

**Title: Our Moorsbus Story by Jim & Lilian Gribbin**

**Author: by Jim & Lilian Gribbin**

**Date: 1993 - 2023**

Our Moorsbus Story by Jim & Lilian Gribbin

We can't remember the precise date when my wife Lilian and I first used the Moorsbus, but it was in late September or early October in 1993! I can still visualize the glorious sunset behind Osmotherly as we stood at Square Corner waiting for the M9 on the final Sunday of that year after the clocks changed. We used to look forward to the start of British Summer Time because that was the commencement date for the Moorsbus. We have caught the M11/M3 service from Stockton High Street, whenever possible, every Sunday since then.

Who can remember the 'last day parties' we had on the final M2 and M3 runs back from Helmsley to Guisborough? People would bring home made pies and cakes, home made wine and sloe gin.

I regret not keeping a copy of the timetables each year, at the time I didn't think they would hold any sentimentality. My oldest that I have kept is 2006, and I think I have one from each year since.

One of the walks we did in that first year was from Helmsley to Sutton Bank, one of our favourites. On our journey home Dennis from Darlington told us that we had walked the first stage of the Cleveland way. Over the years, thanks to the Moorsbus, we had walked every stage from Helmsley to Robin Hood's Bay, most of them many times. During covid 19 lockdown, we made a decision to finish it, and so in 2021 we booked a weekend in a Hotel in RHB and finally complete it. We think that must be some kind of record, 28 years from start to finish! Who can remember Dennis and his wife Mary, they travelled in from Faverdale virtually every

Sunday, they seemed like permanent features. We still see many of the old gang from the '90s.

Walking was always the primary reason for us using the Moorsbus, but we also enjoyed visiting the village pubs for a Sunday roast, we enjoyed spending Saturday evenings, planning routes so that we could pass through a village around lunch time. We could have produced a gastronomic encyclopedia of the best ones, and ones that were best to avoid.

Although we have never missed a bus home, on occasions estimates of times and distances have been miscalculated, which resulted in some hurried finishes to what had been planned as comfortable walks. The nearest to disaster occurred when we had to run alongside a last bus from Osmotherley whilst banging on its side, in order to attract the driver's attention. Fortunately he stopped and we avoided an expensive taxi ride home.

Not all our walks finished without mishap, as Lilian is prone to the occasional stumble. Her most serious fall happened one lunchtime in April 2012 as we approached Lastingham. She tripped on rough ground and fell heavily, badly injuring her shoulder. It was clear she needed expert medical treatment, but there was a risk that an ambulance would probably have taken us to Scarborough or Northallerton hospitals, which would make it very difficult for us to get back to Stockton on a Sunday afternoon, after she had been treated. We were left with the only alternative of, after having lunch in Lastingham, taking a Moorsbus to Hutton-le-Hole and waiting there for the evening bus to Stockton. We finally arrived at North Tees hospital at 7:30 pm, where an x-ray revealed a broken shoulder which took weeks to heal. This has not deterred us from further walks.

We look forward to many more trips on the moorsbus. Here's hoping that the service manages to run for many years to come, keep up the good work.

Jim & Lilian Gribbin.

p.s. My apologies for its length but a lot can happen in thirty years.