

# **Liverpool Catholic Ramblers' Association**

# **NEWSLETTER**

**AGM edition 2008**

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Seventh Series

**SEPTEMBER**



## **Annual Subscriptions are now due**

£5 for single membership, £6 for married couples. Contact Will Harris or send cheque made out to LCRA to Will at 57 Higher Road, Halewood, L26 1TA, or see the person taking bookings on the coach.

## Editor's briefs

What signifies the end of the summer to you? Is it the Canada Geese flying overhead in search of warmer climes, or is it something much more obvious like the appearance of your new winter rambling programme? These should be printed in early October but you will only get one if you have renewed your annual rambling subscription, now due.



Thanks to all who contributed in any way to this edition. I have actually kept a few non-dated items for the October edition due to a lack of space.

There is always a need for more of you to write rambling reports, articles, etc for this newsletter. Just give them to me or send electronically to [davenews@hotmail.com](mailto:davenews@hotmail.com) or to my address: 7 Abbots Way, Billinge, Wigan WN5 7SB. Thanks.

*Dave News*

## NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to all new members who have joined our ranks recently and we hope that you enjoy many happy years with us.

## Christmas Buffet Dance

A date for your diary: It is easy to remember – the last Saturday before Christmas (December 20th). More details in the next newsletter about tickets, etc.

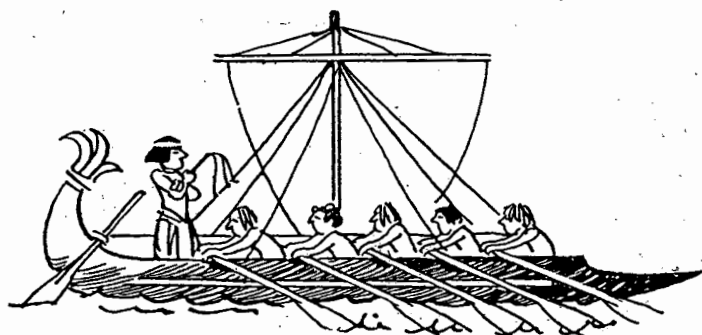
## Married rambler shared holiday hotel room with his secretary

A CLUB'S newsletter (not ours) had several stories from their members about the many varied holidays they had taken in the summer.

Now if an outsider picked up any of our club's newsletters this summer they could easily think that only two of our members had a holiday this year and everyone else did not have one, for there are no reports of holidays, apart from two of us walking in the Tatra Mountains (Zakopane) in June.


I have been using my bus pass a lot recently and the main topic of conversation overheard has been about holidays – either going away or just been – to North America or simply to North Wales.

Surely some of you would like to share your experiences of amusing incidents or something unusual that you did on your holiday(s). Well you still have time to do this in our newsletter this October. Short narratives like this one which contains about 300 words possibly attracts more readers. If you get carried away and write more than one page (900 words) people lose interest.



I sent the mother-in-law on an activity cruise!

As I have said in the past, your photographs don't come out very well because of the way this newsletter is photocopied at a very high speed. Consequently, the excessive black toner clogs up the fine detail of photographs, but I can add hand-drawn artwork in the form of cartoons, etc.

 Now then, the reason for our self employed married catholic member and his lady secretary sleeping together . . . er, well they were actually both married and to each other! And so, that bit of news fell flat; but the deceptive magnetic headline must have got you all reading this article! *Editor*

## Holidays next year

As many of you now know, if you want to get the benefit of economy flights you have to book early. At least 15 of us have now booked for a February skiing holiday. This is at Zakopane again where the cost of skiing is quite reasonable (or even much cheaper if we had booked for March instead of the middle of school holidays week).

NOTICE is hereby given that the Eighty-second

## Annual General Meeting

of the Liverpool Catholic Ramblers' Association  
will take place on **Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008**  
at the **Ship & Mitre Public House** (upstairs), Dale St, 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 Chairman's Report.
- 5 To elect Officers and Committee for the forthcoming year.
- 6 To elect Auditors for the forthcoming year.
- 7 Any other business.

*Note:* Members wishing to submit resolutions of any kind must ensure that they are in the possession of the Secretary, not later than seven days prior to the above meeting.

**Tom Reilly** (Secretary)

*Secretary's address:* 1 Stanmore Road, Wavertree, L15 9ER

Note: This is your club and it is in your own interest to attend this meeting at 8.30pm prompt. The meeting doesn't last long; and then we continue with our social evening and drinks from the bar.

The usual Cheese and Wine Nights are held on the first Thursday of every month at the Ship and Mitre (upstairs) with our own musicians entertaining, plus KEN'S FREE QUIZ with fantastic prizes.



**Would like to get more involved in keeping our club on an even keel?**

**Then why not get your name down on the club's nomination list in circulation?**

Each September our Committee step down, but they, along with proposed new Committee members, can put their names down on the nomination list for re-election.

If more than one name is submitted for an Officer's post there will be a ballot, or, in the event of an excessive number of General Committee members submitted, there will be a paper ballot.

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## The club's Annual Mass

will be held on Sunday Sept 28th in the Metropolitan Cathedral Crypt at 11.30am

*Note:* This is the fortieth anniversary year of the tragic plane crash when we lost eight of our young lady members (on August 9th 1968). So as well as remembering all our past members, we are also especially dedicating this Mass to those poor ladies who died in the prime of their life. Many friends and relatives of the young ladies will be present at the Mass.

# A Brief History of Calendars

**IF you like sleeping you may wish that you were back in the year 1752.**

On Wednesday 2nd September 1752, the subjects of Britain and all its colonies went to sleep as usual but woke up on Thursday 14th September.

This narcoleptic

event was related to the introduction of our current calendar and to appreciate why this change was introduced it helps to understand the history of the calendar.

Calendars in various guises have been used for thousands of years, but our current incarnation, the Gregorian calendar, has only been used in Britain for just over 250 years.

Early calendars were based on the lunar cycle of  $29\frac{1}{2}$  days but, as we now know that the Earth moves around the sun, a lunar cycle caused the 'year' to become completely out of sync with the seasons.

The Gregorian calendar evolved from a lunar-based ancient Roman calendar which had just ten months per year. Each month had either 30 or 31 days and the new year started in March. Our month names originate from this calendar; for example, October used to be the eighth month – Oct meaning eight, as in octopus. This old calendar contained 304 days, which meant a substantial 61 days were adrift in the calculations.

Eventually, one of the Roman Kings attempted to sort out this problem and around 713BC he added the months of January and February and brought the number of days in the calendar year to 355. Approximately every two years, an extra month, called Mercedonius, was added in an attempt to keep the calendar year aligned with the seasonal year. This helped a little but was still not perfect, and, as you can imagine, rather confusing for the general public.

Accurate calendars are based on a solar year, the length of time the earth completes an orbit of the sun. The earth actually takes



*Detail of the tomb of Pope Gregory XIII celebrating the introduction of the Gregorian Calendar.*

365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds to orbit the sun. This means the calendar year and the solar year still don't match by almost a quarter of a day. Over time, this discrepancy adds up, and after four years, the calendar lags behind the solar

calendar by a day. Over a century the difference would be 25 days, so unless a device was created to correct this, January could have ended up in the summer.

Although the Egyptians were the first to recognise the need for a leap year, the Romans refined the theory when Julius Caesar stepped in and invented the Julian calendar which came into use in 45BC. This calendar was fairly accurate, with a leap year every four years, but now it 'overshot' the solar year by just over eleven minutes. This meant that after 128 years, the Julian calendar had an extra day.

In 1582 Pope Gregory XIII corrected the discrepancies in the Julian calendar by adding ten more days scattered across various months and finally sorted out the leap year problem by using some complicated mathematics. This predicament was solved by ensuring that a century year is only a leap year if it is exactly divisible by 400. So 1700 and 1800 were not leap years, but 1600 and 2000 were. The Gregorian calendar year differs from the solar year by just 26 seconds which is ideal as it only adds up to a one day difference every 3,323 years.

However, although the Gregorian calendar fixed a lot of the problems it was viewed as a Catholic invention, so Protestant countries like Britain refused to use it for nearly two centuries after its implementation and continued to operate on the Julian calendar. Britain and its colonies lagged behind most of mainland Europe by several days until the 18<sup>th</sup> century when the British Calendar Act was finally implemented and millions of British subjects 'lost twelve days'.

## 'Quaking' on the Sedbergh 'C' walk

WHAT a day! The July weather was looking like it didn't know what to do. We started our walk with the first footpath as you come off the M6. With a few choice words about the miserable weather we hardy 'C' walkers grasped the moment.

What the Hell! We were all glad to be out and about and ready to fight the elements. But luckily enough we had no need to as the sun surprisingly showed its face while we were heading through farmland, making our way to the Dales Way path.

En route we went past an area called Fox's pulpit, named after a famous preacher, George Fox, who started the Quaker movement – born 1624, died 1690.

He preached to over a thousand people in Sedbergh. He was a bit of a globetrotter, travelling to Jamaica and Maryland in North America and also met annually in Amsterdam with friends from the Netherlands and Germany.

Fox was described by his peers as a man who brought hope in a dark time. He was valiant in asserting the truth, bold in defending it and patient in suffering for it. He was also graceful in countenance, manly in personage, courteous in conversation, powerful in preaching and civil at all times.

Anyway, enough about that; I am rambling away from the walk. We were now having our lunch in a field full of sheep, chosen by Pat and Cathy and agreed by all. The view across the field was to the Howgills – they looked superb with the sun shining across the whole range of those fells. The field sloped down and as we got to the bottom there was a disused railway track. We crossed over it where the River Lune ran through and here we picked up the Dales Way, nearly losing a few members as we came through a leafy coppice. Never mind. Better luck next time.

On we marched with Margaret (her second walk with us) enjoying the openness of the area. We came to a beck which ran into the river Lune. It was really flowing. Huh huh! were the sounds that we were about to get our feet really wet. But then, from nowhere, came this wooden plank, thrown across the back with the exclamation: "Walk the plank, ladies."

It was Knight Nick to the rescue. Now at this point I have to mention that we were short of leaders, and the walk I led was put to me by Will Harris, our rambling chairman and treasurer. Now I hadn't got time to do a recce beforehand, so he gave me a print out of a working farm en route where you could get a cup of tea and a biscuit on visiting. On the map the footpath led across the river where it also said: Ford. Yes, Will, you should have supplied us with skin diving equipment as even our valiant knight Nick could not find a plank big enough to cross this one. Never mind we eventually finished off at the next watering hole . . . the pub!

Cheers all, D.M.



## Persil washes whiter . . .



*. . . but it also used to ruin your hands!*

GEORGE FOX and the Quaker Movement in Dot's report on this page urged me to enlighten you about an enterprising family of Warrington Quakers (Joseph Crosfield and Sons) who were responsible for formulating Persil about a hundred years ago.

They built a huge soap factory in Warrington on the Banks of the River Mersey near the Bank Quay railway station (London to Scotland line). The factory was eventually taken over by Lever Brothers about 35 years ago.

My dad plus two of his brothers, and one of his sisters, worked for them for many years. But my dad wasn't a Quaker of course – his mother was a Fitzpatrick; an Irish Catholic!

When I was a schoolboy he brought home Persil 'spillage' which would have got thrown away. But this came to a halt when my mother stopped using Persil because the chemicals had a bad reaction on her hands, and she started using other soap and detergents instead! Not a very good advert for Persil – but I had better add that Persil changed their formula since then.

*Editor*

## **SENIORS' SECTION**

### **Willaston 8/6/08 Leader Tony Gilmore**

**With our systems primed by the best the Nag's Head could offer – tea, coffee, cider (regrettably without Rosie), the walk started.**

Just a few steps (strides are now, regrettably, a distant memory!) brought us to Willaston's former railway station – a time warp, thanks to Thatcher's hatchet man Beeching. One thing I didn't see in the ticket office was a red flag – maybe technology had replaced it with the signal lamp, as laying alongside it was a note 'Harry' had left, asking for a new lamp – obviously new technology was not working as well or as long as the old.

With an audience of a couple of young children and their parents, one irascible member had to do his party piece, that of imitation of a train whistle, causing consternation to both parents and children!

Once the walk started in earnest it was mostly across meadows, which entailed Indian style walking, and after a while a marching band started practising, which put a swing into our step until we stopped for lunch, taken beneath a large ancient oak, which gave us all the shade we needed.

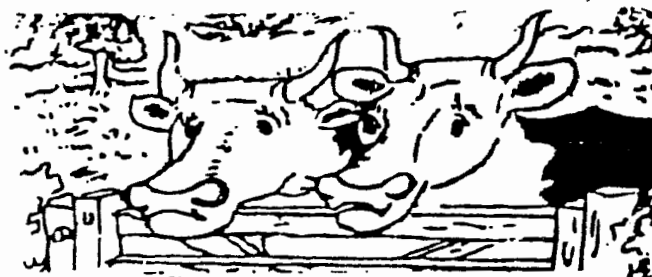
After lunch we entered a huge field. Around its perimeter was an oval to train racehorses, but unfortunately there were no racehorses in training, which would surely have whetted our appetite for our visit to Haydock Park.

Once in a while something stops you in your tracks, be it a sunrise, sunset or an everyday view, taken for granted but suddenly transformed into a moment of magic. In this instance it was just an ordinary pond, ringed by reeds, the type of pond seen on nearly every ramble. But what had transformed this one was a display of almost pyrotechnic brilliance – damsel flies darting across the water, hovering above or landing on the reeds – nature's own LED show.

Approaching the A540 was the furthest reaches of the walk, then back once more

onto a path, this one flanked by acres of rapeseed – a welcome change from nettles.

Entering an Equestrian Centre, and then turning into a lane, our progress was interrupted by locked metal gates spanning the lane. We ascertained that it was milking time for approximately 150 cows passing us on their way to the milking parlour (we didn't count them – the farmer told us!).



"Daisy, do you ever wonder why these groups of humans wander off their nice tarmac paths to walk along muddy footpaths through our fields?"

Some passed us with indifference, some with curiosity. Immediately the gates were opened, we were urged out of the way as 'jaywalkers' by a group of 'mountain blighters' pursuing their right to roam – lanes, footpaths, bridleways and pedestrian only areas!

Shortly before our stop we came upon a memorial garden to a local man, a member of the Bahai Faith, which had a plaque alongside it inscribed: 'a conversation with God.' It had been received by email from an unknown source at the Bahai Centre in Jerusalem asking for favours, most of which were refused in the hope of making the supplicant a better person.

Another mile or so saw us back at the Nag's Head anticipating tea, coffee and cider (alas, once more without Rosie). A meal served by very pleasant staff saw us all fit for the journey home.

Many thanks to Tony for giving us a day of marvellous weather, views and magic moments.

G.