



Taff Ely

April- May

Saturday 22nd April: Coed Ely led by Caroline Smith

Carolyn led 10 walkers on a 4 mile stroll from Coed Ely to Tonyrefail on a nice dry morning with some great company, what a way to start the week-end.

There was a lovely bath on the way if you wanted to cool down, but nobody seemed to want to try it.



Sunday 23rd April: Gilwern and Cwm Clydach led by Tony Yule.

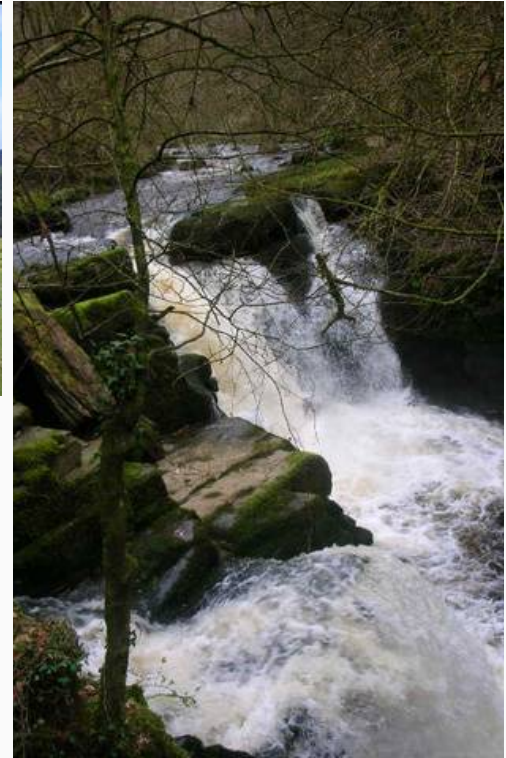
When Sue led her walk around Creigiau and Pentyrch on 19th February Tony played hooky and joined the Vale of Glamorgan Ramblers on a walk by Mike Holley. Having enjoyed the industrial ruins and the gorge so much he asked Mike if he would mind if he used the walk for our group. Mike's reply was "no one owns a walk".

It has been great to see a gradual improvement in the weather over the last few weeks, making a huge difference to the turnouts for the Thursday evening walks, with a newbie, Catherine leading 25 walkers on her first led walk. On our walks we have seen, many fields of bluebells, lots of wild garlic, industrial ruins, disused railway tunnels, christened a trig point, dramatic cloud formations and fiery sunsets, views of rolling green hills as far as the eye could see, bright yellow fields, new born lambs, Roman remains, daisy's, cowslip, buttercups, butterflies, redkites, swallows, a fox, a rabbit, a Long Barrow, a stone monument procession, a henge, a National Trust Manor, bumped into some fellow Ramblers and yes there were a couple of waterfalls, I really hope that list has whetted your interest to find out where and when these were viewed.

Unfortunately, I have missed many of these walks but I have so enjoyed reading about them as I have been compiling this newsletter and I hope you do too. Hayley

On the first recce Tony, accompanied by Roger and Phil, walked through an old railway tunnel that had been passed on the February walk. They also found that the car park used was full so looked and found an alternative car park.

Having felt that one section of road walking could be avoided Tony, this time accompanied by Gareth, used a footpath on the northern side of the new road to climb to an attractive plateau with a rocky pillar (renamed Eleanor's trig point on the day of the walk). Later they also found another impressive waterfall on the river.



The day of the walk started fine and coats were discarded on a number of steep climbs. A small group took the short route through a tunnel on a set of steps between the two lime kilns. Later the group listened to a (w)rapping story in the dark of the railway tunnel. A brief shower on the way to Eleanor's trig point stopped in time for lunch before heavier rain started on the descent back to the valley. However the sun then came out in time to dry out on the return to the cars.

Saturday 29th April: Bluebell walk from Tongwylais led by Janet Sully

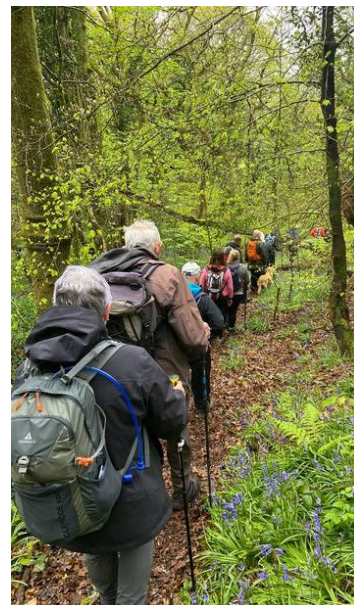
Eighteen walkers started at Tongwynlais in lovely sunny weather for the climb up through Greenmeadow Wood, which was full of bluebells, wood anemones and wild garlic. Then we walked through fields past the very old Rhiwbina Farm and on to the Wenallt for a welcome break, after a short but steep climb. From there we followed a track descending through the ancient Wenallt woodland and eventually back to the start. It was nice to welcome some new walkers and we hope to see them again soon!



Sunday 30th April: Baglan led by Gareth Bisset.



Coastal walk around Baglan 30 April. We left Llantrisant on a gray morning, as we passed Bridgend the heavens opened not boding well for the walk. Baglan was in mist and 22 members set off for a damp walk with a member from the Cardiff area who found the walk on the Ramblers website. The mist did not allow us to enjoy the fantastic views. 3 members of the group opted for the short walk, there was a small amount of confusion at separation point, the back marker saved the day. A late lunch was held in Baglan forest, where we walked through a carpet of bluebells. The long walk alongside the A48 was not inspiring, but the conclusion in the pub was a way to drown our sorrows.



RAMBLERS

Thursday Evening Walks.

Taff Ely

Thursday 4th May: Rhiwsaeson led by Martyne

It was the first Thursday evening walk this year and Martyne led 6 hardy walkers on a rather damp 4 mile leisurely walk around Rhiwsaeson , and I don't think any one person would say they didn't enjoy the walk. Great to have the Thursday walks back on again.



Thursday 11th May: Pencoedcae led by Tony Lawrence.

Just before the 7:00pm start, the rain stopped and despite some muddy sections it was a pleasant evening weather wise. As we were returning to the start a lovely cloud formation appeared above the hill.



Thursday 18th May: Castellau and Beddau led by Catherine Lambert

What a turn out for Thursdays walk 25 were out on a glorious evening.

Catherine led her 1st walk for us. 4 miles around Castellau and Beddau , too good to miss everyone enjoyed.

Well done Catherine and thank you.



Thursday 25th May: Pencoed led by Rob Young.

Another great turn out for Thursday's evening walk 23 plus 1 dog were led by Rob Young for a 4.5 mile walk around Pencoed on a lovely sunny evening .



Sunday 7th May: Caerwent Led by Derek Willis

The walk on 7th May was a moderate one starting at Caerwent starting with a look at the excavated sites of the former Romano-British town Venta Silurum. These included a large town villa, the shops and workshops on the central street, and the main temple complex and forum which formed the administrative and political centre of any Roman town.



The main part of the walk then followed a roughly circular route initially going in a westerly direction, across a large variety of local countryside including fields, with spring and meadow flowers such as buttercups, cowslips daisies amongst others. Several field sections have been rendered inaccessible with utterly impassable stiles so we had to divert along country lanes before changing direction to the south-east. At this point there was a change to deciduous woodland through the main part of "Slade Wood", with its bluebells and other woodland flowers.



Although the day started overcast it remained dry and by the afternoon it was warm and sunny. From the top of the "The Minnetts" there were fine views both towards the ridgeway north of Caerwent and south over the Severn estuary. As we progressed back north-east it was possible to see both the old and new bridges across the Severn. Eventually, we turned back north-west and approached the south entrance of Caerwent. This gave us the opportunity to walk along part of the existing Roman walls before returning to the start point. Stopping at a large pub a few miles along the A48 from Caerwent gave us a welcome chance to relax before returning home.





RAMBLERS

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Sunday 14th May: Blorengel led by Michelle Mansell

Eighteen walkers and one dog set off from Foxhunter car park and began our descent away from the Blorengel. The views in the distance were slightly hazy but, generally, visibility was very good. Partway down our descent from the common on top of the mountain, several walkers commented on how surprisingly green our surroundings were. I was pleasantly surprised by the amount of bluebells there were on the walk, as my recce's of the area had begun in the winter and ended in March.



We had an enjoyable coffee stop in an overgrown field before tackling a steep stile. We passed what we were told was very unusual, the remains of a double lime kiln. A short while later, on an enclosed ascent, we could see the Skirrid in the distance. We then did a long gradual ascent through fields with lots of sheep and looked across the valley at the renowned Goose and Cuckoo pub. However, lunch was not to be served until the ascent was complete! We joined the lane (which runs up from the A4042 to Blaenavon and is not for the faint-hearted) and did the steepest part of the ascent before reaching the common and stopped for a well-deserved lunch next to Blaenavon Community Woodland and a stone memorial.



We then zig-zagged through the streets of Blaenavon, alternating between ascents and flat sections before re-joining the common. We visited Ball's Pond and then walked towards the tall twin masts opposite our car park.

We then drove to the Whistle Stop Inn for a refreshing drink before returning home.



RAMBLERS

Taff Ely

Saturday 20th May: Coach Trip to Avebury.

32 participants were able to attend on the day. 4 chose to visit Marlborough and Avebury, 8 chose to do the long walk of 11 miles and the remainder the short walk of 5 miles. Everyone including the coach turned up promptly and we left at 8.00. Our excellent driver, John from Edwards Coaches, took us to the first drop-off point near Marlborough at Oare village. We enjoyed fair dry weather throughout the day and it was about 21° C at the end of the trip when we reached Avebury.



After an initial climb to the ridgeway we followed in part the White Horse Trail, which connects many of the chalk cut horses in this region. The chalk landscape is similar to that in Dorset where we had our long weekend before Easter. With the late spring flora in full bloom we were treated to views of daisies, buttercups, cowslips and bluebells with many various butterflies in evidence. Several red kite birds followed us and later many swallows.

The route continued to the Pewsey Downs car park, the starting point of the short walk. We continued to have great views along the route to East Kennet. We had our lunch stop by the attractive church before encountering a brown fox and then a startled rabbit. We climbed up to view the very large West Kennet Long Barrow, a very interesting neolithic burial chamber. After that, we descended passing directly by Silbury Hill, then over a final ridge, before reaching the stone monument procession leading into Avebury Circle. A very welcome drink at the very busy pub completed a most enjoyable but tiring walk.



For those on the short walk or simply sightseeing there should have been time to see the pretty village of Avebury, to follow the complete circuit of the main stone circle encompassing the village, or visit the historic Avebury Manor, a National Trust run property on the outskirts of Avebury.

Sunday 28th May: Rhymney Valley Horseshoe led by Tony Yule.



The walk was a hastily rearranged walk due to the scheduled leader not being able to lead their walk that day. Luckily a member had recently found that all was clear on a walk that he had led previously which he intended to submit for the next program. On the day nineteen people walked though the Rhymney Valley from Machen to Rhiwderin before the long climb up the Rhymney Valley Ridgeway walk to Mynydd Machen (encountering the Lower Gwent Ramblers travelling downwards). Eight members of the group took the option of climbing the last hundred metres to the top of Mynydd Machen. The weather was perfect for walking, lots of sunshine with a cool breeze and excellent views.



SOCIAL

You will have to forgive me, a chaotic end to my first year at university has meant I have been a little lax on the social front, a proposed fritillary walk on Llantrisant common failed to transpire but with an upcoming committee meeting on Tuesday, I am sure we will have something lined up very soon. Hayley

June Walks

Thursday 1st June

Ton Teg led by Tony Yule 3m L

Saturday 3rd June

Wenvoe, Wrinstone Valley and the Salmon Leaps led by Huw Evans 4m L

Sunday 4th June

Blaen y Glyn led by Andy & Hayley 11.6m S

Thursday 8th June

Pendoylan led by Tony Lawrence 4.5m L

Sunday 11th June

Cefn Bryn, Parc le Breos and Cilifor Top led by Tony Yule 11m M

Thursday 15th June

Merthyr Mawr led by Andy & Hayley 3.5m M

Saturday 17th June

Pontyclun led by Jenine Boon 4m L

Sunday 18th June

Carmarthen Vans led by Derek Wallis 9-10m M+

Thursday 22nd June

Nelson led by Belinda Adeva 4-5m L

Sunday 25th June

Mynydd Llangatwg and Craig y Cilau led by Daryl Perrins 8m M+

Thursday 29th June

Pentyrch led by Sue Bowker 3.5m L