

AREA NEWS

SEPTEMBER
2005

Scarborough Group Calling

The theme of this article has been the topic of many others in previous AN's & local newsletters in the past, but I consider it essential to appeal to our 'sleeping members' to become more involved in the Association locally.

As a Group, we are neither the biggest or smallest in the East Yorkshire & Derwent RA Area having some 140 members, but rarely do we see more than 10 to 12 coming out on walks.

It is appreciated that many join the RA to support a 'good cause' rather than for rambling. Some may prefer to walk on their own, others may feel they are no longer able to, or just can't get into the habit again (and we've all experienced that from time to time). Some of you may be new members, either to Scarborough or to the RA, and may be finding it difficult to take that first step and break the ice.

To all of you, we say "come along and try us - we would like your company".

In addition to our rambling activities, our Social Secretary, Lisa Crosier, organises dining out & other events locally.

Even though you may not walk, why not join Lisa on one of these social activities? For those new to the area all our activities help to make new friends or just break the ice and meet fellow members.

All are very welcome to attend our Group AGM, which will be held on Thursday November 24th 2005 probably at the Friends Meeting House, Woodlands Drive, Scarborough (still to be confirmed). I am sure that your input would make this a much more interesting meeting, and if you wish - any of you could serve on the committee. This is not compulsory but we would welcome new faces and new ideas.

If you have any queries - please contact myself or any other committee member. We would welcome your call.

Dennis Muir, Group Sec, 01723-377222

(I think all our Group Secretaries would echo Dennis's comments on this issue. Group walks are open to all RA members wherever they live in our Area. AN Ed)

REGION 8 ACCESS CELEBRATION EVENT

Join us at **MILLINGTON WOOD CP**
(GR: SE 837529)

at **10.00am on SATURDAY NOVEMBER 5th**

Agreed Crow Act access to the last areas in England will commence on October 31st.

We shall be celebrating the occasion the following Saturday with 2 walks (4 & 10 mls) in the newly opened Wolds.

Do come along to celebrate this breakthrough and to take the opportunity to exercise your new rights of access to open countryside.

Bring a packed lunch but NO dogs.

Details:- Martin Biggs 01904-424072 or Peter Ayling 01482-657240

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL RA GROUP

To the side of this column is a heart-felt plea from the Secretary of the Scarborough Group for its members to show more support for its activities. I would guess that all our Group Secretaries and Committee members would echo that feeling. We would all like to see more members participating in the walks and other events that we organise, and possibly having a more active role in deciding on what and where such events should take place. The RA is still a membership organisation and it is up to our members to decide what it does at local, area and national level.

If you are interested in helping then your first step is attending and participating in your local Group's AGM which will be happening soon.

Full details are in the enclosed Area Programme, but the dates to put in your diaries are:-

Hull & Holderness: Monday November 7th; Ryedale: Tuesday November 8th;
York: Friday November 11th; Driffild: Monday November 14th;
GYBO: Sunday November 20th; Scarborough: Thursday November 24th;
Beverley: Sunday November 27th; Pocklington: Friday December 2nd;
Howden & Goole AGM still to be arranged.



CLIVE INMAN

www.ramblers.org.uk

working for walkers

East Yorkshire & Derwent RA Area

Area Chairman

Chris Bush

23 Albemarle Road,
York YO23 1EW

01904-612401

Area Secretary

Malcolm Dixon

8 Horseman Ave,
Copmanthorpe,
York YO23 3UF

01904-706850

THANKS & WELCOME

Can we thank all those members who have renewed their subscriptions to the Ramblers Association over the last few months and thank them for their continued support for the work and campaigns of the RA.

Could we also welcome all those people who have joined the Ramblers recently and we hope you find our varied walks, social programmes, campaigning, access and footpath work by the various Groups in our Area sufficiently repays your investment.

If not - please let us know!

And don't forget - if you want to help with the RA's voluntary work - be it walk leading, access or footpath work or surveying or whatever - contact either your local Group Secretary (see back of Area Programme) or the Area Secretary on 01904-706850.

AREA NEWS EDITOR

I wish to give notice that I would like to give up being 'AN' Editor as soon as a replacement for the position can be found.

I am finding my other commitments at home and work, as well as for the RA, are now becoming more burdensome and something has to give or be given up.

In addition, after some 7 years, I think 'AN' could now do with some new ideas and a 'new' look.

Hopefully, there is a local RA member who thinks similarly and would be interested in initially assisting and then, ultimately, taking over as Editor.

If indeed there is someone interested - can they get in touch with me as soon as possible. Thanks.

Malcolm Dixon, 8 Horseman Avenue,

Copmanthorpe, York YO23 3UF

01904-706850 m.s.dixon@care4free.net



HAVE GAZEBO - WILL TRAVEL

JOIN US at the HULL SHOW Saturday September 10th 2005

Sheltered from the elements by the Area's new 'gazebo', members of Beverley & other local RA Groups will be manning a RA publicity & recruitment stall at this year's Hull Show. Copies of the new Driffeld walks booklet will be available along with other leaflets highlighting walks and other events we are organising in our part of Yorkshire. Offers of help would be appreciated - as would any photos of local 'triumphs' as we shall also be taking along our display boards.

We've already had stalls at Driffeld, York & Howden this year and we're always looking for other possible venues, so please let us know if you know of any other possible show or event we could attend with our mobile publicity stall.

2

WELCOME TO WALKING WEEK – September 17th to 25th.

We haven't really organised many W2W walks this year. These are meant to be walks for members of the public new to walking and who might be encouraged to join the Ramblers as a result, but members are always welcome.

There will be our usual walks and ambles taking place during the week
- see the enclosed new Area Walks Programme for details.

Some others to look out for are:-

Saturday September 17th 2005

York Riverside Walk.

Meet outside York Central Library at 2pm c2½miles. Walk Leader: Monica Nelson

Sunday September 18th 2005

Howden Group are doing the Burn/Temple Hirst Circular walk. 9½miles.

An easy going flat walk, but NO dogs please.

Meet at 10.00am in the Howden Hailgate Car Park.

Walk Leaders: Margaret & Roland Howard

Sunday September 18th 2005

GYBO have a circular walk from Helmsley taking in Ash and Riccal Dales.

The 6½ mile is rated 'easy' and will be led by James & Anne Mortimer and probably end in a pub! All welcome.

Sunday September 18th 2005 is also National Day of Walking

Declared as part of ITV's 'Britain on the Move' campaign, National Walking Day will culminate in a star-studded event in Trafalgar Square. For more information or how to get your very own step-o-meter for just £4.99, visit

www.itv.com/britainonthemove.

Sunday, 18 September 2005 - 'Hearts First' Humber Bridge Walk

Join the British Heart Foundation and walk across the Humber Bridge and back - a total of 4 miles.

This BHF walk is in association with ITV Britain on the Move. Why not take part in the fancy dress competition? A fun day for all the family. For further details contact region1events@bhf.org.uk or ring freephone 0800 917 6976.

Thursday September 22nd 2005

"Car Free Day" (For more information, visit www.22september.org.)

11 Mile linear walk from Goathland to Whitby, following rail incline and Esk Valley Walk. Catch the **08-15 840 Coastliner** bus from outside York Rail Station, or catch it on route to Goathland to arrive for a start at **c10-10**.

Walk leader: Malcolm Dixon (of York RA Group)

The walk will follow incline path via Beck Hole to Grosmont, then follow the Esk Valley through Sleights and Ruswarp to Whitby. This would give opportunity for those who want a shorter walk to drop out and return (on their own) by foot, rail or bus to the start or home. Buses back from Whitby to York at either 17-00 or 18-10. Dogs welcome on this walk but must be kept on leads throughout. Route is along paths but could be muddy in places.

Sunday September 25th 2005

York Group's Calderdale Coach ramble. (not 18th) There will be an 11½ml 'A' and an 8½ml 'B' walk both finishing in Hebden Bridge. A seat on the coach costs just £7. Book, preferably with a deposit to register your interest, to either Vera Silberberg on 01904-628134 or Malcolm Dixon on 01904-706850 giving your name, a daytime contact number and your preferred pick-up point.

All welcome, bring your friends including non-members.

NOTE:

The 2005 Festival of Winter Walks will be between December 26th'05 and January 3rd'06.

Please let us know if there's any walk you would like to be included.

OTHER AREA PROGRAMME ADDITIONS & AMENDMENTS

- 1) Pocklington Group are having an 'Open Evening' at Burnby Hall on Friday September 30th to show potential new members what they do on their Group walking & social activities. All Welcome!!
- 2) Ray Wallis has asked me to remind you that the new date for the Minster Way 4 walk will be **October 1st** rather than on October 8th.
- 3) Hull Group have a walk that's NOT been included in the new Area Programme
Sunday January 15th 2006 starting from Cottingham Green (now the car park in the centre of Cottingham)
Meet at 10.30am at GR: TA 045 327 10 miles walk
Leader: Jim Tulloch ALL WELCOME

DRIFFIELD RA GROUP WALKS PACK

The Driffield RA Group have prepared a pack of 4 walks in their area with the aim of helping local people and visitors to enjoy the unique Wolds landscape.

Route 1 is a 9ml or 11ml Wetwang Circular, through Cowdale, Rabbit Dale, Huggate and Deep Dale & back to Wetwang.

Route 2 starts at Bainton and is a 9.4ml circular walk via North Dalton and the Minster Way.

Route 3 starts at North Newbald Church and is a 9mile circular route via Houghton Wood, Sancton and the Wolds Way.

Route 4 starts at Watton Layby on the A164, and then follows a 8 mile circular route via Kilnwick, Cawkeld, Minster Way and Watton Abbey.

The route leaflets come in a plastic pack and as well as containing route instructions, contain colour photos of many of the sights along the route.

Well worth buying and a bargain at just £2.00p (inc post) from the Driffield Group Sec, John Jefferson, 2 Spellowgate, Driffield, YO25 7BB

THE ROSES WALKING FESTIVAL 2005 starts on 17th September and lasts for 16 days until October 3rd. This is a new Festival, replacing the Calderdale Walking Festival, and is promoted by Bradford, Calderdale, and Rochdale District Councils plus Lancashire County Council and will cover all the Bradford and Calderdale Districts in Yorkshire, plus the Pennine parts of eastern Lancashire and Rochdale District - straddling the Pennine watershed. The new Festival also has financial assistance from The Countryside Agency. The Festival plans to offer well over 100 walks of various types and lengths spread across the Festival area. These will include everything from an hour's easy stroll near town, some fairly easy half-day walks, and right up through medium 7 to 10 mile walks, to 10 - 12 milers, and a few hard 14 mile+ walks.

This area now has around 20,000 hectares of new Access Land (mainly high moor) added to the extremely good rights of way network it already enjoyed and additional access facilities allowed by the two major water companies there. A walker's dreamscape!!

Information and booking details: A free programme leaflet is available from Hebden Bridge Tourist Information Centre, Butlers Wharf, New Road, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire HX7 8AF, phone 01422 843831, Email:hebdenbridge@ybtbic.co.uk, or from other TICs in the participating areas.

Details of this and Other Walks, Festivals and Events can be obtained from the comprehensive and regularly updated '**Walkers Diary**' on the Ramblers' Website at:- <http://www.ramblers.org.uk/info/events/diary.html>

Another bit of Scarborough Group news:

Langdale Quest, who organise 4 wheel drive vehicle activities, mainly around the Langdale area, are appealing to North York Moors Park Authority not to refuse the renewal of their licence to operate. Due to the amount of damage, noise, etc caused by these and similar large 'off road' vehicles to certain areas our footpath secretaries (past & present) have provided information to the Park Authority, the local MP and the Secretary of State making the case against renewal. We expect the appeal to be referred to a Public Inquiry in due course. Group members intend to attend and produce photographic evidence and personal views, in accordance with RA policy on these matters, should this be necessary or requested. DT Muir

YORK AMBLES PROGRAMME

All the Wednesday Ambles are open to all RA members (and their friends) who want a walk that doesn't "go too far or too fast".

They are between 6 and 8 miles long and commence at 10-30am.

Sept 7th	Hawnbly	SE 538 897	A & M Mee
Sept 14th	Pompocali (Hetchell Wood)	SE 380 423	J van der Burg
Sept 21st	Whitwell Church	SE 724 659	P Rusby
Sept 28th	Driffield	TA 026 577	A Cumberland
Oct 5th	Copmanthorpe (Sports Club CP)	SE 568 468	M & J Dixon
Oct 12th	Lockton	SE 847 899	P Haynes
Oct 19th	Drax (Sports Club CP)	SE 665 263	J van der Burg
Oct 26th	Boston Spa (VH CP)	SE 430 457	M Webster
Nov 2nd	Harrogate Railway Stn *#	SE 304 553	J Whipp
Nov 9th	Easingwold (Galtres CP)	SE 530 696	R Crackles
Nov 16th	North Grimston (Station Lane)	SE 839 677	R Brazier
Nov 23rd	Great Ouseburn (VH CP)	SE 446 621	J Winn
Nov 30th	Wetherby (Riverside CP)	SE 405 480	K Walker
Dec 7th	Stillington (Sports Club CP)	SE 584 675	I Turner
Dec 14th	Christmas Lunch	Full Details	
	The Lodge, Old Malton	Later	
Dec 21st	Naburn (VH CP)	SE 599 455	A Sanderson

All Ambles are between 6-8 miles long and commence at 10.30am

*# Except Harrogate Rly Stn Nov 2nd starting at 10.45am

Ambles Enquiries: Alan Clark 01904-411969

Some Dates for Your Diaries

The next EY&D RA Area Council will be on:-

Saturday October 8th 2005 at Terrington Village Hall starting at 2.00pm, with a walk in the morning starting at 10.00am

The 2006 Area AGM will be at the Strensall Village Hall, near York Starting at 2pm on Saturday February 11th 2006 and with a walk in the morning

Area Councils will take place in 2006 on:-

Saturday February 25th at Wetwang VH at 2pm

Wednesday June 11th at the Shire Hall in Howden at 7.30pm

Saturday October 7th West Ayton VH near Scarborough at 2pm

ALL RA members are welcome to attend and participate in any of the above meetings.

Affiliated organisations may also send representatives

Proposed Changes at the YHA

You may have read in the Press that the YHA is proposing to sell off lightly used Hostels in order to pay off debts that the organisation has accumulated.

The YHA is 75 years old this year and is taking the opportunity to look at how it operates and how it can best serve its very diverse customer base in the years to come. Sales of hostels, especially in rural areas is one option, as is the concentration on more urban sited hostels with modern & accessible facilities. However, they accept this is not likely to be popular with all its members.

So what other options does it have?

If you are interested in these issues a Strategy Document can be downloaded from the YHA's website (www.yha.org.uk). Comments on that should have been in by July, but card carrying YHA members can still make their points at the organisation's Regional AGMs. Our nearest is at the Clifton Methodist Church in York starting at 1pm on Saturday October 15th.

For news on what the 20's-30's are doing or planning to do - go to their website

www.gybo.org.uk

www.ramblers.org.uk - the one-stop website for walkers

THE RA = WORKING FOR WALKERS

ACCESS : THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING WILL BE IN THE WALKING !!

We now have access to all the open country in Mapping Region 5, the northern slice of our RA Area to the south and east of the North York Moors. The hard work of all the volunteers has resulted in 1087 acres being declared open country. This is a very good result, although we regret every appeal which was allowed. We managed to prevent the landowners getting all the land they wanted removed from the map in 63.7 % of the cases we contested, although in some cases they were partially successful. We have the only set of figures I have seen where the appeals dismissed (i.e. cases where the landowners completely failed) comprise the largest percentage of the decisions. The details are given in the table which follows :

SUCCESS RATE AT APPEALS IN MAPPING REGION 5 (NORTH EAST)

	Decision	Whole Mapping Region	East Yorkshire & Derwent Area
1	Allowed (all land taken off the map)	55.4 %	33.3 %
2	Allowed in part	20.5 %	21.3 %
3	Dismissed (no land taken off the map)	23.5 %	42.4 %
4	Withdrawn (no land taken off the map)	1.0 %	04.1 %

The access team wants to bring these new areas to the attention of all members so they can use them for recreational purposes, be it for a short stroll, as part of a longer walk or some other activity such as kite flying, painting or botanising.

The precise extent of the areas can be examined on the Countryside Agency's website www.countrysideaccess.gov.uk and downloaded if required.

The list below gives the names and grid references of the areas for ease of identification.

Region 5 : Open Country List

Grid Ref Name of Dale Mapped Area

1) Thixendale Complex (hectares)		
SE 848 618	Court Dale	4
SE 830 615	East Waterdale	16
SE 844 605	Huggate Hill & Thixendale	16
SE 830 622	Vessey Pasture Dale	8
SE 814 617	Brownmoor Dale	17
SE 852 614	Waterdale	30
SE 822 608	Milham Dale/Thixendale	17
SE 835 604	Long Dale	25
SE 843 607	Thixendale by Village	3
	Thixendale, Worm Dale >	
SE 847 586	Pluckham Dale,	> 69
	S Breckenholmdale,	>
	BradebamDale	>

2) Brubberdale Complex

SE 866 610	North of road	9
SE 860 597	South of road	14
SE 863 591	Horse Dale	13

3) Burdale Complex

SE 871 633	Whay Dale	32
SE 881 633	Fairy Dale	31

4) Others

SE 926 755	East Heslerton Brow	65
SE 905 750	W est Heslerton Brow	13
TA 045 770	Lang Dale	13
SE 868 692	Nine Springs Dale	6
SE 798 611	Hanging Grimston Wold	33
SE 886 650	Stonepit Slack	5

Total

439 hectares; 1,087 acres



The publication of the OS maps showing the open country in our Area is proceeding, but only a few are available at present. All maps covering an area entirely in Region 5 (e.g. Explorer OL 26 and 27) were published on 28 May. Three other maps, 299, 300 and 301, are due to be published on 1 August. The remainder will be published in November. The availability of particular maps can be checked on www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk or you can telephone 0845 200 2712.

We expect to get a further 2000 acres of open country in Mapping Region 8 (the East Riding), whose conclusive map is due to be published on 15 August. We will give you details as soon as they are confirmed. **Martin Biggs**, Area Access Officer

"HIGH STREET : THE WOLD's RIDGEWAY"

You may have heard of the famous Ridgeway which marches across the downs of Berkshire, past many a hill-fort and long barrow towards Avebury and Stonehenge. It has probably been used by man as a highway for some 4000 years and more, and no one disputes that it is a public right-of-way (RoW). But did you know that our Yorkshire Wolds has just such a ridgeway and that one vital part of it is not yet a RoW?

Where is this ridgeway? You will find it on the larger scale OS Explorer maps emerging from the outskirts of Bridlington as the B1253 and it follows the valley of the Gipsy Race (on its northern slope) to Rudston, passing close to the tallest standing stone in Britain. Soon it climbs onto a ridge of the Wolds and is named on the map as 'High Street'. It touches the hamlet of Octon and there changes direction from west to almost south-west and, after crossing the Driffield road, keeps to the ridge all the way to Sledmere. So far, all this way, it has been a tarred road, rather long and tedious for walking, but a wonderful cycle ride, especially west to east with a wind behind!

At the western end of Sledmere, the B1253 continues and soon runs alongside Towthorpe Plantation on the left but is no longer named on the map. Just short of Canada Cottages there is a gate into the field on the left and here the Plantation curves gently away to the left and leaves the road, which goes north-west to Duggleby.

If you had been here 30 years ago, or more, you would have seen a trackway curving away close to the Plantation and following it across to the B1248 road where, directly opposite, it continues as a public bridleway. This track was shown on all maps before then and I am certain that this must be 'High Street'. It still exists in the first field from the west (B1248) end, although in four other fields to the east it has been ploughed up. Over the road the bridleway continues in the same general direction for five miles to reach the ancient hilltop enclosure at Aldro as a minor road.

So here we have a through route of 24 miles across the Wolds from Bridlington to Aldro, probably used by mankind for thousands of years, separated into two parts by a gap of less than 1½ miles.

I cannot understand why, when the Aldro track was made a RoW, this bit was left out. The first edition of the 1inch to 1mile OS map of 1852 shows the track complete alongside the Plantation and curving into the Sledmere road near Canada Cottages. There are at least eight tumuli (round barrows) in the Plantation or close to the track, which give some indication of its age. It may even have been part of a prehistoric trade route from Ireland to the Continent.

A.J. Brown mentions this very track in his book "Tramping in Yorkshire (North & East)" first published in 1932. After leaving Sledmere, he says:- "I chose the Duggleby road but branched off at Canada Cottages and struck the old green track that runs straight over Towthorpe Wold towards Aldro. This is the sort of track I would rather follow than all the metalled roads constructed by man. It must be very old - how old nobody knows, suffice it that it is a well defined green track running south -west alongside a plantation."

In the year 2000, the publication of the new OS Explorer map of the area (no 300) showed that only one third of the track at the west end still existed and none of it was a RoW. At about the same time I also learnt that anyone could put in an application to add (or delete) a RoW on the Definitive Map, or alter its route or status; so I decided to "have a go".

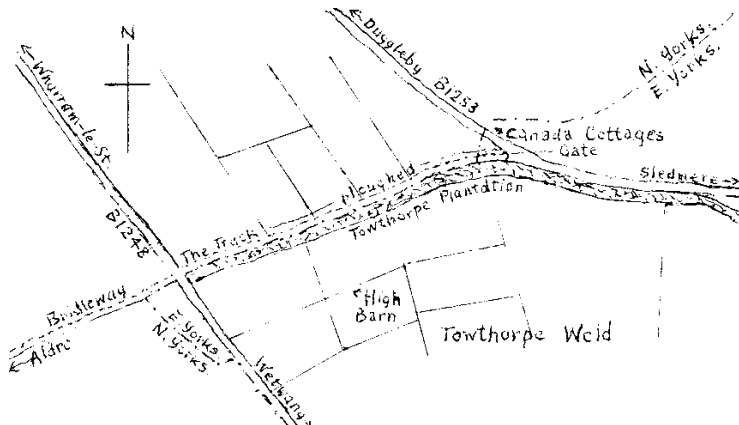
Until 1974 all of this track was in the old East Riding, with a parish boundary following its southern edge. But in that year this became a county boundary, and most of the track is now in North Yorkshire, with only a length of about 90 yards at the east end remaining in East Yorkshire.

So I wrote to North Yorkshire County Council in January 2001 requesting the means to apply. Eleven months later they sent me some forms along with a useful little booklet issued by the Countryside Commission on procedure. I had to find out who owned the land, and although I thought this would be difficult but it turned out to be quite easy. I simply wrote to the five surrounding farms or estates (enclosing a sketch map and a stamped return envelope) and asked if they had any objection to telling me if the fields were theirs. Four replied, three said the land was not theirs, one said they owned only the field west where the track still existed. The other landowner did not bother to reply, so I assumed they owned the other fields. It is interesting to note that two or three of the local people I have written or spoken to all seem to regard the track as a RoW already. One actually said: "I always thought it was a RoW as most local people do".

Having found the two owners, I had to notify each of them that I intended to apply to the County Council for the track to be reinstated as a public bridleway. I also had to certify to the County Council that I had done this. In addition, I had to provide "evidence of use" of the track by the public. This was to prove more difficult. I obtained a photocopy of the passage in A.J. Brown's book and another of a magazine article which stated that the track was used by a group of cyclists in the late 1930's and, of course, I added details of my own walks over it in 1969-73.

Eventually I sent my application off to the N. Yorks CC. They acknowledged receipt on April 11th 2002, adding that, owing to the large number of similar applications they had already to process, it would be "some time" before mine could be dealt with. Since then, however, I have heard nothing more from them on the matter.

However, it is still not too late to send in any further evidence of use. So, if any AN reader has traversed this track on foot, horse or cycle sometime in the last 25 years (or longer) and wishes to help preserve the right to do so they should write to me:- Arthur J. Horne, 27 Garden Flat Lane, Dunnington, York, YO19 5NB. Thanks.



WE started the 2005 GC on the Friday evening with words of welcome from RA's Chair Brian Reader and from Paddy Tipping MP. The latter congratulated the RA on the achievement of the hard won CRoW Act and wondered whether coastal access would follow the opening up of the moors. Locally, the Nottinghamshire CC had made many improvements due to the pressure put on them by RA members. He finished by looking forward to what could be the next campaign for the RA and suggested the EU CAP grants to landowners of £1.8billion, with North Yorkshire landowners getting £125million. He thought some of this should be used for the benefit of visitors to the countryside and used to "lift the landscape and enhancing the environment".

Nick Barrett then took members through the 2003/04 Annual Report, showing how the RA was progressing in line with the objects originally set out in the 'Waymarking The Future' document. He considered the RA as having the aim of having the countryside open for all to enjoy. It was an organisation with common values and visions, shared resources and a sense of mutual trust. It was a charity charged with spreading the benefits to the widest number of people. It was democratic, with its leaders accountable and the will of the majority paramount. It had passion and its job wasn't over, there were still things to do. This was the glue that bound us together as RA members.

He welcomed the CRoW Act and the work that had been done in achieving it and making sure it was properly enacted in all the Regions mostly by local members. However, he contrasted it with the Scottish Land Reform Act with its greater presumption of access and showed that there was more we could achieve south of the border.

There were ongoing campaigns such as the Green lanes campaign, supporting national parks, the 'Walking Out' project, issues related to renewable energy, the Countryside Code, Scottish Access Code and Section 63 of the CRoW Act. The Discovering Lost Ways project had finally started but made little progress so far with only 21 years to go. We also had to make the new cross compliance strictures work.

The RA was in receipt of public money and must therefore help create public benefit. There was still work to be done on the 'cross compliance' aspects of the recent CAP reforms and on the Discovering Lost Ways Project.

Looking at the internal workings of the RA, Nick reported that the Finances were healthy, although there were problems with money flows. We continued to need work on the look and appearance of the RA. We needed to improve the image and the public's perception of the RA. We had to welcome the newcomer. We needed to extend the young persons groups and to extend their members' involvement in the RA. We had to continue to recruit new members and retain our present ones. 18,000 new members were needed each year just to remain static. There were occasional big leaps forward but mostly it was incremental small and local steps. We had to keep on keeping on. Nick brought a big "thank-you" from all the Central Office staff to the local members who did the work out in the field.

In a Q&A session which followed Nick pointed out that 8 areas had not sent delegates and 4 had only 1. The volunteer structure review would continue but the RA was a complex organisation and there were a number of different recommendations and still concerns over the relationship between the EC and the GC, and over money and funding between the Groups and the Centre. A volunteer support team had been recruited and had started working.

Following which delegates retired to the bar and continued the discussions and meeting each other and sharing tales of problems and triumphs.

SATURDAY Morning started with an official & entertaining welcome to Nottinghamshire by David Hunt, the Area Chair, and enlivened with a guest appearance by 'Robin Hood'.

GC business then started with a look back at the 2004 GC and an acceptance of the Minutes from that conference with a report on progress on the motions passed then. Brian Reader then moved the 2004-05 Report as outlined previously by NB. Following discussion on the need for regional cooperation between Areas, and that the Annual Report was essentially a positive and glossy presentation and record of the organisation but was backed up with more detailed circulars and information from Central Office. The Report was adopted.

Denis Fuller, the RA's Hon Treasurer, gave a presentation on the RA's accounts. The RA had had a good year, with our reserves increased and total income up by 6%. 57% of that came from Members subscriptions, donations and gifts. There was a substantial amount gifted by the RA Trust. The RA had spent £3.5 million in pursuit of its charitable objectives. The Treasurer thanked all Group & Area Treasurers

for their hard work and urged the pursuit of a unified banking system and good budgetary controls.

The Treasurer's Conference in July would be widened to include aspects of training, consider how the RA could accrue adequate reserves, use legacies and generally how Groups and Areas were funded. We needed to explore using budget based system at all levels. The Accounts were adopted by GC. Chris Smith followed with his Presidential address applauding the implementation of the CRoW Act, and the RA's winning of the public argument for countryside access. We now had to make full use of the Act & to campaign to widen its scope to include woodland and coastal areas. He also felt that the RA's other achievement of the last 12 months was the acceptance that walking was part of a healthy lifestyle and the image of walkers had improved as awareness had grown.

Following which Chris was re-elected as National President. Vice Presidents were elected. Brian Reader was re-elected Chairman with Terry Squires as Vice Chair. Denis Fuller was re-elected as Treasurer. The Hon Solicitor and Auditors were appointed. A presentation was made to Janet Davis for her 21 years service at the RA's Central Office.

Our next session started with discussions on the Motions submitted by Areas to the GC.

The first applauded the efforts of the RA, other organisations & their individual campaigners in achieving the CRoW Act. In calling on ramblers to defend these new rights, it also asked us "to use and enjoy them".

Subsequent motions called for the provision of the least restrictive option, rather than stiles, on RoW and access land.

Following lunch, Peter Skipp on behalf of the EC, took us through the proposed changes that the EC thought were necessary for the RA to continue to develop in line with the 'Waymarking The Future' 5 year plan and for it to remain in line with Laws covering both Charities and Companies.

Some of these changes had already taken place such as Incorporation and Devolution. Others would take place in future years such as budgetary operation (2006) and reviews of the Area/Group structure (2007/08). This 2005 GC would decide upon the EC/GC's relationship, changes to the way EC members would be elected in future and how long they could serve on EC and to consider alterations to the RA's Charitable Objectives.

In introducing these items, Peter Skipp reported that some of the EC's propos-

als had already been put out to consultation at local level and many Areas had responded to this exercise. For which the EC was grateful and many of these views had been incorporated in the proposals. The proposed changes had been grouped together into 6 blocks to make their progress easier and more understandable. Briefly these changes would mean the Executive Committee being renamed the 'Board of Trustees'(BoT). They following a GC and consultation, would have the final say in what RA policy was and what would be progressed, even when this went against General Council's wishes, although they would be called on to explain why. Their guide would be the RA's charitable objectives and best interests.

It was also proposed that BoT members would serve a 3 year term between elections and could stand for a further 3 year term and then stand down for at least 1 year. This would hopefully bring in new people and ideas whilst providing for continuity. The Chair could stand for a further 3 years on top. There were to be changes to the RA's standing orders to reflect these changes and also to the RA's charitable objectives to clarify the wording (but not the emphasis), as we were not allowed to campaign to change the law as part of a charitable object. They would still set out what the RA was allowed to do, not what it was required to do.

Following a lengthy presentation on these proposed changes there was a question & answer session clarifying many of the issues and members' concerns about the effects these changes could have. But these were dealt with at length and amicably by Peter Skipp and Brian Reader.

The vote on these changes was not to be taken until the Sunday morning session, so there was plenty of time for delegates to discuss them further. There was also a talk on landscape and art and after dinner the formal launch of the 5 'Freedom to Roam' walking guides published by Frances Lincoln and introduced by Andrew Bibby, one of the authors.

SUNDAY started with a walk for some and a hearty breakfast for all. There was then a chance to meet all the candidates standing for the EC/BoT and the Agenda Cttee and question them on their views. However, only a small room had been put aside for this purpose and it didn't really give people chance to do so.

Our first session was chaired by Cath MacKay (her last as an EC member) and was to debate and vote on the Resolutions put forward by the EC to change the MoA and Standing Orders. A 75% majority was required on all for them to be carried and no amendments would be allowed. Brian reader and/or Peter Skipp moved all the various resolutions and they were debated. But given the previous day's lengthy presentations and the chance to discuss the

resolutions since, debate was relatively limited and all the resolutions were carried with very small numbers opposing them and the bulk of conference in favour of them and where they would take the RA. After a tea break we returned to discussing the Motions put forward by the Areas. These started with a call for the restoration of downland & heathland which was supported. As was a call for restrictions on the use of firearms in the vicinity of RoW. An Emergency Motion was then taken on Serious Organised Crime & Police Bill, which had been rushed through Parliament prior to the calling of the General Election and had the effect of criminalising anyone caught trespassing on 'Crown Lands', even if they were not aware they were on such lands. It had been designed to stop terrorists but could be used against innocent walkers. It was passed 'nem con'. Our next motion called for the setting up of a national walking archive and to record the activities and achievements of walking clubs which no longer existed. It also wanted "to encourage research and to promote the value of walking as a positive social activity". It was passed unanimously. The Central, Fife and Tayside area then called on Central Office to differentiate between items related to England & Wales and those related to Scotland, as the laws were becoming increasingly different, most recently in those related to access. This was passed. Our final motion came from the West Riding area and sought to combine walking for enjoyment with the objective of protecting footpaths by asking Groups to organise 50% of their walks within their boundaries so that otherwise sparsely used paths would be used and monitored and to encourage the use of public transport. In the short time left the '50%' was amended to 'as many as possible'.

Keele University will be the venue for the 2007 General Council and I'm already looking forward to it. This was my first GC and I was impressed by the friendly atmosphere throughout the proceedings and how well it had been organised. There was plenty of opportunity to meet other delegates and share views about our many common problems and our occasional local triumphs. It was possibly a shame that such discussions and feedback on common issues, such as access, couldn't go on more in the times between GCs. Hopefully that will improve. *Malcolm Dixon*

The EY&D RA Area has offered to host General Council in either 2008 or 2009. This is likely to be on the campus of York University.

Planning is understandably at a very early stage but nearer the dates we shall be asking for our local members to volunteer to help with the various background tasks that are necessary for such an event to run smoothly.

ARE YOU INSURED?

This information is potentially of interest to any RA member who volunteers.

1. The Concern:

- Do you regularly drive to attend your Group or Area meetings or to attend public enquiries?
- Are you a walks leader who regularly uses your car to get to walk starting points?
- Do you regularly undertake footpath clearance or surveying work for the RA and use your car to get around?
- If you use your car to do voluntary work for the RA your insurance company may need to know!

2. The Background:

Motor insurance companies take differing views of volunteering.

Some consider volunteering to be a social activity and hobby and are therefore happy to include volunteering under their category of "Social Use".

Other companies, however, view volunteering as a work activity and therefore classify car usage for volunteering as "Business Use".

There is no one industry standard and no fixed point at which companies draw the line between volunteering as a hobby and volunteering as work. One of the factors that appears to come into play, however, is where mileage allowances are paid to volunteers as reimbursement of travel costs. This may appear to give insurers the appearance of increased formality and therefore "work".

Insurance companies should not charge any additional premium to customers who "upgrade" to business use. However, being insured under the wrong category can give an insurance company the opportunity to argue its way out of paying out in case of a claim.

3. Our Suggestion:

RA central office can not offer specific advice to any individual volunteer

We recommend that, if in doubt, all RA volunteers call their respective motor insurance companies to let them know the extent and nature of their voluntary work and to discuss and clarify the details of their insurance policy.

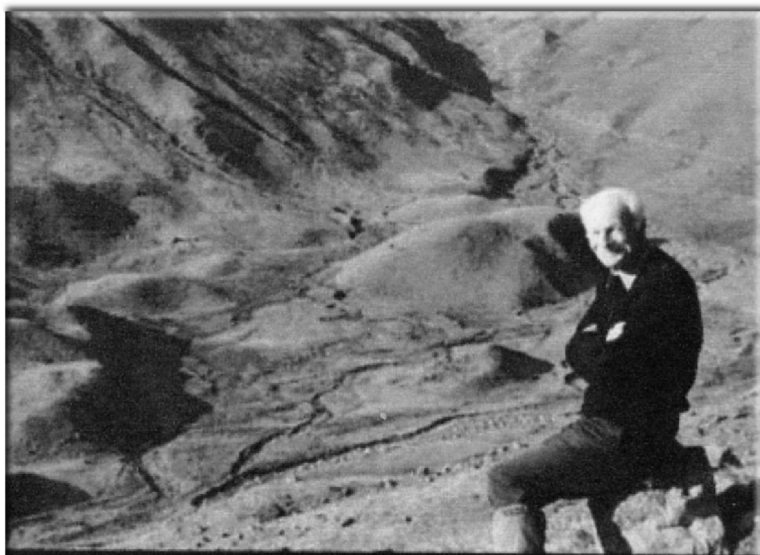
If necessary, we then recommend that volunteers subsequently send very brief details to their insurance company in writing and request confirmation of cover in writing.

A suggested form of words can be downloaded from the website at www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer/resources.html or can be obtained from the EY&D RA Area Secretary.

ALF BUSHBY

Active, that's what Alf was. By the time I knew him, he was already retired, but he'd packed a lot into his life, in the army, running, cycling, walking etc., etc.

I have memories of him walking great distances, camping in the snow, running home to Hessle from N.Ferriby towards the end of a day on the Wolds Way, plodding up Pike 'o Stickle, passing round his famous home-made wine, and talking- oh yes, talking, and arguing at R.A. A.G.M.s and having one too many in The Old Dungeon Ghyll.



He was a champion of the rights of old people and the disabled, and hated the road sign depicting a bent old couple staggering across the road, regarding this image as an insult.

In the late 1970s, he and his friend Walt Swift started a walking group for the over 60s, the East Yorkshire Senior Citizens, a radical idea at the time. He thought that some older people were not active enough and wondered if he could tempt some of them out of their armchairs. He was so successful that numbers on walks soon became an embarrassment, and it became necessary to split into a number of smaller groups, some of which are still very active today.

He had his own long-distance walk, The Humber Bridge Link, with a very large badge for those who completed it.

Alf had more than his fair share of health and other difficulties in his long life, but rose above them with distinction.

The world will be a less interesting place without him. Ray Wallis



The Ramblers' Association



The RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION exists to facilitate, for the benefit of everyone, the enjoyment and discovery on foot of Britain's countryside; and to promote respect for the life of the countryside.

The Association promotes rambling, protects rights of way, campaigns for access to open country and defends the beauty of the countryside.

It is a democratic, voluntary organisation.

It is registered as a charity - no 1093577

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The Editor wishes to thank all correspondents and welcomes contributions: be they news, campaigns, opinions, enquiries, favourite walks, unusual rambles or places to visit, cartoons, book reviews, new footpaths or diversions, amendments and/or additions to the walks programme, etc..

Views expressed in such articles are those of its author and should not necessarily be taken as endorsed by the Ramblers Association, at either Area or National level, unless so stated.

All items for consideration should be sent to :-

AREA NEWS EDITOR, c/o 8 HORSEMAN AVENUE, COPMANTHORPE, YORK, YO23 3UF
or e-mailed to eydan.editor@care4free.net

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