



By the time this was over, it was lunchtime. Our hosts from Cornwall recommended we go to the food court at Harvey Nichols rather than the one at Harrods. The taxi driver knew to drop us off at the side entrance elevator to the top floor of the store.

We wandered around looking at the gourmet cheeses, vegetables, and canned goods. There were a number of restaurants, including a café, and a sushi bar with the colored plates on a conveyer belt. The color of the plate indicated the price of the sushi on the plate.

We had a nice lunch, and Kathy picked up some Spanish smoked paprika to bring home with us. The prices there were rather high, and I can imagine what they were at Harrods!

The next day was to be the day that Kathy was to go falconing. When I was checking out the Isle of Wight steam train on the Internet, I came across a note that the Haven Falconry was at the steam train station. Kathy told me that was on her bucket list, so I got on the Internet to get all the schedules. Haven Falconry was founded by Paul Martin and his wife Sally and is based near Ryde on the Isle of Wight. Paul has a lifelong passion for all things wildlife, in particular birds of prey. The ethos behind Haven Falconry is to promote and preserve the art of falconry and birds of prey for future generations. Education through entertainment and hands-on experience is the goal of the Haven Falconry.

To get there we took what I call a “multi-modal” trip. Taxi to the train station, train to Portsmouth, bus to the hovercraft, hovercraft to the Isle of Wight, electric train to Smallbrook Junction, and finally a steam train to Havenstreet! We started out at 8:30 AM and arrived at 12:30 PM. (whew)

Kathy loved the hovercraft ride, and I enjoyed the steam trains, so it worked for both of us.







We were concerned that because of the rain, our plans for falconing would be cancelled. There was a large tent set up behind the station where we could get out of the rain. I had gone looking for the people, but they had pulled into the tent and Kathy signaled me that they had arrived. The first bird was a barn owl, and Paul gave us the history and the background of how they hunt. Then we both put on a glove and Paul put the owl on Kathy's arm. I also got a chance to have the owl on my arm.



The next bird was a Harris Hawk, and we actually got to fly the bird and have it land on our arms.







The last bird we worked with was the capper. Its name was Merlin, and it was a huge Eagle Owl.



Both Kathy and I were thrilled to work with the birds, but unfortunately we had to catch the last steam train out to get back to London. We reversed the process, steam train to electric train, to hovercraft, to bus. At that point we called a halt to the proceedings, and stopped at a Subway shop for coffee and cookies. We had been on the go since morning, and since we had no commitment to anything we just rested.