

# Ramblers Gems



A Spring Vale Rambling Class Publication

Volume 3 Issue 41

14th October 2022

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## Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Class will be held on **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2022**. The meeting will be held at the Bright Street Methodist Church Hall Darwen BB3 1QL and will commence at 17.30 and should be concluded by 18.30hrs

The meeting will follow the format of Annual Report from the Secretary, receiving the Treasures Report, and the election of the Classes Officers. This is the members opportunity to ask questions and offer ideas for next year's programme of walks. This year is our 127<sup>th</sup> season and all members are invited to attend.

Prior to the Annual General Meeting there will be a 5 mile walk starting from the Bright Street Church at 14.00 hrs. After the walk, a Potato Pie Tea followed by a sweet will be provided. Tea and Coffee will also be served. Booking for this meal is essential via the Secretary please or email using the above address.

## A Walk to Remember

Now is the time to celebrate your loved one with a Ramblers Walk to Remember.

Here is how to do it.

Choose a special place, pick a route and walk to remember your loved one or fellow rambler. Whether you choose a walk and talk with family and friends or a solo stroll, it will be a moment to cherish, to heal and to remember. You'll create new memories to hold onto while helping to protect the places that brought them joy.

There is the opportunity to register online. When you register for a [Ramblers Walk to Remember](#), you'll receive a digital guide full of ideas and inspiration to help make your walk special. It will help you plan your walk as well as make sure it's a chance to reflect, remember and share happy memories.



Spring Vale Ramblers remembered

Michael C

## Connect with Nature

Trees have now begun to turn colour, their leaves start to rustle on the branches and tumble down on windy days. There are smells of wet and decay as plants start to die back, of fungi in the woods, of damp moss and ferns. October is a month for all the senses.

Wildlife is now rushing to feed up before winter, so it is a good time to put out seeds and fat balls to allow the birds to build up their stock before winter. Garden birds and the butterflies can now be seen feasting on the late flowers that are still providing colour in the borders and tubs.

Look amongst the hedgerows and many different fruits are ripening: There are crab apples, brambles and damsons all food for birds and foragers alike. The scent of freshly picked apple skins reminds me of the orchard trees in the house where I grew up.

Here are a few suggestions of how you can connect with nature with October.

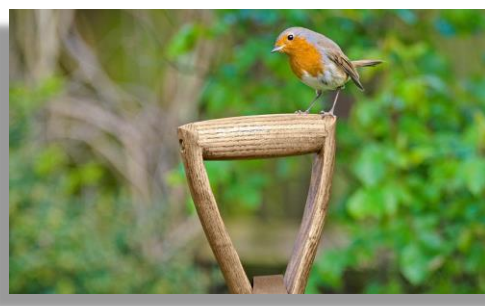
**Gather up seeds.** Collect a range of seeds from gardens and whilst out walking. These can then be stored in paper bags over winter before sowing them next spring. Don't forget to clearly label the bag with its contents, for you will forget by next year.

**Sloe Down!** Pick (carefully, as the trees have sharp thorns) sloes to steep in gin and sugar, (very good for dental pain a good friend of mine told me!). The round fruits are dark purple-blue with a pale bloom and can be picked once frost has softened them.

**Fantastic Fungi.** Around old grasslands and wood pasture a range of colourful fungi can be found at this time of year, esp. the waxcaps. Their shiny caps giving them their name. they can also be white, yellow, orange and red. Please remember though, to quote Sir Terry Pratchett – “All mushrooms are edible – some only once!!”



**Befriend a robin.** Autumn work in the garden usually means being accompanied by a robin. With patience you can gradually gain the trust of a robin, sprinkling food a little nearer to you each day, until hopefully it will alight on your finger. Public parks where birds are used to being feed, you may find a robin will eat from your hand.



**Lose yourself in leaves.** The changing colour of the leaves is always an autumn joy. Walking through and kicking piles of leaves should take you back to your childhood. Native Rowans turn yellow and orange, English oaks turn yellow or red and hazel turns a butter yellow. Visit an ornamental park with Japanese maples (acers) to see their flaming autumn colours.



Jane C

## Wordsworth in Grasmere

Wordsworth Country is that area of the Lake District around Grasmere and Rydal Water and so called because it was where the poet William Wordsworth lived and wrote for over 50 years. Here is the scenery that immersed him and inspired his romantic poetry, the poetry that was the greatest influence on, perhaps even the creation of the way we see and treat the Lake District today. No study of the Lake District can really be appreciated without at least a brief look first at Wordsworth and Wordsworth Country.



Grasmere

William Wordsworth, (1770-1850) the most renowned of the Lakeland poets, was born on the edge of the Lake District in Cockermouth. He spent most his childhood there or in his mother's home town of Penrith. After his mother died, he attended Hawkshead Grammar School for eight years, during which time he wandered far and wide through the countryside of the southern lakes developing a love and appreciation for the beauties of the Lake District. He later went on to St John's College Cambridge, and then spent some years exploring the Continent.

In 1799 Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy undertook a tour of the Lake District in the company of another great poet, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, whom they had met earlier while staying in the Quantock Hills in Somerset.

As William and Dorothy toured the Lakes, they came across a small, abandoned 17th century inn called Dove and Olive Bough, set into the hillside at Town End on the outskirts of Grasmere. They fell in love with the place and in December 1799 they moved into their first Lakeland home, renaming it just Dove Cottage. Coleridge took up residence nearby at Greta Hall in Keswick and was joined there shortly afterwards by their mutual friend Robert Southey. The Lake Poets as they became known were gathered.

Dove Cottage was a surprisingly modest abode for a man of Wordsworth stature, but he lived here for eight years and here wrote much of his greatest poetry. 'Ode to Duty', 'The Excursion', 'The Prelude' and 'Intimation of Immortality'. From the moment they both arrived at Dove Cottage it became a social hub with all sorts of poets and artists, many of them staying for days even though there was hardly room for the two of them. Coleridge came over from Keswick and would stay sometimes for weeks. Southey often came too, the shy, sickly author Thomas De Quincey, who adored Dove Cottage so much that he bought the place for himself after Wordsworth left and lived there for ten years.



Dove Cottage

How they all fitted into to this relatively small property is a bit of a mystery, and it would only get worse. Wordsworth got married in Yorkshire to Mary Hutchinson who he had known at school in Penrith and brought her home to Dove Cottage. All this proved too much for Dorothy who locked herself in her room and sobbed with hysterical for hours.

By 1808 Dove Cottage had become seriously too small to contain Wordsworth and all his family and the hangers-on of de Quincey and Coleridge, so he decided to move them all to a bigger house called Allan Bank at the foot of a craggy hill on the other side of Grasmere. He only stayed at Allan Bank for two years before he moved on to live at the Old Rectory. This proved not to be a good move for the house was cold and damp and where two of his children died. In 1813 Wordsworth and his surviving brood made their final move to Rydal Mount, set on a hillside above the church at Rydal. He rented the property from Lady le Fleming of Rydal Hall. It was here at Rydal Mount in 1850 that Wordsworth died from pleurisy after going for a long walk and catching a cold. He is buried in the churchyard of St Oswald's in Grasmere with a simple headstone lying beneath yew trees. The site has become a place of pilgrimage for the lovers of romantic poetry who wish to pay homage to this great Lakeland poet.

**Michael C**

## Ancient Monuments

On our last Springvale Ramble while walking along the paved footpath known as Spitlers Edge, we could observe the Round Loaf Tumulus far off in the distance as we approached the summit shelter on Great Hill. It is situated on the side of Black Hill and was discovered to be a round cairn or ball barrow. Round Loaf is one of 10,000 bowl barrows constructed between the late-Neolithic period and the late-Bronze Age (2400 - 1500BC). In the top of the mound is a hollow now known to be caused by local treasure hunters trying to excavate into the barrow. It is now registered as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and protected against further damage. Such ancient mounds usually feature an outer ditch. The fact that this particular site doesn't, has led some to speculate that it may actually be natural in origin. As far as we know, a thorough archaeological investigation has never been carried out, only a full and thorough investigation will settle this matter.



**Round Loaf**

There are several ancient monuments on the Anglezarke and Rivington Moors. The Pike Stones is a local name given to a group of stones on Anglezarke Moors which are in fact, the remains of a Megalithic chambered tomb, the only one known to exist in Lancashire. It features the remains of a rectangular chamber divided into two compartments. The tomb measures 150 feet long and at its northern end is 62 feet wide and 46 feet at the southern.

Surprisingly, evidence suggests that the bodies were not interred directly in the tomb, but were left outside, perhaps at the entrance to the cairn, for birds and wild animals to consume the flesh and then, probably after elaborate ceremonies, the bones were placed inside the chamber. This site would have been intended for multiple burials and was a move towards more community values. It has been estimated it would take about twenty able bodied people about 30 days to construct.



**The Pike Stones**

To the south of Rivington Moors stands a cairn stones complex, known as Two Lads while on the west side can be found the Noon Hill Tumulus. The Noon Hill site consists of a disturbed round cairn with traces of a central burial. Some years ago, an excavation at Noon Hill found several secondary cremations, one being in an enlarged food vessel in a small stone cist. This, and some barbed and tangled arrowheads, found during the excavation, are now on display in Bolton Museum. The Winter Hill Tumulus was excavated in 1958 to determine its structure and was found to be well preserved, given its age which goes back to the Bronze Age.

From the summit of Great Hill as you look all around and take in this remote wild and windswept moorland it is hard to believe that this land would have been inhabited during the late Neolithic period. The cairns and remote burial grounds tell a different story. The average temperature was warmer allowing for agriculture to take place at this higher level. The soil would have been lighter and easier to work than the land on the west Lancashire plain which would be thick forest and difficult to clear with the basic stone tools in use at that time.

Today's harsh climate and poor soils support sparse grasses and heathers, and this has allowed the peat in places to build up to over 2 metres in depth. These high moors can seem bleak and foreboding on an overcast or wet and drizzly day, but on a clear day like the one we experienced during the walk the imagination is able to run wild! You could be forgiven if you thought that the small number of figures in the very far distance was not a group of walkers but the ancestors of the warriors from this area all those years ago.

**Tony C**

## Haworth Park Accrington

When choosing this third article in this series local parks, I wanted to select one that was on the edge of the town, was quite small, was a mixture of mature woodland and horticultural features but more than anything gave the residents of that town the opportunity to reflect with pride on their heritage which was world renowned.

Haworth Park was an obvious choice.

Its story starts in the mid to late 1890's when William Haworth was continuing to build his reputation in the town not just as a leading textile manufacturer owning over one thousand looms but someone who was well thought of as an employer. He passed his ethics and morals down to his children, Thomas and Anne, and although it was William who built the Edwardian style Hollins Hill House his children moved into the house in 1909 after William died. This was 3.2 hectares which included woodland, grassland, shrubbery and formal gardens. By 1913 Anne was left to manage the house, grounds, and stables and unfortunately, she died in 1920.



Hollins Hill House - Haworth Art Gallery

The Haworths' legacy was built on strong principles - treating their employees well, a family of staunch liberal beliefs, supporters of the Mechanics Institute, the Public Library, Accrington Victoria Hospital, the Amateur Dramatic Society and Choral Union. As their legacy they bequeathed their home and grounds to the Accrington Corporation. Thomas wanted to provide art for the towns people in a fantastic art gallery in his native town. Hollins Hill opened up as Haworth Art Gallery and Park on the 21st September 1921.

In addition Anne had also bequeathed the sum of £28,000 for the maintenance of the house and grounds. She also left a number of valuable pictures and household effects which amassed to a large sum as Thomas and Anne were known to be collectors of items of exceptional value.

So, growing out of such a strong historical background reflecting the town and the people of Accrington, it wouldn't surprise you to find that an Accrington Pals Memorial is situated in this little park. They were the 11th Battalion of Kitchener's Army in the First World War raised in and around Accrington. All volunteers, it took only 10 days to raise the 250 strong Accrington Pals and what was really only one quarter of the full Battalion. The rest of the men came from Chorley, Burnley and Blackburn. Travelling first to Egypt before going onto France where they took part in the first day of the Battle of the Somme where they suffered 585 casualties or death within the first 30 minutes. The memorial in the Haworth Park is a replica of the one which stands in Serre, France which is where the Pals were killed.

The Haworth Art Gallery and Park is not only known within the Accrington area but throughout Lancashire and beyond for its internationally important Tiffany Glass Museum, and it's travelling Art and Craft Exhibitions. Attracting a different audience into the park area, they offer studio facilities in the Stable Block and for the very young they offer scavenger hunts covering animals, plants and bird life.



Part of the Tiffany Glass Collection at The Haworth Art Gallery

This park is certainly a very different type of park to the norm. The town has looked at its background, what it was renowned for and what it wanted to continue to build on and ensured that those values didn't disappear.

**Glenda B**