Holiday Fellowship local groups have experienced changing fortunes.

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<sup>148</sup> One member of Newcastle & District CHA & HF Walking Club remembers a conversation with T A Leonard at a club trip to Newlands HF guest house in 1942, when she was 19 years old.

<sup>149</sup> A number of the questionnaire responses testify to this fact, see for example, responses No.92, Appendix 8.

<sup>150</sup> Meetings have been held with representatives of six clubs; Bolton, Bradford, Crosby, Manchester, Newcastle and York.

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At the York CHA & HF Rambling Club, for example, the steady post-war rise in membership continued unabated until the 1980s and peaked at 222 members in 1983, 134 of which were regular walkers.<sup>151</sup> However, the emergence of other local rambling groups in the 1980s affected the recruitment of new members, especially the younger ones, and membership began to decline. By the 1990s, the failure to attract new active members began to take its toll and the membership dropped to 146 in 1992 when difficulties were encountered in filling the rambler's coach and group weekends were cancelled. The impact was also felt by the club's social scene. In 1995, a succession of embarrassingly low attendances for talks by invited speakers led to the inevitable decision to reduce the number of social evenings. However, membership stabilised at around the 100 mark at the end of the century, when a greater proportion were 'active' walkers.<sup>152</sup>

The Bolton CHA Rambling Club has had more success in retaining its membership. Membership peaked at over 350 members in the 1960s and the club still has some 300 members, although a large number are not active walkers. Nevertheless, the rambling programme continues to flourish with Saturday afternoon and Wednesday walks. Tuesday evening social activities have ceased as a result of dwindling attendances. An annual dinner remains popular, as are the Christmas Dance and Christmas Lunch.

The evidence from the six local groups contacted shows a consistent pattern of an increasingly aged membership as the century progressed. The experience of the Manchester CHA Rambling and Social Club is typical. The club had over 200

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<sup>151</sup> See *One Hundred Years with the York CHA & HF Rambling Club*, p.77.

<sup>152</sup> See *One Hundred Years with the York CHA & HF Rambling Club*, p.83.

members in the 1980s but membership was below 80 at the end of the century. Most members joined the club following a CHA holiday and the club has provided many CHA hosts and hostesses and secretaries. For instance, the Vice-President of the club, as a student, acted as Secretary at a CHA guest house in 1960 and has been involved with the club ever since. The majority of members have been with the club for a considerable number of years and are now above retirement age, few are under 70 years of age.<sup>153</sup>

For many clubs, the retention/attraction of young members was a major issue during the 1960s and 1970s, a period of social upheaval. Bolton CHA Rambling Club attempted to arrest the decline in members by forming a young members' club in the 1960s and '70s but it only lasted a few years.<sup>154</sup> Since the 1980s, most people joining the club have been in their fifties, mirroring the experience of the parent organisations. The Bradford CHA Rambling Club established a youth section in 1966 to try to retain the teenage children of club members.<sup>155</sup> They had their own committee and organised their own rambles and social entertainment, including ten pin bowling, a very popular pastime of the 1960s, and dances with live bands. This brought in new young members but by the mid-1970s the youth section had gradually merged with the main club.<sup>156</sup>

The vast majority of members of the clubs interviewed have been, and continue to be, women, attracted by the friendliness and fellowship of club membership. The ratio of men to women has been a constant source of concern amongst clubs. On at least two

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<sup>153</sup> Information obtained at meeting with club on 25 May 2012

<sup>154</sup> Information obtained at meeting with club on 29 October 2012.

<sup>155</sup> Brian Padgett was the driving force behind this initiative.

<sup>156</sup> see *Ramble Down Memory Lane*, pp.93-117.

occasions, the Newcastle & District CHA & HF Rambling Club curtailed women membership in an attempt to increase the proportion of male members. Nevertheless, at the end of the century, male members amounted to less than 25 per cent of the membership.<sup>157</sup>

#### Relationship between local groups and the parent bodies

The history of the York CHA & HF Rambling Club provides more light on the changing relationship of local groups with the parent bodies.<sup>158</sup> The Club, formed by a small group of young men who met for re-unions after sharing a CHA holiday in 1908, affiliated to the CHA in 1922 and the Holiday Fellowship in 1923. In the 1930s, with Arnold Rowntree, a member of York's famous confectionary family and a close friend of T A Leonard, as Vice-President, the Club hosted the twenty-first Annual Conference of the Holiday Fellowship in 1935. Members regularly attended annual conferences and liaison meetings of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship throughout the post-war period indicating the value derived from being involved with the national bodies. The links with the CHA and Holiday Fellowship also provided the basis for the accommodation for group weekends until the 1980s.

However, from the 1980s onwards, difficulties were experienced in finding volunteers to represent the Club at national and regional level meetings. Regular re-unions were held with other Yorkshire clubs in the 1960s and 1970s but in the 1980s interaction with other clubs ceased due to lack of interest. Although still using accommodation

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<sup>157</sup> See *One Hundred Years of Newcastle & district CHA & HF Rambling Club*, (2002) ,p.9.

<sup>158</sup> See *One Hundred Years with the York CHA & HF Rambling Club*, pp.38-93.

offered by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship for the occasional rambling weekend, other venues were used to add variety and provide a change of scenery. The 1990s saw the once seamless association between the Club and the parent organisations drift into the administrative background. Indeed, the Club was requested to help with the 1996 Holiday Fellowship Annual Conference but declined the invitation because of other commitments. The Club ceased to be involved nationally with either body from that date. At the end of the century, the Secretary of the Club lamented that loss.

*Gone now are the national associations with the CHA and HF, except by individual choice and in the Club's title. Gone now is the Club's high social membership status, so evident in the 1930s. Gone now are the links with other local rambling clubs. But still remaining is the membership's everlasting quest to enjoy the countryside in the company of friends, a constant thread throughout the last hundred years.*<sup>159</sup>

This sentiment encapsulates the pride in membership and reflects the ideals of 'friendship and fellowship' that T A Leonard would have recognised. Nevertheless, oral evidence from the sample of local groups reveals that they now consist mainly of members with little or no allegiance to the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. Also, until the 1980s, groups only used accommodation provided by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship for annual walking holidays and group weekends. With the demise of the CHA, and the increasing commercialisation and rebranding of HF Holidays, groups sought other accommodation and simply saw HF Holidays as one accommodation provider amongst many.<sup>160</sup> Furthermore, recent evidence would suggest that 50 per

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<sup>159</sup> See *One Hundred Years with the York CHA & HF Rambling Club*, p.90.

<sup>160</sup> Views expressed by several clubs at meetings, particularly, Manchester and Bolton clubs.

cent of those groups that continue to book holidays with HF Holidays do not take part in the organised walking or leisure holidays but ‘Go-as-you-please’.<sup>161</sup> As a consequence, local groups do not always enter into the spirit of ‘friendship and fellowship’ with other guests at Holiday Fellowship centres but ‘do their own thing’, contrary to the original ethos of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship.

### Outreach

From their inception, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship supported other organisations that contributed to the advancement of ‘rational’ recreation. Members were encouraged to support the work of the NHRU and the Workers’ Education Association.<sup>162</sup> The CHA and Holiday Fellowship also worked in close co-operation with other like-minded organisations: Methodist Guild Holidays, Christian Endeavour and the Baptist Holiday Fellowship. Furthermore, as Harvey Taylor comments, ‘the co-operative holiday movement also lent its influence in matters of direct practical concern to open-air recreationalists’. Problems of access to the countryside and loss of rights of way stimulated a campaigning spirit, which added to the evangelical approach to the question of leisure and popular culture.<sup>163</sup>

From the early days, Leonard was associated with the Selborne Society (the pioneers of the anti-litter campaign) and with the Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society (later the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society) and the National Trust. The CHA joined others in opposing ‘the vandalism of County

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<sup>161</sup> Conversation with Steve Backhouse, HF Holidays, Head of Operations, 11 October 2012.

<sup>162</sup> See G.W. Kitchen, Address to the Annual Conference of the Co-operative Holidays Association, Bradford, 1905, *National Home Reading Union Magazine*, Vol.16, No.5, pp.127-128.

<sup>163</sup> See H. Taylor, *A Claim on the Countryside*, p.211.

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Councils and other public bodies'.<sup>164</sup> In addition to support for access and environmental issues, articles in *Comradeship* expounded on other topics such as new towns, green belts and town planning.<sup>165</sup> The CHA donated to a range of national, regional and local environmental bodies, ranging from the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, formed in 1926 by Sir Patrick Abercrombie, a town planner and CHA lecturer, to the Peak District and Northern Counties Footpaths Society.<sup>166</sup>

The CHA and the Holiday Fellowship, which inherited T A Leonard's ideals, were strong supporters of national parks and, in particular, a national park for the Lake District. Both organisations were active members of the Campaign for National Parks and supporters of the English Lake District Association, the forerunner of the Friends of the Lake District, of which T A Leonard was a founder member.<sup>167</sup> An article in the 1955 edition of the Holiday Fellowship's magazine *Over the Hills* rejoices at the designation of the eighth national park, encompassing the Cheviot Hills, and the fact that over twenty Holiday Fellowship guest houses were located within or close to national parks: 'The Fellowship has steeped itself in such areas and is the perfect guide to them; you cannot have easier access to them than from a Fellowship guest-house'.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> See Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.128; *Comradeship*, September 1910, p.35; *Comradeship*, February 1911, p.62.

<sup>165</sup> See *Comradeship*, December 1912, p.36.

<sup>166</sup> See CHA Annual Reports of 1920s and 1930s, GMCRO, B/CHA/

<sup>167</sup> See J. Cousins, *Friends of the Lake District: the early years*, (Lancaster: CNWRS, 2009), pp.9-23.

<sup>168</sup> See *Over the Hills*, No. 98, Autumn 1955, p.1.



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The Holiday Fellowship was affiliated to a range of organisations. The following list illustrates the breadth of the social, educational and recreational interests of this organisation in the 1960s:<sup>169</sup>

Association for the Preservation of Rural Scotland  
Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society  
Council for the Preservation of Rural England  
Council for Preservation of Rural Wales  
English Folk Dance and Song Society  
Field Studies Council  
Friends of the Lake District  
Industrial Society  
Irish Youth Hostels Association  
National Council for Social Service  
National Trust  
National Trust for Scotland  
Pedestrians Association for Road Safety  
Ramblers' Association  
Royal National Life Boat Association  
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds  
Scottish Field Studies Association  
Scottish Council for National Parks  
Scottish Countryside Activities Council  
Scottish Rights of Way and Recreation Society  
Scottish Youth Hostels Association  
The Northern and Peak Footpaths Society  
Tourist Association of Scotland  
United Nations Association  
Youth Hostels Association  
Youth Hostels Association for Northern Ireland

Since the middle of the twentieth century, both the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship have co-operated with organisations such as the Ramblers' Association, the CPRE and Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society (now the Open

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<sup>169</sup> HF Annual Accounts for year ending September 1970, Annual Report for 1969-70, HF Archive.

Spaces Society) on a wide range of access, countryside preservation and national park issues.<sup>170</sup> In the last quarter of the century, HF Holidays, 'Goodwill' Fund has been used to provide grants for footpath work, in recognition of the threat to the environment posed by the huge increase in leisure walking. Grants have been given to local councils and voluntary organisations to repair and improve footpaths, provide gates, and repair walls and fences.<sup>171</sup>

## Conclusions

This chapter has explored in depth, through an analysis of quantitative and qualitative data held in the CHA and Holiday Fellowship archives and through discussion with individual members of both organisations and with local groups, the continuities and changes in the constituency of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, and the organisations' philosophy of friendship and fellowship, during the period 1919-2000.

This examination has shown that, although T A Leonard and the other founders sought to establish holidays that would be genuinely working class in appeal and composition, the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship attracted people of all classes, creed and age. It has also shown that the CHA, which was predominantly a northern organisation, was much more authoritarian and traditional in its approach to holiday making and less amenable to change than the Holiday Fellowship, which had its

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<sup>170</sup> See for example, Report of Ramblers' Rally on Malham Moor, also attended by representatives of the Countryside Commission, Yorkshire Dales National Park, National Trust and Ramblers' Association, *Over the Hills*, pp.36-37; CHA statement on relevance of countryside to CHA, 1985 Annual Report, p.3.

<sup>171</sup> H. Wroe, *The story of HF Holidays*, p.35.

headquarters in London; a highly significant factor in the differing fortunes of the two organisations in the latter part of the twentieth century.

The social, economic and cultural changes experienced during the post-war period had a profound effect on both organisations as they strove to maintain traditional values, yet remain competitive in the face of growing consumerism. The ideals and philosophy of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship drew on earlier concepts of respectability, co-operation and collectivism and voluntarism and each of these were a source of tension between the ‘traditionalists’ and ‘modernisers’ in each organisation and prompted a different approach to change. As the century progressed, the changing social, economic and cultural conditions conspired to act against the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. Membership and guest levels fluctuated, reaching a high point in the 1960s, stagnating during the 1970s and declining in the 1980s. The CHA ceased to operate as an accommodation provider whilst membership of the Holiday Fellowship recovered.

There is little quantitative data on the age structure of the membership. However, whilst there was a strong emphasis on attracting young people in the early days, anecdotal evidence suggests that from the 1960s onwards, the membership of both organisations was characterised by an ageing population as younger people found other outlets for their activities. At the end of the century, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship catered for people in their 50s and 60s. However, if membership is not continually renewed, as older members become infirm and leave, the Holiday Fellowship, like the CHA, will not survive.

This analysis has also confirmed that the popularity of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship to single women continued throughout the twentieth century. Both organisations have always attracted more women than men, in complete contrast to the majority of other outdoor organisations such as the YHA and Ramblers' Association, and other outdoor hill walking and mountaineering clubs, which have generally been a male preserve.

This chapter has also examined the extent to which the CHA and Holiday Fellowship implemented their founder's desire to enhance social mixing through the provision of free or subsidised holidays. Both organisations continued with this provision with varying success. However, although the CHA's 'Free Holiday Scheme' and the Holiday Fellowship's 'Goodwill Scheme' enabled thousands of the less well-off to experience free and assisted holidays in the countryside, and were of immense value to the recipients, it is doubtful whether they achieved their founders aim of 'social mixing'.

Although internationalism was a key feature of Leonard's philosophy, there was little effort during the inter-war period, on the part of the CHA, to attract foreign visitors to British centres. Some initiatives were undertaken by the CHA after the Second World War, including the forging of links with like-minded organisations in Europe in the 1970s, which resulted in an appreciable increase in foreign guests to British centres. The Holiday Fellowship provided specific accommodation in London during the inter-war period but there is little mention, thereafter, of the scale of foreign visitors to British centres.

## *Chapter 5*

In founding the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, the promotion of friendship and fellowship was an integral part of Leonard's philosophy. This chapter has shown how the evening gatherings, whose aim was to 'weld the house party into a group of friends, irrespective of class, creed or colour' have diminished in value as a medium for encouraging friendship and fellowship as CHA and Holiday Fellowship holidays became more flexible and there was a continual drift away from the traditional 'house-party' walking holiday.

Local groups were the main vehicle for maintaining the spirit and purpose of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship beyond the annual holiday. Reflecting the ideals of the parent organisations, they had two main purposes; recreational and social. The changing fortunes of local groups through the twentieth century mirrored, to a large extent, the performance of the parent organisations. Originally formed by young people with CHA and/or Holiday Fellowship attachments, membership grew throughout the inter-war and post-war periods and peaked in the 1980s. However, as the twentieth century progressed, membership has aged and the lack of new members resulted in membership levels declining during the latter part of the century.

In the early days, local groups were vital for keeping members in touch with each other and with the parent organisation but as the CHA and Holiday Fellowship became more commercialised and their customer base broadened, local groups became distanced from the organisation's management. Oral and written evidence from six local groups shows that the original strong links with the parent organisations became more tenuous during the latter part of the century when CHA and Holiday Fellowship local groups became largely indistinguishable from other

## *Chapter 5*

rambling clubs. Nevertheless, as illustrated by the many quotes from individual group members, ‘friendship and fellowship’ and ‘enjoyment of the countryside’ remain cornerstones of club philosophy.

To conclude, this analysis of the changes and continuities in the constituency and identity of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship shows that the social, economic and cultural changes experienced during the post-war period had a profound effect, not only on their constituency but also their ideals of ‘friendship and fellowship’. Both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship struggled to maintain their membership and their identity, as moral changes took place in British Society from the late 1950s/early 1960s onwards and the perception of ‘rational’ recreation changed. Nevertheless, ‘friendship and fellowship’ and ‘enjoyment in the countryside’ remained central to CHA and HF Holidays philosophy to the end of the century.

## CHAPTER 6: THE CHA AND THE HOLIDAY FELLOWSHIP IN THE ENGLISH LAKE DISTRICT

*We met with the intention of having a good time, and we succeeded beyond our expectations. We departed, making place for others to come under the same influences, feeling refreshed and strengthened, not only physically but mentally and spiritually, and with conviction that a holiday so spent is not a mere passing pleasure but an episode of our lives which will impart warmth and colour to them in time to come.*

**Extract from 'A Week among the Lakes' by Fanny Pringle, The Independent and Non-conformist, August 31, 1893.**

### Introduction

Fanny Pringle's account of the first holiday organised under the auspices of the NHRU in the Lakes in 1893 epitomises the attributes of the CHA experience; recreative, educational, simple and strenuous, co-operation and collectivism, companionship and reverence.<sup>1</sup> Her report extols the virtues of the English Lake District as a destination for 'rational' holidays. The importance of this region in the history of the CHA is emphasised by the fact that Leonard's first trips from Colne in 1891 were to Smallwood House in Ambleside. The Lakes was the destination for thousands of CHA holidays over the next 100 years and the location for some of its most notable guest houses. During its lifetime, the CHA made use of twelve centres in the English Lake District, seven after the First World War. Newlands Mill, near Keswick, was the Holiday Fellowship's first acquisition in 1914. The Holiday Fellowship utilised six centres, two of which, Derwent Bank and Monk Coniston, remained in use at the end of the twentieth century (see Appendix 12).

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<sup>1</sup> F. N. Pringle, *A Week among the Lakes*, The Independent and Nonconformist, 31 August 1893, GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/1.

The role of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in the English Lake District is a microcosm of the changes and continuities in the national development of these organisations during the twentieth century. The rural imagery of Wordsworth and the Lake Poets were the foundations of the CHA's guiding principles of fellowship and commonwealth.<sup>2</sup> The English Lake District is also identified with John Ruskin, whose teachings were a strong influence on Leonard.<sup>3</sup> Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley, a founder of the National Trust, was a regular host either at his Parish Room or his church at Crosthwaite outside Keswick.<sup>4</sup> He addressed Leonard's first parties to the English Lake District and introduced them to the teachings of Ruskin and the poetry of Wordsworth, from which Leonard took the motto for the CHA "Joy in widest commonalty spread".<sup>5</sup>

It is appropriate, therefore, that this thesis should include a case study of how the CHA and Holiday Fellowship dealt with the social, economic and cultural changes of the twentieth century in the context of their activities in the English Lake District. This chapter, first of all, traces the changing perception of this area from literary landscape to national playground and then, mirroring the four themes addressed in the two preceding chapters, analyses the changes and continuities in the role of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in the Lake District in terms of the accommodation provided, the recreative and educational holidays pursued, their constituency and their philosophy of friendship and Fellowship. In so doing, it assesses their influence on the 'place-myth' of this distinctive area.

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<sup>2</sup> See R. Snape, 'Co-operative Holidays Association', p.148.

<sup>3</sup> See K. Hanley & J.K. Walton, *Constructing Cultural Tourism*, p.163.

<sup>4</sup> See T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.24.

<sup>5</sup> See T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.15.



## **The Draw of the English Lake District: from literary landscape to national playground**

From the 1830s onwards, a middle-class ‘vision of peaceful farmland as a synecdoche of national identity’ emerged as a reaction against the cumulative undercurrents of social unrest stemming from increased urbanisation and industrialisation.<sup>6</sup> According to Darby, this rural myth looked to the highly cultivated village-centred lowland landscapes of the south and east of England as a place of harmony to palliate the anxieties of Victorian society.<sup>7</sup> However, it ignored the harsh realities of the agricultural labourer, and the loss of ancient rights of way and many commons through agricultural improvement. At the same time, the ‘Picturesque’ epitomised the Romantic upland landscapes of mountains and moorlands in northern England, where myth also mingled with reality.

According to Urry, the ‘place-myth’ provides the images that attract holiday-makers of particular predilections and through which tourists interpret the physical and attitudinal environments of holiday destinations.<sup>8</sup> Since the late eighteenth century, a literary industry had grown up that celebrated the mix of mountains and lakes, and sacralised the Lake District as a shrine to nature.<sup>9</sup> Rojek describes this literary landscape as a ‘landscape of imaginative reflection’, a place-myth that drew from the

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<sup>6</sup> See A. Hemingway, *Landscape imagery and urban culture in early nineteenth-century Britain*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.298.

<sup>7</sup> W.J. Darby, *Landscape and Identity*, pp.124-125.

<sup>8</sup> J. Urry, *Consuming Places*, (London: Routledge, 1995), pp.194-198.

<sup>9</sup> C. O’Neill, *Visions of Lakeland: Tourism, Preservation and the Development of the Lake District, 1919-1939*, unpublished PhD thesis, (University of Lancaster, 2001), pp.10-12.

geography and folklore of the area as well as its literary associations.<sup>10</sup> In the English Lake District, this fusion of romantic literary allusions and scenic grandeur played a major role in the rise of new cultural formulations of scenery and countryside, and of related recreations such as walking and mountain climbing, which were particularly attractive to proponents of ‘rational’ recreation such as T A Leonard.

### A Literary Landscape

The status of the English Lake District as a tourist icon is of long-standing and John Walton and Cliff O’Neill provide a useful perspective on its history as a magnet for visitors attracted by its landscape and literary associations, its outdoor activities and its solitude, for over two hundred years. They provide a substantial analysis of continuity, change and conflict in Lakeland tourism, set in the broader context of the region’s economy and society.<sup>11</sup> In Walton and O’Neill’s view, it took the conversion of parts of the Lake District into a ‘literary landscape’, which entailed the idealisation of a society and an imagined way of life, to elevate it to the special and unique status it has come to enjoy in British culture.<sup>12</sup>

Marshall and Walton examine, in detail, the influence of the Romantic poets; William Wordsworth and his associates, who became an inspiration to those who sought to preserve the Lake District.<sup>13</sup> Ruskin’s influence is evidenced through the efforts of his disciples such as Octavia Hill and Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley in the founding of the

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<sup>10</sup> C. Rojek, *Ways of Escape*, pp.153-154.

<sup>11</sup> J.K. Walton, & C. O’Neill, C. ‘Tourism and the Lake District: social and cultural histories’ in D.W.G. Hind & J.P. Mitchell (eds.), *Sustainable Tourism in the English Lake District*, (Sunderland: Business Education Publishers, 2004), pp. 19-47.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p.20.

<sup>13</sup> See J.D. Marshall & J.K. Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the mid-twentieth century*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), pp.204-219.

Lake District Defence Society in 1883 and the National Trust in 1895. Hanley and Walton, in their exploration of the influence of Ruskin on the development of those strands of popular tourism that rejected the conventional commercial holiday industry of Victorian and Edwardian Britain, conclude that ‘the most positive and congenial relationships between Ruskin’s legacy and the development of new kinds of popular tourism can be found in the Co-operative Holidays Association’.<sup>14</sup>

The construction of rail links to the Lakes from the 1840s onwards brought in upper-class visitors and urban middle-class holidaymakers, leading to the development of a string of lakeside resorts such as Bowness-on-Windermere, Keswick and Ambleside, which provided accommodation and respectable entertainment in hotels and guesthouses. The more adventurous tourists stayed in rural hostelries and farmhouses thought to offer a more authentic taste of Lakeland life.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, as O’Neill demonstrates in his examination of Lake District tourism, prior to the First World War the Lake District mainly catered for a relatively small, niche market composed of those who wished to contemplate the scenery and savour the literary and artistic associations.<sup>16</sup>

### The inter-war years: the developing vision of Lakeland as a national playground

The overall structure of the holiday industry in the Lake District in the inter-war years showed few changes from that established prior to the First World War. However,

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<sup>14</sup> K. Hanley & J.K. Walton, *Constructing Cultural Tourism: John Ruskin and the Tourist Gaze*, p.175.

<sup>15</sup> See J.K. Walton & P.R. McGloin, ‘The tourist trade in Victorian Lakeland’, *Northern History*, 17 (1981), pp.15-82; O.M. Westall, (ed.) *Windermere in the nineteenth century*, (Lancaster: CNWRS, 1991).

<sup>16</sup> C. O’Neill, ‘The Most Magical Corner of England: Tourism, Preservation and the Development of the Lake District, 1919-1939’ in J.K. Walton (ed.), *Histories of Tourism: Representation, Identity and Conflict*, (Clevedon: Channel View Publications, 2005), pp.228.

thousands of day-trippers came on excursion trains from Lancashire, Yorkshire and the North-East and boarding houses, apartments and small hotels sprang up in the ‘honeypot’ resorts on the shores of Windermere, Ullswater, Coniston Water and Derwent Water to cater for the lower middle classes, the clerks, teachers and small businessmen, and the more affluent members of the working classes.<sup>17</sup> These visitors provided much of the clientele for the motor coach tours that criss-crossed Lakeland during the inter-war period. Increased mobility offered by the car also brought more people to the Lake District for day trips or weekend breaks and opened up the remoter parts of the Lake District. Touring holidays with short stays in several localities developed in parallel with the established pattern of a week’s or fortnight’s holiday in a hotel or boarding house.<sup>18</sup> As we shall see later, these changes in the holiday market also brought competition to the traditional holiday providers such as the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

As Urry acknowledges in *Consuming Places*, not all visitors to the Lake District embraced the dominant place-myth organised around the ‘romantic’ (and quiet) tourist gaze. Urry identifies a collective gaze based on conviviality and collective activity, instanced by the “day-trippers” to Bowness who ‘were not looking for peace and quiet but for the high life’.<sup>19</sup> Also overlapping with the perception of the Lake District as a ‘literary landscape’ was the developing vision of Lakeland as a ‘national playground of body and spirit for the common man’.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> C. O’Neill, *Histories of Tourism: Representation, Identity and Conflict*, pp.229-230.

<sup>18</sup> J.K. Walton, & C. O’Neill, *C. Sustainable Tourism in the English Lake District*, p. 31.

<sup>19</sup> J. Urry, *Consuming Places*, p.198.

<sup>20</sup> Quote from a pamphlet produced by the Friends of the Lake District, *Make the Lake District a National Park*, (1937), FoLD.

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The mountains and lakes of the Lake District offered a wide range of opportunities for the testing of strength, skill and stamina. Rock climbing, whose origins date from the 1880s with Walter Parry Hasket-Smith's solo climb of Napes Needle, was an early example of an adventure sport. Lehmann J Oppenheimer takes an idiosyncratic look at the early days of rock climbing in the Lakes.<sup>21</sup> Alan Hankinson, Harry Griffin and a number of other authors have documented the history of rock climbing in the English Lake District in the early days.<sup>22</sup>

The favoured meeting place for the early climbing community was the Wasdale Head Hotel; the Huntsman Inn of Will Ritson fame, where the enlightened members of the Alpine fraternity mixed with local men from the market towns and mining-villages on the periphery of the Lake District. After the First World War, the wider availability of motorised transport and the expansion of the club hut system broadened the appeal of rock climbing and, by the mid-1930s, the vanguard of what was to become the post-war proletarian invasion of climbing appeared, also coinciding with the increasing involvement of women in the sport.<sup>23</sup>

The Wayfarers' Club opened the first climbing hut, a converted barn, in England and the Lake District in 1930 in Great Langdale.<sup>24</sup> K-Fellfarers, originally formed as an employee benefit of the Kendal firm, Somervell Brothers, which subsequently became K Shoes, opened the second climbing hut in the Lake District, above Seathwaite in

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<sup>21</sup> L.J. Oppenheimer, *The Heart of Lakeland*, (London: Ernest Press, 1988), pp.3-12.

<sup>22</sup> See for example, A. Hankinson, *The First Tigers*, (London: J M Dent & Sons Ltd, 1972); A. Hankinson, *A Century on the crags: The story of rock climbing in the Lake District*, (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1988); A.H. Griffin, *The Coniston Tigers: Seventy years of mountain adventure*, (Wilmslow, Cheshire: Sigma Leisure, 2000).

<sup>23</sup> See C. Wells, *A brief History of British Mountaineering*, (The Mountain Heritage Trust, 2001), pp.51-55.

<sup>24</sup> See *100 Years of Wayfaring, 1906-2006*, (Wayfarers' Club, 2006), pp.19-26.

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Borrowdale, in 1934.<sup>25</sup> The FRCC had its headquarters in various hotels in Wasdale, Great Langdale, Coniston, Borrowdale and Buttermere until a hut, Brackenclose, was built in Wasdale in 1937.<sup>26</sup>

The 'hiking' boom also had its impact on the Lake District. The London, Midland and Scottish Railway actively marketed special ramblers' excursions from Lancashire towns.<sup>27</sup> In response, specialised accommodation emerged, not only catering for walkers but also for cyclists. The YHA had a network of over 20 hostels by 1939 catering for single, especially young, people.<sup>28</sup> The CTC had its own network of bed and breakfast establishments.<sup>29</sup>

A limited number of other organisations provided holidays for young people. The YMCA, founded in 1844, established its National Centre at Lakeside on Windermere in the early 1930s to provide holidays and training in an outdoor environment for schools and youth groups from all over the country and for young people in industry.<sup>30</sup> Youth organisations such as the Boys Brigade and Boy Scouts began to take young people to the Lake District, staying under canvas. A small number of education authorities ran school camps and the first tented 'holiday camps' appeared, providing cheap accommodation for hikers.<sup>31</sup>

The popularity of the Lake District during the inter-war period was a constant source of tension between landscape preservationists and those wishing to promote the area

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<sup>25</sup> M. Fox, (ed.), *K-Fellfarers and High House*, (K-Fellfarers, 2010).

<sup>26</sup> A. Hankinson, (1988) *A Century on the crags*, pp.134-135.

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, *Westmorland Gazette*, 16 June 1934.

<sup>28</sup> H. Maurice Jones & L. Porter, *The Spirit of YHA*, pp.119-124.

<sup>29</sup> See CTC Handbook and Guide, 1930, London: CTC.

<sup>30</sup> See J. Hunt, *In Search of Adventure* p.68.

<sup>31</sup> See M. Huggins & K. Gregson, 'Sport, Tourism and Place Identity in the Lake District, 1800-1950, in J.K. Walton & J. Wood (eds.), *The Making of a Cultural Landscape*, (2013), pp.191-192.

as a tourist destination. Cliff O'Neill highlights the effects of the development of motor transport, the changing leisure preferences and changing attitudes to the management of the environment.<sup>32</sup> The first arguments for making the Lake District a National Park began to surface.<sup>33</sup> Eminent geographer Vaughan Cornish considered Lakeland to be 'the National Park of Great Britain', unrivalled in its combination of scenic beauty and compact area with a well-defined boundary.<sup>34</sup> In his account of the invasion of the countryside by the townsman, the eminent philosopher, C.E.M. Joad, had forthright views on the threats to the countryside. He praised walking but railed against the un-bridled expansion of motoring and commercial tourism. He strongly supported the creation of a national park for the Lake District.<sup>35</sup>

It is not surprising that both the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship, founded to provide holidays that were recreative and educational and which inherited T A Leonard's ideals, should be strong supporters of national parks and, in particular, a national park for the Lake District. Both organisations were active members of the Campaign for National Parks and supporters of the English Lake District Association, the forerunner of the Friends of the Lake District, of which T A Leonard was a founder member.<sup>36</sup>

It is not necessary, here, to reprise the landscape preservation movement and the exhaustive campaign for national parks. The history of the national park movement in England and Wales is well covered in a number of texts, not least by Gordon Cherry.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> See C. O'Neill, *Histories of Tourism: Representation, Identity and Conflict*, pp.228-243.

<sup>33</sup> N. Birkett, 'The Preservation of Lakeland' in K.C. Chorley, *Lakeland: a playground for Britain*, (Whitehaven: Cloister Press for FRCC, 1930), pp.8-11.

<sup>34</sup> V. Cornish, *National Parks and the Heritage of Scenery*, (London: Sifton Praed, 1930), pp.29-33.

<sup>35</sup> C.E.M. Joad, *The Untutored Townsman's Invasion of the Country*, pp.90-106.

<sup>36</sup> See J. Cousins, *Friends of the Lake District: the early years*, (Lancaster: CNWRS, 2009), pp.9-23.

<sup>37</sup> See G. Cherry, *Environmental Planning 1939-1969, Vol. II: National Parks and Recreation in the Countryside*, (London: HMSO, 1975).

Blunden and Curry also provide a wide-ranging account of the development of the preservation movement and the public pressure for the designation of national parks.<sup>38</sup>

The Dower Report, which laid the foundations for the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, recognised the potential conflict between landscape preservation and recreational access. The report acknowledged, however, that it would be impossible, and in any case unjustifiable, to ‘deny national parks to motor tourists’. Nevertheless, in words reminiscent of those expressed by T A Leonard and the NHRU on the establishment of ‘rational’ holidays in the Lake District, Dower considered that:

*Those who come to national parks should be such as wish to enjoy and cherish the beauty and quietude of unspoilt country. For all who want to spend their holidays gregariously, and to enjoy the facilities-so well provided by the resorts-of cinemas, music-halls, dance-café, bathing pools, pleasure parks, promenades, shopping-centres and the like, National Parks are not the place.*<sup>39</sup>

The Lake District National Park was the second to be designated, in May 1951. Covering 2,292 sq. km., the Lake District was England’s largest national park. Its aims were to preserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area and promote the enjoyment of the area by the public.<sup>40</sup> Unfortunately, as highlighted by Ann & Malcolm MacEwen, none of those concerned with the formulation of the 1949 Act foresaw the full extent of the changes that were to take place in the post-war period.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> J. Blunden, & N. Curry, *A People’s Charter? Forty years of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949*, (London: HMSO, 1989), pp.6-61.

<sup>39</sup> The Dower Report, Cmnd. 6378, 1945, London: HMSO, p.305.

<sup>40</sup> See Section 5 of the National Park and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, London: HMSO.

<sup>41</sup> A. & M. MacEwen, *National Parks: conservation or cosmetics?* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1982), pp.21-29.



Post-war growth in recreational activity

As Ann & Malcolm MacEwen comment, the period from 1949 to the reorganisation of national parks in 1974 rapidly became the heyday of the affluent, mobile, consumer society.<sup>42</sup> Between 1945 and the mid-1970s, real disposable income per head doubled and car ownership increased eightfold; factors that led to a mass demand for countryside recreation. Statistics on visitors to the Lake District are limited but a number of surveys carried out by the National Park Authority, the Countryside Commission and the British Tourist Authority shed some light on the scale and nature of recreational activity in the Lake District during the second half of the century.

One estimate for the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland (a larger area than the national park but not including Lancashire) put the overnight capacity in about 1960 at 66,000 visitors.<sup>43</sup> According to Walton and O'Neill, 'This is probably a generous estimate but it is far ahead of any conceivable calculation for the 1930s'.<sup>44</sup> By the mid-1960s, when most of the Lake District's railways had closed, 70 per cent of staying visitors arrived by car.<sup>45</sup> By 1972, over 80 per cent of staying visitors travelled by car.<sup>46</sup>

A perspective on attitudes to the 'Lake District experience' is evident from a survey of visitors undertaken by the English Tourist Board in 1972, summarised in Walton &

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p.22.

<sup>43</sup> J.D. Marshall, & J.K. Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the mid-twentieth century: a study in regional change*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), p.234.

<sup>44</sup> J.K. Walton, & C. O'Neill, C. 'Tourism and the Lake District: social and cultural histories' p.32.

<sup>45</sup> Countryside Commission and British Tourist Authority, *Pleasure Traffic and Recreation in the Lake District*, (London: HMSO, 1969).

<sup>46</sup> English Tourist Board (1973) *The Marketing and Development of Tourism in the English Lakes Counties*, P.A. Management Consultants, p.

O'Neill. This showed that driving around the countryside appealed to 70 per cent of visitors, sight-seeing in towns and villages appealed to 58 per cent and shopping appealed to 52 per cent. According to Walton & O'Neill:

*Here was tourism on a more 'industrial' scale: the landscape was a pretty accompaniment to more conventional holiday activities, rather than, for most people, an awe-inspiring end in itself. The Lake District had become more playground than literary landscape or place in which to communicate with nature.<sup>47</sup>*

A survey carried out by the Lake District Special Planning Board in 1975 reinforces this image. It showed that more than half the visitors did not move 'very far' from their cars, but simply wanted somewhere to relax, picnic or take a short stroll to a viewpoint. Nevertheless, the survey showed that the most popular activity was walking (55%), with over 20% walking more than 4 miles, of which half went 'fell walking'.<sup>48</sup>

This period saw a substantial increase in the provision of outdoor activity centres for young people. The Brathay Hall Trust, founded in 1946 by Francis Scott, provided multi-activity holidays for school-leavers, both boys and girls.<sup>49</sup> Outward Bound Mountain Schools at Eskdale and Ullswater, established in 1949, flourished.<sup>50</sup> In 1964, the National Park Authority leased Hassness House in the Buttermere valley to the Ramblers' Association as an outdoor centre. It is now run by Ramblers Holidays,

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<sup>47</sup> J.K. Walton, & C. O'Neill, 'Tourism and the Lake District: social and cultural histories', p.33.

<sup>48</sup> Draft National Park Plan, Lake District Special Planning Board, June 1977, paragraph 10.16.

<sup>49</sup> See M. Dybeck, *A Broad River*, Brathay Hall Trust (2005), p.37-40.

<sup>50</sup> Tom Price provides an illuminating account of his time as Warden of Eskdale Outward Bound in the 1960s in *Travails so Gladly Spent*, (2000), pp.178-185.

originally the commercial arm of the Ramblers' Association.<sup>51</sup> A number of local authorities opened their own outdoor centres; seven are listed in the Lake District National Park Authority's National Park Guide, published in 1975:<sup>52</sup> Mountaineering clubs proliferated after the Second World War and over thirty huts were established in the Lake District in converted barns, cottages, former schools and shooting lodges, with accommodation for over 600 persons (see Appendix 15).<sup>53</sup>

By the 1980s, the Lake District had one of the heaviest concentrations of outdoor activity centres in England; the LDNPA estimated that there were over 60 outdoor education and field study centres.<sup>54</sup> At the end of the century, thirty centres were licensed by the AALA, including two former CHA guest houses (Bassenfell Christian Centre and Glaramara) and two former Holiday Fellowship centres (Newlands and Hawse End) (see Appendix 16).<sup>55</sup> There were 27 youth hostels with over 1,600 bed-spaces.<sup>56</sup>

Information on the number of visitors to national parks in the latter part of the twentieth century is sketchy but 'guestimates' for the Lake District for the 1980s range between 15 million and 20 million visitor days annually.<sup>57</sup> The *1994 All Parks Visitor Survey*, carried out on behalf of the Countryside Commission, estimated that there were 13.9 million visitor days to the Lake District National Park, but acknowledged that this was a substantial under-estimate.<sup>58</sup> The survey found that the

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<sup>51</sup> J.R. Robinson, *A sort of national property...*, Lake District National Park Authority (2011), p.14.

<sup>52</sup> National Park Guide 1975, LDNPA.

<sup>53</sup> Based on detailed information obtained from over thirty club secretaries.

<sup>54</sup> Lake District Special Planning Board, *National Park Plan Review 1985*, pp.120-125.

<sup>55</sup> See [www.hse.gov.uk/aala](http://www.hse.gov.uk/aala) for a list of all licensed providers.

<sup>56</sup> See YHA Annual Reports for 2000, YHA Archive, University of Birmingham.

<sup>57</sup> A. & M. MacEwan, *National Parks: conservation or cosmetics?* p.79.

<sup>58</sup> Countryside Commission *Visitors to National Parks: Summary of the 1994 survey carried out by the Centre for Leisure Research et al*, (Cheltenham: Countryside Commission, 1996), Table 5, p.42.

‘scenery/landscape’ was still the most frequently mentioned reason for visiting national parks; mentioned by 62 per cent of those people visiting the Lake District National Park. Peace and quiet was only mentioned by 26 per cent of respondents and interestingly, only 22 per cent of respondents mentioned taking part in an outdoor activity as a reason for visiting the Lake District.<sup>59</sup> However, almost a third of holidaymakers, those visitors staying overnight, described their visit as an ‘active’ one, with time spent on outdoor pursuits such as hill/fell walking and mountain biking, and a further third were on a ‘moderately active’ holiday, going for short walks and/or cycling.<sup>60</sup>

At the end of the century, according to market research undertaken for the Cumbria Tourist Board in 2002, the most common reasons for visiting Cumbria related to the physical characteristics of the region (the lakes, mountains, countryside and scenery).<sup>61</sup> The authors of the report concluded that the picture that emerges is one of a ‘rural idyll’, an image of the English countryside that is debated at length in Mingay’s *The Rural Idyll*.<sup>62</sup> Nevertheless, although that part of Cumbria known as the Lake District is perceived to be somewhere to visit for the beauty and tranquillity of its outdoor scenery, five of the top seven activities indulged in by visitors were town based or sedentary: visiting towns, shopping, visiting restaurants and pubs, and driving around by car. Indeed, the most common physical activity was not particularly strenuous in nature: taking short walks of no more than 2 miles.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> See Centre for Leisure Research (1995) *1994 All Parks Visitor Survey: Report of the survey in the Lake District National Park, Vol.4*, Centre for Leisure Research, Table 4.5 on page 24.

<sup>60</sup> See Centre for Leisure Research, *1994 All Parks Visitor Survey*, Table 4.7 on page 29.

<sup>61</sup> Creative Research (2002) *Cumbria Tourism Survey 2002: Report of Findings*, London: Creative Research, p.22.

<sup>62</sup> See A. Rogers ‘People in the countryside’ in G.E. Mingay (ed.), *The Rural Idyll*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p.111; P. Lowe, ‘The rural idyll defended’ in G.E. Mingay (ed.), *The Rural Idyll*, (London: Routledge, 1989), pp.113-127.

<sup>63</sup> Creative Research *Cumbria Tourism Survey 2002*, p.10.

This analysis of recreational activities shows that the most popular activities at the end of the century were similar to those of the 1970s: driving around the countryside, sight-seeing in towns and villages, visiting heritage attractions, pubs and restaurants and shopping. At the end of the century, a larger proportion of walkers undertook walks in the valleys and around lakes than thirty years previously, with a lower proportion venturing on to the fells than in past decades. The demographic profile of visitors was dominated by middle class and upper working class visitors, mainly adult groups from the North of England.<sup>64</sup>

Against the background of the changing perception of the Lake District from shrine to nature to national playground, this chapter examines the continuities and changes in the role of the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship in the Lake District in terms of the accommodation provided, the holidays pursued, their constituency and their philosophy of friendship and fellowship.

### **The Role of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in the Lake District, 1919-2000**

#### Accommodation provided

After the initial visit, by Leonard and his Social Guild from Colne, to Smallwood House, Ambleside in 1891, Smallwood House and a number of small houses in Stanger Street, Keswick were used in 1893, parties exchanging centres mid-week.<sup>65</sup> Subsequent CHA parties stayed at Greenhow's Hotel (26 Main Street), Keswick in

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<sup>64</sup> See Creative Research *Cumbria Tourism Survey 2002*, pp.11-12.

<sup>65</sup> F. N. Pringle, *A Week among the Lakes*, *The Independent and Nonconformist*, 31 August 1893, GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/1.

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1894 and 1895 and The Towers, Portinscale from 1896 to 1899.<sup>66</sup> Ambleside was not used as a centre again until 1909 when the property referred to by Leonard as ‘Green Bank’ provided accommodation for some 400 guests during the summer months each year until 1924 (see Figure 23).<sup>67</sup> This property was in fact ‘Scale How’, re-named by Charlotte Mason when purchased in 1895 for her ‘House of Education’ and which subsequently formed the centre-piece of the Charlotte Mason College, now the site of the University of Cumbria’s Ambleside Campus.<sup>68</sup> The choice of an educational establishment as a CHA holiday centre reinforced Leonard’s philosophy of developing holidays that were both recreative and educational. Charlotte Mason, herself, may well have entertained guests.<sup>69</sup> Green Bank was also situated opposite ‘The Knoll’ the residence of Harriet Martineau, a friend of Wordsworth, and a writer whose works also had some influence on Leonard.<sup>70</sup>



**Figure 23: CHA Group at Green Bank, Ambleside, July 1915.  
(a soldier is discernible, fourth row, extreme right)**

<sup>66</sup> See details of arrangements in GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/1.

<sup>67</sup> See R. Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.7.

<sup>68</sup> See J.P. Inman, (1985), *Charlotte Mason College*, Winchester: Cormorant Press, p.10; D. Russo, (undated) *Charlotte Mason: A Pioneer of Sane Education*, Ambleside: The Armit Trust.

<sup>69</sup> See Programme, *Summer Holidays at Ambleside, 1916*, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/2.

<sup>70</sup> Her *Guide to the English Lakes* was an essential reading item.

The use of University and College halls of residence was a common practice by the CHA in the pre-First World War era, a practice subsequently adopted by the Holiday Fellowship.

Newlands Mill at Stair, near Keswick, was purchased for £750 in 1905 to provide a permanent base for holidays in the north of the Lake District as an alternative to rented accommodation. Originally a woollen mill, it had been used for grinding graphite for the pencil industry in Keswick but had lain derelict since 1900.

According to Leonard: “We converted the drab, dirty, old mill into a place of sweetness and light”.<sup>71</sup> When Leonard left the CHA in 1913 to form the Holiday Fellowship, the transfer of Newlands Mill, which had been his first purchase, was high on his agenda.<sup>72</sup> Recognising the value of Newlands, the CHA’s agreement to sell the property to the Holiday Fellowship was subject to the proviso that should the Holiday Fellowship cease to use the property, the CHA reserved the right to re-purchase at valuation.<sup>73</sup>

Another guest house was acquired by the CHA in the Lake District prior to the First World War; Stanley Ghyll House, a former hotel, in Eskdale was acquired in 1912.<sup>74</sup> Stanley Ghyll House was located in the remoter western Lake District and the only effective access was by the L&NW (later LMS) railway from Lancaster to Ravenglass and thence by the Ravenglass-Eskdale (La’al Ratty) railway to Boot; hardy guests walked the seven miles through the woodlands of the Esk Valley. Stanley Ghyll

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<sup>71</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, pp.40-41.

<sup>72</sup> See letter of resignation dated 28 November 1912, GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/3.

<sup>73</sup> See CHA General Committee Minute, 26 April 2013, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/4.

<sup>74</sup> R. Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.40.

House was never as popular as other more accessible centres in England but it was held in high regard by those that visited the guest house.

In his memoirs, Leonard comments that ‘Eskdale never failed to attract real walkers and climbers’.<sup>75</sup> That it was held in high regard by guests is illustrated by the positive stories of holidays there that figure regularly in the ‘Holiday Memories Competition’, a regular feature of the CHA’s magazine *Comradeship*.<sup>76</sup> One such article, ‘Essence of Eskdale’ enthusiastically reflects on the joys of a holiday in the Lake District with the CHA:

*What memories, of sun and rain and wind in “God’s Great Outdoors”; of the joys of comradeship; of new ideas of people and places. Oh! What a CHA holiday.*<sup>77</sup>

In 1919, having disposed of Newlands Mill, the CHA operated two guest houses in the Lake District; ‘Green Bank’ in Ambleside, on a short-season tenancy, and Stanley Ghyll House in Eskdale; the Holiday Fellowship operated Newlands Mill outside Keswick. In 1925, the CHA acquired Forest Side, Grasmere as a replacement for ‘Green Bank’, which fell short of what the CHA required, only providing holidays for a limited period during the summer season.<sup>78</sup> Forest Side was typical of the country houses coming onto the market in the 1920s and 1930s. It had been built by the Earl of Lonsdale in 1853 and was sited within forty acres of grounds, with a coach house

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<sup>75</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, pp.48.

<sup>76</sup> see for instance, ‘Eskdale 1924’, *Comradeship*, Vol. XVI, No.3, March 1925, p.13, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2.

<sup>77</sup> ‘Essence of Eskdale’, *Comradeship*, Vol. XII, No.1, November 1920, pp.10-11, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2.

<sup>78</sup> ‘Our New Centre’, *Comradeship*, Vol. XVI, No.3, March 1925, p.2, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2.



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attached that was converted to self-catering flats.<sup>79</sup> It was ideally located in southern Lakeland, close to Grasmere, Helvellyn and the Langdale Valley, and could accommodate parties of fifty or more guests all the year round.

The Holiday Fellowship established a mountain centre in Great Langdale at Wall End Farm in 1926 and a ‘country house’ centre at Hawse End on Derwent Water in 1928 to complement its more strenuous centre at Newlands. The establishment of the Langdale Centre was not without controversy, as Leonard recounts.<sup>80</sup> Following an exploration of Great Langdale, he first of all found a site in Mickleden that suited his vision of a mountain centre of huts similar to those he had seen in the Alps. However, objections were raised by a number of influential friends, including Canon Rawnsley, who considered that “while he rejoiced that the love and knowledge of the higher fells should spread among the workers of our towns.....he and others felt, nevertheless, that those recesses owed their highest charm to the fact that they contained no handiwork of man.” According to Leonard, “A plea so courteously presented could meet with but one response”.<sup>81</sup> Accordingly, he abandoned the idea of a site in Mickleden and took one lower down at Wall End Farm (see Figure 24 below).

The spring 1926 edition of *Over the Hills* describes the centre thus: ‘This consisted of several small two and four bedded chalets and one larger building containing the kitchen, common room/dining room, one bath and one shower. There was one hot water tap, otherwise one used cold water from the jugs and basins in the chalets. A wind-up gramophone in the common room was fixed to the wall because the floor

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<sup>79</sup> R. Speake, *A Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.52.

<sup>80</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, pp.78-79.

<sup>81</sup> See correspondence in Langdale Camp file, HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

bounced too much when people were dancing'.<sup>82</sup> Wall End Farm epitomised Leonard's vision of simple and strenuous accommodation and his philosophy of communal and collective responsibility.



Wall End, Langdale

Photo by Hamilton-Fisher

**Figure 24: Holiday Fellowship centre: Wall End Farm, Great Langdale.**

As mentioned in chapter four, the tenancy of the property 'Hawse End' on Derwent Water also gave rise to some strong criticism, this time from Holiday Fellowship members themselves.<sup>83</sup> According to Leonard, it was the antithesis of Newlands, a Spartan mountain centre, from which it was only a quarter of an hour's walk, and what the Fellowship as a whole was supposed to stand for.<sup>84</sup> Leonard's comments on the changing emphasis of the Lake District centres provide a clear example of the forthcoming tensions within the Holiday Fellowship between the 'traditionalists' and the 'modernisers'.

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<sup>82</sup> HF Magazine, *Over the Hills*, Spring 1926, HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

<sup>83</sup> See HF Magazine, *Over the Hills*, Spring 1929, HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale

<sup>84</sup> T.A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.80.

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Prompted by members who had holidayed on the continent with the *Jugendherbergen* and wanted to tour rather than stay in one centre for a week, and reflecting the wider changes in the holiday market, the Holiday Fellowship, under Leonard's guidance, advertised 'Lakeland Tours' in 1929, which centred on camps at Wall End Farm, Hawse End and Glenridding, equipped with sufficient bedding and cooking facilities for eight individuals. In *Over the Hills*, an article proclaimed: 'The idea of a walking tour with sleeping accommodation throughout has long been a dream'.<sup>85</sup> The first tours proved an immediate success and ran for a number of years and were repeated in North Wales. These touring holidays, based on simple camping-style accommodation, were the precursor of the youth hostel movement.

Until the establishment of youth hostels in 1930, there was little competition from other providers of 'rational' holidays. In the Lake District, the Wesleyan Methodist Guild (now Christian Guild) established its centre at Abbott Hall, Kent's Bank near Grange over Sands in 1915. This centre was organised on similar lines to the CHA guest houses. The rival Friendship Holidays Association, following in Leonard's footsteps, used 'Green Bank', Ambleside as a summer holiday base from 1925 until the early 1950s.

The 1930s saw considerable changes in holiday provision. Five Lake District hostels appear in the first YHA Handbook (for 1931): Barrow House on Derwent Water, Wray Castle on Windermere, Force Forge at Satterthwaite; Damson Dene at Crosthwaite; and Elm Lea at Milnethorpe.<sup>86</sup> By 1939 there was a network of over 20 youth hostels in the Lake District, out of a total of almost 300 hostels in England and

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<sup>85</sup> See HF Magazine, *Over the Hills*, March 1930, HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale

<sup>86</sup> See YHA Handbook of Hostels, 1931, Welwyn Garden City: YHA, p.16.

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Wales (see Appendix 13). These hostels varied in size and quality from the Keswick Hostel (a former hotel) to the Black Sail Hut, a former shepherd's house in Ennerdale. In 1939, these 24 hostels provided over 800 beds and accommodated 61,000 bed-nights out of a national total of almost 540,000.<sup>87</sup>

Although the early 1930s was a period of un-paralleled industrial depression, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship continued to grow nationally. In the Lake District, the CHA expanded with the construction of a purpose-built centre, Glaramara, located near Seatoller in Borrowdale. It was built in 1934 and described as the 'Association's new Holiday Hostel and Youth Guest House at Seatoller'.<sup>88</sup> It was a Swiss chalet style building, rather incongruous in its English Lake District surroundings, with interior decoration that incorporated reliefs, reputedly designed by sculptor Eric Gill, that are not too dissimilar to reliefs in the Art Deco Midland Hotel in Morecambe built in 1932-33.<sup>89</sup> The accommodation was Spartan, with accommodation for 44 guests in bunk beds in separate male and female dormitories. Electricity had not reached Borrowdale and hot water was provided by a coal-fired boiler in the cellar.

Glaramara continued as a Spartan 'strenuous mountain centre' until the 1970s when guests' expectations resulted in the decision to upgrade the centre. Consequently, a new bedroom wing was added in 1978, designed and finished in traditional materials more in keeping with its location within a national park. The new wing provided more spacious accommodation in 14 double-bedrooms and the dormitory accommodation in the existing building was converted to 18 single rooms, with shared

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<sup>87</sup> H. Maurice-Jones & L. Porter, *The Spirit of YHA*, p.124.

<sup>88</sup> See Minute of General Committee, August 1935, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/1/6.

<sup>89</sup> From conversation with Graham Oglethorpe, Manager, Glaramara Outdoor Centre, 18 July 2012.

bathroom and toilet facilities.<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless, the centre continued to be described as providing ‘simple, down to earth comforts in hostel style accommodation’ and continued to concentrate on providing strenuous walking holidays, for experienced walkers, including youth groups, until it was closed in 1999.<sup>91</sup>

The Holiday Fellowship also expanded during the 1930s; the number of centres nationally increased from 25 to 34. On the termination of the lease of Hawse End, Derwent Bank on the shores of Derwent Water was purchased in 1937. It provided accommodation for about 70 guests. Notwithstanding the criticism, by some members, of the ‘comfortable accommodation’ at Hawse End, Derwent Bank offered similar ‘country house’ accommodation in stark contrast with the Spartan accommodation provided at the Newlands Centre.<sup>92</sup> According to a Secretary at Derwent Bank in the 1940s:

*Derwent Bank was called the ‘arm-chair’ centre in comparison with Newlands down the valley; all stone floors and some-what bleak with a reputation as tough. Nevertheless, all accommodation was in dormitories, married couples had to separate. Washing was communal, using basins on a long stone shelf with a little curtain for privacy if desired.*<sup>93</sup>

During the Second World War, although many CHA and Holiday Fellowship guest houses were requisitioned, the Lake District centres continued to operate and were relatively unaffected other than being subject to rationing restrictions. Holiday brochures emphasised the requirement to bring ration books on holiday: ‘Before

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<sup>90</sup> See plans and related correspondence, Borrowdale Centre, GMCRO, B/CHA/ADM/7/104.

<sup>91</sup> See 1993 CHA Holiday brochure, p.13, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

<sup>92</sup> See Derwent Bank, Portinscale brochure for 1947, HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

<sup>93</sup> Extract from letter from Joyce Witham in HF Archive (Derwent Bank), Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

leaving home make certain that all pages are intact and in order!'.<sup>94</sup> Indeed, CHA annual reports record that the accommodation available was being used to capacity and that: 'a large number of applicants for accommodation had to be refused and this was a source of great regret to us'.<sup>95</sup> As a consequence, short-season tenancy centres at Ambleside and Bassenthwaite were used by the CHA.<sup>96</sup> The Fairfield School in Ambleside, sited opposite Scale How on Rydal Road, and also associated with Charlotte Mason, was used as a short-season summer tenancy from 1942-1947. Bassenfell House, near Bassenthwaite village, a former girl's school was acquired in 1942. It provided accommodation for 52 guests and was well served by the Cockermouth, Keswick and Penrith railway line but when it closed in the early 1960s, the CHA terminated the lease and closed the centre.<sup>97</sup>

Loughrigg Brow outside Ambleside was acquired in 1944 to provide further accommodation in the popular Ambleside/Windermere area. It accommodated 60 guests in two, three or four bed-rooms and was described as 'a commodious house with beautifully wooded grounds'. The acquisition of Loughrigg Brow mirrored the CHA's policy, elsewhere, of acquiring 'country house' style properties with the potential for improved facilities. It offered holidays from Easter to the end of September and replaced the short-season centre, Fairfield School, in Ambleside. Together with Grasmere it satisfied the demand for less strenuous walking holidays (category 2) and complemented the provision of more Spartan accommodation and more strenuous walking holidays at the Eskdale and Borrowdale centres.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> See, for example, CHA Summer Holidays 1946, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

<sup>95</sup> See for example, CHA Annual reports for 1942 & 1943 (back cover), GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/1.

<sup>96</sup> See, for example, CHA Summer Holidays 1946, p.9, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/

<sup>97</sup> See R. Speake, *One Hundred Years of Holidays*, p.51.

<sup>98</sup> See, CHA Summer Holidays 1946, p.4, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

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The Holiday Fellowship's centres at Newlands Mill, Derwent Bank and Langdale continued operating throughout the Second World War, although the total number of centres used was reduced from 33 in 1939 to 14 in 1942/43.<sup>99</sup> Grizedale Hall, located between lakes Windermere and Coniston Water and leased from the Forestry Commission in the summer of 1939, was open for a very short time before being requisitioned by the War Office as a Prisoner of War Camp to hold German officer prisoners. As many were survivors of sunken U-boats, it became known as the "U-boat Hotel".<sup>100</sup> Unfortunately, the Holiday Fellowship was unable to capitalise on the war-time exploits of its occupants after the war, for the property was left in a very bad state and although included in the holiday brochure for 1947/48 it was never opened as a centre and the lease was surrendered in 1948.<sup>101</sup> The property, left abandoned by the Forestry Commission, was demolished in 1957.

The Holiday Fellowship had more success with its leasing from the National Trust of Monk Coniston, overlooking Coniston Water, in 1945. Once owned by Beatrix Potter and regularly visited by John Ruskin when owned by the Marshall family, this property had strong attachments with the founders of the Holiday Fellowship.<sup>102</sup> Monk Coniston provided accommodation for 70 guests in a variety of different sized bedrooms and would become one of HF Holidays flagship centres, continuing to operate until the end of the century.

As detailed in chapter three, there was an astonishing proliferation of outdoor holiday providers after the Second World War. In the Lake District, the number of youth

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<sup>99</sup> See Annual Reports for 1942/43, HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

<sup>100</sup> See history of Grizedale Hall as a POW Camp on [www.bbm.org.uk/GrizedaleHall.htm](http://www.bbm.org.uk/GrizedaleHall.htm).

<sup>101</sup> See C. Johnson, *The History of the Holiday Fellowship, 1941-1980*, p.32.

<sup>102</sup> See D. Holdsworth, 'The History of Monk Coniston', HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

hostels remained fairly static, at around the 25 mark, but the number of beds provided increased considerably as older, smaller ‘adopted’ hostels utilising leased property were replaced by larger, more modern premises. By the 1960s, the 26 hostels in the Lake District provided over 1500 beds, compared with 800 in 1939.<sup>103</sup> In comparison, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship concentrated their activities on their existing six centres, which together provided 400 beds.

The DART study of 1980 identified 213 outdoor centres within Cumbria, 125 of which were located within the Lake District National Park with a further 46 within a 10 mile zone surrounding it, the second largest concentration of centres after Snowdonia.<sup>104</sup> The figure of 125 centres is comparable with the total of 143 hotels, guest houses, youth hostels, climbing huts, outdoor pursuits and field study centres, and other residential centres that accommodated groups in a 1978 survey by the National Park’s Youth and Schools Liaison Service.<sup>105</sup>

In terms of the wider holiday accommodation available, the national park authority estimated in 1977 that there were around 1,100 motels, hotels, inns, guest houses and private houses and farms offering bed and breakfast, able to accommodate perhaps 15,000 people.<sup>106</sup> In addition, there were 1,758 dwellings in the national park used entirely as second or holiday homes plus many holiday flats converted from former hotels and purpose-built chalets.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> See YHA Annual Reports for 1939 and 1965, YHA Archive, University of Birmingham.

<sup>104</sup> See Chapter 9B of DART, *Groups in the Countryside*, pp.141-160.

<sup>105</sup> See *Group Activity in the Lake District*, LDNPA Youth and Schools Liaison Service, 1978.

<sup>106</sup> Lake District Special Planning Board, *National Park Plan 1978*, paragraph 12.3.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, paragraph 12.7.



Mirroring national trends in the growth of car ownership between 1955 and 1974, there was a tremendous increase in caravan sites in the Lake District. In 1952, the total capacity of all sites was less than 600 caravans. In 1976, there were over 7,000 caravan pitches in the national park, of which 1,400 were reserved for touring caravans.<sup>108</sup> There were also about 2,000 tent pitches on licensed sites and a further 1,500 pitches available on unlicensed sites. In addition, organisations such as the Boys Brigade and the Scout Association made considerable use of other sites and wild camping was significant in several locations in the fells.<sup>109</sup>

At the end of the century, it was estimated that at least 60,000 visitors could be accommodated overnight in the national park. The LDNPA did not have an accurate record of the stock of accommodation but it was estimated that serviced accommodation amounted to over 1,200 premises providing 18,000 bed-spaces.<sup>110</sup> In addition, there were about 1,000 self-catering cottages, flats, chalets and camping barns providing an estimated 5,000 bed-spaces.<sup>111</sup> Approximately 4,500 static caravans were sited on 100 sites and there were some 2,600 touring caravan pitches on 89 sites.<sup>112</sup> There were approximately 3,000 approved camping pitches but surveys suggested that double that number of tents might be pitched during peak periods.<sup>113</sup>

Against this background of continually expanding holiday accommodation, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship strove to maintain their position in the Lake District. As the CHA wrestled with the changing patterns of holiday making and competition from

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., paragraph 12.15.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid., paragraph 12.35.

<sup>110</sup> Lake District National Park Local Plan, LDNPA, (1998), p.41.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p.44-45.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p.47-52.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p.53.

rival providers, and reduced its property portfolio by a third in the 1980s, the Lake District centres were retained and improved. CHA Annual Reports record the recurring investment on Lake District properties in an attempt to satisfy consumer demands and maintain market share; improvements to kitchens and food preparation areas, fire precaution work including the installation of fire alarms and emergency lighting, exterior painting, provision of en-suite facilities, the re-styling of bedrooms and improvements to drying rooms.<sup>114</sup> In 1986, the access to Loughrigg Brow was resurfaced and major roof repairs were carried out.<sup>115</sup> In 1987, the Forest Side Coach House was converted to provide five self-catering flats, each for up to four persons, and seven twin-bedded en-suite rooms.<sup>116</sup>

As described in chapter four, mounting debts and poor management led to further closures and by 1997, a hundred years after the founding of the CHA, only six centres remained in operation; the CHA had retreated to its heartland of the Lake District where its four centres remained in operation.<sup>117</sup> Nevertheless, this rationalisation only delayed the inevitable and Loughrigg Brow, Ambleside was sold off in 1997 and converted to holiday apartments. Continuing financial uncertainty resulted in the sale of Forest Side, Grasmere and Glaramara in Borrowdale in 1999. Stanley Ghyll House in Eskdale, the last CHA property to be disposed of, was sold in 2002.<sup>118</sup>

The Lake District did not rank as highly with the Holiday Fellowship as it did with the CHA. With a large number of centres (38) distributed throughout England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, the two ‘country house’ style Lake District centres nevertheless

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<sup>114</sup> See CHA Annual Reports for 1981, 1983 & 1985, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>115</sup> See CHA Annual Report for 1986, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>116</sup> See CHA Annual Report for 1987, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2.

<sup>117</sup> See 1997 Countrywide Holidays Annual Report, Countrywide Holidays Archive.

<sup>118</sup> See 2002 Countrywide Holidays Annual Report, Countrywide Holidays Archive

accommodated some ten per cent of the Holiday Fellowship's total guests.<sup>119</sup> The Holiday Fellowship continued to invest heavily in Derwent Bank, which was the most popular centre with over 3,000 guest weeks per annum. From the 1960s onwards it was open all year round (one of only five in 1965), with partial central heating and hot and cold water in all bedrooms.<sup>120</sup> Constant improvements reduced the beds available from 90 beds in 1965 to 68 beds by 1984, and at the end of the century, Derwent Bank offered accommodation for 74 persons in 37 twin-bedded en-suite bedrooms. Monk Coniston remained a valued centre up to the end of the century with improved facilities, although its listing as a Grade II Listed Building restricted physical alterations to the property. Nevertheless, at the end of the century, Monk Coniston offered 33 double-bedrooms, most with en-suite facilities

The above analysis shows that the performance of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in the Lake District mirrored, to a large extent, the changes and continuities in their activities nation-wide. As the twentieth century progressed, their role as holiday providers diminished considerably. From a position of dominance in the provision of outdoor holidays in the inter-war period, at the end of the century, the Holiday Fellowship, with two centres providing 130 bed-spaces, remained but one small provider amongst a vast array of outdoor holiday providers.

#### Activities: recreative and educational holidays

The first trips to the Lake District offered a holiday experience that allowed mill workers from industrial Lancashire to make contact with the area's literary heritage

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<sup>119</sup> See HF Annual Reports for 1964/65-1969/70, HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

<sup>120</sup> See HF Holiday Programme for 1965, p.16, HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

and its landscape, and also with a traditional way of life, typified by the yeoman farmer, the Lakeland ‘Statesman’.<sup>121</sup> The opportunity to commune with nature was a philosophy espoused by Thoreau, whose writings influenced Leonard’s approach to holiday making.<sup>122</sup> The emphasis of these early trips, therefore, was very much on compulsory daily rambles supplemented by lectures on ‘place names, rocks and plants and historical associations’.<sup>123</sup> As mentioned in chapter two, Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley introduced parties to the teachings of Ruskin and the poetry of Wordsworth. Other guides and lecturers gave talks on a wide range of subjects, including the geology and landscape of the area.<sup>124</sup>

In early issues of the CHA’s magazine *Comradeship*, accounts of walks in the Lake District encapsulate the emotional and intellectual experience gained. An extract from an account of an ascent of the Langdale Pikes, under the heading ‘Vignettes of a Holiday at Ambleside’, portrays poetically the pleasure at reaching the summit:

*Noon finds us, refreshed physically, viewing the landscape from our eminence. The babble of the Babel ceases as we behold the peace and grandeur around us. The tumultuous waste of great hill tops, the peaceful valley below make our noisy years seem moments in the being of the eternal silence.....Though our thoughts are unspoken, we feel nature’s touch harmonising our thoughts.*<sup>125</sup>

Contributions also glorify the joy of walking ‘the windy ridges of high, distant hills’ and excursions ‘which always get to the top of some recognizable summit where,

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<sup>121</sup> See R. Millward & A. Robinson, *The Lake District*, London: Eyre Methuen, 1974), pp.176-202.

<sup>122</sup> See H. D. Thoreau, *Walden: or Life in the Woods* (1854) Boston: Ticknor and Fields;

<sup>123</sup> T A Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.23

<sup>124</sup> See F. N. Pringle, *A Week among the Lakes*, *The Independent and Nonconformist*, 31 August 1893, p. 164 (GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/1).

<sup>125</sup> *Comradeship*, Vol. XII, No.1, November 1920, p.11, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2. See also ‘Fairyland at Grasmere’, *Comradeship*, Vol. XVIII, No.1, October 1926, pp.12-13, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2.

except on those occasions (more frequent than we should like) when mist or rain robs us of our due reward, we stand for a while engaged in the pleasant pastime of identifying the peaks and passes that are spread before our delighted eyes'.<sup>126</sup>

Articles on the Lake District are less prominent in the Holiday Fellowship's magazine *Over the Hills*, perhaps reflecting the rather less weight attached to the Lake District centres within its holiday operation and also the southern bias of its membership.<sup>127</sup>

Nevertheless, the opening of Derwent Bank in 1937 prompted an article on its superb setting and the literary associations of the locality; Coleridge and Southey at Greta Hall, Lamb and Shelley in Keswick, and the patronage of the Royal Oak Hotel by Walter Scott, Tennyson, Robert Louis Stevenson and the Wordsworths. According to the article: 'Our new acquisition has everything the sensitive, literary and open-air lover could want. There is a rich bounty of history and beauty on its doorstep'.<sup>128</sup>

After the Second World War, there is less emphasis on the literary associations; articles tend to be more descriptive of holidays taken in the Lake District, such as 'Waiting on Blencathra', an article in *CHA Magazine* which relates the writer's introduction to walking in the Lake District in 1962 with a perilous ascent of Blencathra via Sharp Edge.<sup>129</sup> However, literary associations are not completely absent and another article describes the writer's pleasure at attending a 'Wordsworth Weekend' at Loughrigg Brow, Ambleside in 1963.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> See 'Eskdale: An Appreciation', *Comradeship*, Vol. XV, No.4, May 1924, pp.7-8, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2; 'Off-Days on the Fells', *Comradeship*, Vol. XVII, No.2, December 1925, pp.4-5, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/2;

<sup>127</sup> See chapter 5.

<sup>128</sup> Extract from HF Magazine, *Over the Hills*, Spring 1938, No.58, HF Archive.

<sup>129</sup> 'Waiting on Blencathra', *CHA Magazine*, Vol. LIII, No.1, Summer 1962, pp.18-19, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/12.

<sup>130</sup> 'An Evening with Wordsworth', *CHA Magazine*, Vol. LIV, No.2, Winter 1963, p.12, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/1/12

The Holiday Fellowship's magazine *Over the Hills* also contains a blend of articles on the literary associations of the Lake District and on the adventure of tackling the Lakeland fells. One such contribution describes the haunts of the Lake Poets and expresses the opinion that:

*In this beautiful countryside, sacred to the memory of the Lake Poets, one cannot tread where they trod, and gaze upon the scenes which they gazed upon, without catching a little of the spirit which inspired some of the noblest poetry in the English language.*<sup>131</sup>

Early holiday programmes for the Lake District centres of both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship draw attention to the literary associations of the area. For instance, the CHA's 1935 Centre Guide for Forest Side, Grasmere emphasises 'the homely charm' of the surrounding area that 'attracted famous people to live here; Wordsworth, De Quincey, Coleridge and Canon Rawnsley, an early Vice-President of the CHA'.<sup>132</sup> The Holiday Fellowship's Newlands Youth Guest House brochure, appealing to a younger clientele, glorifies the landscape of the area in terms of its poets and writers:

*What could be more pleasant than to wander in the footsteps of Rogue Herries down the twisting road to Watendlath and have tea in the home of Judith Paris beside the silent tarn, surrounded by the hills of Lakeland.*<sup>133</sup>

T A Leonard's first holidays to the Lake District were meant to renew the spirit as well as being physically active; an alternative to the seaside holiday that led to the

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<sup>131</sup> 'Homes of the Lake Poets', *Over the Hills*, Winter 1967/1968, Vol. 2 No.23, pp.24-25, HF Archive.

<sup>132</sup> Grasmere Centre Guide, CHA 1935 Summer Holidays Programme, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/4.

<sup>133</sup> Newland Youth Guest House Brochure, 1950, HF Archive.

‘thoughtless spending of money’ and to ‘the inane type of amusement’ found in Blackpool or Morecambe.<sup>134</sup> As the vision of the Lake District as a ‘national playground’ took hold after the Second World War, and it became ever more popular as a destination for coach and car tourists who merely wanted to visit the honeypot resorts and indulge in noisy entertainments, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship continued to provide holidays that were based on healthy recreation and the quiet enjoyment of the countryside; activities that were in entire sympathy with the established ‘place-myth’ espoused by the founders of the national park movement.<sup>135</sup>

Whilst the range of outdoor pursuits provided by other providers multiplied to involve more exciting new forms of activities such as mountain-biking, abseiling, ghyll scrambling, orienteering and fell-running, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship continued to focus on the provision of walking holidays. The Lake District centres were solely providers of walking holidays until 1960, reflecting their location in a spectacular landscape of mountains, lakes and valleys, an area that E M Forster considered to be ‘the most magical corner of England’.<sup>136</sup> Even when the CHA and Holiday Fellowship diversified into special interest holidays, the Lake District centres remained primarily walking holiday destinations.<sup>137</sup>

As the demand for a wider choice of activities increased during the 1970s, the CHA’s guest houses in Eskdale and Borrowdale continued as strenuous walking centres. At Forest Side, Grasmere, special interest holidays were gradually introduced with

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<sup>134</sup> T. A. Leonard, *Adventures in Holiday Making*, p.19.

<sup>135</sup> The Dower Report, Cmnd. 6378, (London: HMSO, 1945, p.305.

<sup>136</sup> Quoted in C. O’Neill, ‘The Most Magical Corner of England: Tourism, Preservation and the Development of the Lake District, 1919-1939’. For a detailed description of the geology and scenery of the Lake District, see R. Millward & A. Robinson, *The Lake District*, London: Eyre Methuen (1970), pp.23-71; and W.H. Pearsall & W. Pennington, *The Lake District*, London: Collins (1973), pp.17-58.

<sup>137</sup> See for example, CHA Holiday Programme for 1966, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5; HF Holiday Programme for 1965, HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

subjects such as literature appreciation (a link to the literary landscape), landscape photography and flower arranging. At Loughrigg Brow, Ambleside, special interest holidays were limited to landscape photography, floral art and folk dancing.<sup>138</sup> By the 1990s, as the CHA belatedly responded to the demand for a wider choice of holiday activities, special interest holidays were introduced at Stanley Ghyll House, Eskdale and Glaramara in Borrowdale, with subjects such as landscape painting, creative writing, bridge, Scottish country dancing and music appreciation.<sup>139</sup>

Holiday Fellowship brochures present a similar picture. Of the 50 different special interest holidays available nationally in the 1969 brochure, only orienteering, sailing and natural history were available at the Monk Coniston centre. Derwent Bank offered a range of walks from strenuous mountain climbs to easy rambles and was a ‘Go-as-you-please’ centre from the start but no special interest holidays were provided.<sup>140</sup> In the 1975 HF Holiday Centres brochure, which includes over 120 weeks of special interest holidays at over 30 centres, only five weeks are provided at the two Lake District centres; bird studies and painting at Derwent Bank, and bridge, visiting gardens and painting at Monk Coniston. The Newlands Youth Guest House and Langdale Youth Camp were solely used as walking centres.<sup>141</sup> At the end of the century, by which time the Holiday Fellowship’s ‘Special Interest’ brochure offered over 500 holidays with some twenty different activities, thirty special interest holidays were available at the two Lake District centres, Derwent Bank and Monk Coniston, ranging from sailing to heritage tours.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> See CHA Holiday brochures for 1976 and 1981, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

<sup>139</sup> See CHA Holiday brochure for 1994, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/4/5.

<sup>140</sup> 1969 HF brochure *Holidays that are Different*, HF Archive.

<sup>141</sup> 1975 HF Holiday Centres brochure, HF Archive.

<sup>142</sup> See Special Interest Holidays brochure, 2001, HF Archive.



At the end of the century, the Lake District National Park Authority asserted that:

*The Lake District offers arguably the best concentration of opportunities in the country for active pursuits such as walking, fell running, orienteering, rock climbing, horse riding, mountain biking, canoeing, fishing and inland sailing and cruising. Many people are content to sightsee, picnic, sunbathe, take short strolls or visit the numerous cultural or interpretive attractions. Large numbers also cycle, climb, run, ride, sail, canoe or go bird watching.*<sup>143</sup>

The above analysis has shown that, from the early holiday talks by local people and visiting lecturers on the history of the Lake District, its geography and geology, to the organisation of special interest holidays on Lakeland life towards the end of the twentieth century, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship attempted to preserve the place-myth of the area as one for healthy recreation and quiet enjoyment. Whilst the majority of visitors to the Lake District either took part in more adventurous ‘noisy’ activities provided by a range of outdoor centres or simply spent their time driving round the area, sight-seeing and visiting attractions, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship continued to emphasise through the content of its holidays the traditional place-myth of the Lake District espoused by Wordsworth and Ruskin.

#### Constituency: age and gender

Throughout the inter-war period, the CHA’s Lake District guest houses accommodated over 10 per cent of the CHA’s clients. During the war years, half of the CHA’s ten operating guest houses were located in the Lake District, accounting

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<sup>143</sup> Lake District National Park Management Plan, LDNPA, (1999), p.42.

for 37 per cent of the guest-weeks (see Table 14 below). The other five centres were located in Wales (3), at Hope in the Peak District and at Hindhead on the North Downs in Surrey.

**Table 14: CHA Centres and guests 1922-1951**

Centre	Guest-weeks				
	1922	1931	1937	1942	1951
Ambleside (G*)	644				
Eskdale	891	865	644	1026	676
Grasmere		1561	1,621	2175	1762
Borrowdale			1,144	1450	1225
Ambleside (F*)				361	
Bassenfell				249	448
Ambleside (LB*)					1206
Total	1535	2426	3409	5261	5317
% B&I Total	(9%)	(10%)	(12%)	(37%)	(20%)
British & Irish Total:	17108	24327	27784	14182	26604

\*Greenbank (Scale How)(G), Fairfield School (F) and Loughrigg Brow (LB).

The Lake District formed a core part of the CHA's activities and throughout the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s the four Lake District guest houses; Loughrigg Brow, Ambleside; Forest Side, Grasmere; Glaramara, Borrowdale; and Stanley Ghyll House, Eskdale, accommodated a quarter of the bed-spaces provided nationally (see Table 15 below).

**Table 15: CHA Centres and guests 1951-1980**

Centre	Guest-weeks			
	1951	1961	1971	1980
Ambleside (LB)	1206	1211	2014	1644
Bassenfell	448	976		
Borrowdale	1225	1072	868	1593
Eskdale	676	781	1509	1125
Grasmere	1762	2057	2283	1807
Total	5317	6122	6674	6169
% B&I Total	(20%)	(20%)	(25%)	(26%)
British & Irish Total:	26604	31065	26552	23797

Guest numbers at the CHA's Lake District centres remained static around the 6,000 mark throughout the 1960s and 1970s, with a peak of 6,900 guest weeks in 1977 out of a national total of 28,000 guest weeks. Guest numbers thereafter declined to 4,500 guest weeks in 1991, although the number of centres used remained the same, a figure amounting to 34 per cent of the national total of 13,500 guest weeks, the final year for which CHA guest numbers are available (see Appendix 4).<sup>144</sup>

During the inter-war period, Newlands Mill Guest House, which accommodated some 1000 guests each year, was the focus of the Holiday Fellowship's operations in the Lake District, augmented by the Langdale Centre and Hawse End Guest House. Together, these centres provided 170 bed-spaces and accommodated over 3000 guests each year. After the Second World War, the Holiday Fellowship concentrated its operations on its 'country house' style centres, Derwent Bank, which replaced Hawse End, and Monk Coniston. Together these two centres accommodated some 4,700 guests each year throughout the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, some ten per cent of the Holiday Fellowship's total guests at its 32 centres.<sup>145</sup>

It is difficult to be precise about the constituency of the guests at the CHA's and Holiday Fellowship's Lake District centres but photographs taken over a prolonged period tend to indicate that visitors to the Lake District were younger and more active than those visiting guest houses elsewhere. For instance, photographs of holiday groups in the 1930s confirm that the clientele at the CHA's Glaramara Guest House and the Holiday Fellowship's Newlands Centre comprised mainly young active men

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<sup>144</sup> Every annual report up to 1990 includes guest numbers in guest weeks for each guest house.

<sup>145</sup> See HF Annual Reports for 1964/65-1979/80, HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

and women, with an even gender balance (see Figures 13 and 15 on pages 248 and 250 respectively). Stanley Ghyll House, Eskdale, a strenuous centre, also catered for the younger age groups whilst Forest Side, Grasmere attracted a wider age group with a broader range of walking abilities (see Figure 25 below).



**Figure 25: CHA Group photograph taken at Forest Side, Grasmere in 1937**

Photographs taken after the Second World War show similar variations between the CHA's more strenuous centres such as Glaramara in Borrowdale and Stanley Ghyll House, Eskdale and the 'country house' centres at Loughrigg Brow, Ambleside and Forest Side, Grasmere, where groups tended to be more even aged with a predominance of women guests. Contrast the photograph taken in 1949 at the CHA's Glaramara Guest House on page 251 (see Figure 17), which shows a casually dressed group aged 20-30 years old, with the group photograph taken at Loughrigg Brow, Ambleside in 1946 (see Figure 26 below), which shows a broader aged group in a more formal pose.



**Figure 26: CHA Group photograph taken at Loughrigg Brow in 1946**

The Holiday Fellowship's centres showed similar variations between the more 'simple and strenuous' Newlands Guest House, which catered for the younger energetic members, and the Derwent Bank and Monk Coniston centres, which were more representative of the holiday provision elsewhere within Britain, with a wider age range represented and a majority of women guests (see Figures 27 and 28 below).



**Figure 27: Holiday Fellowship Group photograph taken at Derwent Bank in 1950**



**Figure 28: Holiday Fellowship Group photograph taken at Derwent Bank in 1963**

From the late-1960s onwards, anecdotal evidence would suggest that the CHA's Lake District guest houses, like the CHA nationally, gradually became less attractive to the younger age groups, who wished to participate in more exciting outdoor pursuits than simply walking the hills, pursuits that were being provided by a range of other providers.<sup>146</sup> At the same time, the introduction of special interest holidays only served to attract the more mature client so that, towards the end of the century, the Lake District guest houses catered for a predominantly middle-aged clientele, mirroring the national picture.<sup>147</sup>

A similar trend was followed at the Holiday Fellowship's centres; Derwent Bank and Monk Coniston. By the end of the century, these two centres offered a range of special interest holidays and the clientele was dominated by the older age groups.<sup>148</sup> By way of an example, the following photograph (Figure 29) shows a typical HF

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<sup>146</sup> Conversations with Robert Speake, 19 June 2009 and Brian Padgett, 1 April 2012.

<sup>147</sup> See Chapter 5, p. 255 and W. J. Darby, *Landscape and Identity*, p.237.

<sup>148</sup> Conversation with Steve Backhouse, HF Holidays Head of Holiday Operations, 11 October 2012.

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Holidays walking club group of the 1990s, mainly consisting of people aged 50 years and over and comprised predominantly of women.



**Figure 29: Holiday Fellowship Walking Group, 1991**

Further evidence is provided by my own experiences at a recent holiday at Derwent Bank.<sup>149</sup> The walking group consisted of married couples, same-sex groups (women) and couples (women) and individual men and women, 23 guests in total; nine men and fourteen women. The minimum age of the guests was 50 years but the majority were aged 65 years and over. Most were long-time members of the Holiday Fellowship. Three grades of walks were available, following the tried and tested Holiday Fellowship formula. Figure 30 shows the 'A' party on a 12 mile walk from Buttermere to Derwent Bank over Grasmoor, Crag Hill and Causey Pike. All seven members of the 'A' party were over 50 years old, with the leader aged 72years. Its small size, compared with the 'B' party of 13 people, which followed a lower-level alternative route, provides some indication of how the majority of guests were more

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<sup>149</sup> Holiday taken by myself in July 2012.

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attracted to the shorter, less strenuous walks. Three guests opted out from any walking activity and simply visited local attractions.



**Figure 30: Holiday Fellowship ‘A’ Party on Crag Hill, 2012**

At the end of the century, guests at the two HF Holidays ‘country house’ style centres in the Lake District reflected the pattern that had become well established throughout Britain; the vast majority were aged 50 years and over and the gender balance remained in favour of women. Strenuous walking was only practiced by a relatively small proportion of guests, the majority preferring shorter, less arduous walks or other activities provided in the special interest programme, reflecting the age profile of guests.

Whilst the centres at Derwent Bank and Monk Coniston continued as ‘country house’ style centres right to the end of the century, from the 1950s onwards, in response to the demand from education authorities, the Holiday Fellowship’s Newlands Centre



and Langdale Camp were exclusively used as School Journey and Youth Centres, providing accommodation for 150 and 55 children respectively.<sup>150</sup> The Holiday Fellowship's Youth Camp at Wall End Farm, Great Langdale was discontinued in 1965 when the lease with the National Trust expired.<sup>151</sup> Newlands Youth Guest House operated successfully until 1988 with over 4,000 visitors per annum.<sup>152</sup> School Journey and Youth Centres such as Newlands tended to be less maintained than 'country house' style centres and had lower standards of accommodation. When the Education Reform Act 1988 introduced changes to schools' requirements, the Holiday Fellowship decided to withdraw from the operation of youth centres. The conversion of Newlands to a main-stream centre was not considered economically viable, particularly since it was close to Derwent Bank, and it was sold off in 1988 as an outdoor centre.<sup>153</sup>

### Friendship and Fellowship

The CHA's and Holiday Fellowship's Lake District centres were run on the same lines as those located elsewhere in Britain. The weekly social programme offered at each centre followed a well-established formula and each centre guide laid down standard rules of behaviour, reflecting the original ideals and philosophy of both organisations, which were steeped in the Victorian concepts of respectability, co-operation and collectivism (see Chapter 5, pages 270-271). CHA centre guides continued to emphasise the social activities available until the 1980s:

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<sup>150</sup> See brochures 'Youth Camps and School Journey Centres 1954'; 'Introducing Newlands Youth Guest House' and 'Introducing Langdale Youth Camp', HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

<sup>151</sup> See *Over the Hills*, Winter 1965-1966, pp.22-23.

<sup>152</sup> See articles in *Cumbria* magazine: 'A Welcome at Newlands', Vol.11, No.1 (April 1961); 'Haven in the New Lands', Vol.24, No.2 (May 1974).

<sup>153</sup> See HF Annual Report 1988, HF Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

*COMMON ROOM: The social activities at the centre are in the hands of the Host and Hostess, who are honorary officials and rely upon the cordial co-operation of the members in contributing to the general enjoyment of the party. We have informal gatherings most evenings of the week – songs, games and dancing, with an occasional talk or discussion. You are asked to help in any way you can with musical items, readings, recitations or sketches.*<sup>154</sup>

Holiday Fellowship centre guides also encouraged the participation of guests in the evening's entertainment:

*EVENING ENTERTAINMENT: The social arrangements of the party are in the hands of the House Committee, consisting of the host, hostess, manageress, centre secretary and co-opted guests. Tell the host or hostess if you can contribute to the programme. Perhaps you would open a discussion upon a topic of general interest. If you have a set of one-act plays suitable for reading, or some good gramophone records, please bring them along. [with the proviso that] Guests are asked to observe quietness after 11.00pm.*<sup>155</sup>

The holiday experience at the CHA's Glaramara Guest House in the 1950s, which strongly reflected the original co-operative ideals of the organisation with communal walking and social activities is detailed in an article written in 2010 by a former staff member, a University student (see Appendix 14).<sup>156</sup>

When the Holiday Fellowship's Derwent Bank was altered and extended in the 1950s, some guests expressed their concerns that the well-liked ambience of the centre would

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<sup>154</sup> See 1976 CHA Centre Guide and Programme for Stanley Ghyll House, Eskdale and Forest Side, Grasmere, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/23.

<sup>155</sup> See HF Centre Guides for 1970s, HF Holidays archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale.

<sup>156</sup> See 'Memories of Glaramara 1951-1956' by Maureen Linton, Glaramara Centre, 2010.

be spoilt for ever. These fears were unfounded and the extended dining room and lounge, and the additional amenities (hot and cold water in bedrooms) were ‘all that could be desired’. As one guest commented poetically:

*What a joy 'tis to visit this House by the Water,  
Always resounding with laughter and fun,  
No matter your age, be you father or daughter,  
A holiday here makes you climb at a run!*<sup>157</sup>

A letter from a member of the Wakefield CHA Rambling and Social Club, written in 1996, further illustrates the friendship and fellowship aspect of the CHA experience in the Lake District:

*I went on my first CHA holiday at Loughrigg Brow, Ambleside in August 1946. I wondered how I would get on, never having been on a walking holiday before. I found that the other guests were a friendly crowd and I enjoyed the walks, good food, and the whole atmosphere of the holiday very much. Since then, I have been on other CHA holidays and tours abroad and I have been a member of the Wakefield CHA Rambling and Social Club for over 30 years. I am now aged 74 years and still enjoy the local walks and socials.*<sup>158</sup>

Many responses to the questionnaire survey express similar sentiments about the value of friendship and fellowship on CHA and Holiday Fellowship holidays; see the extract below from response No.92 in Appendix 9 in relation to holidays at Stanley Ghyll House, Eskdale and Loughrigg Brow, Ambleside from the 1950s onwards:

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<sup>157</sup> ‘Derwent Bank’s New Look, by M Holliday, *Over the Hills*, Christmas 1955, No.99, p.23, HF Holidays archive.

<sup>158</sup> Letter from Mr G.R. Hartley dated 14 May 1996, Countrywide Holidays Archive.

*My father was usually Host on these holidays. His main duties were to meet people at the door as they arrived, to bring up the rear on the walks, to make the announcements after the meals, to lead morning prayers (which took place every morning before breakfast) and to be responsible for the evening entertainment which more often than not seemed to be games and dancing, but also I remember bag beetle and bag whist.*

*Thursday was the day of the concert. Most people got involved in this, usually quite willingly, if only to appear in a "sketch". There always seemed to be a tremendous amount of talent available, sometimes from the unlikeliest people. Quite often quiet, unassuming people turned out to be superb pianists or accomplished singers. The light entertainment always provided much entertainment. By Friday, the guests felt as if they had known each other all their lives and Friday evening's entertainment usually went with a swing, starting with the table tennis final, followed of course by games and dancing. In my teenage years, I remember Friday night binges with illicit alcohol!! As you might have guessed, alcohol was strictly forbidden.*

These responses also hint at the changes taking place in the latter part of the century; the phasing out of morning prayers, the licensing of guest houses and the diminution of the social programme. There is no reference to evening entertainment in CHA Centre guides of the 1990s, only to the 'friendly hospitality' such centres provide.<sup>159</sup> By the 1990s, licenced bars were common and the strict 'lights out' rule had long since disappeared, as had the one-act play readings, and the host and hostess had been

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<sup>159</sup> See CHA Centre Guides for 1980-1993, GMCRO, B/CHA/PUB/5/24 and that for 1996 in Countrywide Holidays archive.

replaced by 'activity managers'. Although social evenings were still a part of the holiday experience, there was no specific structure to the programme.

Wendy Darby discusses the tensions generated by the conflict between continuity and change in the constituency of the CHA in her account of a holiday at the Glaramara Guest House in 1995.<sup>160</sup> She refers to the different attitude towards the ideals and philosophy of the organisation of those guests who were on a led walking holiday and those who were using the centre simply as a base for their own activities and the effect this had on the principles of 'friendship and fellowship'. My own experience at the Holiday Fellowship's Derwent Bank in 2012 confirmed that the social evening now consists of a more informal and voluntary arrangement, participated in by a declining number of guests. Nevertheless, centres such as Derwent Bank continue to offer a friendly, relaxed, communal atmosphere in contrast with the comparable guest house.

## Conclusions

This case study confirms that the role of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in the Lake District provides a microcosm of the changes and continuities in the development of these organisations, nationally, during the twentieth century. In the Lake District, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship provided both 'Spartan' and 'country-house' style centres and catered for young people through the operation of youth centres and camps. The importance of the Lake District in the history of the CHA is unquestionable. It was the destination of the first holidays and throughout the post-war period the four Lake District guest houses accommodated almost a quarter of the

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<sup>160</sup> W. J. Darby, *Landscape and Identity*, pp.234-237.

bed-spaces provided nationally. Although the Lake District did not rank as highly in the Holiday Fellowship's organisation, the two Lake District centres nevertheless provided almost ten per cent of the bed-spaces available.

The close association of the CHA with the Lake District is illustrated by the location of its 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in 1981; the National Park Visitor Centre at Brockhole, attended by 1,700 members.<sup>161</sup> These celebrations included a service of thanksgiving and two commemorative walks (see Figure 31 below).<sup>162</sup>

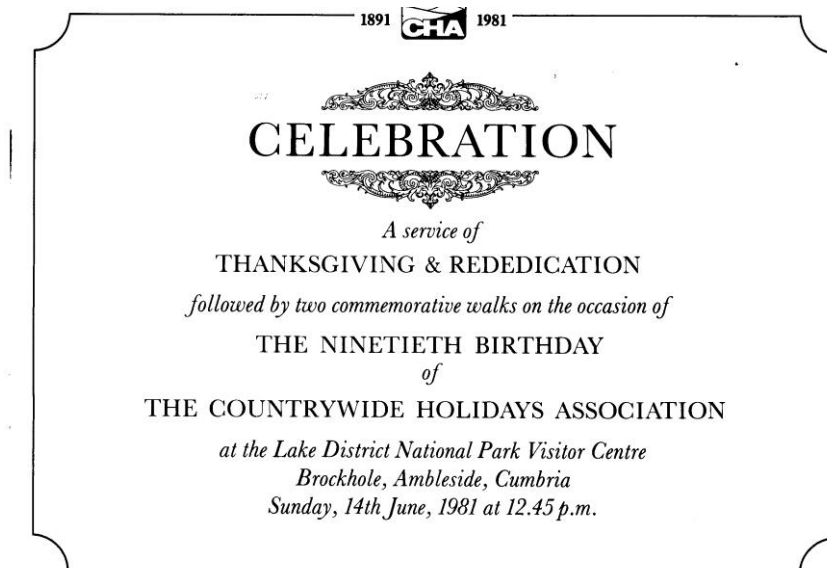


Figure 31: CHA Commemorative booklet (90<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations).

The CHA and the Holiday Fellowship were pioneers in opening up the Lake District for healthy recreation and quiet enjoyment by working people. Through the provision of recreative and educational holidays, they sought to encourage the greater knowledge and care of the countryside and they both supported the designation of the Lake District as a national park. At the beginning of the inter-war period, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship dominated the provision of recreative and educational

<sup>161</sup> See CHA Annual Report for 1981, GMCRO, B/CHA/FIN/2;

<sup>162</sup> See Commemorative booklet, GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/14.

holidays in the Lake District. Until the establishments of youth hostels, there were few other providers of accommodation for outdoor activities specifically, other than the huts possessed by some climbing clubs and the CTC's network of bed and breakfast establishments.

As the vision of the Lake District as a 'national playground' took hold after the Second World War with the proliferation of outdoor holiday providers, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship concentrated their activities on their existing centres. Whilst the range of outdoor opportunities multiplied to involve more exciting new activities, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship focussed on the provision of walking holidays. The mantle of providing outdoor holidays for young people was gradually taken up by the YHA, local education authorities and a range of voluntary and charitable organisations, and by privately financed outdoor adventure centres such as those occupying the former CHA Glaramara Guest House and the former Holiday Fellowship Newlands Youth Guest House.

Consequently, from a position of dominance in the provision of recreative and educational holidays in the inter-war period, by the end of the century, the CHA no longer existed as a holiday provider and HF Holidays continued as just one amongst many outdoor holiday providers. However, although the role of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in Lake District tourism, in terms of the amount of accommodation provided, diminished considerably after the Second World War, their influence on the perception of the Lake District should not be under-estimated.

The holiday experience at the CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres strongly reflected Leonard's original ideals with communal walking and social activities. As special interest holidays were introduced in response to popular demand, the Lake District centres continued to focus on walking holidays. Special interest holidays were slowly introduced at Lake District centres but the range of non-walking holidays provided was limited. The constituency of guests at CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres varied between the more strenuous centres and the 'country house' style centres but, overall, the clientele at the Lake District centres were younger and more active than those visiting guest houses elsewhere. The founding principles of 'friendship and fellowship' and the tensions generated by the conflict between continuity and change were equally relevant in the context of the Lake District centres.

The CHA and Holiday Fellowship subscribed to the literary and landscape associations attached to the Lake District. The fusion of romantic literary allusions and scenic grandeur was a crucial feature of Urry's Lakeland place-myth.<sup>163</sup> According to O'Neill, 'There is no question that this literary heritage played a pivotal role in the images of Lakeland circulating in the inter-war years'.<sup>164</sup> An analysis of contributions to the CHA's and Holiday Fellowship's magazines, and of their holiday brochures, has shown that the 'literary landscape' place-myth helped to shape their approach to holiday making in the Lake District. Although towards the end of the century, guests staying at CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres could be seen touring the Lake District painting or photographing the landscape, or visiting archaeological and historical sites, the vast majority spent their time engaged in walking the fells and valleys of Lakeland.

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<sup>163</sup> J. Urry, *Consuming Places*, p.196.

<sup>164</sup> C. O'Neill, *Visions of Lakeland: Tourism, Preservation and the Development of the Lake District, 1919-1939*, unpublished PhD thesis, (University of Lancaster, 2001), p.28.



## *Chapter 6*

Although largely inward looking, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship supported the early efforts of Canon Rawnsley and the National Trust to preserve the Lake District and were both active members of the Campaign for National Parks. They rejoiced at the designation of the Lake District as a national park, and were long-standing supporters of the Friends of the Lake District. Although, for many, the Lake District is more playground than literary landscape or place to commune with nature, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship played an important role in maintaining the ‘place-myth’ of the Lake District, based on its literary associations and scenic beauty, for which it is internationally recognised.

## CONCLUSIONS: THE RESEARCH QUESTION ANSWERED?

*How effectively have the two leading organisations that pioneered the provision of recreative and educational holidays for working people dealt with the far-reaching changes in social, economic and cultural conditions experienced during the period c.1919-2000?*

### Introduction

This thesis has focussed on the changes and continuities in the Co-operative Holidays Association and the Holiday Fellowship, two organisations at the forefront of the provision of ‘rational’ holidays and founded at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries respectively, their purpose to provide ‘*simple and strenuous recreative and educational holidays*’ which offered ‘*reasonably priced accommodation*’ and to ‘*promote friendship and fellowship amid the beauty of the natural world*’.

This thesis, which deals with the period 1919-2000, fills a neglected area of study and extends an important aspect of the historiography of leisure and outdoor recreation in the twentieth century. This study does not constitute a business history of the CHA or the Holiday Fellowship but takes a social and cultural history perspective of the role and influence of these organisations on twentieth-century tourism and the outdoor movement. It also contributes to the wider debate on the effects of consumerism on leisure and recreation.

Through a detailed examination of the changes and continuities in the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, this research has attempted to establish how effectively these two

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pioneering organisations dealt with the changing demands of the period 1919-2000. In doing so, it has had a major focus on the analysis of the impact of increasing affluence and consumer choice, changing cultural attitudes and expectations, the popularisation of outdoor recreation and the proliferation of competing holiday providers.

This research has examined in some detail how the CHA and Holiday Fellowship dealt with the often conflicting demands of altruism and commercial necessity and has assessed the extent to which they diverted from their original ideals and philosophy in order to combat the challenges of consumerism. It has also assessed the achievements of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship and their contribution to the outdoor movement.

### **Balancing altruism with commercial necessity.**

The history of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship during the twentieth century is one of recurring tensions between their original ideology and modernisation. Both organisations were products of a Victorian philanthropy based on the principles of respectability, co-operation and collectivism, and voluntarism. They were grounded in Congregationalism although they were also hospitable to socialists, even those with a secular viewpoint, reflecting T A Leonard's Christian socialist leanings. They were not unique but part of the broader 'rational recreation' movement, which included other organisations such as the Polytechnic Touring Association (PTA) and the Workers' Travel Association (WTA). However, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship were distinguishable from these other holiday providers in a number of ways.

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Both the CHA and the Holiday fellowship had a distinct rural focus, and the emphasis of their holidays was on quiet enjoyment and education, based on the principles of 'respectability', rather than pure enjoyment. They were also unique amongst holiday providers in that they were equally as attractive to women as to men. However, both the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship eventually served the middle classes rather than the working class for whom they were originally intended, a fate that befell other similar organisations such as the Toynbee Travellers' Club and the PTA.

Nevertheless, their contribution to the democratisation of the countryside as a leisure space was an important one. As Robert Snape concludes, 'the CHA established the practice of providing simple, affordable and non-exclusive accommodation, thus promoting greater access to the countryside, laid the foundations of the spirit of fellowship that characterises walking and rambling, and welcomed women on the basis of equality'.<sup>1</sup> The Holiday Fellowship, having evolved from the CHA, made a similar, if not greater, contribution to the opening up of the countryside as a quiet and reflective leisure space for the urban population so that its natural beauty could be enjoyed by all who wished to.

The review of the secondary literature on the social, economic and cultural changes underpinning British leisure during the twentieth century shows that a rising standard of living, an increasing holiday entitlement and improving public transport during the inter-war period led to a rapid increase in holiday-making with the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, notwithstanding the high unemployment experienced at this time. After the Second World War, a new age of mass tourism emerged, facilitated by almost

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<sup>1</sup> R Snape, *The Co-operative Holidays Association*, p.155.

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universal holidays with pay, a rapid increase in car ownership and a phenomenal rise in cheap foreign holidays. Seaside holiday camps flourished. However, as the century progressed, there was a significant shift away from the traditional guest-house holiday exemplified by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship towards more independent holidays.

At the same time, outdoor activities, originally concentrated on rambling, climbing and cycling, diversified considerably and outdoor pursuits became a fundamental component of British education. Outdoor providers proliferated as participation in the range of activities mushroomed and towards the end of the twentieth century, the accommodation available included not only that provided by traditional organisations such as the CHA, Holiday Fellowship and YHA but also that provided by a wide range of other voluntary and charitable organisations, local education authorities and private commercial companies.

The emphasis of accommodation provision by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship gradually shifted from the 1960s onwards from the 'Spartan and simple', extolled by their founders, to the more comfortable 'country house' style. However, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship adopted different approaches. The CHA was less reactive to the social and economic changes taking place, as a result of its strong desire to pursue its original philosophy of organising holidays at a reasonable cost. It sought to retain its older properties, acquired relatively cheaply in the inter-war period, and improve them to meet customers' needs. The Holiday Fellowship responded more willingly to the demands of its members and the wider outdoor community and was significantly

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more pro-active in disposing of its older properties and investing in newer, more modern acquisitions and the use of short-term tenancies.

The CHA also had a cautious approach to commercial advertising and marketing, which it did not consider sat easily with its ideals, and relied heavily on personal communication. Also, when challenged by the demand for improved facilities in the 1970s and 1980s, reflecting its desire to continue to provide holidays at a reasonable cost, the CHA sought to fund the necessary improvements through borrowing against the value of its properties rather than increase charges. However, increasing trading losses from 1980 onwards resulted in increasing debt leading to the disposal of unviable properties. A reluctance to modernise its practices resulted in further restructuring in the 1990s and the eventual winding up of the CHA as a holiday provider in 2001.

By contrast, the Holiday Fellowship was much more proactive at examining ways of dealing with the challenges of the late-twentieth century. It engaged more actively in marketing, advertising in national and local publications. It disposed of loss making properties in remote locations and acquired more modern properties in more attractive locations. In 1982, the Holiday Fellowship rebranded itself as HF Holidays, appointed marketing consultants, rationalised its property portfolio and increased charges to fund improvements to key properties.

In response to the concerns expressed by members about the regimentation of the traditional compulsory walking holiday, optional excursions were introduced by the Holiday Fellowship in the 1930s and by the CHA in the 1950s. In a bid to capitalise

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on the explosion of interest in a wide range of sports and pastimes in the post-war era, both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship diversified into special interest holidays. The Holiday Fellowship led the way, from the late 1960s onwards, with an extensive range of special interest holidays, and introduced short-break holidays in response to the decline in interest in the traditional full-week walking holiday. It was the 1980s before the CHA introduced short-break holidays. These changes prompted some opposition from traditionalists who deplored the introduction of such holidays, which were less conducive to socialising at centres. But the managements of both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship saw the diversification of holiday activities as the way forward in an increasingly competitive market.

The expansion of the CHA's special holidays programme in the late-1980s did not save it from financial collapse. HF Holidays, on the other hand, survived the twentieth century and although two-thirds of the holidays provided at the end of the century were walking holidays, compulsory walking was no longer a requisite part of any holiday. The development of other leisure activities, short break holidays and, more recently, 'Freedom Breaks', which provide little more than bed and breakfast accommodation, illustrate the extent to which HF Holidays had moved away from its original ideals in an attempt to meet changing consumer attitudes and expectations and remain financially viable.

Another illustration of the impact of commercial necessity is provided by the changing character of the holidays provided. Before 1918, adherence to the principles of respectability was achieved through a comprehensive set of rules and regulations, including centre duties, the prohibition of alcohol, the saying of grace before meals,

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Sunday Church services and dress codes for men and women. The principles of 'co-operation and collectivism' were reinforced through compulsory social activities organised by voluntary hosts and hostesses. After the First World War, a reaction to the authoritarian regime of CHA and Holiday Fellowship holidays, and the increasing secularisation of society, was reflected in growing but unresolved tensions between the traditionalists and the modernisers within each organisation. These tensions resurfaced after the Second World War when strongly opposing views were expressed amongst members on issues such as discipline, religious observance, temperance and excursion arrangements.

These issues, the subject of regular discussion at annual conferences throughout the post-war period, came to a head in the 1960s, a time of significant moral changes in British society. The CHA responded much more slowly than the Holiday Fellowship to the demands for change, reflecting its more traditional approach to holiday making. The Holiday Fellowship adopted a more relaxed attitude towards grace before meals, lights out and alcoholic drinks, up-graded its centres with the provision of en-suite facilities and modern furnishings and introduced televisions and tea-making facilities to its centres.

The diminution of the social programme was also a continual source of tension. The original purpose of the evening informal gatherings organised by the host and hostess was to 'weld the house-party into a group of friends irrespective of class creed or colour'. However, with the drift away from the traditional walking week with its house-party atmosphere after the Second World War and the introduction of optional excursions, special interest and short break holidays, the culture of communal



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socialising declined in importance as a main-stay of CHA and Holiday Fellowship holiday making. The increasing number of non-member guests was also a source of growing tension between the traditional members and the more independent guests, who were less likely to participate in communal social activities and feel part of the CHA or Holiday Fellowship community. Nevertheless, though the terms 'host' and 'hostess' were phased out in the 1990s, the social evening continued in muted form, organised by activity leaders.

The culture of CHA and Holiday Fellowship holidays, therefore, has evolved, from one of compulsory socialising to a more diverse, informal and voluntary arrangement. Although the social life of CHA and Holiday Fellowship holidays changed considerably during the twentieth century, to members, they continued to offer a friendly, relaxed, communal atmosphere in contrast to the comparable guest house and budget hotel accommodation. Although the evening get-togethers diminished in value as a medium for encouraging social intercourse, nevertheless, 'friendship and fellowship' remained a key component of the CHA and HF Holidays ethos.

This study has shown that, during the period under consideration, both organisations were transformed from philanthropic associations providing Spartan and simple holidays to multi-faceted businesses organising a wide range of holiday provision. In attempting to balance altruism with commercial necessity, both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship drifted away from their original ideals of 'simple and strenuous recreative and educational holidays'. However, the CHA in particular sought to continue to offer reasonably priced accommodation whilst at the same time improving standards in response to the demands of its guests. The Holiday Fellowship placed more

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emphasis on comfort and the relaxation of its rules and regulations. It is ironic that Leonard left to found the Holiday Fellowship because he felt that the CHA was unnecessarily improving the quality of accommodation and moving away from its original ideals, yet the Holiday Fellowship overtook the CHA in providing improved 'country house' style accommodation, optional walking and special interest holidays.

### **Achievements of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship**

It would be easy to equate the story of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship with that of the institutional decline of the many voluntary organisations that emerged in the 'golden age' of Victorian philanthropy. However, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship both succeeded, to differing degrees, to redefine themselves in response to the changing social, economic and cultural conditions of the twentieth century. These pioneers of 'rational' holidays for working people, survived two world wars and their aftermaths, including the thirties 'slump', and adapted and adjusted to the changing morals and mass tourism of the 'swinging sixties', the restructuring of the holiday industry in the 1970s and 1980s and the increasing competition from rival outdoor holiday providers in the last quarter of the century.

The CHA and Holiday Fellowship, with their origins in the working-class north-west of England became national and international providers of outdoor recreational holidays that appealed to people of all classes, creed and age. Membership and guest levels fluctuated in response to the changing social, economic and cultural conditions, reaching a peak in the 1960s. At their peak, the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, together, operated some 65 centres, accommodating over 100,000 guests per annum,

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the equivalent of over 650,000 overnight stays. Although the CHA ceased to operate as a holiday provider at the end of the century, HF Holidays continued to provide holidays for 24,000 guests per annum.

Founded to provide 'recreative and educational' holidays for the working class, the available evidence indicates that both the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship came to serve the emerging middle classes. From the First World War onwards, both organisations represented themselves as being open to all, notwithstanding the founder's original intention of providing holidays for the working-classes. However, although references in articles in *Comradeship* and *Over the Hills* provide a tentative indication of the social status of members and guests, there is a distinct lack of specific information in CHA and Holiday Fellowship records on member's or guest's occupations with which to accurately assess their social composition. This is, arguably, the greatest problem with this investigation of the continuities and changes in the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. The lack of information of the social composition of members and guests, compared with the availability of data on gender, is perhaps a reflection of the ethos of both organisations of appealing to people of all classes.

Throughout their history, both organisations attracted far more women than men (generally at a ratio of two to one), and this practice contrasted strongly with contemporary rambling organisations and clubs, which were generally a male preserve. This study, therefore, endorses Anderson's contention that the mixed-gender sociability of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, replicated in the 150 or so local groups that supported both organisations, helped to legitimise female rambling

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and strongly influenced the development of co-operative domestic cultures in the twentieth century rambling movement.<sup>2</sup>

Little statistical data on age is available but photographs of the post-war period suggest that, as the focus of holiday centres shifted from the ‘Spartan and simple’ to the ‘country house’ type, and from remoter rural and mountainous locations to seaside resorts, the clientele of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship gradually aged. Anecdotal evidence also indicates that the membership of both organisations was characterised by an ageing population from the 1960s onwards. This research, therefore, supports the impressions gained by Darby in her experience of a CHA holiday in the 1990s where the group was composed almost entirely of over-60 year olds.<sup>3</sup>

At the end of the century, HF Holidays continued to attract couples and single people in their 50s and 60s, those in professional, managerial and administrative positions and early-retirees. It catered for an older-aged population, helping to maintain physical activity for the more elderly section of the community, an aim very much in tune with Government policy; a significant achievement, although in sharp contrast to Leonard’s original concept for the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

From their foundation both organisations catered for youth groups and school parties long before it became a responsibility of local education authorities and before other charitable organisations such as Outward Bound and private operators became involved in outdoor adventure. The CHA and Holiday Fellowship followed different

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<sup>2</sup> B. Anderson, *Partnership or Co-operation? Family, politics and strenuousness in the pre-First World War Co-operative Holidays Association*, *Sport in History*, Vol. 33, No. 3, September 2013, pp.274-275.

<sup>3</sup> W.J. Darby, *Landscape and Identity*, (2002), p.237.

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approaches to the encouragement of youth groups and school parties, but both recognised the importance of educating young people to love and appreciate the countryside. Although the main focus of the CHA was always on its adult clients, the Holiday Fellowship was more enthusiastic and provided a number of dedicated youth centres and camps during the post-war period. The Holiday Fellowship's direct involvement in provision for youth groups and school journey parties only ceased in the 1980s when changes in schools' requirements proved difficult to meet. Nevertheless, the efforts of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in the provision of holidays for school and youth groups and the prominent role both organisations took in the founding of the YHA represent a considerable contribution to the twentieth century outdoor recreation phenomenon.

The CHA and Holiday Fellowship were also significant, until now unacknowledged, champions of providing free and assisted holidays for the urban poor and unemployed long before the coming of the Welfare State. In accordance with Leonard's Christian Socialist beliefs, from 1897, the CHA provided free and assisted holidays for people who could not afford its modest charges, funded by 'Fresh Air Collections' from paying guests at the end of each holiday. The CHA's 'Free Holiday Scheme' was taken up by the Holiday Fellowship in 1913 as the 'Goodwill Scheme' and, together, these schemes provided holidays for thousands of deserving men, women and children during the twentieth century.

It was through these schemes that the CHA and Holiday Fellowship sought to enhance the social inclusion/engagement of their predominantly middle-class clientele and the working-class constituency which they originally sought to attract. However, it is

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debateable whether these schemes enhanced social inclusion for the majority of holidays took place when regular members were absent. Furthermore, there is little information available to assess the extent to which recipients of such holidays subsequently became members of the CHA or Holiday Fellowship and were integrated into these organisations. Nevertheless, this should not detract from the contribution of these schemes to the provision of recreative holidays for those town dwellers who would otherwise not have had the opportunity to experience not only the natural beauty of the countryside but also the friendship and fellowship of communal activities.

The CHA and the Holiday Fellowship were also in the vanguard of bringing foreign holidays within the orbit of ordinary working people. Under Leonard's influence, the CHA pursued recreative and educational holidays in Europe in the years leading up to the First World War and organised British-German exchange visits in an attempt to foster the 'Brotherhood of Man'. In leaving the CHA to found the Holiday Fellowship, Leonard hoped to make more progress in international relations and, after the First World War, the international work of the Holiday Fellowship built on the links established by Leonard prior to the war. Both organisations developed a comprehensive programme of holidays to destinations throughout Europe, including Germany, and the Holiday Fellowship, under the greater influence of Leonard, arranged trips further afield, to the USA, Canada and Russia.

After the Second World War, both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship took advantage of the liberalisation of air travel and expanded their foreign holiday programmes. However, as the century progressed, the CHA failed to capitalise on the increasing

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demand for foreign holidays and ceased providing holidays abroad in 1992. In contrast, the Holiday Fellowship expanded its operations abroad and, by the end of the century, HF Holidays offered walking, sight-seeing tours and city breaks throughout Europe and worldwide, including long-haul holidays to Australia, New Zealand, and South America. Therefore, whilst the encouragement of international understanding was a key part of the philosophy of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship during the inter-war period, it would be fair to say that the emphasis of holidays abroad in the post-war era was very much on enjoyment and, as such, they differed little from those provided by a range of other commercial operators.

The attraction of foreign visitors to British centres does not seem to have been a priority of either the CHA or the Holiday Fellowship although there were sporadic attempts at assisting international understanding through the accommodation of refugees escaping from war-torn areas. In short, the success of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship in attracting foreign clients pales into insignificance compared with the YHA, and the internationalist ideals of the founders of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship would seem to have evaporated as the century progressed.

### **A significant and important contribution to the outdoor movement**

A number of contemporaries, particularly those people most closely associated with the organisations that Leonard played an important part in founding, regarded Leonard not only as the 'Founder of co-operative and communal holidays' but also the 'Father of the open-air movement in this country', epithets inscribed on the memorial plaques erected following his death in 1948.

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There can be no doubt that the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, under the leadership of Leonard, pioneered a holiday experience distinct from other contemporary organisations, based on the principles of co-operation and collectivism, and which focussed on communal recreative, educational and social activities in countryside surroundings. However, the epithet ‘Father of the open-air movement in this country’ is more questionable. There were other notable access campaigners and champions of walkers’ rights at the end of the nineteenth century, such as the prominent liberals, James Bryce and Charles Trevelyan, Octavia Hill, Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley and Tom Stephenson. As Bob Snape avers, the legacy of Leonard does not lie in footpath preservation or the ‘freedom to roam’ campaign but in the promotion of the quiet enjoyment of the countryside as an alternative to industrialisation and urbanisation, an ideology strongly influenced by Arnold, Morris, Wordsworth and Ruskin.<sup>4</sup>

A clear acknowledgement of this aspect of Leonard’s influence on the outdoor movement is illustrated by the range of organisations represented at his eightieth-birthday celebrations held at the Friends Meeting House in London on 18 March 1944, attended by almost 100 guests. The gathering included representatives of the Youth Hostels Association, Ramblers’ Association, Workers’ Travel Association, Pennine Way Association, National Trust and the Councils for the Preservation of Rural England and Rural Wales.<sup>5</sup> This was an impressive list, and all these organisations owed their existence to some degree to the pioneering efforts of Leonard and the support of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship.

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<sup>4</sup> R Snape, *The Co-operative Holidays Association*, p.155.

<sup>5</sup> See commemorative book ‘Souvenir of a Luncheon’, GMCRO, B/CHA/HIS/16/4.



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Leonard played a prominent role in the foundation of the YHA and the Ramblers' Association. He was a Vice-President of the YHA from its inception in 1931 and President of the Ramblers' Association from its formation in 1935 until 1946. The CHA and Holiday Fellowship were represented on the Executive Committee of the YHA for many years. Leonard was also a founder of the Friends of the Lake District, formed in 1934, an organisation strongly supported by the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship. Leonard was appointed OBE in the George V Coronation honours of May 1937 in recognition of his contribution to the outdoor movement.

If we move beyond Leonard's personal involvement, both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship worked in close co-operation with other like-minded organisations to advance the cause of open-air 'rational' recreation. In addition to supporting a range of bodies concerned with access and environmental issues, including such diverse organisations as the Northern Counties Footpaths Society, the Pony Trekking Society of Wales and the RSPB, both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship were active members of the Standing Committee on National Parks and strongly supported the campaign for national parks in England & Wales, within which many CHA and Holiday Fellowship centres were located.

The CHA and Holiday Fellowship were pioneers in opening up the Lake District for recreative and educational holidays for working people and sought to encourage the greater knowledge and care of the area. They were strong supporters of its designation as a national park. Although their role in Lake District tourism, in terms of the amount of accommodation provided, diminished considerably after the Second

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World War, they continued to play an important role in maintaining the 'place-myth' of the Lake District as a location for healthy recreative holidays and quiet enjoyment.

Both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship provided financial support to organisations active in the preservation of footpaths throughout England, Wales and Scotland. In the last quarter of the century, HF Holidays 'Goodwill' Fund was used to provide grants for footpath maintenance and restoration in recognition of the threat posed by the huge increase in recreational walking. The fund was renamed 'Pathways' in 1998 and became dedicated solely to footpath improvements.

Local groups were an essential component of both the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. They were the main vehicle for maintaining the spirit and purpose of both organisations. They also spread the influence of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship beyond the membership to a larger constituency of outdoor enthusiasts and, through their recreational and social activities, were instrumental in introducing an urban population to the benefits of the countryside. They played an important part in promoting rambling as a weekend leisure activity. Many local groups acquired their own weekend huts and cottages and also became active in the protection of local rights of way and the preservation of the countryside.

One hundred years ago, the 'freedom to roam' campaign was in its infancy, outdoor recreational activities were limited to walking, mountaineering and cycling. At the end of the century, access was available to almost 900,000 hectares of mountain, hill and fell in England (6.5 per cent of the country). Almost 200,000kms of rights of way existed in the uplands and lowlands, adventure activities ranged from abseiling to zip

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wire riding and included orienteering, mountain biking, gorge scrambling and many other outdoor pursuits. This study indicates that the pioneering efforts of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship to provide '*simple and strenuous recreative and educational holidays*' which offered '*reasonably priced accommodation*' and promoted '*friendship and fellowship amid the beauty of the natural world*', was a major factor in laying the foundations for these diverse forms of leisure and recreational activity.

### Conclusions

It is argued, here, based on the wide-ranging evidence utilised in this study, that the CHA and Holiday Fellowship are unique examples of Victorian voluntary institutions that survived the twentieth century march towards modernism. In seeking to answer the research question posed, this study of the changes and continuities in the accommodation provided, the recreative and educational activities pursued, the constituency of both organisations and their ideals and philosophy, has shown that the CHA was less successful than the Holiday Fellowship in dealing with the far reaching changes in social, economic and cultural conditions experienced during the period c.1919-2000.

The continuities and changes within the CHA and Holiday Fellowship can be equated with the product life cycle espoused by Raymond Vernon and adapted for tourist destinations and resorts by Richard Butler.<sup>6</sup> The life-cycle of the CHA broadly conforms to the original tourist area life-cycle model put forward by Butler, which

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<sup>6</sup> See G. Day, (1981) *The Product life-cycle*, Journal of Marketing, Vol. 45, Autumn 1981, pp. 60-67; R.W. Butler, (2011) 'Tourism Area Life Cycle', *Contemporary Tourism Reviews*, Oxford: Goodfellow Publishers Ltd.

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proposed a process of development, expansion, consolidation, stagnation and decline, a model that very much reflects the declinist narrative of Victorian philanthropy. On the other hand, the life-cycle of the Holiday Fellowship displays the characteristics of Butler's amended model, which acknowledges the opportunities for intervention in the development process resulting in a range of end possibilities from decline to rejuvenation. For the Holiday Fellowship, a more professional approach to management, budgeting and marketing resulted in the survival of the organisation in the post-modern era as a provider of quality accommodation serving a niche market.

Adapting to change, however, created tensions between the traditionalists and the modernisers within each organisation. This study has shown that, in attempting to balance altruism with commercial necessity, both the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship drifted away from their original ideals of 'simple and strenuous recreative and educational holidays' laid down by T A Leonard and the other founders. The CHA, nevertheless, sought to continue to offer reasonably priced accommodation whilst at the same time improving standards in response to the demands of its guests. The Holiday Fellowship placed more emphasis on comfort, the relaxation of its rules and regulations, and giving 'value for money'.

Although the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship departed from some of their original ideals, the promotion of friendship and fellowship amid the beauty of the natural world remained a core feature of CHA and Holiday Fellowship holidays right to the end of the century. At the end of the twentieth century, HF holidays still provided holidays for like-minded people in an atmosphere of friendship and fellowship, people who had similar interests and were happy to take part in communal recreative

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activities, eat communally and socialise communally; ideals that T A Leonard would have recognised and strongly endorsed.

The aims of this research were to establish how effectively the two organisations that pioneered 'rational' holidays for working people dealt with the far-reaching changes in social, economic and cultural conditions in the twentieth century. This study has systematically catalogued the way these organisations dealt with the often conflicting demands of the period *c.* 1919-2000 and has assessed the extent to which they diverted from their original ideals and philosophy in order to combat the challenges of consumerism and modernity. It has drawn on the concepts of respectability, co-operation and collectivism, voluntarism and modernity and has shown that the contrasting fortunes of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship can be identified with the tourist area life-cycle concept, a new dimension for examining tourism facilities.

It is considered that this research has achieved its objective and that it makes a significant original contribution to knowledge. It has also flagged up a number of problems and further areas of scholarship. The mixed-gender constituency of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship was a significant consideration in the development of the wider rambling movement. However, the paucity of specific data on class and age has restricted the ability of this research to examine further the social relationships in the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. To investigate this issue in more depth would require a micro-study of the membership, involving more comprehensive quantitative and qualitative techniques including oral surveys.

## Conclusions

Local groups were an essential part of the CHA and Holiday Fellowship. The changing relationship of these groups with their parent organisations and their role and influence in the wider outdoor community would be worthy of further study, involving more detailed interrogation of the activities of the 150 or so groups established by the CHA and Holiday Fellowship, many of which continue to function to this day.

Throughout the Second World War, both the CHA and the Holiday Fellowship managed large hostels for workers on behalf of the Ministry of Supply and the Ministry of Defence. Despite this clear and significant contribution to the war effort it gained little contemporary publicity and has largely gone un-noticed by historians. There is potential here for a substantial piece of research into the role of these recreative and educational organisations in enhancing the social well-being and the spiritual welfare of workers at a time of crisis.

As Thorstein Veblen pronounced in his discourse on the evolution of the scientific point of view, which is equally applicable to cultural history; *The outcome of any serious research can only be to make two questions grow where only one grew before!*<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> T. Veblen, 'The Evolution of the Scientific Point of View', in *The Place of Science in Modern Civilization and other Essays*, (New York: B.W. Huebsch, 1919), pp.32-55.

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File 2: General Committee Minutes, Jan. 1989-Nov. 1992

File 3: General Committee Minutes, Jan. 1993-July 1997

File 4: Minutes of meetings of Invited Guest Trust, 1977-2003

File 5: Correspondence and reports relating to merger discussions during 1967-1970.

File 6: Annual Reports, 1994-2001

File 7: Annual brochures, 1994-2001

File 8: Countrywide News, 1991-2004

Photographs and other memorabilia

**e) Holiday Fellowship (HF holidays) Archive, Newfield Hall, Malhamdale**

Centre programmes for every centre used

Annual Reports 1913-2000

Annual Brochures 1913-2000

'Over the Hills' Magazine 1913-1983

Photographs

Press cuttings

Memorabilia

**f) Youth Hostels Association, Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham**

Y150 Regional Handbooks (Youth Hostels in Lakeland)

Y430 National Handbooks, 1932-2002

Y440 Annual Reports 1931-1997

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Y510 'Hostelling News' 1972-1985

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## **APPENDICES**

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## Appendix 1: Timeline of accommodation providers

	Walking & Climbing Clubs	CHA	HF	YHA	LAs & other organisations
1890	Earliest rambling and Climbing clubs formed.	T A Leonard commences trips to Ambleside in 1891, establishes CHA in 1893.			
1900					
1910			T A Leonard founds HF in 1913.		
1920		CHA has 11 guest houses in 1919.	HF has 9 guest houses in 1919.		
1930	Ramblers' Association formed in 1935	CHA has 28 centres in Britain in 1939	HF has 33 centres in Britain in 1939	YHA founded in 1930.	YMCA (Lakeside) established in 1930s.
1940	BMC founded in 1944				Brathay Hall Trust formed 1946 Outward Bound Eskdale established 1949
1950	Explosion in formation of post-war climbing clubs and provision of huts	CHA guest numbers peak at 30,000 in 28 centres			
1960		CHA re-named Countrywide Holidays Association in 1964	HF guest numbers peak at 60,000+ at 33 centres	Number of hostels tops 300 with over 1 million over-night stays	Local authority outdoor centres established from late 1950s
1970					
1980			HF re-brands itself as HF Holidays in 1982.	YHA undergoes rationalisation and modernisation (number of hostels reduced to 250, number of over-nights tops 2 million)	Closure of some Local Authority centres
1990					New generation of adventure activity centres established
2000		CHA ceases to provide accommodation	HF has 18 centres in Britain		

## Appendix 2: CHA Centre dates

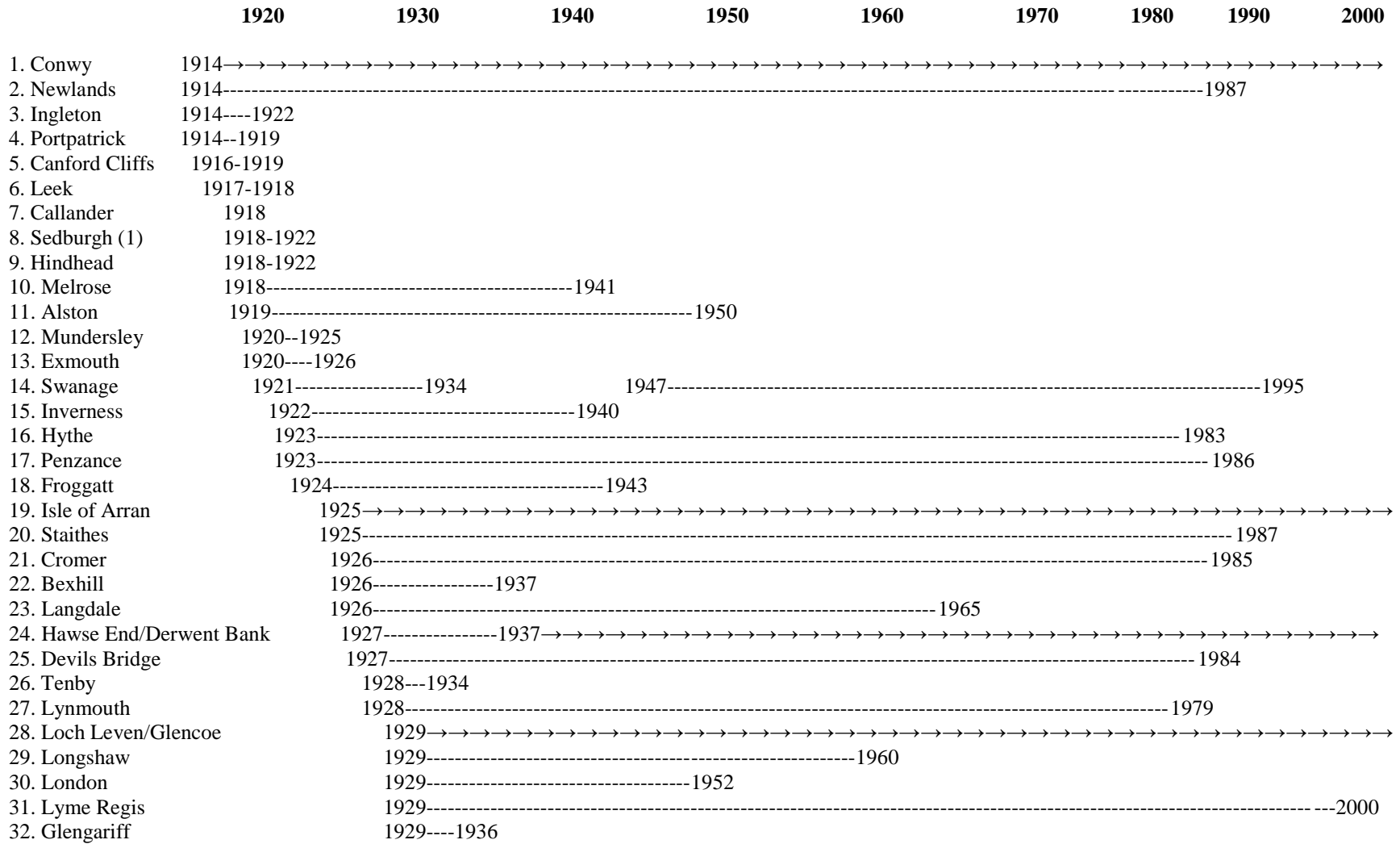
	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
1. Ambleside (Smallwood House)	1891-93											
2. Keswick (Stanger Street)	1893-94											
3. Barmouth	1894---98											
4. Keswick (Greenhow's Hotel)	1894-96											
5. Tavistock	1895											
6. Portrush	1895--99											
7. Portinscale (The Towers)	1896-99											
8. Edinburgh	1896 1900											
9. Helensburgh	1896-97											
10. Whitby	1896-----1999											
11. Buxton	1897											
12. Conway	1898											
13. Hastings	1898											
14. Bangor University Hall	1898-----1927											
15. Rhu (Ardenconnel)	1899-----1982											
16. Keld	1899-1901											
17. Ramsey (1)	1900-02											
18. Monmouth	1902-03											
19. Hayfield	1902-----1911											
20. Richmond	1903											
21. Galway	1903-05											
22. Newlands Mill	1904-----1913											
23. Boscastle	1904-06, 1910											
24. Achill	1905, 1907											
25. Portballintrae	1905-----1914 1919-1920											
26. Dublin	1906											
27. Addiscombe	1906-1910											
28. Halesowen	1907											
29. Wharfedale (Grassington)	1908											
30. Inverness	1908-09, 1911-1912											
31. Ambleside (Greenbank)	1909-----1924											







Appendix 3: HF Centre dates





Appendix 3: HF Centre dates

	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
59. Gomshall				1947-----					1974
60. Selworthy				1952→→→→→					→→→→→
61. Dublin				1954-----	1960				
62. Scarborough				1954-----					1998
63. Aberystwyth				1955-----					1976
64. Edinburgh (1)				1955-1956					
65. Oxford				1955					
66. Freshwater Bay				1956→→→→→					→→→→→
67. Stratford upon Avon					1961-----				1982
68. Newquay					1962-----				1986
69. Thurlestone Sands					1964→→→→→				→→→→→
70. Colwyn Bay					1964-----				1974
71. Crowcombe					1967-----				1971
72. Thorne Island					1967-1968				
73. Edinburgh (2)					1967-----				1981
74. Aviemore					1968-1971				
75. Exeter						1973-----			1982
76. Loch Awe						1974-----			1990
77. Windsor						1974-----			1982
78. Castleton						1975-----			1983
79. Ashdown Forest						1976-----			1981
80. Dinton						1976-----			1982
81. Durham						1976-----			1985
82. Llandudno						1976-----			1984
83. Blairgowrie						1976			
84. Maentwrog						1977-----			1983
85. Ammerdown						1978-----			1982
86. Holmbury						1978-1979			
87. Pulborough						1979-----			1990
88. Purbeck						1979-1981			
89. Horsham							1983--		1988
90. Littondale							1984-		1986

### Appendix 3: HF Centre dates

	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
91. Llantwryd Wells							1984---	1990	
92. Wendover							1984		
93. Betws-y-Coed							1985		
94. Pembroke							1985	1986-1991	
95. Skye							1985-1986		
96. Newtonmore							1985-1986		
97. Ardelve							1985-1986		
98. Horton							1985		
99. Buxton							1985-1986		
100. Beaconsfield							1985		
101. Dorking							1985		
102. St. Ives							1986	→→→→→	
103. Symonds Yat							1986		
104. Pitlochry							1986	1995→→	
105. Newton Stewart							1986		
106. Aberfoyle							1986		
107. Ilkley							1986---	1990	
108. Church Stretton							1986-1988		
109. Ludham							1986		
110. Littlehampton							1986		
111. Hebden Bridge							1987		
112. Appleby							1987---	1992	
113. Shipham							1988		
114. Sedburgh (2)									
1989	→→→→→								
115. Brecon								1990→→→→	
116. Dalwhinnie								1990-1992	
117. Dovedale								1991→→→→	
118. Abingworth								1994→→	
119. Whitby								1998→	
120. Haytor								1999→	

Appendix 4: CHA/HF Accommodation

Year	British Centres		Guest-weeks	
	CHA	HF	CHA (British centres)	HF (all categories)
1914	13	4	10773	2196
<b>1919</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12917</b>	<b>5241</b>
1920	13		17486	6398
1921	14		17939	8433
1922	14		17108	10948
1923	14		17670	12267
1924	14		16222	12942
1925	14		17890	15615
1926	14		19061	16154
1927	14		19926	18969
1928	16		18750	20829
1929	17		22358	28306
1930	19	25	22900	31087
<b>1931</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24327</b>	<b>31555</b>
1932	25	28	26475	29878
1933	24	30	25599	31394
1934	26	31	25838	34333
1935	24	30	26995	35339
1936	27	30	28776	37794
1937	27	34	27784	41041
<b>1938</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>28872</b>	<b>45169</b>
1939	28	33	26890	41516
1940	22		11696	17813
1941	8	6	13305	15800
1942	10	14	14182	14947
1943	10	14	14524	14466
1944	12		16288	14725
1945	13	15	19020	16720
1946	15	31	23770	27767
1947	23	31	29052	45512
1948	25	36	28831	48203
1949	25	35	26888	50585
1950	25	35	26803	52004
<b>1951</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>26604</b>	<b>54703</b>
1952	27	33	27597	58339
1953	27	32	27826	58835
1954	27	32	25654	60198
1955	27	39	23956	61888
1956	27	39	24252	60515
1957	26	38	27730	60249
1958	26	38		58686
1959	26	38	28958	61094
1960	26	38	28662	60957
<b>1961</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>31065</b>	<b>65335</b>

#### Appendix 4: CHA/HF Accommodation

Year	British Centres		Guest-weeks	
	CHA	HF	CHA (British centres)	HF (all categories)
1962	28	38		66820
1963	27	38		67744
1964	26	35		64729
1965	26	36		64223
1966	25	36	27386	66820
1967	25	38	27557	59826*
1968	24	38		61941*
1969	24	37		60313*
1970	24	37		61053*
<b>1971</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>26552</b>	<b>60052*</b>
1972	22	35		62372*
1973	22	36		62066*
1974	22	38		62380*
1975	22	35		65711
1976	22	41	28734	62416
1977	21	40	28528	61760
1978	21	42		61048
1979	21	43		57732
1980	20	41	23797	52209
<b>1981</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>41</b>		
1982	20	38		
1983	14	33	19130	
1984	14	31	18587	
1985	14	36	18726	
1986	14	38		
1987	14	27	17970	
1988	14	24	17393	
1989	14	22	16911	
1990	14	24		
<b>1991</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>13506</b>	
1992	13	20		
1993	13	18		
1994	13	19		
1995	13	19		
1996	6	19		
1997	6	19		
1998	5	20		
1999	5	20		
2000	2	20		
<b>2001</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>19</b>		
2002	1	18		
2003	nil	17		

\*British centres only.



## Appendix 5: YHA Yearly Summaries

Year	-----National-----				-----Lake District-----		
	Members	Hostels	Beds	Bed-nights	Hostels	Beds M/F	Bed-nights
1931	6,439	73	1,562	not known	5	76	not known
1932	16,914	132	2,868	78,067	15	228	10,957
1933	27,905	183	4,281	157,582	18	343	28,170
1934	37,285	212	5,516	221,271	16		37,829
1935	48,057	239	6,398	307,811	18	488	46,996
1936	59,768	262	7,510	385,407	21		50,775
1937	70,505	275	8,762	463,116	22	700	58,263
1938	79,821	281	9,768	536,543	23	749	63,532
1939	83,418	297	10,689	537,986	24	818	61,120
1940	50,864	236	8,267	275,600	22	740	52,693
1941	55,327	170	5,462	331,877	21	594	62,529
1942	78,382	187	6,327	408,443	23		76,188
1943	100,907	197	6,824	502,632	22		87,037
1944	133,678	208	7,885	613,215	21		97,095
1945	153,751	234	9,595	746,699	22		108,225
1946	166,039	264	11,952	859,519	26	1169	124,883
1947	186,930	263	12,220	955,318	25	1145	128,080
1948	228,069	282	12,933	1,140,850	25	1185	144,376
1949	208,425	293	12,735	1,131,441	27	1260+	142,803
1950	210,142	303	13,971	1,157,802	27	1324	143,941
1951	202,316	300	14,196	1,135,610	27	1404	136,090
1952	197,826	298	14,329	1,158,620	27	1404	146,259
1953	184,366	294	14,096	1,072,049	27	1404	136,923
1954	180,251	292	14,119	1,032,410	28	1472	129,235
1955	186,796	286	13,912	1,041,823	28	1372	136,008
1956	192,745	276	13,592	1,026,058	26	1370	143,520
1957	190,048	274	13,269	1,054,595	25	1435	158,176

## Appendix 5: YHA Yearly Summaries

Year	-----National-----				-----Lake District-----		
	Members	Hostels	Beds	Bed-nights	Hostels	Beds	Bed-nights
1958	187,470	274	13,361	1,039,016	26	1520	161,892
1959	195,140	268	13,428	1,114,657	26	1512	175,630
1960	181,958	270	13,385	1,096,880	26	1524	175,335
1961	186,624	266	13,311	1,133,858	26	1563	178,848
1962	192,694	262	13,216	1,178,704	26	1578	190,876
1963	203,370	266	13,470	1,175,987	26	1579	185,468
1964	203,532	271	13,490	1,195,091	26	1555	185,548
1965	219,336	271	13,573	1,239,689	26	1542	191,871
1966	218,305	262	13,240	1,224,322	26	1542	184,479
1967	219,547	261	13,166	1,249,187	25	1556	194,920
1968	217,842	263	13,320	1,274,142	24	1546	186,635
1969	221,432	263	13,245	1,361,985	25	1558	193,498
1970	234,621	259	13,202	1,453,776	26	1585	193,981
1971	234,505	254	13,026	1,487,010	27	1579	202,723
1972	226,202	262	13,549	1,602,471	26	1665	227,018
1973	229,516	261	13,957	1,649,014	26	1668	241,776
1974	243,316	263	13,900	1,740,713	25	1658	252,251
1975	274,992	264	13,973	1,843,989	25	1657	271,116
1976	277,526	266	14,184	1,876,421	25	1657	268,155
1977	280,619	265	14,429	1,899,108	25	1631	256,289
1978	276,770	272	14,670	1,899,530	25	1658	254,108
1979	294,296	272	14,752	1,922,500	25	1673	253,858
1980	309,341	277	15,383	1,940,199	25	1672	260,564
1981	281,132	282	15,858	1,789,719	25	1684	244,298
1982	257,258	284	15,661	1,679,105	26	1704	218,037
1983	255,246	278	15,372	1,721,006	26	1709	227,649
1984	251,550	270	15,045	1,793,974	26	1669	233,557
1985	255,261	260	14,707	1,871,033	25	1596	241,848

## Appendix 5: YHA Yearly Summaries

Year	-----National-----				-----Lake District-----		
	Members	Hostels	Beds	Bed-nights	Hostels	Beds	Bed-nights
1986	269,914	254	14,553	1,808,440	25	1647	227,971
1987	274,849	275	15,205	1,977,340	26	1673	258,958
1988	286,635	261	15,052	2,078,071	26	1679	268,840
1989	314,093	258	15,090	2,150,271	26	1645	275,102
1990	320,747	256	14,960	2,084,427	25	1638	274,130
1991	306,538	253	14,735	1,943,090	26	1687	264,476
1992	278,527	249	14,551	1,917,206	26	1717	259,050
1993/94	265,013	241	14,251	1,899,520	26	1717	248,666
1994/95	258,117	241	14,195	1,940,279	26	1711	248,937
1995/96	271,970	239	13,957	2,031,661	26	1693	250,270
1996/97	268,728	235	13,711	2,102,338	26	1677	256,945
1997/98	269,364	235	13,842	2,111,074	26	1662	271,934
1998/99	278,463	237	13,823	2,114,336	27	1667	267,893
1999/00	293,730	229	13,347	2,093,069	27	1660	272,282
2000/01	296,141	228	13,277	1,990,006	27	1676	260,573
2001/02	272,460	227	13,034	1,667,051	26	1667	179,321
2002/03	314,070	221	12,890	1,963,602	26	1637	256,874
2003/04	284,705	226	13,674	1,938,970	25	1609	260,002

### Notes:

In 1993 the statistical year was changed from 1 October-30 September to 1 March-28 February. The 1992 figure is for the period 1 October 1991-30 September 1992. The 1993/94 figure is for the period 1 March-1993-28 February 1994. The 1993 figure is therefore for only 5 months: 1 October 1992-28 February 1993.

## **Appendix 6: CHA/HF Membership Survey Questionnaire**

Age, gender and occupation (if retired-last occupation)

### First holiday

When and where did you first take a CHA/HF holiday (how old were you)?

How were you introduced to CHA/HF holidays (church, friends, holiday with parents, magazine advertisement)?

Did you take your holiday on your own, as part of a group, with parents, as a couple (married or single)?

What kind of activities were involved (were they walking holidays, special interest holidays)?

What were your impressions of your first holiday (what did you like most, what did you dislike most, what did you get out of it?)

What sort of people were on holiday with you (age/sex/occupation/social class?).

What did you think of the accommodation and facilities?

Holiday experiences (if more than one holiday)

How many CHA/HF holidays have you been on, when and where (which centres have been visited)?

What kind of activities were involved (were they walking holidays, special interest holidays)?

What did you enjoy most about your CHA/HF holidays, what did you enjoy least?

How did the CHA/HF experience change over time?

Last holiday

When and where was your last holiday?

What kind of holiday was it (a walking holiday, special interest holiday)?

Why did you stop going on CHA/HF holidays?

Final Comments

Did you know of its congregational (religious) origins (comments on saying of grace/prohibition of alcohol)?

Were you aware of its sobriquet (catch a husband/husband's found)?

What part did CHA/HF holidays play in your life?

**To sum up, what was the most important aspect of your CHA/HF holidays?**

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES	
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	
FRIENDSHIP & FELLOWSHIP	
COUNTRYSIDE EXPERIENCE	

**[rank 1, 2, 3 & 4]**

Any further comments:

Douglas G Hope BSc(Hons) DipTP MA FRGS MRTPI

March 2012

## Appendix 7: Membership Survey Summary

Total responses      100              male: 35 (35%)      Female:      65 (65%)

Age profile	Age	male	female	Total
	50-59	3	2	5 ( 5%)
	60-69	9	20	29 (29%)
	70-79	6	26	32 (32%)
	>80	17	17	34 (34%)

Most important aspect of holidays (72 responses)

	<b>Rank</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Total</b>
Recreational activities		14	13	44	1	72
Educational experience		0	2	0	70	72
Friendship & Fellowship		31	31	8	1	72
Countryside experience		27	27	18	0	72
	<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>72</b>	

## **Appendix 8: Membership Questionnaire Summaries**

001: Male aged 75 yrs. Retired Engineer, 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1966 (30yrs old). Numerous holidays until 1990 at Cromer. Mostly walking with some special interest. Introduced through local club. Walks leader for 10years.

002: Female aged 52 yrs. Lecturer at UoC, 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1967 (7yrs old), with parents, then with group as a teenager. Last holiday 1975 at youth centre. Between age of 7 and 15 had one or two CHA/HF holidays a year. Walking holidays.

003: Female aged 62yrs. Writer (independent historian), 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1961 (12yrs old) with parents and 2 younger sisters. Parents met at CHA club in 1947. Three HF holidays 1961-64. Then worked as secretary whilst at University (1966-1968) at four centres.

004\*: Female aged 73 yrs. Retired University lecturer (German and Central European studies). 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1955 (16 yrs old). Then worked as secretary whilst at University (1958-1961) at five centres. No holidays thereafter until 1990s. Last holiday at Whitby 1993 with walking group.

005: Female aged 72. Retired. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1970 with friend (member of London CHA local group). Frequent CHA and HF holidays at home and abroad. Walking holidays and special interest. Last holiday was a walking holiday to St. Lucia in 2009. Member of Crosby CHA Club since 1980.

006: Male aged 85yrs. Retired telecommunications engineer. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday in 1940s with parents. Frequent holidays in 1940s and 1950s. None in 1960s & 1970s. Returned to CHA/HF in 1980s. Last holiday to Madeira in 2003. Walking holidays.

007: Male aged 58. Chartered Civil Engineer. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday in 1971 (aged 17yrs) with brother. Frequent holidays during 1970s until married in 1982. Walking holidays. Holidays with children in 1990s (abroad) and then without children from 2003 (skiing).



## **Appendix 8: Membership Questionnaire Summaries**

008: Female aged 84yrs. Retired laboratory technician. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1960 (aged 33yrs with children at family centre). Holidays every year with either CHA or HF since. Mainly walking holidays; special interest holidays more recently. Last holiday 2012 (Murder Mystery Weekend). Member of Crosby CHA Club.

009: Female aged 70yrs. Retired nurse. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1960s (on own). Frequent holidays since. Mainly walking but some special interest. Last holiday 2006. Member of Crosby CHA Club.

010: Male aged 54 yrs. Press photographer. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1981 (aged 23yrs) with friends. Walking holiday. Only holiday taken. Too organised.

011: Male aged 77yrs. Retired lecturer. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1951 (aged 17-18yrs) with friend. Frequent holidays since with Bolton CHA club. Walking holidays. Met wife on CHA holiday.

012: Female aged 77yrs. Retired teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday early 1950s with local group. Frequent holidays since with Bolton CHA club. Walking holidays. Met husband on CHA holiday.

013: Female aged 66yrs. Retired Secretary. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1970 (aged 27 yrs) with friends. Frequent holidays from 1972-1986 until married. Walking holidays with Crosby CHA club. Returned in late 1990s with special interest holidays. Not an active club member any longer.

014: Male aged 76yrs. Retired systems analyst. 1st holiday 1963 (aged 27yrs) with friends. Frequent holidays until 1972. Walking holidays. Then married and went camping with children. More recently, holidays with Crosby CHA club.

015: Female aged 71yrs. Retired teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1961 (aged 21yrs) with friends as a member of Bradford CHA Club. Walking holidays with club until 2000.

## **Appendix 8: Membership Questionnaire Summaries**

016: Female aged 86yrs. Retired teacher (Spinster). 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1955 (aged 30yrs) with friends. Frequent holidays until 2000 (150 in 45 years!). Walking holidays with Bolton CHA Club. Enjoyed fellowship.

017: Male aged 79yrs. Retired civil servant (MAFF). 1<sup>st</sup> holiday with parents in 1949 (aged 16yrs). Frequent holidays up to present time. Walking and climbing. Member of Crosby CHA Club.

018: Female aged 64yrs. Retired head teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday in 2003 (aged 55yrs). Guided walking. Holiday every year since at home and abroad.

019: Male aged 72yrs. Retired chartered accountant. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1980 (aged 40yrs). Frequent holidays every year since. Guided walking first but special interest latterly. Members of Fylde Coast Ramblers (previously Fylde CHA Club).

020: Female aged 69yrs. Retired secretary. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1960 (aged 17yrs) with local walking group (Newcastle CHA Club). Frequent holidays since with husband and club. Walking holidays.

021: Female aged 87yrs. Retired secretary. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1942 (aged 17) with sister. Met TAL (at Newlands). Frequent holidays over next 20years. Walking holidays. Then broadened horizons. Returned to CHA/HF with Newcastle CHA Club in 1990s.

022: Female aged 73yrs. Retired teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1939 (10 months old). Frequent holidays with parents in 1940s and '50s, then as student and young teacher, then with own family and latterly with York CHA/HF Club. Mainly walking holidays. Last HF holiday 1983 but still walk with local club.

023: Female aged 85yrs. Retired Clerk. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday in 1944 when 18 years old with friend. Regular holidays since with husband and then local group (York CHA/HF Club).

024: Male aged 81yrs. Retired Registrar (BDM). 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1959 (aged 29yrs) with wife. Frequent holidays since with York CHA/HF Club. Guided walking.

## **Appendix 8: Membership Questionnaire Summaries**

025: Female aged 66yrs. Retired head of 6<sup>th</sup> form in all-girl's school. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday in 1961 (aged 16yrs) with friends. Three further holidays during 1960s (walking). Only recently found local CHA walking group (Newcastle CHA) following retirement.

026: Female aged 82yrs. Retired teacher at Grammar School. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday in 1939 (aged 9 years) with parents (who met on holiday). Holidays continued until University. Only recommenced following retirement.

027: Female aged 76yrs. Retired canteen assistant. Regular walking holidays over 40 year period with 2 or 3 other people (mainly Christmas at Alnmouth). Stopped in 1990s because too expensive. Now holiday with Newcastle CHA club once a year.

028: Male aged 81. Retired industrial chemist. 1st holiday 1997 (aged 65 years) with wife following retirement. CHA holidays once a year until closed, then HF holidays. Walking and special interest (painting) holidays. Still going on HF holidays with Bolton CHA Club.

029: Female aged 76yrs. Retired midwife. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1995 (aged 60 years) with friends following retirement. CHA holidays once a year until closed, then HF holidays. Walking and special interest (painting) holidays. Still going on HF holidays with Bolton CHA Club.

030: Female aged 81yrs. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1986 (aged 65 years) with friends. Walking holidays annually since then with Bolton CHA.

031: Female aged 63yrs. Retired typist/clerical. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday in 1985 on own. Annual holidays until 2000. Walking. Stopped because of increase in prices. Walk locally with Newcastle CHA Club.

032\*: Female aged 75yrs. Retired primary teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1948 (aged 11 years) with parents. Frequent holidays (almost 200 in total) with CHA and HF with husband and with local group (Crosby CHA Club). Almost all have been walking holidays Also holiday with Christian Guild (attracts people who went on CHA holidays and wish to retain Christian traditions).

## Appendix 8: Membership Questionnaire Summaries

033: Female aged 96yrs. Retired medical secretary. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1923!! Many holidays since but stopped walking holidays in 1980s due to age. Still support Newcastle Club. Met TAL in 1940s.

034: Female aged 67yrs. Retired medical secretary. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1988 (aged 43 years). Frequent holidays at various locations but stopped due to cost. Still walk locally with Newcastle CHA Club.

035: Female aged 69yrs. Retired administrative assistant. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1962 (aged 20yrs). About 30 holidays since. Mainly walking but some special interest. Holidays with Newcastle CHA Club.

036: Female aged 84yrs. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1942 (aged 24 years) with friends. Frequent walking holidays with friends until married in 1960. Continued walking with local club (Bolton CHA) at weekends. Recommenced CHA/HF holidays when husband died in 1970.

037: Female aged 63yrs. University Dean. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday late 1980s with children. Annual walking family holidays with children in 1990s. After a gap, started again in 2010 with children as adults.

038: Female aged 69yrs. Retired retail assistant. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1993 (51 years old) with local group (York CHA Club). Frequent holidays since.

039: Male aged 60yrs. Electrical Technician. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 20 years ago, aged 40 years, on own. Several walking and special interest holidays at home and abroad since, on own or with local group (York CHA Club). Met wife at HF centre.

040: Male aged 68yrs. Retired (Mini-bus driver). 1<sup>st</sup> holiday in 1962 (aged 18 years) with friend. Frequent walking holidays since (led walks at Eskdale). Last week's holiday with family and friends in 1973 (too expensive). Many club weekends since (with York CHA Club).

## **Appendix 8: Membership Questionnaire Summaries**

041: Female aged 64yrs. Retired finance officer. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday in 1990s (aged early 50s). Group weekend at Eskdale (walking). Frequent group walking holidays since at home and abroad with other York CHA Club members.

042: Female aged 71yrs. Retired teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday in 1972 (aged 32 years) with children. Went on Methodist Guild holidays with parents before then. When children became teenagers (31 years old) had to pay full price so went on overseas package holidays instead. Recently joined Bolton HF local group and walk each week with them.

043: Male aged 82yrs. Retired company director (engineering). 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1947 (aged 18) with friend. Thirty walking holidays since at home and abroad. Leader on some holidays abroad (Austria-Dolomites). Stopped in 1964 with marriage and children.

044\*: Female aged 70yrs. Retired workshop supervisor (teaching). 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1976 (aged 34 years) walking with friend. German working in Germany and introduced to CHA through a colleague who had been working in England. Continuous CHA/HF holidays through 1970s, '80s and '90s. Moved to England in 1992 and holidays continue. Special interest and 'Freedom break' holidays since 1990s.

045: Female aged 68yrs. Retired teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1950 (6 years old) with parents to family centre at Filey. Further visits with parents until 1965. Then multiple visits to various centres until 1997 (walking holidays).

046: Female aged 57. Lecturer. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1966 (11 years old) with Mother (widowed), sister and brother. Further CHA holidays with parents and then acted as hostess/leader and Secretary when in Sixth form at school, at University and afterwards until 1978 when married (we met at Grasmere in 1972). CHA Holidays continued with husband until 1997 and then HF holidays. Mainly walking.

047: Female aged 66yrs. Retired play gym leader. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1963 (aged 17 years) with girlfriend, through church. Further holidays in 1964 & 1965 and then got married. Moved to Switzerland.

## Appendix 8: Membership Questionnaire Summaries

048: Male aged 59yrs. University lecturer. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1956 on IG holiday when 3 years old. Another IG holiday in 1963 (when 10 years old). Subsequently worked as walks leader after 'A' levels from 1971 until 1980. After marriage, took CHA holidays with wife at home and abroad.

049: Female aged 70yrs. Charity official. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1988 aged 46 years when widowed (organised by 'Cruse' the charity for the bereaved. Walking holiday. Since been on 15 holidays at 11 different centres, walking, golf and bridge.

050: Female aged 80yrs. Retired teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1991 aged 65 years as part of a group (Llyn Ramblers). Been on six CHA and ten HF holidays since. All walking with one music.

051: Male aged 86yrs. Retired BT Manager. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1944 aged 18 years after previous YHA holidays. Many holidays throughout UK since. Mainly walking until 1990s (Secretary/walks leader for several years). In 1990s, helped form Marple Bridge Rambling Club who went occasionally to CHA/HF guest houses but mostly used private hotels.

052: Female aged 84yrs. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1945 aged 18 years. Many holidays throughout UK until 1990s. Mainly walking but was Scottish Dancing tutor at Moorgate, Hope CHA from 1967-1990s (five day sessions twice a year and weekend re-unions). Fell out with CHA administration. In 1990s, helped form Marple Bridge Rambling Club who went occasionally to CHA/HF guest houses but mostly used private hotels.

053: Female aged 77yrs. Retired industrial chemist. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1955 (aged 21 years). CHA/HF holidays at least once a year since. Met husband on CHA holiday in 1957. HF holidays continue.

054: Female aged 68yrs. Retired confectioner. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1961 (aged 17 years). Three holidays 1961-1963 (walking holidays with friends). Member of local group (Accrington & Blackburn) and continued as member, organizing walks and socials. Met husband in 1963 and CHA holidays stopped.

## Appendix 8: Membership Questionnaire Summaries

055: Male aged 67yrs. Ex head-teacher and university lecturer. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1961 (aged 18 years) with friend. Frequent holidays since, mainly as secretary/leader (8 weeks per year). Still lead walks.

056: Male aged 83yrs. Retired civil servant (1984). 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1953 (aged 24 years) with friend. Numerous holidays since, all walking, until 1992. Occasional walks leader from 1971 onwards.

057: Female aged 60yrs. Retired teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1998 with a friend. Frequent walking holidays since, at home and abroad.

058: Female aged 88yrs. Retired local government officer. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1945 (aged 22 years). Joined Preston CHA Rambling Club in 1944. Met husband on CHA holiday (there were 11 marriages in the club during the 1950s. Numerous walking holidays until 1961 (when daughter 8 years old and started camping).

059: Female aged 73yrs. Retired practice manager. 1<sup>st</sup> CHA holiday 1957 (guided walking), HF holiday 1960. Joined local CHA group in 1960 and met husband. Frequent holidays until present time. Member of Morecambe HF Rambling Club.

060: Male aged 85yrs. Retired export executive (ICI). 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1944 (aged 17 years) with school friend of same age. About 20 holidays 1944-1962. All walking holidays and family holidays with children after marriage (1960). Met wife on CHA holiday. Stopped to go self-catering with small children.

061: Female aged 70yrs. Retired primary teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1958 (aged 18 years) with brother. Secretary during student days. Regular annual holidays with family until 1980. Walking holidays.

062: Female aged 77yrs. Retired primary teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1944 (9 years old) with parents. Frequent holidays followed, at first with parents, then with friends and later with husband. All walking holidays. Brought up in Colne, father was a disciple of TAL.

## Appendix 8: Membership Questionnaire Summaries

063: Male aged 81yrs. Retired industrial chemist. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1974 (aged 44 years) with wife and children. Frequent holidays since; walking, occasional folk dancing and sight-seeing. Member of very active CHA Rambling Club.

064: Female aged 72yrs. Retired teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1948 (9 years old) with parents. Then annual holidays from 1960 to 1991 as an adult. After retirement, money tight.

065: Female aged 83yrs. Retired teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1950 (21 years old). Several holidays up to 1970 when 'R A' and 'Waymark' holidays discovered (trips abroad after family grown up). Also, SAGA special interest holidays. Member of Ramblers' Association.

066: Male aged 81yrs. Retired banker. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1947 (aged 16 years) as part of a Methodist church group. Annual holidays until 1954. The other interests.

067: Female aged 73yrs. Retired minister/hospital chaplain. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1960 (aged 22 years) with friends. Only holiday with CHA/HF. After college, holidays with school.

068: Male aged 81yrs. Retired teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1943 (aged 13 years) with parents. About fifty CHA holidays from 1950 until 2001. Was resident secretary for a few years then host for 30 years. Met wife on CHA holiday in 1955. HF holidays abroad in 1990s.

069: Male aged 83yrs. Retired draughtsman and CAD operator. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1951 (aged 23 years) on own. Frequent holidays since (with wife after marriage), mostly at Moorgate, Hope. Formed Hope Reunion Club which lasted from 1960s until 2005 (met each year at different centres).

070\*: Male aged 65. Retired Personnel Manager. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1967 (20 years old) with girlfriend (later wife). Visited almost every CHA/HF centre over the years. Usually walking holidays with some special interest (bird watching, painting, drawing).



## **Appendix 8: Membership Questionnaire Summaries**

071\*: Female aged 62yrs. Packer at Bae Systems, Barrow. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday early 1990s with friend. Only HF holiday. In Barrow Ramblers Club.

072\*: Female aged 66yrs. Packer at Bae Systems, Barrow. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday early 1990s with friend. Only HF holiday. In Barrow Ramblers Club. Father was leader at Forest Side, Grasmere and Glaramara, Borrowdale in 1930s.

073: Male aged 65. University professor. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday in 1958 (aged 11 years) with parents. Annual holidays until 1967. All walking holidays. Then acquired transport and started self-catering holidays with wife (met on CHA holiday).

074\*: Male aged 65yrs. Retired mechanical engineer. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1959 (aged 11 years) with parents. Frequent holidays until 1983. Walking holidays then family holidays with children. Met wife on CHA holiday. Member of Manchester CHA Club.

075\*: Female aged 67yrs. Retired physiotherapist. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1963 (aged 18 years) with parents. Frequent holidays until 1983. Walking holidays then family holidays with children. Met husband on CHA holiday. Member of Manchester CHA Club.

076: Female aged 74yrs. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1956 (aged 19yrs) with friends from Sunday School. Continued with CHA until Rambler's took it over in 1999. Walks leader for many years. Member of Manchester CHA Club.

077: Female aged 78yrs. Retired Secretary. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1952 (18 years old) with a friend. Numerous holidays at home and abroad until 1991. Mainly walking but special interest later. Member of Manchester CHA Club.

078: Female aged 81yrs. Retired GP's receptionist. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday early 1950s as part of a group (Manchester CHA Walking Group). Numerous CHA and HF holidays up to present day. All walking but more sight-seeing now.

## **Appendix 8: Membership Questionnaire Summaries**

079: Female aged 75yrs. Retired teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1956 (aged 19yrs) as a student with a group of students. Numerous holidays since. After marriage and with children. Continue walking with Stockport CHA Rambling Club.

080: Female aged 76yrs. Retired private secretary. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1940s (aged 7 years) with parents. Numerous holidays thereafter, with parents, with friends, alone, with family and as part of a group (Manchester CHA Rambling Club). Visited almost every CHA and HF centre.

081: Female aged 72yrs. Retired teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1963 (aged 23 years) alone. Numerous holidays since in UK and abroad up to 1991. Hostess on a number of occasions. All walking holidays. Started walking tours with fellow members of CHA club in 1991 (not CHA/HF).

082: Female aged 87yrs. Retired cashier. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1941 (aged 16 years) with friend. Holidays in 1940s until married. Resumed in 1970s and last holiday in 1991 (commenced holidays abroad with other provider).

083\*: Male aged 61yrs. Company Chairman. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1953 (aged 3 years) with parents. Some 200 holidays since (walking). Met wife on HF holiday (her parents also met on HF holiday).

084\*: Male aged 65yrs. Retired commercial director (building company). 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 2008 when retired (alone). Been on 21 holidays since, alone and with wife.

085: Male aged 63yrs. Civil Servant. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1958 (aged 8 years) with parents. Six holidays over next ten years. Stopped on going to University.

086: Male aged 83yrs. Retired director of LDNP Visitor Centre. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1953 (aged 23 years) on own. Frequent holidays thereafter until about 2000. Mainly walking holidays. Walks leader from 1980s onwards. Met wife through local CHA/HF group.

## **Appendix 8: Membership Questionnaire Summaries**

087: Female aged 79yrs. Retired cashier/clerk. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1951 (aged 18yrs) on own. Frequent holidays thereafter (walking) until CHA finished.

088: Male aged 90yrs. Retired training officer. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1953 (aged 31) on own. Some 50 holidays (annual) during 1950s. Met wife on CHA holiday. Stopped to bring up family. Returned to Malhamdale 50 years later to reminisce.

089: Female aged 88yrs. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1950 (aged 25 years) on own. Ten holidays in next three years. Met husband and continued to holiday as couple until late 1950s. Stopped to bring up family. Returned to Malhamdale 50 years later to reminisce.

090: Male aged 87yrs. Retired company secretary. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1972 (aged 46 years) with wife. Numerous holidays since (last holiday 2000). Walking holidays. Member of Bolton CHA and Bolton HF clubs.

091: Female aged 85yrs. House-wife. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1972 (aged 44 years) with husband. Numerous holidays since (last holiday 2000). Walking holidays. Member of Bolton CHA and Bolton HF clubs.

092: Female aged 65yrs. Exam invigilator. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1952 (aged 3 years) with parents (Eskdale was a family centre). Holidays throughout the 1950s and '60s as child and teenager. After marriage, walking holidays continued through 1970s and '80s with husband but stopped in early 1990s. Wanted to do our own thing rather than be led. Member of Bolton CHA Rambling Club and go on club min-weeks at HF centres.

093: Female aged 78yrs. Retired civil servant. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1975 (aged 41) with friends. Several holidays since with Bolton CHA Rambling Club (weekends and min-breaks). All walking.

094: Female aged 69yrs. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday with parents as a child in the 1950s (aged 13yrs). Further holidays with parents until 1963. After college, holidays with friends (met husband) and, after marriage, with children. Holidayed with CHA/HF ever since at home and abroad.

## Appendix 8: Membership Questionnaire Summaries

095: Female aged 73yrs. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday as a child with parents. Frequent holidays until late 1970s. Drifted away because it changed when special interest holidays introduced. Atmosphere changed.

096\*: Male aged 80yrs. Never holidayed with CHA or HF. In student days worked as resident secretary in summers of 1951 & 1952. Member of Glasgow CHA Club from 1954, served on committee and led rambles etc.

097: Male aged 76yrs. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1952 (aged 16 years) in North Wales. Resident secretary at Kinfauns in 1955 (for eight weeks). Other holidays in 1950s but then no more (married).

098: Male aged 80yrs. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1958. Infrequent holidays over next 20 years. In '80s hosted IG Week at Whitby.

099: Female aged 85yrs. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday in mid-forties (first holiday away from parents). After two years of HF holidays, college and marriage meant holidays taken at youth hostels and camping. In 1970s became hostess (after training weekend etc.) and was hostess at 6 different centres during the 1970s. Went as guest with husband during 1980s.

100\*: Male aged 81yrs. Retired teacher. 1<sup>st</sup> holiday 1947 (school trip-aged 16yrs). Only holiday with HF. Following retirement gives weekly talks on ornithology at HF centre

\*Follow-up interviews carried out.

Male respondents 35

Female respondents 65

## Appendix 9: Membership Survey Selected Quotes

004: Female aged 73yrs.

*My first holiday was in 1955 at Longshaw in Derbyshire. I remember going on the train from Grimsby to Sheffield, then by bus. Quite an adventure in those days.....For Coniston, I would go on the well-known route from Grimsby to Manchester Victoria (sometimes having to change at Doncaster or Sheffield), then across to Manchester Piccadilly by taxi, then train again on the West Coast line to Ulverston. We had to change at Preston, Lancaster or Carnforth to pick up the connection which went to Barrow. From Ulverston, I went on the little red Ribble bus to Coniston and then by taxi to the HF centre. My auntie in Ulverston actually knew the taxi driver in Coniston, so he was waiting for me when the bus came in...he was the gardener at Monk Coniston so you can see why Monk Coniston was a favourite for me. The manageress, a Miss Curwen, was a very strict, draconian lady who insisted on everything being done properly.*

006: Male aged 85yrs.

*Very likeable holidays with like-minded people who were willing to walk and talk about the area. They provided friends who we would otherwise not have met.*

008: Female aged 84yres.

*I started walking as a student in 1946. My first visit to a CHA guest house was to Marske as a family unit in 1960. We then took our annual holidays at various centres. We were equally happy to visit HF or CHA centres, depending on the location and cost. I was widowed in 1970 and joined a local HF club walking regularly on most Sundays. I took walking holidays with both organisations. I took early retirement in 1983 and my name was put forward by the club for assessment as an HF walks leader. I passed the assessment at Newlands, near Keswick, and became part of a team for "Best of Britain" walking holidays run by the HF. I led walks for 3 weeks each year at many centres and helped with the evening social activities. The social side*

## Appendix 9: Membership Survey Selected Quotes

*changed considerably over the years. HF introduced 'Bar' sales and provided record players much sooner than the CHA.*

016: Female aged 86yrs.

*I have had between 130 and 160 holidays in CHA/HF guest houses since 1955. On my first holiday I found a place full of friendly people who loved the countryside. The wonderful fellowship drew me back each year. I miss Grace and morning prayers but enjoy my glass of wine at dinner. As an 86 year old spinster, I am living proof of the fallacy of 'Catch a Husbands Association'! Many of the old traditions have gone forever and I miss them but that wonderful fellowship remains.*

021: Female aged 87yrs.

*CHA/HF holidays and Newcastle and District CHA/HF Rambling Club has played a huge part in my life and I shall forever be grateful to Arthur Leonard and his successors because if I had not, after much persuasion, joined the CHA/HF and participated in drama and other social activities, I would not later had the temerity to become a City Guide, Adult Association Chairman or to form a Ladies Bowling Club (of which I was secretary) and which is still going strong.*

024: Male aged 81yrs.

*Enjoyed organised walks, the companionship and the social evenings. Like up-graded youth hostels. Strict regime on Sundays –no dancing or games, at beginning but less regimented later. Sunday became a normal walking day. Communal packed lunches replaced by individual packed lunches. One day on climb up Great gable, opened rucksack with packed lunches on tin tray to find only jam sandwiches. We fed them to the sheep.*

## Appendix 9: Membership Survey Selected Quotes

031: Female aged 63yrs.

*Absolutely amazing! I enjoyed everything about the holidays; the walks, food, company, evening activities. I couldn't fault anything. But it became much too expensive when they moved to en-suite rooms and upgraded facilities. I think people on fixed incomes have been priced out. The original ethos was that a week's holiday should only cost a week's wage. There are still many people, especially in the north who will never earn £700 a week in the present climate.*

045: Female aged 68yrs.

*My mother was invited to be hostess when Glaramara CHA opened at Easter 1935 and she met my father at Grasmere CHA a few years later. She regaled me with tales of her climbing exploits, so that I was familiar with names such as Napes Needle and Lord's Rake, and could name many of the mountains long before I climbed them. I was taken to Filey first, then to Eskdale when I was eight, and CHA family holidays continued through my teenage years. I became a hostess, and for many years it never occurred to me to book any other holiday apart from CHA or HF, both in the UK and abroad. I am now well into retirement, but my main leisure activities are still walking and Scottish dancing. Both of these lifelong interests can be traced back to the CHA holidays, which gave so much pleasure to so many people.*

048: Male aged 59.

*My first holiday was at Moorgate, Hope in 1956. It was called an Invited Guest holiday. My father died in 1955, I was 3 years old, and my mother was left with 3 young children. She was proposed for a free holiday by a CHA member in the town (Nelson). My father had been caretaker of a Methodist chapel and I think that it was a CHA/church member who proposed us for that holiday. I can't remember anything about it but my mother the kids had another free holiday when I was about 10, again at Moorgate. My mother became a member of the Nelson CHA Club.*

## Appendix 9: Membership Survey Selected Quotes

*I never went on a proper CHA holiday but in 1971, after 'A' levels, I went to work as a staff member at Onich CHA for the summer. Subsequently, I worked as a leader and led both standard walking weeks and special walking weeks (longer walks in the high fells of Lakeland). I enjoyed the hill walking, it complemented my interest in the landscape. When I stopped leading for CHA, my wife and I started going to the centres for our holidays and with the demise of the CHA we switched to HF. I suppose I must have spent 2-3 years of my life living in their centres.*

*I also served as a member of the CHA General committee (1984-1990) and attempted to improve their marketing, and reintroduce some of the more strenuous types of hill walking holidays, which had declined greatly probably because the average age of the clients had increased and their ability had declined. I hoped to bring in some younger mountain-enthusiastic people. I think it worked initially for a year or two, but the organisation had limited resources and tried to rely on word-of-mouth publicity. It was bound to fail. HF was more progressive, took risks that paid off and now reap the rewards.*

049: Female aged 70yrs.

*First went to HF in 1988 when recently widowed and with a child. I was very doubtful about it but the holiday was a success; I felt comfortable with the people and the friendly atmosphere was just right. I have stayed at eleven houses since taking part in walking, golf and walking with bridge. The biggest change I have seen is the provision of en-suite bathrooms – rushing for the bathrooms after a day's walking was not great. It is not a cheap holiday but I think good value for money. I would feel very happy to recommend HF and have done so.*

058: Female aged 88yrs.

*They were my only holidays for many years. They introduced me to communal living, which was a new concept to me (an only child) and I had some memorable times. I am sure they influenced, in some part, the way I have*



## Appendix 9: Membership Survey Selected Quotes

*spent the rest of my life, and certainly my involvement with countryside matters through the Ramblers' Association.*

092: Female aged 65yrs.

*It may seem strange but I owe my very existence to CHA. My relationship with CHA goes back a long way – in a sense long before I was ever born. You see my parents actually met on a CHA holiday. This was at Kinfauns Castle in Perthshire, Scotland in 1937. My father was on his annual wake's week holiday from Accrington and my mother was from Keighley in West Yorkshire. So my mother became one of those who did catch a husband at the Catching Husbands Association as the CHA was jokingly nick-named. However, my mother was not the first generation in the family to go on CHA holidays. Her father, born in 1878, must have been among the very first batch to go on these new-fangled walking holidays. He always used to tell the tale of going to Rhu on the Clyde in 1902.*

*My own first memory dates back to the early fifties. I travelled up to Eskdale in the Lake District in the back of an Austin Seven with a cousin. I have vague memories of drinking rather a lot of cherryade on this journey and of being very sick when we reached Stanley Ghyll Guest House. I am afraid I cannot remember anything else. From this time on, every annual holiday was spent with the CHA; Barmouth, Porlock, Ambleside, Whitby, Kinfauns and Dawlish are among some of those I remember.*

*And what strange memories there are too. It seems like another world. First of all the walks were compulsory – unless you were dying you went out walking and no excuses. In those days there were no individual packed lunches. The men used to pick up rucksacks labeled 'A' Party lunch, 'B' Party tea etc. In these rucksacks were metal trays from which food was served to the whole party. This seems very weird now. Cups of tea were provided at willing farms and suchlike.*

## Appendix 9: Membership Survey Selected Quotes

*My father was usually Host on these holidays. His main duties were to meet people at the door as they arrived, to bring up the rear on the walks, to make the announcements after the meals, to lead morning prayers (which took place every morning before breakfast) and to be responsible for the evening entertainment which more often than not seemed to be games and dancing, but also I remember bag beetle and bag whist. The bags contained small prizes bought for tup-pence, four-pence or six-pence. The winning partners had a choice of these costly items. My father was also very adept at getting "seconds at the hatch", i.e. rice pudding after the evening meal, but I am sure he would have managed this Host or not.*

*On Sundays, the main meal of the day was at 1.00pm. Afternoons were kept quiet. I distinctly remember that the piano was not played at this time, although rounders or cricket was allowed away from the house. The men always washed and dried the pots after tea. Supper, which always seemed to be salad followed by trifle, was not until 8.00pm to give time for guests to attend church if they wished to do so.*

*Thursday was the day of the concert. Most people got involved in this, usually quite willingly, if only to appear in a "sketch". They always seemed to be a tremendous amount of talent available, sometimes from the unlikeliest people. Quite often quiet unassuming people turned out to be superb pianists or accomplished singers. The light entertainment always provided much entertainment. By Friday, the guests felt as if they had known each other all their lives and Friday evening's entertainment usually went with a swing, starting with the table tennis final, followed of course by games and dancing. In my teenage years, I remember Friday night binges with illicit alcohol!! As you might have guessed, alcohol was strictly forbidden.*

*My husband Steve was 'converted' to CHA in the sixties. Our children were thus the fourth generation in our family to go CHA. We went several years running to Eskdale, often meeting up with people we had met there before.*

## **Appendix 9: Membership Survey Selected Quotes**

*I have very fond memories of my holidays with the CHA. I have met some lovely people and there was always a lot of laughter. There were a fair number of 'characters' such as the elderly gentleman at Ramsay on the Isle of Man who declared he was a vegetarian but insisted on having bacon at breakfast time. I think cheap holidays abroad probably brought about the beginning of the end. I do know that times have changed and that I would not want such a highly organised holiday myself now. I also know that CHA holidays were an absolute godsend to us especially when our children were little.*

## Appendix 10: CHA Local Groups 1982

### England South

Aldershot  
Basildon & District  
Bedford & District  
Bournemouth & Poole  
Brighton  
Bristol  
Chelmsford  
Colchester  
Croydon  
Eastbourne  
Ilford & District  
Leigh-on-Sea  
London  
Oxford  
Pinner  
Portsmouth  
Potters Bar  
Reading  
Reigate  
South Bucks Walking Club  
Stroud  
Suffolk  
Surbiton & District  
Swindon  
Torbay  
Tunbridge Wells  
Watford & St. Albans  
Worthing

### Midlands

Birmingham  
Burton-on-Trent  
Cambridge  
Cotswolds  
Coventry  
Derby  
Kettering  
Leicester  
Lincoln  
Loughborough  
Mansfield  
Nottingham  
Peterborough  
Wolverhampton  
Worcester

### North East (incl. Yorkshire)

Bradford  
Bridlington  
Castleford  
Darlington  
Dewsbury & District  
Doncaster  
Grimsby  
Halifax  
Harrogate  
Hartlepool  
Huddersfield  
Hull  
Leeds  
Middlesborough  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne  
Sheffield  
Stockton-on-Tees  
Sunderland  
Tyneside  
Wakefield  
York

### North West

Accrington & Blackburn  
Altrincham  
Ashton-under-Lyne  
Bolton  
Burnley  
Bury  
Buxton  
Carlisle  
Chester  
Crewe & Nantwich  
Crosby  
Eccles  
Fylde  
Keswick  
Lake District  
Leigh  
Liverpool  
Macclesfield  
Manchester (Section C)  
Manchester (Section D)  
Morecambe & Heysham  
Nelson  
Oldham  
Preston

## Appendix 10: CHA Local Groups 1982

### North West (cont.)

Rochdale  
Rossendale  
St. Helens  
Southport  
Stockport

### Scotland

Dundee  
Edinburgh and Forth  
Glasgow

### Wales

Cardiff & District  
Prestatyn

England South	28
Midlands	15
North East	21
North west	29
Scotland	3
Wales	2
Ireland	2

<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>
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### Ireland

Belfast  
Dublin

### Overseas correspondents

Australia  
Canada  
France  
Germany  
New Zealand  
Spain  
USA

## Appendix 11: HF Local Groups 1980

The HF Archaeological Society	Liverpool (with Wirral)
Aldershot*	London
Ashton-under-Lyne*	Luton and District
Barrow-in-Furness	Manchester
Basildon*	Medway
Bath and West Wilts	Middlesborough*
Bedford and District*	Morecambe and Heysham
Belfast	Newcastle-upon-Tyne*
Birmingham	Northampton
Bolton	Norwich
Bournemouth*	Nottingham
Bradford	Oldham
Brighton*	Oxford*
Bristol*	Peterborough
Burnley*	Plymouth
Burton-on-Trent*	Portsmouth and Southsea
Bury	Preston
Buxton	Reading
Cambridge*	Reigate and Redhill*
Cardiff	Rochdale
Carlisle*	Sheffield
Chelmsford*	Shrewsbury
Chester*	Southampton
Colchester*	South Bucks*
Colne and Nelson	Stafford
Cotswold	St. Helens*
Coventry	Stockton-on-Tees*
Crewe and Nantwich*	Stourbridge
Croydon	Stroud
Darlington*	Suffolk*
Derby*	Sunderland*
Doncaster*	Swindon
Dublin	Taunton
Eastbourne*	Torbay*
Edinburgh	Tunbridge Wells*
Fylde*	Tyneside*
Glasgow	Warrington
Halifax*	Watford and District
Harrogate	West Cumbria
Hartlepool*	Worcester*
Huddersfield*	Worthing*
Hull	York*
Keighley and Craven	
Keswick	
Kettering*	<b>Total 92 (41 joint with CHA)</b>
Lake District*	
Leeds	
Leicester	
Leigh on Sea*	
Lincoln	

## Appendix 12: Lake District CHA and Holiday Fellowship Centres

	CHA	HF
Keswick (Stanger Street)	1893	
(Greenhow's Hotel)	1894-1895	
(The Towers, Portinscale)	1896-1899	
Ambleside (Smallwood House)	1891, 1893-1899	
(Green Bank)	1909-1924	
(Fairfield School)	1942-1947	
(Loughrigg Brow)	1944-1997	
Newlands Mill, Stair	1905-1913	1914-1987
Stanley Ghyll, Eskdale	1912-1999	
Forest Side, Grasmere	1925-1999	
Great Langdale (Wall End Farm)		1926-1965
Hawse End, Derwent Water		1928-1938
Langdale Camp (Wall End Farm)		1929-1930s
Hawse End Camp		1929-1930s
Stybarrow Crag Camp, Glenridding		1929-1930s
Glamara, Borrowdale	1935-1999	
<b>Derwent Bank, Portinscale</b>		<b>1938-2000*</b>
<i>Grizedale</i> (requisitioned and never occupied)		<i>1939-1946</i>
Bassenfell, Bassenthwaite	1942-1964	
<b>Monk Coniston, Coniston Water</b>		<b>1945-2000*</b>

\*still operate as a HF Holidays Centre

### Appendix 13: YHA Lake District Hostels, dates of opening

	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Barrow House	1931							
Wray Castle	1931-1932							
Milnthorpe (TH)	1931--1933							
Satterthwaite	1931-----1942							
Crosthwaite	1931-----1963							
Newbiggin	1932-----1938							
Caldbeck	1932-1933							
Braithwaite	1932							
Pardshaw	1932-----1938							
Grange in Borrowdale	1932-----1973							
Ennerdale Hall	1932-----1950							
Coniston Mines	1932----->							
Thorney How	1932----->							
Patterdale	1932-----1967 1970----->							
Mardale (2)	1932-1933							
Cockermouth	1933----->							
Keswick	1933----->							
Black Sail	1933----->							
Eskdale (TH)	1933--1938							
Duddon (DH)	1933-----1944							
Hesket Newmarket	1934-1937							
Corney	1934---1939							
Endmoor	1935-----1943							
Windermere	1935----->							
Wasdale (WF)	1936-----1967							
Heltondale	1936-----1946							
Longsleddale	1936---1941							
St. Bees	1937-1939							
Eskdale (New)	1938----->							
Swindale	1938-----1946							
Stainton	1939-----1949							
Elterwater	1939----->							





## **Appendix 14: Memories of Glaramara, 1951-1956**

The original house stood proud in its own meadow. In those days there was no annex and the seven members of the domestic staff, all female, were accommodated in what is now the main building. The Manageress had her own room and sitting room on the ground floor, the assistant manageress had sole occupancy of one of the bedrooms while the remaining staff, the cook, assistant cook, kitchen helper and two house staff shared a room on the ground floor which contained two two-tiered bunks and a single bed.

Electricity in Borrowdale had not yet reached beyond Grange so the lighting in the house was powered by a generator housed in a separate small building. This had a wicked cranking handle which could do serious damage to shins when it was being coerced into life. Water was heated by a huge coke stove in the cellar under the back stairs. Heaven help the girl on duty if she didn't keep the stove stoked up to provide enough hot water for the guests to have baths or showers on their return from the day's expedition and to cater for all the kitchen and washing up requirements.

The word "Co-operative" in the original CHA title was descriptive of the type of holiday offered. The atmosphere was that of a big House Party with everyone joining in the expeditions and also all the social activities. At that time, the CHA had three "serious" centres, Glaramara, Onich and one in Wales (I can't remember which). The programmes at these three were designed to attract the already experienced and strong walker. It would be too strong to say that the excursions were "compulsory" but guests at these centres were expected to take part in each day's programme although each one offered an A and B alternative – not the three groups as described in the "Herald" article.

The walks were organised and led by the Secretary, the "Sec", who also dealt with the accounts and other paper work. There was a two week programme which accommodated guests who had more than one week's holiday. All the main peaks as far as Pillar and the Buttermere hills were included and each excursion literally started at the house door for there was no transport, in fact I can remember the excitement when one guest actually arrived in a car and very lonely it looked parked by itself under a tree, for there was no car park. So guests booted up in the front hall and set off from there. For the Pillar and Buttermere days, this involved a long walk up Honister and to the Drum House and these routes ended at Gatescarth Farm for a tea break before the long drag back up and over Honister. There was no rock climbing but the "A" party did Gable by the climbers' traverse, Pillar by the High Level Route and Scafell Pike by the Corridor Route.

The social events were dealt with by the Host and Hostess, guests who because of their frequent involvement with CHA holidays, were invited by the Association to take on these roles. Prayers were conducted by them before breakfast every morning and, on Sunday evening there was a short service followed by games. They also assisted the "Sec" by sharing in the leading of the A and B parties. Thursday was Concert Night with impromptu turns by the guests, some of which were remarkably good. But the other evenings of the week were the best with dancing to the music of a gramophone – Scottish, Cumbrian and country dancing with old tyme and ballroom dancing for variety. It should be remembered that these were pre-disco days but they were still hectic and wonderfully lively and energetic evenings. The "co-operative" ideal also included the staff girls in all the social events and the girls were never short of partners at the dances.

On the domestic side, there were no labour saving devices. Cooking was done on a huge "Aga" type cooker, vegetables were prepared by hand, though there was a sort of mini cement mixer outside the kitchen door which was operated by hand and which made an effort to remove some skin from the potatoes, but the job had to be finished by hand.

Bread for the packed lunches was sliced by hand though I acknowledge that the bread knives were good and sharp. The kitchen floor was scrubbed thoroughly by hand every day and the wooden floors of the dining room, common room and writing room were also polished by hand. For the common room floor there was one concession. It was called the "donkey" and consisted of a rectangular short bristled brush hinged to the end of a broom handle. The idea being that by swinging this to and fro across the floor it would buff up the polish already put down by hand. It was terribly heavy to throw around but better than polishing on one's knees. Every morning before breakfast the stairs had to be hand brushed and, in winter, the fireplaces in the Common Room and what was then known as the Writing Room had to be cleaned out by hand and sometimes blackleaded before the fire was lit. At regular intervals all the dining room chairs had to be turned upside down and the accumulated polish and any adhering bits had to be scraped off the ends of the chair legs. This all sound like sweated labour but it really wasn't, we were having a great time. If we were tired it was because we'd been dancing to the point of exhaustion the night before.

On excursion days the guests had a very substantial breakfast, a packed lunch and a packed tea to eat on the hill or at a prearranged tea stop and a three course evening meal. The lunch and tea food was packed on trays into rucksacks labelled appropriately "lunch" and "tea" and these were carried by members of the party. A cooked lunch was provided on Sunday when there was a morning and afternoon walk and also on Wednesday which was the "off-day" when guests would make their own plans. Of course Saturday was the busiest day both in the kitchen and in the house. Lunch was provided for those guests who were staying for a second week and an afternoon tea was served for the new intake. Meanwhile the house staff had to cope

with the big change over of guests. Work started at about 6am which was hard to cope with as the Friday night dance always had an extended time usually followed by a “secret” party in one of the rooms which gave us girls a very short night’s sleep. Communal areas of the house were dealt with first so that work could start on the bedrooms as soon as the guests had left. Each bedroom had a two tier wooden bunk built against the wall and many were the scraped knuckles caused by trying to tuck fresh sheets down between the mattress and the wall while pining over the guests who had just left. Later in the day, when the new guest list went up on the wall, the sense of loss changed to excitement in anticipation of what or who the coming week would bring.

Fresh food was delivered by the local bus service. The bus driver would stop at the gate and put the deliveries into a big wooden chest just inside the boundary wall. The girls would then pull a sort of porter’s trolley down the rough gravel track to the box, load up and drag the laden trolley back. This sometimes needed several journeys. Milk came from Weir’s Farm. I can remember a small lad who often accompanied his father in delivering the milk and I wonder if it is a descendent of that little boy who now owns Honister Quarry with its visitor centre and helicopters.

The highlight of the week for the staff girls was of course the day off which varied from week to week. It always started with breakfast in bed as there was no staff dining room and we ate our meals in the main dining room. We girls preferred to have our evening meal before the guests so that once their washing up was done and the tables set for breakfast we could join the dance. If however we had to eat after the guests there was still so much to do afterwards that we felt deprived of our evening and were tantalised by the noise coming from the common room. When we had enjoyed the luxury of breakfast in bed the day was our own to do as we wished. In keeping with the co-operative tradition we were welcome to join the day’s excursion if we so wished and this was a happy way of making new acquaintances, some of whom later became close friends. On one occasion two of us were given the same day off and as we both wanted to see Pillar Rock we made that our objective. We walked by Honister, then up the old railtrack to the Drum Head, round to Black Sail and up the High Level Route till we could see the famous crag. We sat eating our lunch and enjoying the view of the Rock then suddenly both had the same idea. “We could get up that couldn’t we”. So we did – in shorts and nailed boots. Of course we later found out that we had gone up and down by the easiest route on the crag but it was a memorable day and well worth the long slog back.

Towards the end of the 1950s the CHA held a number of Reunions at the Free Trade Hall in Manchester. These were splendid affairs with people coming from all parts of the country renewing holiday acquaintances, exchanging memories and adventures and enjoying the best of dances – for all the seats had been removed from the auditorium making room for the biggest CHA dance ever. At about this time, the first murmurings were heard about a possible change of name. There was a growing

feeling that the use of the word Co-operative gave the impression that the Association belonged to the Co-operative movement. An alternative name was sought which would retain the well-loved initials – hence the “Countrywide Holidays Association” came into being.

Many of the staff girls were foreign students with some of whom I still have a close friendship keeping in touch by correspondence and visiting each other either here or in various parts of Europe and Canada. Life on staff could be hard work but we played hard too. Morning duties started at 6.30am (earlier on Saturday) and ended at 2 or 2.30pm during which period we served two meals and two very substantial snacks. Evening duty started at 6pm which gave time during the afternoon to get up Gable or Glaramara and work off some of the abundant food. All this for £2 a week, less a small deduction for National Insurance, but we certainly had no expenses even our laundry was catered for. In exchange for our labours we were housed, fed, entertained, looked after and even provided with some money. It was a great life.

Glaramara has always been very special to me. It was wonderful to be living and working amongst the mountains, to enjoy the fun and companionship of a wide variety of people, to establish lifelong friendships and, as a by-product, to learn a lot about how to run an efficient establishment, a knowledge which has been very useful to me on many occasions.

THANK YOU GLARAMARA

Maureen Linton – June 2010

## Appendix 15: Lake District Mountaineering Club Huts

Club	Hut location	Grid Ref.	Date of opening	beds
Wayfarers Club	Robertson Lamb Hut, Langdale	NY 304067	1930-present	24 beds
<i>Coniston Tigers</i>	<i>Hut (wooden shed) at Coniston Old Hall</i>	<i>SD 305963</i>	<i>1931-1950s</i>	
K-Fellfarers	High House, Seathwaite, Borrowdale	NY 235119	1934-present	25 beds
F&RCC	Brackenclose (Wasdale)	NY 185074	1937-present	30 beds
<b>Start of Second World War</b>				
Achille Ratti	New Dungeon Ghyll	NY 295065	1942-1951	
Achille Ratti	Buckbarrow (Wasdale)	NY 137054	1944-1996	
F&RCC	Raw Head Barn, Langdale	NY 334067	1944-present	33 beds
<b>End of Second World War</b>				
Achille Ratti	Dunmail Hut	NY 330111	1946-present	38 beds
Lancashire CCC	Tranearth, Torver	SD 281957	1947-present	32 beds (+6 members)
Barrow MC	Coppermines Cottage	SD 289986	1950-present	16 beds
Yorkshire Ramblers' Club	Low Hall Garth, Little Langdale	NY 309029	1950-present	12 beds
Karabiner MC	Irish Row, Coniston Coppermines	SD 292984	1950-1970	30 beds
Keswick MC	Dubs Hut, Honister	NY 210134	1952-1974	no beds?
F&RCC	Birkness Barn, Buttermere	NY 186158	1952-present	31 beds
F&RCC	The Salving House, Rosthwaite	NY 240152	1953-present	24 beds
Carlisle MC	Newlands Hut	NY 229177	1953-present	16 beds
Fylde MC	Newhouses, Little Langdale	NY 315030	1956-present	16 beds
Achille Ratti	Bishop's Scale, Langdale	NY 334067	1957-present	70 beds (+18 family)
Cleveland MC	Starling Gill, Ennerdale	NY 127150	1957-1965	
Yorkshire MC	Dale Bottom, Keswick	NY 296218	1959-1967	12 beds
Gritstone Club	Smithy, Thirlmere	NY 314194	1960s-present	?
Northumbrian MC	Bowderstone Cottage	NY 255164	1960s-present	20 beds
St. Helens MC	Braithwaite, Keswick	NY 225237	1960s-present	under reconstruction
F&RCC	Beetham Cottage, Brotherswater	NY 405130	1965-present	18 beds
MAM	Low House, Coniston	SD 302974	1967-present	25 beds

## Appendix 15: Lake District Mountaineering Club Huts

Club	Hut location	Grid Ref.	Date of opening	beds
Rucksack Club	High Moss, Duddon Valley	SD 237967	1968-present	21 beds
Cleveland MC	Agnes Spencer Memorial Hut, Patterdale	NY 391162	1969-present	12 beds (+10 members)
Fylde MC	Stair Cottage, Newlands	NY 237210	1969-present	21 beds
Yorkshire MC	Irish Row, Coppermines Valley	SD 292984	1970-present	30 beds
ABMSAC/TCC	George Starkey Hut, Patterdale	NY 396160	1975-present	28 beds
Lancashire MC	Blea Tarn House	NY 295048	1980s-present	15 beds (+8 members)
Achille Ratti	Beckstones, Duddon	SD 183903	1990-present	20 beds (+family bothy)
Outward Bound Ullswater	Ruthwaite Lodge Hut	NY 355135	1950s-present	bothy
Galloping Horse MC	Dubs Hut, Honister	NY 210134	1994-2008	bothy

## **Appendix 16: Lake District Licensed Adventure Activity Centres, 2000**

Bassenfell Manor Christian Centre [*former CHA Guest House*]

Brathay Hall Trust, Ambleside

Calvert Trust, Little Crosthwaite, Keswick

Carolclimb, Low Gillerthwaite, Ennerdale

Denton House, Keswick

Derwent Hill OEC, Portinscale (Sunderland Council)

Fellside Centre, Caldbeck (Cumbria CC)

FSC Blencathra, Threlkeld

Ghyll Head OEC (Manchester Council)

Glamara Outdoor Centre [*former CHA Guest House*]

HF Holidays Derwent Bank & Monk Coniston Centres

Hawse End Centre, Portinscale (Cumbria CC) [*former HF Centre*]

High Borrans OEC, Windermere (North Tyneside Council)

Hinning House OEC, Seathwaite, Duddon Valley (Wigan Council)

Howtown OEC, Ullswater (Durham City Council)

Humphrey Head Centre (North Yorkshire Council)

Impact Development Training Group, Cragwood, Windermere

Lanehead OEC, Coniston (Middlesborough etc. councils)

Longsleddale Outdoor Pursuits Centre, Stockdale (Leicester Council)

Low Bank Ground OEC, Coniston (Wigan Council)

Newlands Adventure Centre, Stair [*former HF Centre*]

Outward Bound Eskdale & Ullswater

Patterdale Hall (Bolton School)

Thurston OEC, Coniston (South Tyneside Council)

Tower Wood OEC (Lancashire County Council)

Water Park Adventure Centre, High Nibthwaite, Ulverston

YMCA Lakeside

Total: 29