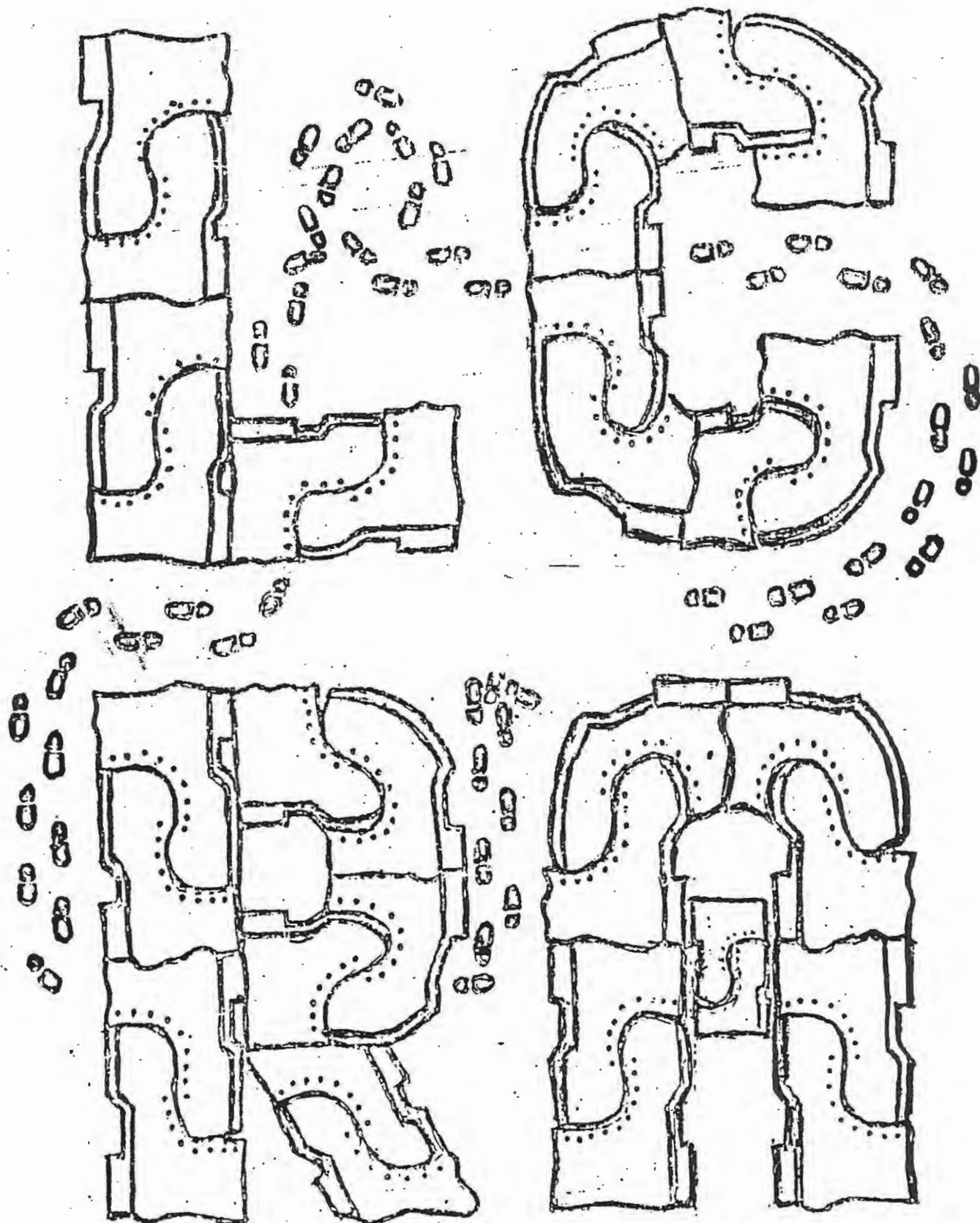


# Liverpool Catholic Ramblers Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2001

Seventh Series Issue 29



# New Year alongside that big lake

OUR long weekend at Ambleside was a Winter Wonderland with a blanket of snow greeting the 30 of us at the massive youth hostel on the shores of Lake Windermere.

On the Saturday night the roads were slushy and about nine of us went to the Vigil Mass in our boots, thus leaving the Sunday free for long walks. A lively festive atmosphere followed, but this has been censured before it's even been written!

Sunday morning and two pairs of crampons had a full inspection before being strapped onto Bob and Eric's boots. They attempted to ascend Fairfield's summit but an imminent weather change prompted a swift U-turn before the impending blizzard engulfed everything.

Meanwhile the B's and C's did slippery "low-level?" walks. Then later, as we B's walked back along the road from Rydal in the blizzard, we witnessed a colossal gridlock of traffic heading for Ambleside - a steep slope in the centre of Ambleside being part of the problem. One car at a time awaited their turn to the slithery cresta-run to the bottom. A fallen tree near Windermere was the other obstacle.

Meanwhile tall Robbie had fun sampling the victuals in Ambleside's cafes, etc, doing a circular tour.

Back at the hostel, after a mountain of wet clothes were left to hang on rails in the drying room, we all enjoyed a superb New Year's Eve buffet, along with the other 200 or so mortals.

Strict hostel rules were waived that night and so the New Year revelry began, ended, and then started again, with fireworks by the lake at midnight. I had better not mention the bit about Mike in drag, or the fact that members' photos confirm this.

Oh yes, and Joe did a middle of the night ramble (outdoors without boots!) arriving back to his bed at breakfast time. Maybe he'd gone searching for Chairman Tom and wife (who both wanted a double room with a view but had no high altitude gear and hard hats!). But that's another story!

Monday January 1st and just a few went home early but Margaret joined Eric with crampons for another attempt to gain a great height. Conditions eventually proved too dangerous, so they saved themselves for the hectic night life instead. The rest of us eventually melted back to normality, along with the snow, on the Tuesday.

*Needs W van*

7 Abbots Way, Billinge,  
Wigan WN5 7SB

February 10th

## Editorial

**IN bygone years a newsletter committee used to read and edit numerous articles and ramble write-ups from members who had often been approached by their leader for a ramble report.**

The assistant secretary, along with others, then typed these on waxed stencils. The editor later clipped these on to the duplicating machine and printed 200 copies.

Production from start to finish took several weeks.

Now, with the aid of modern technology (and my past newspaper experience) I can do the lot in several days.

There's now no need for a special newsletter committee, but sadly, the contribution of articles for publication has gradually dwindled somewhat.

Much of this February edition has been written by myself disguised under various nom de plumes (anagrammatically) but it would be great to get some of YOUR stories - that odd rambling write-up or a report of a recent social event, however brief. So come on everyone, help to support your newsletter! Thanks.

Meanwhile thanks to Richie for his interesting Pilgrim page, and George Skillicorn for the Seniors' ramble write-up.

*Dave Newns, editor*

## FIVE DAYS IN IRELAND

Tuesday 19th June to Sunday 24th

The club is planning a walking holiday in the Emerald Isle early this summer but please book as soon as possible if you're interested. A £20 deposit is needed.

There will be 3 nights in Glendalough and 2 nights in Dublin, flying from Liverpool.

Cost approx £160 including flight and B&B

See Lyn Perrow

## Leaders wanted

The Summer Rambling Programme has now been drawn up and leaders are needed for the proposed walks. A list of the walks is in circulation.

## BOOTS FOR SALE

Good condition, sizes 5 and 6½

only £5 per pair

Ring 01744 632211



**NEW MEMBERS** - We give a hearty welcome to all the members who have joined our ranks recently including Les Butterworth, Patrick Gilligan, Carol Helal and Sally Mason. There are several more who have applied for membership but are awaiting approval at our next monthly meeting on February 12th.

## Help us to recruit more members to fill our coaches

Photocopy or detach the back page and pin up in a suitable place. Permission is needed for church notice boards.

# Ramblerite

SNOW has been the norm for all of this year's walks so far, except Llangollen. Tegg's Nose - a hill near Macclesfield Forest, close to several reservoirs - greeted us with a thin carpet of snow on January 7th. It was a sunny, cold afternoon but good for walking. The Crosby Ramblers were in the same area that day.

A week later we had a 49-seater coach for Coniston, but about ten turned up on spec, ending up with over 50 of us, so we also used a car. There was no snow on the south side of the Old Man of Coniston, but it was a different story on the north side for the A's and B's.

That day there was talk of three of our members going on a Caribbean cruise in the near future, and Denise, on the 'B' walk, was looking forward to the break. Unfortunately she got an unwanted break that day when she slipped on the icy snow and had to be helped down the mountain.

Our car was alerted and Dave and Joan picked her up for the final stretch into Coniston. At first Denise thought it was just a bad sprain to her ankle but after reporting for work next morning she had it X-rayed only to discover it was broken. And so instead of getting plastered each night on the Caribbean cruise, she got plastered at the hospital instead! So back at work

Mrs Peek was left to make next Christmas's puddings instead of Denise. We hope you are soon mobile.

Just in case anyone is worried about the safety on walks: The law of averages is that you will be more likely to get injured if you stay at home.

At Rivington the following week there was a little too much snow. The coach had several goes at climbing up the slippery driveway of the Barn. Only 25 turned out but the following week we had nearly 40 for the Llangollen trip.

Jack Duckworth from Coronation Street (true!) walked past the 'B' walkers beneath Hardcastle Craggs on the snowy Heptonstall walk (Hebden Bridge) but I don't think he recognised any of us! Finally, it seems that we will be having a full coach for the Tebay walk tomorrow, so it is important to book in advance.

Meanwhile, happy rambling.

*Vaned NSEW*

## Social Events

at the Ship and Mitre, Dale Street

### February

- 15 BEER FESTIVAL and DINGBATS
- 22 BRING and BUY NIGHT - Bring all your unwanted Christmas presents, bric-a-brac, biscuits, etc to help boost club's funds. Ray Mc is auctioneer

### March

- 1 CHEESE and WINE NIGHT by Tom Reilly
- 15 BEATLES NIGHT - Sing-along with Richie Cannon
- 22 BOB'S QUIZ
- 29 MUSIC NIGHT

April 5 CHEESE and WINE NIGHT

## THE KESWICK WEEKEND

NEARLY 50 people have now booked for Keswick at the end of March. We have booked the full guesthouse which has many rooms accommodating a total of 47 people. There could possibly be an overflow with some late bookings staying in another guesthouse nearby.

Don't forget that your £10 deposit is not returnable if you cancel towards the last minute, so tell us NOW if there is any doubt about you not going. One must pay the full amount before going up there. Many pay by instalment each week.

Cost of the Weekend has now been confirmed at £52.50 for two days bed breakfast and evening meal. This is at the cheaper winter rate. We finish off with the evening meal on Sunday before departure.

Transport is extra to the cost of the weekend. Some are going up in cars, others in the minibus. Further details will be given to those who have booked.

**MIDAS COURSE** - Two more members have successfully passed the course for competency to drive a minibus. They are Ray Mc and Tom Reilly.

## PUZZLE CORNER

Welcome to SCOOT INN, a scrambled Lake District tourist spot. You can work out where this signpost is by unscrambling the names.

To get you started, the top left sign points to a lustrous field that's shunned by rambblers and farmers.

*It didn't take me too long to devise this puzzle, so now, how about YOU devising a signpost or some other puzzle for one of our future newsletters.*

*W van Sneed - Editor*



## A peep at summer - fifty-one years ago

AN ABUNDANCE of leaders appear in the 1950 summer programme (reproduced here). Note that nine of those intrepid leaders were unmarried ladies, presumably a reflection of the shortage of men after the Second World War. A number of those leaders were real stalwarts of the club - sadly some have died, and not so long ago. At least one of them is still around, namely Mona Roberts (one of our vice-presidents). Now could there be anyone else?

### MADWOMAN'S DATE

WAS ANYONE mad enough to work out the date of the old programme in the last newsletter? The year was 1985. One of the rambles was entitled *Madwoman's Stones*. There was at least one enquiry as to their whereabouts. The short answer is Edale.

They were explored by the "A" walk, high up on the Kinder Scout plateau, directly above the Edale youth hostel.

So if there's any mad women (or men) wanting to visit Edale again on April 8th this year (it's a great place for normal people too) start thinking about booking soon. It's the Sunday between the Keswick weekend and the Easter weekend.

And now . . . a peep at fifty-one years from now -



*"He was the same in the Catholic Ramblers, never took anything seriously"*

### SUMMER PROGRAMME, 1950

Date	Ramble	Meet Place	Time	App. Fare	Leader
May 6	Lady Lever Art Gallery	Pier Head	1-45	1/-	Mr. T. Marquess
" 7	Wirral Peninsula	Pier Head	10-15	1/-	Miss F. Rock
" 14	Little Switzerland	Lime St. Stn.	9-20	2/9	Miss M. Groen
" 21	Thurstaston (Benediction)	Pier Head	2-15	1/-	Miss F. Begley
" 28/29	Llangollen	Details later			Mr. B. Edwards
June 4	Three Beacons	Russell St.	10-0	2/10	Mr. J. Duncan
" 11	Altringham Area	Russell St.	9-40	3/6	Mr. G. Penlington
" 18	Chester Zoo	Pier Head	2-0	2/5	Mr. F. G. Kane
" 24/25	R. A. Chalet, Maeshafn	Details later			Mr. W. J. Roberts
July 2	Rivacre Valley (Swim)	Pier Head	10-30	1/-	Mr. F. A. Boyle
" 9	Aldford	Pier Head	10-15	2/5	Mr. M. Walsh
" 16	Clitheroe & Settle	See Railway Advert			Guest Leader
" 23	Ainsdale	Exchange Stn.	2-0	1/11	Miss K. Gould
" 30	Nettleford Wood	Lime St. Stn.	9-20	2/9	Mr. H. Burns
Aug. 6	Mold	See Railway Advert			Miss B. Tracy
" 13	Arley Hall	Russell St.	9-40	3/6	Mr. F. A. Boyle
" 20	Thornton-le-moor	Pier Head	10-15	1/6	Miss S. Devoy
" 27	Thornton Hough	Pier Head	2-0	1/-	Miss P. Toes
Sept. 3	Pen-y-llun-y-gwr	Central Stn.	10-0	3/6	Mr. R. Marsden
" 10	Puddington & Shotwick	Pier Head	10-15	1/6	Mr. J. Quick
" 17	Barmouth Line	See Railway Advert			R. A. Leader
" 24	Bidston	Pier Head	2-30	1/-	Miss S. Mulhall
Oct. 1	Mawdsley Moss	Exchange Stn.	10-15	2/6	Miss M. Roberts
" 7/8	R.A. Chalet, Maeshafn	Details later			Mr. B. Edwards
" 15	Neston (Benediction)	Pier Head	2-15	1/-	Mr. D. Pearce
" 22	Rivington Pike	Skelhorn St.	10-30	4/3	Mr. G. Penlington

## Seniors' Section

**"Four of the Fourteen" at doggy Rainford - 14th Jan 2001**

*(not to be confused with the Snowdonia 4 of the 14 Peaks)*

THE original walk had fallen foul of all the recent wet weather but ironically the day turned out to be perfect for winter - cloudless and windless.

Our party of fourteen which included our four newcomers, Brian and Joan plus David and Julie, set off from Rainford railway station in high spirits and soon we were being given a rousing reception by the frenzied inhabitants - canine ones, I hasten to add, of the local dogtel.

We crossed the railway line and then the local highway and headed for a very pleasant picnic site in Kenyon's Wood.

We were soon on the old Coach Road, linking Knowsley Hall with Bickerstaffe, but not before Julie caught her foot in a pothole with painful but not serious consequences. The weather remained glorious as we soaked up the miles and admired the nearby pseudo-mountain range. The soil is rich and moist hereabouts and we passed numerous fields in

varying states of prosperity before emerging on the Rainford Bypass. Then we made for the cricket field for "afternoon tea".

The way back involved tarmac through the village, tracks around the various farms and finally, as the sun was setting, along field paths through such quaintly-named spots as Maggots Nook.

A pub meal followed, completing a pleasant day out.



### Forthcoming Seniors' Section Rambles

Feb 25 LITTLE BUDWORTH - Jack Highton - Tel 220 2855  
 Mar 11 SABDEN & PENDLE - George Skillicorn 01744 892823  
 Mar 25 WIRRAL - Tony Roche - Tel 486 4235



The Spanish Church glorified St James as the saviour of Spain from the Moors - witness this extravagant 18th Century statue on the side of the church of Santiago in Logroño, Old Castile

# To be a Pilgrim

## or the life of a rambler in the Middle Ages

IF YOU were a peasant living in the Middle Ages in Europe, instead of joining a rambling club, you would, with thousands of others, strive to make the annual pilgrimage to either Rome, the Holy Land, Canterbury or, as this narrative depicts, to the Shrine of St James of Compostela (Santiago de Compostela) in North West Spain.

You would do it primarily for pious reasons, to please God, to suffer hardships and to atone for sins, but of course there would be that sense of adventure and an escape from your servile work.

Santiago de Compostela was very popular then because tradition has it that St James, the Apostle and cousin of Christ, was the St Patrick of Spain. After his martyrdom by the Roman sword his body was said to have been shipped back from Palestine to Spain, later to be removed to Compostela to avoid the marauding Moors of North Africa. It was not quite as far away as the Holy Land to visit and a cathedral had been built there to enshrine his bones.

For clothing, you traditionally wore a cloak and a broad-rimmed hat adorned with a scallop-shell badge, being the emblem of the Compostela pilgrim (Coquille St Jacques in French to this day).

You would carry a wallet and would take a staff to ward off robbers and vicious dogs. These sticks would also act as support for lameness and help to clear your way through thick undergrowth. The wearing of these scallop-shell badges and carrying a staff reminds me of our present-day members with our LCRA badges and modern telescopic walking sticks.

You would have to swear an oath of allegiance to your monarch before obtaining written credentials from the Church authorities to allow you safe passage through Europe (the forerunner of the passport).

These credentials entitled you to free hospitality at houses decorated with scallop shells (a bit like the way we visit youth hostels today) or stopping at monasteries - the most famous being that at Roncesvalles at the foot of the snow-capped Pyrenees. Here a monk would greet you and take you to a proper bed instead of a floor of straw and he would also allow you to get a good bath.



Your credentials protected you from violence. Murder or robbery was severely punished and would include ex-communication from the Church. You would feel reasonably safe and most likely be travelling in convoy. You would also be exempted from tolls.

Traditional starting places for this pilgrimage were at the Right Bank in Paris or at Vézelay or Le Puy in the Auvergne. You would hear Mass and then your staff would be blessed. Friends and onlookers would cheer you on your way and you would pass many interesting Gothic and Romanesque churches, no doubt many named after St Jacques. (Many towns in France have a Place St Jacques or St James Square).

From Paris you would visit Orléans, Tours and Poitiers and cross the river Loire. A large chunk of France was owned by England then, but English kings were frequently French or at least spoke French as a first language.

You would think that when the Hundred Years' War broke out between England and France this would stop the pilgrimages, but both French and English pilgrims continued regardless.

English travellers not sailing to Bordeaux would cross the channel, then you would walk through "hostile" lands for hundreds of miles before getting to the "friendly" lands of Gascony and Bordeaux in the South West.

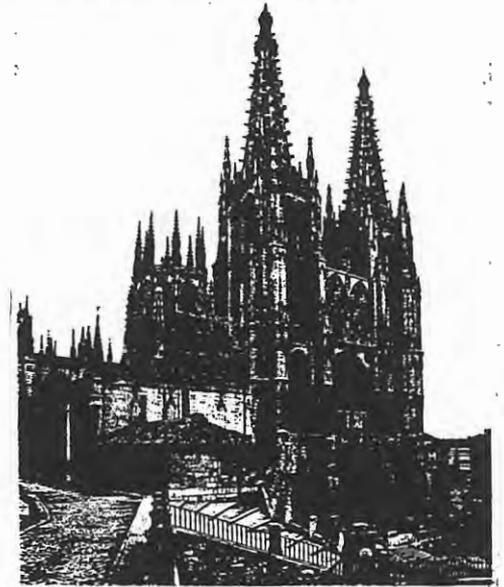
Your credentials and scallop-shell badges would give you diplomatic immunity!

Crossing the Basque Country you would no doubt see men in large black berets playing pelota against a church wall. You would notice the white-walled houses with red painted joists and rickety balconies, see weird-sounding place names in the Basque language and probably be served river trout and wine.

After passing through the arid uplands of Northern Spain and Burgos you would eventually arrive at the cool greenness of Galacia to see the scallop-shell

decorated houses and towering cathedral at Compostela and be proud of your achievement.

You would aim to get there by July 25th as this is the feast day of St James.



The Cathedral of Burgos - its inspiration drawn from the cathedrals of the Rhineland

It is known that St Francis of Assisi made this pilgrimage from Italy in the early 13th Century as did several kings. Only the wealthy could afford to make the journey on horseback and there was always the problem of having to cross rivers and streams at your peril, with or without horses!

"Give me my scallop-shell of quiet,  
My staff of faith to walk upon,  
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,  
My bottle of salvation,  
My gown of glory, hope's true gauge,  
And thus I'll take my pilgrimage."

- Sir Walter Raleigh

Richie Cannon

# Would you like to walk in the hills?

INTERESTED? Then why not enquire about the

## Liverpool Catholic Ramblers

We have walks most Sundays, departing by coach from  
William Brown Street (opposite the Art Gallery) at 9.30

Fare is just £7

Here's a list of our forthcoming walks

### February

25 MOEL SIABOD, near Capel Curig in Snowdonia. There's an 'A' walk led by Bob, a 'B' led by Ray and a 'C' for the less energetic.

### March

4 AMBLESIDE. Another 'A' or strenuous led by Bob, but there's also a moderate 'B' and an easier 'C' led by Mike.

11 STIPERSTONES in Shropshire. There's an optional meal available at the end of the day

18 KIRKBY STEPHEN in the Yorkshire Dales with Roy leading the easier 'C' walk.

25 MOTHERS DAY. No walk.

30 WEEKEND at KESWICK

### April

8 EDALE is in the heart of Derbyshire's Peak District and is a major spot for walkers from Manchester, Stockport and yes, even Liverpool.

15 EASTER. Sorry, we've nothing planned for this weekend.

22 POOLEY BRIDGE near in the beautiful Lake District near Ullswater.

29 ABER FALLS near Bangor, North Wales, are spectacular for the 'C' walkers. There's also a really spectacular ridge walk along the Carnedd's from Lake Ogwen for the more energetic 'A' and 'B' walkers.

We also have weekly Socials every Thursday Night upstairs at the Ship & Mitre pub at the bottom of Dale Street, starting around 9.30

Why not drop in?

For further details telephone this number: