

SIGNPOST

Newsletter of the
Peak and Northern Footpaths Society



Signposts Officer, David Morton, by Sign 504. Peak District Nat'l Park Rangers & Volunteers carried and erected it on Whinstone Lee Tor, N. of Ashopton. Our grateful thanks for all they do for us.



Dave and Judy Brown by the signpost that they sponsored, North of Cracken Edge

Chairman's Piece

David Hurrell, Chairman



During the short days of December and January, there can be many contrasts in the weather. Dank days of little wind and poor visibility, contrasting with sparkling, sunny days of clear blue skies and views of distant hills. Walking is not just about walking, but also about seeing the many facets of the countryside. We can enjoy foggy days when strange shapes loom in front of us, with trees seeming so very different from a clear day. We can enjoy struggling through the snow when a familiar path has disappeared under a blanket of white, and we are left to wonder which way the path goes.

Now the days are lengthening and the sun is ever higher in the sky and we have Spring to look forward to.

In my last Chairman's Piece, I mentioned the illness of Mike Barnes, our Web Master, and that Mel Bale had agreed to help Mike out during his illness. Unfortunately, events moved faster than anyone had anticipated, and you would have read in the same edition of the death of Mike. I know that Mel and Mike had a few meetings before he died, and that Mel was very impressed with the work that Mike had done over the past few years. Mel is now picking up the baton and will continue to build on the work that Mike had done.

Our Publicity Officer, Ian Salvage is working on a programme to celebrate the 120th anniversary of the Society's first success – to keep the Snake Path open in perpetuity for walkers. This will take place over the weekend of 27th and 28th May 2017, and should be an interesting and memorable weekend. Do put the dates in your diary now, and come along on either or both of the days to join in the celebrations. Bring along your friends also. From time to time, the Trustees need to review the work of the Society in all its aspects, and decide what, if anything, needs to be changed in order to assist with its smooth running. The Trustees are currently looking at the Constitution to see if any minor changes may be required to clarify the position regarding the funding of footbridges and boardwalks, and whether the Society would be able to fund gates and stiles under the terms of the Charitable status that the Society enjoys. The Trustees will be taking professional advice before putting forward any proposed changes to the membership.

Don't forget to book the dates of 27th & 28th of May 2017, and come along to the celebrations. I look forward to meeting you and your friends on the day.



Report on our Half Yearly Meeting



David Hurrell (Chairman) and Rhoda Barnett (Courts & Inquiries Officer)

Around 60 members gathered at the Britannia Hotel in Stockport on Saturday 19th November for the Half Yearly Meeting of the Society.

Members heard reports of the activities of the Society from various sections and of the financial health of the Society.

Rhoda Barnett gave a brief introduction to a new draft policy related to recording lost or forgotten public rights of way. These ways are ones which are not currently recorded on the definitive map and statement. If the rights existed before 1949, and are not put on the definitive map before 2026, they will be extinguished. The Society intends to work with like-minded organisations and individuals to identify such ways, research evidence for the existence of the rights, and make applications to surveying authorities for the rights to be recorded. The policy has now been agreed by the Society's Trustees and can be found on the web site at <http://www.peakandnorthern.org.uk/about-us/constitution.htm>. If you think that you could help with this, please do contact Rhoda at rhodabarnett@w3z.co.uk.

Rhoda also mentioned that the rights of way provisions in the Deregulation Act 2015 will probably not be in force before mid-2017. These will have a considerable effect on how diversion and other orders are made, and it is intended that more details will be given at the Half Year Meeting in November 2017, by which time, we hope that the Act has made it on to the Statute Book.

Following lunch, during which members had the opportunity to catch up with each other and socialise together, John Mottram of the Edale Mountain Rescue team gave an entertaining talk on the work undertaken by Mountain Rescue Teams. He described some of the more unusual call outs they had attended, the training they receive, and reassured everyone that, if they were ever in a situation where they required the assistance of a Mountain Rescue team, their call would not go unheeded.

The afternoon session was rounded off by the members' forum, during which the Chairman asked for views on the reduced membership subscription that was offered at shows and presentations as an incentive to join the Society. After some discussion, the view emerged that a reduced first year subscription should be continued. A show of hands indicated the majority of those present would support a more formalised reduced offer, but that the figure may be raised from the current £5. The Trustees will follow this up with a formal proposal at the Annual Meeting.



The Peak District Boundary Walk

Julie Gough

*Fundraising & Marketing Co-ordinator
for Friends of the Peak District*

The current Peak District National Park boundary is almost identical to the one drawn up and proposed by the Friends of the Peak District founders – Ethel and Gerald Haythornthwaite – nearly 80 years ago.

It was resolved at its meeting in May 1937 that the Peak District Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) branch (which later became the Friends of the Peak District) should pro-actively map the areas which were suitable to be included in the park.

After agreeing that national parks were not going to be ‘merely a national playground for townspeople’ and that landscape preservation, access and open-air recreation and protection of wildlife were all of equal importance, a group of local experts set to work. They examined maps, explored the proposed boundary on the ground and engaged in many discussions and disputes before the boundary was finally agreed. It is thought that Ethel circumnavigated the whole route on horseback before committing it to the map.

Then in November 1938, a group of organisations, including CPRE, the Ramblers, and the Peak & Northern Footpaths Society, met at the Church Hotel in Edale (now the Ramblers pub) to begin the campaign for the Peak District National Park.

The Haythornthwaite’s work to protect and preserve the outstanding natural beauty of the Peak District continues to this day.



New developments – housing, road building, quarrying, off-roading, overhead pylons and cables, and most recently, fracking, threaten to damage or destroy huge areas of our national park still.

Friends of the Peak District is committed not only to campaigning against unsuitable developments which threaten the rural environment, but also to educating the public about the natural environment and the damage being caused by uncontrolled development. During their 90th anniversary year in 2015, the Friends’ five staff were asked to generate ideas for sharing the charity’s history, for raising awareness of its work, and ideally for raising much needed funds to enable its work to continue.

And so, the idea of the boundary walk was born. Julie Gough, the Friends’ marketing and fundraising co-ordinator, is a keen walker and wanted to highlight the whole national park because many people are unaware of its full extent.

This new, 192 mile, long distance walk which never strays far from the official park boundary celebrates not only the huge diversity of our first national park but also its historical significance. Hopefully, it will also increase awareness of the Peak District’s beautiful landscape and encourage people to cherish and protect it.



Mile for mile, the Peak District Boundary Walk has more undulations than the Pennine Way but it always follows existing paths, tracks and quiet lanes. By its very nature, it doesn't explore the inner glories of the Peak District. Instead walkers will find themselves away from the crowds and common hotspots, in quieter, less well known but still stunning corners of the park: from dramatic crags and open moorland to quiet woodlands and rushing streams, plus a few squelchy bogs and farmyards! Not unlike the original national park boundary pioneers, the boundary walk has been a truly collaborative project. After mapping the approximate route on paper, volunteers walked it on the ground and made many improvements using their local knowledge. Where possible, the route follows the boundary itself. Where this is not possible, the route strays into the park rather than out of it. As with the original setting up of the Park, there are likely to be many debates and disputes as to where the route for this boundary should and should not go. But at the moment it's where the Friends of the Peak District, like their founders before them, say it should go!

It is envisaged that some long distance walkers may enjoy the challenge of walking all 192 miles in one go, but the route has been divided into manageable stages which are more accessible to walkers who prefer to explore the park boundary in smaller day-long walks (of approximately 10 miles each).

However you choose to walk the Friends' Peak District Boundary Walk, the start and end points of each stage have been chosen with walkers in mind. They have at least a bus stop or car park, a toilet or a shop...at the time of going to print anyway. The route diverts sometimes to accommodate amenities at the beginning and end of stages but walkers are encouraged to enjoy the walk and the scenery in their own way and may choose to start and stop where they like.

Now that the whole walk has been finalised and is being committed to print, the Friends need to tackle the task of installing waymarking on the route on the ground. The walk and its accompanying book, edited by Andrew McCloy, will be launched in Buxton on Saturday 17th June 2017 when groups of walkers will 'first-foot' the route and declare it open as they go.

If you'd like to help us with waymarking, or join the first-footing walk on launch day, please do get in touch with Julie Gough at the Friends of the Peak District on 0114 279 2655 or julie@friendsofthepeak.org.uk

Love the Peak? Help us protect it
The Friends of the Peak District work to safeguard the National Park landscape for the future, by encouraging others to enjoy, understand, value and protect it.



Derbyshire County Council – a Changed Approach for 2017

Mike Ashworth, Strategic Director of Economy, Transport and Communities for Derbyshire County Council (DCC) has recently written to all landowners within the Council's area. He is advising them that in 2017, DCC will be taking a different approach to the way they investigate reports about paths that are either obstructed, or have not been re-instated following cultivation of the land.

DCC will be contacting land managers in advance of an inspection to advise them when they have received a report of a path that is affected by cultivation or crops, or a gate or stile in disrepair. This will only be done when the information received is considered to be from a reliable source, which we hope will include a PNFS Footpath Inspector. He is asking landowners to ensure that contractors are aware of the law, particularly the minimum width of paths to be reinstated (see below).



Mike Ashworth goes on to say:

“Gates and stiles in poor condition can be very limiting to all visitors to the countryside. You may be aware that the owner of the land is required to ensure that a gate or stile is in good repair. This is a legal requirement which also requires the County Council to provide 25% of the cost of the repair of a gate or stile. To improve access to the countryside we are in a position to offer you a free pedestrian gate to replace a stile that is in disrepair. If you would like to take advantage of either of these opportunities please contact our office and we'll arrange for a member of the team to discuss your options. Above all, we wish to work with you to ensure that the PROW network is available.”

Minimum widths for PROWs (as set out in the Rights of Way Act 1990) apply to paths that cross cultivated land:



- where a cross-field footpath is cultivated, it must be restored to a minimum width of 1 metre
- where a cross-field bridleway is cultivated, it must be restored to a minimum width of 2 metres
- other cross-field highways must not be cultivated and a minimum width of 3 metres must be respected for byways and restricted byways
- a field-edge footpath must not be cultivated; a minimum width of 1.5 metres must be respected
- a field-edge bridleway must not be cultivated; a minimum width of 3 metres must be respected
- other field-edge highways must not be cultivated; a minimum width of 5 metres must be respected for byways and restricted byways.

Footpaths under Threat

Terry Norris (Courts & Inquiries Officer)

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 gave walkers the right to roam on open country, but was compromised by giving landowners section 53, which provides that footpaths and bridleways that existed on 1st January 1949, but are not recorded on the definitive map on 1st January 2026, will be extinguished. To safeguard the many unrecorded routes in the Society's area, it is vital that applications are made to the appropriate Surveying Authority to add them to the definitive map. Paths not recorded on the definitive map which become obstructed or out of repair cannot have enforcement action taken by the Highway Authority or the Society to try and remedy matters.

Why are there so many unrecorded ways? Sometimes, powerful landowning interests influenced the process surrounding the creation of the original definitive map to ensure that routes on their land were omitted. Other paths were not properly recorded when they crossed parish boundaries or where there are gaps. The missing section on the route from the Cloud to Bridestones near Congleton was a classic example. In other cases, the process of investigation was not sufficiently rigorous, or paths were considered as obvious rights of way that were not necessary to record. Other Routes with Public Access (ORPA's) are another concern. These are indicated by green blobs on OS maps and need to be checked against the list of streets maintainable at public expense kept by the Highway Authority under s36(6) of the Highways Act 1980.

Many applications to re-instate paths before the cut-off date will be based on historic evidence held in local and national record offices. To investigate these materials requires knowledge of the history of land use and legal changes affecting the English countryside during the 19th and 20th centuries. An example of such material is Tithe Maps. Tithes were paid by parishioners and landowners to support the church and the parish priest, who were obliged to hand over 10% of goods from land subject to a tithe. This included crops, farm animals and wool. Tithes were often stored in tithe barns.

This system existed from the Middle Ages, but became increasingly inconvenient and inefficient, being considered as a barrier to agricultural improvements. The Tithe Act 1836 allowed tithes to be commuted into a money payment. Tithe Commissioners were appointed to draw a large scale map, identifying each land parcel and measuring its acreage. This information was listed in a Tithe Apportionment. The relevance of the Tithe maps to our quest for historic evidence of highway status is that public roads were exempt from tithes and were shown on the map, generally in brown.

Original Tithe maps are held at Kew National Archives but copies are also held in local record offices. Cheshire Record Office has put all the maps online (<http://maps.cheshire.gov.uk/tithe-maps/>) with an accompanying, current OS map so that the modern landscape can be compared with that at the time of the Tithe apportionment. If a route is shown as a highway and not on the definitive map or recorded as a public road, then its status may well be worthy of investigation. If you know of any paths which you regard as public rights of way but which are not recorded on the definitive map please let the Society know, where they are and how long you have used the route

Cheshire Archives



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Peak and Northern's 120th Anniversary Celebration

Ian Salvage (Publicity Officer)

On 29th May 1897, the Snake Path, from Hayfield to the Snake Pass Inn, was formally opened by PNFS's first President, Sir William H Bailey. This had been the first 'battle' for the Society, successfully won against the landowners, using tact and diplomacy as the main 'weapons'. The path was thus 'secured for ever to the public'. 120 years on, so many things have changed, but the Society still continues to fight for walkers' rights and the adequate maintenance and management of footpaths. So in recognition of our 120th anniversary, there will be a celebration on 27th May in Hayfield, where the first ceremony took place. 2017 also marks the 85th anniversary of the 1932 Mass Trespass, making this a particularly significant anniversary for Hayfield and its role in the long history of campaigning for access to our countryside. The main event will be held throughout the day at the Royal Hotel in Hayfield and will feature a host of attractions, making a visit to the village an imperative on that day. At the moment, confirmed guests are Roly Smith (writer, editor and media consultant, living locally in Bakewell and a specialist on the Peak District – see <http://www.owpg.org.uk/member-profiles/rolysmith/>) and Helen Mort (a poet from Sheffield and recent holder of the Derbyshire Poet Laureate post – see <http://www.helenmort.com/>). Other guests have indicated their intention to attend, but as of yet have not committed. Over the coming months, we expect that some of these may confirm.



We plan that music during the day will be provided. In the evening, a band will also be performing at the Royal for those who wish to 'shake a tail feather'.

On 28th, two walks will be organised along the Snake Path. Both walks will follow the Path from its start in Hayfield. The first will be a short walk up to the shooting cabin above Middle Moor, returning to Park Hall in Little Hayfield.

The longer walk will take in the entirety of the Path from Hayfield to the Snake Inn on the A57 Snake Pass. Return transport will be provided for walkers back to Hayfield from both finish points. Depending on the number of walkers, there may be a wait for the minibus, but fortuitously, both walks have been designed to end at a pub, helping time pass quickly!

Date for your diaries

Weekend of

27th & 28th May



We would love to receive items of relevance to the anniversary from Society Members. For example, maybe you would like to write an article or a poem, or create a work of art or sculpture that could be read or displayed on the 27th. Or you might have old items such as newspaper cuttings or other memorabilia relating to the fight for Britain's network of public rights of way. We would love to hear from you, whether you would be willing to provide any of these, or have any other suggestions to make the day a success. Contact me via email at publicity@pnfs.org.uk, by telephone on 01663 746979, or by post c/o PNFS, Taylor House, 23 Turncroft Lane, Offerton, Stockport, SK1 4AB.

Even if you do not wish to contribute, we would love to see you at the events over the weekend of 27-28 May 2017. So put the date in your diary and come along and enjoy the event.

Replacement of Shelf Brook Bridge



Shelf Brook runs West off Shelf Moor on Bleaklow, joining Glossop Brook in the town of Glossop. In heavy rain, it can become a raging torrent, and even at calmer times, there is a substantial flow in it. The Doctor's Gate footpath runs alongside the Brook for much of its length.

Doctor's Gate is a footpath that climbs from Old Glossop onto Bleaklow. Take the path heading East out of Glossop starting at SK 0457 9482 which joins the Doctor's Gate path, with the path ending at the Pennine Way at SK 08980 93327. The path was thought to be a Roman road linking Melandra Castle near Glossop to the Roman fort at Brough. This story originated from the fact that parts of it are paved. However, recent analysis indicates that this may not have been the case, as the path is very narrow in places and so would have posed danger to soldiers marching several abreast.

Legend has it that its name originates from a doctor who was under the influence of the Devil. To gain his freedom, he was challenged to a horseback race. However, the Devil used his powers to win the race. Nonetheless, the doctor also learned from this that if he stayed on the far bank of the stream, the Devil had no power over him. If the footpath was in the condition then that it is now, one would have sympathy for anyone trying to take a horse up it.

The old bridge across Shelf Brook (grid ref SK 07470 94087) was erected in 1969 and was dedicated to Edwin Ambler. Since then, the bridge had slowly deteriorated, until it reached a point where it had to be dismantled by Peak Park Rangers. Walkers have since had to brave the perils of crossing the Brook the hard way. However, a recent rumour suggested that a new bridge had finally been installed by Peak Park Rangers, in association with Derbyshire County Council. And lo and behold, arriving at the site, there it was - a colossus of a bridge if ever there was one. Built to accommodate a Roman legion on the march, or the Devil on horseback (unfortunately the path above the bridge is more suited to a gazelle). Take a look for yourselves.



The Peak Forest Tramway

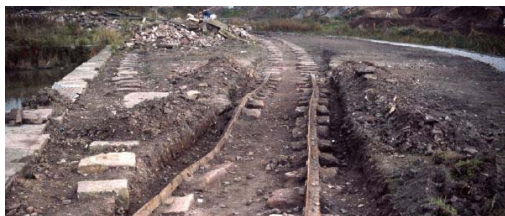
Ian Salvage & Ian Edgar MBE
(Chair of Bugsworth Basin Heritage Trust)

The Peak Forest Tramway once linked Bugsworth Canal Basin, at the head of the Peak Forest Canal, to the limestone quarries at Dove Holes Dale in Derbyshire. It allowed limestone to be carried from the quarries down to Bugsworth Canal Basin, where it was transferred into boats and thence via Manchester, to the Mersey Basin and far beyond.

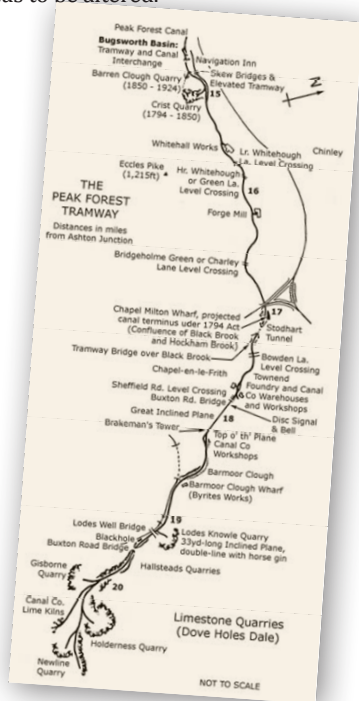
The completed canal and tramway opened as far as Lodes Knowle Quarry on Wednesday, 31st August 1796, with an extension quickly following to Dove Holes Dale quarries, creating an overall tramway length of just under six miles. Initially, the tramway was single track, except for the Great Inclined Plane at Chapel-en-le-Frith and Short Inclined Plane at Lodes Knowle Quarry. However, as trade rapidly increased, a second track was installed in 1803, except at Stodhart Tunnel and under Buxton Road Bridge at the bottom of the Great Inclined Plane. Opening of the Macclesfield Canal in 1831 (which joined the Peak Forest Canal at Marple) also helped trade by making a direct route available to Cheshire and the Midlands for much demanded limestone and lime products.

Movement of the rolling stock was achieved by various means. Loaded wagons travelled down to Bugsworth Canal Basin using gravity, while horses hauled empty wagons back, except at the inclined plane, where full wagons coming down hauled the empty wagons up. Returning wagons were not always empty; it is known that goods were transported to factories built along the tramway.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, tramway traffic diminished, as railways and road networks developed. The last commercial wagons to travel the complete length of the tramway occurred in 1922; by 1924 the tramway between Dove Holes Dale and Chapel Milton was closed; and during 1927 and 1928, the tramway was dismantled.



Land sold after closure of the tramway means that nowadays it is no longer possible to walk its complete length. There are currently no rights of way over the privately owned sections and there are some significant barriers to overcome for this status to be altered.



Thanks to the Bugsworth Basin Heritage Trust (BBHT) for providing much of the material for this article. For greater detail on the tramway, see their website at <http://old.bugsworthbasin.org/>. The website also contains details of a walk along the Tramway Trail, with copious notes and a map. Congratulations also to the BBHT Volunteers, who maintain the Basin to such a high standard that it now has Green Flag status.



Signpost Report

October – December 2016

David Morton (Signposts Officer)

Since our last report in October, we have:

- Added another 7 signposts to the collection, plus one replacement (228) and there are 7 more near completion.
- Attached memorial plaques in memory of members Mike Barnes and David Frith
- Achieved a current total of signs in situ of 461

Additions

SP	Location
530	SK 01282 66995 on Spring Head Farm, Flash, Quarnford
531	SK 01251 67157 on Wicken Walls Farm, Flash, Quarnford
532	SK 01440 67190 on Wicken Walls Farm, Flash, Quarnford
533	SD 66777 38616 on Hr. Hud Lee Farm, Dutton, Hurst Green, Lancashire
534	SD 66785 38594 on Hr. Hud Lee Farm, Dutton, Hurst Green, Lancashire
535	SD 66768 39059 on Hr. Hud Lee Farm, Dutton, Hurst Green, Lancashire
539	SK 01183 66773 on Spring Head Farm, Flash, Quarnford

In the pipeline

537/8	Near Tockholes, Darwen
540/1	At Onecote, Staffordshire
542/3	At Hassop, near Calver
544	At Lindow Common, Wilmslow

Maintenance

299	The biggest job was removing a hawthorn tree which had fallen on S299 at Tom Wood, near Charlesworth. Sign undamaged but invisible and took 2 hours to clear. See the photos below.
530	Uprooting and re-orientating S530 after it had been disorientated twice.
085	The iron plate on S085 was taken down at the second attempt for refurbishing.
-----	Cold weather has prevented Pete and Mike from continuing their re-painting work.
TH	On 6th Sep, David re-painted the Derek Taylor plaque on Taylor House.

Replacement

228	S228 (erected in December 1991 at GR SJ 96680 88831, Low Lea Rd, Marple Bridge, on FPs 79 & 80) was stolen, as reported earlier. It has now been replaced with a new sign.
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Phone me at **0161 283 7824**, if you have any questions or wish to “adopt” any of Signposts 506, 507, 510, 511, 514, 517, 518, 520/1/2/4/5/6/9 or any of the above except 530 and 544. Their locations are shown above or, in the case of existing signs, on the Signpost Gallery of our website, together with photos - <http://www.peakandnorthern.org.uk/signposts/where-they-are.htm>.

Signposts facing north or under trees often need a clean at this time of year, so please assist.



Short Walks Programme

John Fisher (Short Walk Co-ordinator)

So far this winter, turnout for short walks has been low; we hope there is something here for everyone. Use it or lose it!

Any suggestions, please contact John Fisher at: johnfisher560@btinternet.com

Wednesday February 8th

Leader: Martin Riley (01706 848408).
Smithy Bridge to Littleborough, 7 miles.
Train from M'chr Vic to Smithy Bridge 10:26
Walk starts Smithy Bridge Stn 10:55.

Wednesday March 8th

Leader: Paul Easthope (01457 855015)
Glossop Dale circular, 7 miles, 900 ft ascent
Train from M'chr Picc 10:18.
Walk starts Glossop Stn 11:00

Wednesday April 12th

Leader: Ian Salvage (01663 746979)
Hayfield circular, 8 miles, some hills
Train M'chr Picc to Glossop 10:18, then No 61 bus to Hayfield 11:00.
Walk starts Hayfield Bus Stn 11:15.

Wednesday May 10th

Leader: Peter Burns (01744 893432)
Bury circular, 7 miles, easy, 550 ft ascent
Walk starts Bury Metro 11:00
Tram from any Metro stn to arrive then



Hope Walk Sep 2016

Wednesday June 14th

Leader: Ian McKenzie (01663 742920)
New Mills circular, 7 miles, 1 long (not steep) ascent
Based on Edith Nesbitt Trail
Train from M'chr Picc 10:49
Walk starts New Mills Central Stn 11:15

Longer Walks

David Bratt (Long Walk Co-ordinator)

Wednesday March 29th

Leader: Martin Riley (01706 848408)
Greenfield circular
11 miles, 1500 ft ascent
Walk starts Greenfield Stn 10:30
Man Picc stn 09.41 chg Stalybridge

Wednesday April 26th

Leaders: Diane Fortescue (07796 954930) and David Hurrell (0114 288 6474)
Penistone circular
10 ml, 1200 ft ascent
Walk starts Penistone Stn 10:45
Man Picc 09:26 chg Huddersfield

Wednesday May 31st

Leader: Gavin Miller (01565 634510)
Walk details will be added to website mid-April + announced on end April walk.
Thanks to Gavin for short notice stand-in.

Wednesday June 28th

Leader: Alan Talbot (07714 826899)
Linear walk Marple to Broadbottom
11 ml, 1900 ft ascent
Walk starts Marple Stn 10:15
Man Picc 09:50

Wednesday July 26th

Leader: Ken Brockway (01949 843572)
Congleton circular using part of The Great English Walk (see – <http://tiny.cc/83tqiY>)
12 ml, 1500 ft ascent, inc The Cloud and PNFS path
Walk starts Congleton Stn 10:30
Man Picc 09:46





Paul Easthope (Treasurer)

PNFS has recently joined The Walking Partnership. This new partnership, supported by Ramblers Worldwide Holidays, provides direct financial contributions to local walking groups so that they can organise group walks, encourage people to get out walking, clear and improve footpaths, provide equipment to help walkers etc. Over the past 65 years, Ramblers Worldwide Holidays has given many millions of pounds to assist walking charities and conservation projects in Britain, and the countries they visit on their worldwide holidays. Now our group can benefit directly. Ramblers Worldwide Holidays operate group walking holidays in the UK and around the world. Each holiday has a qualified walks leader, who does all the organising, so that you can enjoy meeting like-minded people and of course, participate in some fantastic walking. Holidays are graded in terms of difficulty, with a full range from sightseeing right up to hut-to-hut mountain treks. Visit their website on www.ramblersholidays.co.uk, or call on **01707 331133** for more details, or to order a brochure.

Remember to quote the name of our Society when booking. We will then receive a £10 donation per person (UK holidays), £20 per person (short-haul holidays), and £30 per person (long-haul holidays). The nomination must be made before the holiday takes place. The extra funding will really help us!

For more details, visit The Walking Partnership website at www.thewalkingpartnership.org.uk.

Our thanks to Hilda Bowler

David Gosling (Footpath Inspection Co-ordinator)

Hilda Bowler and her husband Peter were long-standing volunteers at Taylor House. Hilda was already a key team member when David Bratt became Chair in 2004. He remembers her support when he began the PNFS walks programme. Since then she has been in charge of recording footpath faults until her retirement just before Christmas.

Receiving and responding to fault reports is not easy, but Hilda dealt systematically and conscientiously with everything, from long rambling letters in spidery handwriting needing the skills of a Bletchley Park code-breaker to decipher, to finding missing path numbers and grid references, before passing the report to the faults team. And she did this with good humour and immense patience. When a broken wrist prevented her from being at Taylor House, the backlog size bore testament to the volume of work she normally got through on a Monday.

Many volunteers, especially inspectors, saw Hilda as their first point of contact with the Society. David Hurrell remembers her asking 'Can you read a map?'. Answering 'yes' was enough for him to become an inspector. Hilda liked to meet new inspectors, kept meticulous records about each one and was always available to assist them. She has asked that we pass on her thanks to all those that she has worked with over the years and says that she has appreciated their support. Sue Clarke, who worked with her says: 'Hilda was endlessly patient and helpful - it was a privilege to work with her over the years'. Terry Norris added: 'She always made time for a pleasant informative chat' and David Bratt says, 'Hilda is one lovely lady and TH without her (and Peter) is the poorer'.

We will certainly miss Hilda, and we appreciate the huge contribution she has made to the functioning of the Society for more than a decade. Thank you, Hilda.





Why is it that the best pubs have the worst footpath links? At first glance, Kirk Ireton is surrounded by a good network of paths but to the West, Carsington Reservoir soon diverts us onto the popular perimeter path. Looking east things are better - the Ecclesbourne valley offers some excellent walking on underused paths. Trains follow the river between Wirksworth and Duffield, but connections from Manchester are poor on this heritage line. Buses from Derby every hour offer the best access to this unspoilt neck of our wood. Plan your walk with care because the Barley Mow in Kirk Ireton has traditional opening hours. The solid front door may give the appearance that it's closed but check the snick to make sure. External signage is minimal on the front of this solid grit stone Jacobean building. Inside, the wooden settles and slate tables add charm to the beamed ceiling, cast iron range and quarry floor. Now the important bit - no smell of chips here, little in the way of food, but you won't starve. The beer, all real ale, is direct from barrels behind the small serving hatch. Sourced from local small breweries, ale aficionados won't be disappointed. The landlady has run the pub since 1976, now assisted by her daughter. Should you require other provisions, a community shop operates from the former stables next door.



In Memory: Jose Sutton



We were saddened to hear that Jose Sutton died on 4th December 2016. Jose, and her husband Ernest, were a devoted and great team, working tirelessly for the Society over a number of years. Despite suffering badly from arthritis, Jose bravely and stoically battled on, supporting Ernie in his good works (as Membership Secretary) over 12 years for us.

Once per annum, before the AGM, Ernie and Jose would organise a team at Taylor House to stuff envelopes with the required documents for the upcoming Meeting and arrange hand delivery.

This saved the Society a fortune in postal costs and was usually undertaken by the assembled volunteer team on a Sunday evening.

For more information, see Signpost 22 (<http://www.peakandnorthern.org.uk/pnfs-publications/documents/Signpost-22.pdf>).

David Bratt (President)
& **Keith Wykes (Honorary Member)**

Smalley Footpath No 14

John Harker & Martin Davis, PNFS Area Officers

A stile on Footpath No 14 in the parish of Smalley (NW of Ilkeston, in the Amber Valley) was damaged and had almost disappeared under a jungle of undergrowth when we visited it in May 2015. After reporting it to the relevant Highways Authority, necessary work was performed to rectify the situation, with growth being cut back and a new kissing gate being installed. In case you wish to see the new arrangement, the grid reference is SK4083.4513.

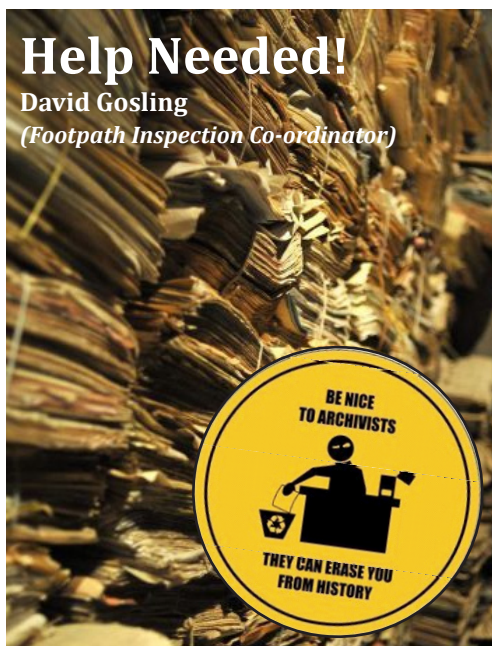
The chap tackling the kissing gate is Martin Davis, our Erewash Area Officer and also a footpath inspector there.



Help Needed!

David Gosling

(Footpath Inspection Co-ordinator)



At Taylor House, there are boxes of unsorted documents, maps and photos. Is there someone out there who would revel in the opportunity to delve into the history of the society and put all this potentially valuable archive material in some order? If you have a tidy mind and interest in the history of PNFS, this could be just up your street!

Please get in touch if you would love to help to get the PNFS archive catalogued and organised. Our past can be a very valuable part of our future - with your help.

Why not pop in for a cuppa and an informal chat with us. There are always a number of us around at Taylor House on a Monday morning.

Or contact us via email, telephone or post:

- Via email at mail@pnfs.org.uk
- Telephone 0161 480 3565
- Post to Taylor House, 23 Turncroft Lane, Offerton, Stockport, SK1 4AB

The Peak and Northern Footpaths Society
Taylor House, 23 Turncroft Lane, Offerton, Stockport, SK1 4AB
Reg Charity No 212219

0161 480 3565

mail@pnfs.org.uk.

The PNFS AGM is on Saturday 22nd April

At the Britannia Hotel, Dialstone Lane, Offerton, Stockport

Buses: 383 from Stockport; 384 from Marple station;

192 runs frequently along the nearby A6

For further details, go to:

<http://www.peakandnorthern.org.uk/members/meetings.htm>



Tony Brackenbury has managed to 'up the ante' on the number of markers and signs on a single post.

The photo shows PNFS Signpost no 222 near Peak Forest with some new additional waymarks, making a total of 10 markers: 2 P&N markers; 4 carved markers; and 4 way markers (there are two carved markers on the blindside of the post).

Anyone know of a more highly decorated post? Send it to: publicity@pnfs.org.uk.

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The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the Society