

# Liverpool Catholic Ramblers Association

# NEWSLETTER

## September 1999

7th Series

Issue No. 21

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### **Rambles - we need a bigger turnout**

At the present we are just not getting enough people on the coaches. We are getting somewhere between 30 to 40 people out but more often than not we are down to 30 people and are losing money. We can't put the fare up yet again, so the other option is to knock one coach per month on the head until things improve, possibly using cars then or doing a local walk. Consequently the Thirlspot coach ramble on September 12th has had to be cancelled.

### **Those mobile phones**

"A couple of empty bean cans connected by string would be an improvement on our mobiles!" was one comment heard recently.

At the moment, it's an agonising fact that they are out of network range in many mountainous areas that we visit. Contrary to this, however, the mobiles did prove to be useful recently near Kentmere when both the 'A' and 'B' walks were out a bit longer than anticipated, so the 'C' leader got in contact and was able to plan their extra wait by making use of a hostelry in Staveley instead of sitting restlessly on the coach.

Maybe in the future we will see trig points on the hills being replaced by telecommunication masts. If this were to happen the leaders wouldn't have a problem spotting the summit. Meanwhile should we save those empty cans?

### **New Members**

We extend a special welcome to all new members who have joined our ranks recently and hope that you have many happy years with us.

### **Leaders**

The six-monthly programme of winter rambles has been drawn up. All we need now are the leaders to put their names down against their choice walks before the programme gets printed at the end of this month.

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### **FAMILY SECTION PROGRAMME**

SEPT 12	RIVINGTON Bernard Foley (01257 254276). Meet at Top Bar Car Park 12 noon.
OCT 10	FORMBY. George Riley (017048 70161). Meet at Formby Point car park at 12 noon.

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### **ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE**

Pay to your Registrar or on the coach - £5 single and £6 married couples

## BRECON BEACONS WEEKEND IN OCTOBER

This will be a first visit to South Wales by our club. The youth hostel is situated in a unique but remote part of the Brecon Beacons and is ideal for exploring those scenic hills and valleys. Members will be going up by minibus. It's quite a long journey down so you will be leaving during the day on the Friday, hopefully missing the traffic queues at Spaghetti Junction. Those members working will need to take Friday off. The full details have not been finalised to date but there will be walks planned for the Saturday and a short walk on the Sunday before departure. A £10 deposit secures your place. See Tom Reilly for further details.



## Social Events



at the Cornmarket on Thursday Nights

September 16

**KEN'S QUIZ.** Quizmaster Ken Regan always teases our brains with his highly professional quizzes. No charge for entry and fabulous prizes.



September 23 - No Social, but it's our . . .

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 8.30 pm at the Cornmarket.** Come down and take an interest in our club. You may even want to join our committee.

September 30

**BRING AND BUY SALE.** Bring anything down that you think might make money for the club, from a good book to a packet of biscuits. Ray Mc is Auctioneer.



October 2

**CHEESE AND WINE NIGHT.**

Cheese and wine supplied at great expense. A nominal charge will be made for this repast.



October 14

**PLACE THE PLACE.** A pictorial quiz by Irene Segerberg. No entry charge and a chance to win a worthy prize for your observance.

October 21

**NATIONAL PRIDE QUIZ.** Details of this quiz will appear in the next newsletter.

October 26

**HORROR QUIZ.** Get into the spirit of Halloween with Helen Riley.

## Cathedral Penny

For many years our club has been collecting money and giving annual donations to our Archbishops towards the cost of building and repairs to our Metropolitan Cathedral. Most of the cash raised is from our committee members who pay a penny or more to this fund at the end of each monthly meeting.

In an effort to boost this fund for the Millennium we are going to give the opportunity for the general membership to join in with our committee by donating something, however small, in the near future.

## Outstanding money for the Snowdon Charity Challenge

Anyone still owing sponsorship cash for "Integrate" should contact Helen or Mike Riley (or any committee member) immediately. Over £400 has been collected so far. Many thanks to all concerned.

## OBITUARY

### Fr Joe Wareing, SMM

It is with regret that we have to record the death of Fr Joe Wareing on 4th August.

Members will remember Fr Joe for the many Retreats he conducted for the club from the early eighties at Sandymount Retreat House. Laterly up to a few months ago he had been based in Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, Gateacre, and had then retired to Lytham.

I have conveyed the Condolences of the Club to the Order and arranged for a Mass.

May he Rest in Peace.

*Chris Dobbin*

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NOTICE is hereby given that the Seventy-third

# Annual General Meeting

of the Association will take place on Thursday 23rd September 1999 at the  
Cornmarket Public House at 8.30 pm

## AGENDA

1. To approve the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting of the Association.
2. To read the Secretarial Report.
3. To read the Treasurer's Report.
4. To read the Chairman's Report.
5. To elect Officers and Committee for the forthcoming year.
6. To elect Auditors for the forthcoming year.
7. Any other business.

Members wishing to submit resolutions of any kind must ensure that they are in the possession of the General Secretary not later than seven days prior to the above meeting.

P. McINTOSH  
*General Secretary*

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(General Secretary's address: 27 Meadway, Hough Green, Widnes WA8 8XT)



If you care about the future of your Club you should take yourself for a walk down to this meeting.  
A Nomination List is in circulation for those who would like to be elected onto the new Committee.

## **ANNUAL MASS**

**Sunday, 26th September at 11am, in the Metropolitan Cathedral Crypt**

Our deceased club members and relatives, especially those who have died recently, are foremost in our thoughts at this Mass. Members, Associate Members and families and friends are all welcome.



A few of our members will be playing the guitar, keyboards, etc.



Vehicles can be parked on the kerbside by the Crypt in Hope Street or in the University car park across the road from the Crypt. (University wheelclamp signs don't seem to apply on Sundays).

# One of the most famous routes in the world

THIS SUMMER a number of our Seniors' Section walked in the French Alps and were really impressed. By coincidence, Richie Cannon from our General Section had spotted an article about an English married couple's experiences there, translated from a French magazine. Now read on:

You don't have to be a professional mountaineer to appreciate Europe's highest mountain. The French Alps is a fantastic region for walkers. The Mont Blanc tour covers about 100 miles, a total of 325,000 feet of climbing, seven valleys, seven mountain passes and crosses three countries. It normally takes ten days to do - however, this Tour of Mont Blanc or "le TMB" as it

is most often called, is feasible in a weekend for the randonneur en bonne forme physique (*ramblers in a good physical shape*). Some would say that this classic is one of the most famous walking routes in the world. You certainly won't get that feeling of isolation that characterises expeditions in very high mountains, but the splendour of the scenery is second to none.

## The challenge of the Tour of Mont Blanc

*An vibrant account, feasible for many of our members - perhaps a club challenge for the Millennium*

OUR GROUP comprised 16 people aged from 22 to 62 and two guides - one accompanied us and the other drove the minibus (*No, the driver wasn't Bob Carney!*).

The organisers supplied us with camping equipment and they used the minibus to transport it from one campsite to another, thus sparing us unnecessary effort.

We sometimes had the opportunity to eat in a restaurant but most of the time we simply ate on the spot. Everyone took part in meal preparation and a very good atmosphere therefore prevailed in the group.

The tourist route is usually anti-clockwise but we did it the opposite way so that we would be better prepared for the physical effort necessary to tackle the hardest part at the end.

A typical day is the equivalent of a 10-mile walk on level ground and the ascent of Snowdon (a vertical distance of 3,560 feet). Generally, the paths are rather good and you don't need any climbing experience, although from time to time the paths are sometimes narrow and run along the edges of steep drops, so it is better not to suffer from vertigo. However, there is sometimes a handrail that one can hold on to.

Our walk, in July, began and ended in the winter sports resort of Chamonix, dominated by the Mont Blanc massif. We went by cable car to La Flegere, which is opposite Mont Blanc, to begin our circuit.

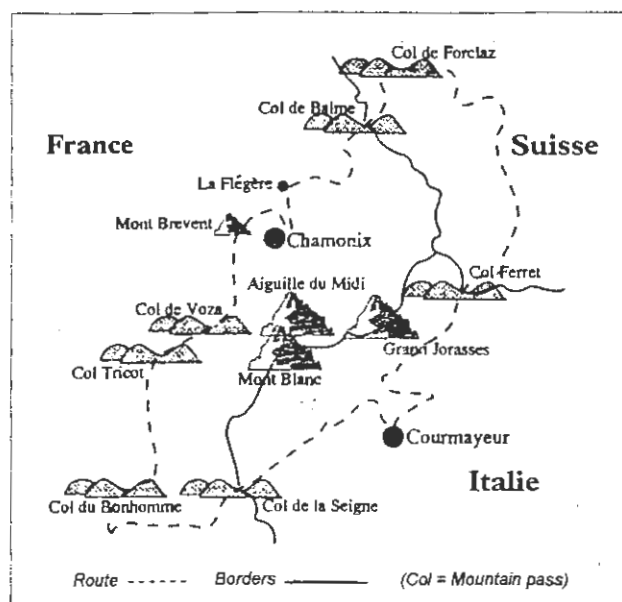
At the end of the first day we reached Lake Blanc where we stopped in a pleasant mountain refuge.

The second day we went through the Balme Pass and descended into Switzerland. The sky had become

covered with menacing clouds when we put up our tents that night. The storm finally broke accompanied by torrential rain. Fortunately, this was the only time we suffered bad weather on our expedition.

After two days of walking in Switzerland we passed through the Ferret Pass and down into Italy.

Over the next two days we passed through the ski resort of Courmayeur and camped below the Peutery Ridge - one of the most well known routes for the ascent of Mont Blanc, and returned to France by the Bonhomme Pass. Then we faced the most difficult day - to return to the Chamonix valley. On this day there were in fact many climbs and descents and we had to go through two mountain passes.



Our circular route - clockwise from Chamonix and back

The final day we ascended Mont Brevent, from the top of which one has a magnificent view of Mont Blanc, then, after having had lunch on the summit, we began the very last descent.

This day ended by a return to La Flegere to take the cable car which took us to our final campsite. Once there we congratulated each other on our feat.

The walk required much physical effort but it was worth it. We had crossed wooded valleys, alpine meadows and picturesque villages. We saw many alpine flowers, rushing waterfalls and superb glaciers.

We had struggled along slopes leading to bare passes and to welcoming mountain inns and refuges.

You can just imagine how unforgettable our experiences were. And we achieved all this in the constant presence of Europe's highest mountain. "

## SENIORS' SECTION

THE LONG MYND 28/8/99

This was undoubtedly a historic occasion, the first joint walk of LCRA and Birmingham Catholic Ramblers since 1965. Five members of each club were privileged to be present at Carding Mill N.T. car park at twelve noon. Not quite true as two of the Brum group had a frustrating delay on the notorious M6. However we were all present and correct eventually.

In lovely sunshine we set off uphill following a stream which perversely was going downhill. These things are sent to try us! At first there were lots of people about but the crowd thinned out and we had lunch high enough up to be able to admire the views.

At this point George gave us an option, 5½ or 10½ miles. All ten stalwarts chose the longer option and off we went towards Pole Bank with the summit of Corndon in the distance, some no doubt worrying that we might have to climb it. But no. We started to descend and eventually reached Ratlinghope, crossed a few apologies for footbridges and resumed our ascent. Lower Barnford was succeeded by Middle and yes, you've guessed it, Higher Barnford. We were now on moorland and after joint consultation, both parties being represented, of course, decided to cut a corner and head down a very precipitous slope covered in bracken to reach Jonathan's Hollow, a beautiful hidden valley. Jonathan wasn't there to greet us but the wonderful quality of the evening light and shade made up for that omission.

All this time there had been a marvellous rapport between the two groups, as if we'd known each other since 1965. Once on the valley floor it was a question of finding the best way back to the car park, which we duly did. Jean and Gerry had taken the trouble to ferret out the best local hostelry, and ferret turned out to be just as tender as donkey. Thanks to everyone who came. A super day.

GEFA

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Aughton 22/8/99

When thirteen eager walkers including two friends of Audrey's turned up at the community centre the leader was visibly shaken. Whether this was nervousness at the thought of such a responsibility or fear of a take-over was anybody's guess. The weather was perfect for walking, despite the fact that Geoff and Audrey were expecting a downpour, it being George's walk.

We set off in good spirits, heading towards Aughton village and actually reaching it. We soon turned through someone's side garden and reached the A59. The footpath continued on the other side and took



a wide parabola towards Walsh Hall, now a riding school where we were able to admire young horses in full flow and also take our lunch. (Hope they enjoyed it!)

Crossing a footbridge and stile, we reached Greens lane. Unfortunately progress was only possible by means of a narrow road but typically there were no complaints and we were soon crossing the ubiquitous L & L canal at Rimmer's Bridge. This was a period of nostalgia for Peter as we passed into Merseyside and he recalled those halcyon days when he would ride these very roads before moving to pastures new. 'O tempora! O mores!' Soon it was time for our leader to make his deliberate mistake, or was it deliberate? In any case he took the party thirty two metres in the wrong direction soon after passing Lydiate Racetrack. The sun was still beating down as we re-crossed the boundary into Lancashire and took tea on the edge of a bean field. As this was a lollipop walk the leader should strictly have distributed some at this point but he has no imagination. We simply retraced our steps towards Aughton village and finished the day at the 'Kicking Donkey' which was more tender than expected. Thanks George and Freda.

GEFA

### **A Cheshire farmer sells his livelihood to The National Trust**

IT was a long time ago - Adam was a lad! - since I walked around Alderley Edge. Hob-nailed boots were the fashion, edged with Tricoonies for scrambling, and more sure-footed on wet rock than the present composite treadware! Last month, on Sunday 7th, the car park at the top of Alderley Edge had enough space for our Seniors' Section party of three cars and no more.

Fair weather was promised and drew crowds to this little piece of National Trust property. After making use of the facilities at the Visitors Centre we set off four-and-a-half minutes late to explore this infrequent area at a promised leisurely pace.

Before descending from the dizzy heights, a traverse was made across the Edge to Armada Beacon then on to Stormy Point for more extensive views - at the spot height of 190m, Jodrel Bank, Ringway Airport and the distant rise of the Peak District could be clearly seen today.

Down from here our route along pleasant footpaths through broadleaf woodland led eventually to the lunch break, after which the weather looked about to change. However, it rained long enough to put on the waterproofs, then take them off again. You know how it is - it gets very hot and sticky when the sun comes beaming down on you legging it among Joe Public in their shorts.

A cobbled bridleway/track of colourful stone called Bradford Lane was used for three-quarters-of-a-mile. Alas, this pleasant piece of landscape may shortly be no more, for a local Highway Authority notice was seen pinned to a telegraph pole, stating that planning for a surfaced highway

for all vehicles is being sought.

On we strolled to The Topps, The Butts, and Adders Moss (any offers to translate?) until we reached Finlow Hill Farm. It was here we advised the farmer of an injured Ewe. However there was no cause for concern as it had apparently been born an invalid.

Our further conversation with him as to all the For Sale notices on his property, elicited a sad reply that he was getting out of farming, mainly because there was no living to be gained at the market sales. The farm had been in the family for three or four (?) generations, and himself for twenty-five years . . . all the past human endeavour to no avail! Is this called "Market Forces"? The new owners are to be The National Trust.

Pressing on through golden fields of barley, wheat and rape seed, the ramble all too soon came to an end. A well-planned route, not strenuous, nor too far a journey, "specially laid on" but poorly attended. Thank you Gerry for your expertise, Jean, Freda, George, and Tony for your company.

W.A.P.