

SOAR FEET

Winter 2019/20

Newsletter of the Loughborough and District Ramblers.

Happy New Year 2020

If all goes smoothly with the printing of this edition of Soar Feet, it should arrive through your letterbox by mid-January. I trust you all had a great Christmas and wish you a happy and successful 2020.

Loughborough and District AGM and Social

The AGM was held at Ronald West Court on 30th October and chaired by Dave Twigg. Fifteen members of the group attended the meeting. One new committee member, Chris Rimbault, was elected. The full committee is as follows:

Chairman:	Position unfilled
Secretary:	Lynne Atkinson
Treasurer:	Chris Rimbault
Programme Secretary:	Unfilled
Area Rep:	Sue Bicknell
Footpaths Officer:	Stuart Tyler
Social Secretary	Sue Mears
Webmaster	Dave Twigg
Other Committee Members: Margaret Machin, Heather Jenkins, Karen Chapman	

The position of Chairman remains unfilled and will continue to be rotated between members of the committee for the purpose of running their meetings. The membership was assured that the non-appointment of a Programme Secretary will be accommodated by adopting a rolling programme, which will be in place when the current programme ends in May. This will be updated on the web site.

John Howells was thanked for his contribution to the group over many years, most recently as Treasurer and Area Representative. Sue Bicknell was also thanked as she also stepped down as Programme Secretary but remains on the committee as Area Representative. Presentations were made to both.

Members have been previously notified of a proposal that the group should follow most of the other local groups within the Area and go paperless, relying instead on email and the website. After a robust discussion, the proposal was overwhelmingly, but not unanimously agreed. More detail, and how to opt into receiving the newsletter by mail, is given on page 2

After the meeting, there was an excellent buffet. Thanks to Sue Mears for organising the food and the venue.

Dates for the Diary

Skittles Supper:

7:00pm Friday 31st January 2020

Soar Bridge Inn in Barrow upon Soar.

Details of menu options and how to book a place are on page 2.

Booking deadline is 23rd January 2020

Leicestershire and Rutland Area AGM.

Loughborough is one of eight local Groups forming the Area.

Saturday 25th January 2020, from 09.15 to start at 10.00 am at Coalville Labour Club LE67 3PW.

The guest speaker is Gerald Price from the Woodland Trust

Skittles Evening and Supper

We are repeating what has proved to a popular and successful event.

Friday 31st January 2020 at 7:00pm

Soar Bridge Inn

29 Bridge Street, Barrow Upon Soar,
LE12 8PN

Menu Choices:

- Homemade Steak and Tiger Ale Pie with Chips and Gravy
- Vegetarian Lasagne and Garlic Bread
- Fish and Chips

Garden peas are served with all the meals.

Cost will be £10 per head subject to getting 20 people. Please pay cash on the night.

To book a place, please contact Sue Mears with your menu choice by 23rd January 2020
07545 395817
01509231350

susanmears16@gmail.com



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Plans for future paperless communication

At the AGM held on 30 October 2019 it was agreed that we will move to electronic communication from January 2020. This means that, in general, there will be no further communication by post to members after this Newsletter. A rolling Walks Programme will always be available on our website. Future Newsletters will be posted on our web site and members will be informed by email when it is available to look at or download. However, any members still wishing to receive a printed copy of the Newsletter should contact the Secretary Lynne Atkinson on 0116 237 4465 and she will ensure that a copy is sent to you. Notification of AGMs will be by email, or by post to those members without an email address.

Dave Twigg and Lynne Atkinson

Derwent Valley Walks

Dave Twigg has turned the Derwent Valley Heritage Way into a series of circular walks which have spanned much of 2019. Here he writes about the planning and the walks themselves. Photos are by John Samson.

The initial idea seemed quite straightforward - complete a series of walks to cover the entire 55-mile length of the Derwent Valley Heritage Way (DVHW) from Shardlow to Ladybower Reservoir. As is always the case though, the reality was somewhat more complicated. Firstly, the decision was made to use circular walks wherever possible, partly for logistical reasons but mainly to enable high level sections to be included. Secondly, each walk was to be limited to about 12 miles so as to give a good day out without being too demanding. Finally, the overall walk was extended to cover the whole of the Derwent Valley from where the

Derwent joins the Trent near Shardlow to its source high up on the moors at Swains Greave, between Bleaklow and Howden Moors. Thus, the concept evolved into 11 walks, one linear (from Long Eaton to Derby) and 10 circular, each about 12 miles, to be undertaken one each month starting in January 2019, with the total distance increased to 134 miles.

The walks proved to be very popular with a total of 25 members taking part and an average of 11 on each. The first six walks covered the southern section of the DVHW from Shardlow to Chatsworth House. Each walk explored the

industrial and cultural heritage of mills, factories, housing, mining, railways and canals along the valley and its towns and villages such as Derby, Belper, Cromford, Matlock Bath, Matlock and Rowsley. Five of the walks also included high level sections from which the superb scenery of the valley and surrounding countryside could be appreciated. The next three walks completed the northern section of the DVHW from Chatsworth House to Ladybower Reservoir, passing through Baslow, Calver, Grindleford and Hathersage, but also including the long line of gritstone edges high above the valley floor. The final two walks explored the Upper Derwent valley beyond the DVHW taking in the Ladybower, Upper Derwent and Howden Reservoirs, the gritstone edges high up on Derwent and Howden Moors, the source of the Derwent at Swains Greave, and the occasional bog.



Lunch on Derwent Edge

Despite being fixed on the walking programme months ahead, most of the walks were completed in very favourable conditions but the wet weather experienced in late summer and autumn did lead to a couple of problems. Because of distance limitations, the two walks in August and September planned to use the stepping stones across the Derwent to the west of Hathersage. Normally this shouldn't have been a problem at that time of year but in August most of the stones, which are uneven and of different heights, were completely underwater. One member, at least showing he was well prepared, stripped down to his swimming shorts and started to wade across, only to be disappointed when the rest of the group turned back to take an alternative route. Fortunately, by the September walk the river level had briefly dropped enough for the group to enjoy crossing the stones at a second attempt.

The final walk was always going to present a challenge, partly because of its remoteness and



Crossing the Derwent stepping stones

the boggy and pathless terrain to be crossed but also because it was to be done in November, with its limited daylight, as the road to the start of the walk is only open on Saturdays after British Summer Time has finished. In the event the walk was scheduled immediately following the South Yorkshire and Derbyshire floods which caused such devastation. It only took place because it was so high upstream, and hence not flooded like most of the Derwent Valley that day, and also because no further rain was forecast. The approach to Swains Grieve was somewhat saturated but the semi-frozen higher ground made crossing the moors on the return somewhat easier than usual. Despite this, two people did sink into bogs rather more than they anticipated. It was an arduous but memorable day, and the whole series of walks, finished with a meal and award of "certificates" in the Ladybower Inn.

Overall the project was very successful with the favourite sections by common consent being the two either side of Ladybower Reservoir which included the high gritstone edges. Despite this, the most talked about is definitely the "bog walk". And now it's over, what next? The Limestone Way starting in January 2020.



Crossing the bogs on Howden Moors

Meet the Member: Karen Chapman

I joined The Ramblers in May 2018 after some of the National Forest Walking Festival walks. I met people from several Rambler groups, but it was the Loughborough crew that I felt more at home with, maybe it's because some of the group are a little quirky or crazy like me. Yes, you know who you are!

I wanted to get involved, so last year I joined the committee as a floating member, mostly being on hand as a backup for our webmaster Dave, alongside putting my hat in the ring and leading my very first walk last November, I managed to bring everybody back safely so clearly I didn't do a bad job but that does seem like a lifetime ago now.

Although I have lived in Leicester for 22 years, the people of Leicester class me as a 'Southerner'. I haven't lost the accent, but I didn't live in London either but rather a little town about 30 miles north of the smoke called 'Hitchin'. Growing up in a little market town with my two brothers was lovely, and I fondly remember Saturday afternoons playing in the local recreation ground with my dad and brother Simon. It was one of those idyllic spaces filled with fun and laughter from children and music from the bandstand.

I left school at 16 and joined British Gas on a 2-year youth training scheme following my dad's encouragement, and on Sunday 18th September 1988 my dad drove me to their training college in Bishops Cleeve to start what became a thirty-one-year career. I held various roles over the years from managing the overnight Customer Service operation to Business Change and eventually ending my career in Risk Management. Yes, you read that correctly, my role was made redundant, so I left my corporate role at the end of October, sadly I am not old enough to retire just yet....but I'm counting the next 3 years!

Now, as all of you that know me are aware, I am crazy into my fitness and don't spend a lot of time sitting still. Yet, here I am again sitting down writing this bio! Being made redundant presented me with a fantastic opportunity and mechanism to obtain my Level 2 Gym Instructing and L3 Personal Trainer qualification to turn my love of fitness into a successful career.

On the 4th November I embarked on a 6 week mission, and believe me that is the right word, to gain the qualifications I needed. Upon booking the course I remember the advisor saying to me

that it was an intense course and it was advisable to do some pre-reading. Armed with this information I started to drip feed myself with knowledge of Anatomy & Physiology. However, what I was not prepared for was being in class and practical assessments between 9-5, then coming home and working until gone midnight every day to complete homework. It was a tough course, but I thoroughly enjoyed it and I am looking forward to what 2020 brings. I shall be staying close for a while to my Rambler colleagues as I have been given a home at the Pure Gym in Loughborough starting in January. Alongside working with and training clients in the gym I will be looking to run some outside training sessions and old school style fitness classes from local community centres.

But for now, I am going to enjoy the Christmas holidays with family and friends, take long walks in nature and generally enjoy a well-deserved break from study. I hope you all have a fabulous 2020.



Karen at the end of a walk at Robin Hood's Bay

Muddy Boots Award

This year's award went to Peter Richart for his waterlogged walk, Trent Valley Villages held on 11th August 2019



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Area Quiz Evening

On 1st November 2018, John Samson and Dave Twigg headed to the Area Quiz which, this year, was hosted by the Melton Group. Again, there was not a full team from Loughborough, so they joined forces with Juliet Youngs and John Jackson from Leicester Ramblers. I feel that at this point, I should make noises of encouragement for more support; this might, however, not be to John and Dave's advantage as they succeeded in retaining the trophy.



The winning team with the trophy

Website resources

This is the last edition of Soar Feet that will be posted out to you, unless you opt to receive a mailed copy (page 2). A colour version of Soar Feet with active links will continue to be produced and will be available to download from the Loughborough Ramblers' website (as is also currently the case). The website is also the place to look for the walks programme which, from May 2020, will be a rolling programme and for any last-minute changes to walks enforced by the weather or local conditions.

Your Soar Feet

I hope that you find something of interest in this newsletter. It would be great to receive suggestions of what you might like to see included, but also possible contributions; an interesting find or a quirky/amusing photo taken on a local walk?

Please send to ted.wells12@gmail.com.

Unattributed articles are by the editor.