



Newsletter March/April 2021

A few words from the News Letter Editor.

Sprung (or whatever the season is called in the new currency, or post Covid jibber-speak) has a Spring in its step. Not-with-standing the doom and gloom. There are longer days. Lots more light, both late and early. Hellebores are merrily wind-nodding, awakened by the kiss of unexpected sunshine. And somewhere in Sussex (or perhaps Kent) the water rails are dipping tentative toes into their damp, splashy, noisy, mating rituals.

There should be walks with six people by April. So can all Walk Leaders (old and new) please conjure up interesting walks -and either post them directly on the Beachy Head Ramblers web site -or send details to David Fry: dfry.architects@googlemail.com

And long-term there is the vague promise of “normal”(ish) life, perhaps, maybe, perchance. Well that is, if we are very, very good -or very, very, very, very lucky by 21 June. (It is a Boris promise after all. So, probably best forgotten).

Please remember this is your newsletter. So any contributions, ideas, flights of fancy, pics, memories, factoids, general daftness and suggestions are most welcome.

All the best -and I hope to see all of you (in one format or another -but as you know I am a digital minimalist. So, I would prefer that it was in person) -and very soon.
Peter Slepokura: peterslepokura@gmail.com

BHR Committee (until the next AGM)

Andrew Scallan: Chair
Suzie Tomkins: Membership Secretary
Linda Bailey: Group Secretary
David Fry: Social Events and Walks Programme Organiser
Lucie Thorneycroft: Evening Walks Coordinator
Peter Clinch: Treasurer and Web Site Coordinator
Peter Slepokura: News Letter Editor

Walking challenges

In July 2020 Sabrina Verjee, age 39, climbed all 214 Wainwrights, back to back, in 6 days 17 hours and 51 minutes. That's a staggering 525 Km and 36 000m of ascent. And all in less time than it takes some of us to boil an egg, or much more important, decide on an appropriate outfit to scale Bostal Hill.

In September 2020 Donnie Campbell climbed all 282 Scottish Munros in 31 days and 23 hours beating the previous record by a week.

It should fascinate (and perplex) you that about 7000 people have now climbed [We use the term advisedly. As they have been led, prodded, prompted and pampered up Everest by squads of extremely competent and courageous Nepali guides.] However, only 50 people have walked the entire coastline of Britain. And even fewer know what the ancient Sussex Trackways, Routeways or dens are -or can or have been able to find them on a map. Please see:
<http://www.highweald.org/learn-about/landscape-stories/the-routeways-story.html>

What challenges do BHR members have for 2021? Come on let your editor know for the next newsletter.

Walkers bite back (Or more likely bite their tongues and do nothing)

What Rambler hasn't been assailed by a pesky, slavering, out-of-control pooch which muddies their freshly-pressed Prada Gaiters -or does much worse? For many lone walkers dogs aren't just a joke, they can be frightening, a genuine threat and dangerous.

And there is the new menace of people newly-converted to dog-ownership -but who cannot or will not control said newly-acquired dog.

Where is there to go walking without being dog (and mainly uncaring-unruly-owner) pestered and threatened?

If all else fails try the Pevensy Levels. Natural England have concluded a review of the Pevensy Levels directions. And have decided to extend the existing guidance until 2027. So dogs, with the exception of Registered Guide Dogs are excluded from this Nature Reserve. Any other "safe" dog-free havens are urgently sought. Please let us know.

And if you love the Pevensy Levels -please help by becoming the Local Footpath Warden for Pevensy. Let Caroline Brown know as there is currently a vacancy. Please contact her on:
eastfootpath@sussexramblers.org.uk

Litlington cafe.

There is a blue van in the grounds of The Long Man brewery offering take away coffee and cakes (do you need the inducement of an etc). Well there are etceteras for your delectation etc. There are public toilets within the complex. So, it is well worth checking it all out on your next walk.

Walks programme

We are aiming to have a full walks programme ready for April and May when (hopefully, Boris permitting) we can resume group walks of some kind.

We have decided to not use the Basecamp site to register the walks programme. Walk Leaders can now load walks straight on to the BHR Ramblers web site which is a very similar process to using Basecamp. David Fry will be sending out details of how to do this to all Walk Leaders before we begin the new walks programme.

Leading Walks

If you have not been a walk leader before -and want to give it a try please let David Fry know. He can help with planning a walk or navigation. All the things you and your group require to get you onto the right path -and to keep you on it. Just email him as above.

All volunteers need to be registered on the Ramblers “Go Assemble” web site. You have to do this to be covered by Ramblers Insurance. So, David has been entering all Walk Leaders, and other volunteers on this system.

Once you can log on to “Go Assemble” you will be able see details of the other members of BHR, members of the Lighthouse maintenance group, Walk Leaders, Committee Members, Footpath Wardens and a whole gamut of useful information.

Match and mix

For anyone keen to have someone to walk with -or perhaps to meet up with a fellow Members of the group during lock-down, we are taking and sharing information (our Matching Service). [should that not be our Matchless Matching Service in oversell-speak] Again, please let Suzie know (If you want something done ask a very busy woman).

You must agree to let us share your contact details -and for them to be passed to another member, together with the area where you live and any other pertinent information. So help us to help you.

Swap Shop

We all have, since the thirteenth re-organization and clear out of the cupboard that holds all the walking equipment, less than one month ago,

bits of gear that we used to love but no longer need. So recycle, repurpose, give it away. Sell. Swap.

To start it off I have 2 x Leki Makulu Anti Shock Poles. They are not Carbon Fibre but nearly as light.

Free to a deserving homes (or homes).

Singly or as a pair.

To really well-feathered homes there must be a suitable massive contribution to the Lifeboat.

What's the word for it?

There is one. There has to be. In Sussex dialect there are words aplenty for that neuk, this crannie, that particular inclination of path, that especial type of scree. Help us find them. More important help us make them live and sing again, by using them correctly.

In the same way that a smattering of Gaelic unlocks the mysteries of the Highland landscape and the seascape. Think long black noses, or even grey ones, glimpsed in half-light and mist, as useful descriptors of important, vital, marks and identifiers of position.

Well my favourite of the moment is "smeuse". Try to guess what it means. Don't look it up. Ponder long and deep. We have all seen them in the bottoms of hedges. Go find one. Poke about in the hedge. Think, wondered on the purpose. You probably have. But couldn't quite put a name to it -and then forgotten to follow up on the search. But this time send answers please, along with your favourite. (Please only one, no need to wear your prowess too high, too bright, too proud).

Video Gaga

There is a current fashion to wallow deep in the safety of long convoluted TV series, usually noir, often Scandi. They have transformed the dreary plodding, (pun intended) British police procedurals. They often incorporate the landscape, the architecture, the weather, or place as an omni-present and slightly unwilling character. An entity that has to be cajoled, co-coerced, convinced into cooperating, But, alas they usually only run for 6, or at the most 12 episodes.

If your taste runs to such things try Spiral. It is French. It is witty. It is grim -and so, so, long. Ninety-six episodes. Enough at one per night to

ration your way out of Brexit, lock-down, and through to another AGM and into the sunlight.

But if your fancy extends beyond the visual or you want something kinder on the Bandwidth- try these Internet radio stations. They both provide gazillions of choices of amazing music from Russian chants to Bach Cantatas, through Zydeco to Jit and way, way beyond:

<http://radio.garden/search>
<https://streamwriter.org/en/>

I prefer “streamwriter” because the search facility is more specific and much more powerful. Try, listen, comment.

Summer party

There will be one. Don't know where, don't know when. But, there will be one. That indefatigably-social David Fry is organising another of his jamborees. For all I know it may be in a hot air balloon over Norway. In a battery powered sub in the Maldives. Be there. Help make it happen by sending your requests to David.