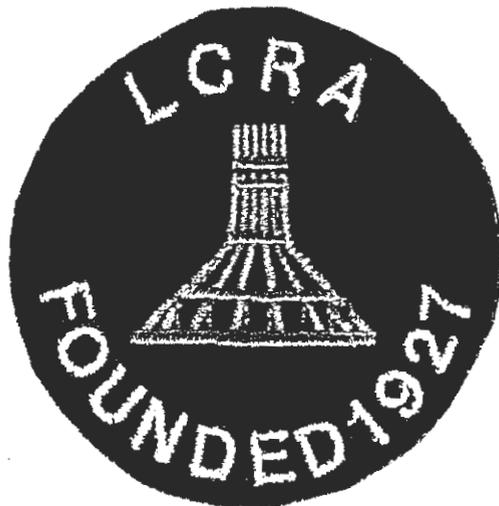


Liverpool Catholic Ramblers Association

NEWSLETTER

7th Series No 20



Midsummer 1999

CLOTH CLUB BADGES These are for sale at just £2 each. Photocopy of one above but obviously looks a lot better in colour (blue and gold). Sew them onto your rucksacks, etc. They are also useful for stopping your nose from getting sunburnt on a ramble! (just use a bit of Bluetac).

NEW MEMBERS A special welcome to the following new members who have joined us during the past few months, namely: Ronald Singleton, Michael Griffin, Peter Bailey, George Foster, Steve Strobe, Mary Molloy, Karen Rees, Betty Mathews and Dave and Joan Anderson.

MAP-READING

Interested in mastering the art of map-reading and using a compass? Then please contact any committee member.

THAT POLISH MILLENNIUM BUG

Four have just returned from another walking holiday in the Tatra Mountains courtesy of Millennium Travel. They did some superb walks and had great weather. Incidentally the bug that knocked a number of our group for six last year was finally traced to an airborne virus over Zakopane. Many more went down with it after we left last year. There were some rumours that the bug was spotted with a small 'SS' on its back and wearing jackboots!



Social Events



CHEESE AND WINE nights, quizzes, etc are all planned for our social events at the Cornmarket on Thursday nights. Attendances haven't been so good lately which is a pity as a lot of effort has gone into some of the quizzes and food nights that we have been organising. So come on down and join in the fun. The following has been planned over the next few months:

- July 29 **WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONNAIRE-ISH QUIZ.** Your big chance to win up to five hundred pence. Will Harris is the questionmaster with a choice of four easy answers.
- August 5 **PIE NIGHT.** Peter, our rambling pieman is supplying the goodies. Could also be a few cakes.
- August 12 **GROUSE QUIZ** (Glorious 12th). Dave Newns will be grousemaster (Oh! that sounds like me).
- August 19 **BINGO.** You may have never played Bingo like this before. Fantastic prizes. Mike and Helen.
- August 26 **PLACE THE FACE** with Jack Henderson.
- September 2 **SANDWICH NIGHT**
- September 9 **PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT**
- September 16 **KEN'S QUIZ**
- September 23 **OUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 8.30 at the Cornmarket.** Come down and take an interest in our club which is in it's seventy-third year. You may even want to join our committee.
- September 30 **BRING AND BUY SALE.** Bring anything down that you think might make money for the club from a book to a bar of chocolate or a club badge to packet of biscuits. Ray Mc is our Auctioneer
- October 2 **CHEESE AND WINE NIGHT**

THANKS to Jack for supplying the toilet cartoon. Richie also sent in quite a lengthy Tour of Mont Blanc article so I will circulate it around the coach for now before appearing in the next edition. Give any articles for our next newsletter to me (Dave Newns) or post them to me at 7 Abbots Way, Billinge, Wigan WN5 7SB.

A full day out (leaders not included)

THE COACH had a number of empty seats at 9.30 so some thought we had better hang on a bit longer. People soon got restless and so the driver made the decision to move off. We wanted a motorway cafe stop but couldn't agree on which one, so the driver took the initiative, shouting: "Coffee stop!" as we pulled in.

Many had returned back to their seats in less than half-an-hour but others seemed oblivious of time after an extensive tour of the cafe and shop. There was no leader to round them up, and anyway they had to take a trip to the toilets yet, and make a phone call! These same people later blamed the driver for not putting his foot down when the coach got to the Lakes an hour later than usual!

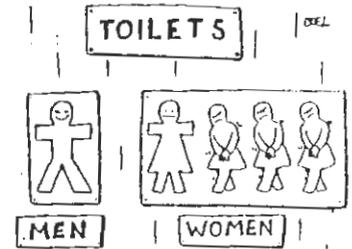
Now several did their own thing and walked around the village but soon got bored. Some shot off up the nearest hill (we don't need a map!) but soon found themselves climbing over high stone walls and barbed wire fences, then thick mist came down suddenly and they were hopelessly lost. One person cut themselves badly on barbed wire but nobody had a first-aid kit. This group later struggled back after a big detour down the wrong valley and having to ask an alien the way back to civilisation. Others found a nice flat path through farmland leading to a lake until a farmer chased them back as they weren't on a public footpath.

At the end of the day the first group back to the coach went in search of cafes and shops. Others arriving back, on finding the coach half empty, went to a pub for an hour. Eventually, the last person decided to wander back to the coach but via the toilets, and we left much later than usual.

On the journey home some thought it was too late to

have a pub stop but the driver needed a short break so we had one anyway. Oblivious of time, some decided that our usual three-quarters-of-an-hour wasn't really long enough, so stayed for another drink while the rest of us waited restlessly on the coach.

Later, at the inevitable urgent toilet stop, some also took a selfish wander around the shop and cafe, keeping the coach waiting much longer than necessary.



The coach had several unscheduled drop-offs often resulting in trapping a few frustrated motorists who had no room to squeeze past. The driver had to open the boot for members gear. (Drop-offs shouldn't have gear in the boot). We finally arrived back in Liverpool at midnight! Many had to get taxis back home but who cares! Some of us had a good lie-in next morning. Others had to be up early for work but that's not our problem.

Am I going out next Sunday? Well, not really! I seem to have overspent a bit on this trip and, oh yes! I have to get up early next Monday.

The day out above is just a bit of tongue-in-cheek fiction, but we can pick up on many points on why we need leaders and strict discipline. We are always looking for extra leaders and below is a list of their duties:

DUTIES FOR OUR CLUB'S LEADERS

A, B and C Leaders must liaise with each other to arrange pioneers, coach drop-off and pick-up points for walks, ideally trying to arrange that all walks finish at the same point, preferably with public toilet facilities.

Ensure prompt departure at 9.30am.

Ensure coach aisle is clear of baggage, rucksacks, etc. Tell members to make use of the boot (unless they are being dropped off en-route).

Collect any outstanding fares for that day.

Circulate a brief description of routes to be followed giving distance, ascent, terrain to be encountered and other points of interest. A photocopy of the relevant map section is of value. Copy of route for the day is to be left with the coach driver for information.

Be equipped with first-aid kit, map, map-case, compass and torches and armbands.

Take name and address, and telephone numbers of walkers out for the first time.

If any one group appears to be too unwieldy, the leader should ask appropriate members to volunteer for one of the other walks.

Appoint a competent whipper-in and have a head-count at start of and during the walk. Travel at a pace which does not allow the party to be too spread out (particularly in misty conditions).

Arrange suitable stops for refreshments.

Record accidents/incidents in the book provided and report any first-aid used.

Ensure prompt departure of coach after walk and/or any other stops. Aim for arrival in Liverpool not later than 10.30pm. Remind passengers to take their belongings, including litter, home with them.

The leader has the right to refuse to take any member who is improperly attired or who, in their opinion, is inexperienced for the walk in question.

One of the leaders is to take bookings for future walks on the return journey.



COACH DROP-OFFS ON RETURN JOURNEY

A common-sense reminder that these aren't unload your gear from the boot stops! You should be ready together with your gear at the front of the coach so that you can be dropped off promptly with the minimum delay.

MOBILE PHONES

The club has recently purchased three mobile phones for the leaders to carry. They are primarily for emergency use on the walks but could also be useful for making contact when running late, etc.

ARE YOU PROPERLY ATTIRED?

I WOULD like to remind all members that there are certain common-sense rules regarding what you are expected to carry for a walk. As we go through summer I have noticed that some members don't carry a rucksack or carry any gear that might be needed on a ramble, expecting the leader or other members to help them out if they get thirsty or need extra clothing. This is a very selfish attitude not to mention foolhardy.

A number of members have experienced dehydration problems recently through taking insufficient drink with them. Some have also experienced hypothermia through sudden weather changes from hot and sticky weather in the valleys to ice-cold winds on the hills in a matter of minutes.

I hope the people concerned will heed this warning and in future carry extra gear and drink in a rucksack.

Remember each leader has the right to refuse to take anybody on their walk whom they consider improperly attired.

Also, in future, members of a ramble will be made to walk with the main party of walkers and not race away, nor deliberately lag too far behind. Don't forget the walk is only as fast as the slowest, so if any members race ahead they will find themselves being designated as whipper-in to look after the tail-enders. If people continue to race ahead on future walks they might even find themselves directed towards the Liverpool Harriers!

Tom Reilly, Chairman

BRECON BEACONS HOSTEL WEEKEND IN OCTOBER

The youth hostel is situated in South Wales in a unique but remote part of the Brecon Beacons and is ideal for exploring these scenic hills and valleys. Members will be going up by minibus, leaving during the day on the Friday, so those working will need to take Friday off. A £10 deposit secures your place.

See Tom Reilly for further details.

SNOWDON CHARITY WALK

Money is still coming in from this recent sponsored event. The name of the charity is Integrate which is involved in helping underprivileged children and treating them to holidays, etc. So far over £400 has been collected.

FIRST-AID COURSE

A one-day First-Aid Course geared towards hill-walkers is to be arranged for suitable members (preferably for our more regular walkers) at a nominal charge. See Bob Carney for more details if you are interested.

COACH FARE HAS BEEN INCREASED

Mainly because of a drop in attendances we have been losing far too much money on coaches over the past months. There has also been a recent rise in the cost of the coach hire so the committee agreed, but with some reluctance, to a £1 increase to £7 from July 4th. Can anyone tell us why attendances have dropped?

PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN

We have recently started spreading more posters around to attract new members. Many members join through word of mouth so maybe you could help to spread the word around but please stress that we are fell walkers and a certain degree of fitness is needed to get up the hills.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS INCREASE

These are due on September 1st and they have been increased by £1 on that date to £5 for single members and £6 for married couples. Note: If you have only just paid your subs on joining the club during July or August then you don't have to pay again until next September.

BOB RAMSEY

Bob's widow Chris would like to express her thanks for our condolences on her sudden sad loss (Bob had a heart attack on the walk on May 9th). Donations were preferred to flowers and the collection we have been having has now been closed with a total of £152. Chris thanks us for our generous donation which is being used to purchase much-needed cooling fans in local hospitals (Bob's four daughters all work in hospitals).

OBITUARY Sadly, we have to report the death of MONICA ROWE who died in May. Monica was a member of the club for many years and a member of the Seniors' Section until several years ago. We offer our sincere condolences to her family.

Seniors' Section Ramblings

Teeing off near Whalley and ending up with tea

WYCOLLER and Bouldsworth Hill having proved too wet and boggy on the pioneering walk, our leader switched to the Sabden Round on June 13th. This did not tempt any more of our Section than those who intended to do the original walk. But we had quality - those going to the French Alps in July!

We started at the picnic site on the edge of Whalley Golf Course and actually finished there. It was a very pleasant day, the company was excellent, the leader adaptable, the scenery delightful. What more can one say? Just that Harry took us to a rather smart "Eater" and that set the seal on a most enjoyable day. Thanks everyone.

GEFA

Whitegate Way - June 27th

SEVEN valiant stout hearts all hovering around the 70 mark (one may even be past it, in the temporal sense) met at what was once Whitegate Station on a very wet Sunday morning. It had rained all the previous night and seemed as though it would never stop. Whilst booting up it was apparent George was in some distress - he'd forgotten his thick walking socks and then said his power steering hadn't been working properly (had a few funny turns on the way!). Freda came to the rescue with a spare pair of socks.

Regrettably there was nothing we could do about his power steering - I'm dead jealous because I haven't got it on my car and have had to struggle on without it. They say the extra exercise is good for the biceps, can't say it's done much for mine - but I digress.

Suitably booted up, we set off. In some respects this route is like the Wirral Way but there is a marked absence of tunnels. The rain was steady and relentless and it was just as wet under the trees as out in the open countryside. This line (as it was) was opened in 1870 (1st June) to transport salt from the mines and works along the west bank of the River Weaver from Winsford to Cuddington where it joined the main Chester-Manchester line. A passenger service opened a month later but closed after only four years because of competition with the main LNWR line. It was re-started in 1886 with three passenger trains a day. The journey apparently was slow and uncomfortable because the trains were mixed and passengers had to wait while goods wagons were shunted on and off into the many sidings. In its heyday there were six passenger trains per day. In addition to salt - coal, livestock, building materials and foodstuffs were also transported by rail. The line almost closed in 1958 but a joint arrangement with BR and ICI left it in use to transport rock salt until 1966. There were a few reminders of the past such as a load gauge at the station and sections of track at Catsclough and Newchurch Common.

The Way is managed for the maximum benefit of wildlife as well as providing an attractive environment for people to enjoy. We saw various species of birds and at times lovely wild flowers, orchids, foxgloves, etc. Even in the rain the views were quite stunning when the route provided us with an open aspect.

Lunch became a problem - there was no shelter and as we had umbrellas up it was going to be difficult to stand and eat butties and pour coffee at the same time. However the leader spotted a rather grotty barn and made for it. A few of us, a trio in fact, thought it would be better to seek permission from the adjacent house before we entered. The

rather surprised lady of the house had obviously never had such a request laid before her but after slight hesitation said yes, as long as we didn't smoke. Harry found a dry section with piles of clean straw so we settled down for a civilised lunch. It was marvellous to be out of the rain. I seem to remember a very learned discussion going on about Heaven and Hell but as I was pre-occupied with the consumption of my strawberry yoghurt (Sainsbury's Economy) I was unable to take part. I'm always a bit lost when it comes to Theological discourse!

Lunch finished we pressed on past the salt works (if you're out of table salt this is the place to come - they've got bags of the stuff here!). The route took us back into the country, across a beautiful golf course and near locks on the river and lakes.

Having crossed our bridge we asked Bill why there had been a train crash a week or so earlier and there followed a most erudite discussion or should I say mini-enquiry into this rather unfortunate occurrence. Harry and Bill mesmerised us with their technical knowledge of sophisticated electronic signalling systems and this threw doubt on whether they really were any better than the ones that had hitherto prevailed. We felt that if Peter Parker and Bill had been running the show, the accident wouldn't have happened. However, the enquiry had to be put into abeyance and a final adjudication delayed until a later date when perhaps more vital facts will hopefully have emerged. (Watch this space).

The walk was resumed and the rain gradually ceased.

I forgot to mention that during lunch Harry gave Bill and I a home-made mince pie each. There is obviously serious competition here. I will have to look to my laurels.

Unbelievably we glimpsed blue sky at times as the ramble concluded at the picnic area. Cheshire is a lovely country and it was well worth the effort in turning out and our thanks are due to Bill for his pioneering efforts on our behalf.

Rambling Recipe

Family Section Rambles

No Family Section rambles during August

September 12 **RIVINGTON, Lancs.** Leader Bernard Foley (01257 254276).

Meet at Top Barn car park, 12 noon. Directions: Enter Lever Park from Horwich, turn right at Lower Barn. Follow signs to Top Barn car park at end of road.