

# Ramblers Gems



A Spring Vale Rambling Class Publication

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 The New Rules
- 2 A Tribute to Howard Ashworth
- 3 Farelton Fell and Hutton Roof
- 4 Walking from Whitehall
- 5 My Walk with my Dog / 17 Pleasures

## The New Rules

It is really good news that we are able to restart our group walks, but of course, the pandemic has meant changes for us all and there are some things you'll need to consider to make sure the walks are COVID 19 secure. These are the new guidelines that allow for group walking to be undertaken and what we must do to be classed as a COVID-19 secure organisation.

- The current restrictions will be explained at the start of the walk and why any additional walkers that have come along without advance booking will **not** be able to participate.
- The walks are for **existing** members only.
- The numbers on the walk is limited to 20.
- All places on the walk must be booked in advance.
- one person per booking unless you are members from the same household when it can be two.
- people must understand their role as walkers and what they must do, in order to participate in SVRC walks
- Travel to the start point in a COVID 19 way. If car sharing, please follow the latest government guidance on travel and transport in England.

- You must carry your own masks and hand gel. When you enter any indoor premise, you must wear a face covering unless exempt.
- All our walk leaders are volunteers and undertake the walk as a personal choice. There is no obligation or pressure to volunteer or take part if they don't want to.
- A record of who is attending the walk will be kept for 21 days to support the NHS contact tracing. This will be only name and a contact number.
- A risk assessment will be completed for every walk and a copy will be kept for 12 months after the date of the walk.
- As a group everyone must follow the government guidelines on social contact and physical distancing. You must maintain a physical distance of 2m from other people wherever practicable and no less than 1m at all times. Avoid touching gates and stile if possible.
- When on roads walk in STRICT single file with at least 1m distance from the person in front
- You are required to walk behind walk leader at all times unless directed otherwise.
- Give way, as necessary on narrow paths such as woodland or canal towpaths. Have consideration for other walkers in maintaining social distancing.
- Bring your own food and water. Do not offer food and drinks around to other walkers
- If you are showing any symptoms of COVID-19 then do not attend the walk.
- If you cannot attend, please cancel your place ASAP as we may have others on a waiting list.

**By everyone taking just a few extra measures  
we can keep each other safe.**

## Howard Ashworth

### “Take only pictures, leave only footprints”

The Countryside Code says ‘leave only your footprints’ and there can’t be many places visited by Spring Vale Rambling Class where Howard Ashworth hasn’t left his footprints. He always did a recce and he liked to lead but he did not like having to do the introductory talk at the beginning of a walk so always managed to get his support lead to do this!



However, he did take walk leading seriously and he attended a course and obtained an ‘Emergency First Aid Certificate’ so he could lead for organisations who require their walk leaders to be first aiders. I first met him when he joined one of the Seasonal Walks from Great Harwood in October 2013. He went on to lead the last of these walks in September 2014 and then joined me planning and leading some of the early Discover Hyndburn walks. Howard loved to walk, and he introduced me to Spring Vale Rambling Class. Many a Friday evening walk was enjoyed when he was on night shift and longer walks at weekends. Rain or shine. Howard planned and plotted his walks using the **walkinghighland** GPS Route Planner. He didn’t like maps but loved his phone and stored all his walks electronically and on the **mapmywalk** app.

The Countryside Code says ‘take only photographs’ and he did. Sometimes over one hundred on an individual walk! If we went walking together, we often set up a shared photo album on Facebook so I am still enjoying his photography. Howard loved panoramas, hill climbs and bagged trip points! He never understood my love of trees, flowers, fungi, wildlife and industrial heritage however between us we produced some great photo albums.

It was his love of East Lancs, panoramas, trig points, hills, canals, pubs and real ale that informed the *choice of Weets Hill for his Memorial Walk.*

*A flat stone had been selected from Rossall Beach. It was cleaned and prepared. A photograph was chosen from a previous Pendle Witch Walk, an inscription was applied underneath the photograph and then it was bonded to the stone. Layers and layers of outdoor varnish were applied to the stone to protect the image.*

The day of the walk arrived and as you can see from the photos it wasn’t the best of days but there was a great turn out. We were joined by members of Howard’s family, coach ramblers and friends.

Gradually we ascended to the cairn and stopped to hide the memory stone in the cairn. It seemed appropriate to leave a photograph of Howard on a walk. At the trig point a few words were said.



Later in the walk Jane Cordingley found a geocache so Howard’s name was recorded in the log. On reaching the Anchor Inn at Salterforth, on the Leeds-Liverpool canal, we stopped to enjoy a drink and share in a toast to Howard. This is a village pub which dates back over 360 years and in the damp cellar of the pub can be found the natural wonder of stalagmites and stalactites formed by water dripping through the limestone. As you all know Howard loved real ale (Cask Ale) so this was an appropriate comfort stop!

Howard Ashworth passed away on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018 aged 49 years. ‘Do what he would want: smile, open your eyes, love and go on’ from *He is Gone*, by David Harkins.

**Barbara S**

## Farleton Fell & Hutton Roof

Two small hills of exceptional interest lie apart from the main Silverdale/Arnsdale area. These hills lie a few miles to the east, across the low, flat basin which carries the Lancaster-Kendal road, the canal, the motorway and a number of tiny lanes.

A familiar sight to travellers on the M6 at the south lakes junction is Farleton Fell, with a distinctive terraced hillside rising to the top of a grey scree cone, which almost overshadows the motorway. Hutton Roof Fell is less obvious - a gently rising wooden slope crowned by an extensive limestone pavement. On the eastern side, above the village of Hutton Roof are the tile-like crags from which it derives its name.

The fell tops provide the main interest, large areas of bare limestone. On Farleton Fell the pavements are open and prospects wide from Morecambe Bay to the Lakeland hills on the one hand, the Pennines hills on the other. On Hutton Roof Fell the reverse applies, for the limestone is like a giant maze. Prickly bushes which sprout from the many crevices abound and progress off the path is akin to exploration. The limestone is massive and the tracks cut between head-high rocks. If unsure of your whereabouts scramble to a high rock and scan the horizon, like a mariner searching for sight of land, but here it is a sea of rock. There is nothing quite like it anywhere else in Britain.

Only one right of way footpath crosses the area, from Holme Park to Hutton Roof village, now known as the Limestone Link, but outside the farmland and protected nature reserves, there is no objection to walking the tops.



The area is renowned amongst naturalists for its interesting flora, protected in two extensive reserves. In late spring & early summer, the early purple orchid is prolific. The sheltered limestone crevices, or grykes, provide a perfect habitat for a range of plants, some of which would be normally found on a woodland floor. Particular look for species of fern-hart's tongue, hard shield and male; the wall & maidenhead spleenwort, the limestone polybody. The pavement is also an ideal habitat for herb robert, dog's mercury, dog violet and a host of other plants.



There is evidence of ancient settlements in the Hutton Roof area, at Grass Slacks to the north-east of the village. Some of the place names are fascinating - Uberash Plain, the Blasterfoot Gap and Ploverlands.

At the edge of the wood on the south-west flank of Hutton Roof Fell is the tiny hamlet of Dalton. Dalton Old Hall, now a farm, was built in Elizabethan style, in 1666. Nearby are the remains of an old village which was depopulated by the plague. At that time Dalton was in the parish of Warton, but Warton refused to bury the plague victims. Burton took compassion, so Dalton joined Burton parish! Burton, which is the largest village in the area was once an important staging post between Lancaster and Kendal and stands on Kendal Old Road(A6070).

I hope your appetite is whetted for a visit to this unique area, and in the next edition of Ramblers Gems, I will describe a walk which visits both Hutton Roof Crags and Farleton Fell. The walk has twice been completed by Spring Vale Rambling Class.

**Alan R**



## Walking from Whitehall

This walk commences from the entrance gates leading into Whitehall Park Darwen. The Park was the first of Darwen's Parks and opened in 1879 with additional land being added in 1887. It was not until 1899 that the imposing gates fronting Bolton Road were installed. The path leads up through the park and goes close to a wrought iron structure with eight ornamental columns and spandrel arches. This is the Catlow drinking fountain, originally fed by spring water, but sadly no more. Cross the road separating the upper and lower parks and continue walking up through the park to emerge at the upper right hand exit onto Whitehall Road.

The route turns left here and follows the farm track heading off towards the moors. As the garages on the right are reached after approximately 100 yards look out for the footpath sign and follow this rather overgrown footpath as it drops down the hillside to the wooden bridge crossing the stream and climb back up across the field, negotiating a stile to enter into the yard of Higher House Farm. The path passes in front of the house, keeping close to the stone wall on your right-hand side. A concessionary route now exists to avoid the farmyard, re-joining the track further down. Follow this track to cross a stream by a small bridge and then climb up across the field to the stile leading out onto Duckshaw Lane.

Once the lane is reached, turn left and continue following this up towards the moors and Lords Hall, the large house on the hillside, once the home to the Lord of the Manor. It is from this lane, by looking to the left that evidence can be seen of old coal drift mines. The coal being transported and used to power the steam engines and boilers of Darwen's cotton and paper mills.

After passing old iron gates posts turn sharp right to follow the footpath that climbs onto the moor. The path at first is steep and can be rather rutted and muddy in places, but with perseverance a rewarding view can be enjoyed. As the line of the hillside is followed, a panoramic Darwen landscape spreads out before you, showing the town straddling the valley with its rows of blue slated terraced houses. The new developments spreading out around the edges can clearly be seen. The Jubilee Tower standing proud overlooking the town, but we are not visiting the monument on this trip. At the cross roads of

footpaths, follow the path off to the right that drops down and off the moor. Do not take the obvious path that heads over to the Tower.

The footpath crosses the moorland arriving on the track leading up from Bold Venture Park to the Tower. Once on the track turn right and walk downhill towards the park. Just after the "Welcome to Darwen Moors" sign take the footpath off to the right leading across rough open ground, to reach a stile by the gate and then alongside the hedge to arrive at Janet House Farm.

The route now follows the track running behind the farm. This is a bridleway so watch out for horse and rider. The track winds around the hillside running between fields. The large building through the trees is Astley Bank. This three storey house was built in the mid 1840's for the Kershaw Smalley family and is now a hotel. After passing the Moorside cottages, on the left, keep straight on and now pass Kebbs Cottage on the right, to finally emerge at Bold Venture Villas at the start of Duckshaw Clough. Turn left at this point to follow the tarmac road, but after two hundred yards turn right through open gate posts to follow the path running to the rear of cottages at Bury Fold.

The path follows the narrow lane, known as Limersgate" which was once a pack horse route carrying panniers of limestone and other goods from the Clitheroe to the port at Preston. This lane continues past the Printshop, an imposing three storey building on the right, which was originally a carding and spinning mill, but was converted into a print works in 1791.

This footpath finally arrives onto Park Road and when continued meets up with Queens Road and opposite is the entrance into Whitehall Park. Turn left now to retrace your steps down through the park to arrive at the starting point.

**Michael C**



## My Walk with my DOG

It was a lovely autumnal Saturday morning, with a gorgeous blue sky. I got my dog Susie into the car and went down to Barrowford, I took the right turn opposite Holmefield House and parked the car.

We went under the motorway bridge, Susie sniffing at every pillar. We passed the "Pendle Pump track" this was opened two years ago and is a 200 metre long track for BMX bikes. Even at this time of the morning there were three or four children whizzing along on their bikes. Just past there on the Swindon Playing Fields, they have made the "Stephen Burke" cycle track, this is for cyclists practicing long distance cycling. It has been opened a few years now and is well used. We met quite a few people, dog walkers, joggers, and cyclists on this path.

We passed over the bridge and onto the tow path for the Leeds and Liverpool canal. It wasn't too busy. The leaves were turning their autumnal colours. Further along I noticed you can't hear any traffic, very peaceful. Two swans glided past and Susie was extremely interested in them, but they took no notice of her. No barges today and the locks were full and the overspill gently flowing. A fisherman was on the other bank, sat on a chair having a drink. I wondered how long he had been there and if he had caught anything.

We walked further along and turned off over a little bridge onto the footpath going alongside the motorway, then onto Colne Road down to the Pendle Heritage Centre. Continuing through Barrowford Park, even at this time of morning there was a man and a little boy feeding the ducks and one or two playing on the swings.



The walk back was along the riverside and onto the playing fields, there were girls doing football training. The cricket ground looked tidy. I wondered how many matches they had managed this year. Got to the car then home for a cup of tea and Susie's breakfast. I really love this walk and never tire of doing it.

**Anne S**

## 17 Pleasures only a Walker Knows

- 1 The smell of a new pair of boots that you have saved up for and picked out.
- 2 Splashing through puddles in those new boots knowing that water cannot get in.
- 3 The lighter than air feeling when you remove those boots at the end of a wonderful walk.
- 4 The crinkle of a new OS map being spread out to plan a walk.
- 5 Being able to finally see the summit.
- 6 Not being lost.
- 7 Enjoying the company of only your dog.
- 8 The rain that starts just as you are driving home after the walk.
- 9 Deciding who gets to touch the trig point first.
- 10 No cows
- 11 Hearing a waterfall echoing across a valley.
- 12 Seeing the pub in the distance.
- 13 Walking ten miles when it feels like only eight
- 14 Enjoying a homemade chicken sandwich halfway around a walk.
- 15 Looking at a view with a 360 degree panorama.
- 16 Finding the stile you predicted over that rise.
- 17 Having tea and a scone at the end of walk.  
(For Jane)

Feel free to add your own.

**Michael C**