

SIGNPOST

**Newsletter of the Peak and Northern
Footpaths Society**



Number 33

Summer 2009

RAMBLINGS FROM THE CHAIR

I hope the first thing you will notice about this newsletter is the improvement in quality, particularly of the photographs. Dave Brown has managed to secure a new deal with a local printer that brings us this improvement at a slightly lower price than our previous printer could offer.

As those of you who follow my ramblings will know, costs and the finances of the Society are a subject close to my heart. So I will make no apologies for rambling on about the Society's finances and the challenge we face.

Subscriptions and donations are the main sources of income and they allow the society to carry out its good work; so I will start by thanking all those members who have renewed their subscriptions. If you have not renewed please take this as a gentle reminder that subscriptions are due now. Next I would like to thank the members who have recently made generous donations. One of these was for £1,000.

During the period 2002 to 2007 the society benefited from legacies totalling over £100,000. Since 2007 income from legacies has been exactly zero. Whilst those legacies were welcome they did mask the real cost of running the society. At the 2008 AGM the membership agreed that it was necessary to increase subscriptions in an attempt to bridge the gap between income and expenditure. That increase has helped but our 2008 accounts report a deficit of over £12,000 and this year we are projecting a larger deficit. Over the last 18 months the officers have examined all our costs

and reduced them where ever possible. There are still some areas in which we can make savings and these will be discussed at the half-year meeting in October.

However, even if we implement all possible savings we will not be able to match our income to our expenditure and continue the level of work we currently undertake. It is fortunate that we have substantial reserves to tide us over this difficult period. However, I believe it would be imprudent to bury our heads and not face the challenge of substantially increasing our income.

We have identified several options - which I must stress do not include scaling back on what we do - and we must pursue them all. The main areas to look at are sponsorship, grants and donations. You will notice I do not mention increasing subscriptions again. We debated that option at several General Meetings and I think we are all agreed that it would be counterproductive and serve to exclude a segment of the public from joining us. Whilst we will pursue sponsorship and grants, given the current financial climate I am not convinced they will provide the whole solution.

2010 is going to be an especially challenging year with our commitment to fighting the claim for the Bridestones path (estimated at £14,000) and an ongoing deficit in funding expected to be a further £14,000-£15,000. It is with this in mind that I am appealing to all members to consider making regular small donations by standing order.

If you would like to contribute in this way, please set up your standing order to the Peak and Northern Footpaths Society bank account as follows:

Sort Code: 40-52-40

Account Number: 00089378

Mark it: REGULAR DONATION.

I will report on the level of donations in future editions of this newsletter.

One great strength of the society is our volunteers and the work they put in to preserve and protect our footpath heritage. Bill Johnson has for 12 years been one of those volunteers, serving as Signpost Officer from 1997 to 2003 and then remaining on the signpost team painting the new plates we receive from Leander. I do not think anyone knows quite how many signposts Bill has erected, maintained or painted, but the chances are we have all seen the results of his efforts. Bill has a great love of the outdoors, as the book "Look Again at Longdendale" (which he designed and edited) shows. With other projects in the pipeline Bill has decided, earlier this year, to retire from the signpost team. On behalf of the society I would like to thank Bill for his years of service and wish him well with his new endeavours.

Staying on the theme of volunteers, we have an urgent need for a volunteer for general clerical work at Taylor House. If anyone can spare three or four hours on a Monday morning please get in touch. The work will require some basic computing skills. Training and support will be available if you do not already have these skills.

In addition I would like to recruit someone who has any experience in grant applications, fund raising or marketing. I expect that the work would be carried out from home on a flexible basis over a fixed period of 12 months or so. Again if you can help, please get in touch.

Historians will be interested to know that the Society's Annual Reports for the years 1894 to 1942 are now available on our website. Many thanks to David Williamson for his efforts in scanning these documents and for his ongoing work with the more recent reports.

Finally, an early reminder that the Half Year Meeting will be held on Saturday 31st October at the Britannia Hotel, Offerton. Let the editor know, before 24th October, if you are coming

GREEN LANE PROTECTION GROUP

The GLPG is an informal group of 19 like-minded organisations, including PNFS, some large and national, others smaller and more local, which was assembled by GLEAM (Green Lanes Environmental Action Movement) early in 2005 to fight for various amendments to the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Bill while it was going

through both Houses of Parliament.

NERC 2006 is a complex piece of legislation concerned with rights of way and mechanically propelled vehicles (MPVs).

More information about GLPG and the provisions of the NERC act can be found on the web at <http://www.gleam-uk.org/>

SOME GOOD SIGNS

Unofficial diversions of public footpaths are far from unknown. They usually arise because the landowner does not want to incur the fee payable to the Highway Authority for processing an application under the Highways Act 1980. This fee is typically around £2,000. Whilst ultimately some of these unofficial diversions could be acceptable to the walking public, it is crucial that the proper legal processes are followed to ensure that the surface and width of the diverted path are satisfactory, stiles or gates are of an acceptable standard and the new route is waymarked. If the diversion is confirmed by the council, or if the matter is contested by a planning inspector, it is very important that signs are erected at both ends of the new route to indicate that the path has been lawfully diverted. The photo accompanying this article shows an appropriate sign used by Bradford Council. Unfortunately this is not standard practice in all authorities.

If your local council does not adopt this practice, the matter is well worth



raising at a PROW user forum or directly with the council (contact details for each authority in the areas covered by the Society are on our website). In due course official diversions will be shown on the OS map, but this depends on the Highway Authority notifying the OS and a new edition of the map being published. A sign, like that illustrated, can remove any confusion for a walker following a path on an OS map which does not show the route of an official diversion.

Unofficial diversions should be reported to the Highway Authority so the matter can be investigated and, if appropriate, pressure put on the landowner to make the definitive line available and formally apply for a diversion. Even if the diversion is satisfactory on the ground, a new owner could lawfully close it and it may then be difficult to reinstate the

original route if, for example, it has been incorporated into a domestic garden.

Can a member of the public walk along a private road? Yes, if there is a public footpath or bridleway along the road. The term 'Private Road' generally refers to public vehicular rights, so that the only persons permitted to drive along the road are householders using the road to access their property. They have a private right to do this, called an easement. Where a road has dual public and private status it is im-

tant that the deterrent effect of any 'PRIVATE ROAD' sign is countered by a public footpath or bridleway sign. I was, therefore, pleased to see the illustrated sign at the side of a metalled road in Calderdale which is also a public footpath. Where there is no indication of public status in such a situation the Highway Authority should be requested to erect an appropriate sign near the private road notice to make it clear there is a right for walkers to use the road.

Terry Norris

SIGNPOST REPORT

I think that it must be six months since I last wrote a short report for Issue 31 back in the winter and another for the 2008 Annual Report. We have planted another 22 signposts so far in 2009, as well as continuing the maintenance programme ranging from repainting to reposting. The new signposts can now be seen on Google Earth, via the "Signposts - Where they are" link on our website. Ted Wolfe, John Hodgson (contractor) and Brian Morrison have been joined by Graham Broadbent from Chadderton, who has, despite ill health, begun to help with maintenance in the West Pennine Moors and Greenfield areas. A new volunteer, Philip Jones from Hoylandswaine, Penistone, is now equipped to look after signs around the Derwent reservoirs.

In January S351, in memory of Bob and Marian Clark, and S356 were erected at Hartford (Northwich) and Whitegate respectively. In February five signposts (S360-364) were erected at Anglers Country Park, Wake-

field, becoming our most easterly signs. S355, in memory of Helen and Bill Boyle, was erected at Lower Water Meetings, Compstall, followed by S366, in memory of Edward Leyburn Barras, at Harrop Fold Farm, Rainow. Then S369, the original but long-lost Signpost No.5 dating from 1905, was reinstated at High Hills Cottage, west of Peep o'Day, courtesy of the Pugh family. March saw our three most southerly signs (S352 - 4) erected with help from Harry Scott and David Hewett, followed by S357 - 9 on or close to the Marsden Estate, Yorkshire.

April saw Ted and John visiting Clatterbridge Hospital in the Wirral, where S371 was planted on a footpath renamed 'Tommy's Path' in honour of one of the young patients from Claire House Hospice. It subsequently made a brief appearance on 'Songs of Praise' with Claire Sweeney, Tommy and his dad. Later, S367, in memory of Jim Wild of Manchester Associates Rambling Club, was erected close to Barlow

House Farm, Higher Poynton. S370 (New Rocklands) and S339 (Thurstaston) were placed on the Wirral, becoming our most westerly signs. On the same day S365, our most easterly signpost, was installed at Thorpe Audlin, Wakefield, close to the A1. May was uneventful as we waited for the foundry to catch up. In June, S368 (Middlecale Farm, Lyme Handley) was erected to commemorate the centenary of Stockport Walkers. S372 (Back Tor) and 373 (Dunge Valley Garden) are due for installation in late July or August.

My next target is a memorial signpost (S343) at Rivelin, Sheffield and another (S374) at Aston, Rotherham, followed by two signposts in Saddleworth. I welcome suggestions for new signpost locations in Lancashire, where we have surprisingly few. If anyone wishes to make one of our signposts a memorial or a gift (e.g. birthday or anniversary present) via a donation of £200, please get in touch at 0161 283 7824.

On the subject of our early plate-maker and second footpath inspector Rowland Mower, I've tracked him down to Albert Terrace, Buxton Road, Newtown in 1911. His occupation was motor engineer and he was still living with his mother and sisters. I suspect that they lived in the very large brick house which



Tommy's Sign

stands empty at one end of the terrace of small, stone houses. Are there any members of New Mills Local History Society out there who might tell us more?

Finally, S085 is still with Martyn Sharp, the PNP's Pennine Way Ranger. He has been very busy and, although it is painted, he has not yet managed to plant it at the top of Jacob's Ladder. When I last enquired about the memorial to Frank Head on South Head, it was still at South Head Farm in the care of Shane Bates.

Dave Morton

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Is this going to be the last copy of Signpost that you receive? It will be if you don't pay your membership PDQ. The constitution states that "Subscriptions will be due within one month of the AGM." We don't insist on that, but we are now well beyond the due date and still some members have not renewed.

There is a membership form on the outside back cover.

SHOW TIME

The Society has shown its presence at three shows so far this summer. Whilst the shows all differ in size and emphasis there is one common thread running through them all. People are becoming increasingly reluctant to part with their money. Whether the credit crunch really has made people worse off is open to question but there is no doubt that it has made them think that they are.

New Mills One World Festival is a wonderful event and now in its twentieth year of promoting international peace, world development and environmental issues. But the British weather put a damper on it this year and David Bratt and I had a real struggle to keep things dry. Despite this and thanks to David's persuasive and persevering patter we managed to recruit almost thirty new members.

One notable new recruit was Gilly Gostick, the widow of Vice President Sir Martin Doughty. Shortly after Sir Martin's death we asked Gilly to



The President with the New Vice President at New Mills Festival

become a Vice President and at the festival she confirmed her acceptance of the offer (and was duly elected at the next Officers meeting)



Farmer Alf Evans joins us at the Cheshire Show

The Cheshire Show was, by contrast, a much larger and much drier gathering. But despite the large attendance, the fine weather, the President's persistent patter, and the sterling efforts of myself, Vince Joyce, Alan Postill, Ian Ray, Neil Collie, Dirk Broad, Janet Buckley and Ian Howard we struggled to improve our daily tally, recruiting fewer than sixty new members in the two days. Our first recruit on the second day must be singled out for mention: Alf Evans, a farmer - not the most represented profession in our membership - and a most engaging character. When asked if he had any problems with walkers on footpaths across his farm he replied "None at all", adding slowly "But then I don't have any footpaths on my land!"

Marple Locks Festival was different again. Organised by the Marple Civic Society this was a relatively small but extremely enthusiastically

supported event, the enthusiasm no doubt increased by it being an extremely fine day. Clarke Rogerson and I recruited our first member before our stall was fully set up and that set the tone for the day. In contrast to the previous shows there were people who asked to join us without any persuasion, a common remark being "I have been meaning



Our youngest recruit?

to join for ages, just never got round to it". Along with those whose arms we did twist we achieved over thirty new members in the day.

It is clear that the much larger amount of money spent on the bigger show did not translate into a proportionate number of new members and we must think long and hard about which shows we attend in future. But shows are not just about recruitment. They are also an opportunity for people with footpath problems to find out if the Society can help them. And for existing members to meet officers and tell us how they think the Society is performing.

We are attending one further show this year - Rushton Spencer Country Fayre on Bank Holiday Monday, August 31st. Do join us there.

PNFS WALKS PROGRAMME

For all walks: check all rail or bus times near the date and bring lunch. All walkers joining a PNFS-led walk should wear appropriate clothing and are responsible for their own safety. Walk leaders reserve the right to exclude people from the walk without giving any reason for that decision.

SHORT WALKS

Wednesday 12 August

Leader: Peter Vickers (0161 748 8135)

Hebden Bridge circular. 5.5 miles.

Manchester Victoria 1045. Walk starts Hebden Bridge station 1130.

Wednesday 9 September

Leader: Peter Burns (01744 893432)

Ramsbottom circular including Peel Tower. 7 miles.

Tram from Manchester Victoria 1000 to Bury Interchange, then No 474 bus at 1030 to Ramsbottom.

Walk starts Ramsbottom station 1100.

Wednesday 14 October

Leader: Neil Collie (0161 440 9424)

Adlington to Bollington return. 6 miles. 500ft ascent. Some road walking. Manchester Piccadilly 1048. Walk starts Adlington station at 1115.

Wednesday 11th November

Leader: Brian Morrison (0161 483 8957)

Offerton Circular. 6 miles. Flat.

Walk starts Taylor House at 1102.

Taylor House is about 20 minutes walk from Stockport Railway Station with frequent trains from Manchester. Coffee and biscuits will be available before and after the walk

LONGER WALKS

Wednesday 26 August

Leader Geoff Errington (01773 827041)

Grindleford Circular. 11 miles. Hilly.

Manchester Piccadilly 1045. Walk starts Grindleford station 1145.

Wednesday 30 September

Leader Peter Gunn (0161 291 9372)

New Mills to Edale linear. 12 miles. Hilly.

Manchester Piccadilly 0945. Walk starts New Mills Central at 1020.

Wednesday October 28th

Leader: Bill Buckley (01475 855639)

Glossop to Chinley linear. 11 miles. Hilly

Manchester Piccadilly 0915. Walk starts at Glossop Station 0950.

Wednesday November 25th

Leader: David Stearne (01928 735809)

Shaw to Littleborough linear. 9.5 miles. 1650 ft ascent.

Train from Manchester Victoria 0938. Walk starts from Shaw and Crompton station at 1010.

CHRISTMAS WALK - Wednesday 16th December

Leader: Clarke Rogerson (0161 749 8412)

Flixton Bottoms Path - a repeat of the popular linear walk which explores the roots and history of the Society.

9 miles but can finish by Metro at 5 miles or 6 miles. Very flat.

Manchester Oxford Road 1016. Walk starts Flixton station 1030.

BULLS AND COWS

It is always a little worrying to cross a field inhabited by bulls or cows. Although bulls give rise to the greatest concern, a herd of frisky young bullocks or heifers can be equally intimidating.

The law on bulls has been clear for many years. Section 59 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 bans

bulls of recognised dairy breeds (eg, Ayrshire, Friesian, Holstein, Dairy Shorthorn, Guernsey, Jersey and Kerry) in all circumstances from being at large in fields crossed by public rights of way. Bulls of all other breeds are also banned from such fields unless accompanied by cows or heifers. But there are no specific prohibitions on other cattle.

However, a recent ruling in the High Court should make landowners more wary about putting frisky cows in fields with footpaths across them. A farmer was found liable to the tune of £1m when cows attacked a woman on a public footpath. This has fuelled fears that other producers could also face huge fines. Shirley McKaskie was walking along a footpath with her Jack Russell dog on farmland near Greystoke, Cumbria, when she was attacked by cattle. The 40-head herd of Simmental-cross cows, which had calves at foot, tossed Ms McKaskie in the air, breaking her arm and ribs and leaving her brain-damaged and needing a wheelchair.

Earlier this month, a judge ruled



that farmer David Cameron should pay £250,000 compensation plus legal costs for the injuries his cattle inflicted in 2003. That sum could

leap to £1m depending on the results of an appeal and an assessment of Ms McKaskie's needs.

While Ms McKaskie strayed from the designated right of way, the judge ruled Mr Cameron was guilty of a breach of duty of care because he had allowed walkers to previously use the route she took. The proper right of way was blocked by nettles, which entitled walkers to deviate from the footpath. Mr Cameron was held liable as the court was shown evidence that it is characteristic of cattle to be aggressive.

THE REAL WORK OF THE SOCIETY

More extracts from our officers' files illustrating just a small part of the work handled by the Society.

Oldham – Saddleworth 277

This is a case referred on to me by John Harker. The Council were intending to reopen this path by the construction of stiles and clearance work. When contractors went on site the Council was requested by the landowner – Greenfield Estates – to cease work as the path had been extinguished under legal powers authorising the construction of Dovestones Reservoir. Neither the landowner nor the Council had copies of the legislation or any orders made. In the circumstances Terry Cavanagh from Oldham Council felt he could not proceed with the works until the matter had been resolved. At the time of the construction of the

reservoir the area was in the West Riding of Yorkshire. I therefore conducted a search at the Wakefield County records office and found the private act of Parliament from 1958. Section 7 gave the Waterworks committee power to extinguish and create new public rights of way in accordance with the deposited plans. A set of the deposited plans were available for inspection in the archives. Sheet 5 showed the paths to be extinguished in green and substitute paths in red. Path 277 was not included amongst those affected. Terry Cavanagh has now obtained a certified copy of the plan and is to reopen the matter with the landowner.

The land agent has raised a number of matters, which in his view show that the path was wrongly recorded

on the definitive map. These include an estate map prior to construction of the reservoir and a statement from a farmer, who has lived in the area since before production of the first definitive map, that he has never known the path. I have written to Terry explaining the legal requirements to delete paths from the definitive map, stressing the need for cogent new evidence and the very limited relevance of negative user evidence. I sense he is struggling to convince his bosses that the Council should take a firm line and proceed to erect stiles.

Rotherham Aston cum Aughton 5.

This path has been blocked by severe flooding since 2007 caused by a blocked culvert where a stream runs underneath a railway embankment to the left of the photo. The path is to the right of the fence in the foreground and runs between fences away from the photographer.

We have pressed RMBC for action to get Network Rail to sort out the blocked culvert. The threat of legal action had to be made and now Network Rail have commenced work on the culvert. The flooding is receding but the lengths of path either side of the flooding have



Flooding on Ashton cum Aughton 5

become completely impassable due to lack of use and under/overgrowth. We continue to press RMBC for works to make this path walkable again and I hope to be able to report in the near future that we have been successful.



Obstructed path Okeover 7

East Staffordshire - Okeover 7

This is just outside of the Peak Park and near Blore and Ilam. A field gate from the road is nailed up, and a large boulder has been placed in front of the gate to greet walkers using the footpath. The Society has reported the problem to Staffordshire County Council.

Cheshire - Lyme Handley 3

The attempt to revive and modify this diversion proposal has been withdrawn by the Council. In view of the high cost of the proposed bridge on the route of the diversion, Neil Collie has been exploring alternative ways forward with staff from Cheshire County Council. It appears possible to reinstate the original route at the side of the river, obviating the need for a new bridge. This is being progressed.

The Peak and Northern Footpaths Society

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X The membership form is also available online at http://www.peakandnorthern.org.uk/membership/membership_form.pdf

Membership Form

Registered Charity No 212219

I/We wish to join the Peak & Northern Footpaths Society

Names _____

Address _____

Post Code _____ Tel No _____

Email address _____

Date _____

Signature _____

Type of Membership	Minimum Subscription*	Amount Enclosed
Individual subscriptions		
Annual	£ 10	£
Annual Joint	£ 17	£
Junior under 11's	£ FREE	£
Five Year	£ 45	£
Five Year Joint	£ 75	£
Ten Year	£ 80	£
Ten Year Joint	£ 130	£
Annual Concession †	£ 5	£

† Concessionary rates are only available to people under 21 who are in full time education or people claiming benefit.

Affiliation fees for clubs and groups		
Annual	£ 15	£
Other items		
Rucksac Badge	£2	£
Donations		£

Total enclosed

Please send this form with your cheque made payable to:

**Peak & Northern Footpaths Society, to the Membership
Secretary, Taylor House, 23 Turncroft Lane, Offerton,
Stockport SK1 4AB**

* Rates are reviewed annually and may vary from amounts shown.