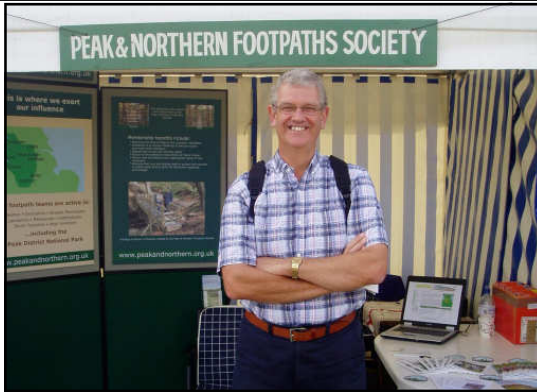


SIGNPOST

Newsletter of the Peak and Northern Footpaths Society

Number 25

July 2007



Welcome to Ken Hobbs - the first of over 130 new members recruited at the Cheshire Show - report page 4

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

AGM

The well-attended AGM took place on 29th April with all Officers standing being re-elected and **David Morton** duly voted in as Signpost Admin Officer to take over from **Fred Ogden** who stood down after many years valued service.

After much healthy debate the proposition to adopt the principle of raising annual subscriptions to part close the gap between expenditure and income was accepted by majority vote and next the proposed changes to the Constitution were unanimously approved.

There then followed more debate on the proposition for specific increases in subs to take effect in 2008 and this was defeated by a majority vote.

RESIGNATION

Shortly after the AGM **Roy Spoors** resigned all offices. Roy has been a major contributor to the renaissance of the PNFS and his departure represents a considerable setback, however this setback has provided an opportunity to restructure—only possible because we now have sufficient able and, just as important, willing people prepared to take on

responsibilities. Accordingly I have split the two posts Roy occupied viz Vice-Chairman and Courts and Inquiries Officer with **Clarke Rogerson** taking the position of acting Vice-Chairman. The further opportunity has been taken to split the Courts and Inquiries Officer position three ways with the appointments of **John Harker** (Eastern areas), **Terry Norris** (Western Areas) and **Harry Scott** (Staffs). I believe in due course that an even stronger and more effective PNFS will emerge.

MEMBERSHIP

The total stood immediately pre AGM at an all time high of 1317. But this is now the testing time. Will all those due to re-subscribe do so? ---many already have but if you have not yet done so please demonstrate your approval for what the Society stands for and what the volunteers strive to achieve which is protecting our footpaths now and for the future.

LEGACIES

The society has recently received two bequests totalling £37,000 from the estates of **GHB Ward** and **J R Shaw**. These have no specific conditions attached as to how these most generous and welcome monies should be allocated, it has been our long standing practice to treat such as income and I look forward to a debate at the Half year meeting (Sat 24 November) on proposals to establish a policy as to how we should administer the interaction of Income/ Expenditure/ Legacies/ Subscriptions.

NEW WAYS OF WORKING

The first review meeting has been held of the group of four Area Officers participating in the pilot scheme operating to the New Ways of Working. The four are **Chris Davison** (Barnsley), **John Harker** (Sheffield, Doncaster, Rotherham and also now all of Derbyshire), **David O’Leary** (Warrington) and **Harry Scott** (Staffs). The fifth original member **Andy Overton** has resigned as an AO as he wishes to pursue footpath issues purely on his own account.

The AOs and Officers are keen to continue running the pilot and minuted action points were agreed—one being that only the three Courts and Inquiries Officers can raise s63 and s56s in the Society’s name. More inspectors are sought for the areas listed above—if at all interested please arrange to come to Taylor House and have a chat with **Hilda Bowler** as to what the vital job entails.

GENERAL

Peter and Barbara Crofts have recently completed with **Adrian Littleton** the vital and intricate task of sorting wheat from chaff in our footpath paperwork record files—these have continued to grow and overwhelm the space available so a pruning exercise was long



Clarke Rogerson



John Harker



Terry Norris



Harry Scott

overdue. Peter and Barbara have now decided its time for a well earned rest and I thank them for their efforts over the years on behalf of us all. Peter for many years led the assessors carrying out Orders and Consultation duties.

On May 8th we formally handed over to Kirklees MC the 3 substantial bridges we have funded in Morton Woods near Scholes on the Kirklees Way. Also handover to Stockport MBC is imminent of the bridge over Gigg brook, Compstall. This has been very generously funded- by our member **Dr David Miller**. Our funded bridges project is now in the hands of **Neil Collie** who is also carrying out a trial with recycled plastic posts for two of our signs and for good measure he was also in charge of our display at the Cheshire Show (19/20th June) to publicize the society and seek to enrol new members.

We were also in attendance at the New Mills One World Festival (23rd June) and recruited 34 new members - report/picture October *Signpost* or see website.

And finally just to prove we are not always office bound and do get out on to them *thar* hills 4 members recently completed what we have styled 3P3C3DPT—Three peaks (Ben Nevis / Scafell Pike / Snowdon), three countries in three days using only public transport for linkage—all done in 67 hours with 6 trains and 6 buses all running to time! If you would like the schedule to give it a go just get in touch with me! **David Bratt**

A WORD FROM THE TREASURER

Typographical Errors

At the AGM I drew members' attention to several typographical errors in the Annual Report and Accounts Handbook. The tables on pages 28, 31 and 33 all contain errors that may have led to some confusion. The Treasurer's Commentary is correct and does make the Society's financial position clear. However, in order to clear up any possible misunderstanding **I have enclosed copies of the corrected pages with the current issue of Signpost.**

The accounts as presented to our independent examiner and those submitted to the Charities Commission were correct in all respects.

SORP 2005

I also spoke at the AGM about SORP 2005 because our independent examiner qualified our accounts with a statement that the accounts had not been prepared in accordance with SORP 2005.

SORP stands for "*Statement of Recommended Practice*" and is the Charities Commission's guidelines on presenting accounts and on how a charity should report on its progress in meeting its charitable objectives. So, for example, SORP provides templates for presentation of accounts and recommendations on the preparation of a Trustees Report to accompany the annual accounts.

Unfortunately when the trustees found out about SORP we were well advanced in preparing the accounts in the format and style used in previous years. However, it is intended that from this year the Society's accounts will comply with the SORP recommendations.

Alan Postill Treasurer

SUCCESS AT THE CHESHIRE SHOW

It didn't augur well when we arrived at our stand at the Cheshire Show. We were sandwiched between Hound Magazine and the Wild Dogs of Wilmslow Flyball Display team and in close proximity to the Countryside Alliance and the Bridleways Association. To make matters worse, there was no power supply so the planned 'high-tech' demonstrations had to be abandoned.

However, our new display boards were quickly erected and we could rely on our Chairman's patter to pull the punters in. We soon found that the public were very supportive and happy to join the Society at the special show rate. During the two days, over 130 new members were signed up. In addition, literally hundreds of leaflets were given out and we hope some of them will be returned to Taylor House with cheques enclosed. Our volunteer team of **Hilda and Peter Bowler, Gillian and Alan Postill, Dirk Broad, Ian Ray, Vince Joyce, David Bratt, Clarke Rogerson, and Neil Collie** were kept busy throughout the two days. Indeed, at one point the public were queuing to sign up!

All in all, it was a successful event, and a very useful way of increasing our membership and spreading the word about what we do.

Neil Collie



Peter and Hilda Bowler recruiting new members

FROM THE VICE CHAIRMAN

I am honoured to have been invited, by the elected officers, to take up the post of Acting Vice Chairman and Trustee of the Society. The year ahead is certain to be an exciting a challenging time for me personally and for the Society as a whole. I would be the first to admit that I have a very steep learning curve ahead of me as I take on responsibility for communications and improved working methods.

The pilot “New Ways of Working” is steaming ahead and we now have 3 very experienced Courts and Enquiries Officers. Our ability to make our presence felt and raise the societies profile with both local authorities and in the eyes of the walking public is strengthened by these changes. The challenge ahead will be to ensure that we have slick channels of communication and efficient working practices to ensure we demonstrate a consistent, professional approach in all our dealings.

To ensure consistency and to protect the Society from excessive costs a new Legal Review Meeting has been set up with representation from Courts and Inquiries, Consultations, Faults and Obstructions and our Legal Adviser which will be chaired by either David or myself as Trustees.

I look forward to meeting many more of our members and volunteers in the coming months and hearing your views and ideas on the Societies future. Apart from Taylor House on a Monday I'm often to be found on our excellent walks which provide a great opportunity for healthy discussion so why not join us and let me hear your views.

Clarke Rogerson

ON THE SIGNPOST FRONT

We now have ten signposts in the garage at Taylor House. Five are replacements for existing signs. S166 (Cobden Edge) and S188 (Burbage) are replacements for tubular posts as **Neil Collie's** programme comes to an end. S205(Compstall), S98(Rushup Edge) and S261 (PNFS Centenary) near the Snake Pass, replace worn, part-missing and wholly-missing signs respectively.

In addition, there are five brand new signs, impeccably painted and posted by **Bill Johnson**, which will be planted on or near to Taxal Edge, Chew Reservoir, Holcombe Moor and Delamere Forest near Manley. These plantings will take place when our outdoor team, Ted and Brian, have recovered from illness and injury respectively, which we hope will be in the next four to six weeks. Meanwhile, Ted and I will be adding our efforts to those of the indomitable **Brian Morrison** in cleaning and repainting. The purchase of quick-drying, acrylic, green paint has made it possible to begin white-lettering after only a short pause to eat lunch.

Another new signpost at Moscar is awaiting collection from Leander and I have three farmers' permissions for no fewer than five new signs on footpaths in the area north of Ashbourne, where previously we have had few signposts.

People continue to request signposts in areas where they are already thickest on the ground, while landowners' permissions are most readily gained in outlying areas, so my main challenge is to bridge this gap.

David Morton

GEORGE HERBERT BRIDGES WARD 'KING OF THE RAMBLERS'

Sunday, October 14th 2007, marks the 50th anniversary of the death of GHB Ward. So why should we remember him? His role in the formative years of the local, regional & national rambling movement was immense.

Born in Sheffield in 1876, he was the founding father of the Sheffield Clarion Rambling Club whose annual handbooks are now so sought after by collectors of rambling memorabilia. That first walk, in September 1900 (a circumnavigation of Kinder Scout using rights of way & roads), was a seminal event. It used the 'Snake Path' which this Society had done so much to reopen only a few years before. The irony of that walk is that it is as a trespasser that Ward is so often remembered.



Ward was feared & loathed by every grouse moor owner, gamekeeper & path obstructor in the Peak District. His power lay in his deep knowledge of the history of the areas he walked in. He knew that many areas of moorland, many historic paths had been closed to walkers by landowners after the enclosure awards of the eighteenth & nineteenth centuries. He researched the archives & interviewed local people & uncovered the evidence that later led to many paths being put on the Definitive Map after the 1949 Act. Paths now taken for granted by you and me. Much of his research work was published in those handbooks & remains a testament to his diligence & persistence. He invented the 'Discovering Lost Ways Project' nearly a century before the 2000 CROW Act did.

He was a tireless campaigner for open access & also his organisational abilities as a trade unionist & activist in the fledgling Labour Party were put to good effect. He founded the Hallamshire Footpath Preservation Society (1912) now subsumed into this Society. The Hunter Archaeological Society (1912), the Sheffield Society for the Protection of Scenery (1924, now the South Yorkshire & Peak District Branch of CPRE) owe much to Ward as one of their founders & driving forces. Then the Sheffield Federation of Rambling Clubs (1926) which begat the National Council of Ramblers' Federations (1931) which became the Ramblers' Association in 1935. Ward's influence was a key factor in all of this activity.

Yet during all of this, he never lost sight of his original goal in 1900 - to inspire working people to get out into the countryside to seek physical & spiritual refreshment. For him, rambling was: "the trinity of legs, eyes and mind". A Sunday School teacher as a young man, he was very much from the muscular Christian wing of the socialist movement. Another favourite saying was: "A Rambler made is a Man Improved". (It has to be said, there wasn't much room for women in Ward's vision of Utopia).

There were downsides to him, as with many great men. He was often autocratic and

intolerant of those who did not agree with him. He condemned the 1932 Kinder Mass Trespass, as did many ramblers leaders, as unnecessary & provocative. However, the balance sheet is overwhelmingly in his favour and we should not judge him by today's standards. One thing is for sure, we shall not see his like again.

I am indebted to David Sissons, a Society member, for help with this article. Any mistakes are mine. For further reading on Ward & his work, get *'The Best of the Sheffield Clarion Ramblers' Handbooks'* edited by David Sissons, published by Halsgrove 2002 ISBN 1 84114 222 0

John Harker

PNFS POSTSCRIPT

Bert' Ward had been involved in an organised trespass on Bleaklow as early as 1907. He is first logged as Assistant Footpath Inspector in the 1910 Peak District and Northern Counties Footpath Preservation Society (as we then were) Annual Report and he remained a member, later a Council Member, until his death 40 years later. In appreciation of his services to rambling the RA (Sheffield Branch) presented to him a piece of land near the top of Lose Hill, still known as Ward's Piece, eventually handed over to the National Trust.

The Hallamshire Footpath Preservation Society came to an end soon after his death because its Secretary died shortly after its founder and Chairman' when its members agreed to hand over their funds and records to the PDNCFPS. Bert's house in Sheffield was left to his sister until her death, after which its value was to be divided between the Hallamshire society and the Ramblers Association. Due to the folding of the former and its take-over by the Peak and Northern, we inherited a legacy of £36,000 from the estate of one of our most illustrious members. Thanks go to John Harker for identifying this legacy to the benefit of the PNFS.



Bert Ward (centre) receiving the gift of 'Ward's Piece' on Lose Hill

PNFS PEOPLE

Jack Robinson, Inspector for Oldham for many years, has passed his responsibility for this area to **Martin Riley** who has been working with him for some time.

Ken West (Blackburn & Darwen) and **Brian Taylor** (Bury) have also resigned due to moving out of the area and declining health respectively. **Andy Overton** has ended his position as Area Officer for Doncaster MBC and **Roy Spoors** has resigned as Inspector for Manchester Ringway. Our grateful thanks are due to all the above for their valued work for the Society.

Lesley and Allan Wilton have taken over Cheadle & Gatley from **John and Eileen Wallace**. **Mike Barnes** has taken on Kirk Langley, Kedleston and Weston Underwood (Derbyshire Amber Valley) in addition to his three Cheshire Parishes, giving us more cover in an area where we are somewhat short of Inspectors. **Graham Sencicle** has taken over Blackpool UC, an area where we had no Inspector, as well as his other parishes. **Terry Norris** has agreed to look after orders for all Calderdale and inspect other parishes as time permits, until another Inspector is appointed for this area. **John Harker** has been appointed Area Officer for Doncaster, replacing Andy Overton, and also Area Officer for the whole of Derbyshire, in addition to being Area Officer for Sheffield and Rotherham.

Due to the inevitable turnover, we are always in need of new Inspectors. Could YOU take on this interesting responsibility for a district you know? If you feel you could, please contact HILDA BOWLER at Taylor House on a Monday morning or at home on 01625 432 426 or email HPBowler@aol.com

The many friends of **Eric Kime** will be pleased to hear that he made a swift recovery after his collapse in Taylor House when photocopying the Minutes of the Officers' Meeting. He had a spell in hospital and is now awaiting a heart operation. Meanwhile he still keeps up his connection with the Society and we see him most Mondays.

We are very sorry to report that **Josie Sutton**, wife of **Ernest**, our highly-regarded ex-Membership Secretary, who stood down last year when overcome by arthritis, has suffered a broken ankle in a car accident when being driven home from a walk. She and Ernie are both in Mellor Nook Residential Home, Mellor.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Perhaps it has slipped your mind, but our Constitution states "Subscriptions shall be due within one month of each AGM". We are well beyond that date now and still some members have not as yet got around to putting hand in pocket. Would a gentle reminder be in order?

FIRE DANGER

Remember the baking heat in April and May? Concern was raised about the very real danger of fire on moorland. Some walkers may have been confused by notices such as this, ordering us to keep off moorland, when a look at the small print reveals that Public Rights of Way are not affected. Even if open access rights are suspended, walkers still have a legal right to walk on a public path. So take every care not to start a fire but *read the small print*.

WIND FARM DEVELOPMENTS

The granting of permission for the wind farm on Scout Moor, north of Bury, now with construction well under way, seems to have stimulated further applications on open moorland.

The Society has recently written to oppose applications for 7 wind turbines on Crook Hill, Rochdale and for 4 turbines on Reaps Moss, Bacup. Our opposition is in accordance with the Society's agreed guidelines in treating each Wind farm on its merits. Both of these proposals affect moorland crossed by numerous public paths. The one on Reaps Moss carries 3 major long-distance paths as well as 4 definitive footpaths. We feel that the installation of these huge constructions (410 feet high!) in open country will ruin the enjoyment of all who pass by.

BRIDGES

I have recently taken over responsibility for our new bridge projects from **David Bratt**. The current projects are: **Bosley, Cheshire**. The location and cost of a new eight metre long bridge south-east of Bosley Reservoir has been agreed with Cheshire County Council and should be installed in the next few months.

Hay Wood, near Slaithwaite, Kirklees. This is a new location for a bridge which would open up areas of woodland on both sides of the river. The landowners have agreed to the location, so we are hopeful this project can proceed.

Cragg Valley, near Hebden Bridge, Calderdale. The detailed cost of a bridge in this beautiful location is awaited. It would replace a previous crossing by stepping stones which was swept away some years ago!

Neil Collie



SHORT WALK REPORTS

21 March – Ashley - Leader David Bratt - 11 out in excellent weather for the time of year. David led us out through the Cheshire countryside to the village of Rostherne, crossing a bridge blocked by a fallen tree along the way. The group took time to look around the village and church yard where David pointed out the grave of Vice Admiral Jodrell Leigh before our return to the station.



Negotiating the fallen tree

11 April 2007, Wilmslow & Bollin Valley. Leader: Neil Collie.

Twelve walkers were out on a bright day. From Wilmslow station we walked up the Bollin Valley and heard about some of the early history of Wilmslow which was renowned for fustian before Ferraris! A leisurely lunch at Woodford was followed by a steep descent into the lovely Dean Valley, somewhat spoilt by the noise from the adjacent A34 Handforth Bypass. We passed the fine Handforth Hall, built in 1562, before reaching Handforth station for the return journey home.

9th May 2007- 6 miles Whaley Bridge Circular. Leader Wally Smith

With a not too encouraging weather forecast it was a case of whether or not we could complete the walk before the rain came. In the event, we managed it in perfect conditions. A group of 10 set off from Whaley Bridge Railway Station along the main road towards the superstore turning left under the Railway Bridge and up towards the hamlet of Hockerley. From here we made our way across a field and down Yardsley lane passing the Hall before joining a



On Whaley Moor near Dipping Stones

lane leading up to Diglee farm to cross over to Whaley Moor. It was a steady climb to get there but walking along the moor presented us with some of the most beautiful scenery. Having Clarke in the party he was able to give an account of the 'Dipping stones'. After lunch we made our way in the direction of Lyme Park but, turning off away from the Moorside Hotel, somewhat to the relief of our party after the long climb. We veered away from Kettlehulme to make our way back via Slattersbank Wood and along Toddbrook Reservoir and in time for two of our members to go ahead to catch their train. The rest of us meandered back to Whaley. On the way home the rain caught up with us so were we lucky.



An impossibly narrow gap stile

13 June – Newhey – Leader Martin Riley

9 walkers a humid overcast day but we did manage to complete most of the walk without waterproofs. Martin, our inspector for the area, led us uphill to Garside Farm pointing out first a new fence with an impossibly narrow gap stile followed by another gap stile completely blocked with a massive piece of masonry. The walk continued on paths that clearly see very few walkers. The highlight of the walk had to be Crompton 59 which had suffered several blockages over the last 10 years. Martin has chipped away developing good relations with Oldham’s RoW Officer to clear this path and make it safe. We were all impressed with the new gates, stiles and steps that now ease the way down this very path. Martin is to be congratulated for an excellent walk and a job well done.

Long Walk Report

23 May – Leader **Clarke Rogerson** – 9 walkers a dull start but the sun and several pairs of legs soon came out for the walk from Bromley Cross. The walk taken from the leaders book **Walk! The South Pennines** followed sections of the Witton Weavers Way and incorporated a little challenge to find out the dates for the construction of the three reservoirs on our route. We didn’t have time to stop at the Black Bull or the Strawbury Duck but we did have time to look at the Old Russia Lodge Chimney and the Barlow Institute on route to Entwistle. After lunch we made our way up to the trig point on Cheetham Close returning via Turton Tower for a quick pint at Bromley Cross before our train back to Manchester.



Trig point on Cheetham Close

Short Walk Programme July to October 2007.

Wednesday 18 July Newhey to Littleborough - Linear

Leader: **Peter Vickers** 0161 749 8135

7 Miles, 800ft ascent Man Victoria 10.30hrs walk starts Newhey Station 10.55hrs

Wednesday 15 August Flixton Bottoms Path – This linear walk explores the roots and history of the Society which was formed 113 years ago. See website for more details.

Leader: **Clarke Rogerson** 0161 749 8412

6 miles (or longer by agreement on the day) very flat.

Manchester Oxford Road 10.13hrs walk starts Flixton 10.30hrs bring lunch.

Wednesday 12 September Shaw to Newhey

Leader: **Martin Riley** 01706 848408.

6.0miles approx Man Victoria 10.30hrs walk starts at Shaw Station 10.50hrs.

Wednesday 10 October Disley Circular

Leader: **Vince Joyce**

6 miles Man Piccadilly 10.37 walk starts Disley Station at 11.02 bring lunch.

Longer Walks programme July 2007 to October 2007

Please check train times before travel

Wednesday July 25th

09.49 Manchester Piccadilly to Hadfield. 12 m hilly walk starts Hadfield station 10.30

Leader **Vince Joyce** 01942 603626

Linear walk—return from Glossop station. Bring lunch

Wednesday August 22nd (NOTE not last Wednesday in month)

09.42 Manchester Piccadilly to Huddersfield. 10 m moderate walk starts from Huddersfield station at 10.20.

Leader **David Bratt** 01925 762472

Narrow canal and Castle Hill. Bring lunch.

Wednesday September 26th

10.03 Manchester Piccadilly to Wilmslow. 10m easy walk starts from Wilmslow station at 10.30 Leader **Brian Summerscales.** 0161 437 8500

Parts of North Cheshire Way and Bollin Valley Way. Bring lunch

Wednesday October 31st

09.42 Manchester Piccadilly to Huddersfield 10.15 then local train back to Marsden. More details in October newsletter.

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