



GET THE OUTDOOR HABIT

EXETER WEEKEND

by Margaret Renshaw
(Photos by Nigel Bolter)



The weekend of November 15th to 17th 2002 started off promising. It was not raining! Janice kindly picked up Martyn and myself after work and we headed off down the M5 towards Exeter. We arrived just ahead of Dawn and her gang, Nigel, George and Stella. It was girl power for once, us girls outnumbering the boys!! Rooms sorted, it was straight off to the pub, the Tally Ho, for a well-earned drink and a meal. We were all well impressed with the food that we booked a table for the following night!

Saturday dawned bright and sunny. Janice was off on her own adventure, driving to Dartmouth as her family live in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia and she wanted to see its counterpart. The rest of us decided to walk from the Youth Hostel along the Exeter canal and the river Exe estuary by way of the Exe Valley Way and the South West Coast Path. Conveniently the Turf Hotel loomed forth for elevenses where tea, coffee and cake were consumed. Now with renewed



energy we continued along the estuary. This was a bird watchers paradise with so many birds on and around the estuary. Martyn was naming Goldfinches, Oyster Catchers, Cormorants, Little Egrets, and Herons, to name just a few birds for us. A highlight was watching two swans taking off close by when we were having lunch. The power and the noise of their wings flapping were incredible. After lunch it was decided to carry on walking to Dawlish rather than turning back and to catch the train back to Exeter from there. We walked along the sea wall between Dawlish Warren and Dawlish avoiding the waves as we went!! We kept up with Nogs tradition and afternoon tea was taken at Tilley's before boarding the train back to Exeter. In the evening it was back to the Tally Ho alas without Dawn who was not well and was confined to bed. I wimped out early and left the other in the lounge watching telly.

Dawn was feeling much better Sunday morning and joined most of us for a Hostel cooked breakfast. Stella opted to go by bus to Exeter, as she was rather foot sore due to new boots, while the rest of us drove to Exminster. Again it was a lovely sunny day with blue skies. Our aim was to walk on the RSPB Exminster Marshes Nature Reserve but due to heavy rain the week before the lane to the reserve was flooded. Even Martyn was unable to persuade a friendly bird watcher to part with his wellies!! So it was back to the hostel and a walk to Exeter along the canal.

This time it was the Two Locks pub for refreshments before meeting up with Stella on the quay at Exeter. I dipped out of the guided tour and did my own tour around the streets of Exeter, joining the others after their excellent tour to watch a short film on the history of Exeter at the Information Office. In time honoured tradition it was tea and cakes (or steak and kidney pie) before departing and the drive back to South Wales.

TRAVEL COSTS

For some time several members, particularly those new to the group have been asking for guidance on what to offer the driver to ask passengers for petrol etc.

It has always been a general principle that people share costs equally. However, to help clarify the situation the committee has recommended that costs are calculated at a rate of 15p per mile, shared equally between all the occupants including the driver.



It is stressed that this is only a recommendation, it's use is not mandatory.

DONATION TO St. DAVID'S FOUNDATION

At each AGM the group usually agrees a charitable donation. At the last AGM this point seemed to be omitted. Therefore following the excellent talk by the Rev Michael Payne on his fund raising trek along the Great Wall of China, the committee

has agreed to give a £20 donation to the St David's Foundation.

WELL DONE, JAMIE!



Congratulations to Jamie Roberts for achieving selection into the Welsh Under 16 Rugby Squad.

After much hard work in training, let's hope that he enjoys the experience of playing amongst and against the elite, the first game being in Italy on February 13th

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REVIEW

The NOGS AGM took place on Monday 26th October 2002, and here are listed some of the highlights of this important meeting in the NOG calendar:-

- ◆ The Chair stated that it had been a good year for Newport Outdoor Group following the problems caused by the Foot and Mouth outbreak the preceding year. One indicator of this was that there had been increased attendance at events.
- ◆ Fourteen new members had joined during the year.
- ◆ Unfortunately Kay no longer has time to participate in Group activities but she thanked the Group for the warm welcome she had received.
- ◆ The sad death of David Bartholomew was noted and his major contribution to the organisation of the challenge walks was mentioned.
- ◆ The Black Mountains Roundabout challenge walk raised £1,800 for the Mountain Rescue team. It was pleasing to note that five members completed the walk.
- ◆ Nineteen people camped in Gower prior to the Gower Gallop which 18 members participated in.
- ◆ The Christmas and New Year events were well attended and thoroughly enjoyed with twenty-eight members of the group staying over the New Year at Borth Youth Hostel.
- ◆ Fifteen members went to Spain for a week in June.
- ◆ Dave Green and others had bought a dinghy – they are happy for group members who are swimmers to sail with them on Llandegfedd reservoir.
- ◆ For next year the Chair hoped to generate more publicity, create a welcome pack and conduct a members survey.
- ◆ Photographs are requested for the Group scrapbook.
- ◆ The finances of the group are healthy but it was noted that the resources are depleted through the year and are subsequently increased by income from the Talybont Trial. (As a consequence of this the Chair had to pay for the New Year Event using his own money because there were insufficient group funds!)

- ◆ £150 has been ring-fenced for purchase of a replacement computer.
- ◆ The Black Mountains Roundabout made a good profit because of a high number of entries and reduced expenditure. It was suggested that, as far as possible, the mailshot for challenge walks be done electronically to reduce costs and effort.
- ◆ Additional expenditure this year was for liability insurance which is for group liability and is not personal injury insurance.
- ◆ Committee organisation is as follows:-

Chairperson: Dave Green

Treasurer: Phil Anderson

Secretary: Dawn

Vice-Chairperson: Chris Nevines

Booking Secretary: Nigel Bolter

General members: Ian reese and Terry

Long distance Walks: Martyn Rogers

- ◆ It was noted that there were no minutes from the previous AGM. It was agreed that the AGM minutes should be produced soon after the meeting and be made available to members. A file should be set up containing relevant Group paperwork including a list of equipment owned by the Group.
- ◆ Dave Green has managed to get a Capacity Building Grant of £4,960 to cover (a) consultancy work to look at reducing probability of accidents and lessening liability (b) training. The Grant can only be spent on these activities (not equipment) and findings must be shared with other similar groups.
- ◆ The Millenium CD is now available for £2.
- ◆ A recommendation of a charge of 15p per mile for car travel expenses was agreed.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Adrian Sparkes and Sophie Smith who were married at Newport registry office on Thursday 9 January. I am sure all members will wish Sophie and Adrian all the best for the years ahead.

Norman believes that in the 30+ years of the NOG's this is the 14th marriage of couples who have met through the group, the last one before Adrian and Sophie being Kevin and Barbara Davis.

Other couples who have met through the group are Sally and Martin Pengelly, Mike and Serena Alder-Woolf, Chris and Karen Jones, Malcolm and Julie Hewson-Tonkin and of course Norman and Jackie Roberts.

So perhaps **YHA** really does stand for **Your Husband Assured!**

