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

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

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## Tony Drake Memorial Event – 22 May 2013

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A handsome ironwork sculpture memorial to Tony Drake MBE was unveiled by RA President Kate Ashbrook on the Cotswold Way at Hambutts Field, Painswick in the presence of some 150 Gloucestershire members on Wednesday 22 May 2013.

Commemorative walks were led by Geoff Smithdale (Area mid week), John Street (Gloucester), Mike Garner (South Cots), Sheila Constable (Forest of Dean) and Brian Payne (Cleeve). Mid Glos and Cirencester teamed up with Forest. Brian Reader, former RA Chairman and it is believed Benedict Southworth our Chief Executive both joined one of the walks.

Chairman Richard Davis welcomed the walkers and representatives from organisations with which Tony had worked with, or even worked against at times. These included Glos CC ProW, the former Countryside Commission, later Natural England, YHA Wales, Cotswold Wardens and Cotswold Way wardens, CPRE, Cotswold AONB Conservation Board. Particularly welcome were Dave Morris RA Director Scotland, Angela Charlton RA Director Wales, Beverley Penney OBE former Director RA Wales, Pete Bland better known to many members as co-ordinator of Ramblers-Net. Ron Williams, Welsh Council Executive Committee and a key organiser for the forthcoming Tony Drake memorial event to be held on the Cambrian Way on 22

June was a welcome guest as was Geoffrey Williams, former Chairman of Ramblers Wales/Cymru who is keen to see a firm future for Tony's creation the Cambrian Way. James Blockley Cotswold Way National Trail officer whose team had installed the Memorial was very much in evidence.

Members, after an enjoyable picnic then settled down to hear RA Chief Executive Benedict Southworth speak about the value of Tony's work and how important it is for us, today's members to value Tony's legacy of a mapped and recorded comprehensive network of footpaths in our beautiful county. Benedict, only two weeks in post, attended Tony's funeral in March 2012 and notably is the first RA CEO never to actually meet Tony but he, as he told us, proudly wears Tony's RA badge, that is the one before the rucsac, the 'two hills and grass' which Tony referred to as 'the nuclear winter', and the present 'stick and rock'.

Kate Ashbrook, RA President and Director of the Open Spaces Society, former owners of Hambutts Field, gave an inspiring address before unveiling the memorial which had been cleverly veiled by our resourceful President Frank Wragg. Chilly winds and grey skies magically vanished and the sun broke through at that moment. Tony, never given to displays of emotion, clearly approved.

Janet Davis, Senior Policy Officer, Footpaths who had known Tony for 28 years delivered a spellbinding address. Janet, though based in Central Office, knew Tony remarkably well as became clear as she recalled his campaigns, his tenacity and yes that path at Maisemore which featured on so many footpath committee agendas. Her address is available to read and print off on the News page of the Area Website.

Mark Richard the well known author of Cotswold Way and other walks books and a long standing Drake family friend over two generations added his own sparkle and vivacity to the event, perhaps wisely advocating caution over the future of Tony's Cambrian Way preferring to preserve it as a place of adventure and challenge, somewhere for solace and for the soul.

Mavis Rear gave thanks to everyone who had helped to make this event: her sub-committee colleagues, Trustees of Hambutts Field Trust, Painswick parish council, the Cotswold Wardens, Glos CC and neighbours who had allowed those with limited mobility to park on their private drives.

Chairman Richard Davis closed events by thanking everyone for coming and Mavis Rear for organising the event.



*Ramblers who attended the Tony Drake memorial Event*

An unscheduled finale was a heartfelt thank you from Peter Drake, Tony's cousin who expressed sincere thanks from Tony's family to us for organising this event in spectacularly beautiful surroundings and for providing a lasting memorial to Tony to be shared by everyone who passes it on his creation, The Cotswold Way.

MR 28 May 2013



*Stretching up to unveil the memorial*

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## A NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Since our last Area News the 2013 General Council has been held and a full report should be published on the Volunteer Website in the near future. Jill Byrne and I attended as your delegates. The motions to General Council did not seem to produce quite as much thought provoking discussion as in previous Councils, which I have attended, but never the less some quite important decisions were taken. Among those passed were motions requiring the Board to take steps to improve our internet ranking, to protect rights of way in future housing developments, to introduce National Volunteer Development Programme, to review the Governance Structure and to provide guidance on wind turbine farms. Elections to the Board of Trustees resulted in the three younger candidates being elected hopefully bringing plenty of fresh new ideas into discussions.

Although of one of our major objectives over the last three years has been to maintain membership levels, they are still falling, something which is becoming very worrying. New members are coming in slowly but

unfortunately their numbers are being exceeded by resignations. While we can expect resignations in times of recession we must still do everything we can to stem the number of members leaving and attract new members. Bernard has been working very hard to increase our publicity profile and I continue to produce 'The Gloucestershire Rambler' in an effort to let all of our members what we are doing, but we must still do everything we can in our groups to publicise our activities.

Footpaths still represent a major challenge with further cutbacks coming through from Public Rights of Way. Changes to the Cotswold Way management and outsourcing of footpath works are two of the latest proposals. We will have to be prepared monitor the effects of these changes and do what we can to ensure that our network of footpaths is adequately maintained.

***Richard Davis – Area Chairman***

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### **Don't run, but walk**

Brisk walking reduces the risk of heart disease more effectively than running when the energy expenditure of both activities is balanced out, a study has found. Researchers compared data from two studies of 33,060 runners and 15,045 walkers. For the same amount of energy used, walkers experienced greater health benefits than runners. The effects on participants, who were aged 18 to 80, were observed over a period of six years,

The Guardian Weekly 19.04.13

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE AREA MID-WEEK WALKS

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

2013

- Wed 3 July 10:00 12m Chipping Campden to Broadway Jane 01242 235214 or 07790 412223 (walk morning)**  
Dover's Hill CP (OL45/LR151) SP 136397 Walk Dover's Hill, Chipping Campden, Broad Campden, Broadway, Saintbury. Long views on a fine day. Picnic.
- Wed 10 July 10:00 10m Winchcombe Arnold 01242 603576 or 07789 317291 (walk morning)**  
Back Lane CP (Pay & Display £1) (OL45/LR163) SP 023284 Walk Sudeley, Waterhatch, Roel Gate, Lynes Barn, Little Farmcote, Dunn's Hill. Picnic.
- Wed 17 July 10:00 10.5m Forest of Dean Janet & Geoff 01531 650349 or 07933 737891 (walk morning)**  
Roadside parking near St Briavels Church and Castle (Youth Hostel). Meet at church gate. (OL14/LR162) SO 558045 Hilly walk via Wyegate Hill, Slade Bottom (travertine dams), Rodmore Grove, Clanna Lakes, Woolaston Common and Hewelsfield Church. Picnic. Partly based on Walk 6 in Forest of Dean book "Exploring Historic Dean"
- Wed 24 July 10:00 10m Cleeve Hill Hazel 01242 254105 or 07884 094365 (walk morning)**  
Quarry CP near Golf Club House on Cleeve Hill (E179/LR163) SO 988272 Walk Cleeve Hill, Cotswold Way, Winchcombe Way, Noverton, Prestbury, Southam, Prestbury Park, Kayte Farm, Haymes, Ben's Tump, Cleeve Hill. Picnic.
- Wed 31 July 10:00 12m Brimpsfield Roy 01242 245488 or 07766 413176 (walk morning)**  
Barrow Wake CP (E179/LR163) SO 931153 Walk Witcombe Wood, Climperwell Farm, Caudle Green, Brimpsfield Park, Gloucester Beeches, Cowley Wood, Cowley, Shab Hill. Picnic.
- Wed 7 Aug 10:00 10m Wales Jude 02920 254201**  
Meet on Old Road (by now closed Lancaster Arms) off the West side of the A465 in Pandy.(OL13/LR161) SO 333218 Walk Hatterrall Hill, Cwmyoy, Offa's Dyke. Picnic.
- Wed 14 Aug 10:00 10m Temple Guiting Susanne 01453 757212 or 07768 403530 (walk morning)**  
Temple Guiting Village Hall CP. Parking by permission.(OL45/LR163) SP 089279 Walk Pinnock, Farmcote, Wood Stanway, Taddington, Cutsdean. Picnic
- Wed 21 Aug 10:00 10.5m Stroud Catherine 01452 615382**  
Stroud Leisure Centre (E179/LR162) SO 844057 WAS WAY Circular . A surprisingly hilly walk around the boundaries of Stroud. Lovely views. Picnic.
- Wed 28 Aug 10:00 11m Ross on Wye Guy 01242 251412 or 079688 797186 (walk morning)**  
Park in lane outside Weston Inn (off A40) Weston under Penyard. (E189/OL14/LR162) SO 631233 AM is stage 3 of The Original Ross Round. Scenic but hilly walking over Howle Hill, The Homme and Cubberley. Lunch at Ross riverside -pub/café/picnic. Return shorter and easier terrain through Penyard Park.
- Wed 4 Sep 10:00 10m Naunton Anne B 01242 863504 or 07718 499523 (walk morning)**  
Park on roadside in Naunton. Meet outside the Black Horse Inn on the east side of village (OL45/LR163) SP 119235 Easy/moderate walk Brockhill Farm, Upper Slaughter, Lower Slaughter, Lower Harford. Picnic.
- Wed 11 Sep 10:00 10m Newnham Shirley 01242 524031**  
Station Road Newnham, alongside playing field. (OL14/LR162) SO 690120 Walk Dean Hill, Blaize Bailey, Lower Soudley, (Lunch at Dean Heritage Centre Café or picnic), Bullo Pill.
- Wed 18 Sep 10:00 11m Bibury Alan 01249 720519**  
Park in area opposite Arlington Mill near bridge (OL45/LR163) SP 115068 Walk in the Coln valley and around. Picnic.
- Wed 25 Sep 10:00 11m Malverns Roy 01242 245488 or 07766 413176 (walk morning)**  
British Camp (E190/LR150) SO 763404 Walk Herefordshire Beacon, News Wood, Nether-ton Farm, Ridgeway, Eastnor Park, Whiteleaved Oak, Fair-oaks Farm, Hangman's Hill, Broad Down. Picnic.
- Wed 2 Oct 10:00 12m Ross on Wye Guy 01242 251412 or 07968 797186 (walk morning)**  
Free long stay CP Wilton Road in Ross (E189/OL14/LR162) SO 589243 Walk on the new Loughpoll Loop which follows the original Ross Round to Foy Bridge - over the river to Foy church and on to the Loughpoll Inn for lunch/drink or picnic. Return via Peterstow, Broome Farm (Cidermakers), Wilton Castle. An easy going & attractive walk.
- Wed 9 Oct 10:00 11.5m Another chance at Skyrryd Derek T 01242 678655 or 07710 339297 (walk morning)**  
Park in lay-by on Old Ross road (B4521) (OL13/LR161) SO 328164 Strenuous hilly walk with approx. 800m ascent. Over Bryn Arw to Stanton, Strawberry Wood, Llanvihangel Crucorney returning over Skyrryd (Ysgyryd Fawr). A repeat of a previous foggy walk. Picnic.
- Wed 16 Oct 10:00 11.5m Hornsleaslow Des 01242 245666 or 07939 615749 (walk morning)**  
Hornsleaslow Quarry (Disused) Limited parking - fill cars. (OL45/LR150) SP 130322 Walk Hornsleaslow farm, Taddington, Ford, Crabs Corner. Mostly undulating walk. Picnic.
- Wed 23 Oct 10:00 11m Coaley Peak Martin 01249 720809**  
Meet Coaley Peak Picnic site. (E168/LR162) SO 794012 Walk Owlpen, Kingscote Wood, Horsley, Nympsfield. Picnic.
- Tues 29 Oct 10:00 9m Rodmarton Diana 01242 578777 or 07528 697023 (walk morning)**  
(Again but different!)  
Park considerably in the village and meet in front of the church. (E168/LR163) ST 943980 Walk Tarlton, Coates, Hailey Wood, Tarlton Down. Picnic.

**Offers of walks for the next programme (November 2013 to March 2014) 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 31st August 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](http://www.gloucestershireramblers.org.uk)**

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

# GROUP ACTIVITY REPORTS

## South Cotswold Group

We are now into our 'summer' programme with evening walks as well as our regular Wednesday, Saturday and alternate Monday walks. Numbers are being well maintained, frequently exceeding thirty.

As well as contributing the usual walks to the Stroud Walking Festival, this year we are also providing two walks for the new Dursley Walking Festival. This is an important new venture for Dursley and ties in with their application for Walkers are Welcome status. We have representation on the committee which has been set up to oversee the Festival and development of the Walkers are Welcome status.

Our Footpath Committee continue to be very active and at their last meeting discussed seven new reported footpath obstructions and four new proposed footpath diversions. They also carried out practical work, last year carrying out eighty man hours of work in clearing thirty one footpaths.

**Richard Davis – Group Chairman**



*The weather is kind on our first evening walk*

## Cirencester Group

Despite the awful weather our group managed to undertake all planned walks with up to 35 members on some and quite a few visitors (most of whom have joined the Ramblers!). We covered most of the Cotswolds with a few outside the county. A lovely walk in Savernake Forest near Marlborough and one at South Marston near Swindon through Nightingale Wood with a stop at Sevenhampton Church, the resting place of Ian Fleming. His memorial reads *Omnia perfunctus vitae praemia marces* - which roughly translates as: "You are rotting away now after having had a good life."

Following the popular Skittles and Quiz night at South Cerney in January our Quizmasters Steve and Katherine held another successful night on 19<sup>th</sup> April, again at South Cerney. Both were well attended.

We have an Awayday planned for 19<sup>th</sup> May in Wales. From Pandy we take the Offas Dyke path to where it splits with the Beacon Way to Llanthony and Bal-bach. We continue on Beacon Way along the ridge then leave it to descend

down to Cwmyoy and back to Pandy. There are far reaching views in good weather.

Jenny, our new publicity officer is working hard. She is organising a stall outside the Cotswold Outdoor shop in South Cerney over the May Day Bank Holiday and has arranged for a local journalist from the Cotswold Essence Magazine to join us on a walk.

We have had a good few new members this half of 2013 and our Webmaster reports 5725 hits to our website, over double for the same period last year.

**Pat Beckley - Group Secretary**



*On top of Giant's Hill near Cerne Abbas on our weekend away*

## Gloucester Group

Our enthusiastic walkers continue to walk almost every weekend and also during the week. Early sunsets curtail us from heading to distant parts but we have been fortunate in attracting some new friends on our mid week walks. However the dark nights gives us time to start planning for the longer days and we have a week in Derbyshire arranged for June based in Bakewell and in September we are off to Austria where, a distant memory, reminds me that they have some wonderful cake shops to offer some reward for scaling the local mountain!

**David Sanderson - Group Secretary**

## Gloucestershire Walking Group

The GWG has had a successful start to the year, with the weather forcing only minor alterations to our walks schedule! Our Sunday walks continue to be well-attended, and after what seems to have been a very long winter we were happy to be able to take advantage of the longer days to restart our Thursday evening walks and pub meals. At the time of writing, many group members are preparing for a trip to the Lake District, and our walks programme for the summer months is looking nicely full. We expect that the summer will bring more opportunities for social events as well as walking.

## Forest of Dean Group

We have, as usual enjoyed a varied programme throughout the last few months. A group of us took a break just after Easter and went to the Gower for a few days. We stayed in a lovely hotel right on the beach at Oxwich Bay. The food was good and the staff were friendly and obliging. The weather stayed fine, and because this is an area not unknown to us our walks were varied in length and terrain. We met early on the Sunday afternoon and had a short walk, Monday there was a choice of long (approx 8/9 miles) or short walks (approx 5 miles) for those interested and the same again on Tuesday. There were also bird watching opportunities at a nearby hide, and several castles to visit for those of us unwilling to push ourselves too far in just a few days. Wednesday morning was another walk a bit further afield round the other side of the Gower and then home, with a bit more sightseeing for some of us on the way, to a well earned rest. All in all an interesting and very enjoyable little holiday.

On the 24th April this year the FoD. and Lower Wye groups combined to walk one lap of the London Olympic Marathon course which we completed in 12 miles.

We took a Megabus from Gloucester into Victoria (£10 return) which gave us time to watch the changing of the guard at noon in glorious sunshine. Our course then took us up the Mall to the Embankment, the Sphinx, the Savoy, and morning coffee at the Millennium Bridge. We travelled on to that lovely sight of St Paul's Cathedral, followed by the Bank of England, the Royal Exchange and then the London Wall with its relics! Once through Cornhill we stopped for lunch at the delightful Counting House pub which is attached to an ancient graveyard, an ideal spot to eat our sandwiches. Four o'clock saw us at Monument and on to Traitors' Gate and the Tower and bridge.

Diversified returns to Westminster via south or north bank, river ferry or "Duck" via the Eye. A delightful, well recommended walk, detailed maps available via FoD.

Ideal for charitable events or pure pleasure.

Finally, it is with great sadness that I report the sudden passing of David Fisher, who will have been known to some of you when he was elected as our Area Rep a few years back. David served on our Committee for some years and stepped in as temporary Chairman when we needed him. David was also greatly involved in the church and served for some considerable time as a "meter and greeter" at Gloucester Cathedral, he was a member of the British Legion, a keen cyclist and was involved with many other groups. He moved to the Forest of Dean approximately 12 years ago and joined the Ramblers in about 2002 soon after his first wife died. I have asked others who knew him better what their remembrances of David were and here are just a couple:

"His strength was that he always had a smile, never a bad word about anyone, and no-one had a bad word about him. He was very pragmatic and ready to listen. He was the one to come up with an appropriate compromise at any meeting."

"A few years ago when chatting to David on a walk he said that he only cleaned his house or did any household chores on rainy days for as soon as the sun was out so was he. I think it was the following year we had a long spell of hot sunny weather and David arrived on a walk when someone made the remark about our unusual dry spell and David said almost under his breath "Yes, my house is very dirty now." This memory always makes me chuckle."

David was greatly loved by all those who were privileged to know him. Our thoughts go out to Maggie his wife of 7 months and his children and grandchildren.

**J Burden. Sec FoD.**

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## **North Cotswold Group**



**Facing the elements on Blorenge**

The Winter/Spring programme has been a mix of short walks interspersed with Figure of 8 longer walks. At Broadwell in January a normally gently trickling stream became a river and a gentleman walker ended up thigh deep in freezing water while helping others across and on another in February drivers faced snowdrifts to get to Brockhampton for a bracing, but lovely, walk. We have been lucky that all walks have taken place over the difficult winter months and we are now enjoying the spring flowers – cowslips and wild orchids this week at Earls Croome. On April 28th the Group had a special memorial walk at Farmington for Doreen Chapman. We were very lucky to have her friend and local historian, Tim Porter, with us to talk about the history and architecture of Farmington Church.

This year the Group is walking about half of the “The Palladian Way” from Buckingham to Hatherop in monthly sections. We have a full Villager bus of 16 walkers and our willing Group member and driver, David Bell, to deliver/collect us from various pick-up points in order that we can all enjoy a relaxing pub lunch. In our first two sections we have enjoyed the grandeur of Stowe House and grounds, the parklands of Evenly Hall and the “modern” Palladian mansion of Tusmore House where no expense is being spared to build a new obelisk dedicated to The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee. And we still have the joys of Blenheim Park to look forward to!

Our “Away Break” at the beginning of April took 12 hardy walkers to HF’s Nythfa House at Brecon. On the first

## **Mid Glos. Group** **Area Walks Coordinator Presentation**

Twenty seven Ramblers enjoyed a brisk climb over the Malverns led by Geoff and Janet, followed by refreshments at walk end.

After seven years of filling this very important position, Geoff finally retired. To show our appreciation the regular Area Mid-week walkers had a ‘whip round’ and Heather presented Geoff with a new digital camera. Coffee and cakes followed, catering by Shirley and Stephen. Geoff is the current Hon. Sec. of the Mid Glos. Group.



**Sunshine on Tor y Foel – one day later!**

afternoon we had planned a short stroll on Blorenge – a hill of some 1850ft overlooking Abergavenny. It should have been a “walk in the park” but near arctic conditions turned it into something more like a “marathon”. It was now obvious that our plan to tackle the Pen y Fan Horseshoe over the weekend was not a sensible one and we moved to plan B – a route that took us round Talybont reservoir and over Tor y Foel which stood at around 1815ft high with barely a speck of snow on top and on a clear, sunny day the most wonderful views of The Brecon Beacons and The Black Mountains. What a difference a day makes! Other walks took us along the Usk Valley and Brecon & Monmouthshire canal and beside, or even behind waterfalls at Pontneddfechan. A good weekend was enjoyed by all with walking organised by the Chairman to suit different abilities which seemed to work well.

