



RAMBLERS

Taff Ely

Sunday 6th March The Blorange led by Michelle Mansell.

The first test of the walk was that the planned car park was full before we all arrived! This was because there was a walk with the Crickhowell Walking Festival taking place. Luckily, I had a back-up plan and waited by the entrance to the car park to guide all my fellow ramblers to a nearby residential street with plenty of room for parking.

After a short stretch along the road, we climbed over a stile into a field full of spring lambs. The route through the field was quite steep, so most of us stopped to admire the views and look at the lambs a few times. It certainly warmed us up.

After a short distance, we admired a couple of lovely houses, their gardens and said hello to the hens.

We then entered some woods and had a short steep descent to the stream (which had to be crossed with no footbridge but wasn't very deep). Luckily, some kind soul had attached a rope to the tree at the top of the descent which was used by many of us to descend the slope.

We had more excitement when we had to limbo under a fallen tree. We then had a short but steep ascent around a bend on a lane, for which most cars would need first gear (and the lane ends up at a house)!

After coffee, we continued our ascent, some sections steeper than others until we reached Keepers' Pond. By now, the wind was making it a lot colder but we managed to find some sheltered spots near the pond to have lunch.

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Spring has Sprung

The horrible weather of February followed us into March, but mid way through it turned very mild and then finished on a mini heatwave. The good news is all planned walks went ahead, we were joined by some new walkers and had 2 members lead their first walks.

We made our first visit to Cwmbach Community Wetlands and discovered a little oasis in the middle of Rhondda Cynon Taff.

Then a walk at the beach in blazing sunshine, finished the month off perfectly.

We contoured around the side of the Bloreng with magnificent views for miles around before making a gradual descent to the canal using some lesser used paths (and not using the famous steep and stony Hill's Incline). From the canal, we took a connecting path down to the cycle track and made our way back to the cars.

It did not rain all day, although the clouds had looked threatening at times.



RAMBLERS

TER SOCIAL

Taff Ely

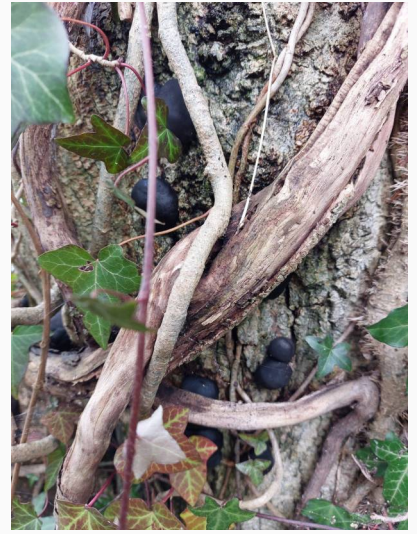
Saturday March 13th Nature Walk and Talk at Cwmbach Community Wetlands.

The weather forecast wasn't looking favourable but we managed to get around most of it with no rain.

Neil Wroblewski was amazing at pointing out the wide diversity of flora and fauna in and around the wetlands.

Capturing them all successfully on camera, was another thing but it was fun trying

Some welcome hot drinks and food in The Rock Inn at the end rounded it off nicely.



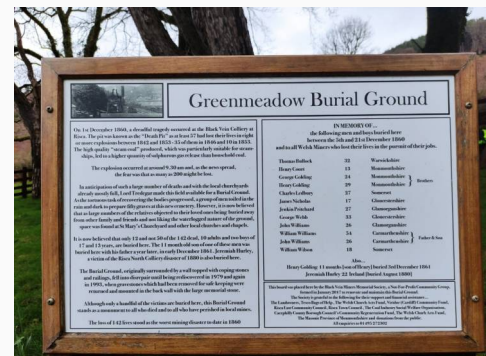


RAMBLERS

Taff Ely

Sunday 13th March Crumlin Canal, Cwmcarn Forest & Craig y Merchant led by Tony Yule.

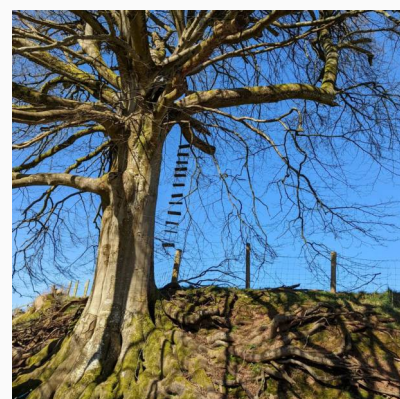
The day started badly for Tony, the leader of the walk on the 13th, when the large car park at Risca leisure centre was overflowing. Eventually, ably supported by Roger as backmarker (who was provided by a map of the route halfway round), twenty-three started on a two mile stretch along the Crumlin Arm of the Monmouthshire canal before stopping at the Green Memorial Burial Ground for coffee. Clothes were then discarded for the 1,000 ft climb to the base of Twmbarlwm with reasonable views of the Shirhowy Valley and Bristol Channel; time for lunch on large boulders before starting the descent along a rough, stony track. The promised rain started as fields were crossed near a solar park and Pant-yr-eos reservoir. A path through the two woodland areas Craig Merchant and Craig y Wenallt returned the group to a nearly empty car park. Luckily the worse of the rain held off until the return home.



Sunday 20th March Defynnog, Blaen-Camlais Fawr and Foxen led by Tony Lawrence.

The walk on Sunday 20 March headed east from Defynnog on a perfect spring day with daffodils brightening the way. The route then turned south. Along the way we past a series of small waterfalls at Cwm-Camlais uchaf and continued on to walk briefly on the moorland west of the Brecon Beacons National Park Visitor Centre. Circulating Red Kites were abundant and our lunch break was accompanied by the song of Skylarks.

The last section of the walk took us north along a bridle way to the open access area of Cefn Llechlid, After passing a small lake or tarn we ascended to the Cefn Llechid trig. point where looking north we had a panoramic view of the countryside beyond. Descending from the trig point we headed east back to Defynnog. Post walk the group de-stressed at The Tanner's Arms, Defynnog.



Saturday 26th March Llantrisant Forest circular walk led by Huw Evans.

Huw led 16 other intrepid adventurers into Llantrisant Forest for a 4 mile walk on a bright and sunny Saturday morning. Much to Huw's surprise, they all came back out of the forest relatively unscathed despite the ascents exceeding some adventurers' expectations. The views compensated for this and made the additional effort worthwhile. This was Huw's first escapade into walk leadership and despite traffic issues resulting in a delayed start it was a success, thanks to the patience and support of fellow Ramblers. Whether he will be brave enough to try other walks remains to be seen.



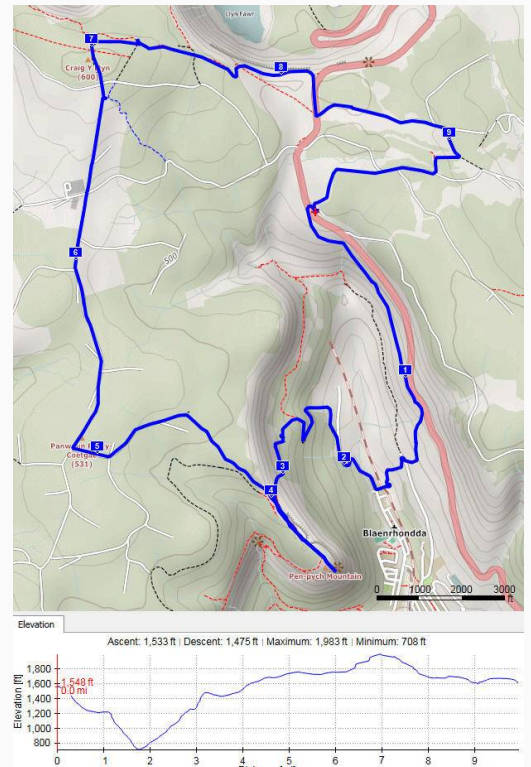
Sunday 27th March Porthcawl, Restbay and Nottage Loop led by Julie Brightman

On a glorious spring day, 28 of us met in Porthcawl for a stroll along the seafront to Restbay, continuing along the coast path to Kenfig Nature Reserve before turning inland and following a route that took us to Nottage and back to the seafront and a well deserved pint at the end.



Undulations by Tony Yule

On the 21st September 2003 Cliff Bluck led a 12 mile walk from the Rhigos. After descending into the valley we climbed 240 metres to Pen-tych from the north. Cliff then uttered the information "That's the end of the climb; it's only undulations from now on." The walk then continued through Mynydd Blaenrhondda and Mynydd Ystradffernol. Cliff's statement was then queried by various members of the group after a further climb of 200 metres and descent of 40 metres over six kilometres. Since that time any leader making the above claim or stating that it's downhill from now is unlikely to be believed and a group discussion may ensue regarding the maximum time or distance one can climb continuously before an undulation becomes a hill. See the picture on the right of the walk and elevations.



Upcoming Events

I don't know about you but I am really looking forward to the Bradford On Avon weekend. It's somewhere I have wanted to go for quite some time, the programme of walks looks fabulous and the time spent in Castle Combe on the Friday will be lovely.

Next on the social agenda is a History Walk & Talk on Saturday 28th May, more details to follow about that.

Then we have being planned as we speak, a day trip to Malvern in July and a group weekend away in the Elan Valley in October, I hope you have seen all the relevant emails about these trips and respond as quickly as possible so we can move forward with them both.

For anyone considering the Croatia trip there are still a few spaces available, speak to Andy or myself for further information.

April Walks

Sunday 3rd

Southerndown, Broughton and Cwm Nash and beach led by Tony Lawrence 8 miles M

Saturday 9th

Walking to Coedely past old colliery workings led by Derek Acock 4.5 miles L

Friday 8th-Sunday 10th

Group weekend at Bradford on Avon

Sunday 17th

Crickhowell, Tre Tower and Glan Usk Estate following the Beacons Way led by Michelle Mansell 10 miles M

Saturday 23rd

Creigiau circular led by Sue Bowker 4.5 miles L

Sunday 24th

Goodrich Castle, Coppet Hill and River Wye to Kerne Bridge led by Derek Willis 8.5 miles M

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