

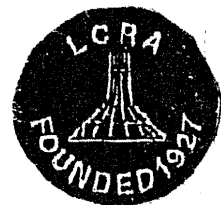
SUBS are now overdue
You won't get your new membership card/programme until you renew them.
£5 Single. £6 Married.

Liverpool Catholic Ramblers' Association

NEWSLETTER

October/November 2009

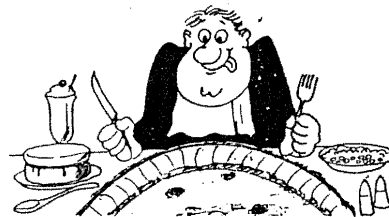
Issue No. 77 Seventh series



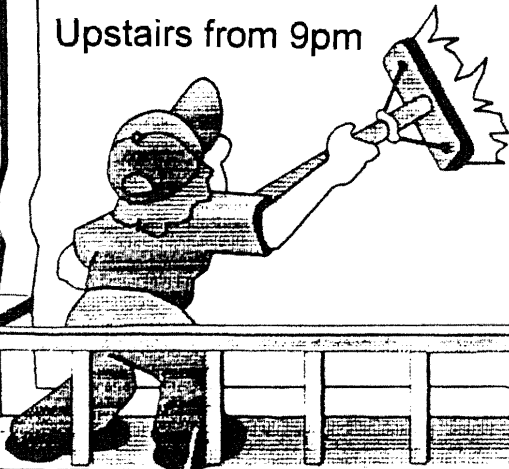
Our Cheese and Wine Nights

plus free Quiz

are held on the **FIRST
Thursday of every month
at the Ship and Mitre
Dale Street**



Upstairs from 9pm



A date for you diary
Christmas Buffet Dance
at **New Century Hall**
(behind Walton Church) Tickets £10
Saturday 12th December

COACH BOOKINGS

When you book for a ramble you reserve a seat for £10. If you fail to turn up then you are liable to pay for that empty seat. On the other hand, if you **cancel your booking** before the Thursday night prior to a ramble we can then sell your seat to another person.

We are fell walkers, not ramblers

We started off, 82 years ago, as a true rambling club, walking in the Wirral and doing many other flattish local walks, but over the years, we have evolved into a fell walking club, simply by nature of the fairly easily accessible mountainous terrain that we now frequent.

Therefore, in theory, we should now just have 'A' and 'B' walks, but we can't veto our 'C' walks as about half of the membership now consists of 'C' walkers. Problem is the difficulty of finding suitable 'C' walks in mountainous areas.

A good example of the lack of even just 'B' walkers was when we had to cancel our recent Snowdon walk because there were not enough members to even half fill our small coach! I was disappointed, as were others who were looking forward to it, as it had not been done by us for several years.

Not too many years ago, I remember Snowdon as being the most popular club walk, often with cars transporting the overflow of members who couldn't get on our full coach!

Snowdon can be tackled by most 'C' walkers, given the time. Richard, a General Section 'C' walker (now in his mid 80's) proved it this year when that the peak was no problem for him to climb, along with friends. He proudly showed us the photographs to prove it. And no, he didn't go up in the train!

As pointed out at the AGM, there is a shortage of 'C' leaders, and many 'C' walks are often sprung onto leaders at the last minute. If we decided to go by the rule and do a recce for each 'C' walk, then many 'C' walks would have to be cancelled on the day, as a recce had not been done.

The walk may be new to the leader, who has to frequently stop to check the map, and change the route, especially when paths have been since closed or overgrown. This situation is no good for some impatient 'C' walkers, nor for the leader, who sometimes gets open criticism from certain members.

Recruitment posters

We need more leaders to come forward, but we also need to recruit more genuine fell walkers who don't complain every time we climb up a hill. It is usually worth it just for the view.

Let us face the facts - a person would not join a golf club if they couldn't play golf; so why do people join a walking club that now does most of the walks in mountainous areas, but that person can hardly tackle a simple hill climb?

A poster is given on the back page for everyone to photocopy and put up in their local fitness centre, or wherever. Thanks.

A Walker

RECENT HOLIDAY TALES

It is YOUR holiday tales that we want to see. I have recently had a holiday, but you have had many of my Polish holiday stories. Now it is up to the rest of you to write in this, YOUR newsletter. Some of you must have had a recent holiday worth writing about. I do know one rambling couple who just came back from Bulgaria and had experienced really saturating rain there. Well, I am sure they don't want to write about that experience, but surely someone must have had a more memorable holiday. Watch this space

Red Autumn leaves

The vivid red autumn colour of the Japanese Maple tree leaves in this country is an awesome sight.

But it may not last for many more years, according to our climate change forecasters, for the Japanese Maple trees are apparently dying in large numbers. Why? It's because of our predicted warmer summers!

What warmer summers? We ask.

The following verse was spotted by Dot Murphy



Autumn

Autumn slipped in unawares; the sun so bright deceived me. I felt the summer stay, Lingered in warm fields and bridle paths.

But there was revolution on every side:

The multitudinous leaves, a sunset host turned yellow in little lanes, hung like fire on peach and pear; all were up in arms,

Had overgrown summer and cast their fruit to mother earth. They knew from the deep say,

From the nip in the wind; they knew and made a last shout across Sussex,

A fanfare of beauty, dying like holy martyrs in the blood of duty . . .

A Carthusian monk

Let us stay with our Carthusian poet. He has much to say to us; he speaks through his silence. For his silent ways have sharpened his senses; he sees and feels the reality behind everyday things. His silence permits him to conjure words most skilfully; then share his vision with me.

Each Monday, a straggling file of monks emerges from the great doors of St Hugh's Charterhouse at Parkminster in Sussex.

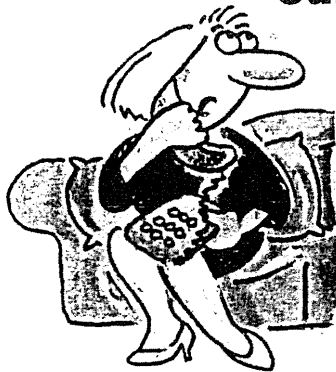
They are dressed in white habits and clomp, two by two in their walking boots.

Here come the monks: dogs bark but the bystanders greet them. It is as if they know they are blessed by this brief passing.

Two by two; then the companies change, so that over the day each monk walks with a different companion. Their conversation is pleasant, never urgent, but gentle, never strained; and as they pass through fields, over stiles, along riverbanks, a heron rises, floating above their heads. There is time aplenty for our poet to drink in the scene.

He sees these vivid autumn colours like banners carried into battle.

Could there be aristocrats on our new committee?



I need to talk briefly about being on the committee dear, as I am putting the oven on in half an hour!

Do you embrace royalty?

Well, three of our new regal lady committee members, namely Lesley Armstrong: our new *vice*-chairman, and Vanessa Tilston: our new Secretary, plus Joan Fearon, have all visited the Prince of Wales on at least several occasions; also the Princess Royal, the Duke of York, and many other pubs!

Joking apart; I feel sure that those three can bring a touch

of the Royle family into the committee and could well put forward new ideas and suggestions; and thus put a new spark into the club.

Thanks are due especially to Mike Riley, retiring chairman, and wife Helen who are stepping down from the committee after numerous years of faithful service to the club.

Gordon Hodson, our new chairman, is multi-talented including doing a bit of boxing in his time, so don't pick an argument with Gordon! I am sure he will have a firm grip on the reigns! Maybe he also has more serene photographic interests, as Gordon prefers pubs recommended by Camera!

Myself presiding, along with Chris Dobbin, will also keep an eye on Will Harris making sure he doesn't stash the club's money in an Icelandic Bank.

Dave N.



All members are welcome

Our meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month. Actually **any** of our club members are allowed to attend the first hour of our meetings as we have our Rambling and Social sub-committee meeting from roughly 8 to 9pm. Will Harris chairs the rambling bit and we delegate walk leaders for the next few weeks and discuss anything regarding rambling matters. There is also the social side when we discuss such things as the Christmas dance, a forthcoming bring and buy sale in February, etc.

Then from about 9pm we adjourn (to the bar) for a minute or two, then start our **General Committee Meeting** when only those elected members attend.

The meeting place is Christ The King Social Club, Childwall, not far from the back of the Rocket, near Queens Drive (Cars enter from the back streets).

Editorial Oct 10 2009



I occasionally dig out old stuff from past newsletters such as the highly amusing Christmas cake recipe below, sent in by a male Scottish member several years ago (he enjoyed a wee dram!). Just read it first - it's guaranteed to get your chuckle muscles working!

Happily, just in the last few days, I have had three different contributions from Dot, Vanessa and Brenda. That leaves just about 150 more of you to contribute an article for the newsletter every now and again.

To be candid, I estimate that about 25 per cent of the current membership (over the past few years) has actually contributed at least something. But once you have broken the ice with your contribution, why not continue with the flow of more of your stories, or even put in that amusing or corny rambler's joke, etc?

Material for our "Christmas" edition (out in late November) should be given or sent to me to 7 Abbots Way, Billinge, Wigan WN5 7SB or emailed to davenews@hotmail.com - If by email then try to send it as an attachment, as Vanessa did; then I can maybe embellish it a little and edit it into columns, etc.

Thanks. *Dave N.* 😊

"Spiritual" Christmas Cake

A tried and trusted/tested recipe

Ingredients:

2 lbs of Flour	1 tsp Salt	2 cups of Dried Fruit
4 large Eggs	8 oz of Nuts	Juice of one Lemon
8 oz of Butter	1 cup of Water	1 cup of Brown Sugar

1 litre bottle of Malt Whisky

Method: Sample the whisky to check the quality. Take a large bowl - check the whisky again to ensure it is of the highest quality. Pour out a level cup, and drink. Repeat.

Find a table with the ingredients on it. Turn on the electric mixer and beat the butter in a large fluffy bowl. Add sugar, and beat again. Make sure the whisky is okay. Cry another tup.

Turn off the mixer. Break the bowl, add to the eggs and chuck in the dried fruit. Mix on the turner. If fried fruit gets stuck in the beaters, pry it loose with a drawscraper.

Sample the whisky to check the consistency. Sift two cups of salt, or flour, or something - who cares! Sift the lemon juice and strain nuts. Check the whisky. Add a teaspoon of salt or whatever you can find. Grease the oven. Turn the cake tin on to 175 deg C and don't forget to beat off the turner. Stand in the centre of the oven.

Don't forget to throw any spare birds out of the window to the nuts. Now finish off the whisky, then bo to ged. I wish you a Good Christmas and a Merry Night. Enjoy!

Esldale weekend

4 - 6 September

Fred, Jan, Joan and myself left Liverpool at 2.0pm on the Friday and headed up the M6. I had never driven to that western part of the Lakes before and Will had mentioned a few village names to guide me on my way. Admittedly, he omitted the very steep hill around a hairpin bend, heading for the Ulpha Fells – it was suddenly down to first gear and up a 40% incline! Very taxing but we did it – even with cyclists speeding down the opposite way – they must have been mad!!!

We found the hostel along the winding country lanes and met with the rest of the group who had arrived earlier in the day. Check-in wasn't till 5.0pm, and with the girls sharing two dormitories and the boys sharing another, everything should have gone like clock-work? Well, not us! Some of the girls had put their belongings in the boys' room, some of the boys bags were in the girls' room! It took a lot of patience of the warden to give us all our keys – even then swapping went on as some girls were in the wrong room! But we all had a bunk to make at the end of it all.

The hostel was very pleasant, located in the middle of nowhere with the nearest pub being the Woolpack a good 5 minutes walk away. We ordered our choice of evening meals at the hostel, which was being cooked as we unpacked, and tried to get our quilts (supplied) into the navy blue quilt cover!

The evening meals and breakfast at the hostel were fantastic, all locally sourced and fresh. We weren't allowed to drink our own alcohol in the hostel but could partake in their reasonably priced local ales or wines. Some did buy a bottle of wine which seemed to be never ending and miraculously changed bottle without the staff noticing – magicians in the Club now, eh? I'm not naming anyone but it was very funny! Off to the Woolpack afterwards for a few swift halves!

The pub had its own micro-brewery attached and there was a mountain of real ales to chose from which the licensees kindly got tasting glasses out and let us try them all. My tippie was Final Frontier at 5.9%; only 2 or 3 were advisable! The wobbly walk back to the hostel was in pitch black so torches were a must. We all piled back into our relevant rooms and attempted to settle down for the night. No such luck!

Just as our room was quietening down for sleep – the dreaded noise of snoring came through the walls!!! On and on it went! We surmised the boys' room must back onto our room.

Up we got for breakfast at 8.0 and by 10.15 we were all ready for our walks. During breakfast we tried to ascertain who was the snorer. None of them of course! Carol Kellet lead the 4-person A walk, consisting of myself, Margaret Scotland and Dave Newns. All started well as we headed in the direction of Birker Fell. The path soon divided, taking us off course a tad, and leaving us to tackle a jungle of tall ferns. Dave was ushered to the front, as with his height it was easier for him to "part the sea of ferns!"

After a while we made it through, but then the next obstacle was the bogs! It was really sodden underfoot and suddenly very cold. Margaret would rather have sunk without trace into the bog than to carry on! But we finally got to the top bog – Birker Fell!



"This is Birker Fell, eh! I think we are the birks!"

Then, after lunch at 2pm, the walk was abandoned; so we then followed Dave's compass along a fell-top river which ended abruptly at the top of a huge waterfall. Lo and behold, in the centre of our awesome vista was the hostel, seemingly about a mile below us; and then along a good path encircling the high fells until we made a fairly rapid descent back.

Carol and I decided, whilst we were still wet, to continue on to see Hardknot Fort near the top of the Pass. What a climb it was! But well worth it.

The evening meal was at 7.0, which gave us time to get back to the hostel and have a nice hot bath. Again off to the Woolpack for more Final Frontier. Soon we were accompanied by Terry singing – not sure if it was the ale or what? But he soon had us all joining in, including Fred who was also in good voice.

A wobbly return once more in the pitch black to the hostel and to our relevant rooms. Dot, Ruth, Joan and I sat up having a drink and putting the world straight when again we heard the snoring!

Bravened by alcohol, we decided to investigate who exactly was the culprit. We snuck towards the boys room and low and behold it was unlocked! In we went, even putting the light on to see! Not a movement! All the boys fast asleep and totally unaware there were three scantily-clad women in their room – their loss! We found the snorer, and we confronted him at breakfast! Fred Delaney! (*see below*).

We had to leave the hostel by 11am, so after breakfast several cars made their way over Birker Fell (*sounds familiar!*) to meet half an hour later at Broughton. A few hung around for a late elevenses while the other ten of us made our way along an old railway track. Dot had given me a map and let me get on with it! I did get a tad lost to begin, but I soon found my confidence to lead roughly, a 3-mile walk.

Nothing serious but very muddy. Gordon called me: Mud Queen!

Back at Broughton, we all said our goodbyes after a nice café late, and left for home. I drove back along the A6 with 4 passengers – map-reader was by Fred – taking in all of the sites. An enjoyable weekend by everyone, I think.

👍 VT

We can't leave poor Fred to take all the blame. I slept in the bunk above him and he reckons that I snored louder than him!

After their midnight trek on that second night I believe that the ladies got shot in the foot, as all the snoring then came from their room!

Only the Czech Republic is now left to sign the Lisbon Treaty

News that Poland has now signed the Lisbon Treaty has prompted me to put this map on the page.

Quite a number of people are a bit confused between the names of the countries of Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Well, simply by studying this map it should clear the confusion for those people. As many of you do understand, the two countries were once called Czechoslovakia but, a little bit like Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic, the country got split into two.

It is also of interest for anyone who has been, or are thinking of going to Zakopane for a holiday. You can find Zakopane right at the bottom of Poland, actually jutting out into Slovakia.

The Tatra Mountains are right along that horseshoe border (about 25 miles long). Scale of the map is about three-quarters of one inch to 100 miles. Poland is about 400 miles deep and about 450 miles wide. Roughly the same size as Germany or even Spain.

On our recent 7-person holiday three of us had a trip to Slovakia and took three cable cars up to one of their highest peaks at a dizzy 8,650 feet. It was an awe-inspiring experience. There was no snow – it has been a particularly hot summer there this year.

On the rocky almost knife-edge summit (complete with restaurant) we were very surprised to see a small bird hopping around – about the size of a big sparrow but with coloured markings. It was looking for something to eat around the sparse bit of vegetation that was growing on the rocks, even at that height.



NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to all new members who have joined our ranks recently.

Cookery corner

Brenda Horan has sent in a book with lots of scrumptious recipes to try out. Here is just one dish. More to follow in our future newsletters.

Sultana Flapjacks

6 oz (175g) Margarine
4½ oz (125g) Clear Honey
1lb (450g) Porridge Oats
2½ oz (60g) Sultanas

1. Pre-heat the oven to 180 deg C (350 deg F), gas mark 4.
2. Heat margarine and honey in a saucepan until melted. Stir in the sultanas and oats, mixing thoroughly.
3. Turn into a greased 7 x 11 inch baking tray, spreading evenly. Bake for 20 minutes.
4. When cool, cut into twelve bars. Remove from tray and store in an airtight container.

Flattered by the law!

After midnight recently, I was suddenly stopped by an unmarked Police car in Warrington. Then the usual: "Can you step out of the car, sir?"

I quickly said: "I've not been drinking, officer."

He politely said: "That's okay, sir. It's just that I thought you were driving like a young driver."

I was thinking to myself: *Could you please put that down in writing for me?*

He said that I had cut a corner off on a roundabout.

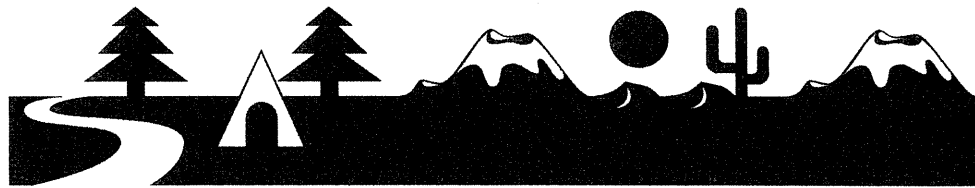
Well, it was quiet and no other traffic was around, apart from him, 20 yards behind me. Anyway, I didn't realise that roundabouts actually had corners!

He then surprisingly enquired: "I presume you are on your way home to Billinge, are you?"

"That's right," I said. *That man, and his dashboard computer, could get a job as a clairvoyant!*

He then got back into his car, saying: "Just checking that you were, indeed, the owner of the car. And please drive more carefully on your way home, sir!"

Why not enjoy a dog's way of life?



**A dog loves to go for walkies – and so do we
– to Lake District's mountains and valleys,
Snowdonia, the Yorkshire Dales, etc**

We run a coach on several Sundays of each month with a choice of grades, from rambling to strenuous fell walks – ages 18 to 80-plus

We are reputed to be more laid back than some rambling clubs, and we are proud of the fact

So why not give us a try? We are called the **Liverpool Catholic Ramblers Association**
– but all denominations are welcome

**Give Will a buzz on 0151-486 6541
or text Dave on 0797 753 7276**

Our walks programme is on liverpoolcatholicramblers.com

PS: You have to be reasonably fit, even for our easier grade of walks which often includes at least some hill climbing