



The Disabled Rambler

The Newsletter of the Disabled Ramblers

A charitable company:

Registered Charity No. 1103508

www.disabledramblers.co.uk

Autumn 2017



Judy Cunningham—Editor

Email: jac4912@yahoo.co.uk

Hello Everyone

I am writing this on a very unusual day. It's Bank Holiday Monday and it's a beautiful sunny, summer day for once, with no signs of rain for the next few days.

It's only August and we are already starting to prepare for the Rambles during 2018. Bernard and I have been to look at routes for the rambles we are leading during May. I'm sure the other Ramble Leaders will shortly be doing the same for their rambles, if they haven't done them already.

I have really enjoyed reading your articles telling us what you have been doing during the last few weeks and months, from rambling around lovely gardens, climbing steep rock faces, rambling over the very wet Yorkshire moors, to the sights of Central London. Thank you all.

Owing to other commitments, and with the agreement of the Committee, there will be a change to the frequency of the Newsletters during 2018. Instead of the usual four, there will be three, produced in May, September and December. I would appreciate your help in sending articles in and photographs.

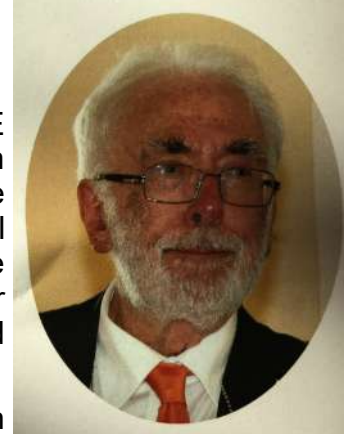
The next Newsletter deadline is **Monday 4th December**.

Best wishes

Judy

FAREWELL TO OUR PRESIDENT by Rosie Norris

As you might know our President Dr Michael (Mike) Bruton, MBE sadly died on 24 May this year and his funeral was held on 15th June at the Oxford Crematorium in Headington. The service was well attended by family and friends, with many of Mike's council colleagues from Windsor and Maidenhead present including the current Mayor. (Mike was himself at one point the Mayor of Windsor and Maidenhead). Other DR members attending were Judy and Bernard Cunningham and Sue and Colin Raymond.



In the Eulogy Jonathan Bruton praised his father's lifelong interest in helping people – an interest inspired in large part by his father's firm Christian beliefs. Mike's determination and his ability to influence and encourage others helped bring about the creation of the Disabled Ramblers as an organisation - allowing people with mobility problems for the first time to access the countryside. Together with like minded friends, Peter Field and Robin Helby, and with the support of his first wife, Jo, Mike began the long struggle to increase countryside access by networking with the great and the good.

Mike moved to Oxford following his marriage to Valerie in 2013 and became a regular attendee at his local church St Nicolas engaging the Rector in many discussions. The funeral reception was held in St Nicolas's church hall and even here Mike's interest in helping others was evident as he partially funded the hall's wheelchair accessible loo.

To sum up Michael was an inspirational man whose intellect and kindness benefitted so many. He will be very sadly missed.



Do you recognise this photo?

Where and when was it taken?

Are you on it?

I was given it by a Ranger whilst reccing routes in Derbyshire for next year. Judy



Not the signs we normally see.

Spotted whilst in the Lake District in June.
Judy



INSIDE DISABLED RAMBLERS— Judy Cunningham

For this newsletter, I have been asked to write the article on behalf of the Committee.

We have several meetings during the year and one topic keeps coming up, that is Dogs on Rambles. Rambling in a group with scooters is rather different from when taking your dog out on your own or with a couple of friends. This means that we have to ask you to think about the following.

There have been several complaints from DR members about dogs off their leads being a hazard when the dogs dart in between walkers, causing them to stop suddenly and causing scooter riders to brake sharply. This can result in rear end shunts and injury, and just having dogs constantly running between scooters is very stressful for the scooter riders.

Dogs on leads which are long, are also a real danger when these dogs run in front of other scooters but are still attached to a person, both on or off a scooter, who may be several people or scooters back along the path. Long leads are also a considerable trip hazard to walkers as they can wrap around legs which may result in falls and injury.

DR has been shown in a very bad light when loose dogs have shot off into fields containing sheep and across moorland with nesting birds; recently this was witnessed by locals including farm and estate workers and will probably result in DR being banned from visiting that area in the future.

So as a responsible organisation, and as a Duty of Care to all our members and guests on rambles, it was decided to reissue the Dogs on Rambles Policy which was originally written back in 2010. The message is still the same.

The Dogs on Rambles Policy is on the DR Website, as it has been for several years. It is sent out to new members, and to ensure that everyone is aware of the Dogs on Rambles policy it is now also sent to everyone attending a ramble, along with their Joining Instructions; when participants sign in at each ramble we also aim to show the policy to members with dogs.

The policy is not intended to offend anyone, only to promote safer and more pleasant rambles for all.

London in July -



On July 29th London was full of bikes – racing bikes, tandems, mountain bikes, Kiddie bikes with stabilizers, a leather settee mounted on two bike-frames, lots of baby sidecars, and three intrepid Disabled Ramblers. The roads were closed from 11am to 4pm on a route from Buckingham Palace to Trafalgar Square, St Paul's Cathedral, the Embankment and points between. The weather was kind (ish), there were 2-3 disabled toilets en route, and there were various festival sites with all kinds of jollities happening, on the way.

Parking was free in Hyde Park and Pete (husband and carer) could pick up a Boris Bike to join the throng. Brass bands played, choirs sang and bystanders applauded us on our way. The Queen was not at home, or I'm sure she would have joined in the applause.

What a day ! Look out for next year's Freecycle London. See you there! **Jackie Jonas**

Little Tryfan...or Bust—Terry Taylor

"Ambitions can be a little dangerous, at my time of Life", they said. But, did I listen? Not really, as I thought that I knew better, of course.

This particular idea had been postponed two years earlier, due to two relatively minor, but very limiting injuries, which I'd incurred on another exciting, challenge, namely the Afon Briant Tidal Stepping Stones, in Anglesey.



A return to fitness, of a sort, re-awakened the idea, once more, earlier this year. Preparations began with a second recce in February 2017, to ensure that I could still get to the starting-point, the base of the massive rock-slab of Tryfan Bach, an ideal place for rock-climbing, close to the A5, in the Ogwen Valley. I had often used it, in my previous Life, as an 'introduction to rock'. Perfect for beginners.

This time, I found it far easier to get there, than my first successful attempt, just after my release from hospital, in 2009, which had been an 'almighty' struggle. Having done that, I could then think about the next stages. First, to climb the slab, and second, getting back down again, intact, and in one 'complete' piece. No worries there then!



Fast forward several months, and the event is tomorrow, (21.6.17), the Summer Solstice, (and longest day) a date chosen to maximise the hours of daylight. Weather is, for once, onside. I am, naturally 'keyed up', and the team is organised, and 'ready to go'.

I left my vehicle at the roadside, then at 8.30am on my Trampler, I set off with Des and Hazel, long-time supportive friends. A short ride brought us to the start of the difficult 'walk-in', which is dealt with fairly smoothly. I even have time to rest, recuperate, and prepare before the 'Main Men', Malcolm and Mark, both fully qualified British Mountain Guides, arrive. The temperature is already rising, and I am prepared for the struggle, when Malcolm arrives.... alone! Mark has been "forced to let Malc down", for medical reasons.

A swift 're-jig' of Mal's plan of campaign, and we get started, Des now assisting me from behind, also on the rope, and Hazel taking photos with Des' camera, from the 'non-climbing' side lines.

Mal climbs steadily for forty feet, and takes a stance, and readies himself, to bring me up the first section. I start confidently on large holds for the feet, but little for my one good hand. I can make progress by a technique called 'laybacking', albeit on one hand/arm, rather than the usual two. Tricky and a test of balance, but I'm soon stood on a ledge just below Malcolm.



Cont...

Little Tryfan...or Bust - Terry Taylor cont....

Mal resumes his upward progress, neatly placing his boots on the small 'spaced' holds, to take another stance at about 50 or 60 ft. My turn to climb again, but this is trickier as there are fewer holds, for both hand and foot, and more awkwardly placed. I try all the options and combinations, as best I can, scraping my elbows, and leaving 'blood on the rocks' in the process. Knees too, are utilised where possible, as a 'judicious' knee, can often be 'useful' in rock-climbing, as we've all learnt, as 'beginners' bruises don't last long.

Not for me though! I can find no way to make progress, and having tired myself greatly, I have no option, but to 'retreat', while I still can. I have no strength in my left arm, so cannot keep enough distance from the rock, to see where the holds are. I **must** descend. That is not too difficult, as Mal can easily lower me down, in a controlled slide to the base of the rocks, like a heavy sack of potatoes.

Although not reaching the summit, I feel it was a success, not at all a 'failure', but a victory of 'Hope' over 'Fear' and 'Doubt'. I feel that I could not have tried harder, or done anything more. I was totally and utterly, physically and mentally, EXHAUSTED!

Failure is not trying, 'not' taking that first, biggest, and most difficult step. My companions had done all they could, for which, "great thanks", but my body was 'unable' to give any more, on the day.



Man on the Moor - Ian Lawson

One of my first rambles with DR was on the Old Wife's Way near the Hole of Horcum, in God's own country. We were informed that the Hole of Horcum was created by a giant, who scooped up a handful of earth to throw at his wife. He missed and the earth created the hill nearby called Blakey Topping. I didn't



believe in giants until today when I came across this chap on top of the moor. He didn't say much, well nowt at all if I'm honest. He was there looking at the view over Westerdale. If he had been a bit more talkative I would have asked if he was Jeremy Corbyn's twin brother.

Are there any DR members who would like some company to recce rambles, or who would enjoy a few days away helping recci routes with a local DRer? This is just a preliminary enquiry to see if any members would I like to be included in this idea?

It would be great (for those who are able) helping look for National/Regional routes to add to the DR programme! **Shirley Keeble**



Sizergh Castle welcomes DR to Open New Route—Jean Crosbie



Rangers from Sizergh Castle, a property in Cumbria owned by the National Trust, are opening up a new Trampler route around the estate. Jean Crosbie has been testing it together with Neil from Langdale, Will Clark and the two Sizergh rangers who are working on it. Jean says "I had a great couple of hours out with the team. When it's ready they'd like to make a splash with the press and a ribbon for cutting and wondered if the DRs would consider joining in. There's an excellent cafe for refreshments, lots of picnic tables and there was talk of making the Castle

grounds complimentary for us to explore as well and other suggestions for extending the ramble. It's likely to be Spring 2018."

We hope DR members will be able to attend the ceremony and take part in a ramble around the estate - more details later. We had a lovely ramble there in 2014 when this photo was taken - you can see lots more under 2014 Photos on our web..

Heligan Gardens - Nicola West

Recently I visited the beautiful Lost Gardens of Heligan, in Cornwall. Despite being told at the ticket office that I would be unable to access most of the garden due to the steep terrain, I am pleased to report that my TGA Supersport made it around almost every path (without steps!) that I attempted as they were almost all hard packed hoggin surfaces. It's a beautiful garden and I can highly recommend it for a day out as there's plenty to see, from lovely formal gardens to woodland paths. I went back into the ticket office after my visit and marked them up a map showing the areas I was able to access with the off-road scooter, and suggested



they produce a route map for scooter users showing the accessible paths! I also gave

them a list of off road scooters used by the Disabled Ramblers which would be able to access the garden. A great day out suitable for any confident Disabled Rambler who is competent using their scooter on terrain which can be steep and uneven in places.



Thank You Bryan - Shirley Keeble

Can I say a public 'Thank you' to Bryan Ulyett, Volunteer MSU tower, for organising an evening meal for everyone on Thursday of the Brecon rambles! A 'roundup of rambles' enjoying good food together. It was thoroughly appreciated by all. Maybe a regular event?

North Yorkshire Moors Tour - Joy Davies



What could be better than a June ramble on the moors of my beloved Yorkshire, starting only a few miles from my home in the hot sunny weather we were having? Memories of years gone by when I walked these same paths with friends, alone or with my dog. True, there were times when I had to hang onto my friend as she careered towards the edge of the cliff on the 'stiff breeze' and another when my dog refused to get out of the car into the snowstorm one May! But that wasn't going to happen in June, was it?

It wasn't raining when I set off for The Lion Inn on Blakey Bank, the highest in Yorkshire, but it was when I got there! And how. Horizontal rain, at high velocity stung our faces, the fog was thick, the wind cold. We were suited and booted and soaking wet and we hadn't even left the car park! Off we went, undaunted (well a little bit daunted). The lovely views I knew were there - weren't, nor was the wildlife I'd hoped to see - well it was but wisely having a 'duvet day'. We are a hardy lot so we pressed on, right until lunchtime when we abandoned it. There was always tomorrow- it wouldn't be as bad tomorrow, would it? I drove home in a steamed up car with the window open. At least I'd get the moor air - and pneumonia!

On Tuesday, Newgate Bank and Rievaulx Moor. Off we set through just a little bit of rain. Not for long - soon it was lashing it down as we left the shelter of the trees and started to climb, the Yorkshire fog and face biting rain returned. The scooters rode through deep puddles on the forest road with never a care and we huddled over the controls, wet, cold and without a care in the world? I noticed the dog accompanying the scooter ahead of me took cover under its owner's cape. How intelligent I thought. Now, what does that say for us? At the top of the moor it was lunchtime. I remember the view (of old) I was using a lot of imagination. We had a little conference here. It did seem to be improving out there (more imagination). We decided to push on. The dog didn't seem impressed.



Nothing stops a Disabled Rambler does it? Oh yes, it does! My scooter started it—it stopped. The dreaded problem, water in the electrics and could not be made to start. Another scooter failed but it was restarted. The decision was taken - we had to abandon. By wonderful organisation, strength, and co-operation etc. I ended up being towed back. Such ignominy, towed back by a scooter and held back on the downhill bits by strong helpers, still in torrential rain. The deep puddles of the outward journey had gone. They were now lakes, water up to and over the scooter platforms. Oh, I did feel a fool!

Next task, get home and get dry sufficient clothes for the next ramble. The highlight of the day? We heard a curlew! I stood in a hot steaming shower and reflected on my two rambles. Do you know what? I thoroughly enjoyed them!

Cont....

North Yorkshire Moors Tour - Joy Davies cont....

A day later came the next ramble from Old Byland, a few miles up the road from home. I got the car out, it was fine and then the heavens opened! I'm not proud of myself, but I chickened out. The thought of another soggy bottom was just too much but I learnt the next day that they didn't have the heavy rain, just the wet kind and they had managed to complete the ramble. Well done.

Friday and the last ramble for me. Would you credit it? Lovely sunny day and a friend to accompany me. A fabulous ramble round Sutton Bank top. James Herriot's favourite view. Yorkshire laid out before us, looking as if it was always like this. Gliders and raptors in the sky, The White Horse shining, the sun almost hot. What beauty, what majesty! Lake Gormire shimmering in its wooded cocoon below the cliff, keeping its legends and secrets safe and mysterious in its dark waters. Oh Yorkshire, you are a beauty.

Back to the car park and time to say goodbye to friends and comrades in arms. No matter what Mother Nature throws at us, Disabled Ramblers ramble through it all. Friendly, kind helpful people, super dogs, grand organisation, see you next year. Good luck! Good health! Good rambling!

