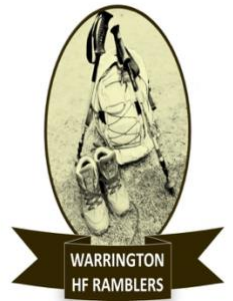


WARRINGTON H.F. RAMBLING CLUB

Affiliated with HF Holidays
Winter 2025 Newsletter



Welcome to the Winter Newsletter

Welcome to the winter newsletter. A short intro this time. There is lots of work going on by your Committee to set up the 2025 Summer programme. Please offer the walk coordinators your favourite walk. As we emerge from the snow we have a full programme for you.

Any offers to set up an autumn weekend away would be of interest. Talk to Cathy if you have an idea on this

Peter Winter
Warrington HF Rambling Club Chair

2024/25 Bulletin Board

Make sure these dates are in your diary!!!

- ◆ Tuesday 14th January AGM at St Oswalds, Padgate
- ◆ Tuesday 11 February Club Night, Quiz Night hosted by Peter the Magician
- ◆ Tuesday 11 March. Ten Pin Bowling Rona Bryce
- ◆ 4 – 7th April 2025 Spring Weekend Away, The Lakes
- ◆ 8 – 15th September 2025 Poland Trip

Website

If you haven't looked at your club website recently, then it is worth a look. It carries lots of information, including latest newsletters, the full programme and has an extensive gallery of club photos. – well worth a look

Let us have your feedback and any suggestions for anything you would like to see on it.

Please note that photos taken on walks are displayed on the website and on Facebook. If you do not wish your photo to appear, please make sure you stay out of shot when the "obligatory" group photo is taken.



Don't forget to visit your website: <https://warringtonhfwalkingclub.com/>



Saturday 28th September 2024 Warrington HF Rambling Club 75th Anniversary

2024 was a very special year, the 75th anniversary of when the Club was founded. So it was only fitting that we celebrated and what better way than to hold a party.

We invited past members to join us, decorated the venue (St Joseph's) appropriately and engaged a band, Loose Connections, brought in a caterer to provide hot food and even purchased a cake (or two). All that was left was to enjoy ourselves, which we did in style.

Members who had given extensive service to the Club were honoured with a card - David Woolf and Dennis Carter for their years as Chairman and President, Phil Barrowcliff for his years on the committee and many holidays abroad which he organised and in his absence Don Morris for his many years as treasurer.

In addition, 28 members (past and present) were presented with a medal to celebrate them each achieving more than 20 years of club membership.

Thanks to all those who helped organise such a wonderful evening and to David Woolf for his generous donation of £500 which allowed us all to have a drink on him to celebrate. See the photos below which give a flavour of the evening:



Autumn Weekend Away at Melrose 18 – 21st October 2024



40 of us enjoyed the Autumn weekend at Melrose at the Waverley Castle Hotel. We all met at 9:00 pm on the Friday nights and the walk leaders explained their preparation and details of the walks, which in our case started after the Spring Weekend away. As the OS sheets are not greatly helpful as footpaths are not shown (the right to roam laws are different in Scotland), we contacted the Melrose Paths Association who provided a booklet of the various walks around Melrose which we all used as the basis of our walks.

The only other issue was the weather. We had travelled up a few days before and did the recces amid soaking rainfall and constantly monitored the progress of Storm Ashley covering Scotland that weekend. After adapting the walks to reflect the weather conditions, we provided a range of walks which went as follows;

Saturday 19 October 2024

Grade B walk Leadersfoot Circular. 12 miles approx and 1500 ft ascent – Led by Phil & Yvonne Wakefield

As the weather was due to be kinder today we opted to do this walk as it was the more undulating of the two walks with a variety of woodland and riverside paths, wet, muddy and slippery in places.

So it was that 24 members and 1 dog set off from the hotel to pick up the Borders Abbey Way footpath at the rear of the hotel heading downriver along the river Tweed to the Chain Bridge (formerly a swing bridge with numerous rules and regs limiting the number of people crossing. Since being renovated and strengthened to provide safer crossing, the original list of rules and regs was retained as a reminder of its history). We crossed the bridge passing through the village of Gattonside to follow the footpath to Earlston. We had a gradual climb out of the valley along a bridleway known as Goats Brae and near the summit of the hill enjoyed a coffee stop that gave us great photo opportunities of the panoramic view over Melrose and the Tweed valley. Continuing on the path for about 3 miles until we reached the village of Earlston where we stopped for lunch at the village green amid pleasant autumn sunshine.

The return trail to Leadersfoot bridges was particularly beautiful at this time of year. It followed the Leaderwater river, a tributary of the Tweed but a major river in its own right. The route known as Speedies Path, meandered through mature deciduous woodland which I often describe as “middle earth”. The sunshine shimmering through the deciduous woodland provided a superb spectacle of autumnal colours interspersed with pleasant views over the river. After a mile we had a choice of paths, either the reputedly easier Leaderwater path on one side of the river, or the more undulating Diamond Jubilee path following the other side. Both paths (each with their own superb views, sculptured seating areas and ancient bridges) met at Leadersfoot bridge. We split into 2 groups, Yvonne taking one group along the Leadersfoot path, Phil taking the other group along the Jubilee path and met up at Leadersfoot bridge.



Shortly, we had another coffee stop and great photo opportunity with a view of the “three bridges” crossing the Tweed. The first, a magnificent viaduct formerly a railway bridge no longer used but retained as a historic monument. The second, the Drygrange bridge formerly the old vehicular crossing now a footbridge crossing which we had taken. The final bridge was the modern vehicular crossing for the A68 road.

Before the village of Newstead we passed “Trimontium”, once the site of a major Roman settlement built around 1AD, during their attempted occupation of Scotland. Now, disappointingly very little remains with only a marker stone and information board to tell the tale.

From Newstead we followed the priorswood route back to Melrose to be rewarded with probably the best view of the remains of the Cistercian Abbey, built in the 12th century under the consent of King David 1st of Scotland

Upon reaching Melrose we were welcomed into the George and Abbotsford hotel for a well earned drink before resuming our walk back along the river to the Waverley Castle hotel.

A Walk. 3 Eildon Hills and Caulshiels Hill – Grade A led by Gary Webster

We all started from the hotel and walked along the river Tweed to the fine suspension bridge ,here we split and carried on passing the old Abbey and rejoining the Borders Abbey Way. Here we started the climb, passing Rhymers Stone, and up to the 3 Eildon Hills. The first one had been a roman signal station 404 m The second Eildon Hill was 422m,and the third Eildon Wester Hill 371M. We enjoyed great views all the way. We carried on to Cauldshiels Hill 329m. Then down to Abbotsford Hall and back to the hotel , a great day.



Melrose Abbey and Abbotsford Grade D Led by Daphne Thomas

On Saturday morning 10 members set off on the walk to Melrose Abbey and Abbotsford. It was a beautiful day with lots of Autumn colour. From the back of the hotel we followed the river Tweed into Melrose. We spent about an hour looking around Melrose Abbey and trying unsuccessfully to find the gargoyle of the pig playing the bagpipes.

From Melrose we followed the disused railway line to Darnick and then a quiet country lane, with lovely views, to Abbotsford, the former home of Sir Walter Scott.

We had our lunch on picnic tables in the grounds and were able to buy teas and coffees. In the visitor centre there was a small exhibition about Sir Walter Scott and the following day several members went back to go round the house and learn some more. We then followed the river Tweed again back to the hotel. An interesting 6 mile walk with lovely views.



Sunday 20 October 2024

Grade B walk Abbotsford & Cauldshield Loch Circular. Approx 12 miles and 1000ft ascent led by Phil & Yvonne

We opted to do this route today as the weather forecast promised rain in the morning and drier in the afternoon with the departure of Storm Ashley. The route also involved more hard surface walking in the morning with the moorland and woodland walking later in the day.

15 members departed from the hotel to follow the riverside path downriver along the Border Abbeys Way past the chain bridge and Abbey into Melrose. We headed up to “Waverley Station”, now defunct and converted to an upmarket Italian restaurant. We followed the disused railway line, converted to a footpath many years ago, leaving the town to head south west towards Rhymer’s Glen. However, prior to leaving we took the opportunity of taking our coffee break under the subway of the A68, an unusual but dry choice for a break and were thankful to see the last of the rain leave us.

The route up to and through Rhymer’s Glen was a perfect illustration of mismanaged woodland now in the process of being

rectified. It had formerly been a deciduous woodland during Sir Walter Scott's time and was reputedly one of his favourite views of the Eildon hills. Since being sold from his estate the deciduous woodland was replaced with commercial coniferous woodland and it is only in recent years that efforts are now being made to replant with deciduous trees original to the area.

From Rhymer's Glen we crossed Bowden Moor, with fine views of the Eildon hills and overlooked by what once was a former Roman signalling station to the nearby settlement until we descended to Cauldshiels Loch for a lunch stop amid the sheltering woodland. The loch had its own folklore allegedly being the home to a "kelpie", a water spirit that takes the form of a horse that drags its rider into the loch to drown. After lunch we further descended to the Abbotsford Estate, the baronial home of Sir Walter Scott, writer and poet much revered in the borders.

We followed the well-made riverside path, part of the Borders Abbey Way, through the estate, past the rear of the house with commanding views of the river and valley. We followed the seasonal "witches walk", an area of a variety of statuesque scenes featuring witches, goblins and other ghoulish creatures until we reached the visitors centre where we enjoyed afternoon tea and cakes (although I missed out on the jam and cream scone I loved the vegan chocolate Jaffa cake).

We briefly stopped to take photos of Abbotsford house before we continued on the Border Abbeys Way crossing the bridge at Gattonside to follow the path on the opposite side of the river to the Chain bridge and took road back to Melrose, again stopping at the George & Abbotsford hotel for a drink and met with the A Group walkers. After being thoroughly refreshed we made our way back along the river to the Waveley Castle Hotel to complete the walk.



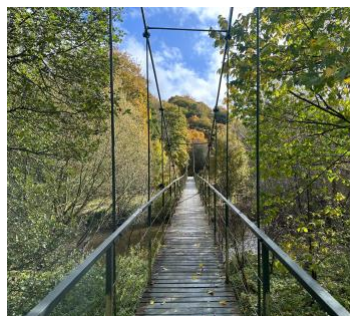
All in all a great weekend, the weather had not been too unkind to us despite the threats from the forecast. Melrose was a pretty little town with an abundance of history and folklore to share. We were welcomed by friendly townsfolk in all the pubs and cafes and should give our thanks to the Melrose Paths Association for the info on the various walks. Melrose was beautiful in the autumnal colours and I'm sure our club will come back at some time in the future possibly in a Spring season.

On behalf of Yvonne and myself many thanks to all the club members who accompanied us on our walks to make the weekend so enjoyable.

Alternative walk on Sunday led by Gary Webster

With the weather forecast bad there was only Craig and myself, we went down to the river Tweed and crossed the suspension bridge and walked past Gattonside and over the top passing Pincushion plantation, Sorrowlessfield Farm and down to Earlston. We then carried on following the river Leader and crossed over another fine old suspension bridge and returned our way back to Earlston.

From here we went through the woodlands and got great views of Black Hill. We crossed over the road and then walked across the famous Roman Bridge, we went back up to Rhymers Stone and followed the track back into the village, we got to the pub before Phil & Yvonne.



Club nights are run monthly during the winter months when we can't walk in the evenings. We enjoyed two prior to Christmas.

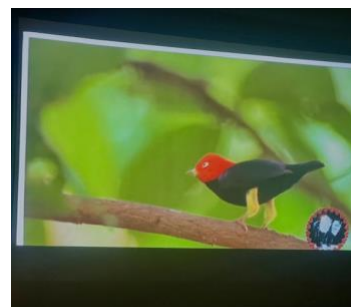
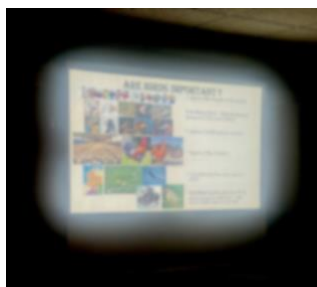
Club Night Tuesday 08 October 2024

For our first club night of the autumn, we enjoyed a fascinating talk on "What you may or may not know about birds" from our very own Chris Sewell. Chris explained that he had been bird watching for over 40 years and gave an interesting account of some of the differences between the various species and shared numerous bizarre facts along the way. Did you know that bird eggs are actually different shapes? And their different colours serve to act as camouflage to prevent them being spotted by predators.

As well as the slides showing the many colourful varieties, we were also treated to short videos showing eg an eagle's eye view of the world and some of the peculiar mating routines.

Chris's enthusiasm and knowledge for the topic led to a really enjoyable evening.

Thanks to Chris for the time and effort you expended on putting together such a great talk.



Club Night Tuesday 19 November 2024

Around 25 members enjoyed the talk by Dr Peter Sykes, a retired surgeon who treated us to his reflections on a long and rewarding career in the NHS. The talk revolved around the lighter side of hospital life: tales about interesting patients, amusing anecdotes and humorous events that he had witnessed over the years.

A large part centred on his training and how this differs significantly from that of current doctors. He revealed that they did not see a patient for 15 months, concentrating rather on theory before being let onto the wards.

Long hours and intense situations led to practical jokes amongst students – though no patients were harmed in this process.

It was obvious that Peter had enjoyed his career, confirmed by the fact that his full retirement was shortlived and he now sits on various committees, as well as passing time enjoying the 3Gs - Golf, Gardening, Grandchildren, and if honest Gin and Grumbling! He has published a number of light hearted novel and short stories and his writing continues in the form of a blog

www.medicaltales.org He donates his fee from speaking to a Manchester hospice.



Dr Peter Sykes

Apologies to those who attended for the lack of heat at St Joseph's, unfortunately the heating had not been switched on in advance of our visit and it was a very cold evening. See photo above of Lindsay being resourceful and using a blanket to keep warm. (Usually the venue is toasty!!)

Thanks for Rona for organising these events.

Walk with a difference - Wednesday 18th December

From time to time we like to do something a little different on our walks and Mike Hilton certainly achieved this by organising an urban hike through Manchester. The 24 attending caught trains to get to Manchester Oxford Road, or in the case of Craig a bus to make use of his bus pass.

This urban walk was a change from our normal walks but Mike thought it would be a good one to do on firm ground in Winter with limited daylight.

We started at Oxford Rd Station and initially headed for Castlefield where we saw the canals and (fake) Roman ruins. We made a brief visit to the National Trust Castlefield Viaduct (free entry) as we passed through the area, then headed for the Bridgewater Hall and on to the Town Hall passing the Peterloo Memorial and various other points of interest. We continued past the Hidden Gem church, Rylands library and Royal Exchange to Manchester Cathedral.

Our onward route took us to the East of the city to Angel Meadows where we had lunch in the gardens

After lunch we viewed restored mill buildings before picking up canals to take us to Piccadilly, passing the statue of Alan Turing before heading down Canal St and finally a short walk through the Chinese Quarter and finishing at Piccadilly Station.

The route took us past a number of interesting buildings and statues, many of which had information boards but Mike also provided extra information on the interesting sites we passed.

Thanks to Mike for such an interesting and very different Wednesday walk.



This is your club. As a committee we strive to make it run smoothly but if you think there is anything we can do to improve things, either email secretarywarringtonhf@gmail.com OR speak to any of the committee on a walk and we can raise it at the next committee meeting

Also, please let us know of anything you want us to include in this newsletter

We aim to publish it in January, April, July & October.



Spring Weekend Away 2025

4 – 7 April 2025 at the Derwentwater Hotel near Keswick
Please note it is April this year, not March

There are still a few places available for anyone who wishes to join us for this weekend.



£65 per person per night for a shared room
£85 pppn for single occupancy in a twin or double room
These rates are for dinner, bed and breakfast

To book on, please email secretarywarringtonhf@gmail.com
clearly stating your requirements ie:

Double/Twin or Single Room
No of nights – 2 or 3


Then send a £50 deposit to the Club Account.
The details you will need are:

Account Name : Warrington HF Rambling Club

Account number: 85115482

Sort code: 09 01 53




Reference: your name (plus what it is for eg. WE April
(NB it is a business account)



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