



RAMBLERS' GROUP NEWS – JULY 2015

From the commencement of the Summer Programme the group has been extremely active; particularly with the Cambrian Way, Festival of Walks, Big Welsh Walk. The Monday Walks, Wednesday Walks, Tea Walks and Weekend Walks have continued to be well supported; whilst the Thursday Evening Walks have had mixed support with, no walk gaps, low attendances on some, but not all of the evenings.

Looking ahead there are still some gaps in the programme, so if anyone is able to offer a walk to fill these gaps please contact:

John Maudsley – 01792-298354

Festival of Walks 2015:

The weekend began with a welcome meeting at the Selwyn Samuel Centre. Invited to attend were local dignitaries and people who had signed up for walks. In attendance to answer any questions were the walks leaders back markers and committee members.

Alwyn Williams, chairman, opened the evening and stated that 2015 was the 20th anniversary of the Festival. He outlined how it was created, with an initial proposal by the late Mr Colin Davies in 1994 to start a Festival of Walks. A small committee was then set up with Colin as chair. Their aim was to promote the locality as a good walking area.

The initial festival offered 10 walks over the weekend and cars were used for walks outside Llanelli along with a hired mini bus driven by one of the group.

To celebrate the 20th anniversary previous Festival participants were asked to nominate their favourite walks. From the list, 15 walks were offered -made up of strenuous walks in the Brecon Beacons, Gower coastal walks , areas associated with castles and Welsh Heritage. A family fun walk was arranged in Kidwelly to coincide with their 900 years celebrations.

The walk leaders and back markers were introduced individually.

Displayed on boards were maps and routes of the walks on offer and participants were invited to meet the leaders and discuss the walks if they wished.

Festival of Walks 2015 (continued):

The get together had a party atmosphere, complete with balloons and cake. The delicious anniversary cake was baked by our own Jeff the chef Davies and beautifully iced and decorated by his wife Diana. A round of applause was given in their absence since they were walking the Camino De Santiago.....their second honeymoon. Mr Colin Davies' widow was invited to cut the cake. To accompany the cake all attendees were offered a complimentary drink. 169 walkers signed on for walks, with 70 of the total being visitors. Coaches were used to ferry people to their destinations. Each coach was made up of walkers either opting for a challenging walk or one of a moderate nature. It had also been arranged on the Saturday that each walk ended with a communal evening meal near the area of the walk. Our Sunday party was a dinner and dance in the Selwyn Samuel Centre. A great night was had by one and all with everyone getting into party mood dancing away to Barry Lewis' disco. Unfortunately only 40 tickets were sold which was disappointing, but thankfully breakeven was achieved.

On Monday the usual Welsh tea became a tea party, and in the spirit of the occasion it was complimentary attracting 97 walkers returned to the Catholic Hall to find a wonderful array of party food prepared by the marvellous Tea Team.

The Chairman would like to thank the members of the Committee for their commitment over the year in preparing the programme, the walks leaders and backmarkers for fine tuning their walks, and to all the volunteers who helped in all sorts of ways to make the 20th anniversary Festival of Walks a success.

Camino de Santiago de Compostela (The Way of St James)

Diana and Jeff Davies set out on their epic journey in mid May 2015, and have forwarded the below a brief description.

Our Journey

'Triumphant,' that's how we felt as we entered the city of Santiago, following the shell markers and yellow arrows through the narrow streets to the main square in front of the magnificent Cathedral where the remains of St James the Apostle are kept.

It had taken us 29 days to walk the 500 miles from St Jean Pied du Port to Santiago, a remarkable journey through beautiful countryside, villages, towns and cities.

Camino de Santiago de Compostela (The Way of St James)

The walking was not easy as 'The Way' took us along hard surfaced, stony paths which affected the condition of our feet, but we kept taking the pills!!

From Santiago our pilgrimage continued to Finisterre (the end of the earth), clocking up another 60 miles over 3 days. It was a dramatic end to our journey and we feel privileged to have walked in the footsteps of so many pilgrims before us. '**BUEN CAMINO**'

Jeff and Diana

Also in May 2015 Vicky and Chris Madigan (Vicky is a regular Wednesday Walker) walked the Camino de Santiago de Compostela (The Way of St James) using an alternative route which took them along the Spanish Coast and the Bay of Biscay.

Big Welsh Walk- Monday 4th May- Family Friendly Walk

A bus took a total of 34 walkers (including 7 children) from the Leisure Centre to the start of the walk in Burry Port for a walk back to Llanelli via the Coast Path. Activities planned en route included: kite-flying, visit to the RNLI in Burry Port, and finishing with light refreshments in the Catholic Hall

Cambrian Way – Journey's End. Conway

On Sunday 28th June in Conway, 25 members of the Llanelli and Lampeter groups completed the final stage of the Cambrian Way in Conway. The group was met by the Ramblers Cymru President Dennis McAteer; during the evening a celebratory dinner was held in the Castle Hotel Conway attended by both the President and Chief Executive of Ramblers Cymru. Certificates were awarded and a celebratory cake cut – courtesy of Lampeter Ramblers.

The venture started in Cardiff, some 276 miles earlier on 1st December 2102, and was completed over 32 legs.

Throughout the project there was a strong link with the Lampeter Group. There is a keenness by all members that participated in the project that the link is maintained via future joint walks.

Monday Roamers Group: In May, 17 members visited Aberystwyth for a 6 day walking break, staying at the "Four Seasons" hotel. Days 1 and 6 were taken up with travelling via the local bus network. The other 4 days consisted of a varied walking programme in and around Aberystwyth. In spite of the weather being changeable a good time was had by all on the walks and evening activities.

The Monday Roamers can celebrate two special occasions; Margaret Seale celebrates her 80th birthday on 25th July and Joyce and John Higgs celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on 1st August. Congratulations to Joyce and John and a happy birthday to Margaret.

Any member of the Ramblers who is over 60 and holds a current bus pass, can join the "Monday Roamers" group. Further information and a full programme can be found on Llanelli Ramblers website or contact: **David 01792-904133**

Monday Homers Group: Leave at 10.30am from Llanelli Leisure Centre for a varied programme of walks. Walks are approximately 4 miles easy at a leisurely pace. During school holidays children are welcome. For further information: see full programme on Llanelli Ramblers website or contact: **Eileen: 01554-741306**

Future Events & Activities

Joint Walks – Lampeter: Over the last couple of years, close links have been developed with the Lampeter Group, during both the Cambrian Way and the Offa's Dyke projects. To further continue these links, the committee has supported the provision of joint walks and members may well have noticed that three walks have been recently added to our current programme. These walks will be led by members of the Lampeter Group and will take place on the following Saturdays: 22nd August, 12th September and 17th October. Some of these dates also coincide with weekends away and or walking holidays. As was pointed out at the AGM, not everyone can always afford or spare the time to go to such events, so the provision of locally-based walks also widens member's choices.

Joint Walks – Lampeter: (continued)

This is an experiment, but hopefully, it will be successful and will be continued onto forthcoming programmes. Watch this space!!!

St Illtyd's Way – Re-launch Spring 2016

It was reported at the committee that signage was being renewed throughout the length of St Illtyd's Way with a view to a re-launch next Spring. Should this go to plan, next year's summer programme will feature walks along St Illtyd's Way from start to finish – hopefully in conjunction with sister groups through whose areas St Illtyd's Way passes. It could also be a suitable project to pursue under the Big Welsh Walk banner next May.

Training Opportunities – Walk Leaders: Monies have been set aside for walk-leader training – prospective, new or even existing leaders, who may feel that they need to upgrade their existing skills.

Please contact John Maudsley on: 01792-298354

Winter Walks Programme – Advance Notice

If you have a walk for inclusion on the next programme, please submit it by 9th September 2015. The usual walk template will be nearer the date, but please start the "thinking process" now

All walk ideas are welcome- not forgetting old favourites.

Contact John Maudsley: 01792-298354

Still to come on the Summer Programme

Offa's Dyke Weekend with Peter and Ian.

Based in Hay-on-Wye for the weekend:

Saturday 25th – Llanthony Priory to Hay on Wye – 13.5m B+

Sunday 26th - Hay on Wye to Gladestry – 10.5m B

For further Information – Peter 01554-741480 or Ian 01554-778870

Hywel's 70th Birthday Bash: 11th /12th August 2015. Join Hywel in celebrating his 70th Birthday by walking up Snowdon. For further information contact Hywel on: 01554-773149.

Pembrey Camp: 28th to 31st August 2015 – A weekend of entertainment for both children and adults either outdoors or in the marquee. Camping is more fun; but if this is not possible come for the day:

Fri-4m evening walk + BBQ,

Sat-Children's Beachcombing + 6m C walk + Evening- Poems & Pints
Sun-Children's Craft in the marquee + 9m C+ walk + Evening Talent Show.

Mon- Children & Adult Sand Castle Competition

For further information contact Hazel on: 01554-755331 or Diana on 01554-833099

Cornwall September Holiday 5th to 12th September 2015: Staying in Hayle for a holiday with walks. Walking the Southwest Coastal Path from Lands End to The Lizard and a little beyond. For further details contact Adrienne/Huw 01554-751777

Agen Ramblers Visit: 26 Agen Ramblers are visiting us 29th September 2015 to 6th October 2015. Their itinerary is to stay in the Marine Hotel Aberystwyth for three nights 29th September to 2nd October; followed by a four night stay in Llanelli. A group of Llanelli Ramblers' will accompany our Agen friends in Aberystwyth ; (also staying in the Marine Hotel). In addition there are others who plan to stay in other accommodation in Aberystwyth.

For our Agen visitors stay the following walks itinerary has been planned:

Wednesday, 30th September: Coach to Borth, Grade C+ walk 7 miles back to Aberystwyth on coastal path. Leader: Pat Pope.

Thursday, 1st October: Choice of 2 coastal path walks:

(1) Cwmtedu to Aberaeron – 10 miles, Grade B. Leader Jeff D.

(2) New Quay to Aberaeron – 6 miles, Grade C+. Leader Greison.

Travel to the start and return to Aberystwyth by coach.

Friday, 2nd October: Walk/sightseeing at Devil's Bridge, travelling from Aberystwyth to Devil's Bridge by coach (*Note:* No train service on Fridays), before returning to Llanelli and Trimsaran by coach. (The visitors will once again be staying at the Coastal Park B&B in Queen Victoria Rd., Llanelli).

Saturday, 3rd October: Start time from Llanelli 9 am, travel by car to Dan yr Ogof, from there a choice of two walks:

(1) to Wellington Bomber crash site and back (6 miles, C+ walk – leader: Alwyn. Tel. 01554 773597) followed by a guided tour of the caves (free entry has been offered to the French visitors);

(2) to Wellington bomber crash site and back to Dan yr Ogof via Sinc y Giedd (10 miles, B walk – leader: John D. Tel. 01792 864525)

Sunday, 4th October: Coach trip to St. Fagans. Leave Llanelli at 9 am. Space on the coach for 33 Llanelli Ramblers on a first-come, first-served basis – cost £9 each if all seats booked.

We will not be asking the visitors to pay a share of the cost. Contact Alwyn, Tel. 01554 773597.

Monday, 5th October: Walk on Mynydd Penbre, 6 miles, C. Leader: Huw. Tel. 01554 751777. Travel by car from Llanelli 9 am. Return to Llanelli by 4 pm latest.

5.30 pm: The Town Council will host a Reception with pre-dinner drinks at the Old Vicarage, Llanelli, for 24 visitors plus 12 Llanelli Ramblers.

7.30 pm: Dinner at the Stag pub, Five Roads. 3-course Welsh fare menu. Cost £12.99 a head. Contact Eileen, tel. 01554 741306. (*Note:*

There is sufficient money in the Social Fund, ring-fenced for the Agen Randonneurs, to cover the cost of the visitors' meals.) We propose organising a coach to take us from Llanelli to and from Five Roads – more information on this to follow. The Stag say they can accommodate 70 people comfortably. 46 places will be offered to the group as a whole on a first-come, first-served basis.

Tuesday, 6th October: Visitors return to France. No doubt some Llanelli Ramblers will want to wave them off, as in previous years. Flight leaves Bristol Airport at 1.30 pm. Transport to the airport still to be arranged.

For further information contact Nina Clement 01554-810979.

Llangrannog Weekend – Organised by Janet and Robert Davies. Staying in the Gwersyll y Urdd Llangrannog 16th to 18th October 2015 – Walking the 21 mile Aberaeron Trail over two days. This weekend is now fully booked, but there is a reserve list.

For further information contact Janet/Robert on 01554-753596.

Website: We at Llanelli Ramblers are a dynamic group, consequently our website is constantly being updated with adjustments to our walks programmes, photo gallery plus other information.

Currently the updates are being implemented by Ray Williams; as with us all, Ray has many other interests and commitments outside of Llanelli Ramblers. Thus the group is asking for a volunteer to act as a back-up to Ray for updating the website.

If any interested person is willing and able to take this on please in the first instance contact Nina – email:nina_clements@yahoo.co.uk or telephone 01554810979