

**Liverpool Catholic
Ramblers' Newsletter
February 2000
7th Series Issue 24**

WANTED: Your stories and articles

THERE are over 200 of you out there eligible to write something - even short ramble write-ups welcome! Just pass them on to me or send them to yours truly at the above address. Thanks to Bob Carney for his interesting diary page, also to Richie Cannon for his Peckforton write-up and to Norma Ridings for her report on the Holly Bough Service. Finally, to Jack for spotting the "Pick your own fight" cartoon which is spot on for one of Bob's diary dates. The Senior's Section, who always send in good reports, seem to have gone into hibernation for this edition. *Dave News*

LEADERS WANTED FOR THE SUMMER RAMBLING PROGRAMME

The summer programme is being prepared for printing but we need more members to volunteer to lead the walks planned. There may also be some new members capable of leading. See Will Harris or any committee member.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS - Flo and Ronnie have given up smoking. They're wearing nicotine patches. Wouldn't these be best stuck over one's mouth to make you stop!? Congratulations on your valiant achievement.

COACH DROP OFFS - people getting dropped en-route at approved points should remember not to put their gear in the boot of the coach. Please keep gear inside so as not to delay the coach unnecessarily. - *LCRA Committee*

TALKING TO COACH DRIVER - A couple of people have been warned about unwittingly having long conversations with the driver while he is at the wheel. His concentration can easily be lost, and the safety of his passengers put at risk. It has been pointed out that the leaders regularly talk to the driver. True, but that's usually to give him directions, and nothing like the long conversations that we are concerned about. - *LCRA Committee*

WARNING: CAR PARKING - New members (and not-been-out-for-a-while ones) note that it now costs £4 to park your car all day on Sundays on the meters, and you will be fined heavily if you don't display the right-priced ticket. **However, there is a handy car park that only charges £2 all day.** Ask any car driver for details.

A SELECTION OF FORTHCOMING RAMBLES

Feb 20 THIRLSPOT/GRASMERE

The 'A' and 'B' walks will probably do Helvellyn - the Lake District's most visited mountain, and the 'C' will do a lower-level Grasmere ramble.

Mar 5 STIPERSTONES is a bit like Stonehenge and close to The Long Mynd, south of Shrewsbury in Shropshire (*abbreviation: Salop, to the uneducated*).

Feb 27 DOVESTONES (near Oldham)

Dovestone Reservoir is in a beauty spot below Saddleworth Moor which has attractive rocky edges similar to Baslow and Froggat Edges.

April 2 THE OTHER BORROWDALE is actually in the Lake District and not the Dales, as wrongly stated in the programme.

19th December 1999 - a beautiful Sunday afternoon

THE HOLLY BOUGH SERVICE at the Anglican Cathedral is a beautiful experience, so much so that this was my third visit. I wonder if both the Liverpool Bishops attend? (*I think this is an Ecumenical Service. I haven't been myself but I would think that both Bishops would be there - Editor*). Anyway, let me tell you all about it.

It starts with teenage choir boys wearing crisp white cassocks ringing handbells - not a wrong note! The ringing echoes around the lofty sandstone cathedral - wonderful architecture. After the tinkling bells, younger choir boys, 6-8 years, wearing green and russet gowns - shining little faces, sang some German carols - one being 'Stille Nacht, Heilig Nacht' (Silent Night, Holy Night). The sweet voices of these little boys were exquisite and emotional (brought a lump to my throat). Then the main choir and congregation sang all the old familiar carols: 'Away in a Manger,' 'Oh Come all ye Faithful', etc, etc.

Then the high spot for me was the church dignitaries in wonderful robes coming down the aisle, followed by a very tall chorister carrying the first huge holly bough, then the small boys carrying little Christmas trees decorated with twinkling lights (the cathedral lights are dimmed for this part). The congregation is hushed, and the gentleness of this ceremony is not to be missed. At the very end some organ music is played - a Cantata. You area asked not to applaud, but it's so beautiful you certainly feel like doing so.

Put the date in your diary for December this year. It's not to be missed. Also the refectory served great food - all home made. Get there early for a good seat.

So here's wishing you all a belated Happy New Year and safe walking.
Norma S. Ridings 2000

PS: Just to say thanks to all the committee who give their time up, sitting in that cold room on a Monday night and planning socials, etc. (I know, I have been there!). Also to Dave Dickel and Bob Carney for organising past and present holidays. To Dave for typing the newsletter and Will and Chris for distributing it. Thanks also to the people who volunteer to do the Thursday night quizzes. Maybe if more people got down earlier, more would attend.

Finally, very belated thanks to the brave souls who risked life and limb! . . . to carry both me and my broken ankle down Y-Llivedd by the Gladstone Rock on the Snowdon range. Also thanks to the very very nice man who pushed me around in my wheelchair. Do you know, there are some great flat walks for disabled people?
Norma and John

COOKERY CORNER - Time and space have stopped me putting in a few more snippets including a new feature entitled 'Cookery Corner.' It's an old newspaper trick to type the first page last for all the up-to-date news, so now you know the secret. The Cookery Corner will start in the Easter edition, so send in your recipes. *Editor*

WELCOME TO ALL NEWCOMERS WHO HAVE ENJOYED OUR WALKS RECENTLY

Peckforton - land of canals, castles, candles and charms

Yuletide walk and premier coach ramble of the Millennium, 9.1.2000

NO MATTER what the season, there's something rather magical about the gentle forested hills of Peckforton, in West Cheshire.

Having enticed the director of "Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves" to shoot part of his film at Peckforton Castle, so I was beguiled into directing a party of 'B' walkers there. Would they likewise succumb to the seductive charms of the plateau looking proudly over the Cheshire Plain and beyond? For here, the patchwork-quilt of fields and hedgerows is the classic beauty of the English countryside; "Far from the Madding Crowd". Look out on a clear day from Beeston Castle's turrets to see what I mean.

So, after an initial cafe stop at Tiverton we "B's" headed towards this dry-roated edifice, dating from around 1337. Six keen "A" walkers had already disappeared, led by Carol. We started with a pleasant stroll along the Shropshire Union Canal, crossing the River Goway at Wharton's Lock.

The weather was perfect for walking. We had escaped the rain which hit Liverpool that day. Soon, the castle loomed up majestically from its hilltop, a silhouette in the distance. Steve McNally had done a recce with me, so he agreed to whip in. Some distance behind were the "C" walkers led by Will Harris.

If, as I am told, it's still lawful to shoot a Welshman with a longbow from Chester's city walls, I wondered if this applied also to Beeston Castle? It was easy to envisage a hail of arrows being released from its ramparts to repel the Welsh invaders.

Moving on, after dodging these imaginary arrows without casualties, we took the Sandstone Trail, which, at first, swathes through the edge of the raised forest. Peckforton Castle was now in view. No redundant film extras were seen prancing about in green tights and pointed felt hats (totally unsuitable forestry wear anyway!) but I was now very wry of being shot at accidentally by camouflaged poachers with hunting rifles as we made our way to the Pheasant Inn at High Burwardsley. Was partridge and pheasant on the menu?

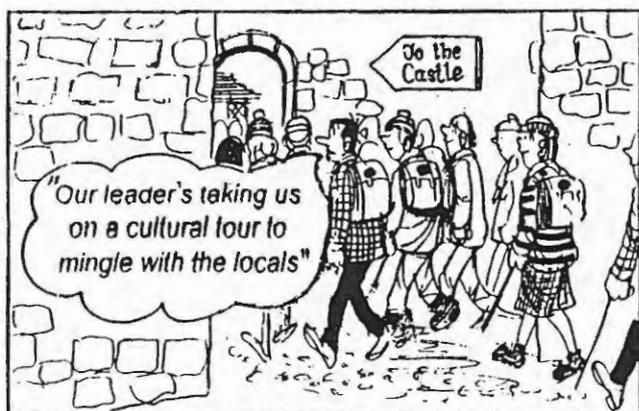
On stopping for a break there we consequently met the "A" party who had done a higher and longer route. We also called at the nearby candle factory. I could wax lyrical (sorry) about this visitor centre but space does not allow. I felt we could not "stick" around too long as interest in the "walk" might "taper" off!

Returning to the forest our path took us up to the look-out point on Bulkeley Hill. On the way we caught up with the "C" group. Although only 101 metres high, great views of the plain below were enjoyed, with Jodrell Bank radio telescope to the east. We soon had to leave these woods for a walk through farm fields but a change of scenery makes a walk more interesting.

We left Will's group behind at this stage as we headed for the most dramatic part of the journey: Rawhead. Maybe this is so named because if you don't wear any headgear on a cold day up on those sandstone cliffs you get a raw head! I advised care here as there was a sheer drop to the right in parts. On the way to the trig point (227 metres) breathtaking scenery unfolds beneath you. You could see Chester and Liverpool to the west with the Welsh mountains to the left, and on the opposite side Jodrell Bank once again. Bickerton Hill now beckoned us to the south, as did the Coppermines pub on the main road far below! On our descent to Chiflick Farm we passed fine specimens of Silver Birch and pine trees, then we crossed the main road at around 4pm ready for our last hill.

At the top of Bickerton Hill was a memorial stone dedicated to a much beloved "Kitty" who must have walked these hills in bygone years.

The "A" group also attained this spot but then continued across to Maiden Castle at 212 metres, but we only had time to descend to Mad Allen's Hole before taking the road back in the twilight to our destination - the "Bickerton Poacher" pub. We arrived at the good time of 5.10pm, only ten minutes after the "C" and 20 minutes before the "A" group. We had been walking since leaving the cafe at 10.45am but we could now relax, enjoy a good pub meal and chat until the special extended stay of 8pm. *Richie Cannon*



Last ramble in January - *Conway

ALL THREE walks in the Conway Mountain area (**the Welsh prefer us to call it Conwy, of course*) eventually turned out to be dry (overhead, not underfoot!) despite a bad forecast of persistent rain and gales. We did get a bit of drizzle at first but that soon cleared up. Carol's "A" walk also included the Tal-y-Fan summit. Tommy led the "B" from near the castle (the walk I chose) and Steve Nuttall the "C". After a bit of a lull, the gales came back with a vengeance during the afternoon, but the rain kept off just long enough for most people to get back on board the coach before the heaven's opened at 5.15pm. We were back in Liverpool around 8pm. This included a 45-minute stop at the Leprechaun pub in Queensferry. Three memorable walks on a scenic but "breezy" afternoon. - *Editor.*



Diary of a Catholic Rambler



IT WAS the first real "wintry evening" of December (the 14th) when I decided to look back and jot down my memories of last January. Snow was descending on most parts of the country, so it was a good night to sit in front of the fire with a nice bottle of beer, a pen and reams of A4 paper.



New Year's Eve, 12 months ago

Myself, Lyn Perrow, Mary Hurley, Lil Martin, Irene Aucutt, Carol Kellet and Ken Regan set out in a borrowed van for Ambleside. It was my first New Year outside Liverpool and also my first stay in a youth hostel. We were soon settled in our rooms, and after unpacking, a few of us walked into Ambleside to sample the atmosphere of a small town in the English Lake District. Before long we were settled in the bar of the Salutation Hotel in front of a log fire listening to some good old Rock and Roll music. At this point we knew that we had not made a mistake by coming away for the "Hogmanay" celebrations.

On our return to the hostel we showered and changed for evening meal and to meet up with our fellow members (30 of us in all). Not long after dinner we all set off for McGinty's - a local Irish bar, just a couple of minutes away. They had agreed to accommodate our large party and we were soon in the swing of things, making friends with people who had travelled from many continents. Those members who had travelled to Poland earlier that year were very surprised to see one of the guides from the tour in our midst, so reminiscence took over for a short time.

Half of our group then set off for a short walk to the Salutation Hotel to listen to one of the best juke boxes in the country. Before long all of the locals were up dancing with us.

A bit later than we expected we were back in McGinty's singing Auld Lang Syne (good old Robbie Burns!). I "believe" we left the bar around 2.30am and for me in particular it was time for bed but a few of our members carried on celebrating in the large lounge of the hostel (*some of the YHA regulations had been relaxed for the festivities*).

Around 8.30 we rose for breakfast and were rewarded with our first views of the New Year. Looking out of the dining area, beside Lake Windermere, there were outstanding panoramic views of the Langdales, Grasmere, and the Fairfield Horseshoe - the faces around the breakfast tables, whilst green, were not so pleasant!

One or two hours later we set off for our first walk of the year. There were three groups - Ken, Carol and Margaret doing the 'A', myself, Dave Newns and Mike Riley doing a strong 'B' (Red Screes), while Dave Dickel led a large 'C' walk around parts of Lake Windermere. In the evening, after dinner, we set off to continue with the festivities up at the Salutation Hotel (surprise, surprise!). We made quite an impression with the locals and bar staff with our typical scouse humour and lack of skills on the dance floor (*sic*). Truthfully we had a great time, and were invited back anytime we were in the area. (*PS: Surprisingly, this hotel closed down the following week, and will certainly be missed by many!*).

Next day we met again for breakfast and discussed our plans for walking. The forecast was extreme winds and possible blizzards over 2,500 feet. With this in mind our plans were to stay low, with the exception of Margaret, who pointed out that she had not come away just to do "airy fairy walks". Anyway, her protest was noted and we finally mustered a grand total of, well, just four people to do a 'B' walk. We skirted the Kirkstone Pass and returned via an internal inspection of a Fourteenth Century pub in Troutbeck. The food was excellent, with Carol commenting that the 'sweets' were really good.

Meanwhile, Jack Henderson led a much larger 'C' walk from Ambleside, circling Troutbeck then back by a very scenic but a rather wet and windy route back to the hostel.

That night most people settled for a nice quiet evening after the celebrations of the previous two nights. The exception being myself who had a forthcoming birthday to celebrate (no rest for the wicked). Five of us set out for a meal at the Queen Anne Hotel before meeting a few fellow members for a quiet drink later on.

Next morning (our final day) we woke to find the surrounding hills covered with a splattering of snow. Needless to say, three walks were called for. Dave Newns led the 'B' and Jack Henderson led the 'C'. Meanwhile, I led the 'A' towards Rydal to try the Fairfield Horseshoe. Unfortunately we never completed the walk because of the weather and we had also agreed to be back for 2.30 pm for an early drive back home. Nevertheless it was a superb walk with a combination of sunshine, heavy winds, rain, hail and snow before retracing our steps back down to Rydal and back to the hostel, eventually leaving for home.

Although the weather could have been a bit better, it was an excellent weekend. It was only the 3rd of January and we had already had three days of walks to start the year off.

Sunday, January 10th 1999

A near full coach set off for Bolton Abbey, near Skipton. It was a very cold and frosty morning. There was a combined 'A'/'B' walk plus a fair-sized 'C' walk. Once we had set off we were glad of the severe frost, otherwise we would be walking on quite boggy ground.

Sunday, January 17th 1999

I decided to go walking with some close friends in Wales, starting from the Ogwen Valley Milestone we walked the Reservoir Route to Pen-yr Ole Wen, circling along the ridge to Carnedd Dafydd and Carnedd Llewelyn before returning to our car back at the Milestone. Again, the weather was pretty trying, starting off in heavy winds, at some points stooping low to avoid being blown off the peak of Pen-yr Ole Wen. On walking up Dafydd we were confronted by hail before being caught in a white-out (snowstorm) ascending Llewelyn - a great day had by all. (Are we really quite sane?).

Sunday, January 24th 1999

Back again with the LRCA we set off for Grange Over Sands, Cartmel and paths of the Cumbrian Way. It was a cold start to the day followed by some good old English wind and rain. A few miles north of Cartmel, on the Cumbrian Way, both the 'A' and 'B' parties came across quite an irate farmer as we passed through his farmyard (*on a public footpath*). Startlingly, the 'B' were confronted by this lunatic man wielding a pitchfork, but our hero, Frank, dealt with the situation in his own *a la mode* way and the party then continued to squelch through his mucky farmyard. I'm glad to say there was no serious damage done to Frank (or the farmer) but recalling Frank's gallant action during this incident gave us all a laugh on the way home (*see cartoon opposite*).

Sunday, January 31st 1999

Again I set off with friends into Wales. I had decided to alternate walks between friends and club at this part of the year. We had decided to do the Arans from Bala, as this is an unusual route in which you need to use two cars - one at either end. It was a dry start to the day but not for long. We were soon in drizzle but we felt we had achieved something when we had completed the said route. The main peaks, as I remember, were Aran Benllyn, Aran Fawddwy and Drysgol.

Looking back, it really was a great month's walking - a total of seven walks in all.

Bob Carney

Towards the end of last year the club received a Thank You card from Bob Ramsey's widow and family. Sadly, Bob suddenly collapsed and died whilst out walking with us in May last year. The message reads:

THANK YOU

to all at the Catholic Ramblers for being such special friends to Bob and for the joy and happiness you gave him over the years when he was a member of your club.

Also to say a big thank you from me and my family for all your kindness after the tragic loss of Bob. You will always be in our thoughts and prayers. God Bless each and every one of you.

Chris Ramsey and family

May/June Scottish Holiday

OUR EIGHT-DAY HOLIDAY is almost full and the book will be closed shortly, so hurry if you wish to fill any of the few places left. If you have a car, please be prepared to use it (see "Transport cost" below).

The final balance for those staying in the youth hostels must be paid BEFORE Thursday 16th March. Anyone not paying by then will unfortunately lose their deposit. Pay to the person going around the coach with the book, or on a Thursday night and please observe that your payment is entered into the book, as any payments not entered will be deemed as still outstanding! Now, finally, by special request, the committee have organised:

A WEE SCOTTISH GATHERING

on Thursday 16th March, 8.30pm at the Cornmarket, followed by a Scottish Quiz

MAIN REASON for this get-together is to find out what people want from their holiday and if anyone has any constructive ideas that they would like to put forward, ie: places to visit, boat trips, sight-seeing, etc. and, of course, if still necessary, finalising transport details, plus a discussion on possible walks and sorting out leaders.

TRANSPORT PROBLEM. We don't have enough drivers volunteering to use their cars. Bob point out that it is quite costly to hire a minibus for eight days at that time of the year - cost including fuel works out at about £60 to £75 per person by minibus. Ideally we need more people to kindly volunteer to use their cars and so avoid Bob hiring a minibus.

ONE EXTRA PASSENGER - It's preferable to have three people per car but we have had a few holidays with four per car. One doesn't need a large suitcase for a youth hostel holiday. A holdall, even binbags, take much less room up. So could drivers with suitable cars seriously consider taking an extra passenger. Public transport is not a viable alternative.

A GENEROUS DONATION TO OUR FUNDS Just before Christmas, club stalwart Albert Downing kindly donated a Christmas bonus to the club including a donation of at least 20 years in subscriptions which he reckons he owes the club whilst he was away globe-trotting, mostly in Australia. Albert still keeps in regular contact with the Catholic Walking Club of Victoria. The committee thank Albert most sincerely for this generosity.

FRED NORBURY and CYRIL KELLY TROPHIES - YOUR SUGGESTIONS PLEASE

A PRESENTATION annually to club members who, in the opinion of the committee, think deserving, was the current way we dealt with the above trophies. But this year we are looking for new ideas and possibly another criteria for presenting the trophies, and we are open to suggestions from the membership.

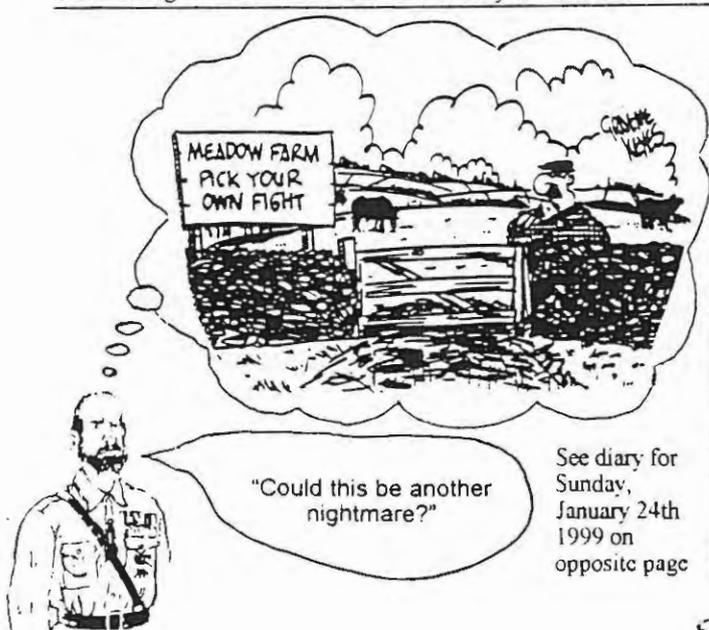
From time to time various committees have changed the criteria. We started with annual competitions for the Fred Norbury trophy. We started with a tennis tournament (when we had our own tennis club). We then had two orienteering events but the chances of winning either the tennis or the orienteering were limited to a small minority of members.

We then devised a popular multi-event competition over two years with an ingenious points system which gave every member a chance of winning. This included pitch and putt sessions at New Brighton, bowls (crown green and ten-pin) and darts. This became an annual event but after a few years numbers dwindled to just the same few people turning up, resulting in the same winners several years on the trot.

So we then decided to present the trophies to members who had done outstanding work for the club. This was naturally usually a committee member or chairman/woman and the ordinary member was, well, left out standing!

So last year we decided to give it to two dedicated ordinary members. A few names were suggested and the committee finally voted for Paul Malone and Paula Larkin. They were both surprised to receive the trophies for a twelve-month period at the recent Christmas dance.

HOW THE TROPHIES ORIGINATED - One trophy was inaugurated in 1973 in memory of Fred Norbury after he died in 1972. He was like a "Godfather" to the club being the last of the active founder-members. He was a vice-president and was still giving his valuable advice at the committee meetings right up to his sudden death. Cyril Kelly died in 1976 and was also a dedicated vice-president (he was chairman for 11 years). Eventually we had a second trophy bearing Cyril's name. Sadly, both were only in their mid-sixties when they died. I knew them both personally - *Editor*



Forty Years ago - Winter 1959/60

WINTER PROGRAMME, 1959-60

Date 1959	Ramble	Leader	Meet	App. Fare
Nov 1	Hawarden	B. Edwards	* S. Johns Ln. 11 am	5/-
8	Ruabon	G. Skillicorn	James St. 10-15 am	6/6
15	Carrog (Ben)	A.B. Potter, B.M. Roberts	* S. John Ln. 10-15 am	8/6
21	S.F.X. Dance			
22	Neston & Parkgate	E. Dulson	Pier Head 10-30 am	4/-
29	Prestatyn	H. O'Neill	James St. Sn. 9-50 am	6/6
Dec 6	Ashurst Beacon	C. Scott	Exchange St. 10-30 am	3/-
13	Chalet Weekend			
20	Beeston Castle (Ben)	V. Walker	James St. Sn. 10-15 am	6/-
1960 27	No Ramble			
Jan 3	Yuletide Walk & Social	Bus 5/-, Meal 5/-	St. Johns Ln. 10-15 am	
10	Holywell (Ben)	M Doyle	James St. Sn. 9-50 am	5/6
17	Trough of Bolan	(a) M McCormack (b) John Kennedy	* St. Johns Ln. 10-15 am	9/-
23	State Dance			
24	Hatchmere	B. Edwards	James St. Sn. 10-15 am	6/-
31	Ceargwle	A. McCann	James St. Sn. 9-50 am	5/-
Feb 7	Conway (R.A. Train)	(a) P. Atherton (b) T. Gilmore	See press for train time	
14	Chalet Weekend			
21	Tnurstaton (Ben)	B. Edwards	Pier Head 11-30 am	3/-
27	S.F.X. Dance			
28	Moel Fammere	J. Kennedy	Pier Head 10-20 am Woodside Bus 10-50 am	5/6
Mar 6	Derbyshire (R.A. Train)	(a) B. Potter (b)	See press for train time	
13	Weekend Retreats			
20	Houghton Towers	J. Hodgkinson	* St. Johns Ln. 10-15 am	6/-
27	Clithrice (R.A. Train)	P. Atherton	See papers for train time	
Apr 3	Trevor Rocks	M. Coughan	James St. Sn. 10-15 am	6/-
10	Aber	(a) Bill Potter (b) T. Gilmore	* St. Johns Ln. 10-15 am	10/6
18	(Easter Monday)			
Rydymryn (R.A. Train)	B. Edwards	See press for train time		
24	Nant-y-frith	H. O'Neill	James St. Sn. 9-50 am	5/-
May 1	Keswick Weekend	Names and cash to W. Potter		

* Coach Trips. Names to be given three weeks beforehand.

NOTE
↓
SUBS 6/- (30p)
197 Date 4/11/59
Received of
Mr & Mrs "Tipp-Exed"
Six Shillings
For LCRA

4. Permission of an officer of the C members may sell tickets in the Club Room should be submitted in writing to the Secret



Social Events

at the Cornmarket on Thursdays



FEBRUARY

- 10th COUPLES QUIZ - *Why couples? Think of the date in four days time!*
- 17th HISTORY OF THE 20th CENTURY QUIZ - Ken Regan
- 24th BINGO (LCRA rules and Fab prizes)

- MARCH 2nd SANDWICH NIGHT
- 9th WHO SAID QUIZ

- MARCH 16th SCOTTISH QUIZ - after (8.30 start) Scottish holiday meeting.

- 23rd BRING AND BUY SALE - *Bring all your quality junk to make money for the club. Auctioneer: Ray Mc*

- 30th DINGBATS QUIZ with Will Harris

- APRIL 1st CHEESE AND WINE NIGHT

THE MILLENNIUM WEEKEND AT AMBLESIDE

For a report on this, just turn to the 'Dairy of a Catholic Rambler' page and read all about New Year's Eve last year. It was roughly 'ditto,' except that some members unfortunately got the flu bug. Thirty of us went and we had a great time (even the flu bug victims!). At midnight fireworks lit the sky on the hills the other side of Windermere. We half watched

the earlier celebrations on telly in McGinty's Irish bar while a guitar player entertained us. He also did a quiz. We left the pub before midnight to join in with the hostel celebrations. (It was just as well we left the pub when we did, as there was a fight there later on but the Police were on the ball. What a way to start the New Year! We enjoyed several good walks.

THE FORTHCOMING KESWICK WEEKEND - MARCH 24th to 26th

We tried to get in at Lakeside House but they were fully booked, so accommodation will be in bed and breakfast houses, all in the same street. Contact with each other

shouldn't be too difficult, we hope. Give your name and £20 deposit to the person taking the book around the coach and at the Cornmarket on Thursday nights.