

NEWSLETTER



PENRITH GROUP

No. 46 November 2011

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GROUP CONTINUES TO FLOURISH, AGM HEARS

MEMBERSHIP remained stable and attendances for the 250 plus Wednesday and Saturday walks offered during the year kept up well, the Group's annual meeting heard.

About 30 members and office holders attended.

Unusually, no resolutions for discussion had been received from the membership nor were any matters raised from the floor under "any other business".

Reviewing the year, chairman Graham Allan said it had been noticeable how new walkers were keen to see what the Group had to offer. Thursday evening walks had also been well attended.

A number of walk leaders of many years' service had decided they could no longer continue. A considerable gratitude for sterling leadership and the responsibility they had shouldered was owed to them.

Special walks and holidays

Special walks and walking holidays had again taken place. A complete hotel was booked for a weekend of Easter walks along the Solway coast and in the Dumfries and Galloway hills. A hotel was again fully booked for the 2012 weekend, in Eskdale.

The second tranche of Sunday walks, completing the southern half of the Cumbria Way, had attracted good numbers and next year four walks were planned to cover the southern half of the Westmorland Way, beginning at Arside. The full 87 miles to Appleby, via Kendal, Grasmere, Patterdale and Crosby Ravensworth, would be in nine parts over two years. The Group's silver jubilee publication, "Walks in the Penrith Area", had sold 1,100 copies, enabling the £8,000 production loan from the Lake District Area group to be discharged. Proceeds from ongoing sales would remain with the Penrith Group.

"The year, in a way, seems to have passed quite peaceably as far as my perception of the Group is concerned, with one or two little problems to overcome, as always," said Graham. "There are concerns by some that the Group might be ageing a little, from others that leaders might be in short supply and whether walks in some parties were getting too easy and others too strenuous. Nevertheless the prospect remains that the Group will continue to flourish."

Footpaths secretary Alan Duval reported that as a result of staff reorganisation, feedback from Cumbria County Council about path problems had been poor, although he was sure some work had been done. Also, because the Group was no longer doing sample surveys of rights of way, only four new problems had



Photograph: Fred Wilson

CONGRATULATIONS to Eric Jennison, founder chairman of Penrith Ramblers, who celebrated his 100th birthday on 28th October at a party hosted by Philip Walker.

been reported, bringing the total outstanding to 161. Feedback from the National Park Authority was also poor. Four new problems had been reported to them. The Group was now helping the Park Authority with a sample footpath survey – random sampling of 5 per cent. of the National Park rights of way in the Penrith area. Eight paths were surveyed in May and another eight were being done in November.

Alan expressed thanks to the many members who helped oppose proposals by the County Council that would have cut spending on rights of way by 70 per cent. They responded to the consultation, wrote to councillors and joined a Protest walk with Ramblers' chief executive Tom Franklin. As a result of Ramblers' campaign the cuts were reduced to 30 per cent.

Path consultations

During the year, the Group was consulted about three proposed changes to rights of way, including a diversion at Naddle Beck, below Haweswater, which was acceptable. A proposed path diversion at Crowdundle Beck, north of Milburn, using a new bridge, was also acceptable. However, there was a problem there with cattle churning up one of the approaches and the County Council was being alerted to it.

Footpath orders made during the year by the County Council following consultation included the creation of a footpath at Penruddock station. The long-running saga of restoring a closed path at Doddick Fell, Blencathra, continued, with a public inquiry into the National Park's footpath order still awaited.

The National Park was proposing significant improvements to paths between Kirkstone Pass and Brotherswater, including provision of a full route on the west side of the road up the pass. Lake District Area of Ramblers were contributing to this project by funding a replacement bridge over Caiston Beck from the Sharpe Legacy that existed to help improve access to the Lake District fells. The bridge would become a right of way. Walks programme secretary Janet Arnison stated in her report that a recurrent problem was finding enough volunteers to lead the B walks. Co-ordinator Keith Scott would be grateful to anybody who came forward.

Another problem seemed to be confusion with the grid references submitted with walks. They were intended to indicate the area in which a walk was being held, not

the start point. In addition, the references were sometimes incorrect or typed incorrectly. Membership secretary John Walker said numbers stood at 341, two fewer than in 2010 and 53 fewer than 2006 when membership was at a peak.

Difficulties of e-mail addresses list

John described the difficulties of trying to establish a list of members willing to receive the walks programmes and other communication by e-mail, which would lower postage costs. The net result of the exercise was that only 19 members who had supplied their e-mail addresses to Ramblers' headquarters were in favour of the scheme — and some of those addresses disagreed with the list on the Penrith database.

It was clearly not worth going to the trouble of e-mailing communications to so few.

In his capacity as website organiser, John reported that three new pages had been added -- a contents page, a report form for path problems that goes directly to the footpaths secretary and a form for feedback about the website, including the option to make comments.

The single set of photographs on the archive slideshow had been increased to 22, bringing the total number of photographs to 720. However, some information about photographs that had appeared previously had been lost and their new descriptions were rather brief. The supply of new photographs from members had almost dried up.

Path that disappeared 30 years ago!

AN ALTERNATIVE route for a section of footpath that was blown up thirty or more years ago in quarrying operations at Hartley, near Kirby Stephen, is under consideration by the County Council.

Application has been made — presumably by Hartley Quarry who have a duty to provide a suitable replacement -- for a modification and diversion order that would again take the path to Birkett Lane, the roadway that leads up towards Nine Standards.

Two years ago, as a condition of approving a further enlargement of the quarry, Penrith Group urged the County Council to insist that the issue of the missing path — which, confusingly, has remained on maps -- be dealt with and suggested a route south of the quarry to join the pathway on the former South Durham and Lancashire Union railway. However, nothing transpired. With the issue now back on the County's agenda, Penrith Group believe it is worth reviving the suggestion, which would make a path between Hartley and the high part of Birkett Lane, cutting out a good deal of roadway. Step one is the lodging of an objection to the proposed modification.

Hartley Parish Council's support is being sought, but the view of the landowner is unknown at this stage.

Brief notices

- 67 booked by mid-Nov., but still room at the inn for Christmas lunch, 8th Dec., Stoneybeck, nr Penrith. £18.50. Phone Sarah Cantrell, 01768 486282.
- AGM Lake District Group Ramblers, 2pm, 14th January, Friends Meeting House, Lancaster (nr rail station). Good speaker, Lord Clark, Windermere, on continuing campaign to retain public access to forests. Day also offers canals walk, 10-4.5am from Meeting House. Take own packed lunch.

CAN YOU HELP YOUR GROUP AS SECRETARY OR MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY?

DAVID Dixon (secretary) and John Walker (membership secretary) will be relinquishing their respective positions with the Group at our next annual general meeting in November, 2012. Up until that time opportunities exist for any of our members who feel they may like to serve the Group in either of these capacities to explore and shadow the roles. Use of a computer and the Internet will be required for each of the positions.

If you think you might be interested in one of these posts have a word with our chairman, Graham Allan (01768 890390), so appropriate arrangements can be made. The positions, which will provide a place on the Group Committee, will be subject to election at the AGM.

Checking the Cumbria Way

THE Group has been requested to contribute to the Cumbria Way checking process for part of the northern section beside the River Caldew. A stretch anywhere between Caldbeck and Carlisle can be chosen, and should be walked twice a year.

A report would be required on

- **unsatisfactory stiles, gates, fences etc.**
- **any hazardous or difficult group conditions**
- **suggestions for improvements and enhancements to the route.**

Travel expenses can be reimbursed. If you might be interested, contact David Dixon on 01768 863155.

... and Wainwright's Pennine Journey

HIGHWAY authorities have agreed in principle to waymark the route of the 247-mile circular Pennine Journey, between Settle and Hadrian's Wall, that Alfred Wainwright made in 1938 and became the subject of his classic book of the same name.

Volunteers are needed to monitor the route annually for problems and Penrith Ramblers have been asked if any members would be interested in taking on a stretch, most suitably between Garsdale and Greenhead. See www.penninejourney.org.uk for map. Contact David Dixon (01768 863155) for further details.

Officers and committee for 2010-11

Chairman, Graham Allan (Tel. 01768 890390); secretary, David Dixon (01768 863155); membership secretary, John Walker (01768 895328); treasurer, Philip Holland (01768 840788); footpaths secretary, Alan Duval (017684 83727); countryside officer, Charlie Shepherd; walks programme secretary, Janet Arnison (01931 714305); social secretary Sarah Cantrell (01768 486282). Area Council representative, Alan Duval (one vacancy); auditor and chalet committee representative, Roger Burgin. Committee members, Christine McNaughton, Bill Mossop, John Upson, Polly Allen, Marjorie Oakey

Walks co-ordinators: A, John Whittaker (Tel. 01768 866225); B+, Polly Allen (01768 840016); B, Keith Scott (01768 867112); C, Marjorie Oakey (Tel. 01768 890194); Saturday walks, John Upson (01768 863538); Thursday evening walks, Mary Patmore (Tel. 01768 897074).

The Ramblers' Association is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales. Company registration number: 4458492. Registered Charity in England and Wales number: 1093577. Registered office: 2nd floor, Camelford House, 87-90 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TW.