



Wet and wild
February 2022



Taff Ely

Our first walk of February was led by Tony Yule. Despite the weather forecast and two errors in the directions twenty two people and a dog (48 legs) ventured out from Taf Bargoed towards Mynydd y Capel via Quaker's Yard in dry conditions. However gale force winds followed by driving rain on the ridge forced Tony to declare an early return. As we descended agreement was reached to forfeit the lunch stop and return to our cars without a circuit of the Taf Bargoed lakes.



Well what a wet and wild February we had, lets hope the daffodils in bloom will brighten our walks this month. Weather conditions impacted our walk's in February, with several storms hitting the UK, Storm Dudley and Storm Eunice on Valentine's weekend and Storm Franklin the following weekend. All bringing storm force winds and plenty of rain, to already sodden ground. It made walking conditions at times, very difficult and so bad that Peter Law's walk at Heol y Cyw, due to be on the 20th February had to be cancelled! That being said, we have still had a great month of walks and a very successful first Social event of 2022.



Saturday walk 12th February led by Janine Boone.

14 Ramblers walked, including a new member who was made very welcome.

The weather surprisingly was dry and we got back to watch Wales beat Scotland 20-17.



Sunday walk 13th February led by Michelle Mansel

All week, the weather forecast had been very poor for my walk from Clytha on Sunday 13th February (possibly unlucky for some). Even so, I still had a few provisional bookings for the walk and four intrepid (or should I say foolhardy) walkers turned up on the day, including one new Rambler from Cardiff. We walked along the river for nearly two miles before reaching the quiet road from Chainbridge to Bettws Newydd. At this point, we met some more intrepid walkers, all toggged up, the Pontypool Ramblers doing a similar walk! We walked up to the hill fort and then down to Clytha Castle. We were just over half way around the walk but not far from the car park. As it still hadn't stopped raining, I explained that anyone who wanted to could go back to the warmth of their cars. Two walkers accepted this offer (including our new rambler as she said that she was soaked through but had enjoyed the walk). Tony, Derek and I had lunch in the rain before completing our walk around the grounds of the Clytha Estate and seeing the ancient chapel ruins.

Hopefully, I can put this walk on again in better weather, perhaps when the bluebells are in bloom.



Saturday walk 26th February led by Elaine Lawrence.

From slags heap to sewer beds doesn't sound very good for a walk but we had good views from the top of the coal tip down over the valley, Colin also pointed out an ancient deer park wall. After a steep walk down to Cilfynydd the walk alongside the sewer beds is more attractive than it sounds, eventually looking down at the River Taff in a really pretty valley, but to cap it all not only did I do a last minute stand in for Tony but I now have his cold.

Thanks to Derek Acock for extra guidance too.



Sunday walk 27th February led by Daryl Perrins.

Walk: Bridgend Reclamation Walk, a figure of eight taking in Bedford Heritage Park, Margam Opencast site, Parc Slip Nature Reserve, and Tondur Iron Park. Total distance 7.5 miles.

Beautiful weather brought out 21 souls all told to meet at Bedford Park Car Park in Cefn Cribwr. The theme of the walk was reclamation and started with a quick stop to take in the surprise of the romantic ruins of Bedford Ironworks. Here surrounded by the rugged contours of slag heaps now colonised largely by mature birch and full of the birdsong that told us spring was on the way. We then crossed the Nant Iorwerth Goch (named after a red headed Welsh nobleman) and made our way down to the old Margam opencast site to view the enormous settling pond which is around 400 feet deep, left by around 10 years of excavations and to avail ourselves of some new access paths that cross this still raw site, where the dark spoil heaps still tell of its very recent (up to 2012) industrial use. We then cut back south to the cycle path which follows the route of the old Dyffryn, Llynfi and Porthcawl railway. This took us to the reclaimed drift and opencast mining site of Parc Slip: a nature reserve since the turn of the century. We walked up past the smaller hides and the scrapes until we reached the northern pond and the largest of the hides on site. Here we stopped for around 20 mins to view Brent Geese, Lapwings (Peewits) and Tufted Duck. Then on lunch at the (closed) visitor centre. Luckily however there was a roadside van with coffee and cakes. After lunch we pushed on across the stunning new boardwalk that links Parc Slip to Tondur and took a circuitous route up and through Park Terrace to see how our ancestors lived (the lucky ones that is) by viewing this listed ironworker's row before heading down to the imposing and intact Tondur Ironworks. Here we pondered its fate/ possible future as a restaurant and hotel leisure complex. The way back took us via a new urban figure of the conurbation of villages to the north of junction 36 of the M4 and past some new starter homes until we were back in Parc Slip Nature reserve and our second refilling stop of the day at the fittingly minimal and dignified memorial to the Parc Slip Drift Mine disaster of 1892, when 115 men and boys died in an underground explosion. The walk ended with a photo stop at the last remaining signal box on the Dyffryn, Llynfi and Porthcawl line, now a museum dedicated to the area and run by volunteers. Return to car park and goodbye /hwyl fawr.



Great first social of 2022

Ten pin bowling at Rhondda Bowl in Tonyrefail.

A lovely mix of Saturday, Sunday walkers and some who can only join us on flat walks.

Everyone was mixed up for the 1st game and it became clear that there were some serious bowlers among us, some rookies and others that needed a lit bit of help.

After a bite to eat everyone was raring to go for the 2nd game. This was ranked, giving us some fab, fun and close matches.

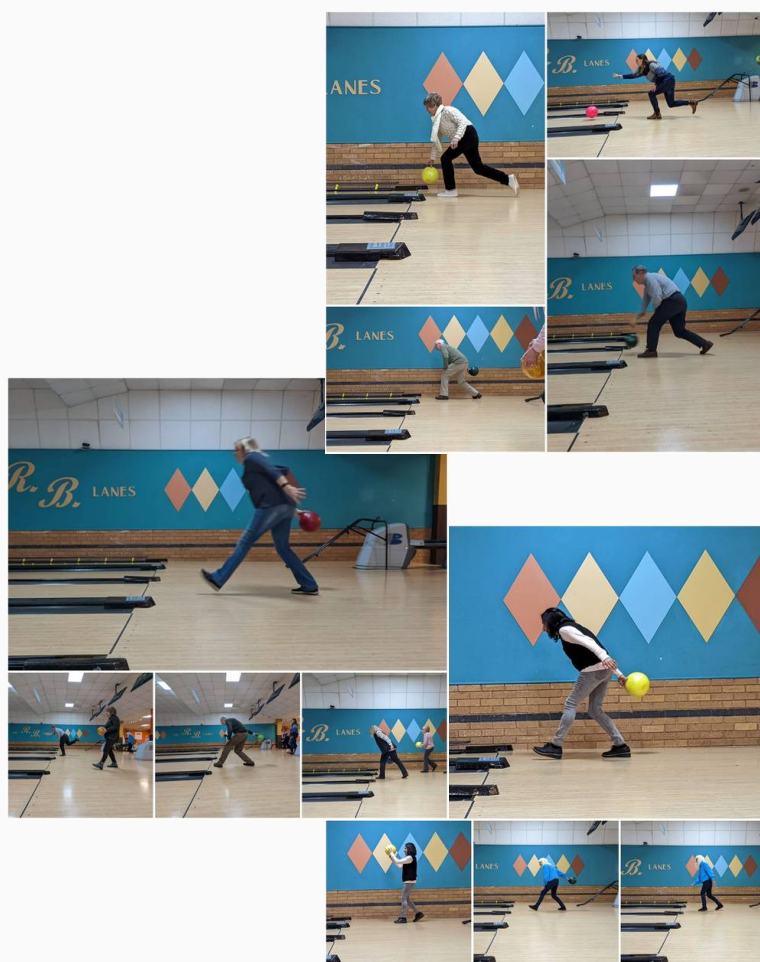



CWMBACH COMMUNITY WETLANDS NATURE WALK & TALK

11am SATURDAY 12th MARCH

OUR GUIDE, NEIL WROBLEWSKI WILL TAKE US ON A 2.5 MILE GUIDED WALK OF THE WETLANDS AND SURROUNDING AREA. EXPLORING THE WIDE RANGE OF NATURAL FLORA AND FAUNA. FOLLOWED BY REFRESHMENTS AND A LIGHT BUFFET AT THE ROCK INN, ABERAMEN CF44 6RB WHERE PARKING IS ALSO AVAILABLE

To reserve a place for £5 please email or text me by Saturday 5th of March
07540158398 hthomas247@gmail.com



Quantocks coach trip 2005.

It was led by Geoff Williams and for my money it was one of the best days out and we had many. Geoff was a superb leader with a wealth of knowledge on flora and fauna and a great sense of humour.

We started at Holford, went down to the coast at East Quantoxhead, then climbed onto the Quantock Hills to Bicknoller Post and made our way back to Holford through the beautiful Quantock combes, Ladies Edge and Hodders Combe. At the end we visited the rather up market Combe House Hotel for tea and scones on the lawn plus a couple of pints. It was a beautiful Autumn day. Just thinking of it now I get a glow and I'm so sad that Geoff probably could not lead it now.

One little extra regarding your truly. I have never particularly liked jam on scones so I collected blackberries and plastered them over the cream. Bliss.

The people in the picture are from left to right:-

Trevor Whately, Cliff Bluck, Sylvia Ayers, Carolynne Smith, Barry Hall, Derek Thomas (deceased), Walter Jones (De), Ron Seely, Edwin Bunney(De), Elaine Lawrence, Geoff Williams, Jeff Brown, Derek Wallis, Krista Derbyshire (De), Mary Jones.

Sadly many are no longer alive except in my memory.

Tony Lawrence.



Don't forget you can get information at anytime on our website www.taffelyramblers.org.uk or our Facebook page.

If you would like to be in our WhatsApp group, Ramblers Adventures just email me hthomas247@gmail.com your telephone number and I will add you.

March Walks

Sunday 6th

The Blorengie starting at Llanfoist, led by Michelle Mansell 10 miles M+

Saturday 12th

Cwmbach Wetlands, nature walk and talk, led by Neil Wroblewski 2.5 miles L

Sunday 13th

Crumlin Canal, Cwmcarn Forest and Craig y Merchant, led by Tony Yule 8 miles M

Sunday 20th

Defynnog, Blaen-Camlais Fawr and Foxen led by Tony Lawrence 9 miles M

Saturday 26th

Llantrisant Forest circular walk, led by Huw Evans 4.5 miles M/L

Sunday 27th

Porthcawl, Rest Bay and Nottage Loop, led by Julie Brightman 9 miles M