

Ramblers Gems



A Spring Vale Rambling Class Publication

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Path Improvements

It is good to see that some of our local footpaths within our area having a much-needed makeover. One of the spinoffs from all the local house building that is being undertaken on every piece of spare land, is that money provided by the developer is used to improve the footpaths and to provide new stiles and gates. The local authority budget for spending on public rights of way is a very small amount, compared to spending on other sections of the council's work so any additional funding is always welcome.

Spring Vale Ramblers regularly walked out from Spring Vale Church heading up toward the Jack Keys area and beyond. The path leading out from Clough Street to Kirkham's Farm whilst still currently temporary closed to allow the house building work to be completed, the route has undergone a significant improvement. See photos opposite.

If a development is underway near where you live try and find out just where and what this available money is being spent.



Another right of way undergoing an improvement from building development work is one off Milking Lane Lower Darwen. A new bridge has been installed as well as re stoning the paths surface and new steps.



The work on repairing and maintaining Darwen Jubilee Tower is due to start imminently with the path from the Bold Venture side currently closed. Extensive work on this path onto the moors from this side has now been carried out, initially to allow access for contractor's vehicles, but will be of great benefit to walkers accessing the Tower when reopened.



Michael C

How to find us

Have you discovered Spring Vale Rambling Class during Lockdowns? If you have started to follow us via the website, social media or members circulating the weekly Ramblers Gems you may be a little bit nervous about joining us on a walk. Things that can put people off are getting to the start point for 10:45 or finding the start location in an area they are not familiar with. Even seasonal walkers sometimes miss out on a walk because of these factors!

So here are a few tips.

The postcode and grid reference are included in the walk details in the programme and on the website.

1. Use Google maps or AA Route Planner to calculate the time and distance from your home. You can print the route out including the maps. This is fine if there are two of you in the car – one to drive and one to navigate. Postcodes will get you in the general area, but country roads can be very long, and I have had issues with postcodes and remote car parks – Hutton Roof! A cars satnav system does not use grid references, so you have to enter in the X and Y co-ordinates i.e. latitude and longitude. A bit fiddly I must say.

2. Plan ahead using Grid Reference. You can enter the postcode, the location, grid reference X Easting and Y Northing e.g. Post Code LA2 0DH and Grid Reference SD 447 560 is given for the meeting place on the Glasson Dock 1st May. walk

3. If you enter the grid reference or postcode you might need to move the map around to pinpoint the car park but then you can right click to mark the location. See Image 1.



Image 1

4. A relatively new smart phone application is called What3Words and this defines any 3 metre square in the world with a unique three words descriptor. Open the What3Words app and enter rejoins.comical.pages in the top search box. This takes you to a map containing many squares and a position on the Car Park at the Vaughns Café at Roddlesworth Tockholes. Click on the little world globe in the bottom right of your screen.

5. This open a new screen showing the car park entrance and at this point click on a more accurate grid square and this gave me 3 new words –

6. Click on Navigate. Click on Google Maps. See Image 2.



Image 2

7. Google maps opens. Enter your home address and then click send to mobile phone. See Image 3.

8. When you press Start, you see the mileage and time to reach the destination from the start point. Do this in advance and add the file to your mobile home screen ready for the day of the walk. You can delete it after the walk. A What3word is now listed in the syllabus for each of the walk start locations.

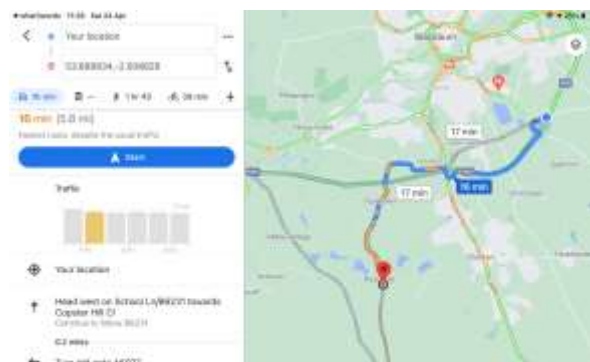


Image 3

Barbara S

Spring

by Christina Rossetti

Frost-locked all the winter,
Seeds, and roots, and stones of fruits,
What shall make their sap ascend
That they may put forth shoots?
Tips of tender green,
Leaf, or blade, or sheath;
Telling of the hidden life
That breaks forth underneath,
Life nursed in its grave by Death.

Blows the thaw-wind pleasantly,
Drips the soaking rain,
By fits looks down the waking sun:
Young grass springs on the plain;
Young leaves clothe early hedgerow trees;
Seeds, and roots, and stones of fruits,
Swollen with sap put forth their shoots;
Curled-headed ferns sprout in the lane;
Birds sing and pair again.

There is no time like Spring,
When life's alive in everything,
Before new nestlings sing,
Before cleft swallows speed their journey back
Along the trackless track -
God guides their wing,
He spreads their table that they nothing lack, -
Before the daisy grows a common flower
Before the sun has power
To scorch the world up in his noontide hour.

There is no time like Spring,
Like Spring that passes by;
There is no life like Spring-life born to die, -
Piercing the sod,
Clothing the uncouth clod,
Hatched in the nest,
Fledged on the windy bough,
Strong on the wing:
There is no time like Spring that passes by,
Now newly born, and now
Hastening to die.

Pesto Cerron

On the Track The Padiham Loop

In the second of this series of articles on once thriving railway routes, I have investigated the disused railway track bed that once formed the line between Blackburn and Padiham. This now redundant line was once a hive of activity operating to serve the local community and industries when the railways were king. It has been closed for some considerable time and it's history is long forgotten.

The Great Harwood/Padiham Loop is a nine miles length of railtrack that left the East Lancashire line close to Little Harwood Blackburn continuing on with stations at Great Harwood, Simonstone and Padiham eventually re-joining the East Lancashire line at Rose Grove. Parliamentary powers to build the first section were obtained on 18th May 1866 and finally opened for goods traffic on 1st July 1875. The impressive viaduct at Martholme and the embankment at Simonstone are both features that took a considerable time and effort to construct. It was the competition from the nearby canal, congestion at Accrington Station and a desire to stop other railway companies gaining a foothold in the area that were some of the reasons for the line being built. Its construction gave the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company the opportunity to exploit the heavy cotton trade in Padiham and the coal traffic that was mined from the numerous pits around the line. The passenger service was closed on 2nd December 1957 with the Goods traffic continuing to use the line until 2nd November 1964 when the line closed to all traffic except for coal deliveries to Padiham B power station.

Several sections of this line have been successfully converted into routes open to cyclists and walkers. Notably the sections between Tottleworth and Great Harwood, the section up to Martholme Viaduct and the Padiham Greenway, where it passes within easy reach to Gawthorpe Hall, have been returned into use. These routes provide a level walk passing many historic features, highlighting our industrial heritage as well as passing through the heart of the countryside. The route provides a natural corridor where all manner of wildlife and flowers and able to flourish. Interpretation boards have been erected along some of the way detailing the abundance and variety to be found. There are plans to link these separate routes together, forming a continuous natural greenway.

Eleanor

A Coastal Walk

The Cleveland Way is 108 miles (175km) in length and is a wonderfully diverse mix of moorland and coastal walking. This article is devoted to the coastal section which accounts for 50 miles of the walk. The full walk starts from Helmsley and follows within the North Yorkshire Moors National Park until it meets up with the Redcar and Cleveland Borough. We pick up the walk where moors meet coast at Saltburn-by-the-Sea, as its name implies, although originally a small fishing village it was also involved in panning salt from the North Sea and the Ship Inn was also famous for its smuggling activities.

The new Saltburn was built relatively late by industrialist and entrepreneur Henry Pease who was also responsible for the installation of the cliff railway, now water powered (see photo below).



Leaving Saltburn we head up the coastline and along a section of dramatic cliffs to Hunt Cliff, the highest point on the East Coast of England. On the way up we pass a plaque commemorating the Hunt Cliff Roman signal station, before the path continues close to the railway track used to serve the Boulby potash mine further along the way.

Leaving the track, we follow the cliff edge to Cattersty Sands with its small jetty, at this point we see, scattered slag waste from the now demolished blast furnaces of the Skinningrove Ironworks. After the discovery of local ironstone the small fishing village Skinningrove was transformed. The path continues along Hummersea Cliff to the beach and onward re-entering the North Yorkshire Moors National Park at Gallihowe. Stretching below for the next mile or so are the extensive remains of the Alum workings which operated for over 200 years.

We soon reach Rock Cliff where you stand on the highest cliff on the east coast – 666 ft (203 metres) above sea level.

In the distance Staithes Beck comes into view and we eventually descend into the village of Staithes with its colourful houses huddled together and a handful of cobles (traditional fishing boats) resting in the estuary.



Cobles above Right Staithes

Staithes is probably the most photographed of all the harbour villages and is also where the young James Cook (later captain) served his apprenticeship to a grocer. The route now leaves Staithes to reach Port Mulgrave with its derelict miniature harbour. It was never a fishing port, but owed its existence to 19th century ironstone mining with ore being carried 5 km through tunnels onto the beach where it was shipped off for smelting.

The soft and slippery Jurassic shales are in evidence at Runswick Bay causing instability which led to a landslip in 1682 resulting in the village being re-built. Runswick Bay has been recently declared the most beautiful place in the country. Kettleness suffered the same disastrous fate as neighbouring Runswick Bay, as one night in 1829 the cliff slipped gently into the sea together with the entire village.

The next stage of the walk takes us through Sandsend along the sandy beach to arrive in Whitby. The town was once the greatest whaling port in the country, demonstrated by the archway of whalebones. The 13th century Abbey perched high up on the headland, Whitby Jet, the association with Bram Stoker and Dracula and of course delicious fish and chips all make this a popular tourist attraction. Whitby's fame and fortune is inevitably linked to the sea, surrounded by moorland on three sides its landward isolation was not broken until the coming of the railways. This began in 1836 when George Stephenson built a horse drawn railway line from Whitby to Pickering.

The final stage takes us into Robin Hoods Bay, which is the finish of the Coast to Coast walk. However, this walk carries onward to Ravenscar via the two inlets of Boggle Hole and Stoupe Beck, and then on to Scarborough, Cayton Bay and our final destination of Filey Brig.

Alan S

Building a Community

Prior to our walk from Glasson Dock on Saturday 1st May I have carried out a little research into the area. Up until about 200 years ago, the point where Glasson Dock now stands, was only fields and marshland. If the River Lune had been more navigable, allowing sailing ships up the channel to load and unload at Lancaster Quays, the docks would never have been built. In 1749 Parliament told the Lancaster Port Commission to improve the situation, so in 1779 the Port Commission decided to build a wet dock at Glasson. Progress was slow, for it wasn't until 1787 that the first ship, The Mary, with captain Thomas Beakbane, tied up at Glasson Dock, and from this time a new community was born.

This was very much a 'local' event for Beakbane was from Lancaster, and The Mary, originally named Rebecca a Lancaster-built ship, a brig constructed by local shipbuilder John Brockbank in 1783. The docking of The Mary in 1787 was the last of its three Atlantic crossings, that Beakbane completed. He transferred to The Minerva, but this ship was wrecked off Lytham in November 1791. Beakbane survived the wrecking, becoming a merchant in Lancaster, before moving to Liverpool in 1797.



On entering Glasson Dock from the Lancaster Road, the first house on the left after the mini-island is Saltcote House, which predates the Dock. This was once a farmhouse, a reminder of the time when the only inhabitants were the farmers of Old Glasson, at Brows-Saltcote. This was originally a farming settlement, within the Manor of Thurnham, forming part of the earlier Saxon Manor of Halton. Thurnham Manor came to the Dalton family in 1556 and all the land in the area stayed with the family until 1780 when Lancaster Port Commission acquired the site for the Dock.



The Dalton Arms

With the Marina on the left, the first buildings on the right were known as Victoria Terrace, the second one having been a Post Office. Behind the terrace are a row of six cottages now known as Railway Place since the arrival of the Glasson Dock rail branch from Lancaster in the early 1800s. They were acquired by the London and North Western Railway in 1883, to house railway workers. The end cottage of nine was occupied by a customs officer from 1820. The Caribou was a public house licenced from 1781, being known as Pier Hall, The Grapes and Gerrards, (after the family who held it for 80 years). It is now apartments. As there is no West Quay, only a sloping bank, the Caribou was not just a pub, but also a dwelling and a warehouse.

The vessels using the Dock didn't need much local labour to load and unload goods, so only a few additional buildings have appeared, one a cottage near to Pier Hall, plus a row of six more on the west bank. Four of these properties were combined to create another pub, The Dalton Arms, receiving its first licence in 1787.

There is one more cottage, standing where the swing bridge is now (the canal is still many years away). This cottage was the home of newly appointed dock gate man John Lamb. It must have been a welcome change from the beached hulk of a ship which until the previous year had doubled as a storehouse and a roof over his families' head! He had bought the hulk for £5 and called it 'Ship House', but even by the standards of the time, it probably left a lot to be desired. John Lamb held the post until his death in 1828, by which time this tiny community of some 30 people, centred round the pub, had grown very little, despite the coming of the canal in the mid-1820s.

Alan R