



RAMBLERS' GROUP NEWS – OCTOBER 2015

The 2015 Summer Programme has continued to be full of events and away activities: **Hywel's 70th Birthday Bash**; Twenty six of Hywel's Llanelli friends traveled to North Wales on 10th/11th August 2015, staying at Betws y Coed, Llanrwst and Trawsfynydd for Hywel's 70th birthday walk up to the summit of Snowdon, scheduled for Wednesday 12th August 2015. The walkers met at the "Victoria Hotel" Llanberis and commenced their Snowdon walk at 10am and followed the Llanberis path to the summit. The day provided brilliant conditions for the walk, with plenty of sunshine and a clear sky; at the summit the walkers were able to clearly see Anglesey to the north and the Llyn peninsular to the west. For many of the walkers it was their first accent of Snowdon. The day culminated with post walk birthday cake and alcoholic refreshment at the Victoria Hotel, and in the evening an excellent celebration dinner at "The Bistro" in Betws y Coed.

Pembrey Camp Weekend: This year's camp over the August Bank Holiday weekend in very agreeable weather saw fewer campers and day visitors at the camp than in previous years; the lesser numbers in no way diminished the enjoyment of those who attended.

Friday evening walk: led by Alwyn, 18 walkers set out on a 3 mile walk in the Country Park, whilst nearing the end there was an enormous shower which had everyone scattering for shelter; Daphne and Angus chaperoned by Caitlyn squashed into a telephone kiosk. The shower over, the bedraggled walkers returned to the marquee for a fabulous BBQ prepared by Jeff and Diana assisted by Andy.

Saturday: The children went off beachcombing with Diana, whilst Hazel and Ron led a 6 mile (possibly longer) walk to Pembrey via the Country Park. The evening was Poems and Pints chaired by Mary Wyatt; Caitlyn winning the children's section and Eirwen the adult self-written section with the following poem:

My Rambling Year- by Eirwen Stephens

It all began in June last year when I got myself some rambling gear!
To the Leisure Centre I had to go, to meet Ian McConkey, Carl and co!

The Thursday walks were fine and fair, but soon I needed more of a dare!
So to Penllegaer Woods I next went, for the Wednesday Big six mile event!
Judy was the leader for her first time with Sue and Rolo at the end of the line.
Then, oh dear, Mud that could not be missed, putting gaiters on my shopping list.

The Trespass store had a nice young lad who sold me a flask and a seating pad
Waterproof coat and a walking stick, now I had bought all the right kit!

"Poems and Pints" night was just stela where I got to taste Chef Jeff's paella!
Halfway socials were the biz, a beetle drive and Christine's quiz!

Beating the bounds with Eva and John a superb buffet as a follow on!
A Christmas trek with Rob and Jan, pieces of stollen with marzipan!

Clive and Audrey's short bus ride to skittles and curry at Ferryside!
Dylan's Laugharne and Oxwich Bay, talking and laughing along the way!

The fourth of March I was up like a lark for Cawl and Welsh Cakes in Pembrey Park.
A Twmpath dance of which to boast, Anniversary walks and a fine hog roast.

Adrienne's and Huw's weekender I tried, eight miles from Kidwelly to Ferryside
Carolyn, Carol, Sandra, Ann and Kath often joined me along each path.

Ron's Penrice walk was going well when "yours truly" stumbled and fell!
But the Ramblers did what they always do and quickly came to my rescue!

Circular walks, I did five of course, but the last I remember due to a horse!
He stood very tall and would not budge, then as I passed he give my boob a good nudge!

In May, there was Hazel's trip to Tenby see! Llanelli Ramblers filled the boat to Caldey.
The Monk's chocolate for Jackie was a definite lure, while at the lighthouse we saw a
miracle cure!

Then off to Snowdon for Hywel's seventy, heroes and blackberry vodka aplenty
The sun was hot as we hiked to the summit and I'm so proud to say that I have done it!
Special memories that will not fade and the finest friends I have ever made!
Llanelli Ramblers I thank your endeavour for giving me the best year ever!!!!

Sunday: Under the brilliant instructions from Diana, the children used the materials they had collected on their beachcombing expedition on Saturday and converted them into a collage mural which depicted Cefn Sidan beach.

For the adults, Huw led a 9 mile circular walk from Kidwelly via Kings Wood and Mynyddygarreg.

Sunday evening was a "Rambler's have Talent" night compared by Hannah Morgan. Though everyone participated the stars of the night were Hannah (Jeff's granddaughter) and Alex our new singing discovery; Hannah and Alex also sang a few duets in wonderful harmony.

Monday: A nice sunny day, when everybody competed (Adults and Children) in a Sand Castle competition. The expertise and quality of the castles were so high that every entry won a category. The evening consisted of a feast of fish and chips followed by a bonfire on the beach with toasted marshmallows.

Tuesday: sadly was break camp day which brought the weekend to a close. In spite of numbers participating being down, the August Bank Holiday Camp remains a brilliant family weekend on our calendar which should not be missed.

Cornwall Week: Based again this year in Hayle; over the week 46 Llanelli Ramblers participated in the 6 walks that followed the South West Coastal Path from Lands End to Coverack. The weather during the week proved to be excellent with the rain holding off until the last day of walking had been completed. The section of the SWCP from Lands End to Coverack offered both relatively easy and challenging walking; with one section from Treen to Mousehole proving as difficult as one can find anywhere on the SWCP. The week ended with a holiday celebration meal at the “Old Quay” hotel in Hayle.

Visit from the Randonneurs de l’Agenais 29th September to 6th October 2015

The decennial visit was most successful with the numerous contingent of visitors yet; the many Llanelli Ramblers who contributed in various ways can feel pleased. The visitors were clearly sincere in their lavish praise of the walks, of the visit and of their welcome. We were further blessed by good weather almost throughout; the one vital ingredient outside our control.

The two-centre format used in Agen in 2014 was repeated this year. The first three days being spent at a seaside hotel in Aberystwyth. The hotel party comprised of our 23 Agen visitors plus 26 Llanelli Ramblers with a further four Llanelli Ramblers staying in a nearby campsite. The walking consisted of two walks on the Ceredigion Coast Path; on the way back to Llanelli the group visited Devils Bridge and the Red Kite Centre at Nant yr Arian. During the three full days stay in Llanelli there were two shorter walks; the first visiting the Wellington crash site on Carreg Goch and was embellished by a fine rendition of “Gwahoddiad” by Arwel Michael and friend; Arwel is the unofficial warden of the site. The second walk on Mynydd Pembre afforded a last perspective of the area before departure the next day.

There were two further visits, the first to Dan yr Ogof caves following the walk on Carreg Goch and was free of charge thanks to the generosity of the owner. The next day’s visit to St Fagan’s was a new experience to many, and much appreciated.

At *l’heure de l’aperitif* on the eve of departure the reception at the Town Hall by the Mayor and her civic reception party was most kind and encouraging. The event afforded the opportunity to thank formally the Mayor and her Council, and the Twinning Committee, for the financial support which enabled visits to continue. The group was able to express the special personal and cultural value of the exchange. Jacques Ginestet spoke for the Agenais and Jean-Pierre Hilaire for the town’s Twinning Association.

A farewell at the Stag Inn Five Roads followed the reception. Gifts were exchanged (for Llanelli, original tablemats depicting scenes from walks; for Agenais Ramblers’ anniversary pens and buffs); speeches were made and endured cheerfully. The party was entertained by songs in Occitan (amply explained by Jean-Pierre) and in French. Following which full and complete audience participation was achieved in spirited Welsh airs, and a costumed rendition of *Alouette*, in which the coach driver of the week Gareth had been persuaded to take a starring role. The evening ended with the singing of Marseillais and Hen Wlad fy Nhadau.

Llanelli Ramblers were invited to return to Agen in 2017

Looking Ahead

The winter programme is currently being circulated; and you will see that the Wednesday walks programme is full. In contrast the weekend programme has many vacancies, particularly in the New Year. Please peruse your programme and if possible offer a walk(s) so that the gaps in the programme can be filled. If you can; contact: **John Maudsley 01792298354**

The Social Programme this winter is offering a varied range of activities; including presentations on: Comino de Costello (the way of St James) The Cambrian Way, Flat Holm to Brecon, Darts, Skittles and Dance Evenings.

In addition our Annual Christmas Lunch is again held at the Stradey Park Hotel on Wednesday 2nd December 2015 tickets are priced at £16.95 for further information contact Margaret Brinley on **07791634501**.

Our **Annual Dinner Dance** is to be held on Saturday 23rd January 2016 at the Ashburnham Hotel further information to follow in due course.

Walking Highlights:

Remembrance Sunday: 8th November 2015 walk to the Wellington Bomber Site 6m C+ Leaves the Leisure Centre at 8am.

Beating the Bounds: Saturday 14th November 2015 – Walk part of the ancient boundary of Llangennech. Meet at the Llangennech Community Hall/ Library for a 2pm start.

Wales Coastal Path: Hannah Morgan continues with her project of walking the Wales Coast Path – next leg Saturday 21st November 2015 – Caswell Bay to Swansea Marina.

Walrus Dip: Boxing Day 26th December 2015 - Take a short walk into the sea for the Annual Walrus Dip to raise money for your selected charity (run back to get warm).

Santa Trail – Wednesday 30th December 2015 - Family 4 mile walk led by Alwyn, followed by hot orange for children and/or mulled wine for adults + nibbles.

St David's Day Walk – Wednesday 2nd March 2016- 6 miles D. Followed by Cawl provided by Jeff and Diana.

Crickhowell Weekend: 2nd & 3rd April 2016. On each of the days there will be two walks on offer, a long walk led by Jeff and Diana and a short walk led by Hazel. The weekend offers the option of either staying in Crickhowell (camping or a B&B) or travelling each day.

Festival of Walks: The theme of the Festival of walks next year 27th to 30th May 2016 will be **"The Valleys"** with exciting walks in the Rhondda and Cothi valleys, coupled with Pembrokeshire and favorite walks locally to please all tastes.

The **Big Welsh Walk** that has been traditionally taking place in early May will now be merged with the Festivals Monday Family Walk and will take the form of two walks; an easy and a moderate along St Illtyd's Way; with the theme of the walks being the Roald Dahl centenary (Pirates or Hatchet Men).

The Friday opening will be held at the Selwyn Samuel Centre, while the Welsh Tea will be held in the Catholic Hall.

Monday Walking Groups - Homers and Roamers: Both groups remain very active and retain their ethos of flat walks on good surfaces and no stiles.

Roamers: Meet on Monday's at their programme instructions time.

further information: David Quarmby on 01792-904133

Homers: Meet on Monday's at 10.30am at the Llanelli Leisure Centre.

further information: Eileen Beaumont on 01554-741306

Annual General Meeting is being held at the Halfway Hotel Llanelli on Tuesday 3rd November 2015, commencing at 7.30pm.

The engine room of Llanelli Ramblers' is your committee; this is where all the decisions are made with regard to: the walks programme, special events (such as away breaks and holidays etc).

Each year at the AGM all positions on the committee are open for election. It also gives the opportunity for members to voice any opinions and concerns that they may have.

Please note: that the Chairman, Footpaths Officer Minutes Secretary and Publicity Secretary are not standing for re-election.

Our Walks and Programme Secretary has also given notice that he will not be standing for re-election in 2016; if anyone is interested in taking up this position putting their name forward now will give the opportunity to shadow the preparation of next Summer's and Winter's programmes.

In addition, our web site is managed by Ray Williams and he is looking for a volunteer to assist and support him in the maintenance of our web site.

Other issues:

Walk leaders are reminded that they can claim recce expenses; currently paid at 28p per mile up to a maximum of 120 miles, thereafter the fuel expense or value of 120 miles at the pence per mile allowance can be claimed – Whichever is the greater.