



July 17-23, 2009

## Invitation and Itinerary

We hope you can join us in Scotland and England for exploration by bike of "The Borders" region of southern Scotland and northern England. In the guidebook *Scotland the Best*, The Borders is ranked as the #1 place to bike in Scotland. Touring by bike is the best venue we know for combining the outdoors, exercise, camaraderie among fellow cyclists, deliberately slow travels, and a dash of serendipitous adventure. We hold the fellowship and good times on past international tours as very special memories. Veterans and first time adventurers are encouraged to join us as we travel to an as yet undiscovered cycling paradise, before the word gets out!

Mary and Allen Turnbull

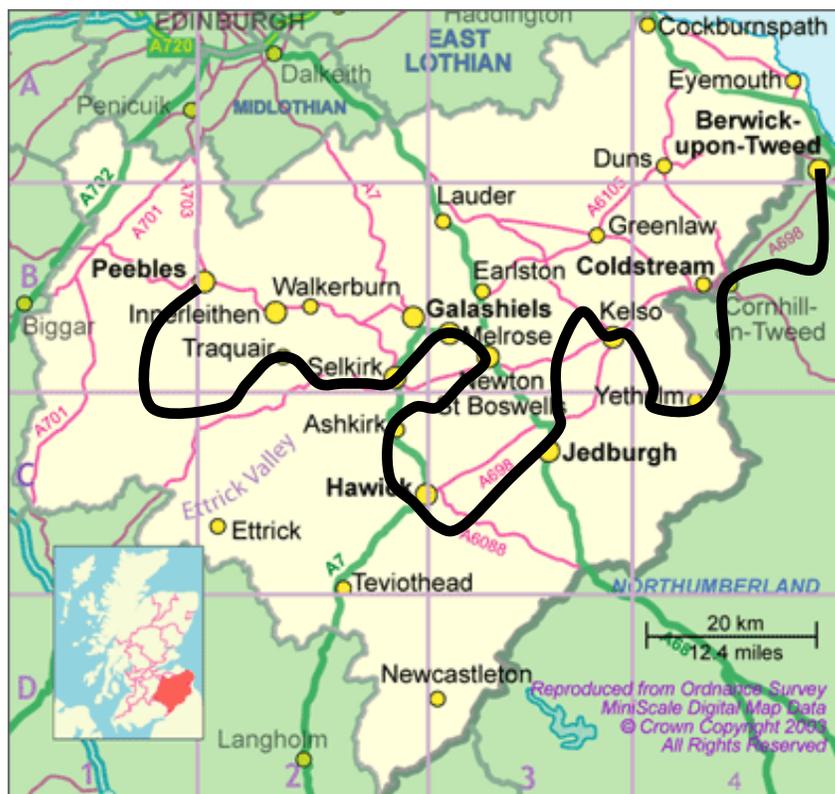
In 2009 Scotland will host its first ever Homecoming year which has been created to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Scotland's national poet, Robert Burns. This will be a special year for Scots, those of Scotch ancestry, and all those who love Scotland. It will be fantastic year to "come home." [www.homecomingscotland2009.com](http://www.homecomingscotland2009.com) What is the best way to participate in this countrywide celebration? By bike, of course! So in July we will bike by ancient abbeys, castles, baronial mansions, gently flowing rivers, and picturesque villages as we start in western Scotland and end in England at the North Sea. The Borders include the four shires of Peebles, Berwick, Selkirk, and Roxburgh in Scotland, plus Northumberland in England. *Insight Guides* says "It [The Borders] is one of Europe's last unspoilt areas." One morning we'll put on our walking shoes and hike the Four Abbeys Way as we make a 21<sup>st</sup> Century pilgrimage to Jedburgh Abbey. Learn more about our wonderful biking environment and the heritage of the area at [www.visitscottishborders.com](http://www.visitscottishborders.com) and <http://www.visitnorthumberland.com/site/highlights>.

**The Borders is a perfect gateway to explore  
the Scottish Highlands or the English Lake District  
before or after the bike tour.**

The Borders Tour is seven nights and eight days. We start in the Royal Burgh of Peebles (since 1152 AD) situated on the banks of the River Tweed. We'll generally follow the Tweed Cycleway as we bike east visiting the four abbeys of Melrose, Dryburgh, Jedburgh, and Kelso. Along the way we'll also visit:

- Traquair House, Scotland's oldest inhabited house now with an award winning brewery.
- Floor's Castle, the castle that Tarzan returned to in *Greystoke - the Legend of Tarzan*; the stomping grounds of Sir Walter Scott.
- Spectacular gardens.
- Holy Island where Saint Cuthbert was Bishop of Lindisfarne in 685 AD.

Saturday will be a special day of celebration complete with clans, tartans, and bagpipes as we join in the dedication of the new Turnbull Monument in Hawick. A day-by-day detailed itinerary follows the logistics overview below.



A View on Saturday's Route



## Tour at a Glance - Thursday, July 17-Thursday, July 23

**7 nights, 8 days** (four 1-night stays, two 2-night stay)

**\$ 2,095 per person, double;** \$ 2,595 per person, single

**Includes:** 7 full breakfasts, 6 dinners, two picnic lunches, water and snacks, luggage transfer, van support, Tour Book, detailed cue sheets, maps, and bicycle.

**Does not include:** airfare, travel to/from the starting/ending point, lodging before or after the Tour, or admission to special attractions.

The tour is priced at the December 1, 2008 exchange rate of £1 British Pound = \$ 1.50 US dollar. The cost will be adjusted up or down one month prior to the tour based on the current exchange rate.

**The Start:** Peebles, Scotland Thursday, July 16 at ~11:00 AM at the Park Hotel.

<http://www.parkhotelpeebles.co.uk/index.html>

The Express Bus from the Edinburgh Airport to Downtown Waverly Street runs every 15 minutes and takes about 20 minutes. Most international flights arrive in Edinburgh between 7 – 9 AM. This would give you time to arrive late morning in Peebles. You will find plenty to do and see if you arrive a day early - recommended!

**The End:** Berwick-upon-Tweed, England Thursday July 23 ~3:00 PM.

You can take the train ([www.firstgroup.com/scotrail](http://www.firstgroup.com/scotrail)) to Edinburgh. Trains run about every hour and travel time is 50 minutes. We recommend spending the night in Berwick-upon-Tweed as there is much to see. Rooms at the B&B below have been reserved. Please reserve your room directly with the B&B letting them know that you are a member of the Turnbull party.

*11 Quay Walls* [http://www.11quaywalls.co.uk/content.php?\\_p\\_=2](http://www.11quaywalls.co.uk/content.php?_p_=2)

<http://www.tripadvisor.com/Search?q=11+Quay+Walls&sub-search=Go>

**Airport:** You can easily arrive in Edinburgh and depart from Edinburgh by plane. Alternatively, you can arrive in Edinburgh and depart from London. Trains from Berwick-upon-Tweed (where we end) leave about every hour for London and the travel time is four hours. Of course you could also arrive in London, take the train to Berwick-upon-Tweed, and the bus to Peebles (where we start).

**Payment Schedule:** January 30 \$ 500 deposit per person (or upon reserving a place)

March 15 \$1,000 due

June 1 \$ 595 due

Please make checks payable to: Virginia Odysseys LLC  
109 Woodmere Dr.  
Williamsburg, VA 23185

**Cancellations:** Full refund if cancellation before May 15 (less \$100). No refunds after May 15. Please consider buying cancellation insurance from your travel agent.

## Number of the Borders Adventurers

The lodging and transportation logistics require that our group size be capped at 18, plus two leaders.

### Bikes



Our bikes will be similar to the one shown here. Perth City Bikes (our 2007 bike supplier) will again be providing our bikes. They will be 27- speed with a wide gear range, high pressure tires, and disk brakes. All bikes will be outfitted with water bottle cage, water bottle, map case, lock, and rear rack (not shown). You can bring your own pedals and saddle if desired. Bring a rear bike bag to carry personal items such as your camera, sunglasses, and wallet or purse.

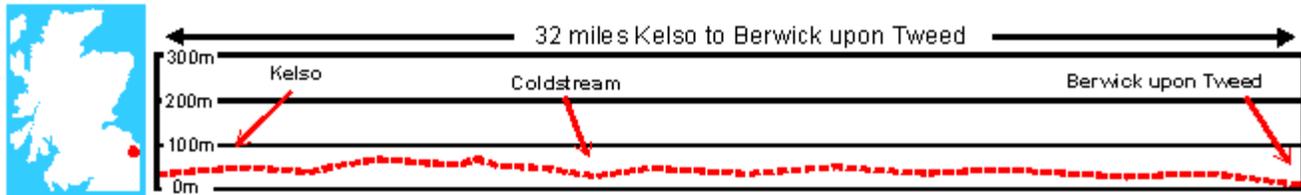
## Support Vehicles

Our Support Vehicles will be *both* a cargo van to carry our luggage, snacks, and water, and a 7-seater van or small bus when needed for special shuttles.



## Terrain

The terrain in the Borders is honestly "gently rolling" – we follow the River Tweed as it flows west to east much of the route. Below is a sample elevation profile for Tuesday (from Kelso to Coldstream) and Wednesday (from Coldstream to Berwick-upon-Tweed).



This website has information on bike routes in the Borders and other elevation profiles.

<http://cycling.visitscotland.com/> The map below shows The Borders region. We'll overnight in Peebles, Melrose, Hawick, Kelso, Cornhill-on-Tweed, and Berwick-upon-Tweed (optional) on the North Sea.

## Training and Gear

Train as you normally would, but be sure to test your foul-weather gear beforehand, and be prepared to bike in rain coming off either the Atlantic or the North Sea. We recommend that you bring tights and layers for the weather - even in July. A bright (ex. neon lime green) comfortable rain jacket is recommended.

## Weather in The Borders

**Temperatures:** Average High 65° F; Low 50° F

**Plenty of Daylight:** Sunrise 5:00 AM - Sunset 10:00 PM

**Precipitation:** July average 2.2 inches

### Disclaimer/Responsibility Statement

Virginia Odysseys, LLC acts only as an agent for various independent suppliers that provide accommodations, transportation, activities, or other services connected with this tour. Such services are subject to the terms and conditions of those suppliers. Virginia Odysseys and their respective employees, agents, representatives, and assigns, accept no liability whatsoever for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or other incident which may be caused by the negligence, defect, default of any company or person in performing these services. Individual travelers are responsible for purchasing a travel insurance policy, if desired, that will cover some of the expenses associated with the loss of luggage or personal effects.

## Detailed Itinerary – The Borders Bike Tour

<p><b>Thursday Day 1</b></p>	<p><b>July 16</b>  <b>Bike fitting, Warm-up 15 or 20 miles</b></p>	<p><b>Peebles Park Hotel</b> <a href="http://www.parkhotelpeebles.co.uk">www.parkhotelpeebles.co.uk</a> <b>011-44-1721-720451</b></p> 	<p>We fit our bikes about 11:00 AM Thursday morning. Once comfortable on our bikes we'll set out for the countryside around Peebles and have lunch at the Traquair House <a href="http://www.traquair.co.uk">www.traquair.co.uk</a>. The Traquair House Ale is known far and wide in these parts! Back in Peebles, you'll have time to explore and shop before dinner. The walk along the banks of the River Tweed to the 14<sup>th</sup> century Neidpath Castle is a must – of course Mary, Queen of Scots [just like our George Washington] slept here! We'll visit several other places during the week where Mary slept!</p>
<p><b>Friday Day 2</b></p>	<p><b>July 17</b> <b>20, 30, 40 (all with van shuttle) or 55 miles</b></p>	<p><b>Melrose Burts Hotel</b> <a href="http://www.burtshotel.co.uk">www.burtshotel.co.uk</a> <b>011-44-1896-822285</b></p> 	<p>You have the option of doing a half-century today, <i>but</i> only if you chose. The support van and shuttle bus will be with us the entire way. Our biking takes us along the Tweed Valley to St. Mary's Loch. <i>Scotland the Best</i> calls this "some of the most starkly beautiful landscapes in Scotland." We'll first stop at The Crook Inn where Robert Burns recited his poems. We'll have lunch a Tibbie Shiels Inn, where the 19<sup>th</sup> century literati Sir Walter Scott and James Hogg often dined. A visit to Bowhill House and Country Estate <a href="http://www.bowhill.org">www.bowhill.org</a> completes our day before we're whisked away by bus to Melrose and the award-winning Burts Hotel - our home for the night.</p>
<p><b>Saturday Day 3</b></p>	<p><b>July 18</b> <b>30 miles</b></p>	<p><b>Bonchester Bridge / Hawick</b> <b>Billerwell Farm B&amp;B</b> <a href="http://www.billerwellfarm.co.uk">www.billerwellfarm.co.uk</a> <b>011-44-1450-860656</b> <b>Horse and Hound Inn</b> <a href="http://www.horseandhoundbonchesterbridge.co.uk">www.horseandhoundbonchesterbridge.co.uk</a> <b>011-44-1450-860645</b></p> 	<p>In the morning we bike to Hawick (15 miles) and then to Bonchester Bridge (15 miles) in the afternoon. Today is a very special day for Allen Turnbull. The Hawick Heritage Center will be the scene of the unveiling of the new Turnbull Monument about 12 noon. Robert Bruce, King of Scotland, proclaimed William Rule Sir Turn-e-bull and gave him and his clan land along the River Teviot after he protected the King by turning away a charging bull while they were hunting. Turnbells from around the globe will gather to dedicate this life-sized statue depicting Robert turning the bull. The celebration that evening will be complete with music, dancing, and great food – all in an outdoor setting on the banks of the River Teviot. The biking routes today are of course incredibly scenic and we'll stop at the Standhill Cheesery to sample some of their award winning cheese.</p> <p>Our home for the next two evenings is Billerwell Farm (room for 12) and the Horse and Hound Inn next door in Bonchester Bridge (room for 8). This is Scottish country living at its best.</p>
<p><b>Sunday Day 4</b></p>	<p><b>July 19</b> <b>25 miles</b></p>	<p>The First Mr. Turnbull</p>	<p>Sunday is a layover day as we leisurely explore the quiet backroads of the Teviot and Rule river valleys. We'll visit Jedburgh <a href="http://www.jedburgh.org.uk">www.jedburgh.org.uk</a>, Monteviot House Gardens <a href="http://www.monteviot.com">www.monteviot.com</a>, country churchyards, and the Turnbull Tower ruins, Fatlips Castle. Sunday night is pub night as we enjoy the good food and hospitality of the Horse and Hound Inn. Anyone for darts or billiards?</p>

<p><b>Monday</b> <b>Day 5</b></p>	<p><b>July 20</b> <b>23 miles</b></p>	<p><b>Kelso</b> <b>Queens Head Inn</b> <a href="http://www.queensheadhotelkelso.co.uk">www.queensheadhotelkelso.co.uk</a> <b>011-44-1573-228899</b></p> 	<p>We start our day by hiking after breakfast. We'll follow the Four Abbeys Way from Billerwell Farm to Jedburgh. <a href="http://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/ustours/borderabbey/index.html">http://www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk/ustours/borderabbey/index.html</a> Our hillside vantage point before we descend to Jedburgh Abbey will offer fantastic vistas. In Jedburgh we'll take a short shuttle to Melrose, where we'll start biking. Our route takes us by Roman forts, Sir Walter Scott's favorite view in the Borders, Dryburgh Abbey where Scott is buried, the William Wallace statue, and Smailholm Tower. Scott called Kelso, set on the banks of the River Tweed, the prettiest town in the Borders. Visit Floors Castle, Kelso Abbey ruins, walk along the River Tweed or simply enjoy a beer or cappuccino overlooking the River Tweed at the Ednam House Hotel. <a href="http://www.roxburghe.net/floors_castle_grounds_and_gardens/">http://www.roxburghe.net/floors_castle_grounds_and_gardens/</a> <a href="http://www.kelso.border-net.co.uk/history/kelso-abbey.html">http://www.kelso.border-net.co.uk/history/kelso-abbey.html</a></p>
<p><b>Tuesday</b> <b>Day 6</b></p>	<p><b>July 21</b> <b>0, 15, 35 miles</b></p>	<p><b>Kelso</b> <b>Queens Head Inn</b></p>	<p>Layover Day to explore Kelso, hike along the River Tweed, shop. Or take a spin in the countryside. The longer mileage will take you to <a href="#">Manderston</a> Manor House. Dinner tonight on your own.</p>
<p><b>Wednesday</b> <b>Day 7</b></p>	<p><b>July 22</b> <b>35 miles</b></p>	<p><b>Cornhill-on-Tweed</b> <b>Tilmouth Park Hotel</b> <a href="http://www.tilmouthpark.co.uk">www.tilmouthpark.co.uk</a> <b>011-44-1890-882255</b></p>  	<p>Today we're off to England as we learn a little history as we bike. First we bike through the picturesque villages of Yetholm and Kirk Yetholm and then on scenic backroads overlooking the spectacular <a href="#">Cheviot Hills</a>, a UK National Park. We bike to the <a href="#">Flodden Battlefield</a> (1513 AD) where Scottish King James IV led the charge and lost his life along with 10,000 Scottish warriors, while the British only lost 1,700 in a resounding victory for the English crown of Henry VIII - the brother-in-law of Scottish King James IV! We'll visit <a href="#">Etal Castle and Ford Castle</a> and have lunch at the Black Bull, the only thatched roof inn in Northumberland County. Along the way we'll stop at <a href="#">Heatherslaw Mill</a>. Since we're in England, let's have a game of croquet complete with <a href="#">Pimm's Cup</a> when we arrive at our home for the last night, Tilmouth Park. We can walk off a few calories after our celebration dinner by trekking to see the stone Twizel Bridge over the River Till.</p>
<p><b>Thursday</b> <b>Day 8</b></p>	<p><b>July 23</b> <b>25 miles</b></p>	<p><b>Berwick-upon-Tweed</b></p> 	<p>On our final day we'll bike the gentle contours of the land to the North Sea, Holy Island, Lindisfarne Priory, and Berwick-upon-Tweed. <a href="http://www.undiscoveredscotland.com/berwick/berwickupon-tweed/index.html">http://www.undiscoveredscotland.com/berwick/berwickupon-tweed/index.html</a> Berwick-upon-Tweed changed hands over a dozen times before it finally settled under English control in 1482. Today over 80% of the residents would rather be under Scottish rule! <a href="http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-514118/Berwick-Tweed--Englands-northernmost-town--wants-defect-Scotland.html">http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-514118/Berwick-Tweed--Englands-northernmost-town--wants-defect-Scotland.html</a> Politics aside, the biking is easy as coast downhill to the Holy Island causeway that is only open at low tide. The force is with us as on July 22, 2009 tides allow us the option to bike onto the island and visit the Lindisfarne Priory. <a href="http://www.historic-uk.com/DestinationsUK/Lindisfarne.htm">http://www.historic-uk.com/DestinationsUK/Lindisfarne.htm</a> Then it's on to Berwick-upon-Tweed following the UK National Coast and Castles Bike Route 1. We recommend spending Thursday night in Berwick at our B&amp;Bs, but trains run every hour to Edinburgh (travel time one hour), or London (travel time four hours) if you need to be on your way.</p>