



Gloucestershire Ramblers Area GRNews February 2017

www.gloucestershireramblers.org.uk
gnews@gloucestershireramblers.org.uk



Kate Ashbrook, Ramblers Vice-President, joined our Annual General Meeting at Rodborough Tabernacle hosted by South Cotswold Group near Stroud.

Over the year to Sept 2017, as well as helping defend footpaths, our members engaged in 'Walk about Britain', 'Thames Path 20th Anniversary', Festival of Winter walks and the 'Big Path Watch'. Following a lively discussion we broke for our bring and share lunch. Afterwards Kate spoke with passion about the work of Ramblers across the country. The All England Coastal Path is gradually taking shape and 'Pathwatch' has now become a tool of choice to feed back walking issues to Local Authorities.

Finally Richard Davis, our outgoing Area Secretary, led us on a walk around Rodborough common. We had stunning clear views across the Severn Estuary, the Forest of Dean and in the distance the Sugar Loaf, Abergavenny some 40 miles away.



Richard Holmes, Area Footpath Secretary for Gloucestershire, managed to organise the Cirencester Group Path Maintenance Volunteers to meet John Baker Footpath Secretary with Forest of Dean Group near Chepstow. It's great to join in and work together.

Pathwatch Launch 14th- 20th November 2016

To launch Pathwatch, Ramblers embarked on an ambitious week of path maintenance on the 177 mile long Offa's Dyke to highlight the importance of keeping our pathways open.



The aim of the week was simple: to highlight the immense contribution ramblers volunteers make to keeping the nation's paths open and accessible, enabling everyone to go walking and experience the outdoors on foot.

www.ramblers.org.uk/news/blogs/2016/december/pathwatch-launch-week-on-offas-dyke



Remember to let your walking friends know about Ramblers! They may use the internet - Meetup or facebook – so do we. Look for GWG – Gloucestershire Walking Group on Meetup or in facebook find and 'like' our 'Glos Ramblers' page.



Ramblers Gloucestershire Area has a new chair Brian Payne
Brian joins us from Cleeve Group where he's known as a doer, whether it's leading walks, checking footpath issues or helping with running the group. Living in Prestbury he knows urban as well as rural paths and used to spend happy times walking his dog over Cleeve hill. Brian's keen to meet many of the volunteers who help make the organisation work in the county, and to understand how he can help in his new role. To contact Brian, email chair@gloucestershireramblers.org.uk

Dates for Diary

Wed 22 Mar 7:30pm Area Groups Council - Ramblers General Council Motions etc
Gloucester Room Premier Inn A38 Twigworth GL2 9PG
Wed 24 May 7:30pm Area Groups Council Meeting
Gloucester Room Premier Inn A38 Twigworth GL2 9PG



Fri-Sun May 19-21 Find us at the Wincombe Walking Festival



Obituary: Joyce Longhurst, passed away aged 99 (fifth from right below - large smile).

Fifty years ago there were no red (nor green) dotted lines on maps indicating footpaths. It was ramblers volunteers who took time to try to make sure paths on the ground were on the Definitive Map so that later Ordnance Survey could show them on their maps. Today many walkers tend to take the paths and maps for granted.



Joyce was one of the founding members of what is now called South Cotswold Ramblers. Groups were set up in the 1970s and The Stroud and District Footpath Group (the Group's original name) was established in 1975. Joyce was also a member of our affiliated Stroud Rambling Club. Members of both organisations were busy visiting Shire Hall to make copies of the Gloucestershire Definitive Map and work out where the legal paths were. Both are still finding and claiming the odd path not on the map today (as are other Groups across the Area) and work very hard defending Public Rights of Way.

From right to left you can see "Little Jim" Fern (Cider with Rosie fame), Peter Heaton former chairman (who erected over 300 signposts with volunteers), Tony Drake peering through, Don McKie, Joyce Longhurst, Frank Wragg, Mavis Rear, Kathy Bullen former chairman, Eric Seymour (who lived to 94). You may also spot Margaret Taylor (former Group Secretary) in patterned sweater, and 5th from left Ruth Cook, who organised Group work clearance parties for many years.

Thanks to Mike Garner who sent the 1995 photo above, of a walk to launch the Group's first book of Favourite Walks.

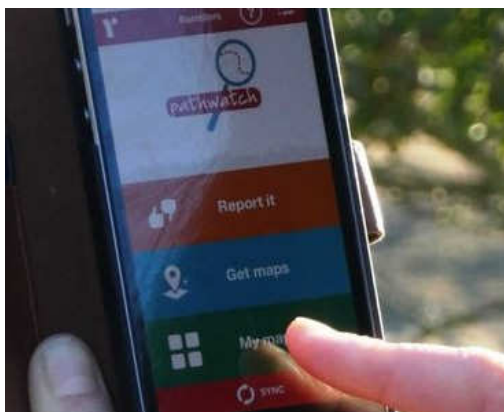
Out and about

It's that time of year when we expect some heavy rain to test our walking gear. Ancient footpaths and bridleways were often constructed with ditches either side to help keep clear of standing water. Over time ditches can become blocked or when a path is diverted, drainage may not be so good and a mini lake appears. Although walkers tend to make do, sometimes they need another way through. What could have been a straightforward drainage issue develops into a new fence, stile or both. If you spot one of these, before it's too late, please let us know footpaths@gloucestershireramblers.org.uk or try 'Pathwatch'.



Pathwatch Tips

- > Try Pathwatch on your home PC if you don't have a phone.
- > Lost? Click 'Report it' then 'Locate me'. An OS map appears of where you are.
- > Click 'Get Maps' to download some 1km squares to a phone before your walk





Seven of our Groups within Ramblers Gloucestershire Area:- North Cotswold, South Cotswold, Forest of Dean, Cirencester, Cleeve and Gloucester, respond to footpath issues and lead walks across the region. Gloucestershire Walking Group organises walks for members of working age with a sub-group for 20-30s. Most members join a Group but are also automatically a member of ramblers Gloucestershire Area and able to enjoy the get together 10-12 mile Mid –Weeks walks on the next page

Forest of Dean Ramblers www.fodramblers.org.uk

As well as the usual series of walks Forest of Dean Ramblers is offering holidays in North Wales and the Yorkshire Dales and is also organising a series of courses.

A recent Leadership Course in January was extremely successful and fully booked with 17 members attending. Delivered by Richard Holmes the Area Footpath Secretary, it followed a similar format to that a few months ago at GWG giving prospective leaders that extra bit of confidence. The course consists of a presentation in the morning and practical leading along forest paths in the afternoon.

Basic First Aid and Outdoor Emergency First Aid Courses are also being organised to help ensure our group has a continuous stream of enthusiastic leaders able to deliver a varied programme of walks for the Forest of Dean Ramblers.



Cirencester Group www.cirencesterramblers.org.uk

The group has been very active during the winter months. Our AGM on 26th November had a different format this year. Instead of the usual evening meeting, we opted for a daytime one on Sunday 26th November, and incorporated a short walk and bring and share lunch. This was well attended and proved very popular, with hot homemade soup and coffee.

The Christmas lunch at the Royal Agricultural University was well attended with over 40 people enjoying the event, including retired members. It was a chance to catch up with old friends who no longer walk on a regular basis.

Social events to come include our usual Quiz Night on 31st January, a Barn Dance with The Amazing Matchless Dance Band on 31st March and a weekend away in Sidmouth, Devon at the beginning of March. An Autumn mid-week break in Torquay is also planned.

We have managed to fit in some splendid winter walks and the weather has been kind to us with no walks having to be cancelled due to bad weather.

The Path Maintenance Volunteers have been busy too with 3 sessions working on the Wysis Way near Kemble and help at Offa's Dyke in the Forest of Dean.



Cleeve Group www.Cleeveramblers.org.uk

Cleeve has again completed an enjoyable and varied full programme of walks

- weekly Sunday walks averaging around seven and a half miles,
 - monthly short pub walks of about five miles and
 - our Festive Walk which begins with Mulled Wine and Mince Pies
- Walkers that have attended including visitors from other groups and abroad.

Our committee meets every 2 months to keeps our various activities co-ordinated. As well as the walks there are Social Events such as Walking Holidays. In October we visited Lulworth with HF where the walks, weather and accommodation were excellent. In November we held a Quiz night at the Royal Oak.

Our Footpath Committee is kept busy with various issues raised by members the general public and notifications from the County Council Public Rights of Way Department. In the coming year it expects to form a working party to provide path maintenance. It is currently occupied with several applications for diversion of paths.



Gloucester Group Away Game www.gloucester-ramblers.org.uk

The Group is planning to walk the entire 135 mile Glyndwr's Way long distance path from Knighton to Welshpool in sections beginning in February this year, to celebrate our illustrious Chairman's special birthday! As a result, our interest in the long range weather forecast has increased considerably since we decided to have a go!! Those with long memories still remember being faced with having to ford a newly emerged river when we walked the Coast to Coast a few years ago (we chose the road instead!).



A page of Mid Week walks for the Gloucestershire Area

Gloucestershire Area organises a programme day walks approx of 10-12 miles long usually mid-week in the county and neighbouring counties. Why not give us a try (please contact leader beforehand). Once a member, all our walks are free! (Sorry Access dogs only but see walks at www.fodramblers.org.uk) Feedback GRNews@gloucestershireramblers.org.uk

Wed 1 March 11 miles/17.7 km – Moderate **Coaley Peak**
10:00: Coaley Peak Car Park (GL10 3TP, SO795015)
Hills and valleys from Coaley Peak. Picnic lunch.
Contact: Catherine, 01452 559924 or 07456 425880 on day

Wed 8 March 10 miles/16.1 km – Moderate **Frampton Mansell**
10:00: Park roadside verge just south of village (E168/LR163).
(GL6 8JE, SO920023) Frampton Mansell to Cherington and Coates.
Contact: Andy & Wendy, 01453 885498 Picnic lunch.

Wed 15 March 12 miles/19.3 km – Moderate **Kingscote**
10:00: Park at rear of Hunters Hall pub CP. (GL8 8YA, ST815960)
Walk around valleys and hills including Ozleworth, Tyley Bottom,
Coombe, Newark Park, and Ozleworth Bottom. Picnic.
Contact: Dave, 01452 721792 or 07593 296983 on day

Wed 22 March 11 miles/17.7 km – Moderate **Dymock**
Note 9:30: Park considerably in the village and meet at the front of
the church near PH for the start of the walk. (E189/190/LR149)..
Picnic. (GL18 2AQ, SO700311) The 'Daffodil Way'
Contact: Rosie & John, 01684 273746 or 07933 783799 on day

Wed 29 March 10 mi/16.1 km – Strenuous **Grwyne Fawr Horseshoe**
10:00: Blaen y Cwm car park. OL13. (NP7 7LY, SO252284)
Ascend valley side to Pen y Gadair then over Waun Fach, Rhos Dirion
to Blacksmith's Anvil before dropping back down valley to the start.
Contact: Mike, 01594 562341 or 07490 138413 on day Picnic.

Wed 5 April 9.5 miles/15km Moderate **Charfield Railway Disaster**
10:00: Farmers Table Upper CP, (Tortworth Estate Farm Shop)
LR162/E167). (GL12 8HF, ST704930) Tortworth, Charfield, Churchend,
Bibstone, Leyhill Arboretum. 540ft ascent. Fairly easy, views Nibley,
Contact: Richard, 07984 853775 Picnic. Good Cafe at end of walk.

Wed 12 April 11 miles/17.7 km – Moderate **Woolhope**
10:00: Woolhope Village Hall CP (E189/LR149). (HR1 4QZ, SO610360)
Haugh Wood, Backbury Hill, Prior's Court to Mordiford. Then Wye
Valley Walk return Woolhope past Alford's Mill. Three nature
reserves Bring a picnic lunch, pub at Mordiford for drinks.
Contact: Susanne, 01453 757212 or 07587 713668 on day.

Wed 19 April 12.5 m/20 km Mod **Secrets of the 'Land Between'**
10:00: Tintern Lower Wireworks Car Park. Turn right in Tintern
(coming from Monmouth) at the Royal George pub and the CP is on
the right after 300 yards. (OL14). (NP16 6TQ, SO527001)
An exploration of the country between the Wye and Severn. Iconic
features, Devil's Pulpit, Offa's Dyke, and Wintour's Leap, less known
a spectacular outlook across the cliffs of the Wye Valley from the top
of the Disused Tintern Quarry. We also (if weather kind!) walk above
the Severn Estuary to Tidenham Church, with views of sandbanks and
bridges. The final stretch is along a little used (by walkers!) railway
track parallel to the Wye. Steep initial climb, and a moderate descent
into Tintern at the end of the walk.
Contact: Lynn, 01291 689954 or 07957 662209 on day Picnic lunch.

Wed 26 April 10 miles/16.1 km – Mod **Bredon Hill and River Avon**
10:00: Eckington Bridge CP. (E190) (WR10 3DD, SO922422)
Walk along the river to Bredons Norton, Westmancote, up onto
Bredon, down to Birlingham and back across fields to the car park.
Contact: Maggie, 01684 592727 or 07938 543055 on day. Picnic

Wed 3 May 10 miles/16.1 km – Moderate Hilly walk **Painswick**
10:00: Walker's CP off B4075 opp Rococo Garden (E179/LR162)
(GL6 6SL, SO867105) Painswick village, stream, Slad, Down Farm, Bulls
Cross, Damsells Mill, Tocknell Court, Royal William, Painswick Beacon.
Contact: Arnold, 01242 603576 or 07789 317291 Picnic.

Wed 10 May 11 m/18km – Moderate **High Meadow Woods and Biblins**
10:00: lay-by A4136 600m east of Staunton (OL14) (GL16 8NT, SO558123)
High Meadow Woods and Biblins taking in Hearkening Rocks, suspension
bridge, ferry (hopefully) plus various workings, caves and sisters. Some
narrow tracks on steep ground plus minor scrambles. This is a loop walk.
Contact: David P, 07824 603711 Picnic lunch with a view.

-----DARK PEAK BREAK-----

Monday 14th May to Friday 19th May.

The Area Group (Wednesday midweek walks) will be visiting Hope in
Derbyshire for 4 nights, 3 days walking For details, contact David &
Henrietta on 01452 302024 or e-mail david@jaeger-demon.co.uk

----- New walks welcome for July-October programme -----

Wed 24 May 2017 11 m/18km Mod. **Grosmont - Views Bluebell Woods**
10:00: Meet in Grosmont by the Angel Inn. Park in the street. Public
toilets. OL13/E189 (NP7 8EP, SO405244)
Undulating meadows and lush green valleys, carpets of bluebells and
panoramic views. Bring a picnic lunch.
Contact: Jenny, 01600 715719 or 07455 267262 on day

Wed 31 May 11 miles/17.7 km – Moderate **Marshfield**
10:00: Lay-by south side of A420 west end Marshfield Village (SN14 8JJ,
ST772737) Little Solsbury Hill & back including parts of the Limestone Link.
Contact: Mick, 01453 542082 or 07443 643462 on day Picnic Lunch

Wed 7 June 2017 11 miles/17.7 km – Moderate **Redbrook**
10:00: Redbrook CP (charges) (NP25 4LP, SO536099)
To Newland via the hidden valley, onto St Briavels via Stowe Green before
descending into the Wye Valley and following Offa's Dyke back to
Redbrook. Energetic: one long, gradual ascent and two shorter ascents
(1742 ft in total). Bring a picnic lunch.
Contact: Jackie, 01594 564417 or 07767 351190 on day

Wed 14 June 2017 10 miles/16.1 km – Moderate **Coaley Peak**
10:00: Coaley Peak CP. (GL11 5AU, SO795012)
A moderate walk with a few hills taking in Dursley, Uley and Nympsfield.
Contact: Sue L, 01452 741229 or 07808 116725 on day Picnic.

Wed 21 June 10 miles/16.1 km – Moderate **Pewsey Downs**
10:00: Knap Hill CP, north-east of Alton Barnes. (SN8 4JX, SU116636)
A moderate walk over downland following the White Horse Way. We shall
see ancient earthworks, a twentieth century White Horse and the
preserved grassland of Milk Hill. Picnic.
Contact: Henrietta & David, 01452 302024 or 07832 234790 on day

Wed 28 June 2017 10 miles/16.1 km – Moderate **Winchcombe**
10:00: Winchcombe Back Lane CP (£1.00). OL45 (GL54 5PS, SP024284)
A circuit of the countryside around Winchcombe passing Sudeley Castle,
St. Kenelms Well, Monks Hole, Ireley Farm and Abbots Leys. Picnic.
Contact: Ann & Gerry, 01242 674107 or 07984 266321 on day

Moderate - a good level of fitness. May include some steep paths and
open country, and may be at a brisk pace.

Strenuous - above average fitness level. May include hills and
rough country, and may be at a brisk pace.

Walking boots and warm, waterproof clothing are essential.
If in doubt about fitness please contact the walk leader beforehand.