

# Ramblers Gems

A Spring Vale Rambling Class Publication

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## Time for Tea

Oh how times have changed. It was common practice in the very early years of the class that refreshments would be taken at the many cafes and private houses that served teas and light refreshments. These places were in many of the villages and hamlets and provided for the needs of both walkers and cyclists. A reference would be made within the syllabus where tea was to be taken such as tea at Downham, Waddington or Whalley Banks. A later reference is made by Jessica Lofthouse, a local walker and writer of walking guides around the Ribble valley, and within her books she gave the address and telephone number of many of these establishments. The tea stop at Whalley Banks is described as a Tea Room, ready to refresh you with pots of tea, minerals, snacks and lunches after you have climbed the Nab. If the walk destination did not go close to one of these tea rooms, the syllabus would indicate to take provisions. During the period of the First World War the advice to walkers detailed in the Syllabus was "seeing that provisions are scarce and dear, we wish to notify all Ramblers that it will be to the advantage to all to take provisions on every ramble as this precaution will lead to the best working of our ventures" The 1922 syllabus also records "now that vacuum flasks are so plentiful and cheap, great saving of time would be made if these were generally used."

The abundance and general availability of these small local tea rooms continued well into the early seventies and I have great recollection of drinking tea at Mrs Tarns who lived at Hill Foot, Twiston.

Continues across

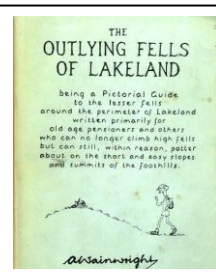
## Wainwright Celebration

This year marks the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Alfred Wainwright's first visit to the Lake District from his home in Blackburn. He was 23 and was on his first proper holiday with his cousin, Eric Beardsall. They caught the bus from Blackburn Boulevard to Preston and then on again by bus to Windermere. "They set off 'in a state of great excitement' and arriving on the bus at Windermere proceeded to climb Orrest Head."

Wainwright was to write many years later: 'It was a moment of magic, a revelation so unexpected that I stood transfixed, unable to believe my eyes. ... Those few hours on Orrest Head cast a spell that changed my life'."

Wainwright left a fairly detailed account of the weather he and Eric encountered during the first four days of their walks. Using this data, Derek Cockell, a member of the Wainwright Society, checked with the national weather archive office and discovered they must have gone up to Windermere on June 7<sup>th</sup> Whit Saturday in 1930.

He was so enchanted by the views of fells and lakes that they changed his life, and he in turn changed the lives of many others with his Pictorial Guides which quickly became synonymous with the Lake District.



The walk to Orrest Head and the inspirational views that come as the reward is described in great detail within Wainwright's book "The Outlying Fells of Lakeland" This guide describes 56 routes that were omitted from the earlier Pictorial Guides, but are within the National Park boundary.

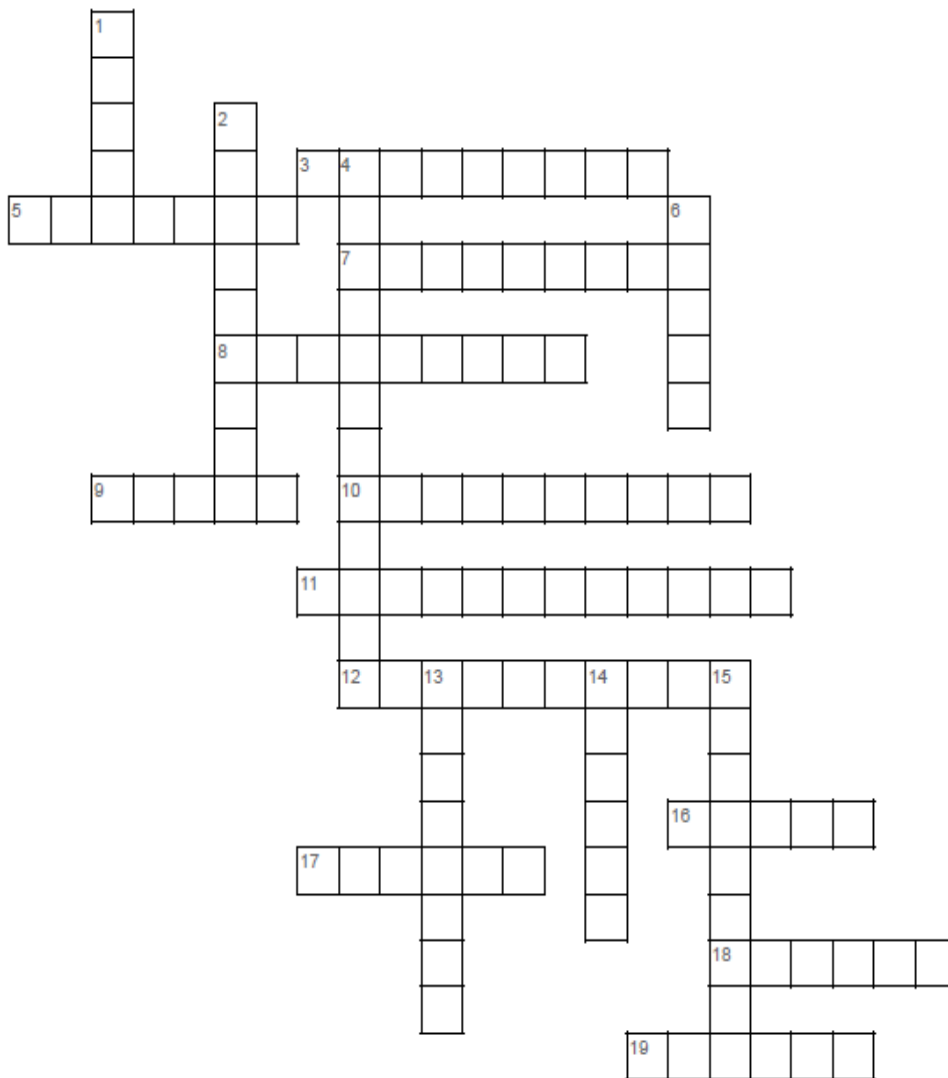
This was a very popular and welcoming cottage where, when wet outside, groups of walkers would sit on benches around the wall in the front room, with a large grandfather clock ticking in the background. Happy days

Michael C

# Rambling Crossword

Just for fun

Answers in the next edition



## Across

3. Pike, Hall, Gardens or Barn?
5. Smooch your way through this gate.
7. Highest point in Lancashire (as per Wikipedia)
8. Another word for rucksack.
9. Essential footwear.
10. Home of the local Roman museum.
11. Darwen's space rocket.
12. Home of the Hobbits.
16. A treat at the end of a walk, with cream on top.
17. Squeeze or ladder.
18. We plan these all year.
19. Not too much of this on a walk please.

## Down

1. To aid us up and down hill.
2. One of the Yorkshire 3 peaks.
4. Another Yorkshire 3 peak.
6. Is it tea, coffee or something stronger in there?
13. Another word for walking.
14. River and valley.
15. ....in Pendle with Witches Galore!

## Take the First Step!

Let me set the scene. My parents were walkers and during my first ten years whilst living in Darwen I walked miles around Darwen and the surrounding area. I attended Chapels Nursery and St Cuthbert's School so my roots are anchored in Darwen! After leaving Darwen my walks were mainly local 'dog walking' exercise with time spent near riversides whilst my dad spent hours and hours fly fishing whilst my mum was at work. Then thru my teens and later years there was a dearth of walking. In the 1960s horse-riding, ice skating and ballroom dancing were my chosen hobbies. In the 1980s it was squash and running but in the 1990s I became incredibly involved in nature and the environment and was drawn to the sea so took up yachting. It was only in 1995 when we acquired a cocker spaniel descended from a Danish Field Trial Champion that walking became more regular and adventurous! Marley and I travelled miles and walked miles. Just the two of us and very occasionally a friend was invited along!

In 2007 we lost Marley, my first granddaughter was born and my right hip started to become quite a problem. In 2008 I stopped practical volunteering with Great Harwood PROSPECTS Panel and walking and by 2010 I could only walk a quarter of a mile. The left hip was now being quite bothersome. Then over an eight-month period from 2010 to 2011 I had both hips replaced. Thank you, Mr Niall Graham, Consultant *Orthopaedic Surgeon* at The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital, Oswestry you said you could improve my quality of life and you certainly have!

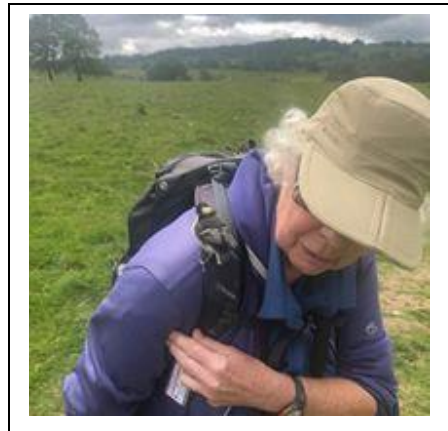
2013 saw me active again with the Great Harwood PROSPECTS Panel and we started planning the 'Seasonal Walks from Great Harwood' with Hyndburn Ramblers (HR) and Great Harwood Camera Club (CC). A walk a month and a 12 month programme. Nigel Brooke (HR) or Phil and the late Peter Eddleston (CC) helped me plan and recce all the walks. The first 3.5 mile walk 'October Autumn Colours' around the Dean Reservoir area was a rude awakening. I realised how unfit I had become but gradually I improved and in 2014 with a lot of flat canal towpath walking I managed 7.4 miles on the 'April Bursting Buds' walk.

On Olivia's seventh birthday I tackled Clapham Nature Trail, visited Ingleborough Caves, scrambled up Trow Gill and went down Gaping Gill during a family walk.

On our return I bumped into Trevor Whittaker (HR) in the pub and he introduced me to NE Lincs Coach Rambles so off I went to Llangollen and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct. I felt out of my depth but taking that first step to walk with strangers in an area I had never visited started to change my life. I did not want to get involved with formal walking groups but once a month on a coach I felt OK.

Post walk I met Robert Eccles and Howard Ashworth in Llangollen. I promised myself I would do only six-mile 'D' walks in 2014 but thanks to these gentlemen I was soon doing eight-mile 'C' walks. Howard suggested I went on a Spring Vale Rambling Class Tuesday evening walk, so I did.

Michael Counter and Alan Rogerson made me feel so welcome on my first two walks and this resulted in the biggest change in my life because I suddenly felt like I had come home, back to Darwen, and I had found a group I really wanted to be part of.



So here I am in Covid-19 shutdown, but on the SVRC committee, planning walks to lead, writing articles for the Ramblers Gems newsletter and surrounded by so many new friends. Taking that first step in October 2013 has led me to all this ...new friends, new places, a new quality of life and a different way of life. My glass is always half full and sometimes overflowing. Walking keeps me connected with nature, means I can socialise, get exercise in the fresh air and makes me happy and contented.

If you are thinking about starting to go walking but worried about being in open spaces, meeting new people, being able to keep up or cover the distance please **take that first step**. You will surprise yourself and the sooner you get started the sooner you will notice the difference in your life!

**Barbara S**



## Walking on Darwen Moors

When I wrote this piece there was a moorland fire raging out of control on Darwen Moor, near to Darwen Tower. It appeared to cover a large area and the prevailing wind was sending the smoke out towards another famous tower- Blackpool Tower. It's an embarrassment for the people of Darwen, as it appears to have been caused by thoughtless and foolish actions. Of course it is one of the delights of summer to see the heather in bloom and every time there is a fire on the moors it wipes out the heather for many years, especially if the fire spreads down in to the peat. What isn't generally acknowledged is that the West Pennine Moors, of which Darwen Moors forms a part, actually has a richer ecosystem than the more famous Peak District National Park, including a superior expanse of Sphagnum Moss.

There are many public footpaths crisscrossing the moors, so it would be difficult to describe a route to highlight the heather at its best. Of course, many people in Darwen would probably take the track opposite the Sunnyhurst Arms, past Sunnyhurst cottages up to the moors.

My Dad (Henry), who was a walk leader for many years with Spring Vale Rambling Class, sadly died last year and he always liked telling people that he walked with me up to Darwen Tower when I was 3 or 4 years old (he apparently carried me down on his shoulders). The route we took was probably the straight forward one from Bold Venture Park, following the track to the summit. Another popular route from the southern part of Darwen is walking along Bury Fold Lane, opposite Mayfield Flats, which then continues as Duckshaw Lane and up past Lords Hall.

Although Spring Vale Rambling Class have been unable to gather as a walking group because of the Coronavirus lockdown, I attempted to keep some kind of continuity going by setting off from home and walking the route I was due to lead on Easter Saturday, from Roddlesworth Information Centre (Vaughn's Cafe) . Interestingly I spotted a fox on my route over the moors back to Roddlesworth.

**Tony C**

Darwen Moors showing the extent of the fire around Lords Hall



The Moors before the fire



## A Ramble from Hoddlesden.

Walking Distance 6.5 miles.

Terrain: Can be boggy and rough going in places.

Not advisable to do in bad weather or after rain.

(If anyone wants to do this walk, but doesn't fancy doing it alone, give me a ring)

I have not ventured too far from home as yet during lockdown. We recently went a little further than usual for our pre – tea ramble. Please note this is partially over open access land which can be boggy and “ankle snapping” and a little bit of navigation may be necessary.

Stating from Hoddlesden village centre, head down towards the Millennium Green. This area is now protected by the Fields in Trust organisation. It was developed from an old mill site, there are information boards at the entrance giving the history of the area. Follow the path to the end of the wooded area to another information board – Slack Cottages. Facing the information board take the two stiles to your left and join a sunken road. This is probably the Saxon Road an old pack horse road called Limersgate and was once the principal road between East and West Lancashire. The track is short, and soon you will join Sunnyfield Lane, turning right follow this track until it turns ends at an unusual post box.



Just before reaching the post-box, in the fields on your right, was the site of a prisoner of war camp, when Darwen played host to Italian POW's. Here leave the track, cross a stile and walk straight ahead keeping the hedge on your right. The path descends to a collection of stiles and the start of open moorland. *Ref: SD723213*

Now it gets exciting – open access land!! Cross the stile and the stream and head towards a grouse shooting butt on your left. From here the path to Grey Stones should be visible. A steady walk uphill of about half a mile brings you to a marker post (with no markings) on an old jig line from mining days. Turn left and follow path to Grey Stones. This is a lovely place for a drink stop; the views are wide on a clear day. Climb the two stiles and keeping the fence on your right hand crossing Orrell Moss and head for firstly a stone enclosure on the left and then Soot Hill. At Ref: SD 730203– 4 paths meet at a stile. Take the 2<sup>nd</sup> path on your left, The West Pennine Way, which follows a wall across Horse Hey down to join a larger farm track at SD 737202. Leave the WPW here and turn left to follow the track all the way to The Naze and onto Blackburn Road.

This is easy walking with interesting old coal or coke kilns along the way at 734198. At the right time of year cuckoos can be heard nearby. You may have a herd of cows for company.



On reaching Blackburn Road turn right and walk along road (busy take care) for .3 of a mile. Then take the footpath on the left hand side of the road down to cross the railway line. A short steepish climb puts you on another good farm track, turn right and follow this to the small hamlet of Whittestone. Walk through the houses and where the road bends to the right to rejoin Blackburn Rd, ignore this, but carry straight on through what looks like (and is) someone's drive

Following this path, you will see Grimehills Church away on your right, and an air shaft for the Sough tunnel on your left. You arrive at a meeting of at least 6 paths and tracks at a gate. This area is always boggy!! Cross the stile and take any of the paths on your left – they all end up at Cranberry Fold. *See picture below*

On arriving at Cranberry Fold, either at the new houses or along Cranberry Old Lane, turn left or follow Cranberry Old Lane until you reach Plantation Cottage, the lane ends here. Cross the field aiming for Lower Barn Farm and at the farm go around, keeping the buildings and farmhouse on your right. Then follow the bridleway around the far end of the buildings and onto the farm track going back up to Roman Road. The farm dogs are noisy but friendly!

Once on the Roman Road, turn left and walk back down the hill, past cottages on your left. Ignoring the first two footpath signs on the right and after what was the Red Lion Pub there is a footpath on your right. This route is again part of the old Limersgate. The track drops back into Hoddlesden, along Carus Ave to return into the village.

**Jane C**

*Footpath options at Cranberry Fold.*

