

February 2024

Outing to the Great Tapestry of Scotland at Galashiels

Our visit to the Great Tapestry of Scotland, housed in its purpose-built modern museum, did not disappoint. Members commented: *"Thoroughly enjoyed the visit to The Great Tapestry of Scotland. A beautifully crafted and informative project, well displayed in an accessible building."* & *"It was wonderful!"*

We were welcomed with a brief introductory talk. We learnt that Galashiels had been chosen as the Tapestry's permanent home owing to the town's past association with the textile industry. One panel, on Rosslyn Chapel, had had to be re-worked, the original having been stolen and thought probably to be now overseas. *"The introduction to the exhibition was very interesting and a great start to the visit"*.

The 160 panels are colour coded into zones of several categories, but arranged in chronological order. The panels illustrate a wide range of subjects including Scottish history (from earliest geology), sociology, literature and the arts, culture, sport, warfare, politics and more. The Borders are very much included with mention of Carham, Yetholm, Wooler and Flodden. Reading the concise, informative narratives below each panel added hugely to understanding the general point of the exhibition: Scotland's history and achievements. For example, who would have known why the first sheep in the world to be cloned was named 'Dolly'! Many cryptic and meaningful details were embedded in the panel scenes, with puns too. *"All magical!"*

The exhibition offers so much of interest it is almost impossible to appreciate everything on one visit. Each panel is intricately stitched, providing a study of its own. *"I thoroughly enjoyed looking closely at the detail in each panel and, of course, appreciated the skilful stitching."*

On a first visit the Tapestry can seem somewhat overwhelming, but the café and shop provided us with welcome breaks. All in all, visiting this truly impressive pictorial history of Scotland proved a most enjoyable day. *"It was a real treat: an inspiring day out."*

Rosemary Bell