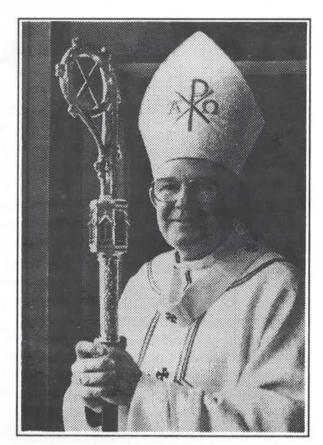


Foreword

Message from Archbishop Patrick Kelly



Picture: Catholic Pictorial

ONE of the joys in coming to Liverpool has been the opportunity quite often simply to walk along the promenade at Otterspool.

I often look across to the hills on the other side with a sense of regret that there is not time to explore those more fully.

I am certain that fidelity to Our Lord includes taking every opportunity to explore the beauties of our world.

A careful reading of the Gospels makes it clear how aware He was of everything around Him.

I congratulate your Association as you celebrate your 70th anniversary and wish you well for the future.

Introduction - then and now



AS CHAIRWOMAN of the Liverpool Catholic Ramblers' Association I have the opportunity to give an introduction to this Seventieth Anniversary Souvenir. For guidance I was given copies of the 40th and 50th Anniversary editions and having read them see how different the Association now is. In the first year or so, rambles were held on a Saturday as "it wasn't the done thing to go rambling on a Sunday". On one memorable ramble in the thirties, 98 members went to Caergwrle! Fare, boat and train to Caergwrle was 1s 6d - a princely sum!

We also have seen change in dress. A photograph of a rambling group in 1927 shows 'gentlemen' in suits, overcoats, trilbies, and I spied a bowler! Ladies all wore hats with not one pair of trousers in sight. One article mentioned a lady member had been suspended from future walks because she had dared to

come out in a 'divided skirt!' My! How things have changed!

When I became a member, ten to twelve years ago, the rambles were fortnightly. We met at the 'Liverpool' on Thursdays and the Tennis Section was still playing tournaments. The newsletter was prepared on stencils, as it had been done for many years. It's much easier now we have been hauled into the 21st century with a computer.

The Association still enjoys various social events including games nights, themed and general quizzes, bring and buy auctions, theatre trips, opera and ballet - and I hasten to add, not performed by members. Phew! What a thought! And, of course, coach rambles each Sunday, holidays and weekends away - my most memorable ones were in Keswick, Maeshafn, Ireland, and with six men in two caravans on the Isle of Skye. It was there that I climbed my first Munro. I am sure you will have similar memories.

Where would we be without the companionship of our fellow ramblers and, those who seventy years ago got together to form what we now know as the Liverpool Catholic Ramblers Association. It's a great testimony to those founder members that the membership is healthy and long may it continue to be. The Association has provided support, companionship and social benefits to many, even through the war years keeping in touch with members overseas.

Sadly, this year, as many of us know, we lost a valued member. Gerry Penlington died in May shortly after his 80th birthday. He had given many years of faithful service including Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer (over 36 years) and Vice-President. I found Gerry a quiet but strong influence and a great support at Committee. A dignified gentlemen and missed by all his family and friends.

And so to the future. I would like to think the Association will, for many years, continue to provide a medium for social enjoyment and to appreciate green open spaces, in a catholic manner (as defined in my OED (paperback): adj. 1. Of all Churches or Christians; 2. Roman Catholic; 3. (Catholic) universal, including many or most things - to uphold our Christian values, uphold and respect the countryside.

As rambling/fell walking continues to increase in popularity, we may soon see charges introduced to enter/use National Parks and open spaces. In years to come we may even have rambling by surfing the nets or even visual reality. I do hope not, as there's nothing like being there in person.

However, long may the Association continue as it was in the past and my very best wishes to you all for the future. I wonder where we will all be in 2027? Watch this space!!

God Bless.

Bernadette Doyle
Chairwoman

HOW FAR HAVE WE RAMBLED? - It may be hard to believe, but it's a fact that the combined mileage of our members on all our rambles since 1927 would take us to the moon and back, twice!

Seventy years through our archives

IN 1927, Tom Marquess, our first chairman, and the Norbury brothers, along with friends from St Oswald's discussed the idea of starting a Catholic Holiday Guild. After preliminary meetings the first general meeting was held in July that year.

Appropriately, Archbishop Keating was then approached and readily gave his consent and blessing to the club. His successors gave their

patronage, some in a presidential role.

By the autumn of 1928 over 110 members had joined the Holiday Guild with a small group spending a week's holiday at Hope in Derbyshire. Four socials had been organised but twelve summer rambles had been held, so it was decided to rename the club the Catholic Holiday Guild and Rambling Association but in 1929 this title was aptly switched around to become the Catholic Ramblers' Association and Holiday Guild.

By 1930, rambles were held on the first Saturday and the third Sunday of each month. Only 18 months later we started weekly rambles but still on alternate Saturdays and Sundays. Even a few Wednesday rambles were tried but didn't last - then, in the summer of 1934, the weekly Sunday rambles were finally launched.

The years between 1930-35 also evidenced an expansion of other activities to include a tennis section, a football section, choirs, concert parties with our own pianists, theatre visits and a library.

CLUBROOM BOMBED

In 1937 our Wood Street clubroom was proving too small for our expanding membership and we moved to St Sebastian's Hall where we had previously held many dances. Now monthly Benediction was introduced, normally at the end of the ramble (this practice only finished in 1966).

Unhappily, dark clouds were now appearing on the horizon - Munich 1938, the phoney war of 1939, the blitz of 1940. Our young men were quickly called up for service and our clubroom got bombed. Most club activities were ceased by 1940, but a small nucleus of members met quarterly, organised the occasional dance, and the ladies kept up a continuous correspondence with the men who were stationed on active service.

With the cessation of hostilities in 1945, St Oswald's Hall was placed at our disposal to help us re-form the Association, then we moved twice, getting St Sebastians back again for a few years.

Rambles were finally resumed in 1946. We celebrated our 21st Anniversary in 1948 with Bishop Halsall presiding over a dinner dance at

Reece's Cafe. We moved to the Cathedral Buildings in Brownlow Hill in 1952.

A few 'A' and 'B' walks were instituted in 1953 to some opposition at first, but were mainly used just for the more strenuous walks. Chalet weekends at Meashafn and guesthouse weekends at Keswick were popular. Small groups started continental walking holidays and skiing holidays.

We started annual trips to Snowdon in the mid-50's but it wasn't until the late 60's that we tried other peaks in Snowdonia and could reach the Lake District (guesthouse weekends excepted).

On giving up our clubroom at Brownlow Hill in 1967, organised dancing and games were gradually phased out due to a younger generation of members favouring discos. However, we kept our country dance sessions at the annual Yuletide visits to Rivington Barn, where in 1977, we had a record crowd of almost 250 (including children).

NOMADIC EXISTENCE

In 1970 the Family Section was formed. More recently this has now been renamed the Seniors' Section and replaced by a younger Family Section.

The General Section were now regularly using coaches instead of trains. Our popular guesthouse weekends at Keswick were often fully booked. We had caravan weekends, camping at Wastwater, holidays in Scotland and annual skiing holidays.

Socially, since 1967, we've had a nomadic existence, moving to different premises about every three years on average. Atlantic House was the most memorable, having a large dance floor.

During the last decade the age of the average member has risen and discos were dropped in favour of our present-day social scene of quizzes, cheese and wine nights, bring and buy, etc. Hostel weekends had replaced caravan weekends.

Surprisingly, regular 'C' walks were only introduced in February 1990. Better coaches have been welcomed during the last few years and numbers have now risen to over 50 on some trips.

In the earlier years we had joint rambles with other Catholic rambling clubs from St Helens, Chester, Bolton, Manchester, etc. Those clubs seem to have fallen by the wayside since, but the Newcastle Catholic Ramblers still soldier on.

For ensuring the LCRA's continuity we thank such stalwart past vice-presidents as Fred Norbury (45 years service) died 1972, Cyril Kelly (42 years service) died 1976 and the late Gerard Penlington (over 50 years service) died in May. R.I.P.

Archives research by Dave Newns

Chairmen 1927-1997

1927 Tom Marquess	1949 F. C. Norbury	1965 C. Dobbin	1982 P. Stevens
1928 Tom Marquess	1950 G. Penlington	1966 C. Dobbin	1983 P. Stevens
1929 W. G. Smith	1951 M. Walsh	1967 B. J. Manley	1984 D. Newns
1930 Tom Marquess	1952 W. J. Roberts	1968 B. J. Manley	1985 D. Newns
1931 Tom Marquess	1953 W. J. Roberts	1969 D. Titherington	1986 Miss A. Platt
1932 J. F. Harvey	1954 C. Kelly	1970 D. Titherington	1987 P. Healy
1933 T. Joyce	1955 C. Kelly	1971 D. Newns	1988 P. Healy
1934 J. F. Harvey	1956 C. Kelly	1972 D. Newns	1989 Miss B. Doyle
1935 T. Joyce	1957 C. Kelly	1973 D. Newns	1990 Miss B. Doyle
1936 J. F. Harvey	1958 C. Kelly	1974 J. Clarke	1991 Miss B. Doyle
1937 J. F. Harvey	1959 C. Kelly	1975 J. Clarke	1992 Miss B. Lyons
1938 J. F. Harvey	1960 C. Kelly	1976 F. Mullin	1993 Miss B. Doyle
1939/45 J. F. Harvey	1961 C. Kelly	1977 Miss P. Unsworth	1994 Miss B. Doyle
1946 T. Inight	1962 C. Kelly	1978 Miss L. Clarke	1995 Miss B. Doyle
1947 F. C. Norbury	1963 C. Kelly	1979 Miss M. McDonnell	1996 Miss B. Doyle
1948 F. C. Norbury	1964 C. Kelly	1980/81 Vacant	1997 Miss B. Doyle

The Fred Norbury and Cyril Kelly Trophies

FRED NORBURY was a founder-member of the Association whose initial enthusiasm for the club was maintained throughout his 45 years service until his death in 1972. He played a leading role by taking on many of the officers positions, finishing as Vice-President. The club decided that a trophy in Fred's memory would be a fitting tribute. It was to be competed for annually. Fred had a special interest in the club's Tennis Section and the trophy was appropriately launched in 1973 with a tennis tournament at the club's tennis courts at Lance Lane in Wavertree (since closed). Various competitions were then held including multi-events such as pitch and putt, crown green

bowls, darts, pool, quizzes, etc. with one lady and one gent winner sharing each year. Then in 1985 the Cyril Kelly Cup was also inaugurated. Cyril was of similar mould to Fred, but joining in 1934 and giving 42 years service to the club. He died in 1976 when he was a Vice-President, but a few years went by before Cyril's trophy was launched. Now with two trophies we use Fred's for the men and Cyril's for the ladies. Each year winners names are engraved on the cups. In recent years the competitions have faded away, so now two outstanding club members, decided annually, are presented with the trophies. This usually takes place at the club's annual dance.

* * * * *

Bus, train, boat or tram!

TRAMS were used frequently for our rambles in those early days. A number of rambles took place in the Wirral and the near Welsh Hills and the ferry across the Mersey was regulary used to connect up with public transport. Fares shown on many programmes included boat and train, such as: 'Boat and train to Caergwrle, 1/6d' or 'Boat and bus to Arrowe Park, 10d'. Here's just a few snapshots from the past:

Oct 4th 1930 (half day) IRBY. Meet at Island opposite Liver Building, Pier Head, 2pm.

Nov 1st 1931 (half-day) CRANK (near Rainford). Meet at St Helens Tram Terminus, 2.30pm.

Jan 17th 1932 (full day) PEX HILL (14 miles). Meet at Woolton Tram Terminus 11am.

Nov 5th 1933 PARBOLD. Joint ramble with Preston Catholic Ramblers. See Press notices.

Jan 14th 1934 SIMONSWOOD. West Derby Tram Terminus 2.30pm (4d). Leader F. Norbury.

Mar 1st 1935 MELLING MOUNT. Meet at Exchange Station 2.15pm (Fare 6d).

Aug 9th 1936 MAM TOR and CASTLETON. Meet at Central Station 9.45am (Fare 4/-).

Easter Monday 1937 HOLYWELL. Meet at Liver Buildings 9.30am (Fare 2/2d).

Personal Reflections 1954-1997

ABOUT 1954 my friend of school and teenage years got married and left me 'all forlorn' but not for long. I responded to an advert in the Liverpool Echo inviting readers to join the Catholic Ramblers for recreation in the 'great outdoors'. The general secretary during that period was Harold Burns (who later became a long-standing trustee and vice-president). He dutifully sent the application form and programme of events. (Sadly, Harold's health has deteriorated now, and he and his good wife Betty do need our prayers at this time).

From my environment of terraced housing with brick walls to front, side and rear, the first and subsequent rambles were indeed a 'new world' of mountains, valleys and clear blue skies (most days) and complementing all this were long-lasting friendships.

A senior member Cyril Kelly (RIP) was the first I met, informing me of the various activities of the club but not including boxing (my previous sport), thus a pair of cauliflower ears and a flat nose was avoided. Having only joined in the August of that year, the winter 'Chalet' weekend looked enticing and was the 'buzz' during those social evenings - "Come and join us!" was the cry.

So having received precise instructions and sketch from Gerry Penlington (God bless him!) I eagerly found myself alighting off the 9 o'clock Crosville bus from Woodside at Maeshafn Corner - only every other Saturday morning off work those days! The sun was shining and a warm autumn breeze cooled the brow as I made my way along lanes in a spirit full of excitement and mystery to new pastures of green fields and rolling hills. Never missed a year at the Chalet since!

Cajoled onto the committee that first year (elected by rule of course!) left me no time to stand and stare. Being swept along by the enthusiasm of fellow members, many ventures and adventures unfolded.

Committee meetings, for instance, always included the important registrar's report giving current membership figures, with Mona Roberts, in her renowned efficient but individual manner, stating how many doubles, singles (not the Malt!), lapsed and joints (not the hallucinatory!). By the way, on court Mona had a wicked forehand and, I suspect, may still have today! I've given up!

The rambling programme soon began to take us further afield. So with a borrowed Austin A7, Bernard Edwards and I set off to pioneer a club walk into Snowdonia, in particular Tryfan, that steep and rugged peak which rises from the floor of Ogwen Valley and needs the use of hands as well as feet.

The walks among the higher peaks engendered a call for 'A' and 'B' parties and that first introduction caused mixed feelings and fears of splitting the social fabric of the club, which, until that time had danced and walked their ways together. 'Amen, or so be it!' The later addition of 'C' walks during the last decade was taken for granted.

Some rambles featured both activities. For example, homeward bound on public transport we would 'sing along' to the rhythm of our hob/tricunni-nailed boots (except through local villages and on buses without permission) - Rule 999 of the club, I think? Square dancing was also practised on dimly lit railway platforms, or on the top deck of the Birkenhead to Pier Head ferry, in readiness for the Wednesday fling in the meeting hall of Brownlow Hill.

The annual Yuletide and Treasure Hunt was transferred from the Park Gate Cafe to Rivington Old Barn which proved a great success for many years - three bus loads one year - children galore from the Family Section on later occasions. This is another part of LCRA history.

After my second or third year of weekends at Lakeside House in Keswick and excursions among the Lakeland fells, there awakened for me a strong desire to 'Climb Every Mountain' and many were realised.

An increase in affluence and longer holidays enabled visits to the Alps by some small groups. Sobhad Hall in Austria and the glittering Italian Dolomites sowed the seed for that great love of nature in all her glory. Thank God for His providence and wonderful creation.

In compiling this meander it came to me that the past practice of Benediction on some of our rambles afforded us, as an association of kindred spirits, To 'Praise Him! Praise Him!' was 'no ah bad thing'.

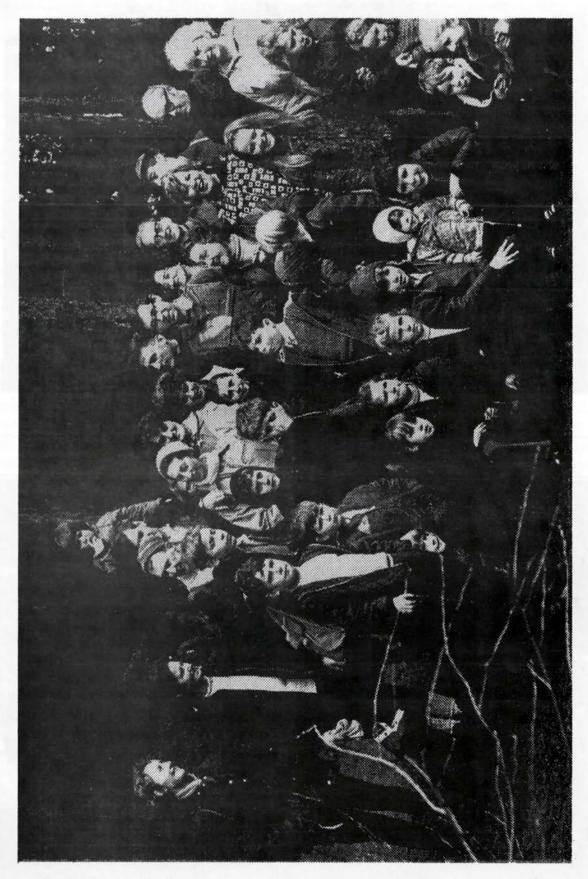
Bill Potter



The late Cyril Kelly (left) and the late Gerry Penlington (right) about 1975. Others (left to right) the late May Kelly, John Clarke and Daphne O'Shea.



Some of our Lance Lane tennis ladies just a "few" years ago. Mona Roberts (extreme right), Maureen Howard (next to Mona).



Family Section 1971 at Freshfield (some of the parents shown here are now in the Seniors' Section).



Christmas Fancy Dress, 1955/56.



Rivington Barn, Christmas 1967.

The Seniors' Section

(THE ORIGINAL FAMILY SECTION)

IN the summer of 1970, a small group of exramblers who had formed firm friendships when active in the club, married partners from the club and had had children, suggested getting together and embarking on formal walks with the abilities of the various children being foremost in mind.

Surely other ex-ramblers would be interested? Well, we could only ask and wait for the response. A date was fixed and the venue named - Rivington.

This was chosen because everyone would know where it was, it had toilets and it had shelter if the weather was inclement. And so the message went out - mostly by personal contact.

We expected plently of excuses for not 'Parading' and we thought we may manage twenty or so if we were lucky. SEVENTY souls paraded - yes SEVENTY, ranging from babes in arms upwards. All parents declared it a brainwave - 'why hadn't it happened years ago?'

The walk at Rivington was a resounding success. Mums and dads dug out their boots and the children wore 'wellies'. fighting through the dense undergrowth on the terraced gardens was a terrific adventure for the children. (Rivington had been badly neglected for many years and the formal garden area of the hillside was almost impenetrable in parts with pathways lost).

Many old friendships were renewed and the children made many new friends and this was the key to the future success of the venture. So, instead of cries of 'can we go home?' there were cries of 'can we come again?'

So, the family section was born with news of its existence spreading amongst friends and via the children. Interested families, who had not previously been associated with the Ramblers begged to come and so the numbers swelled. 80-90 on a ramble was not unusual, 120 being the best at a Yuletide.

To add interest for the children the famous Lollipop Trees were planted. It became the duty of the leader to purchase a supply of sweets/lollipops, etc. and slip ahead of the party to plant the 'goodies'.

A good-natured treasure hunt occured on every ramble. A fee of 10p per family was levied to cover the cost of the sweets. Ask any of the 'one time children,' now in their 20's and 30's what they remembered about ramblers and you will be given one answer the lollipop trees.

Other events organised for the children included Christmas parties and tnen for many years visits to the Pantomimes at the Neptune Theatre. We must have had a certain magic as there were never any squabbles or problems amongst the children, with many remaining friends to this day.

As the years have passed families have left and new families joined - mostly friends, fellow parishioners or old school friends. All have been made welcome and have become an intergral part of the section.

Almost from the outset a committee has existed - to liaise with the Main club and to ensure that the section ran smoothly. Meetings are held monthly in each other's houses and form an important part of the social life of the section. For the past few years there have been two walks per month, the second being easier and intended to suit the now less able.

Although the children are long grown up, fifty members are still involved and now as well as walking, enjoy an active social scene with visits to various theatres, concerts, events and place of interest.

In October 1992 the Main club suggested passing the title Family Section to a newly formed section with children and so the title Seniors Section was chosen and approved - an apt, and perhaps kind title, as all members are now retired - but still young at heart

Leo Pearson

The Family Section - full circle

MY first taste of the Liverpool Catholic Ramblers Association occurred at the age of nine. A new section had been formed by married members with children. Many friendships were made or remade in the early days of the Family Section.

The highlight of the year was the Yuletide at Rivington Barn. Here both sections joined together for walks, a hot-pot and barn dance. On one snowy day I remember sitting on top of Rivington Pike, watching the 'A' walkers trample a path through the snow and disappear into the mist as they crossed the moor to Winter Hill. Years later, I lead similar walks and gained competence in the use of map and compass.

At the age of eighteen I joined the Ramblers in my own right and enjoyed countless days and weekends walking and socialising. The Keswick weekends were particularly enjoyable, 45-plus ramblers would descend on Lakeside House with Mavis at the helm. Long walks, good food, late night dancing - what more could you ask for.

My own interest in walking extends beyond the Ramblers. Prior to joining I had walked on Dartmoor and the Black Mountains, but each week the Ramblers took me to a new area and a new experience. My personal achievements have included the 14 Peaks, the 3 Peaks in under 24 hours and Wainwright's Coast-to-Coast path. My present challenge is to complete all the Scottish Munro's - 178 completed, 99 to go.

Anyway, enough of my ramblings, back to the

Family Section. A group of members, now married with their children decided to organise their own family walks. In October 1992, after a number of false starts, a group of married members with children met for a walk at Whalley Bridge led by Bernard Foley.

The day was a success and more walks were planned, but what was the section to be called. Family Section seemed the most appropriate name but that was already used. After negotiation the original Family Section became the Seniors' Section and our new section inherited the name Family Section.

The last five years have been up and down for our new Family Section. Walks have been held most months and the average attendance has been about 15. Apart from one very wet and miserable day the participants have thoroughly enjoyed themselves. It is amazing how the most reluctant child seems to excel when surrounded by other children. The Section is growing stronger with new members from inside and outside the Club.

The Association has reached this Seventieth Anniversary because of the members, who over the years, have got involved and participated in all the activities. Let's hope and pray that our children will help to ensure the continuation and development of the Association for many years to come.

Not as epic as Michael Palin but still full circle.

Anthony Brockway

Milestones

- 1927 First Annual General Meeting in July. Annual subscription one shilling.
- 1928 Membership over a hundred. Ramble reminders were sent to members by individual postcards.
- 1930 First rambling programmes printed and supplied to members.
- 1933 Foundation Stone laid for the original Metropolitan Cathedral.
- 1935 First football team formed at Queens Drive, Stonecroft.
- 1936 First tennis courts opened in Cherry Lane. YHA walking holiday in Ireland.
- 1940 Last social held in air-raid shelter as the clubroom was badly damaged by bombs.
- 1945 First post-war social was held at St Oswald's Hall, Old Swan in October.
- 1946 Newsletter resumed publication in June. Membership was 46.
- 1953 'A' and 'B' walks inaugurated.
- 1957 First of the traditional Yuletide Walks at Rivington Barn. Previous Yuletide venues were varied.
- 1959 First of annual trips to Church Stretton for football and social at the De Montfort College.
- 1967 Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King opened on Sunday, 14th May no ramble that day.
- 1970 Orienteering introduced with the aim of producing more competent leaders. Family Section formed.
- 1987 Although we we thriving socially, the rambles were suffering with only two or three walks per month.
- 1989 Rambles were back on a weekly basis.
- 1990 Regular 'C' walks inaugurated.
- 1992 New Family Section formed. Previous Family Section renamed the Seniors' Section.

Today's Scene

DURING the year '96/'97 we had 44 coach rambles including the Yuletide event, and an average of 46 ramblers per coach isn't bad at all. Two of these trips included a meal at the Camforth Hotel and on other occasions free chips, sausages or butties were included during the pubstops. We also explored a totally different area (in this era at least) namely Flamborough Head, establishing that it is practical to visit the N.E. for a Sunday ramble providing we get an early dart.

The Commarket continues to be our Thursday Social evening venue and has been very popular with quizzes, auctions, Cheese and Wines and other events, usually with prizes.

We amalgamated the Rambling/Social meetings with the General Committee meetings at Birch House, and therefore the general membership can attend the Rambling/Social part of the evening on the second Monday of each month at 7.30.

We had three very enjoyable weekends in Youth Hostels at Greenhead, Longthwaite and Llanbedr. During the Christmas break we visited Hilbre Island, and Formby for local walks and on other occasions we had local walks on the Wirral. We also had a series of map-reading classes which will be repeated shortly.

Other events included a barge trip and meal at Maghull, and visits to the ballet, Coppelia and the Nutcracker.

The Fred Norbury Cup was presented to

Dave Dickel and the Cyril Kelly Cup to Carol Kellett at the Christmas Dance.

Last October we had a celebration dinner at Birch House where we honoured some of our long-serving members. Chris Dobbin and Gerry Penlington received gifts and Brian Keller was made an Honorary Member. Sadly, as most of us know. Gerry who had been a dedicated member since the '30s died shortly after his eightieth birthday in May.

We celebrated our Annual Mass in September and the Retreat was as usual last November.

We twice contributed to the Cause for Hope Appeal during the past year, and along the way, by means of the Committee's Cathedral Penny and Raffles we have accrued a fair amount of cash for the Cathedral's Millennium Fund.

This very eventful year was only made possible by the efforts of all those who led walks, prepared food, provided quizzes and planned the events, so on behalf of us all, thank you.

Among the highlights planned for the coming year is a weekend to Torbay at Easter, a Youth Hostelling weekend at Wastwater, a bowling and barbecue inclusive walk at the Bickerton Poacher and a Keswick weekend next October. These along with our full programme of walks and warm comfortable coaches, courtesy of Selwyn's, may perhaps entice some of our old membership back into the fold.

Ray McIntosh &



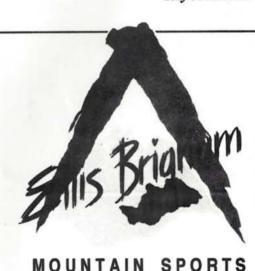
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