

Ramblers Gems



A Spring Vale Rambling Class Publication

Volume 3 Issue 40

7th October 2022

For further information or to submit a contribution email: svrcramblers@gmail.com Web Site <http://www.springvaleramblers.co.uk/>

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The Ribble Valley Jubilee Trail

A new circular walking trail around the Ribble Valley and Forest of Bowland AONB has been inaugurated as part of the Ribble Valley Borough Council Jubilee celebrations. Starting in the bustling town of Whalley, the 65 mile route is split into seven easily manageable sections and is designed to be walked as a challenging three-day trek, or a more relaxed 5-7 day walking tour. Along the way, the walk visits villages like Downham and Slaidburn and also climbs to the summit of Pendle Hill.



The route has been planned, reconnoitred and waymarked personally by the Mayor of Ribble Valley Councillor Stuart Hirst with help from Council colleagues and county footpath officers. The planned route is suitable for experienced walkers who are comfortable covering 7-12 miles a day in hilly terrain. There are shorter individual sections which could comfortably be completed allowing less experienced walkers to enjoy this beautiful area.

The walking trail will be a fitting Platinum Jubilee tribute to Her Majesty the late Queen Elizabeth and is to be developed as a permanent visitor attraction supporting Ribble Valley tourism within this area of rural Lancashire.

The Mayor's inaugural walk took place in September 2022 and the route is now available to browse on the [Ribble Valley Borough's](http://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk/) website. Digital mapping and downloads of the full route are available via popular walking Apps, including Outdoor Active and OS Maps.

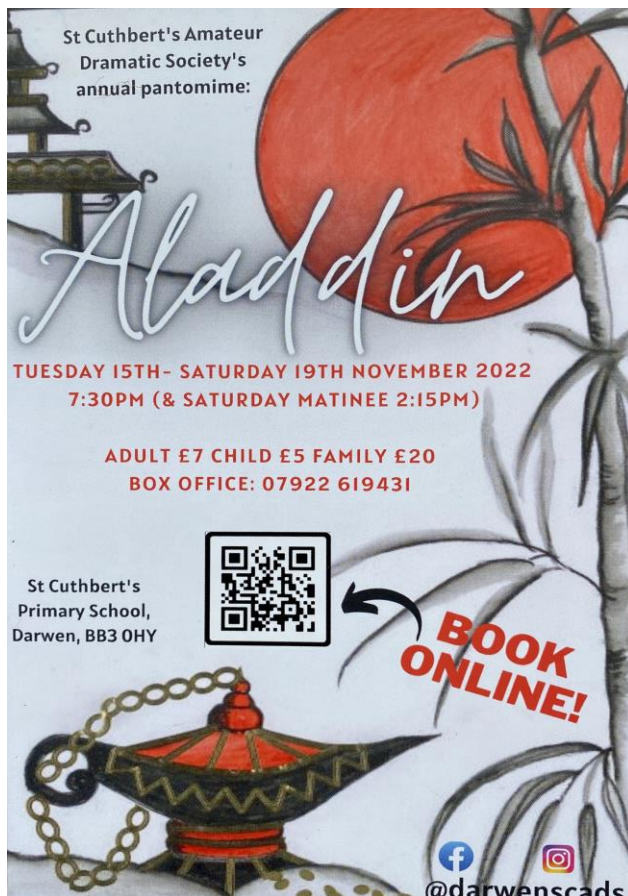
Michael C

Aladdin comes to Darwen

A regular contributor to Ramblers Gems and a SVRC walks leader Jane C is turning her many skills towards the stage. Jane has been a member of the St Cuthbert's Amateur Dramatic Society for many years and is appearing as Widow Twankey's sister Moira Wong in this year's production of Aladdin.

Straight from the classic "Arabian Nights", with a slight detour along the way, Aladdin tells the story of a poor, lovestruck boy who longs to be with Princess Jasmine. Meanwhile the evil Abanazar wants to be the most powerful sorcerer in the world and plans to use Aladdin for his evil schemes! Meet Aladdin, Wishee Washee, and Widow Twankey as they try to stop Abanazar and his henchman,

Performances run nightly from **Tuesday** 15th November to **Saturday** 19th November, beginning at 7:30pm prompt. There will be a matinee performance on Saturday 19th November, beginning at 2:15pm prompt. To book online visit <https://www.darwenscads.org> or use the QR code below. Please support Jane in this local production, it will be a fun evening with laughter all the way.




St Cuthbert's Amateur Dramatic Society's annual pantomime:

Aladdin

TUESDAY 15TH - SATURDAY 19TH NOVEMBER 2022
7:30PM (& SATURDAY MATINEE 2:15PM)

ADULT £7 CHILD £5 FAMILY £20
BOX OFFICE: 07922 619431

St Cuthbert's Primary School, Darwen, BB3 0HY



BOOK ONLINE!

@darwenscads

Rambling Pioneers

Spring Vale Rambling Class is an affiliated walking group to Ramblers, the national body that promotes the rights of all walkers. The Ramblers came into existence as a result of the famous Kinder Scout mass trespass in 1932. However, it should be recognised that the fight for the right to roam started long before 1932. Our very own Darwen Moors was the scene of a similar battle when the Lord of the Manor at the time decided to close off the moors to public access. A continuing battle during the 1870's and 1880's culminating in what could only be described as a brawl on the moors between protestors and local game keepers. This finally led to a legal case at the High Court in London which decided in favour of the self-named Freedom Movement. Following this landmarked case, an agreement was made to open up 25 acres of moorland as an urban common, open to all, allowing public access onto all the footpaths and roads crisscrossing the moors.

In 1896, there was a mass trespass over land around Winter Hill, emanating from the Bolton area and walking onto land on the Smithill estate. This event was organised by the Bolton Socialist Club and attracted over ten thousand participants. In 2021 the commemoration of the 125th anniversary of the Winter Hill Trespass was attended by representatives of the Unite Union as well as other left wing groups and local people from all around the area. The right to roam is still regarded as an important issue.

A Commemorative plaque on the side of Winter Hill



Tony C Heading for Winter Hill on the anniversary walk

Velocipede versus Virus

Spring Vale Ramblers as a walking group faced a situation over the past two years the likes of which we had never experienced before. We all coped initially by walking as individuals in our local area and then coming together in a safe manner as we began to come out from lockdown. It is fascinating to learn how other people were able to manage the severe restrictions that were imposed on everyone.

This is an account of how one such person Ian Appleby, a cyclist, handled the situation he was faced with. Ian emerged from the experience a fitter and healthier person and now much more appreciative of the area close to his home and of the new routes he has discovered.

On 20th March 2020 just two days before 'lockdown' was announced, I decided to ride my bicycle every day. This was allowed under the 'exercise' category of the restrictions. Having ridden most days to work, and on most days since retiring, this did not seem too much of a challenge. I had an extensive knowledge of many bridleways and minor roads in the area, so off I set about exploring them.

I had already been to Horwich, Rochdale and Todmorden using very little tarmac. I had a ball pioneering many routes-the Spring was dry, so many tracks produced more dust than mud, however, by expanding my usual routes I did find myself in the odd farmyard with a retrace but found many bridleways that had obviously not been used for many years. The Rossendale valleys in particular has many routes because of the mill towns and the quarries.



The new improved cycle route along the old disused railway through the Rossendale Valley

In the Autumn I just kept riding, maybe I could ride to the 31st December? Most of the rides were within 15 miles of my home, and sometimes when the weather was good, I would ride out twice, once before and then after a light lunch. I could not stop at cafes, as in the past, so carried small energy bars and a drink bottle. Then I wondered was it possible to ride out every day for a year? I had tried this twice before but failed due to bouts of illness. At 78 this was my last chance - what the hell, go for it! I set myself a daily winter target of at least 10 miles. Previous winters



Ian Appleby aged 80, is cyclist on the left enjoying a brief rest with his companion Peter Douglas

I thought "this may be a first for a member of our local CTC section"- but it could be bettered in a leap year. I did not always reach my 10 mile a day target and missed it 6 times, my worst day was only 2 miles, as it was so windy. In the late Autumn I was nearly blown off the bike four times. Mechanically, I was almost trouble free-just two punctures, but I carried 2 spare innertubes this was not a problem. One of my three bikes has a modern hub gear, and that froze up twice.

I fell off once but laid down with style, no one watching-there was no ice or snow. I did not record mileage, having given up having a computer on the 'bars a long time ago. They can be very depressing! So, I set my target to ride up to 1st April 2021, for that was the date I joined the CTC 64 years ago. My medical team advised a short break in Bacup and take up knitting!!

Ian Appleby
Submitted by Alan R

October Offerings

In the old Roman calendar October was the eighth month and got its name from the Latin and Greek “octo” meaning eight. October retained its name after January and February were inserted into the calendar by the Romans. Anglo-Saxons know the month as Winterfyleth because of the full moon signifying the approaching winter and also as Wyn Monath as a season of wine making.

October Folklore

7th October – Twyford Church, Hampshire. In 1754 William Davis was lost in thick fog and mist in the Hampshire countryside. He was about to ride over a cliff (similarities with Robin Proctor) when the bells of Twyford Church rang out. William realised he was going in wrong direction and pulled his horse up to take stock, he noticed he was on the edge of a deep quarry and would have plunged to his death. In gratitude he left in his will a pound for the bell ringers to ring a peal annually on the date and time of this event to aid others who might be lost. Although the funds ran out long ago, the campanologists still continue the tradition.

8th October – St Keyne’s Well, Liskeard, Cornwall. A famous holy well in Cornwall, named after Keyne (Cain-Wyry – Cain the virgin) 461-505, a Celtic Saint who lived in the 5th century. She was the daughter of the English King of Brecknock. She dedicated her life to bringing Christianity to the West Country. Legend recalls she planted four trees around this well, an oak, an elm, a willow and an ash and as she was dying imparted strange powers to the water therein. It is believed that after a wedding, the first of the wedded couple to drink from the well would be the dominant partner!

St Keyne’s Well Liskeard
Cornwall



“A well there is in the west country,
And a clearer one never was seen.
There is not a wife in the werst country,
But has heard of the well of St. Keyne”

Robert Southey 1774 – 1845.

13th October – St. Edwards the Confessor’s Day, Westminster Abbey. A special service commemorates the last Anglo-Saxon King and the Abbey founder. He earned the name “The Confessor” due to his monk like qualities of generosity and also due to his alleged unconsummated marriage to Queen Edith. A famous legend associated with the King recalls that whilst riding near a church in Essex, a man asked for alms. Edward had no money, instead removing a large ring from his finger and giving to the man. A few years later, two travellers in the Holy Land became stranded and were helped by an old man, who when realised they came from England, said he was John the Evangelist and asked them to return the ring to Edward, adding that in six months he would join him in heaven!! Edward died shortly afterwards in 1066, to be followed by the ill-fated Harold.



The Shrine to Edward Confessor in Westminster Abbey

21st October – Trafalgar Day and Victory Service, HMS Victory, Portsmouth. In 1805 a fleet of 27 British Ships commanded by Vice Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson, fought a combined French and Spanish force of 33 ships off the coast of South-West Spain at Trafalgar near the port of Cadiz. The result was an overwhelming British victory, with “only” 700 losses on the British side, Nelson being one of them. Nelson has been shot as he paced the quarterdeck of *HMS Victory* by a sniper from the rigging of the French Ship *Redoubtable*



HMS Victory Portsmouth

Jane C

Whitehall Park Darwen

This Grade II listed park lying at the southern end of Darwen was the town's first Public Park and opened in 1879 expanding in 1887, 1899 and 1902 as further land was acquired. Today people normally enter at the junction of Queens Road and Cemetery Road but there are a number of alternative entrances or footpaths. Whitehall feels like a park of two parts divided by a stone wall. The lower part follows a gentle track with a children's playground, bowling green and is proud of its well-planted shrubberies, Lych Gate and the Catlow Drinking Fountain dated around 1901 which was established in commemoration of the Coronation. This Grade II listed wrought-iron canopied structure has always been something for young children to aim to reach when they first start to ramble!



Whitehall Park in its early years

Beyond the "dividing wall" the ground starts to rise more steeply and a central stream coming down from Darwen Moors is broken by a series of waterfalls and pools and within the main pool there is the cast-iron Lightbown Foundation presented to the park by the Mayoress, Mrs Alderman T Lightbown.

Many winding paths lead through the wooded valley up onto level grassed terraces which were formally areas dedicated to flower gardens. Now you see kite flying, football being played or picnics being enjoyed. As you get to the top of this section your effort is rewarded with panoramic views of Longridge Fell, the Pennines and more locally with the Blacksnake area. In the south it is surrounded by open farmland and moorland rich in heather and wildlife but nestles snugly in places in a disused quarry.



The Catlow Drinking Fountain

Gifts to the park over the years have included an Iron Fountain in 1886 by Mr T. Lightbown, the Catlow Drinking Fountain of 1902 and the Lightbown Lychgate of 1907, this was restored in 2004.

To the North West of these grassed areas in the South West corner of the park you will find the site of the former Pickford bandstand erected between 1894 and 1902 but unfortunately was removed in 1956. During this period the residents of Darwen enjoyed visiting the park for their open-air musical enjoyment as well as to stroll among many ornamental gardens.



The Lightbown Lychgate



The Pickup Bandstand

Whitehall Park is just one of three Grade II listed in the English Heritage Register of Parks for Darwen, the others being Bold Venture Park and Sunnyhurst Wood

You might not have realised it, but Darwen has a rich heritage of brass band playing and these areas would be used all year round. Even today, especially as we approach Christmas, local choirs, community groups and schools use the only outside bandstand space we have left in Darwen which is situated within Sunnyhurst Wood.

But that story is for another day.

Glenda B