

SIGNPOST

Magazine of the
Peak and Northern Footpaths Society

Number 76 - Summer 2023



S031 Restored by John and Merrick

Photograph by David Morton



From the Chair

Spring is well under way; some days are quite warm and getting out to walk is a pleasure. As a society our focus is preserving and improving public rights of way and over the past few weeks, we have been working hard to maximise our impact.

To help cover the many paths in the multiple parishes across our geography we have over 180 footpath inspectors. They are vital to our work, and we have a steady number of new inspectors joining us. However, we have not been able to hold a training event in person since 2019. Online training has been available and is of excellent quality, but there is nothing quite like meeting together and sharing knowledge and questions. It was brilliant to hold a training day at Taylor House on 25 March. Thanks to David Gosling, Linda Smith and Andrew Harter who provided expert guidance for over twenty footpath inspectors with a mixture of talks, demonstrations and question and answer sessions. Despite the rather cramped room, everyone enjoyed themselves and we all learnt from each other. We plan to do more sessions so that we can ensure new inspectors get the chance to attend soon after appointment.

Our Courts and Inquiries (C&I) meeting, which takes place bimonthly is the place where the most difficult and intransigent faults are discussed. At times we can feel that little progress is being made and results can be slow. However, we have had several

successes recently which provides some encouragement. Often the faults have been present for a long time and it is only the determination and persistence of a C&I officer which leads to a breakthrough. Their detailed knowledge of the law relating to PROWs is amazing. Finding people with these skills and knowledge, or an interest in developing them is one of the challenges we face. So, if you have had previous experience, perhaps in a Highway Authority or as a lawyer, could you consider training for the role?

We run a walks programme as you will be aware. Several of us recently met at Taylor house to discuss the organisation of the varied programme of walks. There are organisers for long walks and shorter walks which take place on Wednesdays and a variety of walks on a Saturday, expanding the options for access. Our discussion related to the way we organise our communications on our website and in Signpost, so hopefully you will notice the difference. I am going to lead a walk myself in September, a great way to meet members.

Having mentioned the website I wanted to highlight that our much-advertised new website is up and running. Several Trustees and others have worked hard over a number of months to make this possible. I would like to thank Mel Bale and Suzanne Longworth in particular, though others have been involved of course. If you can feedback your views on the new layout and functionality, that would be very helpful.

Our next major event is the AGM so by the time you read this we will have held it in Stockport, I am looking forward to seeing you there.

Kathy Mclean, Chair



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Monitor rights of way on behalf of the Society

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- in your own time
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- report problems

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and protecting our right to walk public footpaths.*

If you are interested contact Footpath Inspection Coordinator, David Gosling
07841647275 or by email inspection@pnfs.org.uk

Ulnes Walton, Chorley FP11



In July 2022, Bob Smith, footpath inspector in Chorley, inspected Ulnes Walton FP11 and found that it was blocked by a bund. He also noted that it was subject to a diversion order dated October 2017 so he inspected the diversion but found it to be blocked by a large steel padlocked gate. Photographs taken by Bob shows bund (top) and padlocked gate (bottom).

In August Bob reported both the bund and blocked diversion to Lancashire County Council (LCC) who replied a month later that the new route “has not yet been certified as fit for public use” - five years after the diversion order was made. Dissatisfied with this response, in October he contacted the Courts and Inquiries team and as I was the nearest C&I Officer, I took the matter up. Here was a situation of both a footpath and its diversion being obstructed: until the diversion was made fit, the original footpath still existed. A flurry of emails was exchanged with the LCC PROW Manager. No action was promised so in early November, with the approval of the C&I Team, I sent a Letter Before Action to LCC. Another exchange of emails ensued with LCC stating on 13 December that “they contacted the owners who said they would do the necessary works to make the new route able to be certified. A colleague is visiting the site today.”

By 21 December, I had heard nothing so I emailed LCC again asking if any progress had been made. No reply was received therefore at the C&IO meeting in January 2023, I asked for approval to proceed with s56 notice action on the original footpath. The expectation was that this would prompt the landowner to spend effort and time on making the diversion fit for purpose and the original path would then cease to exist.

On 13 January I served notice to LCC and a month later, I received a reply from LCC informing me that the diversion has been brought to an acceptable standard and has been certified, and that therefore the original path ceases to be a public rights of way. Bob then revisited the diversion. His photograph shows the gate (from the opposite direction) having been removed and an overhead barrier fitted.

A result! This is my second success out of four attempts in solving footpath faults since I was appointed C&I Officer in June 2021. Thanks go to Bob for drawing attention to Ulnes Walton FP11 and for his thoroughness in this matter.

Shirley M Addy, Ribble Valley Footpath Inspector and Courts and Inquiries Officer

Darfield Footpath 11



Darfield Footpath 11 runs through the graveyard of All Saints Church Darfield near Barnsley. It's part of a 30 mile recreational walk called the Dearne Way, way-marked with a miner's safety lamp logo. The river Dearne, once classed as the most polluted river in Europe due to the heavy industry along its banks, rises in Kirklee before flowing through Barnsley town centre and joining the river Don near Conisbrough castle.

A curiosity stands a few metres off the footpath by the west door of the church (*see photo*).



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Media 026/23

It's the grave of 19 year old Robert Millthorp killed by his own headstone in September 1826.

Yes, that's right. Killed by his own headstone. How?

The lad was killed by "inadvertently throwing this stone upon himself whilst in the service of James Raywood of Ardsley". Raywood used the offending stone and had it carved into a headstone.

Employer guilty conscience at the lack of health and safety provision? Certainly, employer hypocrisy is in the verse at the bottom of the headstone.

*"Alas how frail this brittle clay,"
"Though form'd with matchless art",
"Death waits in ambush for his prey",
"And none escapes his dart".
"A youthful Frolic prompted on",
"Whilst the grim Tyrant gave",
The mortal stroke by this same stone ",
"That marks my early grave ".*

John Harker, Courts & Inquiries Officer Barnsley

PNFS History walk from Hayfield - April 2023

If PNFS were a religion, and for some people it is (nearly), then Hayfield would be its Mecca. There are more holy relics from the Society's history around Hayfield than anywhere else in the PNFS region. Furthermore, Hayfield was the site of the now-famous Kinder Trespass, and although the Society was not involved in that event, it was a significant landmark in the struggle for access to the open moorland in northern England. This 8 mile walk visits PNFS historical sites starting with the Centenary Plaque in Hayfield bus station.

The plaque was unveiled by Martin Doughty, Chairman of Derbyshire County Council on Sunday, 21 August 1994 at the Hayfield Information Centre. It commemorates the events of 1894 when the Peak District and Northern Counties Footpaths Preservation Society was formed on 3 August 1894, and a fortnight later the objects of the Society were agreed. The first object was stated to be: "The preservation, maintenance; and defence of the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of public highways, footpaths, bridlepaths, byeways, and other ways...." The Society under its current name the Peak and Northern Footpaths Society continues to pursue this principal aim of protecting rights of way today.

It is less well-known that the original founders of the Society agreed a second object which was "The prevention of the abuse of such rights, especially trespass and damage to crops and property, and disturbance of game by trespassers." This enthusiasm for an anti-trespass stance appears to have been designed to gain widespread support among the middle classes and landowners.

The first president was Sir William Henry Bailey who was an engineer, businessman and local politician, knighted by Queen Victoria for his work on the creation of the Manchester Ship Canal. Among the Vice-Presidents were three members of the clergy including Archdeacon Anson, (son of Baronet, Sir William Anson), an Alderman; Walton Smith (Chairman of the Manchester Free Libraries Committee); Sir Edward Leader Williams, the designer of the Manchester Ship Canal; and perhaps most significantly five Justices of the Peace. These were not gentlemen who would look kindly on law-breaking such as trespass.

We thanked these gentlemen for the foresight they showed in creating the Society and proceeded to cross the River Sett, walking across the small park to Swallow House Lane and then taking the right turn onto Bank Vale Road to an attractive group of buildings around Swallow Bank Farm.

The path known as the 'GiggleGaggle' climbs through attractive woodlands overlooking what was once the millpond for Bank Vale Mill, until we reached Signpost 89 originally erected in 1935. It is recorded in Harold Wild's notebook that on 11 July 1981 "the post had been on fire, the plate blackened, but is now been cleaned and stump repainted". A new plate was ordered in 2004 and erected in 2005 using the modern PNFS design designed by Mr Percy Hutchinson, the Society's signpost secretary from 1987 to 1993. This design was first used in 1989.



The path skirts Hey Wood until it finally emerges into open country, on the flank of Lantern Pike. Bridleway 18 is well-used by mountain bikers as it is part of the Trans Pennine Trail, but this section is also a favourite gallop for horse riders. At Six Lane Ends (SK02528 88947) near the entrance to Blackshaw farm is Fingerpost 8, which was erected by Harold Wild, (who was signpost officer from 1920 until 1954). It was taken down at the outbreak of war in 1939 but was reinstated in 1943. Jack Gorton painted the sign annually, travelling by public transport. This fingerpost, with its six 'fingers' is unique among PNFS signs.

We proceeded the short distance to Blackshaw Farm. The Annual report of 1932 notes that "By his will the late Mr. Arnold Wilson devised and bequeathed to the Society the income to arise from his farm and lands at Blackshaw, Hayfield." The fund that was handed over to the Society was between £550 and £600, which as the Annual Report notes was "a very welcome addition to the usual annual income." Today Blackshaw Farm has legally diverted FP19 and new stiles and gates have been installed. In May 2021 our Hayfield inspector David Eaton reported the faulty stile, a rotting gate and misleading signage.

We crossed some open pasture on FP27 to Lanehead Farm, then along the lane to FP26 where we stopped for lunch with wonderful views towards Mount Famine and South Head to the South, Kinder plateau to the east and across the Cheshire plain to the west. On this clear day we could see the Clwyd Hills over 40 miles to the west. This path ends at Monks Road which links A624 and Charlesworth and is one of the hollow ways mentioned in documents in 1290 showing that the Abbey of Basingwerk (near Holywell in Wales) held the manors of Longendale. The link was probably Ranulf, Earl of Chester, who founded the abbey in 1147.

We crossed the busy Hayfield to Glossop road and began the descent on what is now FP91 towards Carr Meadow. But it is interesting to note than the PNFS Annual Report in 1927 reports that this right of way was disputed. *For some time past the Inspector of Footpaths has been endeavouring to get together evidence in support of the public's right to traverse the old road, but so far he has been unable to achieve much in this respect. In the Great Hamlet Inclosure Award, the road is laid down as a private or occupation road, and, in view of this, dedication will have to be proved since 1830, the date of such award.*

Nineteenth century maps show that, along this route, the heather filled hollows of today were once old quarries. When we reach the rushing waters of Hollingworth Clough, we find, close to the gate from the road, in the place known as Carr Meadow, the very first signpost erected by Thomas Mower on behalf of the Society in 1905. The Annual Report of that year notes: *During the past year the council have appointed one of their members Mr Thomas Mower to be the inspector of footpaths of this Society....Work has been undertaken by Mr Mower who had selected positions and obtained permission for the erection of a number of notice posts ... the council consider the work to be of the very greatest utility, as settling before they arise claims which might possibly be made in the future. The notices are made of cast iron with the letterings in strong relief and they are mounted on good wooden post sunk well into the ground.*

We owe the cast iron plates which have become famous as PNFS signs to the decisions of Thomas Mower in 1905. This picture shows our group Sue, Rosie, Jeannie and Ross at signpost 1. Also at Carr Meadow is bridge number 1 and the Thomas Boulger memorial who was secretary of the Society for twenty five years between the wars. The AR of 1966 notes:

Thomas Boulger, who started as an inspector in 1920, was our Secretary from 1921 to 1946 and later served as Vice-Chairman and Chairman. He died in 1963, after 43 years' service and a memorial footbridge was erected in 1966 at Carr Meadow, Little Hayfield.



The route from Carr Meadow to the Shooting Cabin and onward to White Brow and Hayfield was one of the routes successfully claimed by the Hayfield and Kinder Scout Ancient Footpaths Association (founded in 1876). But as the commentary on Signpost 2, erected near the Shooting Cabin in 1905, suggests the major route we know today was once much less obvious.

Carr Meadow bridleway ... is at present difficult to follow and is therefore very little used. If it were better indicated a large number of tourists would avail themselves of a most delightful walk over upland pasture and moorlands. The path crosses the ones secured by the Society and has therefore special interest to members.

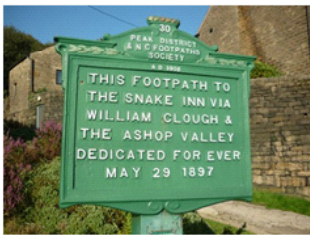
Signpost 2 also marks the junction with the Snake Path, which after crossing several pastures close to the local landmark of 'Nineteen Trees,' emerges onto the moorland just west from this point. The first report of the Society in October 1894 refers to claiming the right of way known as the 'Snake Path' as the first objective of the newly created Society: *In furtherance of the resolution passed at a General Meeting of the Society held on August 6th last, authorising the Managing Committee to take all steps they may consider expedient to obtain evidence as to the right of way over Kinderscout from Hayfield to the Snake Inn, Ashopdale...* By the following year the new Society reports that: *The work in relation thereto has been very much more laborious than was anticipated, and has necessitated a large number of meetings, entailed long and difficult research into old maps, records, &c'* The following year, in 1896, the Annual Report celebrates 'Work Done - Kinderscout - Right of Way obtained, about 6 miles long, between Hayfield and the Ashop Valley; this will be a great advantage to tourists and residents in the Peak District.' But this was no easy victory as the two agreements, one with the Duke of Devonshire and the other with Mr Sumner of Park Hall, clearly show. The 1896 Annual Report describes 'Certain obligations were thrown on the Society' with regard to:

- (a) The forming and clearly indicating the entire route from the Jumble to the Snake Inn.
- (b) The placing of sign posts in various places to indicate that roads crossing or deviating from the admitted route are "private" roads.
- (c) The making of stiles on walls at present crossing the route on the Hayfield side.
- (d) The draining of the difficult part of the route near Mill Hill.
- (e) The building of a foot-bridge over the Lady Clough above the junction of the Lady Clough stream with the Ashop River.
- (f) The repair for a limited period of a short length of wall.
- (g) The payment of certain law costs, viz., those of the Duke of Devonshire, Mr Sumner, the Duke's shooting tenants, and certain survey charges of some of the landowners.

All of this necessitated considerable costs and work by the Society. It was also necessary to commit themselves to preventing any trespassing off the agreed route.

Your council think that every endeavour should be made by members and the public to desist from, and if possible prevent, trespassing, as this creates a bad impression on the owners of land, and is liable to change the spirit in which that they, with few exceptions, assist the Society in carrying out the objects forward it was formed. This position against trespassing undoubtedly influenced the Society's attitude to the Mass Trespass of 1932, which we will come to shortly. The opening of the Snake Path was a famous victory, which was later celebrated by a poem written by 'JH' in the AR of 1997 called Trails of Freedom. Here are the last two verses.

*These men of modest pretensions, men of no great ambitions to fame,
Banded together, fought all opposition and gave our Society its name,
In this name they opened the landscape for those who enjoy nature's call,
No discrimination who should tread the paths, a bounty given to all.
This year will live long in memory. A century has now passed away,
Since that signpost standing in Hayfield showing the 29th of May,
Tells of the pathway that rises o'er Kinder. It's there for all who would climb,
It beckons, come now, the Snake Path is open from now to the end of all time.*



The Snake Path heads in a south easterly direction to White Brow where the walker is rewarded, if the weather is kind, by a magnificent panoramic view of the Kinder Plateau and Kinder Reservoir. We passed above signpost 19 (SK 05231 88274) and headed to the base of William Clough which was the site where, in 1932, Benny Rothman and his fellow trespassers, who were scrambling up towards the Kinder plateau, came face-to-face with the Duke of Devonshire's gamekeepers. In the ensuing scuffle, one keeper, Mr Edward Beever, was slightly hurt, which led to the trespassers being charged and found guilty of 'riotous assembly'. Our route back to Hayfield is along the permissive path which borders the Kinder Reservoir which was constructed in 1903.

The AR of 1901 notes that *Stockport Corporation promoted a bill in parliament in the session of 1901 to construct waterworks near Hayfield the owner is surveyor of the Society Mr HT Crook examine the plans and found that the works would interfere with a considerable number of very well known roads and footpaths. Consequently the act authorising the works provides that no public footpaths shall be stopped up diverted or interfered with unless and until the corporation provide substituted footpaths for the convenience of the public.*

At the top end of the reservoir is Upper House which was redesigned by James Watts in 1905, although the original buildings date back to 1378 when it was owned by the Kinder family. This second James Watts (it was his father who had made a huge fortune and built the emporium which is now the Britannia Hotel in Manchester) became a Vice-President of the Footpath Preservation Society, while it was his son who employed the fifty or so local men to be game keepers on the day of the trespass, which had been well-advertised in advance. The family leased large areas of the moor on the northern side of Kinder for game birds to be raised and shot for sport.

Our route along the valley of the Sett took us to Bowden Bridge Quarry where Benny Rothman addressed supporters of the Trespass in 1932. There is a plaque in what is now a car park commemorating the event. It was along the narrow road into Hayfield that the leading members of the Trespass were arrested. The day after, Rothman and four other ramblers were charged at New Mills Police Court with unlawful assembly and breach of the peace. All six subsequently pleaded not guilty and were remanded to be tried at Derby Assizes - 60 miles from the ramblers' homes - in July 1932. Five of the six were found guilty and were jailed for between two and six months. It was surely this unjust punishment which has given the event its notoriety.

Finally, we reached Signpost 30 which marks the start of the Snake Path. The sign, described in Harold Wild's notebook as of 'ornamental design', was erected 1908 to commemorate the early victory of the Society.

David Gosling, Vice Chair and Inspection Co-ordinator



David's Sixtieth Birthday

It's time to embarrass my old friend David Armin, who is a member of PNFS and one of the Amber Valley footpath inspectors. David recently celebrated his sixtieth birthday, as did Keith, another of my long-standing walking friends, and to celebrate these milestones jointly the two of them arranged a rather special gathering in the Highlands. Eighteen of us stayed in a splendid big house, close to the shores of Loch Rannoch in Perthshire, which we rented for a week in late April; we even engaged a cook to prepare all our breakfasts and evening meals. The house was situated on an extensive estate and there were views from the windows to the shapely cone of Schiehallion. Much hill walking and peak bagging was carried out, not least by David who is working towards a full haul of the 2,500 foot Corbetts.

On the final evening it was time to present David with the gifts we had clubbed together to buy (Keith had already received his). Some ingenious thought had gone into this. True, we were fairly predictable with malt whisky and walking gear vouchers, but the novelty gifts did show some imagination we felt. As David is renowned for taking a very comprehensive packed lunch on his walks, with a sandwich box so full of assorted goodies that it takes him half an hour to eat it, we decided to assemble the biggest lunch box ever. I managed to obtain a plastic lidded container of very large proportions and we all contributed items to go in it, from packets of biscuits and savouries to wine and a can of gin and tonic.

There were two further presents that recognised his involvement with PNFS however, which is the point of this article. David discovers and reports plenty of broken stiles in the course of his inspections, so we thought he might like one of his own. Another friend cleverly constructed the model of a stile shown in the photograph, assembling it with a step that he had broken earlier! The final gift was a mock-up of one of the Society's iconic signposts. I came up with the concept and did a rough sketch of what I had in mind; then I handed this to yet another of our group, along with some photographs with examples of real signposts, and she used her artistic skills to create the sign you see here.

He probably hasn't finished the packed lunch and the whisky yet, so continues to have a very happy birthday David.

Graham Stevens, Member





Book Review

The View from the Hill, Four Seasons in a Walker's Britain

by Christopher Somerville, Haus Publishing 2021

Despite the ever increasing piles of books in our house, I can't resist a regular visit to the Central Library in Sheffield. Two things are almost guaranteed. I certainly won't have to part with any money (fines for overdue books were abolished several years ago) and I'm very likely to discover a hidden gem. Christopher Somerville is the Walking Correspondent of *The Times* and the author of over 45 books, and I'm slightly embarrassed to admit that I'd never heard of him.

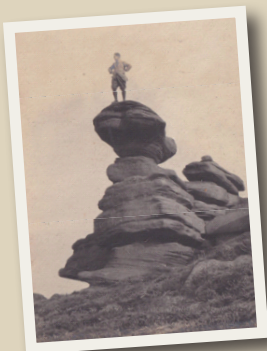
The book is a collection of pieces, many of which have previously appeared in other publications. The reader is taken on a gentle meander through the year chronologically and across the length and breadth of the United Kingdom. Locations range from Rathlin Island, the most northerly point of Northern Ireland, to Speyside, the Brecon Beacons, Bleaklow, Orford Ness and numerous others. The writing covers history, nature and landscape as well as local customs. It is a mine of information and often quite humorous. A map of the places visited would perhaps have been useful, but then there is a certain pleasure in discovering where an unknown village, moor or hill actually is. None of the pieces is more than three pages long, so it is an ideal browse or bedtime read.

Scattered throughout the book is an A to Z of article titles. Some predictable, such as Q for Quagmire, many less so, like Z for Zymurgy. Puzzled? Well, a clue is that Somerville enjoys a pint!

The writer is often in the company of his partner, Jane. Many other entries feature a cast of characters who bring their own views and experiences to the areas featured and the subjects discussed.

In my opinion the book does have a couple of shortcomings. Although, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are visited, the majority of locations are in England. And, other than his aforementioned partner, most of his walking companions are men. Despite, these quibbles, the book is certainly worth looking out for.

Mel Bale, Membership Secretary and Trustee



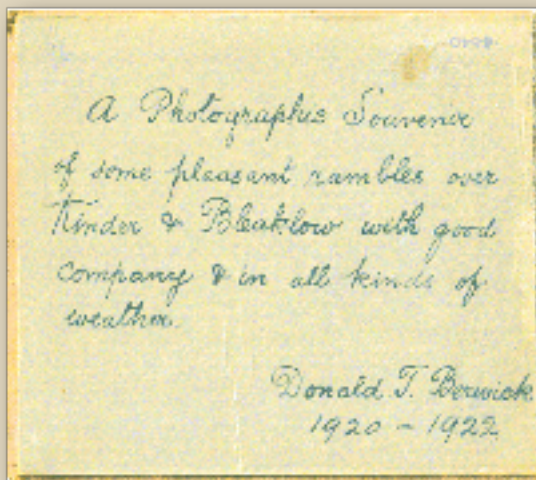
A Photographic Souvenir of some pleasant rambles over Kinder & Bleaklow with good company & in all kinds of weather. Donald T Berwick 1920-1922

If you look back at issue 5 of *Signpost* on the PNFS website you will find an article entitled "From the Archives – 80 years ago" about an album of photographs from the 1920s. The article reproduced a few of the photos and included a transcript of an expedition to erect a signpost in Ashop Clough. The eight participants on the expedition were named in the transcript.

That photo album has now been "re-discovered" having sat in a box at Taylor House for the last 20 years – not quite forgotten but certainly under-appreciated. The album is even more interesting than the article from *Signpost* 5 suggested. It contains over 50 small black and white photos, covering several trips to Kinder and Bleaklow and elsewhere – not just the expedition to put up the Ashop Clough sign. This is the opening page:

Most (but not all) of the photos have a title and sometimes a date. Accompanying the album is a small booklet – this either repeats the title of each photo, or gives a different title, or provides some other information. In many cases the booklet gives the names of the people pictured. The photos themselves are quite varied. Apart from some general landscape views there are several shots of chaps just larking around, such as this one.

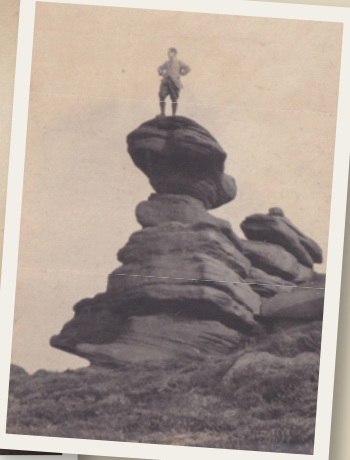
In the same vein are posed shots of individuals or groups atop rock formations which form a significant part of the album.



"Robbing the rain guage, Bleaklow" (The accompanying bookler says "Just a joke the rain gauge was not robbed")



"A leap on to the Rocking Stone"



"The Summit gained"



"Kinder top. Fairbrook Clough"



"Rock parasites"

You may recognise the "Rock parasites" photo as the one used on the cover of Keith Warrender's recent book "Forbidden Kinder". Some cleaning up of the image was done prior to publication. The majority of people appearing in the photos are male. Here are two with a female presence



"Rest on the way to Edale"



"Weekend party. 1921"

In the left hand photo above the young man turning towards the camera looks as though he has been caught unawares. It is the nearest to a “candid” shot in the whole album. The right hand photo above is the only one to name a woman – the wife of the gamekeeper at Upper Ashop Farm. The unnamed girl is her daughter. The full names of all the men are given. Note the hob-nailed boots, pipes, and the camera held by the central figure.

How significant were these photos when they were first taken? It is now impossible to say, but they were clearly thought important enough to collect together and store at Taylor House. Although the album bears the dates 1920-1922, one of the photos (showing a spiked security gate) is labelled “Alport 1925-1947”, and appears less old than the others. This suggests that the album was actually assembled in 1947 or later. Who actually took the photos? Donald Berwick appears in some of them but not in others, so there was more than one photographer. The “Weekend party” photo above shows that there was more than one camera on at least one of the rambles.

Besides the 1920s album there are many other photos stored at Taylor House, including this one:

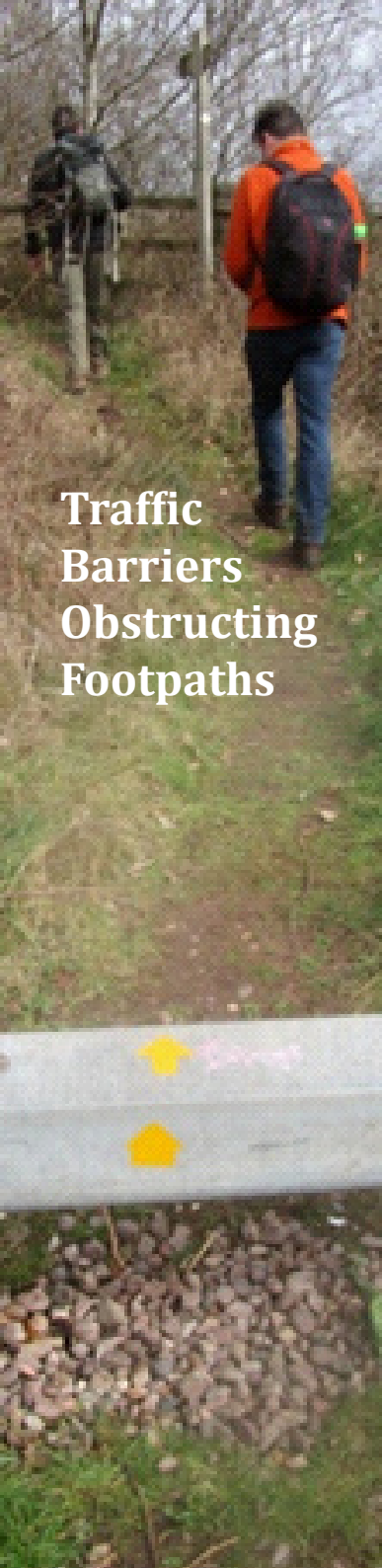
*“Ledum Groenlandicum
July 1975”*



On the reverse the middle figure is identified as Donald Berwick. So over 50 years later Donald was still active in the great outdoors. The figure on the left is named as Isabel (Donald’s wife?), the figure on the right is not named. Note that Donald has a camera. So who was Donald Berwick? A search on our website comes up with numerous references. He was a Council Member of the Society for many years and in later years was a Vice President. His death was announced in the 1992 Annual Report when he was described as the Society’s longest serving member. More details of his contribution to the Society are probably contained in Council and AGM minutes that are not currently available on the website.

In due course the full set of photos will be put on the Society’s website. They have been stored for many years in sub-optimal conditions and show signs of deterioration. They are presented here without any attempt at improvement. For someone with the appropriate software and time the production of “restored” versions could be an interesting project.

Andrew Harter (Inspector for Leeds and Bradford and Taylor House volunteer)



Traffic Barriers Obstructing Footpaths

While walking a Slow Way in Worcestershire I was annoyed to find yet again a traffic safety barrier obstructing the right of way. To add insult to injury it had a waymark arrow fixed to it but no provision made to ease our crossing (*see photograph left*).

I reported this obstruction and received the reply "I have enquired about this and it appears to be one of those issues where the highways need overruled common rights of way practice. I have been assured that a route around the barrier has been left (off the definitive line of the path). I hope this is satisfactory for you." Well it wasn't but that beyond PNFS territory so I move on.



Cheshire East Wildboardclough FP3 onto the A54 this path makes a direct link to Wildboardclough BR1, well it would if there were not a traffic safety barrier blocking the way (*see photographs from Geograph: above copyright Ian Calderwood, below copyright Peter Barr*).



There are dozens of these barriers across our footpaths, not for our benefit so should we take them in our stride or complain?

Ken Brockway, Footpath Inspector



New PNFS Website

Our new website was launched in early May. This marked the culmination of many months of effort from our design company, First Sight (*note 1*) and a small team of trustees (*note 2*).

The aim of the redesign was to make the website visually appealing and easier and more enjoyable to use. We wanted to take the content of the existing website and give it a fresh and dynamic new look, whilst at the same time adding new enhanced features.

The website has been completely restyled. The first thing to notice is our new logo, we hope you like it? Like all the changes, we think it builds on what we had before.



The menu system in the header is more straightforward, making it easier for people to find what they are looking for.

There are fewer options to choose from and the content of a number of previous pages has been combined. Most of the text has been rewritten and is now supported with more and better quality photographs and images (*note 3*).

There are links to other parts of the website in the footer, these include our Volunteer Zone (formerly the Volunteers' Area).

There are also shortcuts to our Footpath Inspection Database (FID) and a social media feeds.



The primary purpose of the website is to provide information to existing and potential members as well as the general public.

Maintaining and expanding our membership enables us to carry out the society's objects. These are embodied in our Statement of Purpose, which can be read at <https://peakandnorthern.org.uk/constitution.php#headingTwo>.

The website now has an SSL certificate. This means that all data transfers between your browser (Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Safari, etc) and the website are encrypted and therefore secure.

The website has been coded to the highest of standards. It will be straightforward to maintain and develop in the future.

The key test of a well designed website is that any user, new or existing, young or old, can find what they are looking for with the minimum of effort and as quickly as possible. It shouldn't be necessary to provide a user guide, so I don't intend to. So if you haven't already explored our new website, just type PNFS into your browser and explore what awaits you.

We have done our best to test everything, but if you come across something that doesn't look right please let me know at membership@pnfs.org.uk and I will endeavour to put it right as quickly as possible. We'd also like to hear what you think about the new website.



NOTES

1. First Sight (<https://www.firstsightdesign.com/>) is a small graphical design company with a proven track record of developing excellent and visually striking websites. Fred Walters is their Senior Designer.
2. The PNFS team were Mel Bale, David Gosling, Suzanne Longworth and Chad Wilkinson. In the early stages of the project Debby Pickvance worked on simplifying the website structure. Judy Brown, David and Suzanne proof read all the website text ahead of the relaunch.
3. Some of the photographs used on the website were taken by Andy Leader.

The Society

What we do

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Instant news from Peak &
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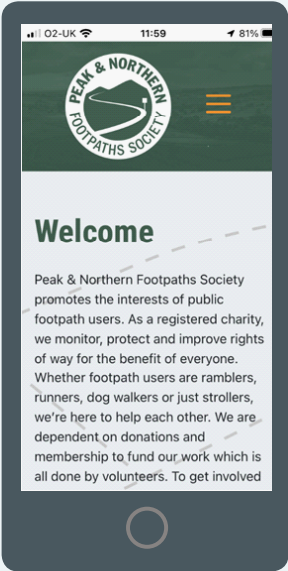


I'm delighted to say that all the feedback that we have received so far has been very positive. It seems as if we have succeeded in our aim to make the website more visually appealing and easier to use, once again, we hope that you agree.

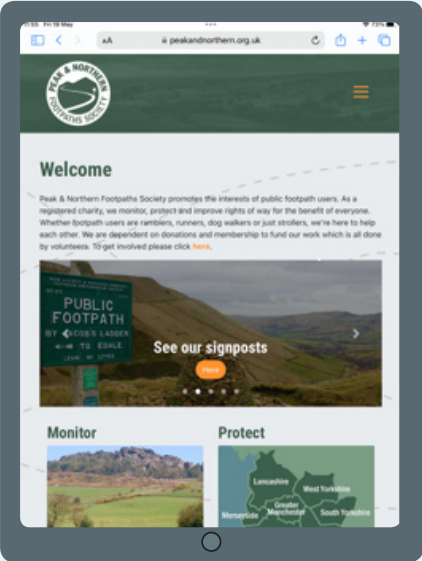
Throughout the redesign process the team were very keen to ensure that the new website looked equally as good on the different devices that people use to view websites. These range from the smallest smart phone to the largest desktop.

Our designer stressed the importance of this approach because younger people in particular tend to use their phones to access the internet and prefer to scroll up and down a webpage rather than clicking numerous links to change to other pages.

Mel Bale, Membership Secretary and Trustee



Website phone



Website tablet



DMMO Hathersage

A Definitive Map Modification Order application (Derbyshire ref 4239) submitted in 2018 by Sheffield Ramblers is making progress through the system. It was for a footpath which cuts off the corner between Mortimer Road Moscar and the A57 Manchester Road in Hathersage parish. The evidence submitted was compelling being from the Hathersage Enclosure Award of 1830 but the route had long been unused and hence even in 1830 may not have been evident on the ground because it has never shown up on maps prepared by the diligent staff at Ordnance Survey.

Derbyshire County Council carried out informal consultation in 2019 and received five responses, one being from the landowner's agent stating 'We feel that this claim is unjust and unnecessary and will lead to complications for our clients. We feel that due to the land already being Open Access land, members of the public are still able to exercise their rights to enter the land, however by creating a new right of way the council will be encouraging an increased volume of people using our property to "cut a corner"'. The agent stated numerous reasons for contesting the application which were;- no real benefit, designated Site of Special Interest, impact on wildlife habitat, risk of animal stock escaping onto main road, potential risk to motorist and issues of lack of verge for new access way. They summarised by stating 'There has not been unrestricted use or access to this cut through for more than 20 years therefore we do not believe that there is enough evidence to justify this route being made a public footpath. Our client would like to reject this claim for the above reasons and to prevent future claims against the estate should someone hurt themselves on the land in question'.

I draw the conclusion from this response and my attempts to use other access land, that landowners have accepted access land so long as the public don't demand access to it.

Fortunately the Council's response to the agents objection was "None of the reasons given for objecting to the application are relevant under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and they therefore cannot be taken into account when determining the application."

A site visit was undertaken by the Council on 14 February 2020. On Mortimer Road they noted a wall with no gap for the claimed route. The surface of the route is grassland and there is no visible usage of the route on the ground. On Manchester Road there is two stone posts in the wall with the gap between them blocked by a wooden fence.

The report concludes "The Hathersage Enclosure Award and Map provides very strong evidence that the claimed route has historically carried bridleway status. The award describes the Public Bridle Road proceeding '...from Sheffield and Glossop Turnpike Road at Nether Reeve Low over the moors crossing Mortimers Branch Road'. The award also states that allotment 120, which corresponds to the area known as Parson's Piece, is subject to that same Bridle Road, called Derwent Road."

The report recommended that an Order be made for bridleway. We await further developments.

Ken Brockway, Footpath Inspector



Signpost Report

Before and after photos of S314 near Windgather Rocks. Repainted on 5 May 2023 by the stalwart Steve Brown of Disley.



Prospects

Prospects for new signposts are looking bleak.

Only two new signposts are planned and, in order to avoid even higher costs, their plates cannot be ordered until I have a batch of four or more. The two are 645 at Crowgutter Farm, Ipstones Edge, Staffs and 646 at Green Stacks Farm, near Jenkin Chapel, Rainow.

Signpost Donations

As of 10 May 2023, we have received five donations totaling £2,480 plus some Gift Aid.

1. From Ray Russell IMO his wife Astrid, 1945-2022 re 630 at Alton, Ashover
2. from Blackbrook Conservation Soc. IMO member Tony Brackenbury re S642 at Andrews Farm, Chinley Head
3. from Chris Booth IMO member Kevin Brierley re 643, also at Andrews Farm.
4. from Gail Sharples re MP IMO Harry Speight on 644, also at Andrews Farm
5. from Christopher Thomson IMO Paul Thomson on S580 at Knowl Farm, Norden, Rochdale

New Signposts

S642/3/4 were erected at Andrews Farm by John and I on 14 February. Their photographs can be seen on page 21 of “*Signpost 75*, spring 2023 or on the new website under “What We Do”, “Signposts”, then go to the foot of the page.

Maintenance

February - Steve Brown and I variously repainted, touched-up, wedged or inspected 339, 370, 371, 450, 470 on the Wirral, 207, 399 and 270 at Stoneheads, Cock Knoll and Jenkin Chapel. Merrick Iszatt of Bakewell fixed a new MP IMO Astrid Russell to 630 at Alton, Ashover and fixed a modified one, IMO George Rochford and Ian Stenhouse of Altrincham & DRC to 178 at Jenkin Chapel. New volunteer Colin Bugey met me at Jenkin Chapel and helped me to recover the plate from 329.

John Hodgson and I reinstated 298 at Hartington YH and we retrieved the plate from 031 outside the gents’ toilets.

March - 351 reinstated on Concrete Rail Post at Hartford by JH and I. 511 reinstated on shortened post by PDNP staff - Paul Wetton and David Oldfield. MPs were fitted to 643 and 644 at Chinley Head and a new JUP to Bridge 1 at Carr Meadow. 307 at Beeston Tor Farm was repaired with large wedges. Nearby signs 524, 460 and 326 at Rushley were cleaned. Written consent was given for a proposed new sign on Ipstones Edge. Steve Brown repainted logo on 102 at Lyme, Shirley Addy cleaned 601 and 602 at Slaidburn and D Bratt inspected 301 at Culcheth.

April - 031 reinstated on CRP at Hartington gents’ toilets by Merrick, John Hodgson. and I. Plate was reinstated on 328 near Jenkin Chapel and written consent obtained for new sign at nearby Green Stack farm. Steve Brown repainted 221 at Lyme Handley and 089 above Little Hayfield. Footpath Inspector Jim Bosworth kindly inspected 497 and 498 south of Wirksworth, saving me a long trip and a lot of CO2 emissions.



Admiring the S031 restoration in Hartington, two little girls from Surrey (also see cover for John Hodgson and Merrick Iszatt who restored it).

David Morton, Signpost Officer

PNFS Signposts - considerations for selecting locations

The Society urgently needs more locations for its signposts. If you know of a suitable place for one, please bear in mind the following considerations. Contact David Morton, Signpost Officer, on signposts@pnfs.org.uk. Signposts can be sponsored with commemorative plaques.

We always need

- The landowner's consent

We like the signposts to be

- At a junction of footpaths and/or bridleways in walking country
- Accessible for installation and future maintenance
- In parishes and areas which have few or no existing PNFS signs as “silent ambassadors”.
- Close to a wall or fence, if in a field used by horses or cattle.
- In the shelter of trees, which minimises the need for maintenance.
- In locations where lost walkers face potential danger, eg. those regularly visited by Mountain Rescue Teams in bad weather.

We like to avoid

- Locations near busy roads or roads treated with salt in the winter, eg. A57.
- Locations adjacent to an existing Highway Authority or Peak District National Park footpath sign.
- Ex-farms now in multi-occupancy where you need to get 6 or 7 peoples' consent..
- National Trust (NT) estates, unless we have a donor willing to accept their ban on memorial plaques (eg. S526 above Alport Castle, which was actually donated by the “Friends of the NT”).
- Locations where vandalism is a likely problem.



I reported a fault to a damaged stile on Tintwistle FP5 on 19 January 2023. In late March I was amazed to learn that they had repaired the stile. This is totally different to how long it takes Tameside to carry out footpath repairs. I received an email from DCC with a photo of the repaired stile. Is this normal for Derbyshire to carry out what I consider a quick response to repairing faults?

*Paul Easthope,
Treasurer and Inspector*

Tintwistle FP5



Mud Galore ~ Birch Vale

I fell across this field (almost literally!) in April 2023. It is above Birch Vale on the path north up towards Lantern Pike, between a cottage at SK025872 and the lane at Lower Cliff at SK026874. The problem is at the top end of the field, beside Lower Cliff where there



is a horse feeding area, a wide mixture of ankle deep mud and horse droppings.

The sign you can see asking you to keep to the footpath is somewhat ironic. There is the option of using the bridleway a little to the west but by the time you've come north upfield it's a bit late. It's not so bad going south as you can see the problem and divert to the bridleway.

Gordon Richards, Member

Parish Notes ~ Roughlee Booth, Pendle



The parish of Roughlee Booth in Pendle, Lancashire sits centrally in the borough and shares its border with the parishes of Goldshaw Booth, Barley with Wheatley Booth, Old Laund Booth, Barrowford and Blacko. Back in the 1300s when the parish was first recognised the area was largely forested and used for hunting by the local aristocracy. The parish now forms part of the Forest of Bowland Area of Natural Beauty, however much of the original woodland no longer exists having been cleared for farming and settlements.

Perhaps the parish's greatest claim to fame is its association with the Pendle witch trials of 1612. Alice Nutter was a resident of Roughlee and was charged with attending a witches meeting to plot the demise of a local landowner. She was tried, pleaded not guilty but was convicted and taken to Lancaster to be hanged. There is a "Nutter" gravestone in the nearby churchyard of Newchurch-in-Pendle (in Goldshaw Booth) where local folklore says she is buried but this is considered unlikely by historians as anyone hanged wouldn't be buried in consecrated grounds. In 2012 a statue (see photo) of Alice Nutter was erected in Roughlee to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the witch trial.



The parish is also associated with the birth of Methodism. John Wesley preached here in the 1740's near the bridge opposite the Bay Horse public house.

Many parishes in Lancashire and Yorkshire have "booth" in their name which denotes their historical connection with cattle herding. Large areas of land, used to herd cattle, were known as vaccaries with their sub-divisions known as a booths – hence the name. Livestock farming is still very much rooted in the parish today.

Roughlee is largely set in a shallow valley, Pendle Water winds its way from Whitehough, through Roughlee village and arcs south towards Barrowford. Pendle Water supplied the mills around Roughlee – firstly the corn mills and later, the largest, Judson's Mill, built in 1767 spun and bleached cotton. In the early twentieth century the mill lodge became a boating lake and pleasure gardens and was a popular day out for people from the local towns of Nelson and Colne. The mill was demolished in 1961 and very little now remains of Roughlee's industrial past although Roughlee Parish Council have an online trail which passes the old industrial sites (<https://www.roughlee.org.uk/mills/>).

Roughlee is now the location of the last Clarion House standing (see photo). Sited on Jinny Lane the Clarion was built in 1912 by the Nelson Independent Labour Party funded by a loan of £350 from the Nelson Weavers Association. Originally part of a small network of Clarion Houses around the north designed to spread a socialist message and a meeting and resting place for local factory workers escaping the grime and noise of the local towns. This last Clarion House is still open to walkers and cyclists most Sundays – tea is served by the pint!

I recommend a visit if you are in the area. More details can be found online - <https://www.clarionhouse.org.uk>.

Despite being just two miles square in area the parish has some 18 miles of footpaths within its boundary historically connecting farms, settlements, and the other rights of way. The Pendle Way, a national trail, passes through the parish on its 45-mile journey through the borough. The parish has a population of less than 400 and there has been very little modern development so it retains a sense of history and openness. From the higher, northern parts, Pendle Hill (see photo) is never far from view and Pendle remains a popular area for outdoor activities.

Simon Worrall, Footpath Inspector

This article is part of a series named Parish Notes, contributed by readers. If anyone would like to write about their parish or a favourite one, contact Mel Bale on membership@pnfs.org.uk.





Book Review

15 Short Walks in Arnside and Silverdale

by David Jordan, published by Cicerone, 2023

Cicerone has just published a new range of six walking books with the titles prefixed *15 Short Walks*. The one being reviewed falls partly just outside the boundary of PNFS's remit but, hey, who's to quibble when it covers an area only a few miles away from Silverdale? Besides, a PNFS walk, held annually, covers cover both parishes.

The book is of hand-carry size, has 96 glossy pages, numerous colour illustrations and extracts from an OS 1:25k map with each route individually drawn. *15 Short Walks* is aimed at the beginner or casual walker. It reassures the reader that 'No specialist gear (is) needed'.

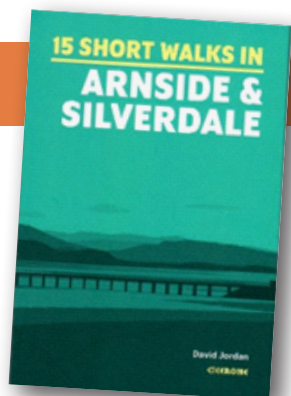
Each walk is given practical information, including start location by using post codes and what3words. No grid reference is given, confirming that the book is designed for walkers of 'all abilities' or, rather, people equipped with a smartphone. Who would blame anyone wanting to explore footpaths near Morecambe Bay in one of the smallest AONBs in the UK?

The walks themselves range from 1.5 miles to 5.75 miles but all can be readily combined with one or more walks to make a longer one. The longest walk is called a challenge walk. The routes are easy to follow with instructions numbered to correspond with locations of the route. Features of interest are described in green – as well as being shown in photographs - so they do not interfere with the route directions.

The author has lived in the area since 2019 so he's well qualified to write about walks on his doorstep. However, it's rather disappointing that one of the walks follows the shore path past Browns Houses instead of Silverdale FP14. Perhaps, judging from a photograph of the gate leading to Browns Houses, this was written before PNFS won the court case involving this footpath which took 25 years. It is hoped that a later edition of his book will revise this route and include a new photograph showing signpost S605.

Aside the above reservations, *15 Short Walks: Arnside and Silverdale* is an attractively produced walking guide with very clear directions. It covers nearly all of the best public rights of ways in this beautiful and unspoilt area often overlooked by walkers intent on the Lake District. Whilst I've not yet been able to test any of its routes - I know the area well - I would not hesitate to recommend it, especially when serious or experienced walkers can make several long walks from several routes. Also, the area is ideal for lazy and relaxing strolls in very photogenic scenery.

Shirley M Addy, Editor, Footpath Inspector, and Courts and Inquiries Officer





Signpost Picture

The picture of the signpost on the path from Hayfield to Kinder was painted over a period of three weeks starting in March at my U3A Art Group on Thursday afternoon from 2-4 pm and finished at my evening art group on Tuesday. This involved a total of seven hours.

I set myself a challenge of painting a winter landscape and on looking for a suitable scene I remembered that there were some wintery photos in the winter 2022 edition of *Signpost*.

On reviewing the pictures I choose the photo of the path leading from Hayfield to Kinder and having walked the path and it also is a very wintery with snow and grey skies it met my brief. In addition it also features the PNFS signpost which I have not seen in a painting before so decided to include the signpost as a key feature. Also, trying to match the green colour of the signpost was a challenge as well.

The painting measures 30 cm by 40 cm painted in Windsor and Newton Galera acrylics on acrylic paper. The colours used were cadmium reded and yellow, titanium white, ultramarine, raw umber and leaf green.

Michael Granger, Member



Whilst I enjoy writing articles for Signpost, I do sometimes wonder what people think of what I have written. Of course feedback is always welcome, but it is very seldom received. One sure way to guarantee that I will hear from the membership is to write something mildly controversial.

My comment about our lack of Footpath Inspectors in Doncaster is a case in point. I was delighted to hear from David Gadd. He is the chair of Doncaster Ramblers (DR) (<https://www.doncasterramblers.org.uk/>) an organisation affiliated to the society. David told me the group have over 20 members who attempt to check all the 500km of rights of way across the borough of Doncaster. This amounts to 603 individual routes. Most years they have a 100% success rate. DR has a good relationship with Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) and also carry out a regular programme of maintenance work.

David is also a Footpath Officer for the Tickhill and District Footpath Group, another very active group. They have recently produced an information booklet entitled 'Walks Around and About the Parish of Tickhill'. I'm very much looking forward to receiving my own copy.

These two groups are excellent examples of what can be achieved when people work together with a common aim in mind. Very much like PNFS!

Our Area Officer for Barnsley, Chris Davison has been contacted by their Rights of Ways department. They have asked him if he and his fellow Footpath inspectors would be willing to help them with their 'asset register' by providing information and photographs of bridges and stiles on Rights of Way throughout the borough. This seems like a win-win for the society. We can help a hard press local government department whilst carrying out our usual voluntary work for PNFS. It can only improve an already very good relationship that we have with BMBC.

The Ordnance Survey has recently invited suggestions for new symbols to support people getting outside more easily and safely. One idea was to differentiate between paths with or without stiles. Wouldn't it be great if there was a way to indicate where stiles and bridges were on Rights of Way?

If your membership is due for renewal there will have been a renewal reminder with this issue of Signpost, please renew as soon as possible. This reduces the amount of time spent on administration and enables us all to focus on other matters.

As always, please contact me at membership@pnfs.org.uk and share your thoughts and ideas about this series of articles and any other membership matters.

Mel Bale, Membership Secretary and Trustee



Seen these? Use *Path Checker* app!



Did you know that PNFS has its own smartphone app called Path Checker? Path Checker is free and can be downloaded from both the App Store and Google Play.



It has three features. By default it shows the user's grid reference and allows them to enter details of a fault have just encountered. An existing or new photograph can be selected and then all the details emailed to the society by pressing a submit button.

The other two features are available via the 'Map' and 'PNFS' icons at the bottom of the screen. The former shows the society's signposts and bridges via standard location icons. Selecting an icon shows a photograph of the signpost/bridge along with its details. 'PNFS' provides three links to the society's website, 'Join Us', 'Support Us' and 'About Us'.

Our new app simplifies the reporting of a fault. Why not download it now and try it out? Tell your friends and family about it as well.

*Mel Bale, Trustee,
Membership
Secretary and
Webmaster*



Walks for PNFS members

IT IS VITAL that attendees check all train times and pnfs.org.uk for any updates.

Saturday, 1 July Mick Chatham 07792 709198 01706 379318	Todmorden (definitely not up to Stoodley Pike!). 10 miles, medium, on the tops. Starts from Todmorden railway station 10:30 (revised time; Victoria 09:57, arrive Todmorden 10:19), OL14 7AA, GR SD93500 24100. Free adjacent parking.
Wednesday, 12 July John Harker 07929 051978	New Mills to Marple, 8 miles approx. Walk will take in a new public bridleway that PNFS was involved in getting added to the definitive map on the outskirts of New Mills. Route beyond that will be towards Thornsett, Rowarth, Moor End and Mellor. Manchester Piccadilly 09:48 or Sheffield 09:14. Walk starts New Mills, Central Station 10:15.
Wednesday, 26 July Ross Myddelton 07941 547378	Linear walk from Silverdale to Arnside visiting Gait Barrows, Fairy Steps, Beetham and Dallam Tower. Moderate walk of 11 miles with 850ft of ascent. 08:50 train from Piccadilly arriving Silverdale at 10:29. Book Arnside return train ticket. Walk starts at 10:35.
Saturday, 5 August 2023 Ross Myddelton 07941 547378	Brock. An 11 mile circular walk with 800 feet of ascent. Around Beacon Fell then following the River Brock to Brock Side. Starts at 10:00 from Carwags free car park, SD578422, PR3 2NJ. No dogs.
Wednesday, 9 August Shirley Addy 07434 897143 text	8-9 miles, medium, hilly. After climbing Whalley Nab, we descend to Read and then climb Clerk Hill before returning to Whalley. Manchester Victoria 09:43 to Whalley 10:51. Walk starts 10:55 from station and (11:05 at Dog Inn for those parking on Accrington Road BB7 9SP, SD73317 36196).
Wednesday, 30 August Gavin Miller 07951 746523	Burnley to Todmorden Walk. Train 10:04 from Manchester Victoria, arrives Burnley Manchester Road 10:48. Buy a return to Burnley. Walk starts from Burnley Manchester Road Station 10:55. 11 miles 2,300 ft ascent.
Saturday, 2 September Kathy Mclean 07967 802549	Eyam. Circular walk via Bretton Clough and Hucklow Edge. 9 miles, about 1,600 feet ascent. Focus on the plague history in Eyam, and fantastic views including of Middleton cliffs. Walk starts at main car park at 10:00 (two adjacent car parks, free and P&D), S32 5QP, SK21841 76801.
Wednesday, 13 September David Bratt 01925 762472; 07401 789400	Knutsford. A 7.5 mile flat stroll round Tatton Park. Manchester Piccadilly departs 10:10. Walk starts Knutsford rail station 11:00. Bring lunch or can use visitor centre cafe.
Wednesday, 27 September John Harker 07929 051978	Bamford Circular walk. 10-12 miles, via Sickleholme golf course, Gatehouse, Dennis Knoll, Stanage Edge, Redmires Reservoirs, Stanedge Pole, North Lees and Brookfield Manor. Trains 09:48 Manchester Piccadilly to Bamford arriving 10:40, or 10:14 Sheffield to Bamford arriving 10:36. Walk starts at 10:45.

If anyone would like to lead a walk, please contact: Shirley Addy (Saturdays), smaddy@talktalk.net, 07434 897143 text; Ross Myddelton (Wednesdays 5-9 miles), r.myddelton1@ntlworld.com, 07941 547378; Ken Smith (Wednesdays 9-12 miles), kensmith4rj@icloud.com, 07918 154959

Scan here for any updates and the latest walks calendar

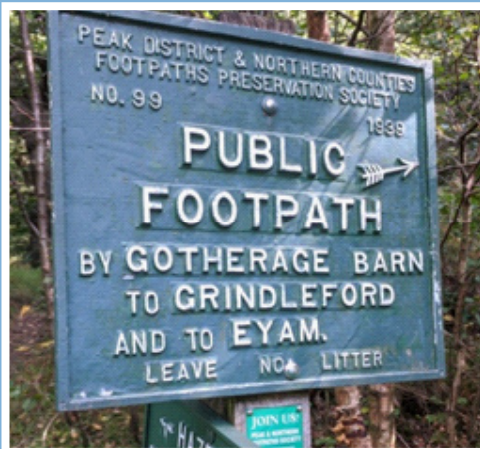


PNFS Longer Walk - April 2023



The Prestbury Circular - Alderley Edge and back - walk was held on Wednesday, 26 April 2023. Led by Bill Minshall, it was 10 miles long with 800 feet ascent. Fantastic views were enjoyed during lunch on Alderley Edge. 15 members attended this walk.





More of PNFS's Earliest Signposts

Photographs by Norman Rice

