

Important advice for walks participants. If the weather is at all doubtful, eg snow, floods, storms, fog, please ring the leader to check that the walk is still on, or to find out if there is a change of start place or time. Likewise, if bus or train travel is involved, please check that the timetable has not changed. Doing so could avoid the possibility of your day being spoiled.

Area AGM Saturday 23rd March. Carlton in Coverdale Village Hall.

10.00am Morning walk options of 4 miles or 6 miles. Foresters Arms serves light lunches from 12.30, or you can eat your own lunch in the village hall from 12 noon.

2.00pm Start of AGM, with guest speaker David Butterworth, Yorkshire Dales National Park Officer. Come along for an interesting talk, to hear about Area activities, and enjoy a social occasion with other members. Tea served.

Durham County Council's Big Spring Clean 18th March – 12th May

Advance notice of this year's big spring clean has been given. Members of the group have carried out successful clearance of rubbish for the last two years on the footpath starting near Barnard Castle School. The source of most of the rubbish seems to be the Sports Centre, and I have been pushing for a proactive approach from DCC, especially as it's their customers using the centre. If anyone is interested in helping with a similar day this year, please let Jo Bird know, preferably by email jobird9@tiscali.co.uk or 01833 637756. Also please give suggestions of any other places that could benefit from litter clearance, and of course from related publicity. Once I know who is interested in helping we can decide on suitable days and times that don't clash with the walks programme.

Annual Lunch - Saturday April 13th

Last year the committee decided that due to our uncertain winter weather conditions, we wouldn't have a Xmas Lunch. Instead it was decided to have an Annual Lunch. I know that some members were disappointed at there being no Xmas Lunch. We can only give this a try and the committee can take feedback from the members.

(Maybe for Xmas 2013 someone else would like to organise a Xmas Lunch)?

Details for Saturday April 13th: Lunch to be held at the Farmhouse Kitchen, (Low Way Farm), Holwick in Teesdale.

Main course: Roast Silverside of Beef with Yorkshire Pudding - Roast Loin of Pork with Apple Sauce - Oven Baked Salmon with Parsley Sauce - Peppers stuffed with Cous Cous and melted Stilton

Sweet: Rhubarb Crumble and Custard - Baileys Cheesecake - Meringue with Banana and Toffee Sauce.

Cost of the meal is £13.50 for 2 courses and tea/coffee.

There will be a £3 corkage charge for each bottle of wine taken. Soft drinks will be available for purchase. The meal is booked for 1pm after a morning walk. (Details of the walk on the programme). Anyone just wishing to come for the meal will be welcome.

Names with choice of meal to Joan by April 6th. Tel. 01833 637825. Email.

ijmar8@tiscali.co.uk

Coach trip - Saturday June 8th

A coach trip has been arranged to the Northumberland Coast. The coach will leave Charles Dickens Lodge at 8.30am for Craster. The **A walk** will start from there and walk north to Seahouses using the Northumberland coastal path via Dunstanburgh Castle, Low Newton and Beadnell, a distance of approx 11 miles and will be lead by John. The **B walk** will be from Embleton and will also use the coastal path. A distance of approx 8.5 miles and will be lead by Joan and Ian. There is also the possibility of walking the 3 miles from Beadnell, but we have no leader. Anyone just wishing to go to Seahouses for the day and maybe have a boat trip out to the Farne Islands would be most welcome.

Names to Maureen with £5 deposit. Tel:01833 637601. **No deposit no name on the list.** Cost of coach fare approx £10 per person, but dependent on numbers.

The Missing Acorn

In May 2009, the group took part in the 40th Anniversary of the creation of the Cleveland Way. The whole of the route was walked in stretches on the same day. Our group did the 10 miles from Clay Bank to Kildale. Frances co-ordinated this with the National Parks Authority who were organising it. Each group taking part was presented with a nice carved wooden acorn, the symbol for national trails. As we don't have any premises it was agreed that the members would give it a home for a while and then it would be passed on. This seemed to work at first and then it seemed to go into a "black hole". I did ask on a walk some time ago and various people remembered passing it on to someone else, but the trail went cold. It isn't that I want the acorn back for myself, it would just be nice to know that it's somewhere safe. Therefore, would ask you all who took part to put on your thinking caps or look in cupboards that haven't been opened for a while and see if it is lurking somewhere. Thanks. Joan Martin.

Photos for the Scrapbook

As a lot of you know, I have been doing scrap books for Barnard Castle Ramblers for nearly 40 years. They contain photos of many members sadly no longer with us, newspaper reports and other titbits relevant to the group: in other words, a history of Barnard Castle Ramblers. There is even a copy of the very first AGM minutes!! For over 20 years there was mainly me taking photos. Now that so many people have digital cameras, there are lots of people taking photos. A lot of you send them to Maggie for the website which is a great modern medium. However, when technology has moved on yet again, people will still be able to sit and look at the scrapbooks. **Despite several appeals, I still find it hard to understand why people can't copy me on to the email so that I can print out some of the photos. After all, you only need to copy ijmar8@tiscali.co.uk onto the email and I will get it.**

Walk Reports

As with the photos, I have been writing reports for the Teesdale Mercury for a long time. These are widely read and give us lots of publicity. For years I tried to encourage walk leaders to write their own reports with limited success. It's amazing that now they are going on the website, more leaders are writing reports. That's wonderful. Everyone has their own way of writing, so it adds more variety. The message is – don't forget to send the reports to the Mercury as well as the website. editor@teesdalemercury.co.uk All these reports go in the scrapbooks along with the photos. Joan Martin.

Memorial walk for Ken Ashworth

On Sunday June 23rd, Ian and I are doing a memorial walk for Ken. We intend doing the same 5 mile walk we did last year. We are doing it on the Sunday because some of Enid's family hope to do the walk with us. We intend having our picnic lunch again at Stanwick Church at approx 12 noon when Enid and others will join us. At the end of the walk we will go into the Stanwick Arms in Aldbrough St. John for a drink of tea/coffee or something stronger and think of Ken. Joan Martin.

Heart of Teesdale Landscape Partnership

At last we can expect some action on promised improvements to Teesdale paths, such as the old railway track from Cotherstone to Lartington, and poor surfaces in Flatts Wood where some paths have slippery sideways slopes, and others have boggy sections. The appointment of a new member of staff is expected to be made in March by DCC's Rights of Way section, to be funded by Heart of Teesdale, and to work on only Heart of Teesdale project related work.

Proposed Tees suspension bridge

This proposal is becoming something of a saga, now with the intention for the route to the bridge on the town side to follow the Teesdale Way instead of the bank top path. This would require steps up the steep bank, or a considerable length of zig-zag path to reach the bank top. Either option would require much landscaping work, and would suburbanise a rural unspoilt part of the river bank. Details of this proposal are to be included in the forthcoming planning application, so there will be an opportunity to comment, and possibly to object. It has also been revealed that there is to be a Visitor Centre to include new public toilets, which would certainly be needed. But whether this will include gift shop and cafe is not yet known, nor is the proposed location, which is worrying. A new building would also need planning permission, but enquiries have not yet revealed whether this would be included in the bridge application, or separately. The group committee will need to keep an eye on the proposals.

Coastal Access

Proposals for the stretch of new coastal access, from just south of Hartlepool to Sunderland, has now been published for comment. The Ramblers' rep in Northumberland (Nuala Wright) who has been leading on this with Natural England, tells me that NE's proposal is very close to the Ramblers' preference, except for one small stretch. The proposed route follows a road into Sunderland, but the Ramblers' preferred route is to follow the old railway line as far as the Port of Sunderland, and from there to go across the Town Moor and along the riverside to Wearmouth bridge. A look at the map confirms that the Ramblers' route is far preferable and I'll be supporting this for the group.

Jo Bird, Access Officer

Get Walking Week

It has just been announced that Get Walking Week this year is to run from Saturday 4th to Saturday 11 May, and this year there is the suggestion to liaise with Walking for Health, a scheme which does what it says on the tin. Last year Walking for Health was taken over jointly by Macmillan Cancer and the Ramblers (their national offices are in the same building in London, occupied solely by charities!). The scheme was originally run by Natural England, and has done invaluable work in helping people get well and keep well, and enjoy walking. We have put on a short walk jointly with Barnard Castle Walking for Health organisers, and they are running a short walk to which our members are specifically invited. Details of these are in the programme.

Do you receive Ramblers E-news and special emails about the Ramblers' campaigns?

If not, click on <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/newsletter-sign-up.aspx> to sign up. It's as simple as that! You could be surprised by all the things going on. You can also add your name to special campaigns, recent ones being saving our woodlands and the management of national trails, all for the benefit of walkers.

Walking Festival for Teesdale and the North Pennines

The Friends of the North Pennines AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) are proceeding well with plans for a walking festival, mentioned at our AGM in November. It will have the title and theme "Inspired by the North Pennines", and will run from Sat 28th Sept - Sun 6th Oct 2013. It specifically promotes the route of "A Pennine Journey" through the AONB territory in Cumbria, Northumberland and Durham. The route has been divided into sections, all to be walked on 28th Sept 2013 and leaders have already been identified. "A Pennine Journey: the story of a long walk in 1938" is a book by the great Alfred Wainwright, giving his account of a 211 mile walk, not published until 1986. It consists entirely of text with only one small location map, quite unlike his later books, and is now out of print. The book on which "Inspired by the North Pennines" is based is called "A Pennine Journey: from Settle to Hadrian's Wall in Wainwright's Footsteps" and is a version edited by David Pitt, a member of the festival committee. The 247 mile route is described in detail, taking a slightly different route from Wainwright's, avoiding roads now busy with traffic. There are maps of the entire route in Wainwright style by Ron Scholes, and illustrations in Wainwright style, by Colin Bywater. The book is a collaborative work by members of the Wainwright Society, and is available from booksellers.

It is hoped that the entire route of "A Pennine Journey", including the sections outside the AONB territory, will also be walked on Saturday 28th September, the 75th anniversary of the start of Wainwright's 1938 walk, with other organisations taking on the sections outside the AONB. There will be an event at Mickleton on the evening of 28th, with other walks and events during the rest of the week, and they will reflect the 'inspired' theme, by linking to art, poetry and anything that the North Pennines inspires.

On the committee, representing Teesdale Action Partnership's Tourism group is Jo Bird, and John Bird is representing Barnard Castle Ramblers. John will be contacting members shortly about leading walks or offering slide shows. Anyone wishing to help please contact John on 01833 – 650034, jflcbird@aol.com

Dalegarth: 22nd – 26th April 2013-01-29

Anyone interested in joining this group, or wanting further information, please contact Judith on 01642 – 700062 or j.baker574@btinternet.com Judith is also looking for anyone willing to present a slideshow during the summer.

Your Newsletter is now compiled by Jo Bird, who will welcome contributions for the next one by 26th May. Please email: jobird9@tiscali.co.uk or ring: 01833 637756

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