



BIGGAR RAMBLERS

Walking in Clydesdale

www.biggarramblers.co.uk

NEWSLETTER October 2015

The View from the Chair

Welcome to the new Biggar Ramblers Programme. We are now leaving Summer (if you can call it that) behind us and heading into the Autumn - and Winter walks. Thanks to John and all the walk leaders for continuing to get us all out there in the rain, mist, wind and sunshine to enjoy our countryside. As always at this time of year the highlights are the AGM and the Christmas Dinner but more on those later.

I have one personal highlight coming up shortly. Since joining Biggar Ramblers, I have happily joined in walks to the higher summits. In doing so, I learned about the "Donalds" (hills over 2000 feet and south of the Highland line); there are 89 of them! I gave myself a personal challenge to climb them all. Some I have done with this group, but mostly they were solo events. Now I am about to climb the last of them, which will be Culter Fell. (Yes, I have climbed 88!) This event is on our programme for 10th October and I am grateful to John for leading it. I hope that those who feel equal to Culter Fell will join me on the day, and afterwards in the Mill Inn at Coulter (aka the Coulter Inn) for refreshments.

From Brian

(Is Brian buying? I think we should know - Ed)

Our Brand New Website

Our Group website, set up many moons ago back in the days of steam, by the sterling efforts of some of the Committee, is now getting past its sell-by date and is quite difficult to keep up-to-date and working efficiently - just like some of us! So, our IT expert, Lesley G., has been working diligently with Sara of SKK Web Design to produce something more modern and attractive and easy to maintain. Lesley hopes to have it up and running by the time you read this and she will endeavour to update it weekly. There will be a page for members to pass on their thoughts and news etc. But Lesley requests that for the moment everything should go through her. We are sure everyone will be delighted with it, and will be uploading it to all their devices. *(what does that mean? - Ed)* Please let Lesley know if you have any problems using the new site. Our thanks to Lesley.

Forthcoming Attractions

The Group AGM will take place on Monday 9th November at 7.00pm in the Elphinstone Hotel, Biggar. Come along and hear what the Committee have been doing, have your say and tell us what we should be doing. This year sadly Rosemary Turpie will be leaving the Committee due to other commitments. Rosemary has put together and led many interesting and delightful short walks around our villages and countryside and we thank her very much for all her work. We will continue to offer short/slow walks 'n talks in the programme and, happy to say, Rosemary will still be leading some of them.

For our Christmas Dinner this year, we will be returning to the New Lanark Hotel for their popular Carols by Candlelight on 10th December. This is always an enjoyable occasion and an opportunity to leave off the Gore-Tex and Paramo, put on those glad rags and relax among friends (and fellow ramblers). But don't forget to book the hotel if you are planning to stay overnight.

Pam, our Social Sec., is already planning our Spring Away Weekend - always good fun. We're going to Ballatar on Royal Deeside; wonderful scenery and great walking opportunities. If you are familiar with the area (perhaps stayed over at Balmoral with HM) or feel like contributing a walk, we will be delighted to hear from you. *(Does spending time at HM's pleasure count? - Ed)*

Last but not least, the Clydesdale to Solway Area will be holding their AGM in Biggar on 16th January followed by a short walk. It will be in the Elphinstone at 10.00 for 10.30. Come along and see what the Area does and have your say. A reminder will be sent round in advance of the date.

Photo Corner

Congratulations to John on another win in the WALK Magazine competition with his picture of a group of slimy things being menaced by a fierce monster. (No, it's not a party of ramblers being chased over a fence by a bull.) John has won so many cameras now that he's having to build an extension just to house them. Well done, John!

Walking Notes

Regular walkers will be aware that an emergency contact list is now normally completed at the start of a ramble, and this is generally felt to be a good idea. The form is going to have some modifications and guidance to the leader which we hope will make it a useful tool in the event of a mishap on a walk. Would walk leaders kindly pass the form to any committee member on a walk for forwarding to Lesley G. who will collate them and keep a record of numbers coming on walks.

On a recent walk we learned that somebody had missed a walk because they turned up at the old meeting place. Just a reminder that we now meet outside the Corn Exchange in Biggar which is opposite the Elphinstone Hotel.

Is the walk you are leading having to be cancelled or changed? Unfortunately this does happen. So to ensure that as many people know as soon as possible, please advise John Hart as Walks Secretary, Leslie Glidden who will send an e-mail to those members on her list and Jan Airlie who will ask the local press not to include it in their upcoming events section. Of course if you are on our closed Facebook group, you can post your own notice or, if not, ask Lesley to do it for you. If you would like to belong to our Private Facebook group, contact Lynn - weirlynn@hotmail.co.uk.

If you find that you cannot lead a walk which is already on the programme, you may be able to persuade a colleague to lead it on your behalf so long as you provide clear instructions.

If you want to send a message round to all Group members, remember that Lesley G. will be happy to do that for you. So contact her on lesleyglidden@btinternet.com and she will send your words flying through the wires to land safely on everyone's computers in the blink of an eye.

The Headmistress is coming!

Jess Dolan, the new Director of Ramblers Scotland, has expressed a desire to visit as many local Groups as possible. We will be sending her our new programme and extending a warm invitation to come on a walk with us. Hopefully we will be able to let people know in advance so that we get a good turn-out. A good opportunity to meet the management, so make sure you stand up straight, look smart and pay attention.

Good News Corner

We hear that about 250 planned windfarms are likely to be cancelled due to the decision to reduce the subsidy given to new onshore windfarms from next April. The subsidy is funded from levies added to household electricity bills. Investors are now losing interest in lending to windfarm developers. This is great news for the countryside and, eventually, for our fuel bills. Cheers!!

News from Chatelherault

Wearing his other hat (the one with "Greetings from Dunoon 1978"), your editor attends the South Lanarkshire Access Forum to keep tabs on what's going on walking-wise. Recent matters discussed included a path closed due to a rock fall at Calderglen Country Park, concern at Scottish Water's policy of putting up signage deterring access to reservoirs and some natural lochs, the feasibility study into linking the Clyde Walkway to the Southern Upland Way and the Ayr and Tweed Ways and reports on the activities of the Forth Access Group who are working hard to open and maintain paths in the Forth area, the Clyde and Avon Valley Partnership, the Get Walking Lanarkshire initiative, the people from Community Payback and the Paths for All Group who are all beavering away in the background to make walking around Clydesdale easy and pleasant for all of us.

Finally, a Thought for the Day *submitted by member B. Henry, of Peebles.*

"Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend" Albert Camus (1913 -1960)