



GLOUCESTERSHIRE AREA NEWS

February 2013

The Ramblers' Association is a registered charity (England and Wales no 1093577, Scotland no. SC039799) and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England & Wales (no. 4458492). Registered office 2nd floor, Camelford House, 87 - 90 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TW

Editor: This edition is typed and layout designed by Angela Marks 01452 616886.

Area News is issued three times a year in February, June and October. Items of news and suggestions or other features are always welcome.

Deadline dates: 6th May, 6th September, 6th January



A NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The coming year is promising to be quite exciting for both Ramblers and Gloucestershire Area. Our AGM in December proved very successful with our guest speaker, Benedict Southworth, Ramblers CEO, giving an inspirational speech on his activities since taking up his post and the future of our organisation. He touched on the challenges facing us in the coming year with the alterations to the structure of National Trails and further reductions in PROW activities and emphasised the importance of Ramblers as the leading walking charity in the country. The meeting also saw most Council vacancies filled for the coming year. A big thankyou to those who came forward as well as to the retiring officers for their work over the last year.

An item of more interest to our affiliated clubs is the change of heart over the increase in subscriptions, which they pay. The proposal made towards the end of last year was to increase from £45 to £95. Quite naturally there were strong objections to these proposals from the clubs and indeed Gloucestershire Area also appealed on their behalf. As a result the increase was reduced, the fee now being £55, an indication that Ramblers, as an organisation, is prepared to listen to its members.

High on the agenda for the coming year are the proposals for the Tony Drake memorial event. Details are to be found elsewhere in the Area News but I would just like to say how important an event this will be for both Gloucestershire Area and Ramblers as a whole and ask you to give it as much support as you possibly can.

In February we have our annual meeting with the PROW Department of the County Council and I am sure that they will be seeking our help even more vigorously as they suffer further cutbacks. I have already floated the idea of a central footpath maintenance operation for the county similar to the Avon arrangements but that would require a really enthusiastic person to organise it. Failing this it is up to the individual groups to do what they can. I know some already are heavily involved and are able to carry out quite a bit of work but even if you are not able to do much you can still help by reporting problems to PROW. There is a facility on their web site for making reports and even if they cannot respond immediately the report remains on file.



Richard Davis, Mavis Rear and Benedict Southworth at the AGM

GLOUCESTERSHIRE AREA MID-WEEK WALKS

Map numbers: E = Explorer. OL = Outdoor Leisure, LR = Landranger. Sorry, no dogs!

-
- Wed 6 Mar 10:00 10m Haresfield Val 01452 419827**
Park along roadside in Haresfield Village (E179/LR162) SO 814102 Walk Harescombe, Edge, Pitchcombe. Picnic.
- Wed 13 Mar 10:00 10m Eastnor & Bromsberrow Janet & Geoff 01531 650349 or 07933 737891 (walk morning)**
Car park on north side of A438 at summit of hill at Hollybush (E190/LR150) SO 759369 Walk Midsummer Hill. Eastnor Deer Park, Little Woolpits. Bromsberrow, Chase End Hill, Raggedstone Hill. Fairly strenuous ascent of 3 hills but they could be avoided by self-guided alternatives! Picnic
- Wed 20 Mar 10:00 11m Miserden Catherine 01452 615382**
Start at Carpenters Arms. Park on roadside near pub (E179/LR163) SO 937088 Walk Honeycombe farm, Brimpsfield, Caudle Green. Picnic
- Weds 27 Mar 10:00 10m Sevenhampton/Belas Knap Roy 01242 245488 or 07766 413176 (walk morning)**
Park Sevenhampton Church (**not** village only road) (OL45/LR163) SO 033217 Walk Charlton Abbots, Waterhatch, Newmeadow Farm, Belas Knap, Breakheart Plantation, Cleeve Common, Puckham Scrubs. Picnic.
- Wed 3 April 10:00 10m Minchinhampton Andy 01453 885498**
Minchinhampton Reservoir CP (E168/LR162) SO 855013 Walk Eastcombe, Bowbridge, Rodborough Common. Picnic.
- Tues 9 April 10:00 9m Charfield Diana 01242 578777 or 07528 697023 (walk morning)**
Park at Charfield village hall CP - south side of B4058 close to railway bridge (E167/LR172) ST 723923 Walk Kingswood, Mounteney's Farm, Wickwar, Churchend. Undulating countryside. Picnic.
- Wed 17 April 10:00 11m Ross on Wye Guy 01242 251412 or 079688 797186 (walk morning)**
Free long stay CP Wilton Road (E189/OL14LR162) SO 529239 This is stages 1 & 2 of the original Ross Round Walk. Easy going - am, Wye Valley Walk to Hole in the Wall, Wobage farm, Upton Bishop, pm, Hartleton Water, Bollitree Castle, Weston-under-Penyard and return by **bus** to Ross. Pub lunch/drink/ or picnic.
- Wed 24 April 10:00 10m Forest of Dean Des 01242 245666 or 07939 615749 (walk morning)**
Tidenham Case CP (signposted for Offa's Dyke) on B4228 Chepstow to Coleford Road (OL14/LR162) ST 558992 Walk Beeche's Farm, Hewelsfield, Ridley Bottom. Based on Walk 14 FoD Group Book 'Historic Dean'. Picnic.
- Wed 1 May 10:00 10m Winchcombe David 07787 710 187**
Back Lane CP, Winchcombe (OL45/LR163) SP 023284 Walk over Langley Hill with it's long ranging views over the Vale of Evesham to the Malverns - and then on to Stanley Pontlarge, Far Stanley, Dixton and Prescott. Picnic.
- Wed 8 May 10:00 12m Redbrook Derek T 01242 678655 Or 07710 339297 (walk morning)**
Car Park (Pay and Display £3) on A466 at Redbrook (OL14/LR162) SO 536100 Hilly walk (approx. 750m ascent) to Bigsweir via Newland and Offa's Dyke, and return via the Argoed. Picnic.
- Wed 15 May 10:00 10m Ozleworth Susanne 01453 757212**
Newark Park NT CP (E167/LR162) ST 782932 A walk in and around the Ozleworth Valley. Picnic.
- Wed 22 May 10:00 10m Haresfield Janet & Geoff 01531 650349 or 07933 737891 (walk morning)**
Shortwood NT CP (E179/LR162) SO 833085 Tony Drake Memorial Walk. Walk Cotswold Way via Haresfield Beacon and Edgeworth to Painswick to join other groups for a picnic lunch and memorial event at Hambutts field. Return walk via Pitchcombe.
- Wed 29 May 10:00 11m Cowley Roy 01242 245488 or 07766 413176 (walk morning)**
Park in Seven Springs layby opposite PH (E179/LR163) SO 966170 Walk Hartley Wood, Salterley Grange, South Hill, Coldwell Bottom, Cowley, Cowley Wood, Cockleford, Upper Coberley, Coberley. Picnic.
- Wed 5 June 10:00 10m Minchinhampton Martin 01249 720809**
Minchinhampton Reservoir CP (E168/LR162) SO 857013 Walk Besbury Common, Upper Hyde, Cherington Pond, Avening, Slips Lane, Box. Picnic.
- Wed 12 June 10:00 11m Goytre Wharf Anne O 01242 269236**
Goytre Wharf CP (OL13/LR161) SO 313062 Walk to the Crash Bomber Site and then over to the Goose & Cuckoo. Pub or picnic.
- Tues 18 June 10:00 9m Colesbourne Diana 01242 578777 or 07528 697023 (walk morning)**
Park at Colesbourne -Hilcot road off A435 on track by barn (E179/LR163) SO 994142 Walk Colesbourne, Penhill, Elkstone, Lower Cockleford, Pinswell. Picnic.
- Wed 26 June 10:00 10m Woolhope Susanne 01453 757212**
Woolhope Village Hall CP (E189/LR149) SO 610360 Walk Haugh Wood, Backbury Hill, Mordiford, Wye Valley Walk. Picnic.
- Offers of walks for the next programme (July to October 2013) are requested as soon as possible.** New leaders are particularly welcome! Please contact our walks co-ordinator Susanne Zamze (Tel: 01453 757212) Email: susannezamze@talktalk.net Walks details required by 30th April 2013, please.
-

AS A MEMBER YOU CAN WALK WITH ANY RAMBLERS' GROUP - GRWalks lists all the walks from the seven geographical Gloucestershire groups, the Gloucestershire Walking Group (for 20s, 30s. & 40s) and the Area Walks in convenient date order. See the Area website at www.gloucestershireramblers.org.uk

NO COMPUTER? Send SAE(s) (9x6", C5 size) to editor Mike Garner (GR Walks) Southcot, The Headlands, Stroud, GL5 5PS

Tony Drake Memorial Event

Wednesday 22 May 2013

Hambutts Field, Edge Road, Painswick

Grid Ref: Landranger 162 [SO 863097](#) at 1.00 pm for approximately one hour

Members and friends are invited to come and join together to commemorate the life and work of Tony Drake, MBE (1923-2012) who for 60 years worked for the Ramblers' Association in the furtherance of opening up the footpath network in Gloucestershire and elsewhere in Great Britain. A fitting memorial will be unveiled at a site adjacent to the Cotswold Way. This will be a great gathering of Ramblers and others who knew and respected him so do come along to share this very special event in the Ramblers history in Gloucestershire.

Gloucestershire Area and several Groups are organising walks to Hambutts Field from various starting points – see your Group programme for details, or visit the Area website

www.gloucestershirearearamblers.org.uk or
www.southcotswoldramblers.org.uk/tonydrake

For non-walkers, Painswick is served by the Stroud/Gloucester and Stroud/Cheltenham Stagecoach buses. Car parking is not available at the site but cars can be parked at public car in the village 300 yards south of the church on the A46 and the Ramblers Car Park – off Gloucester Road near the Rococo Gardens. Please car share if possible. Public toilets are located in the public car park and also near the church.

If you are intending coming to the event but will not be taking part in one of the walks could you please let me know soon by email to mavis.rear@tesco.net tel 01242-674470 or Richard Davis riana@riana.plus.com tel 01453-762373.

Mavis Rear

GROUP ACTIVITY REPORTS

South Cotswold Group

The Group Autumn Holiday was in the Isle of Wight at the Hambleton Hotel, an old favourite, and attracted 18 members. A thoroughly good time was had by all with some excellent food and lovely walks put on by Bill the proprietor of the hotel and owner of the walking company.

During the 4 months to the end of February the Group had a programme of 45 walks with attendance varying between 18 and over 40. On the 22nd December our Chairman, Richard Davis, led a 9.5 mile figure of 8 walk around Rodborough returning for soup, mulled wine and mince pies at Rodborough Tabernacle. Over 30 walkers attended, some dressed in festive style with Christmas hats and tinsel very popular.

The Monday morning 4 mile leisurely walks remain popular attracting some very regular walkers while Mike and Richard

are continuing to lead walks along the Gloucestershire Way.

Our Footpath Committee continue with their excellent work, a new secretary, Bob Frewin, having been appointed at the AGM.

Bernard Smith



Cirencester Group

During this very wet winter period we had to cancel 2 walks in the Bibury area due to flooded paths, diversions were made to others and all in all it was quite a difficult period, as most groups in the area will know.

However the weather did not deter members attending a Skittles night on 30th November at the Elliott Arms in South Cerney. The evening was very successful, with a lovely buffet laid on by the pub and Steve's usual tricky quizzes kept us entertained between bowls.



The Christmas Lunch Walk

Cotswold Outdoor in South Cerney held an Open Evening Christmas Shopping Night for Ramblers on 20th November and treated us royally with Mince Pies and Mulled Wine. Our group also managed to win 1st and 3rd prizes in the free raffle!

Thirty members enjoyed a 6 mile Christmas walk around the Cirencester area, followed by lunch at The Vaults in Cirencester with another 10 non walkers joining the party for lunch. Members got into the spirit of the season by wearing Santa hats, Jingle Bells etc. and drew many amused looks from the busy Christmas shoppers .

Two committee members have organised a Mapping Workshop for January. This will include Maps and symbols, Grid references, Use of compass, Measuring distances and a Practical Outdoor session. It is hoped that this will help new members to plan walks and be a refresher for established leaders.

We have an exciting programme of walks for the spring and summer, including 2 walks in Wales, 1 taking in the Long Mynd in Shropshire and a few in Wiltshire. We have had a number of younger members join this past year and they will bring a fresh approach to the group.

Pat Beckley, Group Secretary

Mid Glos Group.

Thanks to the weather the last quarter was something of a wash-out. Two walks cancelled and one with a very low attendance; the leader and two others! Mud and surface water made the prospect of rambling something of a challenge. Here's hoping for better conditions in the New Year. One major success was the joint Christmas Dinner, the Mid Glos. Group and the Cotswold Club joined forces to host a third Christmas 'Bash' at the Brickhampton Court Golf Complex

Des Smyth, Chairman

The Walking Partnership
Supported by Ramblers Worldwide Holidays

Direct financial support for your local walking group

Travel with Ramblers Worldwide Holidays and support your walking group!
Receive group funding every time you holiday through the Walking Partnership initiative.

Call us or go online for more information
01707 386804 www.thewalkingpartnership.org.uk

ABTA V5094 Atol protected 0990 AITO

Ramblers
Worldwide Holidays

Forest of Dean Group

Our work on Upper Forge Bridge.

The Forest of Dean Ramblers have undertaken a project to provide a new footbridge as replacement for an ancient stone bridge over the River Lyd that has recently been closed by Lydney Parks Estates due to it's poor and swiftly deteriorating condition.

The bridge site is located at Upper Forge on the B4238 between Lydney and Whitecroft, (Map ref OL14-SO 624048), and was originally used as access to the Upper Forge now also in ruins both being circa 1650. Access over the bridge by foot has been used for eons and as such we used it in one of the walks published in our guide book to the Forest, 'Exploring Historic Dean'. It is from the proceeds of this publication that we are funding this project.

The actual path has never been a Public Right of Way, or even permissive, and is on private land, owned by Lydney Parks Estate, so before we would undertake any replacement expenditure we needed the path to be dedicated as a PROW. The dedication process has taken just over twelve months and we now have official agreement from Lydney Parks Estate, The Dean Forest Railway onto whose land the path emerges, and Gloucestershire Highways, PROW Office.

We have full consent also from the Gloucestershire Flood Resilience and Land Drainage Dept and are anticipating Planning Permission from the Forest of Dean District Council for the bridge construction plans to be complete by **11 January**. This also involved an Ecological Survey by the Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. Lydney Town Council has already registered it's approval with the FOD DC for our construction plans.

As not only a bridge is to be installed but also a stairway down from the road and a walkway across a boggy area to the site of the new footbridge, there is a comprehensive list of material requirements and the majority of these will be supplied by GCC. Transport of some of the heavier pieces, i.e. main beams etc. will be provided by Dean Forest Railway. We are also providing three 'kissing gates' for footpaths where they cross the DFR railway line.

The FOD Ramblers have undertaken not only to fund this project but also to be the main labour source for its construction. So anyone wishing to join us and get their hands dirty please feel free to come along.

June Burden

Gloucestershire Walking Group

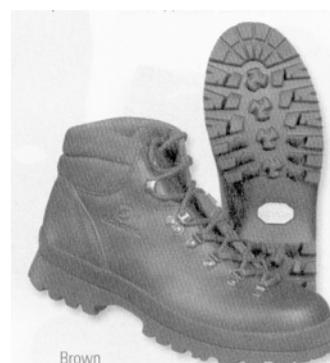
The end of 2012 has again been a busy time for the Gloucestershire Walking Group. We have had our usual full programme of walks, and in a nod to the season we included some themed events (fireworks in November and mulled wine and mince pies in December) - thanks as always to all those members who have volunteered to lead walks.

We have been walking most Sundays, but in 2013 we are considering varying our schedule to different days if it proves convenient for members.

We continue to be active socially, with events including a curry night, cinema visits, a comedy night and a pub quiz. This year Andy stepped down as social secretary, but not before organising another great Christmas meal for us - thanks to Andy for all his work, and welcome on board to Siobhan who steps into his social shoes. We do have a couple of other vacancies on the committee too, and are still looking for members to get involved.

Further afield, we had trips to Studland in Dorset (in October, organised and catered splendidly by Martina and Ian) and Coombe Martin in Devon for New Year (organised by Catherine and Paul). Topping it all off, the GWG were pleased to host the Area AGM in December. We're looking forward to another good year in 2013 - and hopefully some better weather than last year!

Geoffery Cochran



Gloucester Group

We continue to receive good support for our 2x weekly walking programme and, as always, numbers have been exceptional on the mid week walks in the New Year. We have begun to have some success with advertising our programme in the Gloucester Citizen and attempting to attract people who may be new to the great outdoors and to group walking by concentrating on shorter distances with a tempting opportunity of a pub lunch at the end. And of course longer term we are planning several social events during this year when we will be celebrating our 30th Anniversary.

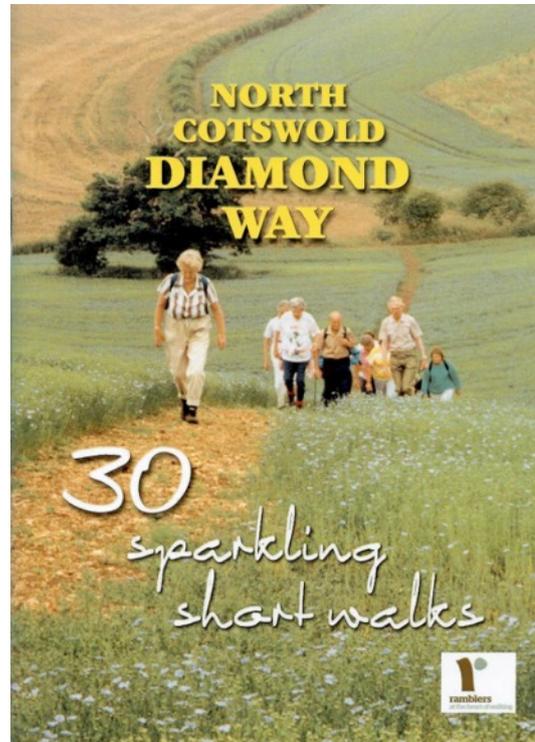
David Sanderson

North Cotswold Group

In 2012 the Group published a new edition of the North Cotswold Diamond Way as 30 Sparkling Walks. This version divides the 60-mile Diamond Way route into 30 bite-sized circular walks enabling tourists and seasoned walkers to stay in one location and tackle this classic long distance footpath in sections or just enjoy a few walks in the glorious Cotswolds. Proceeds from the sales of these guidebooks will be used to maintain and improve local footpaths.

Our walks programme continued in the same format of 2 walks per month with a high proportion of "Figures of 8" to allow maximum flexibility. Attendance at walks in 2012 has reduced slightly perhaps partly due to recent wet weather. The winter programme has focussed on "local" walks mainly in our own region, but sometimes it is worth venturing "abroad" e.g. January walk in Blenheim Park –

an excellent choice in waterlogged conditions. Our last walk of 2012 took us a circular walk around Blockley. A warm glass of mulled wine and festive cheer awaited 16 members at Blockley.



This year our linear walk (with minibus support) will take us from Buckingham to Burford on the Palladian Way. We are looking forward to the mix of architecture that this relatively new long-distance path provides. Starting at The Old Gaol in Buckingham and passing Stowe Landscape Gardens before going through Brackley and heading south to Blenheim Park. The route then heads west into the familiar Windrush valley, past the ruined hall in Minster Lovell and Swinbrook with the Mitford family connection, before arriving at Burford.

Sue Salmon

