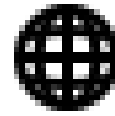




Manchester and Salford Ramblers



Newsletter No 66 June 2025



Publicity Committee Members have been out and about promoting the work of our group and The Ramblers in general, whilst meeting up with others who run other activities.



Middlewood Locks Festival Saturday 10th May. We were invited by the Canal and River Trust to join in these celebrations. The setting was at the Middlewood Locks site in Salford. It was a fabulous day with lots of festivities and plenty of people enjoying the gorgeous weather. We had plenty of interest in our stall and saw lots of ramblers there. Mags Metcalf.



GM Moving Conference. Monday 12th May saw a few of our members attend this year's event at the Lowry in Salford. It was a day of learning, connections and movement and everyone was inspired by several community and youth groups who got the event off to an active start. The panel, led by Andy Burnham and Ayisatu Emore, included a wide range of partners and the day itself had over 16 workshops and outdoor activities to join in with. It was great opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with other groups who have a shared interest in promoting and supporting active lives for all. Janice Kerrigan

Walks organiser report. The unexpected sunny spring weather has been great news for the M & S Ramblers, the Monday walks in particular have been well attended accounting for about 60% of the total number of ramblers who have joined our walks. In total 288 walkers have attended our walks since February with 169 of them being the Monday walks. The weather has undoubtedly played a major part in bringing a significant number of walkers to join our walk leaders, the monthly breakdown has been as follows Feb 61 / March 84 / April 69 / May 74, the pattern clearly shows the 4 to 5 mile walks are popular. Hopefully Summer will treat us to some decent weather, continued growth in ramblers attendances. Very soon the next walks programme for August, September and October will be published, there will be a slight change in the programme, that being ramblers will no longer be required to book onto any walk in advance on Tuesdays or Saturdays. On Tuesday June 3rd I will be attending a Zoom Conference call with other Walk Organisers to discuss Walk Leader Training, I hope to give further feedback on this in the next newsletter. Enjoy the summer & the walks and thank you to our Walk Leaders who continue to support the M & S Ramblers. Alan Scholes.

Socials Date for your diary. 9th July, Guided walk with Emma Fox taking in some of the history of Salford. We will start on Chapel street and with some diversions on the way finish at Salford museum. Look out for timings and booking details in the next week or so. A summer trip out to Knutsford with a guided walk and some time to spend strolling in Tatton park is in the planning stage. Again keep your eyes open for details Last year we cancelled our event at Stockport Air Raid tunnels due to lack of numbers. Since then several people have expressed an interest in going so this is a possibility for later in the year. Other than our annual Christmas and quiz there are no other definite plans as yet. If you have any suggestions please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you ... or seeing you very soon. Chris Quinn.



Walking Elsewhere Black Combe

This year I'm leaving the West Cumbrian bolthole I've had for over 10 years. I had two main reasons for spending time here: a quiet, 4-mile-long beach with views of the Isle of Man and proximity to

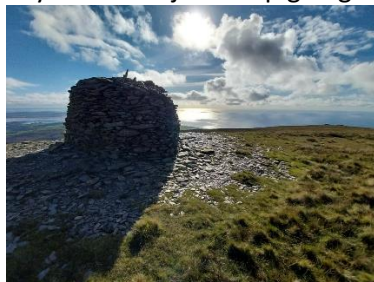
Black Combe the most southerly and westerly fell in the Lake District, prominent in views across Morecambe Bay as a dark whale-back.

From the summit of Black Comb... the amplest range; Of unobstructed prospect may be seen; That British ground commands...; In depth, in height, in circuit, how serene; The spectacle... of Nature's works; In earth, and air, and earth-embracing sea. (1)

For me, the Wordsworth quote above encapsulates Black Combe's perfect blend of high land, sea and sky. Other poets have waxed lyrical about this almost-mountain (it falls 30 feet short). Branwell Brontë, a tutor in nearby Broughton-in-Furness, was awed by 'his mighty form... formed to fight a thousand years of struggle with a storm... huge and heath clad' 2) and local poet Normal Nicholson devoted many poems to it. (3)



Most people climbing Black Combe take the 5½ mile out-and-back route from Whicham Church, where there is parking. This walk can be done in most weather conditions and needs only basic navigation as there is a well-used track all the way flanked by bracken and heather. The gradient is mostly gentle and allows plenty of opportunity to enjoy the growing seaward views. About halfway up, you may get a text message reading 'Welcome to the Isle of Man' as your phone latches onto a mast 45 miles away over the Irish Sea! The only navigation choice comes 150 yards from the summit where a stone arrow points due East to the trig point. The path briefly becomes indistinct, but you should just keep going East.



Most days you can see the Conistone Fells and the Scafell Group from the summit and if it's clear you will also see the Southern Uplands of Scotland, Ingleborough and even Wales. On descent you get wonderful views over the nearby Hodbarrow Nature Reserve and Walney Island. You could take a short diversion past a small tarn to the south summit, where there is a magnificent cairn which is easily visible from the coast. It's possible to descend, or indeed ascend, by other routes (if transport allows). Some of the best go: along Whitecombe Beck and up the mildly scrambly Horse Back ridge; down past the tiny tarn of Eller Peat Pot and the shattered cliffs of Rabbit Crag; via the low, contouring path that passes through weird rock formations at Tarn Dimples and continues over Hentoe Hill; or, from the highest point on the Fell Road, over Stoneside Hill, through the bog known as Black Dub and across gently rising moorland to the summit ridge. Wherever you go, keep your senses alert for skylarks, ravens and the occasional peregrine. Also, beware adders in the spring and summer, although I've only seen one once.



If you don't want to climb to the top, go to the minor summit of Seanness, which has wonderful views of Black Combe, the Whicham Valley and the nearby coast. Even better is Swinside stone circle, which can be approached via the A595 and a track from Cragg Hall (limited parking). It stands on the eastern flank of Black Combe in a spectacularly beautiful setting. Its alternative name, Sunkenkirk, reflects folklore about the Devil thwarting the construction of a church by stealing the stones and using them for the circle.

I've climbed Black Combe about 25 times, in all seasons. As I say goodbye to West Cumbria, I know I'm going to miss its grand but sombre beauty. Kate Wilson.

[1] View from the Top of Black Comb, William Wordsworth, 1815

[2] Black Comb, Northangerland (Branwell Brontë), 1840

[3] The Shadow of Black Combe (poems), Norman Nicholson, 1978



Our Socials Art Gallery and Street Art tour of the Northern Quarter. Great guide



Very enjoyable tour of Whalley Range with Jonathan Schofield. Stories of previous residents ranging from Victorian architects and entrepreneurs to The Smiths and Phil Lynnot. And who knew that St Bede's School started life as an unsuccessful aquarium? Thanks to Chris for organising both socials.



Carers walks Another sunny day for our walk in Didsbury. Both the longer and short walks went through three parks Fletcher Moss, Parsonage Gardens and Didsbury. The longer one also went by the river.



30 gathered in the sunshine at Debdale Park and enjoyed the lovely weather, wonderful flowers and trees, especially cherry blossom. One of the carers re-created a childhood memory of her Dad shaking the blossom from a tree all over her. Both walks included a look at Heroes wood commemorating local people who participated in womens suffragette campaigns, fought in both world wars or worked in local factories. A walk back along the side of one of the reservoirs completed the walks. Then a picnic lunch in the Centre.



24 made the most of another sunny day with walks at Sale Water Park. All enjoyed the chance to walk alongside cooling water and under lovely trees, as well as soaking up some sun. The longer walk included a stretch of the River Mersey. All surprised and pleased to see so many damselflies flitting across the path and then spot them more easily flying low over the lake. Finished off with a picnic lunch outside Tree Tops café.



For carers week in June we again had a walk for each group. In Salford Gaddum Carers held a treasure hunt at Salford Quays, supported by Ramblers Mags and Linda. Wigan & Leigh Carers visited RHS Bridgewater where Ramblers Carol & Dave led some on a tour. Manchester's walk was on green routes & Parks in Wythenshawe, supported by volunteers from Lifted carers and Margaret from Ramblers. Bury Carers supported by Shirley, Linda and Margaret, also had a sunny day at Heaton Park. All walks finished with lunch, thanks to good cafes. Thanks to players of National Lottery for funding our walks.

Keswick weekend 25 to 27 April

Fifteen of us had a great weekend. People stayed in a variety of places but a few were at the Youth Hostel which made a good base and were helpful in providing space for our Saturday evening quiz. The weather was mixed but mostly sunny and we never got really wet.



Friday. Early birds had a short walk to Derwent water, around Friars Crag, Ruskin memorial and Castle Head.



Saturday. A walk on Latrigg Fell for 14 of us. A lovely hill above Keswick. Alan led the walk and told us we were following in the footsteps of 2500 people who walked to the top in 1887 as an act of mass trespass. 9 years before the Winter Hill and 45 years before the Kinder Mass Trespasses. They had to force a chained gate open and remove other obstacles. As a result of their actions the right of the generality to access this uncultivated mountain in perpetuity was gained. Today as 'the generality' all we had to do was follow a decent track to the top. Great views of lakes, mountains and of course Keswick from the top. A lunch spot was found out of the wind on the way down a grassy slope. We then followed a lovely lane, with banks of wild flowers, back to Fitz Park and the Youth Hostel quiz time tonight.



Sunday. Various options put forward for people to do in smaller groups. Some walked the old railway line, now a walking and cycling route, Keswick to Threlkeld. Finishing up at the lovely community café in the village hall there. Two got the bus to the Lodore Falls Hotel and walked along the west side of the lake. Only a bit of drizzle at the start. Lovely route through woodland, along shoreline and towards the end through the Lingholm Estate with these handsome alpacas and a great cafe and walled garden. Three walked back to Keswick on a bit of the east side of the lake after getting a boat to Ashness Bridge.

Our group walks.



Lovely walk Worsley to Eccles along the loop line to Monton and Canal. Signs of Spring everywhere.



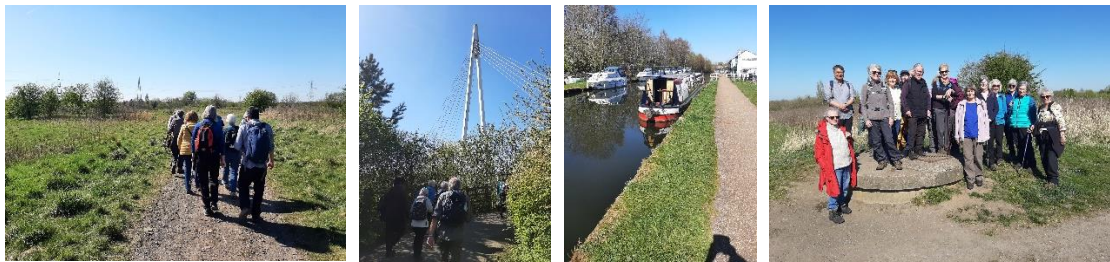
City centre walk, featuring local history points of interest. Angel Meadow, former cotton mills and the lock keeper's cottage alongside the Ashton Canal, The Glade of Light, Manchester Cathedral, Co-op Buildings.



Heaton Park slow short walk. Beautiful weather and great group of walkers.



Lovely Tatton Park walk featuring a solar eclipse, fallow & red deer, Tatton Old Hall. The remains of the medieval settlement of Tatton are nearby. The large open spaces of the park were used for parachute training in the Second World War. Lunch at the Stableyard cafe and a bit of rain as we headed back to Knutsford.



Stretford on a beautiful spring day, with great company, great walk, nice to see a deep blue cloudless sky



A small group had a good walk from Mossley to Hartshead Pike. Climbing up gave us some great views and the weather was lovely. A wait for the train gave us chance for a drink as well!



Lovely short walk today around MediaCityUK and Salford Quays. Sunshine, fine views and good company.



On a rather damp drizzly Easter Monday 21 participated in the Salford Quays to Sale Water Park walk, considering the weather it was a wonderful turn out with great company and a nice change not to encounter mud covered fields. Very Spring like in the parks with lots of fresh green leaves.



A pleasant walk from Newhey Metro up to and around the 3 reservoirs, Ogden, Kitcliffe & Piethorne.



A really good turnout, 28 on a reasonably pleasant day, including those who saw it in the GM Walking Festival. It went past Hopwood Hall and returned via Boarshaw Clough to Mills Hill.



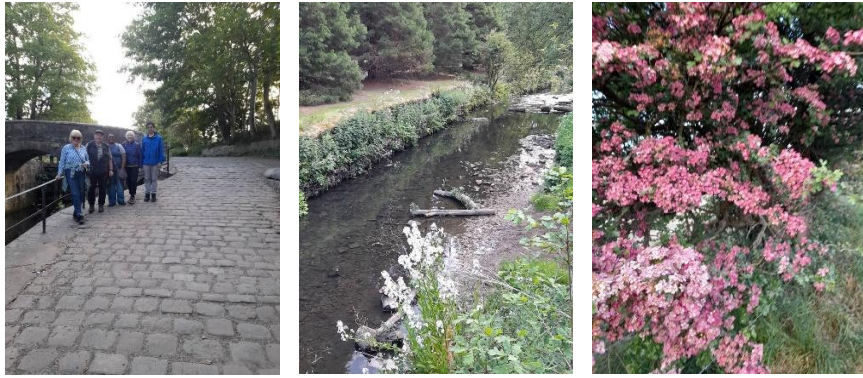
Irlam and moss lands. Very flat but a varied terrain of agricultural land, two sites managed The Woodland Trust. New Moss Wood & the exciting restoration project at Little Woollen Moss by Lancashire Wildlife Trust.



Very pleasant walk today from East Didsbury. Glorious weather and good company



Good walk on the MGT, Ardwick Green to Whitworth Park. Interesting buildings & green open spaces.



Lovely evening walk in Chadderton. We walked along the Rochdale Canal and country lanes to Chadderton Park and the River Irk. Finishing with a drink at The Rose of Lancaster.



Very enjoyable walk. From Clayton Hall along the Yellow Brick Road to Debdale, on to the Moravian Settlement, and back along the Ashton Canal. The weather was unexpectedly kind to us, as well.



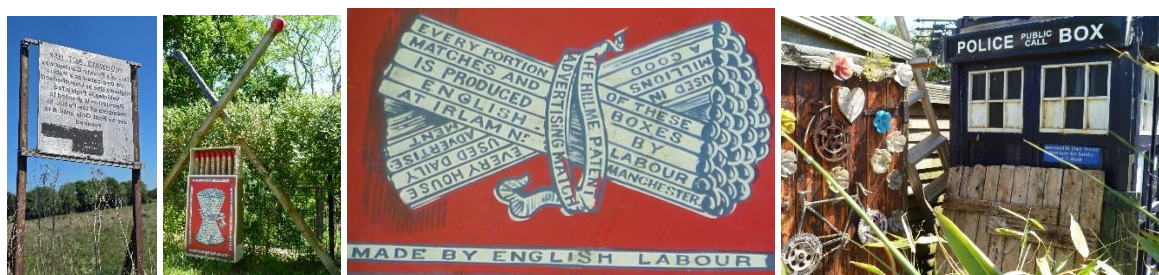
Fabulous walk from Withington metro. Sadly the information board about the local area was defaced but still legible. Past the former Withington hospital with beautiful buildings and onto river Mersey. Up to Chorlton Water park and through Southern cemetery pausing to look at both some well-known gravestones.



Great walk around the Littleborough area. Along the Pennine Bridleway with some fabulous views despite the weather forecast. Down towards Hollingworth Lake and back along the Rochdale Canal.



Castleton to Shaw. View from Tandle Hill towards Rochdale with the "seven sisters" flats prominent



A few of the interesting things seen on our recent walks.

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