



Coventry CHA Rambling Club Newsletter December 2019



Dian Edwards crew taking a break at Blackford Mil, Henley in Arden. Picture by Malcolm Smith

Christmas Party 2019



This year's Christmas Party will take place on Saturday 14th December at the Friends Meeting House, Hill Street, Coventry CV1 4AN. The start time is 2pm. There will be a buffet as usual supplied by yourselves; savouries; cakes etc will all be most welcome.

Bournemouth Holiday 19th-24th January 2020

Currently we have 93 booked on this holiday, there is the capacity to take a further 7 people. If there are any more of our members interested in going please contact Alan Whitcroft, he will be glad to give you the full details. Phone 02476 315275 or 07908999180.

A reminder for all who have booked, final payment is due on or before 30th November 2019, cheques to be made payable to Coventry CHA Rambling Club and sent to:

Alan Whitcroft, The Trossachs, Parrotts Grove, Coventry. CV2 INR.

Alan Whitcroft

Report of the 2019 holiday in Portugal

70 club members set off from a rain-soaked Coventry at 10.30am on Tuesday 24th September 2019, after gathering a 71st member on the way we arrive at London Gatwick for our flight to Porto. We landed in Porto at 19.05pm and in spite of horrific traffic conditions, we make it to the Hotel Priagolfe, in Espinho in time to take dinner before checking in. After which some went direct to their rooms, while others made a detour of a few yards to a local beach bar, the "Doo Bop", which became a regular haunt for some during the week. The Santana Tribute night there being a highlight.

Wednesday was a free day, to rest, get to know the Espinho, the coast line, and the local shops. Some went further afield and took advantage of the remarkably cheap local rail network, to visit other towns, notably Porto City.

Thursday, those on the touring coach were treated to a more comprehensive guided tour of Porto. The walkers were off to the Arouca Geopark for a 10km hike on the walkways along the Paiva River. They were advised that it would be on boardwalks with a few steps up at the start. In reality there were

500+ steps up and similar coming down, but the nature trail was absolutely spectacular and was more than worth the effort. The walkers were pleased to be met by the coach, for a well earned break in the town of



Arouca, where there was a local festival and farmers market to enjoy. The wine flowed liberally that evening as many begin the long process of recovery, not only from the hills around Arouca, but also from the hills of Porto City and Gaia.

Friday another free day, many club members used the trains to visit Aveiro, a.k.a. "The Venice of Portugal" to take boat trips along the canals, others went to Porto and Gaia, some to visit the cellars of Sandeman, Dow and Taylor as well as some lesser known Port Wine Producers.

Saturday saw the touring coach leave for the area around Braga, while the walkers coach went to Guimaraes. The coach dropped the tourers at the monastery on Monte Da Penha, a hill that dominates the town of Guimaraes, there a guide ushered us down a winding, stepped path and eventually into the town itself. Sitting in a bar with a view back of our walk we detected a cable-car which had we been forewarned of its existence, may have saved much calf ache.

In a co-ordinated pincer movement the two coaches met and the guides regaled us with tales of Portugal's long and chequered history during a short walk into the centre of Guimaraes, taking in the Dukes Palace, quaint houses and public squares on the way.

Sunday provided the more devout with the opportunity to visit local churches, while others went shopping, and the more dissolute congregated in local bars.

Monday provided most of us with the opportunity to visit the lovely Douro Valley. After a coffee stop was made at Amarante, a charming medieval town, the touring coach went off down the scenic "Valley of Gold". The walkers coach meanwhile wound its way to Provensende, perched in the middle of vineyards, through which they descended some 1500 feet, in ever increasing heat, via Sao Cristovan do Douro, until meeting the coach above the bustling town of Pindao where they alighted for a refreshing drink or two.

Both coaches met after a scenic drive along route 222 one of Portugal's renowned and prettiest routes, at Peso da Regua we stopped for some Port wine tasting and a film of the Port wine making process.

Tuesday it was time to pack for home, check out and spend a leisurely lunch time, before our coaches whisked us back to Porto Airport.

Finally we arrived back in a very soggy Coventry around 2.30am Wednesday, somewhat comforted by the knowledge that our week had been spent in daily temperatures of 28°C, with clear skies and without a webbed foot in sight.

Doug Skelton

AGM Friday 25th October 2019

The AGM was well attended; for those unable to attend this year's AGM, here is a short summary of the topics covered in the officers reports.

- During the year we have changed the Club's Santander current account so that three people can authorise transactions instead of two. The supply of debit cards to all three persons has meant that we are not limited to paying by cheque and have more than one method of making a payment. This has worked well especially during Richard Satchwell's (Great to see him back) spell in hospital.
- Approved membership applications reached 14 this year which is down on last year although 46 information packs were sent out, which is an increase on last year, due in part to the advertisement in the Observer Free Newspaper, and the full page advert they did twice without payment.
- The subject of whether to allow dogs on club walks was discussed, the overwhelming verdict was against, and this will become part of club rules.

- 66 members have opted to receive Club correspondence by e-mail which is saving the Club £300 per year in printing and postage costs. To encourage more members to sign up to Club correspondence via e-mail and make further savings, members can now have Club correspondence e-mailed to them and also have a hard copy of the Rambles Programme if they want one; all they will have to do is ask for one when they go out on a ramble.
- Sunday walks figures for attendance are improving but not quite to the 46 needed to break even. Coach fares have therefore increased to offset the shortfall.

Attendance figures for 2019



Number of **Sunday** rambles 47. Total number of people attending 1913. Average attendance per ramble 41. Last year 44. Previous year 48.

Number of **Saturday** rambles 48. Total number of people attending 1108. Average attendance per ramble 23. Last year 21. Previous year 22.

Number of **Thursday** rambles 25. Total number of people attending 420. Average attendance per ramble 17. Last year 22. Previous year 18.

Number of **Sunset Strolls** 16. Total number of people attending 305. Average attendance per stroll 19. Last year 20. Previous year 27.

Please Note. The £10 Annual Membership Subscription is now due.

Map reading



Are you a would be walk leader, are you interested in learning a new skill or just completely lost? If the answer is yes to any of these then maybe you should contact Terry Stamper on 02476 697083 or 07940544606 he has kindly offered to arrange some map reading sessions at his home address!

Craft for Myton

Everyone is welcome to a craft day to raise funds for Myton Hospice.

Monday 9th December, 10am at Risen Christ Church, Wyken Croft, Coventry

Come and make a bookfold hedgehog or angel and make a donation.

Coffee and Mince pies.

Ring club member Janet Foot for details on 02476 612691 or 07709862104