

Ramblers Gems



A Spring Vale Rambling Class Publication

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Pendle Radicals

If you have recently walked to the summit of Pendle Hill, you may have been impressed by the recently constructed Summit Stones by the trig point. These and the new walkers' shelter have been created through the Pendle Hill Landscape Partnership programme. Built into the wall is a tribute to George Fox, one of the Pendle Radicals



The Pendle Radicals are part of a wider programme celebrating the landscape of Pendle Hill. It is a research and creative project, exploring the stories of some of Pendle Hill's extraordinary change makers, radical thinkers which includes all the following.

Nonconformist * Suffragist * Reformer * Socialist * Quaker * Chartist * Pacifist * Punk * Trespasser * Seeker * Ranter * Evangelist * Mathematician * Artist

But who are the Pendle Radicals? They include George Fox, the first Quaker, whose vision at the summit led to the birth of a worldwide movement; Sir Jonas Moore, known as the 'father of time', and a key figure of the English Enlightenment; Tom Stephenson, a campaigner for walkers and the countryside, Selina Cooper, a hero of the fight for women's suffrage, in spite of having to work in the mills from the age of 12; and the extraordinary story of Ethel Carnie Holdsworth, mill worker turned prolific writer and uncompromising activist.

These are just a few of the subjects, but the stories are many. You can explore the stories through the pages of their website, and through the special places that have been signposted for the Radicals Trail.

Over four years, Pendle Radicals is retelling these stories through all kinds of creative means. They include films, audio, performances, readings, exhibitions, walks, publications, a podcast and more. Take a visit to the [Pendle Radicals website](#) and discover more about these fascinating people from our own local history.

Michael C

October Nature

Autumn is here. The scarlet berries of black bryony string the hedges and luminous red berries of guelder rose glow in damp woods. Black Bryony is a vine that scrambles through the hedgerow. It grows happily through Hawthorn, Rowan and Rose hips and if you go foraging you would be well advised to get to know this one, so that you don't pick it by mistake. Not all of the red berries are good berries. These devil's cherries would make a poisonous pie.

Black Bryony



The best habitat to visit this month is a woodland where you will see a last burst of activity with leaves turning colour and berries ripening. Hardcastle Craggs is a great area for walkers.

Other colours provided by late flowers include the yellow of ragwort and the soft purple of water mint. Fungi are at their best, so look under birch trees for the distinctive fly agaric with its red cap and white spots, and the red, purple and yellow russulas. The giant puffball (*Calvatia gigantea*) can reach sizes of up to 150cm and weigh in at 20kg. A large specimen might contain up to 7 trillion spores! Some fungi can be poisonous so be careful and don't touch.



Giant Puffball



Ochre Brittlegills

On rocky coasts, grey seals are breeding. On muddy estuaries, wader numbers are building up. Curlews and godwits mingle with oystercatchers and redshank on the mudflats around Britain. Visit the Silverdale and Arnside area or Heysham nature reserves.

At night listen out for the soft sighing of redwings as they arrive at our countryside; you can often hear their calls even above night traffic.

Watch out for red deer and fallow deer in parks and woods and see the males fighting each other for access to groups of females.

In the garden, hedgehogs are looking for hibernation spots and fat orb spiders sit in their spiral webs. Do one thing - Make a hedgehog home for hibernation or leave a woodpile to create natural crevices. Don't forget to check for hedgehogs before lighting bonfire piles.

Look out for the 22-spot ladybird, which is a vegetarian and active long after others have gone to sleep for the winter.



22-spot ladybird

Many animals are busy stocking up for the winter so keep an eye out for birds feeding on the ripened berries and looking for invertebrates in the leaf litter.

Go on a Big Wild Walk. It's time to walk for wildlife and show you care about the nature and climate crisis with The Wildlife Trusts' Big Wild Walk, Monday, 25 October to Sunday, 31 October. The Wildlife Trusts are on a mission to protect and restore at least 30% of UK land and sea for nature by 2030.

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/events/big-wild-walk-2021>



Back-tailed Godwit



Redwing

Jean G

The Peel Monument

We have often walked from Holcombe and climbed up to Holcombe Tower or The Peel Monument as it is often referred to locally, to continue to walk over the moors. Why was the tower built and what does it represent?

It was erected shortly after the death of the Bury- born Prime Minister (1841-46), Sir Robert Peel and there are two main reasons why Peel is remembered.

Peel's Legacy

Robert Peel is best known for his creation of the London police force in 1829. To avoid any confusion or association with the army, the police were dressed in blue tailcoats and top hats and carried truncheons. This distinguished them from the army, who would wear red jackets and be armed with guns and were not a popular presence on the streets. Ten years later, his police force model was rolled out to the rest of the country.

The second thing Peel is remembered is for abolishing the much-hated Corn Laws. Bread was a staple food of most of the population and was of particular importance to the poor. The Corn Laws imposed tariffs on grain imported from abroad, and these tariffs kept the price of bread artificially high.

The Raising of the Monument

Peel died in 1850 and almost immediately a campaign was started to raise a statue to him in Bury and place a large monument on the top of Holcombe Hill. Local industrialists were quick to form a Monuments Committee that insisted that the tower be built in line with St Andrews Church.

The tower cost £1000 to build and the stone was quarried from the top of the hill, right next to the tower. The monument stands at 128 feet tall. In the middle of its large base section is the entrance way with the word PEEL above the door. The base supports the tower, which has four stages of mullioned windows. Both the base and the top of the tower have battlements.

On 8th September 1852, Edward Hodges Bailey's statue of Peel was unveiled in Bury town centre. The next day, a separate ceremony took place on top of the hill for the opening of the tower. The tower was a

splendid memorial both to Peel and to the free trade movement

Later History and Repairs

By 1929, the monument was in need of repair. As well as general renovations, the rotten wooden internal staircase was replaced with an iron one. Part of Peel's resignation speech which had already featured on his town centre statue was now replicated on carved marble and placed within the base of the tower.

It states "It may be that I shall leave a name sometime remembered with expressions of goodwill in the abode of those, whose lot it is to labour, and to earn their daily bread with the sweat of their brow – when they shall recruit their exhausted strength with abundant and untaxed food the sweeter, because it is no longer leavened with a sense of injustice."

In the 1930s, a local farmer named Percy Vickers took over the running of the monument, charging a entrance fee to all those who went inside for the climb. During the Second World War the tower was used as a look-out post. Just two years after the war, the iron stairs were so badly rusted they were judged to be unsafe and so the tower was closed to the public. Ownership passed to Ramsbottom Borough Council and although external repairs were done from time to time over the next few decades, few locals ever thought the tower would be reopened.

However, in 1985, thirty-eight years after it was closed, it was finally reopened when a new concrete staircase was put in place. The monument is now owned by Bury Metropolitan Borough Council and once a month volunteers are on hand to open the doors so that people may enter in and trek to the top.



Michael C

Still going Strong

This article is reproduced from the Spring Vale Ramblers newspaper clipping archive and first appeared in the Darwen Advertiser on 13th September 1963.

What was true then is still very relevant today. Perhaps something to reflect upon is just how tough our ancestors and original members of our walking group were. Usually, they worked a full week and even on a Saturday morning and then went out for a long walk on the Saturday.

All this building up of stamina certainly stood them in good stead for when they retired or stopped working. This would fully prepare them to undertake even more walking in their beloved local countryside during the week. This was clearly in evidence from the article outlined below.

A 12-mile trek in misty drizzle isn't everyone's idea of a pleasant day out, but that's how Mr. Joseph Kirkham of Stanhope Street Darwen, celebrated his birthday at the weekend and his 81st. Mr Kirkham, one of East Lancashire's 'veterans' has been a member of Spring Vale Rambling Class for about 40 years.

Hardly out of breath after his many marvellous hikes through the Ribble Valley, Mr. Kirkham told me "If the weather had been a little brighter, I would have gone around again. I don't think I have ever felt fitter".

Mr. Kirkham, 5 foot nothing in his hiking boots, is as tough as they come. He has missed only a couple of rambles with the Spring Vale Rambling Class this season and he is out most weekdays, walking over the moors above Darwen for mile upon mile.

Only 8 years ago he climbed the 1830-foot Pendle Hill. Walking is a great relaxation, and the fresh air keeps you wonderfully fit. Most folks don't know what they're missing. 12 or 15 miles, there's nothing to it really, just keep going steadily at your own pace, is his advice.

Glenda B

Not Footwear 2

Following on from last weeks article about phrases that are not connected with the body here are

15 Foot Phrases that aren't about feet

Foot the bill

Pay for a meal

My Foot

I don't believe it

Put one's foot down

either to insist something is done, or to speed up a car

Don't put a foot wrong

make no mistakes

Put your foot in it

commit a blunder or indiscretion

Have a foot in both camps

to support both sides

Wrong foot someone

put someone at a disadvantage

Start on the wrong foot

to make a mistake at the very beginning

On friendly footing

a good relationship

Firm Footing

a solid foundation

Light footed

to be nimble

Footloose and fancy free

free from romantic ties

Follow in someone's footsteps

to do the same as someone else

To tread underfoot

to beat all the opposition

Footnote

comment at bottom of page

Eleanor

The Sloe Fairy

When Blackthorn blossoms leap to sight,
They deck the hedge with starry light,
In early Spring
When rough winds blow,
Each promising
A purple sloe.
And now is Autumn here, and lo,
The Blackthorn bears the purple sloe!
But ah, how much
Too sharp these plums,
Until the touch
Of Winter comes!



Submitted by Pesto Cenorr

Sloe Gin

The sloe is a wild plum and is the fruit of the blackthorn. A densely growing bush, packed with thorns, it's often used in hedgerows to keep livestock in check. Pick the sloes that have ripened in the sunshine, as these will be sweeter than those in the shade. Always pick from waist height upwards – this will leave plenty on the bushes for the wildlife and means you will collect the cleanest berries.

One bite will set your teeth on edge until it has been mellowed by frost; but it is not poisonous. Now they used to say don't pick the sloe until after the first frost and you need to prick them before using. Nowadays you can pick them and put them in the freezer until you need them and when they thaw, they will burst so no need to prick them!

Ingredients:-

Sloes 500g /1lb; **Sugar** 250g /9oz; **Gin** 70cl

Pick over your sloes to remove any stems and put them in the freezer overnight or longer.

Find a clean, airtight jar. You'll need something that comfortably holds 1.5 litres. Pop the frozen sloes into the jar. Add the sugar. Pour in your gin.

Keep your jar in a dark place, but for the first week or so bring it out and turn the jar over a few times before replacing it. Once all the sugar has dissolved, leave it in the dark for as long as you can bear, three months at the very least.

Then strain the mixture through some muslin and into a clean bottle, and it will be ready to serve. Some say make it one year and drink the following winter!

This gin is lovely on its own, or reduced and drizzled onto cakes, but is also a great cocktail ingredient. To make a sloe fizz, simply pour 25ml of sloe gin into a champagne glass and top with prosecco.



The Blackthorn Fruit - Sloe

Cheers!!!!



Barbara S