



FOREST NEWS

Editor: John Sheraton

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 216.

PROGRAMME DEADLINE

- **March – June 2013 programme.**
Henry Burden, Tel. 01531 820354
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Details of walks for the next programme should be submitted no later than **15 January**, directly onto the Group website (www.fodramblers.org.uk) if possible, or to Henry. 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.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Group AGM will be held at 7 for 7.30 pm on Friday 2 November 2012 at the Catholic Church Hall in Coleford. I understand that several Committee members intend to step down this year, so please consider nominating for one of the positions. Without a Committee to organise things there can be no walking group. There will be the usual 'bring-and-share' supper after the meeting, so please bring along a plate of sweet or savoury goodies. Hot and cold drinks will be provided.

WEDDING BELLS



Continuing a well-established Group tradition, two well-known members, Margaret (Maggie) Walters and David Fisher, were married on 22 September at Christchurch Church. After the ceremony, the guests were able to drink the health of the happy couple. Many of the party then retired to the Dog and Muffler at Joyford. We wish Margaret and David all the best for the future and look forward to walking with them for many years to come.

GOWER HOLIDAY

We have provisionally booked 8 rooms at the Oxwich Bay Hotel on the Gower Peninsula for 3 nights from Sunday 7 April 2013. This is the weekend after Easter. The cost is £79.95 per room per night which includes dinner, bed, and breakfast. This works out at £40 per person per night and, having checked around, I think it is pretty good value. Some rooms are also available in 'The Cottage', where dogs are welcomed at an extra £5 per night. They will also make up packed lunches if required at a small additional cost. The hotel is right on the beach and set in 8 acres of grounds, so those not wanting to walk far can just have a roam around the grounds, or explore nearby attractions such as Oxwich Castle. I know there are some lovely walks both on the coast and inland, and even those who have already walked in the area should be able to find somewhere new!

Bookings will be taken on a first-come first-served basis, although there are currently 7 other rooms available. So potentially we could make up a group of 30 – wouldn't that be great! Please contact me on **01531 820354** or e-mail japhillips@tesco.net if you are interested. (June Burden, Secretary)

QUIZ NIGHT

After being pinned to the ground and soundly beaten, I have agreed to the Committee's demands that I run another quiz. Apparently I need an opportunity to make amends for some perceived shortcomings last time. Accordingly, the room at the Miner's Arms at Whitecroft has been booked for 7 pm on Thursday 28 February. I have been instructed on pain of death to make the questions simple enough for Committee members to answer (Does that restrict them to their names and dates of birth? *Could they even answer these? Ed.*) and to ensure that I have the correct answers (I am not sure why this was stipulated. *Everyone else is. Ed.*). They also require that the rules are equitably applied! There is simply no end to their demands. I will try to please if you will try to please. (*Cringe. Ed.*) Put the date in your diary now. It might even be fun! At least there will be good grub at only £8 per head, and not forgetting the beer. (Henry Burden)

WALKS PROGRAMME

Only a couple of weeks ago the new walks programme was looking rather sparse, with not a single walk in the Christmas–New Year period, a time with generally very good attendances on our walks. Henry, our walks co-ordinator, was understandably becoming rather alarmed at this, particularly as a number of our regular leaders had not submitted any walks. For many years we have had a full and varied programme of walks, so the reasons for this are by no means obvious. Nevertheless, as the result of an appeal by Henry we now have a much more respectable total of 27 walks for the November–February period. Although this is somewhat less than the previous programme, it may just reflect the season, with the winter weather and the limited daylight restricting what can be done. Many thanks to all those who have submitted walks, notably to Ronnie, who has filled in a couple of major gaps in the programme.

As a result of the above, Henry has come up with a proposal to encourage members who have not yet led any walks to take up the challenge (see next item).

YOU ARE A POTENTIAL WALK LEADER

I never cease to be amazed by the number of beautiful places our Group gets to visit, led by someone who may be a little surprised that we did not all know about the route long before. Also, I am sure you have walked through some beautiful countryside and may have wondered why our Group has never been there. Quite simply none of us can have a full knowledge of our region, and we probably all welcome the chance to visit pastures new.

So what can we do to encourage members who do not lead walks to take us to their best-loved spots? Not everyone is able to lead a walk, of course, but many may consider the role of walk leader to be somewhat daunting or suited only to those confident types who like to wear an 'I'm in charge' cap. In reality this is far from the truth. I feel there may be a simple answer, which is to give you a chance to lead a walk with the ongoing help of one of our regular leaders. They can make a preliminary walk over of the route with you and guide you through the process of getting it onto the programme (actually a very simple task). The end result will be a bunch of grateful members stepping out along one of your favourite tracks. We really do need your input. So if you have the beginnings of an idea of a good walk then please, please share it with us. Give me a call on **01531 820354** so that we can chat and set up something of a simple and friendly nature. (Henry Burden)