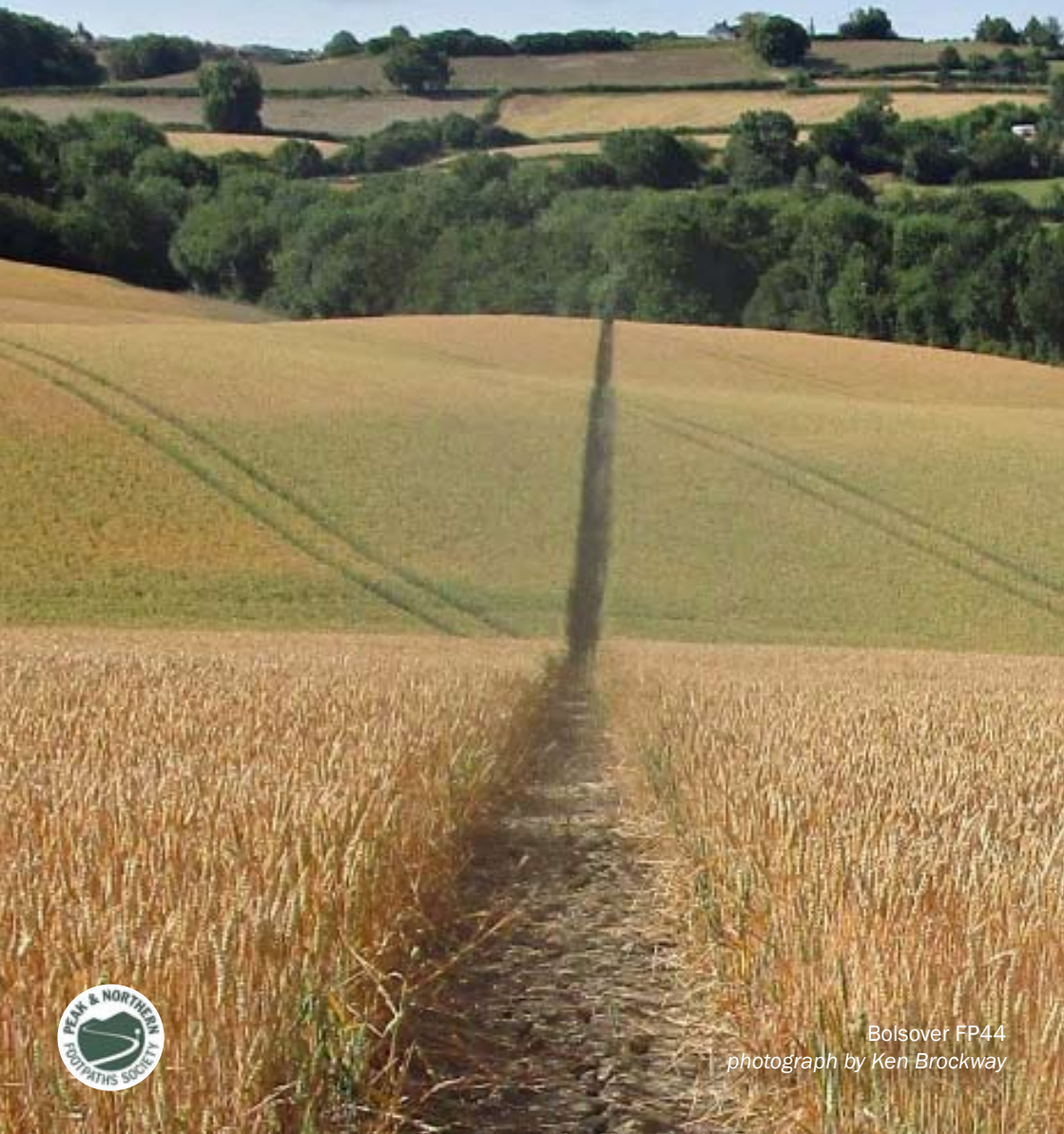


Magazine of the Peak & Northern Footpaths Society

Signpost

Number 84 - Summer 2025



Bolsover FP44
photograph by Ken Brockway



From the Chair



It feels early to be writing this for our summer edition of Signpost, but this is because we send it out with our Annual Report, ahead of the AGM in May. The potential of long summer days, with our opportunities for walking expanding, is becoming a reality at the moment. I like this time of year because each day is a little longer than the last, new blossoms, birdsong and young animals seem to be popping up everywhere. As I walk to work, along the Derwent River, I am accompanied by the sounds of a beautiful song thrush and the insistent drilling of our local woodpeckers amongst other bird song.

At this time of national and international uncertainty it feels as if our focus on a fundamental right, that of walking on public rights of way, is even more important than usual. The simple act of wandering freely along these paths not only connects us to the natural world but also to our sense of freedom and community. It is a reminder that, despite the challenges we face, we can find solace and strength in the landscapes that have endured through centuries.

Your Trustees and other volunteers are in the process of setting up groups to take forward the strategy which was one of our successes of 2024. I am confident we can make significant progress over the next few months, but more volunteers to help will be welcome as there is a great deal to be done.

As you are aware, if all efforts to improve, unblock or repair PROWs fail, we can resort to legal challenge. We don't reach this stage too often but at the moment we are engaged with such a case, thanks to the work of Martin Hampar, one

of our Courts and Inquiries officers. We have resources specifically assigned to legal cases, so once the Trustees have approved the costs we are able to proceed.

When successful, the impact is usually substantial for local and sometimes more distant walkers.

The footpath inspectors conference on 1 March was very successful according to reports. I was sorry not to be able to attend due to other commitments. We rely on inspectors for much of our work and it is great to be able to continuously learn and develop, but also network with colleagues. We plan to hold more local meetings in the coming months so do look out for these.

I hope to see you at the AGM, where you can stay in touch with the society, meet other members and hear our speaker.

Kathy Mclean, Chair





The Peak & Northern Footpaths Society

Taylor House,
23 Turncroft Lane,
Offerton,
Stockport, SK1 4AB

Registered Charity No 212219

T: 0161 480 3565

W: pnfs.org.uk

E: mail@pnfs.org.uk



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Fed-up with finding paths obstructed or overgrown?

Become a footpath inspector for PNFS!

Monitor rights of way on behalf of the Society

- in an area you have agreed to inspect
- at your own pace
- in your own time
- find the paths on our unique database
- record your inspections
- report problems

Have the satisfaction of supporting the work of the Society and protecting our right to walk public footpaths.

If you are interested contact the Society's Footpath Inspection Coordinator, Simon Worrall, by email inspection@pnfs.org.uk

INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

For more details of above and other volunteering roles, go to pnfs.org.uk/volunteer



Inspectors' conference

For the first time since 2018 the Society organised a conference for all footpath inspectors. It took place at Central Hall in Manchester on March 1 and was attended by 56 inspectors and Society officers. All the main areas the Society covers – Staffordshire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, West Yorkshire and Lancashire – were well represented.

The main aims of the conference were to update inspectors on public rights of way law and inform them of the developments in the Society, particularly the recently published five-year strategy. We also highlighted how the Society could support them in their inspection activity and of course the meeting enabled inspectors to talk to one another about their issues and challenges.

David Gosling presented the Society's strategic aims for the next five years and highlighted the urgency of getting more members to consider becoming trustees, officers and helping on sub-committees. David introduced the concept of arranging group inspections which was well received (see article in this issue of Signpost for more details.) Simon Worrall, footpath inspection coordinator, gave a brief update on 2024 inspection statistics and outlined the significant turnover of inspectors during the last year. David and Simon were followed by Rhoda Barnett, Courts and Inquiries Officer and an Area Officer in Derbyshire. Rhoda delivered a thorough review of public rights of way legislation and guidance focussed on answering commonly asked questions such as "who owns a public right of way?" and the respective maintenance responsibilities of landowners and highways authority. The presentation was followed by a Q&A and informative case studies.

After lunch there were three sessions designed to highlight areas of the Society's activities and inform inspectors about this work. Nigel Howe, the Society's Bridges and Improvements officer, illustrated several completed projects all of which had received funding from the Society. Nigel explained the process from project inception to delivery of the bridge or improvement working in partnership with the relevant highways authority.

David Morton, the Society's signpost officer, asked that inspectors keep an eye out for Peak and Northern signposts and report back to him on their condition and whether any maintenance might be required. If an inspector carried a small brush and water to clean the sign plates, then all the better. Photographs of the signs and posts always welcome. David now has over 500 signposts to maintain, and any help inspectors could give was greatly appreciated. Another request was for suitable signpost locations. David threw in some amusing anecdotes about his "career path" to becoming the Society's signpost officer and the rapid expansion of signs under his stewardship!

Martin Hampar, a Courts & Inquiries (C&I) officer, spoke to the inspectors about the C&I committee, what they do and focussed, by way of example, on several issues he had personally been involved in around the Salford and Trafford areas. It was interesting to hear about just how much work goes into resolving these issues, how long it can take and the potential cost of pursuing actions like these. It was positive to hear about the recent successful outcomes for the Society underpinned by the work done by C&I officers, supported by the trustees.

The conference ended with details of a planned update to the Footpath Inspection Database (FID), the Society's main IT software for capturing details of inspection activity and faults. Simon Worrall described the planned improvements to the FID which would help underpin one of the Society's strategic objectives to measure success and impact of inspection activity. The upgrade would help inspectors track fault resolution better and provide more meaningful reports in this area. Ironically, the overhead projector decided to malfunction before this session started!

It was great to see so many inspectors attending and in particular a good number of relatively new inspectors. The event was very worthwhile, and we plan to continue events such as this with further regional meeting in the coming year.
Simon Worrall, Footpath Inspection Coordinator

Dogs! Please take note

Recently whilst walking on Clitheroe FP1 at Bradford Bridge, I came across a notice for dogs. It reads "DOGS - Can you have your owner - handler on a LEAD!". Hope our barking four-legged friends will take notice of it.

*Shirley M Addy,
Footpath Inspector
for Ribble Valley*



A modest proposal: group inspections

Currently PNFS has data on rights of way in about 50% of the parishes in our region. This data is held in our Footpath Inspections Database. The central area of our region is well covered, and the richness of that data is increasing all the time. I hope many members will be accessing this data when they are planning walks. If you do not currently have access, please contact Mel Bale (membership@pnfs.org.uk) and he will fix you up with access to our database.

Having this volume of data is an amazing achievement, but it leaves many parishes where we know nothing about the condition on the paths, or the data we hold is out of date. How can we make some inroads to these areas?

My proposal is that we initiate group inspections, where two or more inspectors walk together. The group can walk paths together or they can divide paths between them and meet-up at an agreed point. The group may choose to travel together and maybe have a pint or a cuppa, afterwards to make it a pleasant social occasion.

This would create opportunities for inspectors to work together. Inspecting paths can be a lonely experience and, although many of us are happy to walk on our own, walking with others can also be enjoyable. In a group we would discuss the faults we find, share our own practice and this might help to make reports on the FID more consistent. If we also invite members from Affiliated Groups we might also recruit some new inspectors.

Members who are not currently inspectors, but who are considering taking on the role, will be able to join group inspections to learn about what is involved. This could encourage more members to become footpath inspectors.

The idea was enthusiastically received at the Inspectors' Conference and by Courts and Inquiries Officers. We have already trialled the idea with Stockport inspectors. So how will it work?

- 1.** We will collect names and emails and set-up one or more WhatsApp group(s). We will set-up regional groups where there is sufficient interest.
- 2.** Individual inspectors will select an area where they will lead a group inspection.
- 3.** The leader will then advertise dates when they propose to undertake the inspections. Nearby inspectors and/or Affiliated Groups can be invited.
- 4.** Others will say, via WhatsApp, or by email, whether they can join on a given date.
- 5.** If the leader thinks there are enough volunteers, then he/she will advertise the transport arrangements (either public transport or car share) and timing.
- 6.** The group could walk together, or the leader could allocate routes to those attending – there are no hard and fast rules.
- 7.** The leader will be responsible for collecting the reports after the group inspection and sending them to the group walks coordinator. This will be me, David Gosling, in the first instance, and I will enter the reports onto the FID.
- 8.** The leader will also undertake to contact the relevant HA to report any major faults.

Group inspections will probably be more popular in the summer months when the days are longer and the weather is (or can be) better, but we can make a start as soon as possible. If you are interested in joining a group inspection, please email me davidgosling@pnfs.org.uk.

David Gosling, Vice Chair



Urban paths

Signpost always has countryside on the cover but there are lots of paths in urban locations, many that allow us access to green spaces. I offer a picture of Derbyshire, Erewash, Long Eaton FP55 and maps to show how the path has changed from fields to houses. Map dates are 1880, 1938 and 2024.
Ken Brockway, Footpath Inspector



Return of S320



S320 stands on Holcombe Moor,
 above Ramsbottom.
 We reinstated it in August.
David Morton, Signpost Officer



Wildly Different: How five women reclaimed nature in a man's world.

Sarah Lonsdale, Manchester University Press 2025, £20.00



Very few women feature in the writings of great explorers and adventurers, unless they are those keeping home for the brave, heroic men who are out taming the wild lands. This book seeks to redress the balance by drawing our attention to five women who, 'in the face of insults, disapproval and even imprisonment and physical violence, challenged the right to explore, enjoy, conserve, investigate and, ultimately, protect an increasingly fragile world.' (prologue ix)

Having read this quote from the book, you are left in no doubt that women are as capable as men of undertaking adventures, making exciting and interesting discoveries, and persevering in the face of extraordinary obstacles.

Up until the late nineteenth century, women who undertook expeditions to wild places were usually from aristocratic families or themselves very wealthy. However, a few women '*were beginning to contest the idea that wild nature was just the arena of men.*' (p11)

The five women featured in this book did just that.

The book is divided into three sections:

1. *Saplings: early years, personalities and motivations.*
2. *Trees: greatest achievements and personal costs.*
3. *Forest: considers the women's legacies*

The contents are set out in such a way that it is possible to read about each woman separately or about all five in each section. I found it particularly interesting to gain an understanding of what these very different women were doing at roughly the same time.

The five women are:

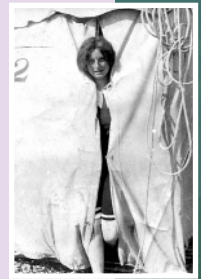
Mina Hubbard, in the summer of 1905, departed on an expedition to map the Naskaupi and George Rivers in Northern Labrador and witness the great summer caribou migration.



Evelyn Cheeseman took part in a research expedition to the South Pacific in search of new entomological species. She was the curator of insects at the Zoological Society in London.



Dorothy Pilley, a mountaineer who completed several first ascents in The Alps, Eryri and The Rockies. *‘The deliberate courting of physical danger, incomprehensible to many, was to Dorothy life-affirming.’* (p53) She was instrumental in establishing the Pinnacle Climbing Club, the first feminist rock climbing organisation in 1921.



Ethel Haythornthwaite, having been widowed in 1916 became seriously ill and sought solace and refuge in the moors of the Peak District. Her campaigning led to the establishment of the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE).



Wangari Maathai, having been educated in the USA, she returned to Kenya where her campaigning for women's equality and the end of the degradation of the rural environment brought her into conflict with the then president, Daniel Arap Moi. She was arrested, imprisoned and physically abused on several occasions.



Mina Hubbard, Evelyn Cheeseman and Dorothy Pilley represent the arenas of exploration, scientific discovery and mountaineering. They all endured challenges in the wild places they travelled to, but 'none was more difficult than the prejudices they faced from the men who controlled access to these worlds.' (p11)

Ethel Haythornthwaite and Wangari Maathai devoted their lives to the conservation of wild places. Ethel 'would help preserve tens of thousands of acres of Peak District wilderness...at the heart of her work was the goal to secure access to the moorland for the people of Sheffield.' (p71)

Wangari was the first Kenyan woman to be awarded a PhD from University College, Nairobi. She received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 in recognition of her work to restore the forests of Kenya to enable wildlife to return.

This book is inspiring. It details how these women, against the greatest odds, achieved extraordinary feats. They are role models for us all, whether we are women or parents/carers/relations of friends of budding female adventurers and conservationists.

The author, Sarah Lonsdale, is a Senior Lecturer in Journalism at City University in London. She is no stranger to writing about 'wildly different' women, having already published 'Rebel Women between the Wars' in 2020.

*Note: The images are reproduced by the kind permission of Manchester University Press.
Pauline Williams, Member.*

Parish Notes - Dore

When is a parish not a parish? There are no doubt many possible answers to this question, but as far as Dore is concerned, it is when the government of the day says so, read on to find out more!

Dore is a picturesque and historically rich village. Nestled between the urban expanse of the city and the natural beauty of the Peak District.

It has a distinctive character that blends rural charm with its close proximity to a city slowly but surely coming to terms with being 'post-industrial'.

The village appears in the Domesday Book of 1086, where it was recorded as "Dora." The name is believed to derive from the Old English word "dora," which refers to a door or gate, possibly symbolizing a point of entry or passage through the surrounding landscape. The area was primarily rural, and its early inhabitants made a living from farming. The village was a relatively quiet and small settlement throughout much of the Middle Ages, with agriculture as the primary occupation.

During the Victorian era, Dore began to experience a transformation. The advent of the railway in the mid-19th century brought increased access to the village, attracting affluent families who sought a more peaceful and rural lifestyle away from the industrial heart of Sheffield. This marked the beginning of Dore's transition into a suburb, a process that accelerated in the 20th century as Sheffield expanded.

Dore retains much of its historic charm, with many of its buildings reflecting its Victorian and early 20th-century growth. However, despite the development, Dore has managed to preserve its heritage, making it an appealing blend of history and modernity. Located in the southeastern part of Sheffield, about five miles from the city centre.

The village was once part of the larger parish of Bakewell in Derbyshire, a significant administrative boundary at the time. In the 19th century, however, the growing population and urban expansion of Sheffield led to Dore's eventual transfer to Yorkshire. This change officially took place in 1935 when the boundary was altered and Dore became part of Sheffield.

Perhaps the most important building in Dore is Christ Church, a striking Grade II listed building that dates back to the 12th century. The church is an excellent example of early Norman architecture and is central to the community's identity. Its tall spire and historic features make it a prominent landmark in the area. It is not only a place of worship but also a social hub for the village, hosting events and gatherings throughout the year.

Another historically important building is Dore Old Hall, a historic manor house that once served as the centre of local governance and community life. Sadly, unlike the church, it is not open to the public.



Christ Church

The local landscape is characterized by a mixture of natural and agricultural land, with well-maintained fields and wooded areas surrounding the village. The Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust (SRWT) Nature Reserve – Blacka Moor is a short walk to the west of the village. The reserve is the largest and most spectacular of SRWT’s reserves. It contains 181 hectares of breath-taking scenery and forms part of the much larger internationally important wild landscape of the Peak District National Park.

The village is an excellent starting point for walkers, offering numerous opportunities to explore the natural beauty of the surrounding countryside. It’s proximity to the Peak District National Park means that it is an ideal base for those who enjoy hiking, with routes suitable for all levels of ability.

For those unfamiliar with Dore, an ideal starting point is the Dore Village Society website <https://dorevillage.co.uk/>. There you will find a wealth of information about the village, along with an excellent guide to local walks, downloadable for free from <https://dorevillage.co.uk/pages/publications>.

Wyvern Walkers is the village walking group. Named after a legendary creature that is part of Dore’s folklore and heraldry. The Wyvern is often depicted as a dragon-like figure and has been historically used as a symbol of the area, particularly in the context of its local identity and heritage.

In summary, the village is rich in history, scenic beauty, and opportunities for outdoor activities. Its combination of historical buildings, tranquil landscapes, and proximity to the Peak District makes it a unique place to visit or reside. With its perfect balance of rural charm and urban convenience, it is a true hidden gem.

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*Derbyshire Map
- Robert Morden (1695)*



Wyvern Stone



Old Hay Brook, Hillfoot

An ancient salt road and a graffitist



*"Old Wayside Cross - Lady Cross, Woodhead Road, Langsett parish (geograph 6068556)"
by Milestone Society is licensed under
CC BY-SA 2.0.*

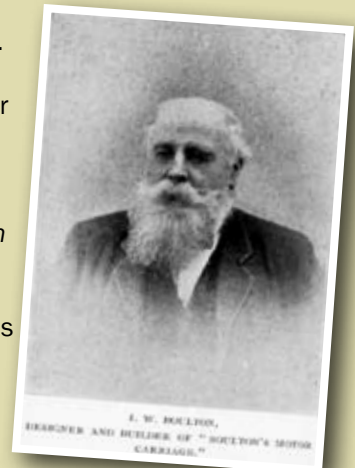
There is a medieval "Lady Cross" on the ancient salt road between the Cheshire salt "wichs" and South Yorkshire via Longdendale. It's 1 mile east of Salter's Brook packhorse bridge which, until 1974, formed the boundary between Cheshire and Yorkshire(now Derbyshire and Yorkshire).

This section of salt way was upgraded to turnpike road in the 1730s and the wooden bridge over Salter's Brook, first mentioned in 1695, was rebuilt in stone (see *below photo, Wikimedia public open use*).

Another bout of turnpike 'mania' in the 1820s saw a new 'bypass' built (the A628 which is used now via the modern Salter's Brook Bridge). The old section over the 1730s bridge was legally closed, and it became a backwater until the growing interest in recreational walking in the late C19th.

Isaac Watt Boulton (IWB 1823-99), shown in the photo (from *Grace's Guide to British Industrial History website*) later in life, was what might be tactfully called a 'character'. Born in Stockport, he lived much of his adult life in Ashton under Lyne and had an aptitude for mechanical inventions like his Steam Carriage (see *over photo from Grace's Guide to British Industrial History website*).

In his 20s Isaac and his father spent three months in prison for the theft of a canal boat. He realised the future was in steam power and railway engineering and he prospered.



He died an Alderman and magistrate, but his relevance to us was that his hobby was walking and he became a passionate advocate for rambling and open access to the moors. He became an expert on ancient lost paths, what we would call “lost ways,” especially those in the Kinder Scout area. Whether he was involved in the early history of this Society, we don’t yet know.

In 1893 the Ashton Herald newspaper published an article from him describing a walk he had recently done: “that may help some of your younger readers who believe in walking as a healthy exercise and are anxiously looking forward to the Whitsuntide weekend for the purpose of going on a long tramp over mountains and moorland”.

He got the train to Woodhead station, arriving at 8am. He breakfasted on: “oatcakes off the flake, fresh butter and a glass of beer” whilst chatting with the “genial landlady” at the Miller’s Arms pub on the Woodhead Road east of the new Salter’s Brook bridge. This pub was later knocked down by the Manchester Waterworks Corporation to prevent pollution of the reservoirs in Longdendale.



FIG. 14.—BOULTON'S MOTOR CARRIAGE.

IWB has left behind evidence of his walks. His initials are carved in the stone base of Lady Cross as can be seen in the photo on previous page. He carved them at the bottom of a turnpike milestone just east of the old bridge over Salter’s Brook. The stone says “From Wortley XII miles From Rotherham XXI miles”.

He carved them on the milestone that said 19 miles to Manchester on the old road north of the Woodhead reservoir then in Cheshire (the old turnpike road had been managed by different Trusts in Cheshire and Yorkshire. Hence the use of Roman numerals by the Yorkshire Trust, but not the Cheshire one) His “IWB” initials have been found on a rock near the Dean Head Stones on the Derwent watershed. There might be others somewhere as yet not photographed, or not found.

What his motivation was for what must have been time consuming carving is unknown now. Is it vandalism by graffiti? When does such work cease to be considered unacceptable and become historical and of interest to today’s walkers? Certainly, there was a tradition of carving initials on significant landscape features especially on important boundaries separating parishes or large estates. I’ll leave you to ponder that conundrum.

John Harker, Courts & Inquiries Officer South Yorkshire

The Manchester Pedestrian Club

The Manchester Pedestrian Club (MPC) was founded in 1903, only a few years after PNFS but with a different provenance. During an era when walking had become very popular, a walking race was organised on 23 May 1903 from Manchester to Southport. Following that, a group of 'gentlemen' decided to form a club for walking, not restricted to race-walking but intended for serious walking especially around the Pennines and Peak District. Indeed, one year a motion was put forward that membership be restricted to those who would walk 1000 miles each year - that is, average 20 miles for each of 50 weeks per year! I am glad that the motion was defeated.

Meticulous records were kept of the walks and how many miles members walked each year and, after a while, a cup was awarded each year to the person who had walked the furthest that year. 2025 began with walk number 5569. The MPC possesses a sizeable archive which would be of interest to social historians and anthropologists. Up to 2024 we walked every Saturday of the year except in December, usually with two walks each Saturday, A and B, plus one or more weekends away. The A walk is longer and more strenuous, 12-16 miles, occasionally 20, such as the infamous Kinder Circular, and the B one is easier and 8-9 miles. The walks were very varied, ranging from challenging Pennine moorland to easy Cheshire plains. Each walk would be planned, recce'd and then written for leaflets that were sent to members in bundles every 2-3 months.

At the end of walks, the two parties would meet for a meal because, as one member put it, "Our only boast is our good fellowship." Members were expected to dress smartly for the meal. Those who came by car would leave a change of clothes (including one of the Club's two ties!) in their cars, but those of us who came by public transport might have to carry it around the strenuous 16 miles. Though we deserved extra mileage to be recorded for us, we never received it. I recall walks where we get back in cold pouring rain and have to don a cold shirt before we could enter the pub.

The Club's first walk, on 11 July 1903, was from Hayfield to Castleton, over Snake Pass, 21 miles. We repeated it to celebrate our 120th Anniversary on 24 June 2023. We could not follow all the route exactly because Ladybower Reservoir has covered some of it, but it was a grand feat. The longest walk the Club has tried is the 40-mile Derwent Watershed, on 13 May 1979: walking round the watershed of all the streams that flow into the Upper Derwent Valley. Those who walked it gave up in darkness and exhaustion only two of miles short.

But decline has set in. Most members are no longer able to do 12-16 miles, let alone 20, and recruitment is a challenge as is probably true for many walking clubs today. Up to the 1990s, colleagues at work would be invited on walks and (if deemed suitable!) to join the Club, but social life in work has declined, with the breaking-up of many large organisations, the outsourcing of work to consultants and contractors, and increased pressure of work. Moreover, with the rise of websites that publicise walks for anyone to join, there seems to be less need for clubs organising walks for members.

So the MPC is rethinking what its role is, and how it can complement other clubs like PNFS and the Ramblers, rather than duplicate. A survey of members found several things were valued: the quality and variety of walks, which were well organised, the courtesy and companionship on walks (excellent non-frivolous conversations, plenty of clean humour and the meal together after the walk), and what one member called our "intellectual capital" both in members' conversations and memories and in the archive. The archive is gradually being written up onto the website, as a resource for study and even just sheer interest, with leaflets from the past and labelled photographs from recent years.

<https://mpcwalking.org.uk> ~ email: manchesterpedestrianclub@gmail.com.

Andrew Basden, Hon Walks Convenor.

Editor - Our affiliated walking club members are invited to write about their own club.



2031 cut-off scrapped: the pressure is off or is it?

From Helena Horton, Environment reporter, The Guardian, 26 December 2024:

“England has thousands of miles of unrecorded rights of way, estimated to stretch more than 40,000 miles, which are well used by walkers, cyclists and equestrians but are not officially recorded or protected. The previous Conservative government had announced that all of them needed to be formally recorded by 2031 ...

As a Lost Ways researcher I agree wholeheartedly with the above statement but question the current basis of identifying the 40,000 miles of paths. Having spent hours, weeks ... years, investigating unrecorded routes I've come to the conclusion that we are taking the wrong approach. I have walked 3,000 miles to review Slow Way routes and on the way discovered a huge alternative path network that is in regular use but hidden from view to those of us who rely on the bible of Ordnance Survey (OS) and the Definitive Map.

The maps published by OS retain many historical routes as a single black dash line. What we really need is information of paths actually on the ground and in use, let's go back to the original surveys showing what is physically present. Our trusted friend is being sidelined by OpenStreetMap which shows what is really on the ground although sometimes even these paths are inaccessible. I speak from experience having tried exploring Oxford.

Walking on United Utilities land in Longdendale I commented to our walk leader that the path was not on my map, how did she know where to walk? Years of walking in the area, came the reply. There are hundred of miles of formal permissive free access paths, lets show them on maps. We now have acres of Access Land (AL), great in the wide open spaces but again rather than wander willy nilly and disturb the wildlife lets have the recognised walked paths on a map. And what about those islands of AL which fail to live up to their name because we have no access to them where the surrounding land is kept private and access points are not provided and identified on maps.

Are you a walker not a rambler? That is someone who goes out daily to exercise the dog. There is a huge network of dog walking paths which often ignore the rights of way network, following field edges but at times offer useful links to and between the formal path network. Money and effort has been poured into cycle routes but those orange dots offer little assistance planning a route because they lack details and frequently only show isolated sections. Looking at the Derbyshire online mapping portal it shows an exciting and ambitious network of proposed routes. I can't wait to use them. The recorded footpath network does not stand alone. It relies on bridleways and other definitive paths plus roads to offer an imperfect network of walking routes, a network that would be improved with inclusion of all walked paths.

Rather than squeezing that inconvenient path between high fences planners need to insist developers provide pleasant wide corridors through the built environment which offer an invitation to abandon the car. It's time to take a proper look at providing a safe joined up network of paths for walking to the shops, school and escape into green spaces.

Ken Brockway, Member

Signpost Report

Prospects and Signpost Donations

Thanks to our Footpath Inspector in Staffordshire Bill Twigg, we finally have consent for a new signpost at Swynnerton Old Park, a forestry area near Stoke on Trent. It is an area with no PNFS signposts. I plan to visit and meet with him there soon. I have collected the new plate for signpost 93 at Hope, which will be replaced when the land dries and hardens.

Since my last report in mid December, we have had a single donation of £1000 for a new signpost from an old friend in New Mills



Ramblers. Between us in 2013 we refurbished two badly-neglected RA signs on Anglezarke Moor above White Coppice, Chorley. One of them required a new plate to be made. The RA's Frank Lockerby Fund covered the costs.

Please make suggestions for new signposts. We have ample funds. A half-page of "Considerations for locating new signposts" can be found on the PNFS website at pnfs.org.uk/newsplots.

My thanks again to Simon Worrall for enlisting the help of footpath inspectors and path checkers in the growing task of suggesting, monitoring and cleaning/clearing our signposts. Their response has been good, but we need more suggestions for new signpost locations, especially in popular walking areas which lack adequate signage. If anyone asks you, the full donation to cover the cost of a new signpost is £800, but lower donations may be accepted and are also welcome for modified memorial plaques, repairs, etc.

New Signposts

No new signposts have been erected since late July. My plan to replace the long absent S061 near Errwood foundered. When I made a site visit, I found a re-aligned and reconstructed forest road, which had displaced the footpath junction to a spot near The Street gate, which already had a PDNP fingerpost.

I have been trying to find a suitable location for a new signpost at or near Wyre Way in Garstang since July 2022! Hopefully where there's a will, there's a way.

Thefts

None that I know of since 511 at New Barn, Win Hill in September.

Maintenance

December-January

Help with various signs from Steve Brown, Stephen Royle, Stephen Chubb, Paul Mcevoy, Mike Brown, Brian Hamilton, Sara Carberry and Danny Allen.

February

John and I reposted S226 on the Macc Canal towpath east of High Lane then 448 at Haylee Farm, Combs. Both were fixed to salvaged and recycled wood posts. Both proved tricky!

Total Signs, etc: 583

David Morton, Signpost Officer



Job advert for a signpost officer or trainee

I will be 83 in March and am looking for a trainee, who might replace me in a few years time. I have found the work both enjoyable and therapeutic and am reluctant to retire until old age obliges me to. Contact me if you are interested, live near Stockport, ie where our workshop and most of our suppliers are based, drive a car, are reasonably fit with plenty of spare time and a wide range of basic skills, from use of DIY tools, OS maps, phones, camera, PC or laptop to interacting with a wide range of people, ie a pleasant, cheerful and sociable disposition. My email is signposts@pnfs.org.uk.

David Morton

Hill walking in Turkey and England



"If I could afford boots like that, I'd buy a car." In some ways, the old villager's response to our inquiry about the route to the ancient city of Trysa in Lycian Turkey sums up the key difference between hill walking in Turkey and in England.

The mountains are higher in Turkey, often rising to over 10,000 feet (3000 metres) and the extremes of weather greater, but the key difference is that there is no longstanding walking tradition in Turkey. It is perhaps as it was in England before the industrial revolution when there were footpaths between villages and passes over the hills and mountains to facilitate the transport of goods often by donkey or mule, but no real concept of walking for pleasure.

In England, the coming of mass-production factories with the industrial revolution changed all that. In the words of the Manchester Rambler: "I may be a wage slave on Monday but I am a freeman on Sunday." In the Peak District, walking became very much a way of escape from hard labour in the mills – notices by some mills today remind you that life expectancy in industrial parts of the Peak District then was 33 years. The desire of people confined to work in factories to have the freedom of the hills inspired land access in England exemplified by the Kinder Scout Trespass – "No man has the right to own mountains" – so that socialism and the fight for access that enables walking for relaxation grew hand in hand. But there was no such symmetry in Turkey.

In Turkey, driving to a shaded spot, preferably beside water and sitting down next to the car for a barbeque (if forest fire regulations permit) is the most popular way of relaxing: walking in the hills and the mountains is not. However, walking in the mountains in Turkey started to become more popular around the year 2000 when mountaineering groups including many from universities started to organise large outings. These walking treks might involve perhaps 200 people arriving in coaches, so somewhat different from rambles in England. Twenty years ago, when camping at Yukarı Kavron Yaylası in the Kaçkar Mountains in August, when the snow retreats and the flowers bloom (pictured here), I received a message to say that the state-run Mountaineering Federation was coming (one of the key walking groups at the time). We left swiftly as their buses rolled into the last village with an access point.

There are ancient, traditional footpaths in Turkey, some follow the silk routes, but there is no tradition of waymarking the paths, though some areas do. Around 2000, when I was planning to guide groups in the Kaçkar Mountains, we visited the mountains to establish the routes. There were no maps; no signposted routes. I found the routes by asking locals and storing what I learnt in my memory. At that time, only the army was allowed access to maps to help you

figure out the route. In England, there is something truly magical about the quality of the signposted walking routes alongside Ordnance Survey maps with their wealth of detail that enabled you to establish where you were long before Google maps and Smart phones turned map reading into a disappearing art.

Fortunately, by the year 2000, signposted walking trails started to appear in Turkey thanks to an English woman Kate Clow who secured funding to waymark the Lycian Trail that stretches along 550 kilometres of scenic mountain routes beside the Mediterranean from Fethiye to Antalya. This was followed by a second route known as the St Paul Trail in the Taurus Mountains north of Antalya. I helped waymark both routes: the red and white trail

marks pictured here guide the way. The good side of these waymarked trails is that this opened many areas eyes to the potential of boosting tourism through encouraging the development of walking trails, which can now be found in most areas of Turkey. The downside is that this was accompanied by raising the value of beautiful areas so that second home ownership, boosted by the post-Covid tourism boom, is in danger of destroying some of the beauty as concrete villas invade the landscape. But still much of the Lycian way is very beautiful as this view from the Lycian Trail from above Öludeniz to Faralya illustrates.

Another key difference between walking in England and in Turkey is the hospitality that often greets the traveller in Turkey. One drizzly, misty day in the Kaçkar, as we descended from the hamlet of Samitsal to the village of Palovit, out of the mists a shepherdess shouted, “Palovit’a hoş geldin.” (Welcome to Palovit). We greeted her back and asked where we could camp. Hers was a very Turkish response with a genuine warmth and welcome. “This is Palovit. You can camp where you like.” We were offered endless food and drink by local people – entertained with music, a form of bagpipes are played in the Kaçkar, and even helped with packing our tent the next morning. The Turkish custom of welcoming strangers is strongly embedded and unparalleled in our experiences of walking in England, though we appreciate the friendly salutations of walkers along the trails in England, a custom that seems not to exist in some countries.

We love walking, both in Turkey and in the Peak District and beyond. It is our greatest source of relaxation. There is no equivalent organisation to the PNFS in Turkey but perhaps, slowly, as walking for pleasure becomes a more common feature of Turkish life, groups will form to protect the access routes and the beauty of the land through which they pass for generations to come recognising that our landscapes are “Ours to Care For”.

Özkan Yaşar, retired Turkish mountain guide, and his wife Julia Strong



PNFS walks

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



Wednesday, 11 June (Short) - Brian Lomas 0161 688 5237 rossmyd@gmail.com.
Appley Bridge to Parbold. A six mile linear walk starting at Appley Bridge railway station following paths and including Fairy Glen, Harrock Hill and Windmill to Parbold for return rail journey to Manchester. 10:09 train from Manchester Victoria arrives Appley Bridge at 11:00 when walk commences. WN6 9AE.

Wednesday, 25 June (Long) - Mick Chatham 07859 967535 chathamnick@gmail.com.
Littleborough circular walk. Walk starts at Littleborough Railway Station. Watergrove via Mary Townley Route and visiting Tenter Field sites. 10/11 miles. Train from Manchester Victoria 09:36 arriving Littleborough 09:57. Walk starts at 10:00. OL15 8AR.

Wednesday, 9 July (Short) Walk leader required.

Wednesday, 30 July (Long and short) - Udo Pope and Ross Myddelton 07941 547378 rossmyd@gmail.com. Silverdale circular walks from railway station starting at 10:30. Udo to lead an 11 mile walk and Ross to lead a 6 mile walk - details to follow. LA5 OSP.

Wednesday, 13 August (Short) - Alan Talbot 07714 826899 alan.talbot@rocketmail.com.
Heaton Park to Manchester Victoria linear walk of 7 miles along part of the Manchester Green Trail. Walk starts at 10:30 from Heaton Park Metrolink stop and finishes at Manchester Victoria station, M25 1JN.

Wednesday, 27 August (Long) - Walk leader required.

If you would like to lead a walk, please email your walk details as below

Short walks are usually 5-9 miles long - r.myddelton1@ntlworld.com.

Long walks are usually 9-12 miles long - kensmith4rj@icloud.com.

