



Taff Ely

July

Saturday 1st July: Peterson-super-Ely led by Sue Bowker

Ten ramblers met at the Three Horseshoes pub in Peterston-super-Ely for a circular walk to St Nicholas and back. Sue had reccied the walk the day before so all offending brambles had been cleared from the path.



The route took us through a wooded path to the Cottrell golf course, which we skirted, before passing the church in St Nicholas and back through fields, including a really pretty barley field, back to Peterston.

Sunday 2nd July: Llantwit Major coastal walk led by Colin Owen

On a warm but slightly windy day we started our walk at Llantwit Major beach, as we set off along the headland, we saw a helicopter out at sea. It must have been quite a sight from up there!



Where did our beautiful summer weather disappear too?

Downpours, strong winds and low temperatures made it feel more like autumn.

Thankfully, although raincoats were nearly always close at hand it did stay dry for most of our walks, the Thursday evenings walks seeing some of the best walking conditions and the largest turnouts.

I will try and forget Andy & my Brecon Beacon walk on the 30th! But aren't they always the ones you remember, the not so perfect ones?

We have had a wonderful diverse range of walks and saw our youngest member Kingsley lead not one but two Thursday evening walks, both giving him lots of experience and we look forward to him leading more.

Lets hope we see a little more sunshine in August, especially on the 19th for our Pembrokeshire Day Trip.



The rugged coastline was really something to behold, with the waves crashing against the rocks and the sea stretching out as far as the eye could see.



We then came to Nash Point Lighthouse, which was really impressive up close. The lighthouse has been in operation since the 1800s, and it's amazing to think about how much history it's seen over the years.

Passing through St. Donats Church was really interesting as it's such a historic and unique building.



Throughout the walk we saw various aircrafts due to an air show being held at Swansea Bay and the Spitfire show that happened at the end of the walk was incredible, to see those planes in action was an unexpected treat.

A cool drink was enjoyed by some at the end of the walk, with Tony Lavery rewarded for his dedication for completing the walk in odd boots.

Thursday 6th July: Graigwen, Ynysybwll circular led by Tony Lawrence

Nineteen walkers assembled for a 4.5 mile evening walk. The walk started at the top of Graigwen Road, Pontypridd on a minor road which eventually leads to Llanwonno. The road is bordered by fields and hedges either side which softens its appearance and for part of the way, affords views of the Rhondda Valley far below. Hopefully the rural nature of the road offered some compensation for the two kilometers of tarmac before we joined a footpath leading off.



The footpath meanders down to a small valley and stream, Llys-Nant and a footbridge. During extreme storms a few years ago, the footbridge was severely damaged making it unusable and a considerable hazard. Due to its rather remote location in woodland, I held little hope it would be repaired. However, it has been replaced fairly recently with a new substantial structure. The new bridge provided great location for a group photograph. (See front page)

My decision to lead this particular walk was in part to celebrate the bridge and to walk the route again after at least five years.

As far as I know the footpath is little used so on my reconnoiter two days before the walk, I set off armed with secateurs and a big stick to clear the vegetation. I only managed to clear enough to make it passable with care. However, on the evening of the walk, I found the path had been cleared completely by some mechanical device. The individual/s who carried out the work remain a mystery but thanks.



Crossing the footbridge and climbing out of the valley past a farm, we continued on, following tracks and field to the southern end of Ynysybwll. From there we headed back to the start location along an old sunken road and later, passing through Lanwood with its lovely beech trees.

Sunday 9th July: Forest of Dean led by Gareth Bisset

5 members turned up at the meeting point, this was not a surprise as there were alternative day trips available. We all set off in one car confident that we would be joined by others after their Turkish breakfast. In total 15 members and a dog set off. As we walked down the path to the The Saracens Head Inn to catch the ferry, we were informed that a young girl was injured on the path but there was room to pass. As we arrived at the base of river the ambulances were arriving at the bottom of the path and we able to direct the crew to the casualty.



At the ferry two of the group decided they would undertake the shorter walk it was agreed to meet at Biblins Rope Bridge. The young ladies in the ferry enjoyed the structure of the ferry man, commenting on the guns he carried. The weather was changeable and waterproofs were on and off. The walk through the forestry saved us from the weather. After a slight delay at the bridge waiting for the group to reunite the walk continued to the finish. The pub was noisy but we found a quiet corner where everyone sat around one table.



Thursday 13th July: Badger Walk 6 led by Tony Yule

The six Badger walks were created by a team consisting of Olie Wicks, a Ramblers' Cymru staff member, Pontyclun Community Council and members of our group's footpath maintenance group. The six walk leaflets are available from the offices of Pontyclun CC or one-line versions are available on our web-site under the "Walks Leaflets" heading. There has been a delay in the way marking of this Badger walk due to RCT having problems with a footpath diversion that affects part of the walk.

On the night, despite promised rain, twenty three people followed the route and dodged the rain.



Saturday 15th July: Rhiwsaeson led by Geraldine Rogers

With the weather forecast not looking good, Geraldine led 10 strollers on a circular walk from Rhiwsaeson crossroads. The weather was kind to them and it wasn't until they got back in their cars, at the end of the walk that the heavens opened.

Sunday 16th July: Penllyn, Craig Penllyn and Llansannor led by Sue Bowker

We met at the Forage Farm shop car park just outside Cowbridge to follow one of the trails promoted by the business to take in parts of the Penllyn estate. The walk headed to the village of Penllyn where we stopped for an early coffee at Dr Salmon's Well - the original source of water for the village.



We then walked through fields, woodland and lanes via Craig Penllyn to Llansannor Church where we stopped for lunch. Unfortunately many of the stiles along this part of the route were damaged or broken, but we all reached the church more-or-less in one piece.

Many of us had worn waterproof trousers due to the forecasted risk of heavy showers. As they hadn't materialised most went back into bags; only for a short sharp shower to catch us out as we left the churchyard. The walk back to Cowbridge took us via a farmyard selling milkshakes from a machine - they were delicious! We then skirted Cowbridge School, the allotments, and through fields and woodland to get back to the cars.



Thursday 20th July: The Battlefields led by Kingsley Thomas

A wonderful evening for Kingsley to lead his first Taff Ely Ramblers walk.

Starting from Capel Farm Community Centre, we were soon into lush green fields, with the clouds breaking up, the evening light seemed magical, especially as it streamed through the trees onto a bench, which commemorated a former TER member Rod McKenzie.



We followed part of The Penrhys Pilgrimage Way and through the Battlefield. It is great to see a relatively new member, especially as young as Kingsley confidently getting out there, finding and leading beautiful walks for our group, he was a natural.



Seeing that Kingsley's recent evening walk passed a commemorative plaque to an old friend and character, I hope I can be forgiven for adding a few pictures of the day we held a brief ceremony to remember Rod. It was fitting that Walter gave the address; he and Rod were something of a double act and hugely respected and liked within the group besides being a source of fun. Tony Lawrence



Sunday 23rd July: Wentwood Forest and reservoir led by Peter Law



17 participated including one potential ramblers recruit (having regained his taste for walking having recently completed 72 miles of the Camino de Santiago!). The weather forecast was a 50% chance of rain, but rain there was none. In fact it was warm and sunny throughout.

The walk was a mixture of wide forest paths and more challenging terrain. Our first stop was for coffee (other refreshment also permitted) at a methodist chapel dating back to the late 18th century, reckoned by a passer-by to be the oldest such chapel in Wales.

Its location had three or four properties nearby (large enough to be described as a hamlet?). For the record it lies midway between Pandy Farm to the west and Chapel Farm to the east.



Pressing on through woodland we emerged at Foresters' Oaks in time for lunch at its picnic site. Then followed the "more challenging" terrain as we dropped down to the reservoir, through ferns and in one spot a descent demanding a handhold which comprised a prickly hawthorn bush!



The return from the reservoir was via a mixture of lanes and paths; rather more of the former than there should have been due to the closure (official or otherwise) of many of the OS recorded paths.

Upon conclusion of the walk we made for a pub, highly recommended by a friend of the leader. Unfortunately this delightful looking gastropub had also been recommended by rather too many others as it transpired, and reservations had been made for its full capacity of 200 Sunday diners enjoying table service only. Regrettably the group had to depart with only some of us finding an alternative drinking sanctuary in Caerleon.



Thursday 27th July: Circular walk Tonyrefail, Edmondstown and Penrhiwfer led by Kingsley Thomas

This was Kingsley's second Thursday evening walk back to back, and second overall, so he really did dive in at the deep end. Not yet 30, he's the youngest member of our group and has a significant interest in learning about the South Wales valleys, Cardiff, and beyond.



I'm certain that no-one expected the route he had planned for us, as it was literally a step up from his tour last week of Tonyrefail, which was also very fascinating. Starting at the industrial estate near Rhondda Bowl, we took a lane down to a busy road where one driver kindly stopped dead, to let us cross (**that was me, travelling back from Bath, what are the odds?**) which regained my faith in humanity! After that, we walked down a similar track then came to Edmondstown common, with its picturesque trees and stream, plus the rock face of Mynydd Dinas which lay ahead. At the point we left the common we turned left to come to a short woodland before reaching the Rhondda Valleys link road.



Crossing here brought us to Penrhiwfer where our mini-adventure was brought to life. Suddenly, I found the walk became more interesting as our leader eventually took us up the mountain to old farm buildings, ruins from Penrhiwfer Colliery, and excellent views across the valley, despite a mist reducing our visibility.



Nearly everyone I spoke to said it was a diverse walk and a good finish to our summer evening walks programme. As the walk came to an end, the sun had set, and dusk had nearly had its day, but luckily we didn't need to call for help! Steve Craven.

Saturday 29th July: Peterson-super-Ely/St Nicholas and Tinkinswood Burial Chamber led by Janet Sully

Despite the rather gloomy forecast, 15 Ramblers enjoyed a sunny walk from Peterston-super-Ely to St Nicholas, and then on to see the New Stone Age Tinkinswood burial chamber with its massive capstone. We returned via the edge of the Cottrell golf course and through a woodland path. It was nice to be joined by a couple from Pontypool and two others who haven't walked with us regularly, and we hope to see them again.

It was Terry's birthday and all joined in to sing him Happy Birthday and I would like to thank him for providing the photo's for today's walk.



Sunday 30th July: Blaen y Glyn and Taf Fechan led by Andy & Hayley

Well July saved its wettest walking day for us! With Andy's daughter Emily and her boyfriend Bobby down for the weekend and looking forward to a walk in the Brecon Beacons, calling it off was not an option and as we set off, having had a few apologies we thought it could be just the 4 of us. On entering the car park, we were pleasantly surprised to see other TER's already there and soon others arrived too, giving a total of 10 brave souls setting out, in the already persistent rain.



We had changed the start point, moving a stretch of road walking to the start rather than end, we then walked through Blaen Y Glyn upper carpark, walking along forestry tracks before reaching open boggy ground below the summit of Waun Rydd. Having climbed this very steep hill twice before, we both agreed our fellow walkers wouldn't like it either, so we did a 2nd recce to find a more gradual route to the Wellington Bomber Memorial site. This new path was not without its difficulties though! Crossing the stream via slippery stones caused Colin to get even wetter and finding a sheltered spot for coffee was impossible.



Slightly refreshed we had our last steep push to the the memorial, Belinda producing a beautiful bouquet of garden flowers from a 2nd rucksack she had carried up to lay at the stone obelisk, that marks the site where 5 Canadian crew lost their life when their Wellington Bomber crashed in poor weather conditions in July 1942, during the 2nd World War.

From here we carried on northwards, until we reached the Bwlch Ddwyallt ridge, here just a few weeks before we had wonderful views of Brecon below us, and off to the west the peaks of Pen Y Fan, not today though! There was enough visibility though to view the glacial escarpments, as we followed the ridge to just short of Fan Y Big. Here we started our descent, making the decision to push on to the treeline we could see below us, with hope of shelter to have our lunch. Once reaching there, alongside the empty reservoir, there was little in the way of shelter, so after a quick refreshment stop we continued on our return.



We were soaked from head to toe, but we all kept smiling, laughing and enjoying being out in beautiful Wales - even in the rain.

Finally the warm Red Cow pub in Pontsticill, was a perfect end to the day.

Day Trip to Pembrokeshire Saturday 19th August

24 people have shown their interest, we are waiting for confirmation and cost of a minibus, if you would like to join us email me at hthomas247@gmail.com

Montenegro Saturday 16th - Saturday 23rd September

Andrew will be in touch with Danijela to confirm individual prices, mini bus is booked for our airport transfer. 15 confirmed, room for 3 on the trip but only 1 seat available on the minibus. Full itinerary available.

Historical Walk Around Llandaff Saturday 30th September

Janet Sully will lead us on an informative walk around Llandaff, starting from Insole Court. I will send out a poster in the coming weeks, with further details.

Cadair Idris Friday 20th - Sunday 22nd October 2023

To date we have 16 signed up for this weekend, with plenty of space at the Corris Hostel, it is not too late to book up.

Elan Valley Friday 22nd - Sunday 24th March 2024

17 people booked to go, is there anyone who has paid a deposit that June is not aware of? If so could they message her on 07956520614. There is still space available, these would be in sharing twin rooms.

August Walks

Sunday 6th August CHANGE TO WALK PROGRAMME

Trehafod to Ynysybwll circular led by Tony Lawrence 9.5m M

Saturday 12th August

Pencoed, including Llanilid Church led by Rob Young 4m M

Sunday 13th August

Sugarloaf from Llanbedr led by Derek Wallis 9m M

Saturday 19th August CHANGE TO WALK PROGRAMME

Pembrokeshire Day Out led by Hayley & Andy

Saturday 26th August

Talgarn led by Martyn Hopkins 5m L

Sunday 27th August

Pen Y Fan from Pen Milan led by Michelle Mansell 9m M+