

Newport Outdoor Group (YHA)



Editors

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Web Site

<http://walk.to/nogs>

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**Get
The
Outdoor
Habit!**

CARDIFF TRIP September 14th to 16th

By Richard Weeks

This weekend was a great success. It was attended by 13 NOGs. I arrived at the Cardiff YHA in Wedal Road at approx. 5.30 pm. The hostel is located just down from Roath Park. Clair, Marion, Colin and Nigel had also arrived. The five of us walked into City Road to a curry house called "Majhi". The meals were plentiful. Marion having a panini, it was enough for at least 4 people. I am not a lover of curry, so I went to the chip shop next door and had chicken, chips and washed it down with a can of Tango.

Later we re-assembled and joined Sally, Jackie, Norman and Kevin at the Grape and Olive pub, near the hostel. We had drinks, and as my birthday had passed on the 11th, they all sang "Happy Birthday" to me. After that we walked back to the hostel.

On Saturday morning the 9 of us had a hostel breakfast and then caught a local bus to Thornhill. A day ticket is valid to mid-night and costs £3.40, and we took advantage of this. On this stage of the journey we passed Roath Park, taking in views of the Wenallt Mountain.

Arriving at Thornhill, we left the bus to start our walk. Norman was our leader and he took us through the gardens of Cefn-Onn, then up a gradual climb to the Rhumney Ridgeway. There we ate sandwiches near a disused quarry, taking in the views of Rudry and Caerphilly. We then continued along the Ridgeway, with more views across the River Severn Estuary to the south. The walk then took us in to woods and down to the Maenllwyd Inn, where we had a 1 hour lunch break. Later, we retraced our route as far as a local farm, where we joined country lanes. We stopped to admire the views of the City of Cardiff and Bay. We caught the bus at Lisvane, with only 9 of us as passengers to start off with. We travelled as far as Cardiff University Hospital, and then we walked back to the hostel. When we arrived, Norman was presented with a certificate to show that he had stayed at every hostel in England & Wales. Starting in 1965 to the present, he has stayed at a total of 276 hostels. He was also presented with books to mark the occasion from a regional YHA manager.

In the evening we caught 2 buses to Cardiff and The Bay. To arrive at a restaurant called "Signor Vallentino's". There we were joined by Liz, Dawn, Tony and Paul. I had meatballs followed by pasta, and everyone had the meal of their choice. Then we caught the bus again! Some had a drink in Cardiff, others went back to the hostel by taxi. It was Tony's first night in a hostel. At 4 am in the morning all hope of sleep was shattered by a group of yobs from Bristol. They were drunk and entered in to the hostel, kicking down doors and caused a lot of damage. Fortunately, they were evicted at 7 am in the morning. On the Sunday Liz, Dawn, Tony and Paul left early. So again, after breakfast, 9 of us did a local walk, this time starting from the hostel. Our journey took us through Cathays cemetery, along the A470 road, then down onto the Taff Trail. The River Taff, a former industrial river, rises in the Brecon Beacons, and continues for 40 miles to Cardiff. We passed Llandaff and Llangriffith, taking in views of Castell Coch along the way. Leaving the Taff Trail near Taffs Well, we walked to Tongwynlais, having food and drinks at the local pub, the John Lewis.

Before we left, Norman, Jackie and their son Jamie joined us for 10 minutes. Jamie, of course, is famous for playing rugby for Cardiff Blues, Wales and the British Lions.

Catching the bus back, this time to Lake Road West, we walked back to the hostel via the hospital grounds, where a helicopter was seen coming in to land. At the hostel we had tea and biscuits. I then gave Sally and Kevin a lift back to Newport and was home before 5 pm.

Picture of Castell Coch shown is courtesy of gj [CC-BY-SA-2.0 <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>], via Wikimedia Commons.

CARDIFF YHA: FACTFILE

Great for a city break, YHA Cardiff is situated by Roath Park and only a short bus ride to the sports venues, museums, theatres and bustling nightlife that the city centre has to offer. It is only two miles from the centre, and this backpackers hostel offers cheap accommodation in Cardiff and makes a convenient base. There are 66 beds and facilities include a self-catering kitchen, laundry, internet access and TV lounge. It scores 80% for customer rating on the Hostelling International website.



Coast To Coast Walk (Part 2)

By Jackie Roberts

Day 16. Glaisdale to Robin Hoods Bay – 19.5 miles +1

Hart Hall was an imposing farmhouse, not easy to find, but it provided a bed for the night and reasonable breakfast. Shared bathroom facilities and two extremely large blisters on my heels were by now not bearably comfortable and I was eagerly anticipating the end of the walk.



The day was very hot but we set off in high spirits along the River Esk and from Egton Bridge we were soon walking through Grosmont past the North York Moors railway where Norman was able to steal a few quick photos, we were all trying now to ensure that we did not fall behind on our trek. We now had 15 and-a-half miles to go to Robin Hoods bay and it was almost lunchtime.

Through Littlebeck Woods past the mysterious carved out boulder named The Hermitage, unfortunately we did not have time to queue for tea at Falling Foss tea gardens, much to Brian's dismay. We hardly paused after lunch and the village of High Hawsker was our last five-minute rest stop before our much-anticipated view of the North Sea. But the sea mist had set in and we did not get our first views until we were a little way along the coast path almost at our final destination. Relief, we were in the right place!

After the customary pebble throwing into the North Sea and Norman's foot dipping, we made our way to the Bay Hotel to have a well-deserved celebratory drink.

Many thanks to the seagull who christened my backpack with guano out on the balcony! Then we had fish and chips near the boathouse to finish our days epic journey and hobbled, sorry, strode boldly along the cliff top and down to Boggle Hole YH for our very last night's sleep on this journey. Not sure what Brian, John and Julian did for entertainment that evening, but Norman and I retired to our room with a couple of bottles of Thatchers Gold cider.

Brian completed his full journey back to Newport on the train but for the rest of us our taxi ride back to Richmond and Norman's car the next day completed our coast to coast for 2012.

Many thanks for your company to everybody who came along on this journey, for your camaraderie particularly Brian, John, Jules and Norman of course on the second part of our expedition. The five of us enjoyed a special FFCTCG evening a couple of weeks later to mark our seven days of intense bonding. Extra special thanks to Gareth – my feet couldn't have made it without you.

The only question now is....where next?
No hurry....

NORMAN CELEBRATES!

As mentioned in Richard's article on the front page, congratulations go to Norman Roberts for his fantastic achievement of visiting all hostels in England & Wales, culminating in the Cardiff YHA hostel visit.

In recognition of this, Sue Mackinnon (a YHA trustee) presented to Norman a personal letter of congratulations written by the Chairman of the YHA, Chris Darmon, a "Spirit of YHA" certificate and two signed books (The Spirit Of YHA and Eighty Years Of Youth Hostelling). Only a handful of dedicated YHA members have ever completed this feat.

Well done, Norman!



NEW NOGS WEB SITE LAUNCHED

As from 19th July 2012, the NOG website at <http://walk.to/nogs> was replaced by a new website at <http://newportoutdoorgroup.co.uk>

The new website has a more modern image and improved navigation. It also contains an interactive 'Forum' where you can submit your own posts and respond to the posts of other users.

Thanks go to Mike Alder-Woolf for all of the work and support that he has put in over many years to keeping the old website up to date.

The administrator for the new website is Chris Collier. Thanks also go to Ross Madden, who developed the new website under the guidance of a NOG sub-committee comprising of Chris Collier, Sheila Holmes, and Norman Roberts.