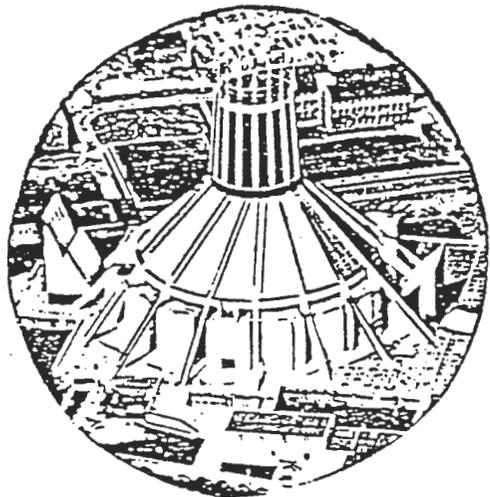


14. 3. 95

LIVERPOOL CATHOLIC RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER



6th Series Issue 8

March 1995



Editor's Ramblings

The prize crossword in the January edition was a challenge and only attracted a few entrants, but this time it's easier and you also get the chance of winning a FREE RAMBLE plus other prizes. See back page.

Our current programme started with the Llanarmon hot-pot ramble which sparked off ravings about the Raven. Due to one of our leaders being indisposed that day, we must thank Bill Potter of the Seniors' Section for stepping in last-minute to lead one of the rambles. Unfortunately Bill developed a knee problem during the walk and he ended up by being escorted to the inn by two of our new members, both nurses of course.

Bill isn't right yet. We wish you a speedy recovery - "kneed" we say more! Actually, with the Raven's dining room unusually out of bounds that night, some of us needed a good pair of knees on which to rest our "hot"?-pot. The spuds hadn't reached their cook-by-date (chain-saw needed!) but to be fair there were some who actually enjoyed the meal and three people found plenty of meat, but I think that was in the vegetarian meals!

Ray Mc mentions an alternative venue in his Ramblerite, plus a little elucidation on pub stops on our return journeys. Just for the record, as many of you are aware, we haven't always had a pub stop on some of our winter rambles (the pubs were still closed) but on many recent pub stops the coach still managed to get back in Liverpool by around 9pm or earlier, well inside our 10.30pm limit.

Thanks to all the latest contributors to this newsletter. New scribes are welcome, so why not try your hand at putting a few witty words together describing recent rambles or social events, or anything of suitable interest for our next edition and give them to Ken Clark or myself as soon as possible. Deadline date for copy is Easter Sunday.

Dave Newns

Editors' abode: 7 Abbotts Way, Billinge, WIGAN WN5 7SB



OBITUARY

Sadly, Paula Larkin's mother died on Monday, 20th February. We offer our sincere sympathy to Paula. Her mother will be remembered in our prayers. - R.I.P.

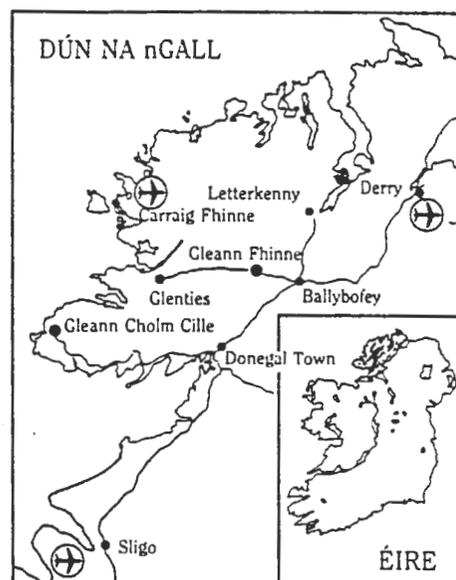
HILLWALKING IN DONEGAL (Dun na nGall)

by Tony Birtill

I joined the Catholic Ramblers last summer but don't get out with you as often as I like as I am in Ireland several months a year on hillwalking courses which take place at Easter, July and August with myself as the main leader.

Donegal, in the north west of the Irish Republic, contains some of the best hill-walking areas in the country and its Sliabh Liag peninsula contains some of the most dramatic marine scenery in Europe.

It is also a bi-lingual area with the Gaelic language, culture and music remaining vibrant amidst its glens and mountains. It was to provide a means for outsiders to sample this rich cultural heritage that the Oideas Gael college was set up in Glen-cholmcille eleven years ago, initially offering courses in the Irish language for adults.



Over recent years the college's programme has expanded to include set dancing, archaeology, tapestry weaving, painting and hillwalking, all conducted bi-lingually amidst the breathtaking scenery of Glencholmcille. Hundreds of visitors, mainly from Ireland, Britain and the USA attend the courses each year.

A COASTAL STRIDING EDGE

I first climbed Sliabh Liag in the summer of 1973. Although just 2000 feet high, its position on the coast gives a great sensation of height as well as remarkable views. The famous 'Cosan in Aonar' (one person path) just before the summit is a coastal version of Striding Edge. Although I climb Sliabh Liag several times a year I never tire of its dramatic scenery and solitude. Near the summit is the ruined hermitage of Aodh Mac Bric, a ninth century saint. We stop for lunch here.

Despite the beauty of this peninsula it is, due to its isolation, unusual to meet another party of walkers, even in the height of summer. The day starts at 10am when we meet up at the college, get the local weather forecast and head for the hills, usually returning around 5pm. The holiday is described as cultural hillwalking and there are numerous prehistoric sites in the area to visit en route. Many rare plants thrive in this wild place, as do seals, foxes and hares.

Course participants have the choice of staying in one of a number of houses we rent in the glen which usually works out at £50 per person, self catering for a week. Full board is also available at reasonable rates in local guest houses. There is also a hostel and a hotel. The course fee is £70. In the evening there are cultural activities in the college, such as set dancing and singing. A visit to a local pub usually follows, and as the area is famous for its traditional music, the craic is always mighty!

TRAVEL DETAILS

Flights from Liverpool to Dublin are available at reasonable rates by booking in advance with Ryanair or Manxair. McGeehan's bus runs twice daily direct from Dublin to Glencholmcille. If there is enough interest, it could be possible to organise a mini-bus from Liverpool to Glencholmcille via Holyhead.

A coloured brochure and further details are available from Oideas Gael, Glencholmcille, Co Dhun na nGall, Eire. Phone 010 353 73 30248 or me, Tony Birtill 79 Kingfield Road, Liverpool L9 3AL. Phone 525 4987. I've also sent a brochure to Dave Newns for circulation.

OUR SOCIAL SCENE



First special night at the Crown this year was the Free Pie and Pint Night. As anticipated, there was a good turnout for this fun night and we even had a couple of delicious pies left over which were promptly used as part of the numerous raffle prizes. Thanks to Barbara and Dougie for making this a successful evening.

On the other hand, torrential rain seemed to put the dampers on the Valentine's Night event. The upstairs room filled up slowly, but two lucky people won £10 each in our sweepstake and we heard a romantic tale about Steve's gallant rescue of Lisa's hat on a recent ramble.

We've now forecast a massive turnout for our following St Patrick's Night:

THURSDAY, MARCH 16th at The Crown

One day early, but it's the
Liverpool Catholic Ramblers'



St Patrick's Night



IRISH stew is included during this fun night. Terry Pearson has catered for sixty people, so don't miss out. **ADMISSION FREE**

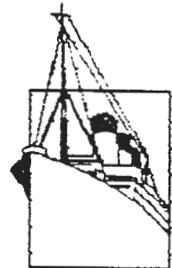
NEW MEMBERS - A warm welcome to the following who have joined us recently and wishing you all many happy years with us:

John Cosgrove, Robert Jones, Anthony Mooney, Patrick McCall,
Tony Woods, John and Mary Dixon

50th Anniversary of V.E.Day.

As member's are aware this year sees the 50th Anniversary of V.E.Day. Two events staged by The Liverpool Retired Seafarer's gives an opportunity for rambler's to take part. "V.E. Anniversary Celebrations" at Edinburgh Park [Dockers Club] on Friday 12th May.

Featuring the RENOWNED Irish show band "The Hooleys" and comedian "Jackie Hamilton".
Tickets £2.00 Doors are open at 7.00pm.



For those members who may wish to honour and remember loved ones who lost their lives at sea, a ferry boat has been chartered to sail down the Mersey and an opportunity to put a wreath over the side. This service will be jointly conducted by the Port Chaplain of the Stella Maris. Mersey Mission to Seaman. and the Paster of the Norwegian Seaman's Church. Sails from the Pier Head tuesday 23th May. 6pm to 9pm.

Tickets £3.50.

For further information contact Joe Rourke.

Secretary. retired Seafarers. 256 9144.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the sixty-eighth

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the Association will be held at the Legs of Man public house,
London Road, on THURSDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER 1994, at 8.30pm

AGENDA

- 1 To approve the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting of the Association.
- 2 To read the Secretarial Report.
- 3 To read the Treasurer's Report.
- 4 To read the Chairwoman's Report.
- 5 To elect Officers and Committee for the forthcoming year.
- 6 To elect Auditors for the forthcoming year.
- 7 Any other business.

Members wishing to submit resolutions of any kind must ensure that they are in the possession of the General Committee not later than seven days prior to the above meeting.

ANNUAL MASS - Sunday, 25 Sept, 11.30am in the Cathedral Crypt.

Whether you're a Catholic or not, everyone's welcome to join in as we sing to music played by our members at this special service with our own "hired" priest who was once a rambler himself. We remember especially all our deceased members.

POSTBAG

This letter, coupled with the superbly drawn picture on the back page, was sent by the four Polish trainee priests who came out on several of our walks during the past year and have now left this country, but not without their memories. We wish them every success.



ST GREGORY'S HOUSE, HALEWOOD ROAD

Dear Friends at the Catholic Ramblers,

Thank you for the many happy days we have shared together through rain and sunshine. Your generosity has made it possible for us to visit many beautiful places in this country. You have given us many happy memories to take with us to our Mission Countries.

We will keep you in our prayers. God bless you.

THE SEARCH FOR THE GLENRIDDING "B" PARTY - AUGUST 21

To "B" or not to "B", that is the question posed as work commitments looked like I would be unable to lead this ramble. After a couple of all-night sessions at ACAS, a planned route for the Lake District trek began to unfold, which my trusted friend John Cavanagh agreed to do on the day for me.

The pub at the top of the Kirkstone Pass seemed to be the ideal starting point, not for a quick drink, but rather the 1500 feet which had already been gained by simply sitting in the coach. However, as John informed me later, this advantage of height was soon forgotten shortly after the start when the hard slog up Red Screes made progress very slow. This, coupled with the fact that they didn't get off Ken's coach until 12.30pm meant that an anxious eye had to be kept on the time.



Meanwhile, by good luck, I managed to finish work handy and went into mega drive to find the car park full at Glenridding. A couple of sideroads later I am making strides along Grisedale Beck towards Grisedale Tarn, with the hope of taking on Fairfield from the west.

By 2.30-ish I'm at the top of Fairfield where the map tells me this sweaty height is 873m or in ole money, 2800ft-ish. This was the point that I knew the "B" walk must pass, so all I had to do was hang around for a short while.

Wrong! John's party had reached Hart Crag, but unfortunately time was pushing on and some of the crew were finding it hard going. Taking soundings, John quite rightly decided to drop down into the valley heading towards Patterdale, no doubt feeling that Fairfield would be there for another day.

By 3.30pm I was scanning the horizon with a borrowed pair of binoculars. Apart from a few Bosnian Serbs and some UN peacekeepers, there was no sign of the intrepid "B" party. Resisting the urge to do what any man would do in this situation - secretly burst into tears! - I pushed on to St Sunday Crag.



In the guidebooks it says St Sunday Crag looks like a giant whale's back. Having struggled across the terrain, I would say the description of a killer whale would be more appropriate! (Stop moaning laddie, after all there's a very good pub down there in Glenridding!).

At the end of the day everybody got back safe, even if their little leggies were feeling a bit stiff.

Thanks again to John Cavanagh for taking the strain. Cheers mate,

Roy Thiis

GRASMERE

"B" Walk December 4th.

Anyone lucky enough to go to Keswick will, if they have the time, take the scenic route through the Lakes. One particular part I always enjoy is the road climbing out of Grasmere. To your right you have the impressive might of Great Rigg and to your left a more gentle mass of Helm Crag, otherwise known as the Lion and the Lamb.

Up until this ramble I didn't even know it was called Helm Crag, but I always promised myself one day to walk these tops that I envied every time I drove past.

Brian Eassom was to be our trusted leader, who in true "B" walk spirit, started the walk at a good pace! Following the Easedale Road out of Grasmere. It wasn't long before we bade farewell to the "C" party led by Dave Newns heading for Easedale Tarn. Passing the sign for Thorny How youth hostel brought back memories of a great hostelling weekend a couple of years ago. However I must confess to getting really lost (so what's new!) after a night of imbibing in Grasmere. I didn't know it could be so dark in the country and how every back lane looked the same. Lucky enough Tom's headlights found me about midnight and I wished at that point that I really would turn into a pumpkin! Meanwhile back to today's ramble . . .

It was now raining hard enough for the ole waterproofs to make an appearance, plus there was the prospect of a steep path up White Crag. On a summer's day this may have been a bridge too far, but today the majority of us got through OK. Approaching High Raven Crag a sense of satisfaction could be felt as the first reward of the walk came into view - Rydal Fell with Grasmere nestling below, and of course the Keswick road snaking its way up towards Thirlmere. Even though it was the middle of winter the relaxing vivid colours still had a late autumn feel about them. The rusty reds of the old heather clinging to the fell sides look more dramatic than usual due to the changing light conditions caused by the subtle change in the rolling mist reflections.

It's days like these you did not want to walk another inch, just sit down and become completely mesmerised by nature's own picture show. Grumbling noises from the ole tum-tum has a good habit of bringing you back to earth. So it was on to our highest point, Helm Crag (1200ft) where the luxury of a well-earned butty break was taken.

Suitably refreshed it was time to push on after the statutory photo-call from Steve's camera! With the main height now gained it was time to slip into fifth gear and start to enjoy the walk along the ridge. Looking to our right most of the high peaks were shrouded in mist, but during a brief period the mist rolled back enough to expose dense white clouds. Hold on, that's no cloud, it's fresh snow! The weather forecast the night before had predicted snow for the Scottish Highlands, but not for England. So it was a real bonus, even if it was too high for a snow fight.

Enjoyable as it was along the ridge, it was becoming obvious we would have to drop down due to the failing light. John saw a possible short cut, which although very steep, proved to be the fast way down, especially if you slipped on the faithful mud!

Once we reached the fast-flowing river it was time for a quick coffee and bite to eat before the final push for Grasmere. All in all a great ramble with good company, just the thing to recharge the ole spirit! Thanks again to Brian. Cheers!

Roy Thiis

BRONTE COUNTRY

"B" Walk - January 15th

Haworth was to be our start and finishing point, so having dropped off the "A" crowd at Hebden Bridge we continued our coach journey towards Haworth, but the ole heart sank a little as the coach entered dense mist - not much fun leading walks in the fog. However the weather cleared as Ken's coach dropped into the Worth Valley at Haworth.

Even at this time in the depths of winter there were still a fair number of day trippers around. The now famous Parsonage is closed during each January for essential maintenance but this didn't affect our schedule as time was limited.

No sooner had we passed behind the church that we were on a muddy track out of Haworth climbing towards Penistone Hill. The wind was blowing hard but at least the grey skies had not let go of their droplets.

A flock of birds, flying in a formation that the Red Arrows would envy, seemed to be totally unaffected by the cross-winds, unlike our crew! However good time was made as we pushed towards Bronte Bridge, but not before the embarrassment of having the "B" party in front of us! Needless to say, it's a long story why this happened, but we quickly overtook them with a gritted determination.

The first butty break was held at Bronte Bridge which isn't exactly the Forth Bridge in status but I'm sure a good story must be out there somewhere. *(It was one of the favourite spots where the Bronte sisters used to play - Editor).*

Just as I'm enjoying butty number three the "C" party are spotted hot on our heels. Now I know how General Custer felt when those Red Indians just kept a comin'! Since we had no ammo. left, a rapid escape was made up Bronte Waterfall onto Harbour Hill and looking back at the smoke on our trail we knew the "C" crowd were nowhere to be seen. A good pace was now maintained all the way to our furthestmost point, Withins Height.

I now feel its my duty to mention in the dispatches that Steve did indeed resign his post as whipper-in. I won't go into detail why . . . oh, why not . . . he was really missing Lisa, so there! Lucky enough a quick replacement was found in the form of Will Harris whose name has now been put forward for a CDM.

Withins, so the plaque on the ole ruin tells us it was regarded as the inspiration for Emily Bronte's "Wuthering Heights". With the wind blowing wildly through leafless trees, the darkening skies and rolling moorland its easy to see why.

With second butty break over, it was time to push along the Pennine Way to Ponden and Lower Laithe Reservoirs which were full to capacity. At Stanbury those gallant rambles known as the "A" party, were spotted catching up, which is a pleasant change! The last miles to Haworth was unexpectedly rewarding as there was just enough daylight left to enjoy the final viewpoint, not far from Penistone Hill.

Thanks again to Steve and Will for being the tail end gunners. Cheers!

Roy Thlls

RAMBLERITE



Our traditional pub stop of 45 minutes' duration is just long enough to induce conviviality without excess and, although not mandatory, we endeavour wherever realistically possible to have one.

Though our stop is not always popular in some quarters, the Carnforth Hotel, a recent discovery, has proved enormously so with everyone. Christine, the landlady, makes us really welcome, even to the extent of providing free snacks on some occasions. Consequently and especially in view of the poor reports on our last hot-pot evening, we will probably be looking north for this event next winter. More imminently however and in the current programme we will be planning a longer stop and meal at Carnforth. The cost and details to follow. I'm sure mine hostess will do us proud.

I hope you enjoy the new crossword. I have made it somewhat easier than the last. No one recognised Win Hill as being "above and beyond Hope," a village near Castleton.

There will be prizes again, so let's have lots of entries this time.

Ray McIntosh

The Keswick Weekend March 24th - 26th

We have been stopping at Lakeside House in Keswick bi-annually for over 20 years. This superb guesthouse holds approximately 50 people and is complete with basement drying room, bar and dancing area. Different grades of walks are arranged for the Saturday and Sunday. A few sometimes prefer to do their own thing. Meals are good with packed lunches included for the walks on the Saturday. Weekend finishes with the evening meal at 5pm on the Sunday. Cost last October was £55 including the hire of the coach for the weekend and it will probably be not much different this time. Bookings, up to the time of this newsletter going to print have been light. If you intend going please give Ray McIntosh your £10 deposit as soon as possible. Coach leaves St John's Lane at 6.30 on the Friday night (if enough bookings warrant a coach this time).

POSTBAG



Dear editor,

During the last Map & Compass course held at J.Rourke's house I borrowed two books off one of the members on the course and I am ashamed to say I have now forgotten who that person was. I have asked all of the people, who I can remember and I have been carrying the two books around with me for some months, down at the pub nights and on the weekly rambles. I have had no luck in tracing this person.

DID YOU LEND ME TWO BOOKS??

If so please accept my apologies and please get in touch with me.

Ken Clark.

Guided Walks in Liverpool's Parks and Green spaces 1995.

Provided by the Liverpool Rangers Service
051 225 5910 ALL THE RANGER LED WALKS ARE FREE.

Thursday 2nd March - 2pm
Allerton Tower and Golf course

Come and join the Rangers for a historical look at
Allerton Tower and Golf course
Meet at the Menlove Avenue Gate of Allerton Tower.

Saturday 4th March - 2pm
A gentle March through Sefton Park

Brave the March winds for this gentle walk and discover some delights
and features.
Meet at Sefton Park Palm House.

Thursday 16th March - 1pm
The History of Sefton Park

Come along and listen to the fascinating history of Sefton Park
Meet at the Boat house at the southern end of the lake.

Thursday 23rd March - 2pm
Wavertree Botanic

Join the Rangers for a historical guided walk through Wavertree Botanic Park
Meet at the corner of Botanic Road and Edge Lane.

Tuesday 28th March - 2pm
Reynolds Park

Join the Rangers for a historical walk through Reynolds Park
Meet at the Park Gates, Church Road, Woolton.

Thursday 30th March - 10am
Toxteth Deer Park Walk

A SIX HOUR circular walk through parks occupying part of the ancient Deer
Park.

Join or leave the walk by the Britannia Inn at Herculaneum Dock at 1.15pm
Stout shoes or boots and wet weather clothing are advisable
Meet by the Boat House at the southern end of Sefton Park Lake.

COUNTRYSIDE RECREATION FORUM

I was asked on one of our walks a few weeks ago, if I was still the Catholic Ramblers representative on the Countryside Recreation Forum, (yes I am), and could I explain the work the forum performs.

The Countryside Recreation Forum are involved in all aspects of the countryside environment, they work very closely with Liverpool, Knowsley and Sefton Councils and are supported by Operation Groundwork, and other parties.

They meet every two months, have presentation from various organisations and discuss the best ways to overcome any problems appertaining to our environment.

What is Operation Groundwork?

Operation Groundwork was set up in 1981/2 as an experiment in partnership between central and local government, the business community and voluntary organisations.

The aim was to discover whether derelict land could be restored and the countryside revitalised around a large industrial centre.

The spread of the Groundwork movement throughout Britain and into Europe during the past ten years is clear evidence of the success of the experiment in National and International terms.

What is the Groundwork Trust?

The Groundwork Trust is a small independent charity set up at the same time to lead the experiment, co-ordinate action and promote within the local communities a wider interest in and concern for our environment .

The Trust acts as a bridge between public, voluntary and private organisations.

The Trust has been so successful that it has requests for advice from all over the world.

Who are the F.R.O.G.'s?

The Friends of Operation Groundwork or F.R.O.G.'s as they are know - are local people of all ages and backgrounds. They use their varied skills and talents to promote the work of the Groundwork trust.

Their roll is to encourage people, particularly children to take part in practical tasks. I myself have been involved in three projects run by the Groundwork operations, working with children and adults in the Kirkby area.

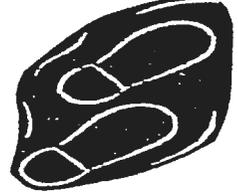
The Forums are involved in many projects, a whole range of educational events and environment visits to places of interest. The latest involvement was the Mersey Basin Campaign, Alt 2,000 Initiative. The objective was to enhance the land adjacent to the river and create an integrated public footpath/bridleway along its entire length.

Another project was the upgrading of the Canal Towpaths, Liverpool to Halsall, Scarisbrick and Burscough, some canal walks will be available later on this year.

The Urban Challenge, was a scheme aimed at improving school grounds, any school demonstrating "Imagination, creativity and considerable Ingenuity" could apply for grants ranging from £500 to £2,000. Many of the big Multi Nationals and small companies sponsor the Groundwork Operation.

I hope I have answered your questions about the work the Countryside Forums are involved in, if any of our members would like issues raised at one of the forums, please give your question and views to me and I will gladly act on your behalf.

SENIORS' SECTION



FRESHFIELD - February 12th

This enjoyable walk was to take us around woodlands, sand dunes and beach in the Freshfield and Formby area, sixteen members meeting at Freshfield Station car park for the walk starting at 11.30am.

Instead of setting off as usually towards the Fisherman's Path, George, our leader, proceeded down Victoria Road, accompanied by the party plus one dog, Cindy, to the National Trust Estate. Here we found the reason for the change of route. A new toilet block had been built or rather dug out in the sand dunes. Having availed ourselves of these conveniences we continued in the direction of the shore, but turned off to the right along a forest path which we followed for a while eventually finding ourselves back, guess where - at the "Luxury Loos". It seemed the walk was to be a "Toilet Circular".

We crossed the road and walked round the Red Squirrel Reserve. Three or four squirrels were seen, some, perhaps the younger ones, redder than others. The small colony of red squirrels was introduced from Scandinavia earlier this century. We meandered along the Woodland Path passing a Christmas Tree farm and St Joseph's Home for Handicapped Children, until we reached the Slacks (not Audrey and Geoff!) a marshy area where we found picnic tables and so lunched in comfort. The lake was alive with various species of water-fowl including swans from Southport, but as usual no Natterjack toads were spotted.

Our walk took us past St Luke's church in Formby; its churchyard white with an abundance of snowdrops. Here is buried Percy French, an Irishman who gave up his aspirations of becoming a civil engineer. Whilst surveying in Ireland he fell in love with the mountains of Mourne and, around the turn of the century, was inspired to write songs which proved a more lucrative occupation. He died in Formby, where he was well-known and popular, after developing flu whilst on a visit to his cousin, the vicar of Holy Trinity church. (Information courtesy of Audrey and George).

Altcar Rifle Range and Shorrocks Country Club were also passed along the way. At one stage we encountered a flooded path where the only way was straight through the ankle-deep water. Those in wellingtons were laughing but none offered a piggy-back. We continued along the Sefton Coastal Path until eventually reaching the beach. The strong south-westerly wind helped us along the foreshore. The sand was being blown towards the dunes, in front of which old Christmas trees had been used to form fences to trap the drifting sand, eventually to form new dunes. Some footprints and small black stumps of trees were evidence of an ancient forest near the site where once had stood the first lifeboat station in Britain.

We left the shore via steps up to a platform put there to enable disabled people to be brought in wheelchairs to view the coast. Following the woodland path we made our way back through the network of paths, noticing some trees in bud, but on the whole it was a little early for signs of spring. Arriving back at the new toilets we now had only a third of a mile along Victoria Road to go, to get us back to the cars by 4pm. Thanks to George for leading a lovely walk on a fine day when, despite the black clouds, the rain held off.

Maureen

SENIORS' SECTION

CARR MILL - January 15th

"Where are we meeting for your ramble?" George was asked. "At Carr Mill on the East Lancs Road" was the reply. Silence for a while, then the comment "You jest, now be serious." "Gadzooks! I jest not" came the reply (the Seniors' Section use a lot of armchair terminology).

Possibly out of a sense of curiosity fifteen ramblers (some in carnival spirit wearing funny hats) turned up to watch the traffic thundering by and to view the local factory scene. The first surprise was to view the tranquil waters of the Carr Mill Lake with its busy wildfowl population of mallard, coot and even a couple of great crested grebes.

As we left the A580 behind us, we entered Goyt Wood. We walked on the lakeside and found ourselves in typical winter wonderland - bare trees, dead branches, a deep wet carpet of last season's decaying leaves. The peace and silence of the woodland so close to a main road was refreshing. In fact the remainder of the walk could have been in a remote Peak District glen, rather than in deepest Lancashire.

Underfoot, the going was precarious. Months of rain had saturated the soil and had turned it into a soggy claying mud, which even our walking boots had difficulty in gripping. Overhead the sky was leaden and the dull sky appeared to purge all colour from the surroundings leaving behind a monochrome landscape, which had a beauty all of its own. The threatened rain held off whilst we had lunch in a secluded valley by Crank Caverns, a series of caves which appear to be left over from mining operations in a previous era. Here there was shelter from the prevailing northerly winds.

After lunch, we skirted farmland as we looped our way first in the direction of Billinge and then towards Crank without entering either. It began to rain. The temperature dropped and the light, never strong, began to fade. The decision was taken to curtail the walk, lest we find ourselves in treacherous walking conditions in the dark. We returned to the cars.

A most enjoyable and invigorating walk. Many thanks Freda and George. Verily George you jested not.

Molly and Tony

SENIORS' SECTION PROGRAMME

MARCH 12 - RIBCHESTER (note the change). Leader George Skillicorn. Meet at the Parish Church/Museum car park for a 12 noon walk start.

MARCH 26 - WIRRAL. Leader Tony Roche (ring 486 4235).

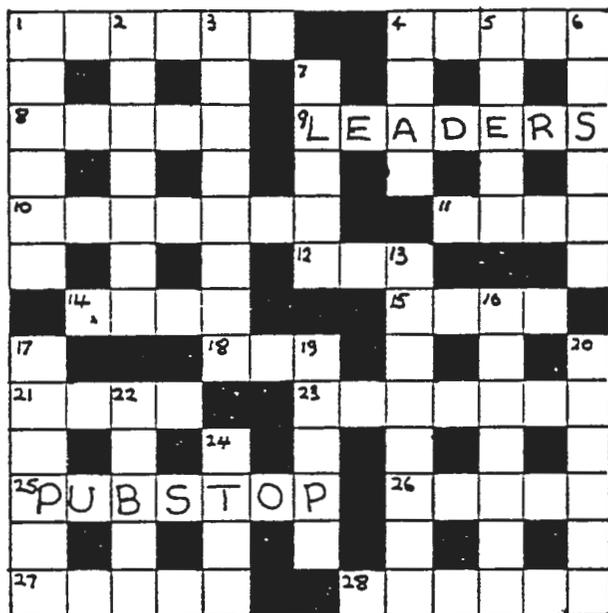
APRIL 9 - LLANFAIRFECHAN. (note the change). Leader Bill Potter. Meet at Promenade by toilets and Pavilion Cafe. Start walking 11am (486 7952).

HOUSE MEETING - April 6 at the Skillicorns. 12 Avon Road, Billinge.

Prize Crossword No 2

ACROSS

1. Can't see wood for established trees. [6]
4. Hilltop home for this rabbit. [5]
8. March this way. [5]
9. _____?
10. Is this boot for cheekier fell runners. [7]
11. Tripped in the hills. [4]
12. Gut rot not rot gut. [3]
14. Rhaeader Fawr - come again? [4]
15. Impel to impulse. [4]



18. He provoked a cross word by burying a bone at archaeological excavation. [3]
21. Lyle's partner moved into gallery with Albert. [4]
23. Clumsy. [7]
25. _____?
26. Raise Sir up at swordpoint. [5]
27. Crossed cheque to L.C.R.A. [5]
28. Contours in ladies' clothing. [6]

***** CROSSWORD No 1

Best entry was from Carol Kellett who gets a year's subscription to Country Walking magazine, and runners - up were Brian Keller and Beryl Baker who both get a free Ramble and a pen. Solution to crossword No 1 is shown here. No one got it completely right.

DOWN

1. The coach sets out from here. [6]
2. Speaking rubbish leaves a bad taste in the mouth. [7]
3. He keeps woolybacks in their place. [8]
4. Another 12 at pinnacle. [4]
5. Designer parks for thee & me. [5]
6. Autumn leaves noise. [6]
7. Often red but never dull. [5]
13. A backpacker's burden. [8]
16. It scoured the hills - ages ago. [7]
17. Mount coach & increase pace. [4, 2]
19. Brollies giving current protection. [5]
20. Slow coaches out of gear. [6]
22. Cumbrian station provides service. [5]
24. What an eyesore! [4]

PRIZE CROSSWORD No 2

When you have completed the crossword use your skill and write what you think would be the best clues for 9 Across & 25 Across. Entries to be handed to Ray McIntosh or sent to him at 27 Meadway, Hough Green, Widnes, WA8 8XP. by Good Friday.

Name _____

9 Across _____

25 Across _____

Winner of this Prize Crossword No 2 will get a FREE RAMBLE plus a Technical Drawing Pen. Runners - up will get a Technical Drawing Pen.

