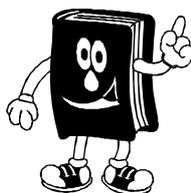


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Muddy Meanderings

Footpath Opening - Report by David Sutton



Late last year Ruth Somerville from Central Office contacted Bob Hunt our Footpath Secretary - could we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Definitive Map legislation? (which legally enshrined claimed footpaths as rights of way on the 16th December 1949). The problem in Birmingham was that, although there are about fifty footpaths on the DMS, none of them were there because of Ramblers activity. However, Bob mentioned one in Yardley which is due to go on the map shortly and *is* one of Birmingham Group's claims (one of about 100 we have pending).

The 19th of December was decided a suitable date and advertising the event took place via our e-newsletter and on the Sunday coach rambles as well as on the National Ramblers website. Kate Ashbrook, chair of Ramblers Campaigns and Marketing had agreed to cut the ribbon to officially celebrate the claim of our Group's first ancient path to be added to the DMS.

The path in question runs from School Lane to Queens Road in Old Yardley Village, and like

(Continued on page 3)

Social Scene 2010

From our Social Secretary, Derek Garfield

Our first SOCIAL EVENT of the year was a presentation by Area Chairman Michael Bird entitled 'A Short History of Rambling'. This was of particular interest because, as you will all be aware, this year is the 75th anniversary of the formation of The Ramblers' Association not to mention the 30th year of our Group.

Michael did the subject proud with his usual slick Powerpoint presentation and it was gratifying that he attracted one of our largest ever audiences to this sort of Social. Or was it the thought of Janet Gibbs' fine buffet or Sylvia Hickman's legendary apple pie that drew in the punters? Anyway, it was a very successful evening.

As I write this, our GROUP ANNUAL DINNER (5th March) has not actually happened but it will have as you read this! We returned to The Eaton Hotel on the Hagley Rd and I hope all who went enjoyed it.



Our first WALK DAY OUT of the year (on Saturday 17th April), takes us to The Severn Valley Railway, a treat for all railway buffs (and, come on, who isn't!). We will obviously be riding on a vintage train and visiting the recently opened Engine House SVR Visitor Centre which overlooks Highley

Station - one of the most charming views one could hope to see. This is an opportunity to visit a national treasure right on our own doorstep. Well, I think so!

Our ANNUAL DAY OUT is on Saturday 3rd July so put this date in your diary. Our destination has not yet been decided but I am confident it will be somewhere you will find interesting.

And don't forget, I am always keen to hear of any social events you think would be of interest to the Group.

Socially yours
Derek Garfield



(Continued from page 1)

many of Birmingham's ancient path claims it's a short one, a couple of hundred yards at most, bordered by trees on one side and a playing field on the other.

In the event, a cold, frosty morning, about twenty ramblers turned up for the ribbon cutting, though Kate Ashbrook was unable to attend because of being snowed in at home! Our Area Chairman Michael Bird made a short speech and then the ribbon was cut by Michael, with Bob Hunt and Anne Shaw of Birmingham City Council in attendance. The event was extensively photographed by a freelance snapper and subsequently a very decent report by Jo Ind appeared in *The Birmingham Post* for their



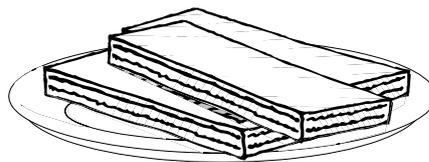
Photo: David Sutton

23-29 December issue.

The group of ramblers ceremonially walked and re-walked the path, under precise instructions from the photographer to gather, bunch up, walk, smile and otherwise look as natural as possible while he snapped away! And we all enjoyed a bit of winter sunlight and fun for a couple of hours! ■

A secret recipe?

An unusual request. Some years ago, when I was a member of the Sutton Hill Walking group, one of the ladies produced a recipe for a healthy flapjack which would also be sustaining when walking. I did try it but later lost it. I wonder if a short note in our magazine.



might produce something from our members, from which we all may benefit! - *Ken Waugh*. Does anyone remember this recipe? If so, contact the editor!! ■

Saying “Thank you” - a little job for you!

At the A.G.M. in November 2009, you elected a new Committee to serve you for the next year.

Each Committee member has taken on an area of responsibility; some are Officers of the Ramblers, organising the running of the Group, monitoring footpath matters, implementing Ramblers' charitable aims and publicising events. Others arrange the walks programmes, a range of social activities and holidays.

Amongst our Group membership, there are many other people, without whose valuable contribution the Group would not be able to function as well as it does.

You will already be aware of some of them. For instance, the large team of walk leaders for Sundays, Wednesdays, holidays & Ridges & Tops, the Map Library co-ordinator and the two ladies who take charge of the catering for our social events.

Some volunteers, like the Task Force, work behind the scenes, putting in stiles, kissing gates & sign posts. While every quarter the “Stuffers” work away during our Committee meeting, putting Footnotes, Programmes & Walker into envelopes addressed to each of you.

Whenever we ask for volunteers to help us for a specific task, we can always rely on your support. I think our Group is very lucky to have such dedicated members, who will always rise to the occasion.

I would like to recognise the important role that all these volunteers play in making our Group so special, by creating an Annual Award for the “**Rambler of the Year**” to be presented at the A.G.M. in November 2010.

This is your chance to reward a fellow member for their efforts.

Please could you play your part by nominating the volunteer, who you think deserves the award this year?

Give your nominations in writing, to a Committee member before October, so that the winner can be announced in November.

Thank you
Libby Hunt, Chairman

Walk Leaders Needed

As every programme details: “To keep a full programme going, we need more volunteers to lead walks at all levels”. If you are one of our leaders, you are already doing your bit, for which we are very grateful. Without you, the Group would not be so successful.

Whether or not you have led before, and are thinking of offering us a walk, we urge you to do so. Please let us know, in person, by post, phone, or email. Addresses and numbers are in the programme.

If you want some ideas, we can help. There are various sources of walks available, many already having been mapped out by previous leaders. Here are some of the sources available – just ask Roger Gibbs if you would like to borrow any files to peruse.

1. Adam Wood is keeping a record of Sunday walks as a computer file. It shows map, area, date, and leaders, and in many cases a copy of the route is held on file. The history goes back to 2005.
2. Bernard Horton has filed maps for 57 walks as saved by Fred Willits from 1987 to 2004 covering the whole of our Sunday walk area.
3. Thanks to Libby, we have a file of over 100 walks published in the Birmingham Post, circa 1993, filed by starting point.
4. We also have from Libby an unclassified file of 50 walks from the Birmingham Post, circa 1994.
5. “Country Walking” walks, filed by map and grid reference for the whole country, from 1994 to 2008.

Three websites to try:

<http://www.theaa.com/travel/>

<http://www.walking-routes.co.uk/>

http://www.walkingbritain.co.uk/walks/select_walk2.php

If you don't feel confident enough to lead, we can help there too. If you are ready for a leadership and navigation course, we recommend Derek Jones' “Routes and Rambles” courses held regularly free of charge. If you prefer to learn “on the job”, there are several existing leaders who would show you the ropes. Perhaps you could offer to help a leader by offering transport, which is always helpful for planning a linear walk; or offer to backmark using the route map and ask for help if needed. You may feel confident enough then to lead a walk yourself! There will be plenty of

advice, and we always keep a watchful eye on new leaders and offer assistance if required. ■

Group history

Roger Gibbs scours the archives.

The 1990's

30. 1990 - Task Force set up under Arthur Foden, mainly tackling the newly created "North Worcestershire Path".

31. 1995 - Coach fare £4.

32. Chairmen

1991-1994 Margaret Norcott

1994-1997 Horace Marsh

1997-2000 Philip Barnes

33. Long Distance Paths

North Worcestershire Path
1990-91

Peakland Way – 1990 – 91

West Midland Way 1991 – 94

Ridgeway – 1992

Glyndwr's Way – 1994 – 95

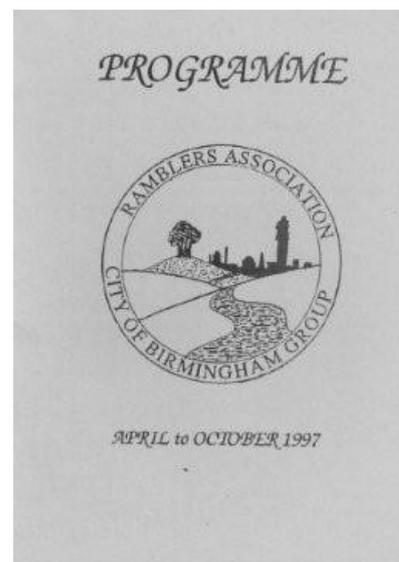
Centenary Way – 1995

Marches Way 1996 - 1998

Jurassic Way – 1996 -1998

Heart of England Way - 1998
(- 2000)

Birmingham Coast to Coast - 1999
(- 2002)



Programme cover 1997

Welsh Coast to Coast – "A+"
challenge walk - 1999 (- 2000)

34. Group Holidays

1990 – Loch Awe

1992 – Glencoe

1994 - Arran

1996 - Ireland

1998 - Alnmouth ■

The Birmingham Greenway

We first walked this north-south route (devised by our then Footpath Secretary, Fred Willits) in 1990 to celebrate the City of Birmingham Group's 10th Anniversary. As it was 20 years ago and led, of course, by the author himself, we walked the whole 23 miles in one go!

Now this year is our 30th Anniversary and we propose to walk our own special Birmingham route once again. We are encouraging as many people as possible to partake of The Greenway's delights by splitting it up into 3 shorter sections of approximately 8 miles each, and leading them on 3 consecutive Saturdays in August (7th, 14th & 21st). Each section will start and finish at a railway station.

These will be our Public Walks

for August, rather longer than our usual 5 miles but, as we are never far from public transport, it will be possible to leave early (should you be able to drag yourself away from the fascinating details of the route!)

Starting at the most northerly point of the Metropolitan area The Birmingham Greenway traverses Sutton Park and proceeds via green areas, canals, parks, lakes and riversides, with the minimum of tarmac walking, to reach Cofton Park at the most southerly point.

Details of leaders and meeting points and times and routes, etc, will be published in the June issue of *Footnotes* but this is to warn you – don't to go on holiday in August!

Co-ordinator: Pat Holmes

THE MIDLAND AREA OF THE RAMBLERS' ASSOCIATION 1930-1987 BY MICHAEL BIRD

Published in celebration of the Ramblers 75th anniversary in 2010, this 83-page chapbook is a detailed history of the area and includes many photographs, plus historical documents and maps. In the Foreword Kate Ashbrook says: "The story of the Ramblers is scattered across countless local archives, spare bedrooms and people's heads. Michael Bird has done a valuable job in pulling together the history of Midland Area."

This publication is available as a downloadable pdf file from:

www.warwickshireramblers.org.uk

Competition winners

Last issue we had two competitions, a puzzle and photo caption competition. First out of the hat and, and the winner of the caption was **Christine**

“Don’t worry your worship, I’ve got a spare pair of trousers in my rucksack!”



Wood, with the caption opposite (Roger speaking to the Lord Mayor). Winner of the puzzle was **Bernard Horton**. The solution to the Men with Hats puzzle was: “C”, calling out a black hat. He knows this because D can see C & B, with white & black, but can’t know his own hat colour. A & B can’t see anyone. C knows he has a black hat because if D saw that B & C were wearing white, then he would have answered. As D is silent, C knows he has a black hat as he can see B has a white hat. Birmingham Group embroidered badges go to the two winners! ■

Sign up for the e-newsletter...

The Birmingham Group now have an occasional email Newsletter. News and reminders about forthcoming social events, walk changes and information, and other items of interest to group members direct to your inbox. To sign-up, simply email the editor:
david.sutton986@btinternet.com

Contribute to Footnotes:

Your walking experiences, general articles associated with walking and the countryside are welcome: David Sutton, 194 Station Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7TE. (Phone: 0121 444 6188).
Email at: david.sutton986@btinternet.com.

Please Note: Any discounts shown in this publication are wholly at the discretion of the retailer and are not an entitlement to Ramblers members.

