

Ramblers Gems



A Spring Vale Rambling Class Publication

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 **Donald Remembered
Out and About with Children**
- 2 **Prepare Plan and Pioneer (Part 2)**
- 3 **A Limestone Country**
- 4 **Imbolc**
- 5 **Be Afraid be very Afraid**

Donald Remembered

It is with deep sadness that I have to report the loss of Donald Kimberley who passed away last weekend after a short spell in hospital. Donald, a long-standing member of the Spring Vale Rambling Class, was a walks leader for many years. He served on the committee and helped organise the publication of the annual syllabus of walks. Donald designed and encouraged us to use the Darwen Tower logo that the Class uses on all of its publicity material. We send our condolences to his wife and family who still live in Darwen and also to his son Andrew who is a committee member and leader.

Donald



Michael C

Out and About with Children

When you've got a family, getting out to go walking can be difficult - most children would prefer their iPhone or their Playstation to a 3-mile walk. But with childhood obesity a growing problem in the UK, and with just one out of five children being "connected to nature" in a survey by the RSPB, we need to get more children taking exercise and getting close to nature - and walking is a great way to do that.

Walking in parks and the countryside is such a cheap and easy way to get out and enjoy nature whilst getting in some quality family time and exercise for parents and children.

Getting children into walking at a young age can influence their habits in later life, hopefully leading to a healthier, active lifestyle.

Tip for Walking with Children

1. Be enthusiastic – it can be contagious
2. Don't try to walk too far
3. Avoid strenuous routes
4. Set your pace to that of the slowest walker
5. Find a route that has points of interest for the kids. Boredom can be the biggest enemy
6. Set easily attainable objectives
7. Bring plenty of snacks and drinks
8. Stop often for rest or refreshment
9. Be prepared to stop your walk when children tire
10. Finally, always praise them at the end.

Eleanor

Prepare Plan and Pioneer

(Part 2)

All walker leaders are different. We like different things, and we plan and pioneer our walks differently.

On another occasion I had done a shorter 5-mile walk and wanted to share it but due to the sunshine and time of year we wanted to extend it as we preferred an 8–9-mile walk.

Using a map, a ‘rough’ route for a middle section was planned. After completing the first section we came to a lane and the plan was to turn left but the cobbled, hedge-lined, bridleway opposite was just too tempting so that is the way we went. Using the map, crossing fields and selecting footpaths and tracks at every opportunity we proceeded in a general direction aiming for a canal access point.

Going by some cottages a gardener asked us where we were going. I was perusing the map at the time so described the options we were considering.

“Oh, I have a route I know you ladies will really enjoy”, he explained.



“..... completing the first section”

So, off we set off along a path at the back of some cottages and by the time we reached a canal access point over a quaint bridge we had seen a converted chapel, a cluster of cottages, a traditional cottage industry site, followed a brook down a winding lane, arrived at a mill pond, a weir, a 100-year old textile weaving mill and seen a heron!



“..... hedge-lined, bridleway”

This change of plan resulted in a longer section of the canal than anticipated but it was a balmy day and we had lots of distant hills and panoramas to enjoy before we reached the third and final section of our walk.



“.....over a quaint bridge”

Towards the end of section three we changed our route and went through a nature reserve. After which we met a lady, who was a local guide, and she diverted us to a track lined with inscribed grave edgings, a walled garden and an amazing view down and across a valley.

Of course, we ended up with almost 11 not 8-9 miles so it would need adjusting before we could share it with others on an 8-mile SVRC walk.

The moral of this and Plan Prepare and Pioneer Part 1 from Issue 5 is don't stick to somebody else's route, don't stay rigidly to a route planned on a map, go with the flow and your intuition, reverse a route, make it up as you meander along or adapt it using footpaths locals share with you. This is how you have your best and most fun adventures and discover so many new things.

Thank you to John Haybron and Trish Grant for so many adventures during 2020 and 2021. I will try to stick to the planned mileage of 8-miles but no promises! You know it will be 10-12 miles anyway...

Barbara C

A Limestone Country

This story begins around 360 million years ago, at the start of the Carboniferous era, when the sea level rose, almost inundating us. Under the sea, sediments piled up, gradually squashing the lower layers down, so that over millions of years a combination of pressure and time turned them to stone- carboniferous limestone. This geological activity formed what is now our very oldest limestone, which gives us the spectacular scenery in places like the Yorkshire and Derbyshire Dales, as well as the Burren in Ireland. The limestone of Gordale Scar and Ingleborough Cove were created at this time.

Limestone is a notoriously soft type of stone as far as stone goes and is particularly prone to erosion and weathering. It reacts with anything even slightly acid, which 'eats it away' all the faster. The biggest dissolver of limestone is rain. As it falls through the atmosphere it picks up carbon dioxide, which makes it mildly acid, so the softest limestone dissolves, leaving the harder parts. Over time this created the dramatic scenery with waterfalls, gorges and ravines, before rivers disappear down sink holes, 'swallows' and potholes into underground cave systems. Limestone caves often contain stalactites and stalagmites, formed from dissolved calcium salts which are deposited by dripping water into pointy shapes.



Towards the end of the Carboniferous period approx. 290 million years ago the seas were much shallower and giant fern like trees covered the swamps and this is what created the coal forests. But deep below the earth the tectonic plates were still shifting and the two supercontinents of the time joined together to form one giant land mass called Pangea. Britain was pushed back into desert conditions for the next 80 million years. The land dried out and the creation of limestone stopped.

The tectonic plates continued moving, pushing rock layers deep underground, or higher to form the steep cliffs and coves that we see today. When we walk among the fantastic landscapes that are the Malham limestones cliffs, it is hard to believe that this whole area was once a shallow tropical sea sitting close to the equator. If the rocks are explored further, recognisable shells and skeletons of ancient sea animals and ammonites can be found.

Situated amongst this limestone region, is Malham Tarn, but how is it possible for a lake of this size to remain in such a porous area. The bed of the tarn mainly lies on a bed of slate which is impervious to water, the shallow lake basin was dammed by rubble from the end of the last ice age approximately 10,000 years ago. The tarn area used to be about twice its current size, having shrunk due to the silting at the western shore; this has formed a boggy region called Tarn Moss. An embankment and sluice gate were added to the lake in 1791 by Lord Ribblesdale; this had the effect of raising the level of the lake by approximately 4 feet (1.2 m). The tarn at its deepest is only 4.4M (14ft). The small stream that leaves the tarn at the southern end but only lasts for about 500 metres before it flows off the slate bed and sinks into the limestone.



This river when much more water was flowing would have cascaded over the top of Malham Cove making it a waterfall higher than Niagara Falls. The limestone pavement on the top of the Cove has been shaped by the erosion of water over thousands of years. White the scaring was formed by the slow progress of a glacier scarring boulders on the soft surface.

All of these features can be seen on a Spring Vale Ramblers walk around Malham scheduled for later in the season.

Michael C

Imbolc

People celebrated in several different ways the festival of Imbolc on the 1st and 2nd February. Rituals help prepare us for the Spring equinox which occurs on Sunday, 20 March. Celebrations could be wide reaching acknowledging the first spark of spring and the imbedded energies that have laid dormant over the winter.

It was a time to celebrate new beginnings, purification, the hearth and home. The Celts regarded Bridghid as the goddess of hearth and home, forage and the sacred flame. She is honoured at Imbolc but there are hearth goddesses in other cultures and religions too.

Now is a good time to focus on domestic crafts such as knitting to increase your creativity. The colours of Imbolc are white to represent a blanket of white snow, green to denote the evergreen plants of winter and the new growth peeking through the ground to signify spring is not far behind.

Snowdrops are a popular flower of Imbolc along with other flowers that bloom at this time of year. I often give paperwhite narcissus bulbs as a Christmas present as they have small, fragrant flowers.

Bridghid is the fire keeper as well as the goddess of domesticity and fertility so lighting an open fire, woodburning stove or a firepit can be a way to celebrate. The lighting of fires celebrates the increasing powers of the sun.

The 2nd February was Candlemas, one of the oldest feasts of the Christian Church. Candles displayed in groups were lit to welcome the return of the sun after a long winter, but you don't have to burn candles you can use battery candles or fairy lights.



paperwhite narcissus

A floral wreath can also be made using evergreen foliage, spring flowers, white ribbons and add in a bit of red for the colour of fire and yellow for the sun. Pastel colours used in the home can show you are looking forward to spring.



Imbolc wreath

Imbolc is the halfway stage between winter and spring, a time to welcome the rebirth of the sun. A time of contemplation, to think about the past year, your mistakes, and successes, and what you have learned from them to help you plan out your goals, dreams and ambitions for the coming year.

Start planning your spring garden and consider how you can live more in harmony with nature or make space for new beginnings in your life. Spend time reviewing your intentions for the year. Because Imbolc is associated with new beginnings and purification make time to do some spring cleaning and make your own eco-friendly cleaning products. Use orange, lemon, pine or your favourite herbs.

Afterwards have a soak in a bath to celebrate. Add cleansing salts or a cup of milk to the water. Dairy products are highlighted at this time of year, but plant-based products can be substituted. Add herbs or oils to your bath that represent purification and relaxation. Make bath bombs or herbal sachets using muslin or organza. Hang sachets under the showerhead or taps. Relax knowing that the herbs, salts and water are cleansing your body, soul and spirit and all the negativity absorbed by the water will be washed down the drain and out of your life.

Imbolc is a good time to make bread or hearty soups with root vegetables especially leeks or squashes and potatoes. These can be enjoyed after a SVRC walk or when you have been contemplating.

Jean G

Be Afraid be very Afraid

Many people can think of nothing better than getting out of the house, meeting friends to catch up on the latest news, being able to take the opportunity of a spell of good weather or sitting having a sandwich with a cup of tea or coffee from your flask. The chance to take in the distant views as well as the local sounds can be equally relaxing but I would recommend that you don't undertake these ways to relax if you suffer from one of the following:-

- Acarophobia. Fear of mites or ticks
- Acrophobia. Fear of being in high places
- Agoraphobia. Fear of open spaces
- Ambulophobia. Fear of walking
- Anemophobia. Fear of wind
- Apiphobia. Fear of bees



- Bathmophobia. Fear of steep slopes
- Batrachophobia. Fear of frogs
- Brontophobia. Fear of thunder
- Catapedaphobia. Fear of jumping from high and low places
- Acrophobia. Fear of frost, ice or extreme cold



- Eleutherophobia. Fear of freedom
- Gephyrophobia. Fear of bridges, or of crossing them



- Hylophobia. Fear of forests
- Karaunophobia. Fear of lightning
- Limnophobia. Fear of lakes
- Myrmecophobia. Fear of ants
- Ombrophobia. Fear of rain



We haven't got Ombrophobia.

- Potamophobia. Fear of rivers
- Taurophobia. Fear of bulls

These are only the ones I am aware of but just think how busy our footpaths would be if all these people were also out with me on my walks.

Glenda B