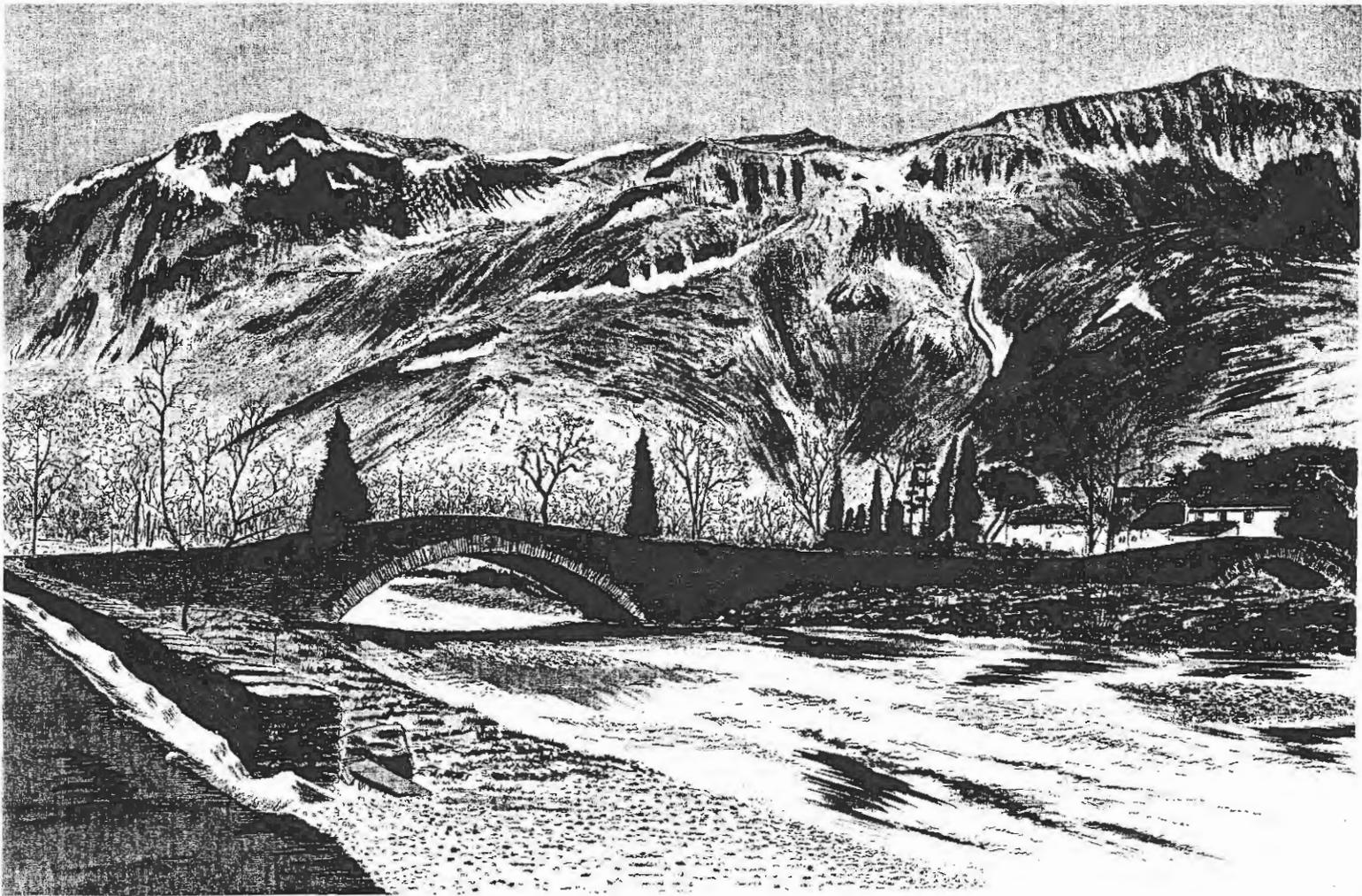


Liverpool Catholic Ramblers' Newsletter



Winter - Grange in Borrowdale

SPRING 2001 Seventh Series Issue 30

EDITORIAL - I could say this edition's been a bit of a pig to produce, not that there's many pigs around at the moment. Now I've got to hoof it off to the Office Superstore. (Apologies to any farmers reading this). Actually this slimline edition was a doddle to produce. The last edition's mistake of being printed on one side of the paper only has now been rectified - the idiot from the Office Superstore who did has been exterminated! *Dave News*

A Superman version of Wainwright

IN BORROWDALE, recently, I had an absorbing chat with the above man, but I'll tell you more about him in a minute. Nearly fifty people were booked for that Keswick weekend at the end of March but after a debate and a vote by the committee the weekend was cancelled. However, shortly after this decision, media publicity urged people not to desert Keswick and this prompted 26 of us to book privately.

After driving over the disinfectant mat on an unusually quiet Kendal Bypass to Windermere, me and my three car passengers were amazed to see hundreds of sheep and a few herds of cattle, at a safe distance from human contact, but still very much alive and roaming around the fields. The empty Cumbrian fields the media portrayed were obviously at the far north of the Lakes.

First stop was the Information Bureau in Keswick to see what we could and couldn't do. I was surprised to learn that the new Theatre-by-the-Lake was fully booked for Saturday night (bar four odd seats).

Anyway, after an entertaining evening by a guitar duo in the Oddfellows Arms we had a wet Saturday morning market day. But like magic, a really sunny afternoon found us walking along permitted roads through Portinscale (and disinfectant dips) passing many other walkers and cyclists. We visited the Derwent Bay Bear Factory (huge wooden ones) near Hause End landing stage, then Eric (*welcome back*) successfully extended the walk by several miles to include the cosy Swinside Inn for afternoon tea and sandwiches.

Meanwhile Mike, Helen and Dave D had an interesting afternoon Heritage Tour around Keswick organised by the Tourist Board, while Flo, Mary and Margaret went for an dip in the swimming pool.

On the Sunday we climbed aboard the minibus and Bob dropped many of us off in the Borrowdale Valley, then subsequently dropping off a few 'A' walkers over the Honister Pass for a road walk back to Keswick.

That same day, while we stopped for afternoon tea outside a cafe in the old monastic village of Grange, I

noticed a familiar face. Until recently he used to do thoroughly entertaining slide shows on Ice-climbing in the Lakes at the Moot Hall in Keswick.

This was Ray McCaffey, a Superman-type version of Wainwright, now, at 65-years-young, he was on his way back to Keswick (on bicycle) via the Honister Pass, waiting (half-an-hour) for his wife to catch him up!

He is actively involved in the local Mountain Rescue organisation and always has many stories to tell such as the time when someone slid off the (flat sloping) summit of Helvellyn on ice and plunged over the edge. He said you nearly always find the bodies at the same spot way below the summit, but they couldn't find this particular chap after searching day and night in arctic conditions.

The following day it transpired that the man had been spotted in a pub alive and well. By some miracle he had survived the fall but neglected to inform anyone. Ray said he couldn't repeat the words he spoke to that climber in the pub later!

Ray told me that over the years he had personally opened up many new climbing routes in the Borrowdale Valley alone and a book was currently being printed.

He has just retired from his job as renovating footpaths around the heart of the Lakes and was now looking forward to a spring climbing holiday in America!

"It makes a change from the Alps where he had rubbed shoulders with well-known climbers," he said.

Finally, it must be said that those of us who stayed in Lakeside House for that (unofficial) Keswick weekend really enjoyed the food and hospitality. We even had our own musicians, namely Richie and Peter. *Dave News*



Social Events



Apr 26 - Play Your Cards Right. With big cards and fabulous cash prizes on offer. Mike Riley's better than TV!

May 3 - Cheese and Wine Night plus Dingbats. Only £1.50 for cheese and wine. Should be a good night.

May 10 - Sing-Along with Richie and Company. Entertainment with those old songs played on guitars.

May 17 - Who Want's to be a Millionaire. Similar to TV but with Will Tarrant - a real chance to win up to 500p!

May 24 - The Weakest Link - First time for Helen Robinson. Similar to TV again but without the cameras. Make Helen smile! - Goodbye!

May 31 - Picture Quiz

June 7 - Cheese and Wine

Obituaries

Larry Kearns - Sadly, Larry died recently after a short illness. He was a widower and joined our club over a decade ago. In spite of giving up rambling several years ago because of knee problems, he continued to drive his car and joined us on many of our club weekends away. We offer our sympathy to all his friends and relatives, and also condolences to club member and neighbour Kay. May he rest in peace.

Pat McIntosh's Mother - We also offer our condolences to Pat, and prayers for her mother who died recently. May she rest in peace.

Ramblerite

OUR programme of walks has obviously had to be scrapped because of the Foot and Mouth epidemic, but the good news is that some footpaths and canal paths are now re-opening. Consequently we are laying on a coach to Betws-y-coed on May 20th where already some of the forest paths have been re-opened. There are also rumours that possibly Snowdon itself will be achievable by the time the Betws-y-coed trip takes place.

Meanwhile, in true British spirit, we soldier on with our makeshift programme of walks in permitted places. Many of you have been in telephone touch and found out about these local rambles, two of which included a beach walk and the other around the Walls of Chester.

It needed a volunteer or two to report on these walks for this newsletter (in vain!). The only walk I turned out for was the last one on the Sunday before Easter when eighteen of us trekked from the car park at Spike Island, by the Catalyst Museum in Widnes, so I will reminisce.

That day found us bouncing along the dizzy heights of . . . the Widnes-Runcorn Bridge! After pausing in the middle for the view we eventually reached the far end, then Ray Mc took us via a pleasant canal path to Norton Priory. On the way we passed perilously close to a team

playing American baseball, a rare sight in this country.

Now we had the option of visiting the Priory but on seeing the admission charge (and trying unsuccessfully to negotiate a party discount) we opted for barging into the Barge Inn. Here many of us enjoyed good value-for-money bar meals at less than the Priory admission charge. Unfortunately it was raining on the return trek and this caught some without waterproofs - so a few were saturated by the time we bounced back across the bridge. Moral in this story is that although many of our paths are closed - the clouds are still open for business!

Now, tomorrow's club trip to York has proved to be popular with a full coach booked. Weather forecast says that it could be dry in York, but take no chances!

Dave Newns

Forthcoming walks

April 29 - LOOPLINE - Hunts Cross to Aintree.
Meet at Hunts Cross Railway Station at 11.00. Train leaves Central 10.42; leaves Hough Green 10.53.

May 6 - FORMBY TO SOUTHPORT.

May 13 - ALBERT DOCK TO OTTERSPOOL.
Meet at Tourist Information Shop at 11.00.

May 20 - BETWS-Y-COED. (Possibly Snowdon for A and B). Coach leaves 9.30 from our usual place.

Evening guided tour of the Metropolitan Cathedral

A chance to explore the hidden depths of the Cathedral that the general public don't normally get to see.

Also a chance to meet members of the Seniors' Section.

TUESDAY, MAY 22 at 7pm - Meet at the underground car park entrance.

New Year 2002 at the Ambleside Youth Hostel

The following dates have been booked for 30 beds:
Sun 30 Dec, Mon 31 Dec, Tues 1 Jan 2002, return Wed.

Those wishing to stay longer or shorter should indicate on their booking form.

Booking forms can be obtained on the Sunday walks or at the Ship and Mitre (upstairs) on Thursday nights.

Accommodation (bed only). The more beds per room the cheaper it costs, ie: 2-bedded room £16 per person, 3-bedded room £15.34 per person, 4-bedded room £14 per person, 6 to 8-bedded dormitory £13.50 each

The allocation of 2, 3 and 4-bedded rooms will be on

a first come basis, ie: 3 x 2-bedded, 1 x 3-bedded, 1 x 4-bedded. If you require a room (instead of a dormitory) then you must book early and state the number of beds required in your room and who you wish to share with.

Meals extra: Evening Meal £4.90, Breakfast £3.30, Packed Lunch (standard) £2.90.

Note: Transport will not be provided. Members to make own arrangements as in previous years.

All cheques and monies to be paid to Liverpool Catholic Ramblers Association or "LCRA" and not to me. **A £15 Deposit required.**

Dave Dickel

Seniors' Section

Tour of Metropolitan Cathedral - Tuesday May 22 - 7pm. Meet at underground car park entrance. *See above*

RAMBLES

May 13 ROCHDALE, 12.00. For details ring 01706 658281. Leader Harry O'Neill.

June 10 George Skillicorn - Ring 01744 892823 for details.

HOUSE MEETINGS

May 3 Audrey & Geoff Slack 427 4192
June 7 Molly & Tony Roche 486 4235
July 5 George & Freda Skillicorn 01744 892823

Aug 2 Maureen Howard 427 4537
Sept 6 AGM
Oct 4 Amie Shaw 724 4689

Free Luxury Holiday to Bangkok

I THINK many of you would be interested if you were offered this free week in Thailand.

Club member John B actually won this holiday competition courtesy of the Sunday Telegraph.

Although our close friendship had ended, he wanted me to accompany him, even though I had said: "Feel free to take someone else." Anyway . . .

October 2000: Flight to Bangkok - Club Class complete with luxury silk armchair (personal TV fitted in chair), all sorts of Channels, gift bag, cosmetics, socks, socks! (*one changes your footwear so one is relaxed, one does!*) - also silk cover in case you feel chilly!!

German stewards: "Drink madam? Anything you desire!" Even the menus were masterpieces with cream/gold/red ribbons. Then the food trolleys appeared, linen napkins (*I use paper ones*), cutlery wrapped in starched napkin - the weight of the cutlery revealed that it wasn't cheap stuff - more like Asprey (London). Every kind of food delicacy (*I can't eat much, wish I could*).

"More drinks Madam?" (*Brandy and soda lasts me for ever*) - Manchester to Vienna, on to Bangkok.

White Mercedes waiting, chauffeur in white uniform. More goodies, chilled drinks, chilled cloths for your face, and fruit. Bridges that stretched out for ever - multi-storey blocks going into twilight, so lights were shining everywhere; beautiful skyline.

Then the Oriental Hotel - Queen Eliz/Charlie, Piers Brosnan, Tom Cruise, Mick Jagger have a suite of rooms there. Diplomats, beautiful Thai girls, even the staff were Thai girls wearing very stylish dresses - you couldn't call them uniforms. Each time they spoke to you they bowed, hands in prayer-like mode.

This Colonial hotel, had a very interesting history, and exquisite decor, orchids everywhere - luxurious. Wow! Our suite was overlooking the busy Cha Pra River carrying all types of interesting craft.

If you stayed on your balcony all day it would be entertaining. On the ordinary passenger craft, you had to jump on, then held, held your breath, then finally jumping off quickly.

We visited posh places in an electric storm - makes a change. We also strolled along the alleys with people cooking everywhere. Good stuff, even though we didn't know what we were eating - every type of rice, ball-shaped, tasted OK in stew. Velly velly good!

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There were plenty of Buddhist Monks, all ages, in their yellow gowns and shaven heads. It was forbidden to touch them, even accidentally, as you passed by.

We visited markets that went on forever, they were like Aladdin's caves, and the prices were OK. We tried their tea and toast which consists of extra thick cubes smothered in honey on fruit - velly tasty!

We saw gruesome cock fights. How can they watch this? (all men). Beautiful tall birds all killing each other, spurs on their feet, screaming, blood everywhere. The men didn't seem to like my objections to all this horror when I shouted out. I even saw fighting fish. Is this all classed as their culture?

There were thousands of people everywhere. Children were begging for money to go to school. They had big cards pinned to their clothes.



One evening, after we threw ourselves off a moving bus (one of the roads was blocked off for a Hindu ceremony) we found everyone in white with garlands - lamps and music - bearing gifts from the Gods, calling at shrines and dancing.

Another day we had a river trip with fruit and drinks served. We saw contrasts of affluence and poverty - not just living in shacks by the river but also on the river. If it rained - tough!

We visited shrines - "Take your shoes off please!" Gold Buddha's/thousands of ornaments.

Last day: Invited for tea in the Author's Lounge - only the privileged: Hemingway, W Somerset Maugham, Lord Byrom, etc, etc, all behind glass cases. Beautiful girls with handsome men (*some not so handsome!*) having posh tea; also witnessed a fashion shoot - cameras out flashing a fashion mag.

The dream was over. Came home to bills, the cat, plants I had forgotten to look after, and the bleakness of Liverpool.

Thanks to John for a memorable holiday (*I have a very pretty ring bought by him*). I didn't want to go initially, but I'm glad I did.

Would I go back again? Love to. One never knows what's around the corner (*Optimist!*).

Meanwhile it's got to be Llanfairfechan/Sicily on the yacht. (Oh no, not again!).

Norma R

PS: Hopefully I will be walking around our green and pleasant land, very soon.

Note: Oriental text reads "Free Holiday to Bangkok" - typed on the club's computer, honestly! - Editor

CONGRATULATIONS to Paula Larkin and Paul Coakley who got engaged recently

BRAINTEASER for all you lateral thinkers. If any Chinese person (and there are thousands of them living in Thailand) saw the Oriental message down the centre of the story above they would spot the error, but if a Japanese read it he would have difficulty finding an error. Why! Answer upside down below.

OUR CLUB'S OWN WEBSITE - For many of us, until recently a website was just a quiet corner of the garden where Septimus Spider lingered. Now forget about Septimus and make a careful note:

www.geocities.com/Livercra (the capital L must be used)

STOP PRESS: I've just heard that we are having teething problems with this website. Well we've still got the newsletter!