



NOTTS DERBY WALKING GROUP

FOOTPRINT

JUNE 2009 [WWW.NDWG.CO.UK](http://www.ndwg.co.uk)



Fingle Bridge, Devon, 3rd May 2009

*Nobody told me about the F***** bridge!*

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NOTES FROM THE CHAIR



Although we have just passed the longest day, summer is far from over as there is a packed walks programme over the next few months, with a wide variety of short evening walks still left to the other extreme of Brendan and Lizzie's challenge walks on 11th July at Sherwood and 5th September at Ladybower. Not forgetting the regular Sunday and various Saturday walks!

Places are also still available for [Penzance](#) over the August Bank Holiday weekend; and [Elterwater](#) has just opened for bookings.

Also the active social programme continues with the ever popular regulars of pub meets and group meals accompanied by various open air theatre trips. The Summer Ball has now sold over seventy tickets but a limited number of last minute places will be available for booking (and payment!) up to 18th July. Please contact [Ed, James or myself](#) if wanting to book a last minute place. The price of £39 includes drinks on arrival and four course waiter served meal.

If anyone wants to tell their friends or work colleagues how good being an NDWG member is; then please contact Lara or Paul Kirby as we have now taken delivery of several hundred printed leaflets to help publicise the group and hopefully attract a few more new members as well.

Although a long way off, a date for the diary is 5th December for this year's Christmas Coach Trip. Rumour also has it that Rob Stevens has already sorted a few fine weekends away up to and including Easter 2010. Talking of the future this year's [AGM](#) is on 7th October; when as ever a few (well ok all of them!) committee posts will be up for election. Anyone who is thinking of joining the committee or who would like to know what is involved; please feel free to talk to any committee member.

Hard work, new ideas and enthusiasm are the main requirements; with particular thanks due to this years committee who have all worked hard behind the scenes to ensure the group continues to thrive and prosper.

See you all on a walk soon.

Andy Rogers

**DARTMOOR –
THE GREAT ESCAPE
(MAY DAY BANK HOLIDAY 2009)**

Born in West Cornwall I am familiar with the A30, which completes the last 100 miles `home` after the end of the motorway near Exeter. On 1st May this year however, I was looking forward to branching off the A30 to follow the B3212 which is Devon's wildest road, effectively linking Exeter to Plymouth right over the top of the moors.



Moor roads lead to Moreton

The first town on this road is Moretonhampstead (known locally as Moreton) which lies at a crossroads on the edge of the moor. Lizzie and I chose the independent `Sparrowhawk Hostel` which used to be vegetarian only. It isn't vegetarian any more but retains a laid back atmosphere free from the fast pace of modern living, with a good selection of books, old fashioned board games and definitely no television.

Having arrived very late on Friday (1st May), and shopped early the following morning for breakfast and hill snacks, we drove to Hound Tor and started the first of Lizzie`s walks. We soon came across a `modern art exhibit` i.e. a giant wooden chair minus cushions.



Streets of stone

The next point of note was a low col with a well preserved mediaeval settlement and a distant view across to Princetown, visible just below the distinctive mast on North Hessary Tor. Princetown is the highest and remotest town on Dartmoor, and is an ideal site for a maximum security prison. Unless you live there on Her Majesty's pleasure...

We pressed on over a grassy moor and the first of many hill forts before dropping to Widecombe-in-the-Moor, a delightful oasis of a village with immaculate gardens, a lovely church (with the incongruous name of `St Pancras`), a village green, and most importantly, at least two pubs and tea shops. The famous village fair takes place in the autumn. Rumour has it that Widecombe is erased from the maps that are issued to the armed forces (or the teenage participants in the Ten Tors Challenge) for use on exercise, should they happen to stumble across the village and become distracted from their hardcore training regime.

As punishment for succumbing to tea-shop temptation so early into our own 16 mile route march, Lizzie marched us uphill through a `bouncing bog`, and along a random course linking as many rocks as possible, but always uphill. Arriving at Hay Tor however, we

had a long break to eat and admire the twin tors and sunny views down to the distant sea near Teignmouth and Dartmouth.

A few of the group split off shortly afterwards but most of us rounded off the walk by dropping into the pretty wooded valleys near Manaton, where we chanced upon an interesting wooden bridge and sampled the Otter Ale (we were too far west for good cider – that comes from Somerset). A quick `hop` across the fields concluded the walk but the drive back to Moreton was delayed by a bovine traffic jam. Some of us were too tired for the beer festival at the Union Inn on the Saturday, so just had a quiet meal in (unlike some of the hostels I have picked for the group it was possible to cook in this one) or in one of the other town pubs.

Sunday was another fresh sunny day and this time we were guided from the hostel across the fields to another hill fort which was a vantage point above the Teign gorge, opposite Castle Drogo. Dropping into the gorge, we came across Fingle Bridge and its Inn for an early pub stop (we were drinking coffee by 11.05am).



Fingle Bridge

Lynne and I had a paddle then we swiftly walked upstream to the next bridge to wave goodbye to Lynne and Sarah as they had to return home that

afternoon. The rest of us ascended to the castle. There wasn't time to appreciate it from inside and externally this is not the classic kind of castle that young children would paint (with a drawbridge, portcullis, moat and turrets). Maybe they don't like playing rough this far south and just ring on the doorbell.



Castle Drogo. A `proper` castle?

It looks more like a stately home but it's a good viewpoint and lunch stop. Anyway we haven't done badly for castles this year...

Following the Teign valley downstream, initially high above the gorge but later at river level, we eventually left the river at Steps Bridge and crossed the moor back to Moreton to complete a gentle 14 mile walk. The later stages offered long distance views to Hay Tor where we had been the previous day.

Sunday was not over by far, Jacqui had used the bus from Steps Bridge to get back to Moreton early and cook some roasted vegetables and couscous to eat on a `picnic` up on the tor later that evening. Whether picnicking or not, we all drove over to Hound Tor to enjoy an hour or so of easy scrambling, a short walk down to another mediaeval village, then back

up to the top of the tor taking photographs of the sun sinking below the rocks. We then retired to bed, or the live folk music and real ale in the Union Inn.



The twin outcrops of Hay Tor in the distance, Hound Tor in the foreground

On Monday morning some of the group went on a road trip (home via Exmoor and Minehead) while the last five of us (Lizzie, Ashley, Clare, Dan and me) drove round to Meldon Reservoir. Having had about a month of fine weather (most of April) the weather started to go downhill on Monday (a bank holiday, obviously...)

We went uphill instead, the reservoir gradually receding into the distance below, and onto the open moor. This is the part of the moor befitting its stereotype, with the tough, featureless terrain, and flagpoles and military warning signs reminding us that on working days this is can be a dangerous as well as gloomy place. This grim imagery and the drizzle did little to dampen our spirits although some of us retreated just half a mile or so short of bagging Devon's highest point, High Willhays, in order to avoid the contents of a fast moving black cloud advancing across the lowlands. This also forced a rushed goodbye to Ashley and especially to Lizzie, who did the vast majority of the hard work that made the weekend another success.

However, with Meldon Reservoir just off the A30 we can all bag this hill on the way to or from Cornwall in August!!



DIRECTIONS TO MELDON RESERVOIR:

A30 WESTBOUND ignore the first junction for Okehampton then several miles later, at the top of a hill, come off at the sign for `Services`. Follow the slip road under the A30 then links to A30 Exeter (i.e. back east again!) but only about half a mile back down the A30 come off at a limited access junction, initially signposted Okehampton. Then turn right over the bridge and follow the brown signs to the reservoir on minor roads.

The car park has toilets and information boards. There is an easy path all the way around the reservoir, for those who don't fancy going up onto the moor, or when the moor is closed for army training.

A30 EASTBOUND is an easier approach because the limited access junction is in your favour. Initially follow the Okehampton sign off the A30 then when on the slip road use the local brown signs as above. Returning to the A30 you go west initially but then use the interchange at the services to turn round. The services include petrol and a Little Chef.

FOR BOTH DIRECTIONS, if you choose to visit Okehampton town as

well then you won't need to backtrack.

DIRECTIONS FOR SAT-NAV USERS. Politely ask the farmer to pull your car out of the mud with his tractor and get him to tow you back onto the nearest tarmac road. Ask directions to a garage or shop, buy a proper road map and then stay on the A30 (only joking...)

Gary Olds

KIRKSTONE – A 'GORGEOUS' WEEKEND

(MAY DAY BANK HOLIDAY 2009)

I was thoroughly looking forward to my second weekend away with the NDWG. Staying next to a pub in my favourite part of the world – the Lake District – what more could anyone want!



The highest inn in the Lake District

Everyone arrived a little after closing time (9 pm in this case!) on Friday evening, with the exception of Chris who had valiantly walked up 'the Struggle' from Ambleside with all his stuff earlier in the day. He therefore became the warden of our weekend abode situated next to the Kirkstone Pass Inn. There was some consternation at seeing our delightful

bunk house – 12 bunks tightly packed into a semi-converted public toilet, including 4 very short ones (even my feet hung over the end and I'm 5 ft 2!). We were also able to hear, and smell, rather too much from the bathroom due to gaps in the walls. However we made the best of things in 'Prisoner Toilet Block K' - Denise created her own 'boudoir' and Andy exchanged all his snout to get hold of a fridge, kettle etc from the Governor, so it was actually quite homely by the end! We headed off for last orders at the Brotherswater Inn before settling in for the night.

Saturday dawned bright although slightly misty. A couple of problems were identified. Jen's watch had also stopped, contributing to the girls getting up late. Then Denise, much to everyone's amusement and sympathy, revealed she had no clean knickers. There was the faint hope of picking some up en route through Patterdale, but fortunately, when this proved to be knickerless too, she was helped out by Lara who had a spare pair of 'gorgeous' ones, which became the theme of the weekend!



Knickers!

The pub provided a fantastic cooked breakfast and we got the opportunity to observe Graham's 'silent but deadly' eating style for the first time. Rob 'I don't do crap walks or weather'

Stevens offered to lead the jaunt for the day- 12 miles round the Deepdale Horseshoe. i.e. Patterdale, Hartsop Above How, Hart Crag, Fairfield, Cofa Pike, Saint Sunday's Crag, Arnison Crag and Rooking.

We set off into Patterdale and enjoyed a walk in very clement weather conditions. I don't want to boost Mr Stevens' ego, but this was the best walk I have ever done in England. The scenery was stunning and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I'm not sure the same can be said for Dave and Lara – the bullying really did get too much at times!



`Get your rocks off`

We ended the walk with a pint at the Patterdale Hotel, or thought we had ended the walk rather. It appeared there was another 4 miles (ok slight exaggeration) which Rob had failed to mention. However this did give us the opportunity to see lots of rabbit-eared sheep and lambs and also compare knee and hip injuries.

On our return to Toilet Block K, a bath mat and mirror had magically appeared in the bathroom, aiding everyone in their task of cleaning up. Fearing another night of contortion, I joined the boys in their room for a decent length bunk, equipped with curtains to avoid unseemly sights and smells. Andy, Rob and Lara moved into the pub B&B rooms (confirming my

view that committee members can't hack it!) and we then had an excellent meal in the Kirkstone Pass Inn, with some rather nice Kirkstone Porter and Red Screes beer. Kicked out of the inn by 9.30, we faced the prospect of an early return to the cells. I wasn't having that, so apparently let someone drive my car back to Brotherswater, so we could carry on drinking to a more sensible hour.

There was more in store for Denise first thing on Sunday as she was exposed to Graham's 'buns' at close hand, again causing much amusement for fellow prisoners. Following another huge breakfast, most of the group headed round the back of the inn to start the day's walk, while Denise retired to her office for the day to do her homework (well that's her story).

Rob, on walk-leading duties again, led the group up Pikes and down Dodds for a walk to Hartsop, which was anything but a doddle. . After a recovery stop at Brotherswater, it was time for the hard bit, with Graham forging ahead, soon out of sight, fuelled by three breakfasts and two poles. Climbing steeply up nearly 550 meters into the windy skies, first Middle Dodd and then Red Screes were conquered, the bunkhouse far below, and looking quite cosy from this height.



Honey I shrunk the bunkhouse...

For walk techies this was the Kirkstone Round: St Raven's Edge, Cauldale Moor, Thornthwaite Crag, Grey Crag, Hartsop, Brotherswater, Middle Fell and Red Screes.

Lara and I spent a marvellous day boosting the local economy in Ambleside and eating cake. Ok yes I know we're on a walking holiday – so we did venture up Red Screes at a leisurely pace in the afternoon, though no one believed us. Dave and Jen were far more energetic and spent the day on a 20 mile epic walking, climbing and gear shopping session.



Tough going in the mountains

Once everyone had returned from their activities, we said goodbye to Lara and Rob who, having seen Monday's forecast ("crap") were off to Cornwall, and hit the town (well, Ambleside) for curry and drinks. We discovered Amy's amazing talent for eating hot curries – a 'Phal' – even the waiters were impressed! We then headed to the Queens Bar & Nightclub before retiring back to the bunkhouse, where Chris and Denise stayed outside till 3am, putting the world to rights and using up the last beers.

We awoke on Monday to the same drizzly and misty weather we'd arrived in. After one final jumbo breakfast, we drove to Kentmere, to attempt a walk, got out of the cars, then decided to

get straight back in again. So gradually we all said our goodbyes and headed back down south. Everyone agreed it had been a thoroughly enjoyable weekend. Many thanks to go to Andy for organising, Rob for leading the walks, Lara for her gorgeous knickers and shopping expertise, Chris for his dry wit as warden of Prisoner Toilet Block K and everyone else for making this such a good weekend!

Heather Greenan (with help with Chris Parkin)

Photos: Chris Parkin

WEIGHTLESS AGAIN (REVIEW OF ALTON TOWERS SOCIAL)

Ah, Alton Towers, what a day. It started with me running up and down the stairs, waiting for a police officer to finish in the bathroom; it ended with flashing blue lights in the early hours of Sunday morning, police pulling us over in Lenton Abbey. I'll have to learn to give better directions.



Ann, James, Edd and NEMESIS

Along the way we passed through the Forbidden Valley, the Congo River Rapids, and almost crashed into a tunnel wall on the Runaway Mine Train. Hex was the weirdest and the Flume was the scariest - I had Ed between my legs to hold on tight to in the dark.

So, what were the best bits? Well, maybe it was sharing doughnuts or Anna in an acorn or maybe the terror and lovely whooshing release of Oblivion. Others will go for Air, Ripsaw, Enterprise, Nemesis, the Blade or Rita the Queen of Speed.

I loved the twilight come see about me moments and our wander from the Nursery Man, to the Vic, and then that little wine bar in Beeston; it's lovely when a day doesn't want to end. Next time we just need to remember to keep the car straight on the road.

Neil Smyth

THE LIFE OF A WEEKEND LEADER

(GLENCOE)

SPRING BANK HOLIDAY 2009

Three months to go...must send out first email thanking everyone for signing up and teach some of them to suck eggs about 'the dangers of the Scottish Highlands', ha-ha, who am I kidding? The weather will be fantastic.

One month to go...oops, where have two months gone? Better start to think about the weekend a bit more seriously.

Three weeks to go...must send out another big email and start to get people organised into cars.

Two weeks to go...wasn't there something I should have done two weeks ago???

10 days to go ...ah bugger that was it, must phone the hostel and give them our final numbers, 10 boys, 6 girls...also, are there any freelancers? Must organise them too.

9 days to go...WHAT???

YOU ONLY HAVE SPACE FOR 8 BOYS AND 8 GIRLS???

Can we mix them? "No" - Can you move anyone else around? "No, we are full" - Is there any other accommodation nearby? "Yes, but they'll be full too" - Go on then, shout it, I know you want to...

"FFFFFreedom !!!!!!" ... NOOOOOOOOO!!!

8 days to go...If we get consent can we mix them? "Well, we don't usually, but in this case we'll make an exception, you'll have to sign a declaration of consent though", I'll sign anything at this point...PHEW!!!

7 days to go...Cars almost sorted, anyone want to come to Glasgow too? (Just to make things a little harder for myself)

6 days to go...Hotel booked in Glasgow

5 days to go...Some final car swapping to do as a result of the Glasgow stopover.

4 days to go...Ho-hum, twiddling fingers, might as well send out another email showing snow on the Mountain tops...doesn't matter, the weather will be glorious

3 days to go...Hmm, did Michael Fish do this weather forecast?

2 days to go...Oh dear, I think he did!!!!

1 day to go...Maybe it'll be like Caernarfon, wind and rain forecast, but actually gloriously warm and sunny!

D-day...Yay!!! Wall to wall sunshine - Michael Fish, John Kettle, Darren Bett, Helen Willetts, Rob McElwee, Helen Young, you took a **HELL** of a beating and got it wrong! Oh, what's that? You didn't get it wrong, the weather is just going to be late...



A bonny sunset over the Clyde

So, there it was, from Saturday the weather was going to be rubbish...that left Friday and gave 6 lucky Glasgow bound NDWG'ers (plus one extra lucky freelancer) the chance to enjoy Scotland at it's finest, Glasgow by night, Mountains by day. The rest would arrive in Glencoe sometime on Friday; missing the best of the weather... the early bird gets the worm!

Everyone seemed fairly surprised by the palatial nature of the Etap hotel, Lisa commenting "Ooo, they even have towels, I didn't expect that!" Yes, it seems in these days of increasing prices, global financial meltdown and Politicians pick-pocketing you by stealth, Etap have a product that they don't want to rip you off with. £34 per room per night... bargain, especially as they sleep 3 adults fairly comfortably, and have towels.

A good early start the next day, fuelled up on an Etap breakfast (as much toast as you can eat), a quick stop at Cotswold for some last minute gear bagging, and it's off to the Highlands we go! Today's mission is Ben Arthur, more commonly known as The Cobbler.



Get your boots on---it's the Cobbler

A rather impressive Corbett, one of the most popular Mountains in Scotland and a stone's throw from Loch Lomond and Glasgow. This shapely peak is given the nickname because one of the 3 rugged outcrops of rock that make the summit, looks like an old cobbler stooped over, cobbling away. Simon takes a look, "nah, it looks like your dad", cheers mate, it's hardly Mount Rushmore. A fairly rapid ascent, no midges to speak of (woohoo, maybe we missed them!), lots of pictures and a bit of scrambling by all to the top of a pinnacle with a scary amount of exposure, and we are on our way down...quite possibly one of my favourite ever ascents and plays on a Mountain, notwithstanding more scrambly escapades like Tryfan and Striding Edge, etc.



The Cobbler and Loch Lomond

Around teatime we arrive in convoy at the SYHA in Glencoe and for some unknown reason I'm stressed out.

Maybe it was a stupid decision to check my work email, or maybe it was the stresses of the rooms the week before. In total bewilderment however, everyone seems to be acting their age as responsible adults and looking after themselves...awesome. People are sorted into their rooms, some are off to the Clachaig Inn for some nosh, and some are cooking. I decide it's time for a quick shower and then a pint and some grub at the pub...and it's still sunny outside!

Now, the Clachaig Inn is famous, World famous in fact. It stands head and shoulders above all other hiking drinking holes and has a similar notoriety as Pete's Eats in Snowdonia, and the Grindleford Café in our very own Peak District. So, why on Earth do they have the most miserable policy of stopping food service in the hikers' bar at 8.15pm on a Bank Holiday Weekend? It's beyond me, but that is what it will be for the next 3 nights too...and the food isn't great, just ok, not great as it once was. Clachaig...SORT IT OUT!

Oh, what was that I said about people being responsible adults? Phoned call - "Greg? Hi, it's Clare...I'm at Glasgow Airport and have forgotten my Driving Licence so can't hire a car, I've got to wait here until morning!"...oh dear ;-)



Where's this rain then?

Saturday morning comes, people jump out of bed ready to bound up a Mountain, kit is being thrown into bags. Today is Aonach Eagach Ridge day! Rob isn't coming, he scared himself too much last time he did it...oo'er. Someone has the bright idea of pulling back the curtains and..."Urgh, erm it's a bit claggy!" Oh well, it's supposed to clear up later according to weatherman Rob. I should point out now that I assume Rob does not share any ancestral relation to Michael Fish, but what I am sure of is they both learnt all they knew about Meteorology from the children's ladybird book "Weather for Dummies", which states "If a Moo-cow lies down, water may fall from the sky. If it stands up, Mr. Sunshine will smile down on you and all the pretty flowers and fluffy bunnies". I think that morning Rob saw a cow crouching and figured that meant it was raining now, but later the cow was expecting the Sun...Rob, we need to talk mate!

Wow, this is a long write-up, need to quicken the pace...

Saturday - Rain. Clare turns up just in time and off we go, 16 plucky hikers off to tackle the scrambly Aonach Eagach Ridge, the finest ridgeline traverse on the UK Mainland. Many hundreds of feet of exposure on either side, slippery rock and some challenging little pinnacles. Halfway across a coke bottle drops out of James' rucksack and tumbles end over end about 20 feet until it hits a rock and explodes...hmmm, I think to myself that could be someone's head.

Not to worry, keep smiling and they won't realise the precarious nature of the exposure, the mist is doing a fine job of masking it. Lunchtime comes and goes and the Sun doesn't appear like it should...maybe the cow was just

sick Rob? Eventually we reach the end of the ridge, a ridge that in Winter is a full on Mountaineering Challenge. Everyone seems pleased they are still alive, and now begins that elated feeling. Yes, some people struggled at points, a lot of people grew in confidence measurably as the day went on, some people made it look easy, but all were glad they did it, I'm proud for each and every one of you. Only a couple of people saw their leader slip too, which was a bonus, thanks 'little tip of my index finger', if it wasn't for you I'd probably look like that bottle of coke.

In the evening, most go to the pub again, but if you are up that way, I can highly recommend Kinlochleven Seafood Café.



Mist conceals the death defying drops

Sunday - Rain. Ben Nevis day!!! Actually the weather isn't that bad. Today the cows to the west of Loch Linnhe are lying down, the cows on the east of Loch Linnhe are standing up, Ben Nevis is on the eastern shoreline. Up the Pony Path (or tourist track) we stomp to about 600 metres. The weather is holding off and everyone is in good spirits. We leave the 'tourists' at this point and head around to the North Face of the impressive beast towards the CIC hut. Our challenge today is the Carn Mor Dearg Arête (or CMD) a scrambly ridgeline from the

Munro of Carn Mor Dearg up to the summit of Ben Nevis. On a fine day you get the most impressive view of the North Face of Ben Nevis, a massive craggy feature of rock that doesn't get any Sun and that has taken many, many lives over the years. It should be noted that a couple of years ago, when the country finally recorded a temperature of 100F, on that day, Snow was found in one of the many gullies on Ben Nevis North Face. It should also be noted that the summit of Ben Nevis is the only year round sub-arctic environment in the British Isles and has only 40 days of sunshine a year...today wasn't one of those 40 days and it was feeling decidedly more arctic than sub-arctic. At the CIC hut we are faced with still massive snow fields in the Corries of the beast. Thankfully that environment is reserved for climbers, we are going up the opposite way, and it's started to rain. Five hundred metres of loose rock and scree and almost vertical ascent lies before us and off we go. It's good to know there is one sensible member of the NDWG. Lisa, not liking the look of the weather and the steep boulder field, decides to turn back. Like most of the day, I'm at the back, Rob is leading this one. A very long drive and two days of big Mountains have taken their toll and I'm not feeling good.

About an hour of the most soul destroying ascent I've ever had to partake in and we reach the ridgeline. The weather is atrocious, it's cold, very cold (there are still massive cornices of snow up there), it's raining hard and the wind is blowing people everywhere...and we can see 20 feet at best. Holding down Jane so she doesn't turn into a Glider, Rob approaches. "I think we should head down, this is ridiculous, do you concur?"...hell yes I concur...as the

Shepherd said to the sheepdog, "Let's get the flock out of here!", but not without walking the 50 yards to the summit of Carn Mor Dearg...Munro bagged...Yes! Down we head as fast as we can, descent isn't that much better than ascent, but we all make it, remarkably without any injuries.

It's at this point the group splits. There is a faster way down, to the North Face Car Park. Four of us take this route and get down quite quickly, even the rain stops and the sun shines at one point, the others go back to the Pony Path. If you ever fancy doing Ben Nevis via the CMD, go up from the North Face Car Park. There are no crowds of stupid people wearing Jeans and T-shirt, the path is good and the ascent steady, 10 times better than the other way up...and the views are better to boot!

Monday - Rain. Hardly anyone wants to walk, a few masochists head off for a low level walk to a reservoir. Nine of us head off in the cars to Glen Nevis to walk up the gorge to the Glen and the Falls of Steall. A very short but pleasant and interesting walk with an impressive finale, the falls are in full force. A play on the wire rope bridge that you have to cross to do the famous Ring of Steall and it's back to the cars. Plan is to go sightseeing, and the better weather is West, so we head off in the direction of Mallaig. A stop at Glenfinnan Monument, a quick look at the viaduct the steam train in the Harry Potter movies uses and we end up at a beach...blue sky!!! It's getting late, so what do we do? Instead of heading back to the hostel, we jump on the ferry to Skye!!! All of 30 minutes on Skye to the bridge at the Kyle of Lochalsh, and then a failed attempt to get a table for dinner at the Plockton Inn (where Hamish Macbeth was filmed).



Plockton

Unfortunately Plockton is full of Yank tourists which is a shame as the village really is beautiful, has Palm trees along the harbour front and the food there is lovely if you can get it. We stop at Eileen Donan Castle, a most famous castle, which, helpfully, has the gates over the bridge left open after closing time..., and then it's a race back to the hostel to beat curfew. It's a good job that growing up I used to like the odd Arcade Game, because my rallying skills came into use not once, but twice, all deer in this part of Scotland are safe on this night, we won't be having Venison for tea.

Tuesday - Sun. It's home time and the Sun makes an appearance, thanks Mr.Sun, rub it in why don't ya? Oh look Rob, the cows have got shades on, perhaps that is a better indication?

Thanks to everyone who came to Glencoe, including Rob Stevens (Weatherman and Weekends Coordinator) for providing me the opportunity to lead the Weekend in the first place. Unfortunately we can't control the weather, but I think we made the most of it and had fun.

Greg Whitton

Photos by Greg and Brendan

WALKS PROGRAMME – FINISHED!

I am sure you will all thank Rob Lievesley and Luke Bradley for putting together a great summer / autumn walks programme. There is something in there for everyone, from the very short local `Kingfisher Walks` by the Trent on summer evenings, to some 20+ milers in the Dark Peak and Sherwood Forest. Thanks to everyone who volunteered to lead walks. Your efforts enabled the programme to get mailed out with leaders for **every walk**, probably the first time this has ever happened.

Any questions about walks, please contact either:

Luke 07890 363416

lr_bradley@yahoo.co.uk

Rob 07903 410561

rob_lievesley@ramblers-reunited.org.uk

And if you want to volunteer, keep reading!

WHY LEAD A WALK? WHY NOT?



If you have been approached by either of the aforementioned gentlemen in recent weeks, chances

are you have been press-ganged into leading one of our walks, in which case, welcome to the bridge of the good ship NDWG. If you haven't done so, I hope this article will ~~intimidate~~ inspire you. In a similar vein you might be encouraged to really push the boat out and plan a weekend like Greg above. But like so many worthwhile endeavours, there are some obstacles to overcome on the voyage to success, otherwise known as **excuses**.

1. I only do short walks! If you look at the latest programme you will find there is ample demand for shorter walks. More than ever before, there is a huge selection of easy short walks on many summer Wednesday evenings and Saturdays, and some Sundays. Traditionally it has been harder to get volunteers for easy walks than for hard ones. Come this autumn, Rob and Luke will be after more!

2. I am a slow walker! With the possible exception of some longer walks in the autumn and winter, being slow is probably an advantage. After all, the only race we are taking part in is the human race. The pace of the walk should fit the slowest walker and allow for those who want to stop to take photographs, or need to pop behind a tree. Not at the same time though!!

3. I cannot even read a map! Enlightenment is at hand courtesy of the Peak District Rangers. The link <http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/ranger-walks.htm> will help you with that, or why not come on a normal walk and ask the leader to explain the route, or join in leading a short section of the route? Or team up with a friend who has done it before. Two leaders are often better than one.



Must be the Whitton Bank Holiday.

4. What if it rains on the day? This is a lame excuse. Nobody is going to blame you for the weather. Just ask Greg Whitton about Glencoe, or just ask Rob Stevens about Glencoe. Or just ask anyone who works in the umbrella shops in Fort William or Kinlochleven.

All walk and weekend organisers and leaders, however experienced, are in the same boat, weather-wise. Hopefully it will not be Noah's Ark.

5. I have not got time to plan a route and reccy it. The majority of the walks are pre-planned i.e. go where Luke and Rob tell you! Doing a reccy can put your mind at ease when leading the real walk as you need not constantly look at the map. Minor variations to the route are OK as long as the length is right and the main highlights are not missed (like scenic viewpoints, pubs or the place where the cars are parked). Or try and get your name down for a walk that you know really well, possibly a local walk or one you have made up.

6. What if I get sued?



There is a disclaimer at the bottom of the inside cover of the walks programme, and NDWG are covered by Civil Liability Insurance. Everyone takes their own risks. There is always some fool jumping around on the crags at Stanage Edge and the Roaches, or daring to disobey one of the signs at the Grindleford Café...

Formal leadership training is available, for example at established outdoor centres such as Plas-Y-Brenin in North Wales, should you want to lead children or paying groups of adults, or simply gain more advanced skills. We don't expect this level of competence just to lead an NDWG walk though.

7. All the present walk leaders are fabulous! Why should a nobody like me consider becoming involved? NDWG walk leaders, weekend organisers, and committee members are like `pop idols`.



Reach for the stars, climb every mountain higher.....

For a year or two their name will appear every week in Digest, all over

the walks programme, the website and here in FP, and they may even appear in **HIKE** posing on an icy mountain top in the Highlands, straight out of the outdoor equipment shop, clad in the trendiest designer fashion kit from RAB, Rohan, et.al. One of our ex-chairmen has even been on television! Every other [Thursday](#) from about 7.55pm the girls and boys will be `in the place` excitedly waving cheques in the air, scanning the door looking for a glimpse of their weekend idol, aspiring to be the first person to be accepted on their `guest list`.

BUT before you can say `Spice Girls`, remember taste is a fickle thing and they will soon demand a new flavour. Your former heroes will be cast by the wayside into a life of drinking redbush tea and penning magazine articles.

YOU can replace them at the top of that glittering podium! But in years to come will you be known as the equivalent of Elvis? Take That? Or that blond guy from Coronation Street?

8. Now for the positives. If it's a weekend away you get a guaranteed place!



OMG I've secured a place on Easter 2012 - what do you mean... I've got to organise it?

9. When you go for an interview or promotion at work you will have evidence to back up that comment on your curriculum vitae where you

typed `**I have demonstrated my leadership and teamwork skills`.**

You could bring a laptop and come equipped with a Microsoft Power Point slideshow presentation. Use imaging software to superimpose your face onto that naff Windows 95 clip art of the smartly dressed businessman planting a flag on a mountain top. For extra impact embed an MP3 multimedia clip of a `power ballad` like `Search for the Hero` by M-People.

Or for those with more taste, describe your enthusiasm for volunteering to lead walks, and organise events, and get your photo taken somewhere like this....



He can testify that he has been moving on up (closer to heaven) and feels proud about it....

Unlike a competitor on `The Apprentice`, or the manager of a Premiership football team, team NDWG will continue to support you if you make a few mistakes (like getting everyone lost overnight in a blizzard on Kinder Scout, or forgetting to bring the Green & Blacks to share around) If your name is Alan Sugar or Richard Branson you have probably got your finger in bigger pies, but for most of us its another little step in the right direction.

10. You're hired!!

Gary Olds

NEXT FOOTPRINT (AUGUST)

The last month of summer is the one time of year when Footprint might be described as an `august` publication, the rest of the year it's a load of flannel like this...

Talking of summer, having failed twice in a row, we cannot promise you one this year, but we will do our best to bring you reviews of the `summer` weekends away. The first has already happened and is being written at this very moment. On 12th to 14th June NDWG visited the limestone and cavers` paradise of Ingleton. This is mainly underground, which is why the sun came out. At the end of July we go to Boggle Hole. This sounds like another cave but is actually by the beach, so it will probably rain. We will also be updating the status for booking onto Penzance and autumn weekends away (Elterwater, Capel Curig and York)

And of course, keep your antennae tuned to this `space` for a review of the `star` social event of the year, as we are rapidly approaching the `event horizon` and preparing for the final countdown.

But remember, it's your newsletter, so if you would like to submit articles or photographs, (neither have to be works of art), telephone, email or talk to us on a walk. The articles will be required by 15th August.

IMAGES:

If sending photos or other images by e-mail, keep the size below 100K please. In Windows XP for example, open the photo to normal size, right click and

choose the `send to mail recipient` option. This opens an `Outlook` window and gives the option of reducing the file size. The resulting image often comes out around 50K.

If we like it we might request a higher quality one later. Alternatively place it on a dedicated photo sharing site like Flickr or Picasa, even Facebook is OK. These sites will probably already have compressed your photos before hosting them.

For extra interest, why not geotag your photos?

Look forward to hearing from you

~ Brendan and Gary

WEEKENDS AWAY JULY-DECEMBER 2009

WHERE	WHEN	BOOKING OPENS
BOGGLE HOLE	Fri 31 July – Sun 2 Aug	OPEN NOW
PENZANCE RUTLAND (camping)	Sat 29 Aug– Wed 2 Sep (BH)* August Bank Holiday*	OPEN NOW See Andy Rogers
CONSERVATION	Fri 11 Sep–Sun 13 Sep	23 July / 13 Aug
ELTERWATER	Fri 18 Sep–Sun 20 Sep	25 June / 9 July
CAPEL CURIG	Fri 16 Oct – Sun 18 Oct	23 July / 13 Aug
YORK	Fri 6 Nov – Sun 8 Nov	27 Aug / 10 Sept
AMBLESIDE	Wed 30 Dec – Sat 2 Jan 2010*	7 Oct (the AGM)

* check the dates and your diaries carefully because you might need to take extra days off work, apart from the Bank Holiday!

COMMITTEE 2008/09

CONTACT DETAILS AND MEETINGS

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Committee Meetings - dates and venues

The Bell Inn, Nottingham

Tuesday 28th July 2009 7:45pm

The Flowerpot, Derby

Tuesday 29th September 2009 7:45pm

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the NOTTS/DERBY WALKING GROUP

The Mechanics Institute, Shakespeare Street, Nottingham.

Wednesday 7 October 2009. Time TBC

NDWG SOCIALS 2009

DERBY PUB MEETS

Pitcher and Piano, Friar Gate, DE1 1BX
Second Thursday of the month... 9th July, 13th August etc...

NOTTINGHAM PUB MEETS

The Canalhouse, Canal Street, NG1 7EH
Fourth Thursday of the month... 23rd July, 27th August etc...

MONTHLY MEALS (FRIDAYS)

17 th July	Derby	Siam Corner, Derby
21 st August	Nottingham	Kayal, Broad Street, Nottm
18 th September	Derby	Balti International, Derby

ONE OFFS

Sun 19th July: Splendour Music Festival, Wollaton Park, Nottingham.

A day of music and comedy, Madness, The Pogues....

Sat 25th July: Lunar Ball, Hemsley Suite, Nottingham University.

The highlight of this year's social calendar. DEADLINE 18TH JULY!!!!

Sat 22nd August: Karting, Notts Raceway, Melton Mowbray.

Get ready to race on a 650m outdoor circuit.

Sun 30th August: Theatre at Nottingham Castle.

Watch Shakespeare in the open air.

Sun 6th September: Darley Park Concert, Darley Park, Derby.

The UK's biggest free outdoor classical concert.

Please see the bi-weekly Digest and the website for the latest updates to the social calendar.

Why not tell us what you did this summer? It might get in Footprint!

Brendan and Gary