



**Liverpool
Catholic
Ramblers'**

Newsletter

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2009

Seventh Series Issue 73

Keswick Weekend Friday, April 3 to Sunday, April 5 – Note the new dates

Staying at Lakeside House guesthouse in Keswick, where we have stayed for some 40 years; this could well be our last stay there. The usual walks will be planned. Accommodation is mostly in twin-bedded and three-bedded rooms with just a few single rooms. Prices this year are the same as last at a total of £65.50 for dinner, bed and breakfast. I think this time we will be starting with dinner on arrival on the Friday night, but check when booking. Transport as usual will be by cars so make sure that you can get a lift up there before booking. There is an alternative of £21.75 for one night of bed and breakfast and £32.75 for one night of bed, breakfast and evening meal. You must pay £10 deposit when booking. There's not much time left and all deposits must be paid by February 13 when bookings close, with the final payment made by March 29 at the latest. For those who have not been before and who require more information, just ask around. Many members have been there.

BRING AND BUY SALE

**Thursday, ~~March 5~~ Feb 5th
at the Ship and Mitre (upstairs)**

Starting around 9pm, and replaces our usual Cheese and Wine night. These sales are held from time to time and all proceeds help to boost our coach funds.

Just bring anything along that you think might sell. You can also enjoy a drink and a chat and may snap up some bargains as the same time. Our usual Cheese and Wine nights resume on the first Thursday in March at the Ship and Mitre (upstairs).

Ramblerite

Weatherwise, on the walks over the past few months, we have done well, with most of the rain and bad weather occurring between ramble dates, but our boots have certainly taken a pounding with all that mud around! We had a snowy landscape above Grassington in December and our small 'A' party actually trekking in over an inch of the white stuff once we got on the moors high above that popular Yorkshire village. Afterwards a planned elongated stay allowed many to enjoy a pub meal in Grassington.

Smaller coaches have been used this winter because of the lower attendances but we now need to fill these a little more than we have been doing lately, otherwise this could mean a rise in coach fares. Happily we are now getting more members joining us and with the days getting longer, we hopefully will get more members coming out.

We did have an almost full coach on the recent Cartmel walks with another meal option, but there were a few hiccups for those who wanted a full meal, and some just opted out for a big bowl of chips. For any new members reading this it must be said that we don't normally finish our walks with a meal – only for special events – and we normally have a shorter stay in a pub at the end of our walks.

We are looking forward to our forthcoming Keswick weekend (note the date is different that in the programme). For bookings see cover. It is possibly our last stay in Lakeside House, but there is a glimmer of hope that someone else may possibly take over and revamp it to make it a viable proposition. Meanwhile keep enjoying our rambles.

ANNUAL RETREAT

Saturday Feb 7 at Loyola Hall 10am to 4pm

It is hoped that a Saturday may prove to be more convenient for both sections of the club rather than the usual annual Sunday retreat. Names and further details for those in the General Section wishing to attend on this special day should be given to me, Dave Newns, so that meal arrangements can be made – 01744 632211 (am).

New members

A number of new members have joined us since our last newsletter. We give them a hearty welcome and hope they enjoy many happy years with our club.

Editorial

As your last newsletter was in November I have had several reports from the Seniors' Section including details of an Edge of Wales walking holiday. Richie Cannon also sent in a few jokes for a Chuckle Corner, but unfortunately, because of the Referendum pages I have run out of space, so I will put the Edge of Wales holiday and Chuckle Corner in the next edition. Meanwhile, keep your contributions coming in. Give them or send to me at 7 Abbots Way, Billinge, Wigan WN5 7SB or to davenews@hotmail.com

A few forthcoming rambles

Feb 1 LYME PARK. Starting and finishing at Disley, not far from Stockport, trekking through undulating landscape on the edge of the Peak District and also a meander up hill and dale for the more strenuous walks and all passing through the deer park, hopefully spotting some of the animals either at close quarters or at a distance.

Feb 8 LLANGOLLEN. Always popular in the winter months with a good choice of walks from trekking along part of the canal for the easier walk to climbing over the hills around the Vale of Llangollen for the harder walks.

Programme changes

Note that March 29 is now changed for the walk to Hawkshead in the Lake District and not to Pendle Hill. Also the Keswick weekend has been swapped with the Coniston walk in April, so now the first weekend in April is the Keswick weekend (Friday 3 to Sunday 5 April) with the Coniston walk now on April 19.

The recent Christmas Dance

It was not a very good turnout with just over 60 attending and was a pity that a few more didn't turn up, but those who did, enjoyed Christmas crackers on the tables, party poppers, paper hats, and a really great hot and cold buffet with plenty left over, including various gateaux, etc. Michael Griffin won the hamper and there were also lots of raffle prizes. Dancing to a good choice of not too loud disco music was also enjoyed by all.

Thanks to Mike Riley for organising it but he unhappily could not get there because of his recent hip operation. We wish you a speedy recovery.

OBITUARY

Tony Bond's mother sadly died recently. We offer our sincere condolences to Tony and his brother. Tony says that his mother's ashes will be taken to Silverdale, one of her favourite spots. May she rest in Peace.

Seniors' Section reports

Yarrow Valley Country Park – October 2008

TEN of us met at the Yarrow Country Park Visitor Centre on a bright and warm Sunday morning.

It was good to see Peter Atherton out with us again, especially as, without him, Gerry would have been the only male in the group. Also good to see Kath Byron – well it was good to see everyone, but Peter and Kath had been absent for a while!

The initial part of the walk took us along the Yarrow Valley and the first point of interest was the Fish Pass. Now, we'd all heard of having a pass to go fishing, but why would a fish need a pass? All was revealed. A fish pass is a series of steps which allows salmon and trout to leap upstream and to bypass the weir. So something new was learnt.

After the Pass, the river meandered and we meandered with it until Lilian and friends (Anne, Sue and Ita) started mentioning a lunch stop. Despite the reluctance of the leader, who wanted to get a bit further along the route and into familiar territory, we stopped in a pleasant spot to partake of our lunch. A bit of map reading and discussion and we were on our way again, along a disused railway track and into Adlington.

We walked through Adlington and across fields from which we had fine views of Rivington Pike. The weather was perfect; we were in T-shirts all day. After crossing a golf course and a stroll along the Leeds Liverpool Canal, we entered Duxbury Park. Our first riverside path seemed to be going in the wrong direction, so Freda and Jean led us up the steep river bank on to the straight and narrow. Shortly after passing another golf club, the path proper rejoined the river and we followed this back to the country park visitor centre.

The path was very pleasant with the sun coming through the trees and the beautiful autumn colours beginning to show. Of course, it was a bit wet and muddy but that's par for the course this year!

The walk was about 8 miles and 600ft of ascent. This is a lovely area and well worth revisiting. Thanks to everyone for coming and enjoying the walk.

Marcia

There were two fairly similar reports for the above walk, and both mentioned the Fish Pass, so I decided to use Marcia's version, but here is just a little snippet from the other report – *Editor*

"We left the small village of Adlington via a footpath which enabled us to reach the foothills of south Lancashire where two old friends graced the sky line, namely Winter Hill and its lower cousin, Rivington Pike, both rising sharp and clear . . . Many thanks Marcia for another lovely walk, showing how varied the Lancashire countryside is. *G.*"

Formby – 14 December 2008

Leaders: Marcia and Tony

THE WALK actually started at Waterloo and, in contrast to recent walks, there wasn't a wellington in sight.

The day was ideal for walking – cold and dry with a light covering of cloud playing tag with the sun, which produced some dramatic cameos of Clarence dock installation, plus the stark stationary windless turbines, and views across the Mersey in the Wirral and the distant North Wales.

To reach the prom, the path bisected two leisure lakes, upon which an eyrar of swans were keeping a watchful eye on a small dog scampering in and out of the water causing some agitation, as there were some first year young still wearing their grey "crombies."

When I was a lad where Otterspool prom is now, was known as the Cast Iron shore otherwise the "Cazzie;" should this term now be bestowed upon Crosby prom? Another innovation to the promenade is the white demarcation line, separating walker from cyclist, leaving the walker to dodge the sea spray and, in rain, cyclist spray.

As we munched our lunch on benches, kindly donated for this purpose, the sun and cloud entertained us with an every-changing vista, encompassing up river, across and beyond.

Once past the Coastguard station the terrain changed dramatically. Gone was the manicured neatness replaced by scrubland with a shoreline a jumble of sea scoured masonry – spoil of the wartime bombing of the city and suburbs. The next mile or two on the walk saw us near the military firing range, with its repeated warnings to "KEEP OUT." With guns popping off every few minutes, the warnings were well heeded!

Once past the camp we were able to regain the shore. It was while walking this final stretch we fell to talking about the moon being nearer to the earth for some time, and because of that it would appear larger than usual. Those who observed it on the specified night saw hardly any difference in its appearance, except Jean who saw it shining into the bedroom from a different angle, to which Tony T opined that it must have landed in our back garden! But the only thing greeting us upon arriving home were moonbeams – the fairies must have got tired of waiting and had gone home.

As darkness fell the final tableau of the day was the stark, black silhouette of an inward bound ship, like a child's cut out pasted on a seascape, as the weakening rays of the setting sun gave us a streaky bacon sky.

With the sun finally gone, the temperature fell which encouraged the appearance of woolly gloves, hats and scarves. A fitting end which fulfilled its earlier promise of a dry, cold, windless day's walking. The latter part was certainly new to most of those present: Anne, Lilian, Rosemary, Sue, Freda, Tony G, Harry and yours truly. It was all made possible by our excellent leaders Marcia and Tony, to whom we give our wholehearted thanks. *J & G*

More Seniors' Section reports

Malpas

This walk was programmed for Sunday 9 November, but this being Remembrance Sunday, it was rescheduled to 16 November

A very welcome return to our walks given by Audrey and George Parkinson, after a gap of thirteen years due to church duties – Audrey being organist, with George on duty as church warden. It's great to have them back walking with us once more.

About midday the clouds cleared to give the sun a breather and us a warm-up. Although the sun was shining brightly it was having very little effect on conditions underfoot.

The path out of Malpas was by way of a series of stubble-covered fields, the stubble being the remains of a crop of maize. On the recce for this walk it was still flourishing, which made me wonder how many plates of Kelloggs it would fill? Speaking with the farmer a bit later he told me it wasn't a cereal crop but it was to be made into cattle feed. Well I suppose if one is having a bowl of Kelloggs for breakfast one needs milk to pour over it!

The footpath terminated at the gate of the farmyard. This presented a further problem for us as the yard was covered with greyish sludge, which made it difficult to decide which was sludge and which was concrete. This was where walking poles came in very handy. Once through the yard walking became easier on the hard surface of the road. The views were expansive and there was a surprising amount of colour to be enjoyed.

The next feature of the landscape was Overton Scar, but unfortunately there is no path to its crest, so we had to be content with traversing its base, but still getting views over the plains of Cheshire.

With the sun past its zenith it lost most of its warmth as we sadly started the final trek back to Malpas, in the course of which we were unable to help a mum and young daughter who were looking for a dog which had gone AWOL. Just before reaching the village there is this very imposing building which was formerly a Catholic Retreat House but which is now closed down and is to be demolished to make way for a housing development.

We still had some daylight which enabled a visit to the local parish church's Fourteenth Century, we were informed by a local resident we met.

With daylight exhausted it was back to the car park, and then after the "constitutional" at The Edgerton Arms, it was off home.

Many thanks to Audrey, Lillian, Cath, Freda, Tony and George who helped us to have a great day's walking.

J & G

Rosemary's Birthday

The Chalet – 9.11.08

The Seniors' Section gathered at the Chalet to celebrate Rosemary's entry to her Octogenarianism. The occasion being, as with H.R.H. Rosemary's "public Birthday."

Her family birthday was Sunday 12th October when she was joined by her daughter Ann, husband James, children Rachel, Adam, Micheal and Alexander, along with her son John, his wife Rachael and their children Matthew and her sister Maria.

We arrived at the Chalet to the traditional lovely welcome, despite the preparations for the evening meal for 27 diners. Two short walks had been arranged – short to make sure all would be present with suitable sharpened appetites ready for the three-course meal.

Bill led a walk along the Leet Valley, whilst Harry took us up Moel Findeg. The start of Harry's walk was through the woods alongside the Chalet, which was fine for a mile or so, but upon entering the woods proper we came upon a scene of utter devastation, a First World War battlefield in miniature. Deep mud-filled tractor tracks faced us with shattered trunks and branches lying in complete confusion – all caused by rain, lots of it, and tractors having a rave-up, high on red diesel!

Finally, with our feet back on firmer terra firma, a line from Flanders and Swan came to mind, to paraphrase: "Mud, Mud, Glutinous Mud, nothing quite like it for congealing the blood."

On a grassy bank, in warm autumn sunshine, a well earned cuppa was enjoyed before setting off to reach the top of Moel Findeg, which afforded a wonderful panoramic view. Shortly before the end of the walk, a brief drizzle fell, followed by a most spectacular double, with the hint of a triple, rainbow.

Many thanks to Harry for a mini ramble, which encapsulated almost all of what rambling is about.

Once we were all assembled and seated around the common room table eagerly awaiting the fare, which was emitting a most tantalising aroma, an astonishing selection was offered, which judging by the number of plates being refilled was a tribute to the quality of the food and the skill of the cooks.

As Chairman, Leo rose and gave our collective thanks to Rosemary for inviting us and to all who helped to organise such a wonderful day.

Rosemary specifically requested that no presents be brought, so if anyone wished to mark the occasion, a receptacle would be available for donations to charity, which resulted in an astonishing sum of £300 being donated from the family and us, which Rosemary was very pleased to pass on to Cafod and the Congo Appeal.

I am sure that the best present Rosemary went home with, is the esteem and affection in which she is held by all members of our club.

Referendum

on the coach departure times and stops en route

Please fill in the simple form overleaf

A few years ago we had a fairly similar referendum on coach departure times, refreshment or toilet stops, etc.

Now the question has been asked again. And so, to help your committee decide, the proposer states his case below:

Walk stops en route

You are asked to vote on the motion that outward stops to our walk destinations in summer be reduced to ten minutes (toilet stop only) as is the case in winter. As proposer of the motion, I would like to put forward my case.

The reason for asking for this reduction is to give a longer walking day to those parties that would like it. Trips to Snowdonia and the Lake District can sometimes mean, at present, that we do not start walking till 12.45, which, for A and B parties, doesn't give these beautiful mountain areas the time they merit. Those parties that do not require such a long walking day could still have a refreshment period at the location of the start of their walk (Such places are probably nicer - and cheaper - than a motorway café.) I understand that, very occasionally, a C walk may start from a place which does not have a tea/coffee shop etc - I have only known this to happen once in the last three years - and in such circumstances, a longer stop en route could be taken, if required.

On many of our trips to the Peak District, no stop at all has been taken on the outward journey. (This is because the only known place for such a stop is Buxton, which often means a detour.) This point is made just to show that we can dispense with a stop and still survive.

When we go to places in North Yorkshire - Bolton Abbey, Malham, Grassington etc - we often stop at Skipton. This usually knocks three quarters of an hour off our walking time due to the time taken to get in and out of the town plus time there. It is then only about another half hour or so before we arrive at our destination. Surely this is not necessary. And you have to pay to use the loo!

As you can probably tell, I would prefer it if there was no stop at all (outward bound), but, having an enlarged prostate myself, I can well understand and sympathise with anyone who felt a toilet stop was necessary.

Ultimately, this is your decision, and if you feel that an outward refreshment stop is an integral part of a happy day out, then you must vote that way. If you feel, on the other hand, that you could manage with a later stop, to allow those members who like a longer walking day to have one, then I would ask you to vote for the shorter stop.

J.L.

Referendum

As was mentioned in the last newsletter, we are conducting a referendum on coach starting and leaving times, and how long the break is on outward journeys.

Start time – Currently 09:30am

Choice 1 – 09:00am

Choice 2 – 09:30am

Leave Time – Currently 06:30pm to 07:00pm

Note: This is earlier in winter when we lose light. The time voted for will be the latest time the coach will leave for the return journey.

Choice 1 – 06:00pm

Choice 2 – 06:30pm

Choice 3 – 07:00pm

Outward Journey – Length of Break

Currently 30 minutes on summer programme, 10 minutes on winter programme

Choice 1 – Leave as now

Choice 2 – Change to the 10 minute break all year round

Please circle choices and print name below. Names are required to ensure 1 member 1 vote, but votes will be treated with confidentiality.

Name

Hand forms in on coach or social evening or post to Mr W. G. Harris, 57 Higher Road, Halewood, Liverpool, L26 1TA.

All votes to be in by Friday March 6th 2009.