



FOREST NEWS

Editor: Ronnie Walker

Forest of Dean
Group

NEW MEMBERS



A very warm welcome to new members who have joined the Group since the last Forest News.

Membership is now 226.

PROGRAMME DEADLINE

- **July – October 2016 programme.**
e-mail: walks@fodramblers.org.uk

Details of walks for the next programme should be submitted no later than **7 June**, directly onto the Group website if possible (www.fodramblers.org.uk), or to the walks co-ordinator. Any member, whether old or new, is welcome to lead a walk. Anyone who wants to borrow books of walks or who needs help to organise a walk, please contact any Committee member.

Many thanks to everyone who has led a walk since the last newsletter.

AGM

The Group AGM will be held at the Catholic Church Hall, 4 High Nash, Coleford GL16 8HL at 7 for 7.30 pm on Friday 4 November 2016. Do come along and learn what we've been doing for the last year and have your say on what we should do over the next twelve months! Please bring something for the 'bring and share' supper afterwards, which provides a good opportunity to socialise with fellow members, some of whom can no longer walk regularly with us. Tea, coffee, and fruit juice will be provided.

CRISIS, WHAT CRISIS

I, the editor, was at the latest committee and I have to report that the current Chairman, Mike Ingleby is stepping down at this year's AGM. This is due to his love of rambling with HF Rambling. We therefore need a new chairman to replace him as soon as possible. Could you chair the next meeting on 10th May 2016?

We also have currently two vacancies that need filling.

We need a FOOTPATH SECRETARY to ensure that FOD District Council planning hear our voice in respect of footpaths and that the footpath problems are reported and if possible dealt with by the group

We need a Publicity Officer to get the word out into the area that we exist and need more ramblers.

We also have the 2015 revised Exploring the Dean book ready for purchase, if you would like a copy please contact the Treasurer (David) or Secretary (Jackie)

Editor

NEW YEAR RAMBLE

The New Year Ramble was attended by 32 ramblers, who found plenty of mud! However it remained dry throughout. Well almost dry, started to spit just before 1pm, so we took a short cut back to the cars at The Woodlands Car Park (near Speech House). Along the way your new Newsletter editor was snapped by Carol at the Heart of Stone, one of the sculptures on the sculpture trail. More rambles to do... See you on some of them, Ronnie Walker.



WALKING IN THE COTSWOLDS

Roy & Anne will be continuing their walks in the Cotswolds. Roy concentrates in the north Cotswolds and Anne in the south Cotswolds. You may have noticed that there is an on-going series of walks entitled Anne Ochala's South Cotswolds. Initially the idea, utilising Anne's knowledge of the area, was a Cotswold calendar of twelve walks. However, every walk seems to suggest more possibilities, therefore there is no particular end number in sight. The seven walks in the series so far have been very well attended. Walk #4 was repeated in January and attracted 27 walkers. The seven walks, plus the repeat, have totalled 162 walkers. Walk #8 takes place on Sunday 12th June at Wotton under Edge.

Roy will continue with a series of walks in other parts of the vast Cotswold area. Sundays will continue to be the chosen day as this gives FOD members who live in the forest ease of travel around Gloucester, unlike on weekdays when long delays are to be expected.

Awre Solar Farm Plan Rejected

An application for planning permission to install some 200,000 solar panels on 260 acres of land covering the Awre peninsular, making it the largest development of its kind in the UK has been rejected by members of the Forest of Dean District Council. The council's planning officer recommended refusal based on form and scale of the development which would have resulted in significant harm to the rural character, appearance and landscape qualities of the area. Five members of the FOD Ramblers walked around and through the proposed area prior to the council decision and it was clear to us that the proposed development would have been very detrimental to the area and its footpaths.

NORTH WALES WAY

The next of Ronnie's long-distance walks will again be in Wales: a section of the North Wales Way, which runs from Bangor to Prestatyn. The plan is to walk the 34 miles from Bangor to Llandudno, a scenic route of coast and mountains, between 20 and 24 April 2016. More information ring **Ronnie Walker** on **01594 845225**.



A picture of Llandudno, a photo taken near the end of our Cambrian Way walk in May 2008. .

JOINT WALK WITH PONTYPOOL RAMBLERS

Please note that the walk on Sunday 24th April will be a joint walk with Pontypool ramblers. The Forest of Dean is an attractive area for our Greater Gwent neighbours. They try and do one or two walks in the forest on each of their walk programmes. This first joint walk with our group will take place on Sunday 24th April and will be led by Roy & Anne and starts at English Bicknor.

BIRTHDAY WALKS

There were two birthday walks in December. Ronnie's from New Fancy on 5th was followed by the traditional cheesy chips at the Rising Sun, Moseley Green. After Malcolm and Sue's from Hewelsfield on the 23rd, participants were invited back to their home for champagne and mince pies. Congratulations to both the birthday boys and thanks for their hospitality. (John S.)

A THANK YOU TO THE PREVIOUS EDITOR

The chairman and the committee would like to express their many thanks to John Sheraton for editing the Newsletter for the past 13 years or so.

THE NEWSLETTER QUIZ

A ramble AR_____ the FO_____.

The TI_____ CH_____ is on the route of the Wysis Way to the WI_____ near MI_____. Then via Littledean we go to the SO_____ BO_____ CA_____ PA_____ near the BL_____ BA_____ VI_____ PO_____. After that we travel on to the RI_____ SU_____ at MO_____ GR_____ for a pint of beer perhaps then its home to LY_____ for TE_____.

First correct entry sent to the editor will be featured in the next newsletter.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE WONDERING IF A WALK IS GOING AHEAD

As we approach summer, there may be occasions when there is an adverse weather forecast or reports of heatwaves etc, and you wonder if a walk is going ahead. All our leaders are made of stern stuff and it would be a rare event when a programmed walk does not take place. Nevertheless, if a leader considers that conditions are unsafe they may take the decision to change the walk route or even cancel it. Cancellation would only be in exceptional circumstances and every effort would be made to post information on our website or send an e-mail. In any case, unless travelling is unsafe, the leader will still go to the starting point to let people know the situation (not everyone can check the website) If you are in any doubt about whether a walk is going ahead, please phone the leader. (Jackie Huck)

FROM THE NEW EDITOR

This will be my first edition of *Forest News*. I will endeavour to keep it simple. Any News for future publication gratefully received. (Ronnie Walker)

GROUP WEBSITE

This can be reached either via the national Ramblers site at www.ramblers.org.uk and searching groups, or directly at our own site www.fodramblers.org.uk

EDITORIAL CONTACT DETAILS

Telephone: 01594 845225

email: ronaldwalker335@btinternet.com

Footnote:-

All our rambles start with a step and end with another step too.

