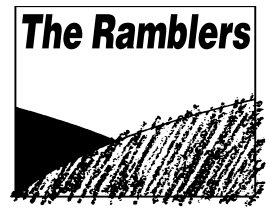


The Ramblers' Association

Working for walkers



Family Rambler

Volume 3

2004

Derbyshire Family Rambling Group

It all started off as a small group of family and friends meeting up to go on short walks with their children, but as more people realized that walking is so much fun, it turned into a hobby. That is when Derbyshire Family Rambling Group started. Its not all about driving to a certain place and walking a few miles, you also have the advantage of getting the chance to making new friends, the achievement of walking a distance of up to six miles or more, finding out new facts about the environment and getting the chance of travelling to different youth hostels across the country.

There are now many different walking groups to suit people's different needs, our group is made up of parents and grand parents walking with children and the occasional dog. We go to places that children like e.g. caves, stepping stones and walks by the river. We also have quizzes for the younger children.

In our group we have been to many different places in The Peak District, the Lake District and Yorkshire. My first Youth Hostel visit was to Sherwood Forest when I was very young (1999) and our last youth hostel trip was to Ingleton for two nights, in October.

Sarah Plunkett Age 13

Published in Duffield Scene November 2004

Derbyshire Family Rambling Group in 2004

Derbyshire Family Rambling Group continues to thrive, one of few RA family groups in the country, though some other Groups arrange some family walks. A useful meeting was held in January in Manchester, coordinated by national office, enabling the family groups to share ideas & contact details.

The Family Rambling Group ran 16 day walks, in addition to family walks during weekends away at Haworth hostel in April & Ingleton hostel in October. The first camping weekend at Newhaven in July 2004 was a success, and another camping weekend at Sherwood Forest will take place in 2005, with the option to sleep at Sherwood Forest youth hostel. Hostel weekends at Conwy will be held in April 2005, in the Lakes during October and Edale in March 2006 (!) - the earliest date we could book!

Most walks attract around 30 people, though the Welcome to Walking week/Amber & Erewash walking festival walk comprised 45. However 2 walks in June & July attracting only 8 & 9 people (? due to many other summer events), & more hostel weekends outside the Peak (attended by 30 rather than 60-70 people - though 30 is considerably easier to organize!), has reduced the mean walk attendance from 32 in 2002-3 to 24 in 2004. About half are children. Around 25-30 on a walk works well, as then most children coming find good company with others of similar age & sex from other families.

The Group ran family rambles for "Let's go wild in Derby" in August, and, as in previous years, for RA Welcome to Walking week/Amber & Erewash walking festival in September & RA Welcome to Walking Week in December. Through these festivals, we have met new people & some families who had not previously walked with the Group, but have continued to do so since. As children grow, interests change, time demands on children & parents increase; a family rambling group tends to have a higher turnover than adult-only groups, so there is a constant need to attract new members to keep the group vibrant.

Family rambling for all families who would like to?...

Though obviously not covered by the new disabled access act, which came into effect in October 2004, families do sometimes include people with mobility problems or other disabilities, be they children, parents or grandparents... Up to now only few pushchairs have ever been brought, & only few family walks have been advertised as accessible for wheelchairs or pushchairs. The next family rambles for the Winter Walks 28.12.04 & Welcome to Walking week/Amber & Erewash walking festival & RA Welcome to Walking Week September 10, and (if demand) the Sherwood Forest weekend are suitable for wheelchairs, pushchairs and stile-free. Parents volunteering to share a walk/activity they & their families enjoy with others like-minded organize all activities of the Group; this could be a new area if anyone is interested to coordinate this.... The Derbyshire Family Rambling Group started with just 1 annual walk...

The Ramblers' Association locally & Derbyshire Association for the Blind work together to offer walks. If anyone wants to know more about these, or to offer to be a sighted guide walking alongside a blind or partially sighted person, please get in touch and we can give you the relevant contact details.

Things children teach adults...

- A 4 year old's voice is louder than 200 adults in a crowded restaurant.
- Superglue is forever.

Any more for future editions....?

Growing up...

Conscious of the need to continue to offer interesting walks for children of all ages, it is hoped to develop some activities for teenagers up to 18, hopefully "bridging the gap" until they are old enough to join the 18-30/Young walking groups e.g. at Chesterfield & Notts./Derby. The first event will be a

TAP weekend - Teenagers Abandon Parents - in October 2005. Those aged 14 & over plan to walk to Ambleside youth hostel & stay overnight there without parents or any adults! Meanwhile the rest of the family rambling group will do separate walks Sat. & Sunday, spending both nights at Langdale Hostel. Should be interesting! We hope the Edale weekend with climbing Saturday & Kinder Scout walks on Sunday in March 2006 will also be exciting for older children. The Group continues to offer family walks of varying lengths & difficulty to cater for different age groups, inclinations & levels of experience.

Women Rambling

Dr. Johnson

"One is amazed not that it is done well but that they should wish to do it at all. It is rather like a chicken desiring to learn to roller skate." I wonder if a woman had left him trailing at the back!

How to be a Rambler

It's dead easy, all you need is

- a pair of legs
- something to stop them wearing out at the ends (i.e. boots or shoes)
- some clothes to stop you getting cold
- some others to stop you getting wet
- something to eat &
- something to drink &
- something to carry it all in.
- somewhere to go &
- something to help you find the way (map, compass, string, policeman, Girl Guide, Brownie..)

Mike Harding, from his book *Rambling On*

Heard on a walk...

*Appeared previously, but not included in this newsletter as none sent in...
Are they just too embarrassing? Any more for future editions....?*

On Rambles...

avoid falling off things, down things, in things or getting lost.

Mike Harding, in his book *Rambling On*

See previous article: Maybe advice some teenagers may need for their TAP weekend?

Notes for leaders

If you have offered to lead a walk in 2005 you should also receive a copy of this sheet, and an attendance sheet to ask people to fill in on the day. Please remind people that email addresses are very useful, a cheap & quick way of updating.

If I have forgotten to enclose them, let me know!

email addresses

email addresses are very useful, as a cheap & quick way of informing everyone of new walks, events & new/changed details. If you do not currently get email updates, even if you don't check your email very often, please let us have an email address if at all possible – please email to info@derbyshirefamilyrambling.org.uk. We will never pass on your email address or personal details to anyone else, and promise not to email loads of stuff! If you cannot open attachments, or have any comments/feedback – please let me know. With more experience/ knowledge, my email use gets better. Annual postal mailing only (due to the time it takes, & the cost).

Yahoo group

This Yahoo Group allows members to communicate with each other. Membership of this group is restricted to families with children who have been on at least one family walk with the Derbyshire Family Rambling Group. Please feel free to read & post messages! To date use has been disappointingly low. Ideas for use are to offer or to sell out-grown (but not worn-out) children's boots & walking gear, to swap holiday or other ideas, maybe a safe place for older children or teenagers who would like to chat. To join or to learn more, visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/derbyshirefamilyrambling>. Any ideas welcome – please email to info@derbyshirefamilyrambling.org.uk or

To start sending messages to members of this group, simply send an email to derbyshirefamilyrambling@yahogroups.com

Photos of family rambles

Photos from family rambles are on http://www.gameover.co.uk/new_web_site/Derbyshire_Fax.html and a full set kept as a photo archive. Though in 2004 there has been some delay in my forwarding photos to Ian to add – I now think I know how to send Ian photos more efficiently & in future photos I hope should appear soon after the walks.

If you have any digital photos taken on family rambles to add, please email photos to info@derbyshirefamilyrambling.org.uk, or email to ask for postal address to send a cd (I will post you a replacement blank cd). Thanks to Ian for setting up this up.

Lake District hostel weekend

We had the most amazing weekend at Buttermere / Black Sail Youth Hostels (July 2004) and can thoroughly recommend them to anyone.

Four families (Messrs. Snape, Murphy, Winder and Wilde) travelled to Buttermere on the Friday night. Saturday was a glorious fine day. We set off at 10.00am past the end of Buttermere Lake, up through the trees to Bleaberry Tarn for dinner. The tarn is at a height of 500m and gives a great view of the lake and youth hostel. It was so hot all the girls jumped into the tarn for a cool down. After lunch, we set off up Red Pike. We all found it difficult climbing to the top with full packs on but the view was fantastic as we are now 750m high. After a brief rest, we continue uphill again to the summit of High Stile – a magnificent 807m above sea level. From here you get a panoramic view over the whole of the Lake District and as far as the coast. We could actually look down onto Cat Bells.

I was starting to get a bit worried by this time because it was 3.00pm and we still had about 4 miles to go. However it was mostly down hill from here on and our pace quickened. We walked along the ridge past High Crag with Buttermere on our left and Ennerdale on our right. The ridge drops in height from 807m at High Stile to some 560m above the Scarth Gap Pass. Some of the ascents are steep and shingly.

We arrived at Black Sail at 6.30pm. It may be in the middle of nowhere but it is fully licensed and has draught beer, wine and spirits so we all had a well earned drink. Pete the warden informed us that unfortunately the shower wasn't working but the stream nearby had a dam across it and it was deep enough for a swim. The water was absolutely freezing until you were so numb that you couldn't feel the cold any more. Keith (the assistant warden managed to provide John with a bag of ice, which we nursed his swollen knee with. The hostel has two four bedded rooms and one eight bedded room kitted out with bunks and duvets – very comfy and more than I was expecting.

Power for the hostel is provided by a wind turbine, and bottled gas is used for cooking. Pete and Keith cooked a fabulous meal of home made soup for starters, followed by Cumberland sausages, spicy potatoes and carrots for the main meal, orange and chocolate sponge with cream for afters, finishing with percolated coffee. After dinner, the girls collected firewood, and we sat outside around a fire until the early hours.

Next morning we were up at 7.30am for another dip in the stream and returned to find Pete had baked some fresh bread. We ate the bread with our breakfast – delicious. Whilst we ate, the door to the hostel was open and the local sheep wandered freely in and out of the dining area. They were very tame from Pete feeding them leftover food scraps & the children loved stroking them.

We set off next morning up the path out of the valley. The climb was fairly gentle compared to that of Saturday and only took about an hour before descending gradually to the edge of Buttermere Lake and a gentle stroll along the shore back to Buttermere Youth Hostel.

It is difficult describing the exhilaration we all experienced over the weekend but one we would recommend to anyone. More gen: get in touch via Derbyshire Family Rambling Group. Details of this & other youth hostels on www.yha.org.uk or ring 0870 870 8808. *Adrian Snape*

For full details of walks & weekend trips, & much more please use web or email if possible. info@derbyshirefamilyrambling.org.uk. Otherwise, 01332 841975 or 554756, or 07970 815333.