



Ramblers

Ramblers' Group News – JULY 2018

PHEW! WHAT A SCORCHER!

The dominant feature of this season's walking has been the hot weather. Numbers have been down on several walks as members, wisely, take stock of their ability to walk in such high temperatures.

Roamers holiday - May 2018. A special report by Paul Barrett

The question was "Could it last?" The weather in the days leading up to the holiday had been spring-like; ideal walking weather. In the event the answer was "Yes it could". Warm, clear and sunny days persisted throughout the holiday and contributed to our enjoyment of the area.

The group assembled in Shrewsbury before travelling to Ellesmere. For some this was an unknown part of the country and is in many respects a hidden gem. The meres - glacial remnants - are set amongst deciduous woodlands filled with flowers and birdsong. Our rambles traversed the countryside and utilised the towpath of the Shropshire Union Canal; Ellesmere and its wharf being at the junction with the Llangollen Canal.

After transferring to our hotel in Llangollen, the afternoon cruise along the canal over the spectacular Pontcysyllte aqueduct and back to Llangollen was the highlight of the day. A degree of trepidation was felt by some on the following day as the Pontcysyllte and Chirk aqueducts were crossed on our days walk, which also involved negotiating several long canal tunnels. The final ramble allowed members to complete the journey along the canal to Llangollen, and some extended the journey, by a variety of means, to the start of the Llangollen Canal at Horseshoe Falls.

Fun-filled evening entertainments were organised and chaired by Dave Quarmby. He must also be "mentioned in dispatches" for his excellent organisation and management of the entire trip. A good time was had by all.

Festival of Walks 2018 Our theme this year was SEAS, but that did not prevent the inclusion of plenty good inland walks. The launch of the weekend was in the

Selwyn Samuel Centre attended by local dignitaries, members, and visitors. Rexton Outdoors were there to display a fine range of walking clothing and equipment.

The three days of walking were blessed with mainly dry weather, with some warm sunshine thrown in. The traditional family walk attracted over 35 participants, with goodies and a free Welsh Tea provided for the children. In total over 180 people took part in the festival, over half were visitors.

Many of the visitors remarked on how much they had enjoyed the weekend and planned to return next year.

The festival is an excellent opportunity for members to take advantage of the availability of the Gwynne Price Coaches and complete some spectacular linear walks.

Congratulations and thank you to all the volunteers who contributed to the success of the 2018 Festival of Walks.

Two Moors Way with Ian and Peter.

The first leg of this walk took place on the weekend of June 8th / 10th and was based at Ivybridge on the South Devon coast. Over the weekend 25 walkers took part, covering 33miles from Wembury to New Bridge. There was good weather on all three days. The transport arrangements worked perfectly, and everybody enjoyed the whole weekend.

Details of the second leg, to take place in September, have now been sent out on email.

Heart of Wales Line Trail (HOWLT) (report from Community Rail Website)

Glorious sunshine for the launch of the Llandovery section of the [Heart of Wales Line Trail](#).

The launch of the Pantyffynnon to the Powys border near Cynghordy section of the Heart of Wales Line Trail took place on Llandovery Station on the 26 June in glorious sunshine. Walkers arrived by train, on foot and by car, well prepared, with plenty of sunscreen and water to drink along the way.

The opening ceremony, organised by Robin and Monica Barlow of *Llandovery Walkers are Welcome*, began with Llandovery Male Voice Choir, originally a railway choir, who were in fine voice on the platform. Speeches by Cllr. Peter Hughes-Griffiths and Cllr. Handel Davies were very well received and both the

station, complete with well-tended gardens, and the volunteer run Station Café, were praised and deservedly so.

After the official launch and refreshment courtesy of the station café, three guided walks departed from the station, primarily to explore the newly-opened section of the trail with one route branching off to Llanfair Church to see the grave of William Williams, Pantycelyn, the renowned Welsh hymn writer. The two longer walks both took a break at the Myddfai Community Café and Hall, a chance to get out of the hot sun, share stories, attend to blisters and enjoy tea and marvellous cakes.

Prof Les Lumsdon, who has been a key figure in the making of the new trail from the outset said, “Increasingly we are seeing sections of the trail, for example the trail between Llandovery and Llangadog, reaching an exceptionally good standard – and that’s something to be very proud of. The route between Cynghordy and Llandovery is also much improved and our thanks go especially to Alan Warner and the Carmarthenshire Rights of Way team, who have been extremely supportive. As time goes on we will see much of the trail reach these high standards.”

A trail that intersects with the railway is a unique idea and has attracted the attention of national walking groups and the press. It is a concept that fits in very well with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, which is all about improving the wellbeing of people and place, of society and culture, of the environment and for future generations.

Rachel Francis, Manager of the Heart of Wales Line Development Co said, *“The trail is attracting national media interest and rightly so. It’s a brilliant idea and the team working on it have been an inspiration. People of all abilities will be able to enjoy this trail and the wonderful and ever-changing countryside that it passes through. The new trail provides a long distance challenge for the boldest walkers, a great opportunity for occasional weekenders to get away from it all and get fit, and better access (by rail) for walkers and would-be walkers of all abilities. Rail and Trail is a winning combination.”*

Llanelli-Agen Twinning Visit. (this report from Eirwen Stephens)

The Llanelli and District Twinning Association welcomed five visitors from our twin town of Agen from 5th to 9th July. The main reason for this visit was to showcase the songs and music of Agen’s renowned singer, Christian Moulié. He gave two concerts over the weekend, one at Llanelly House and the other in the Parish Church of St. Elli. He sang in French and in the regional language of Occitan, accompanied by his pianist Jean-Michel Martinez. Two of our

rambling friends from Agen, Jean-Pierre Hilaire and his wife Catherine, came over with the group.

The Twinning Association had planned a series of exciting events for the French visitors. These included a behind the scenes visit to Y Ffwrnnes Theatre, a visit to Coedcae Comprehensive School and a bowls session with Llanelli's Visually Impaired Bowls Club. **Llanelli Ramblers** took the group on a heritage tour of the town, pointing out several important Blue Plaques and walking over the Pont d'Agen on the way back from a pub lunch at the Sandpiper.

At the Mayor's official reception, Jean-Pierre Hilaire who is Secretary of the Agen Twinning Association, stated that 2019 will see the 30th Anniversary of the twinning and he hoped that links would continue to be built between the two communities. Chair of Llanelli Twinning Association, Paolo Piana, said that the visit had been a great success and he looked forward to many more visits in the future. Indeed, Llanelli gave a very warm welcome to our friends from Agen and long may the exchange continue!

Vive l'échange et vive les randonneurs! Long live the exchange and the ramblers!

Llanelli-Agen Twinning Visit.

A poem by Eirwen Stephens

Our friends came over from Agen
To visit the town of Llanelli.
Christian Moulié sang to us
In the Parish Church of St. Elli.

Llanelli Ramblers welcomed them
By putting on a walk.
We showed them many Blue Plaques
And they listened to our talk.

The sun was shining brightly
As we rambled round the town,
From Leisure Centre to North Dock
Then over the Pont d'Agen.

A spot of lunch in a local pub
With a pint of real ale,
What a friendly day we had
On the Llanelli Heritage Trail!

The Working Party

The working party has been out only once so far over the summer months as it has been difficult to organise a day with the rangers due to holidays and other commitments. The one occasion that the team did get together saw them working in Troserch Woods, north of Llangennech, replacing hillside steps. This project will take another two days to complete so the team are eager to get together again soon.

August Bank Holiday Camp – 24th to 28th August 2018:

Come on Down for this fun packed family friendly weekend. Join us for a few hours or a few days. With all the usual events, there is something for everyone. Full details to follow in due course

South West Coast Path - 8th to 15th September – Walking the 630 miles of SWCP continues, this September based in Looe. For further information contact Rob and Jan 07974 757806
