



BIGGAR RAMBLERS

Walking in Clydesdale

www.biggarramblers.co.uk

NEWSLETTER October 2013

Chairman's bit

How can anyone say we've not had a good summer? (someone will, ed.) The exception was when I led 3 others on Ben Lomond and visibility was nil and rain was 100%. (told you!) Anyway, we now have autumn and winter to look forward to and John's programme is once again full of good walks. We also have our AGM in the Elphinstone again (recommended for good food) and our Christmas dinner at the New Lanark including a good walk, good company and good food.

At the AGM we will see the end of John's 3 years as Walks Secretary and we thank him for the work he has done. He tells me that he enjoys seeing the routes people have proposed, while planning the programme. He also appreciated very much the co-operation from the many walk leaders who come forward to volunteer walks for the programme. Now he is standing down and we are looking for another to take over this important and very interesting role. Could it be you? Contact John or me to find out more and how to put yourself forward.

Brian

The Winter Prog.

John and his band of leaders have given us another selection of goodies. We will be able to compare the snowdrifts in Peebles and Arrochar and shelter from the sleet in Rommano Bridge and Beattock. Because of the Ben Lomond washout in June, Brian has put Beinn Narnain on the programme to enable us to get some big views on a big climb this year. If the day dawns wet and cloudy, there is an alternative in that area. Note that this walk will not be reced in advance, however Munros are well documented so we know about the prominent rock buttress known as the Spearhead which we walk around through a rock filled gully. On the Cobbler, if we have time, there is a scramble through the needle to get to the top of the pinnacle. Let us pray for good weather. Your editor is hoping that his walk in December runs as scheduled. His March walk was cancelled due to the wrong type of snow, and that in August had to be diverted due to cows on the line! What will happen this time? - track washed away by an avalanche or the wrong type of sandwich in the buffet?

Help!

A new survey suggests that a majority of hillwalkers, climbers etc. don't know the correct procedure to summon help. So if you are in this position this is what you do: Dial 999 or 112 (both work equally well), ask for police, then ask for mountain rescue if on a hill. The police will require the following information: location of the incident (2 letter/6 figure grid ref. and a named feature), number of casualties, injuries sustained, condition of casualties – are they deteriorating, accessibility of the location, equipment you have available, your contact number. In an area with a poor or no signal it is sometimes possible to send details by text to 999. But you will have to register first. See www.emergencysms.org.uk for info.

The Borders Walking Festival

Unlike the situation in another place, Biggar Ramblers decided to cross into Peeblesshire, with arms (and legs) and humanitarian aid (corn plasters and corned beef sandwiches) and put boots on the ground in order to ensure the success of the Walking Fest. John, Isobel and Gerrard led a substantial international brigade on a march from Stobo along the John Buchan Way and entered Peebles by way of Cademuir Hill. Brian, Blane and Michael led an encircling move from Peebles via old drove roads and Birkstane Hill to take Innerleithen from the Traquair direction. Meanwhile a group led by Jan, Bernard and Isobel followed the River Tweed from Peebles, using the old railway line and the super new bridge at Cardrona to approach Innerleithen from the west. All went to plan and, at the end of operations, we withdrew across the border to Biggar with no casualties and leaving behind only happy walkers and expenses forms. Another success for Biggar Ramblers!

And now here is the News

This year's AGM will be held in the Elphinstone Hotel in Biggar on Monday 18th November at 7.00pm. The main items are the reports from the various Committee members, election of a new Walks Secretary, suggestions and questions from the floor and any decisions which the Committee feel need approval by the membership (e.g. should we have tea or coffee). So this is your opportunity to come and moan at the Committee and then join us to show how it should be done!

Our Christmas dinner will again be the Carol Evening in the New Lanark hotel on Thursday 12th December. The cost is £24 per person. A booking form is enclosed. There will be a short walk in the afternoon in the New Lanark area. Anyone wishing to stay overnight should make their own arrangements. Also those wishing to share transport should arrange that themselves.

Our Away Weekend in 2014 will be in the Oban area, probably at the end of April, with a variety of walks to suit everyone from the hard men/girls to the sensible strollers. Oban hotel costs are being investigated for a three night stay over a weekend or, possibly as a change, mid-week. Details may be available at the AGM but will be posted out with the next programme in January.

Jo tells me that she appreciates receiving all our walk reports but, although most leaders send her their reports quite quickly, some are a wee bit tardy and she hopes they won't mind her tactfully reminding them. Don't forget these reports appear in the World's press and are read as far afield as Carlisle and Peebles.

Lynn would like me to remind all leaders to be sure and send in their recce expenses. This boosts the subsidy we get from HQ and, if you don't actually want the money, you can request that it be paid to the Group Social Fund. Lynn apologises that the accounts may be a little late this year as she's run out of red ink.

The Group website is having some management problems at the moment and there is also a slight access glitch. John is to contact Neil at Glenholm to hopefully sort things out. However the Group Facebook site is very popular, with lots of photos and comments. To join, contact Lynn.

"Walking in Scotland" This excellent leaflet, produced with help from SNH, is available online from www.ramblers.org.uk/scotland/go-walking/walking-in-scotland. It gives a lot of good advice and useful information about (surprise, surprise) walking in Scotland. But it's not for the English! Talking of walks, apparently the new Led Walks Database is still being updated by HQ.

Glentworth Forest. Brian attended a consultation meeting recently and forcefully put forward our view that there should be more provision for walkers and better separation from the mad bicyclists who cause innocent ramblers to end up in the mud with heart attacks. His comments were noted.

Clydesdale to Solway Area

As an alternative to getting soaked on Ben Lomond, I attended the Area Council meeting in June. Main items were - there is a "support fund" available to help local groups with specific projects or purchases; the famous key-rings (see last 2 newsletters) are expected soon and will be distributed free to all walkers; the Area AGM will be on 18th January 2014 at 10.00 for 10.30 at the Annandale Hotel, Moffat and there may be a local walk afterwards. All welcome.

South Lanarkshire Access Forum

I attended this meeting in June. The adopted final core-path plan is available on SLC's website. Noted that the recent review of the 2003 access legislation concluded that it was working well and no changes were proposed. Matters of interest to ramblers included the Old Wishaw Road near Law, the Clyde Walkway at Milton Lockhart estate near Dalsert and at Kirkfieldbank and obstructions in the Douglas area. The minutes of these meetings are on the SLC website.

Contributions, ideas, reports, information, breaking news etc. always welcome for the Newsletter.