



The Poly Rambler

Members' Newsletter of the Polytechnic Rambling Club

www.polyramblers.org.uk

Contents

Page

- 1 Chairman's Message**
Mike Coyle
- 2-3 Snow-walking weekend in Fussen (January 2016)**
Dominique Marchand
- 4 Gerard Kremenstein**
Christine Bignold & Arnold Kremenstein
- 5-7 Dorset YHA Weekend**
Pam Massey
- 8 Weekends away planned for 2017**
Gillian Swan

We've had some pretty grim weather in the first part of 2016 and wellies have been the first choice of footwear for many of us. We have still managed some good walks and it is heartening for the organisers that attendance levels have been relatively unaffected.

It is becoming more difficult to find pubs that offer simple food and are happy to cater for groups of walkers. Rural pubs in particular are finding it harder to make a living and seem to be concentrating more and more on being restaurants. Some pubs now ask larger groups to order in advance and although this seems rather prescriptive to traditionalists like me, it does seem to work well both for the pub and the group. It's a bit more effort for the organiser who has to pass the menu round on the train and ring the pub, but it does mean that we usually get taken straight to our table and don't have to form a scrum at the bar.

Chairman's message

Thanks to all of you who came to the AGM. It was particularly good to have Quintin with us again after his years in the wilderness. We must take better care of him in the future!

The officers and committee were elected unchanged and obviously we are all happy to continue. However, we do think that it could benefit the club if there was a greater turnover, thereby bringing in new ideas.

Please all have a think about whether you feel you could serve as a committee member. Unless you are the Secretary or the Walks Organiser, the duties are not onerous and there are just 4 meetings per year. Do speak to a committee member if you think you can help.

Although a good few of you expressed a preference for Sunday walks at the AGM, the ones that have taken place so far this year have not been well attended. In general, our organisers prefer Saturday walks as there is a better train service and pubs are less busy, so if you really do prefer Sunday walks, please try and support those that we offer. Or why not put one on the programme yourself?

Here's hoping for a fine summer's walking.
Mike Coyle



Material for this edition collated by the committee.
Production by Kim Chowns
Printing arrangements by Dominique Le Marchand.

The Polytechnic Rambling Club

(in association with the
University of Westminster)
Founded 1885

Affiliated to the Ramblers'
Association (Inner London Area)
Affiliated to HF Holidays

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

President

Christine Bignold

Vice Presidents

Margaret Lanham
Rosemary MacLoughlin
Professor Geoffrey Petts

GENERAL COMMITTEE

CLUB OFFICERS

Chair

Mike Coyle

General Secretary

Gillian Swan

Treasurer

Daniel Duffy

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Hilary Abbey
Pam Beach
Kim Chowns
Dominique Le Marchand
Solvig Starborg
Stuart Swan
Geoffrey Waters

CONTACT FOR CORRESPONDENCE

Kim Chowns

k.chowns@yahoo.co.uk

Club's Facebook page:

<http://tinyurl.com/qclyyfq>

Snow-walking weekend in Fussen (Bavaria) – 15 to 18 January 2016

The weeks before our departure for Fussen, I kept checking the weather forecast and the webcams in Fussen. No sign of snow. And then, the day before we left, it started falling and we arrived in a winter wonderland scenery.

After an uneventful journey by plane from Heathrow to Munich and by train to Fussen, we settled in our accommodation only a few minutes' walk from the station. After Stuart had sawn the padlock to Hema's suitcase, we went for a walk around the beautiful old town. We had dinner at Gasthof Krone where we had to wear bibs instead of using napkins. We enjoyed a range of Bavarian delicacies such as pork dripping, knuckle of pig and various types of sausages.

The scenery on the Saturday morning was beautiful as more snow had fallen during the night. We travelled by bus (free thanks to the Fussen guest card) to the Hohenschwangau and Neuschwanstein castles. We first did a guided tour of Hohenschwangau castle with an amusing guide who told us that King Ludwig was not mad, but eccentric. We then climbed the hill to Neuschwanstein castle where we had a tour with an audio guide (not as good as with a person). It looks like a fairytale castle from the outside but is heavily decorated inside with many swans in all shapes and forms all over the place. We walked back to Fussen on snowy paths (except for Danny who took the bus back to research a restaurant for our evening meal). We decided to use our grips after Stuart slipped on an icy patch. Putting our grips on is always an ordeal – although it gets easier by the end of the weekend - and we had to hold on to each other and to trees before getting them on. We walked through the woods to Schwansee, up along the side of Mount Kienberg and arrived in Fussen as night and the snow fell. We had another excellent meal, at the Aquila restaurant this time



Snow-walking weekend in Fussen (Bavaria) – 15 to 18 January 2016 continued

It was snowing heavily when we started our walk on Sunday along the river Lech. We crossed it and were soon walking on a path in the middle of snowy fields before reaching lake Forggensee. The snow stopped and started. We walked along the lake which was covered with snow and ice up to Waltenhofen and then followed the road to Schwangau. We continued along the road to the cable car station where we had a hot drink before going up on the cable car to the top of Tegelberg (1,707m). The summit was in the clouds – no view - and it was very cold so we had lunch. Stuart and Danny had an enormous knodel (dumpling) filled with plum jam and served with vanilla sauce which they shared with most of the group. This was washed down with plenty of gluhwein and beer.

When we arrived back down after taking the cable car, the snow had stopped and we walked back to Fussen through the countryside with the two castles in the background. We crossed the river Lech once more and followed it to Fussen.as heavy snow started to fall again. That evening, we ate a Herzl am Rathaus, a restaurant that serves, among other things, Flammkuchen, Rösti, and fried potatoes with fried egg on top.



On the day we were leaving, we woke up to a brilliant sunshine, blue sky but very cold temperature. While Danny went on a bus tour to make maximum use of his Fussen card, we walked to Alatsee. Before following the river Lech westward, we stopped at the beautiful St Mang church. We then took a path that went up in the woods, walking along a narrow track for a while before reaching the lake. It was frozen and there was a magnificent background with the mountains. We walked back to Fussen along a small road and arrived in town to see a dozen hot air balloons above the mountains. We just had time for a quick meal and shopping before catching the train to Munich airport for our flight home. Another lovely weekend that went far too quickly.

Start thinking about next January when we will be going to Oberammergau - <http://www.ammergauer-alpen.de/oberammergau/en>



Gerard Kremenstein : 1935-2016

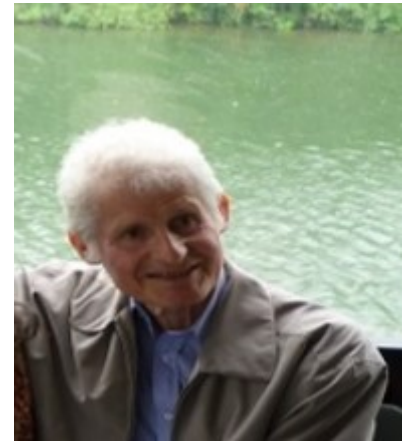
Gerard was born on 15th July 1935 in Paris, the eldest of three brothers, to an English mother and Polish father. In June 1942 his father was arrested, interned and deported to Auschwitz, where he died on 10 August that year. This event marked him for life. The family arrived in England on 8th November 1945.

In April 1946, the three brothers were taken to the Jewish Orphanage, West Norwood, south east London where Gerard spent 5 years. In 1955, he was called up for National Service and spent a year in Penang, Malaysia.

After leaving the Army Gerard went to live with his mother and younger brother Fernand and they eventually settled in Wembley, Middlesex. Their mother died in 1991 and Fernand died in 2004. The death of Fernand affected him deeply as he was now on his own. His health gradually deteriorated and, following a fall at home and spending two months in hospital, he was admitted into a care home in September 2015. Although he was very unhappy there, he was comforted by visits from many friends including Poly members. He died in hospital following a heart attack, on 16th January this year.

During his working life, Gerard had various office jobs, starting with Thomas Cook when he left school and ending in the employ of a subsidiary of Associated British Foods.

A big part of Gerard's life was his time as a member of the Polytechnic Rambling Club which he joined in 1964, following (literally) in the footsteps of his brother Arnold who had joined in the previous year.



Gerard, in his heyday, was always the life and soul of the party. He would sing, dance, play the clown, and spoke fluent French when the occasion arose, such as on Dominique's first Club weekend in France. He enjoyed Latin American music to which he would dance, as many Club members will recall. Very talented and versatile, Gerard, known as "Gerald" by Club members, was on the Committee as Secretary at some point until eventually he became a Vice President of the Club which he remained until the end. He made many friends at the Club, and he loved his walks including night walks, weekends away, Youth Hostel weekends and a skiing holiday – many places he said that he would not have visited had it not been for the Rambling Club.

So it is farewell Gerard. God bless and rest in peace.

Christine Bignold and Arnold Kremenstein

Dorset YHA Weekend

Lulworth, Dorset coast, is a very pretty part of the county, and has some of the best coastline on the Jurassic Coast. But by crikey, it's steep! We climbed hills I heard someone mutter must be 1-in-3. They felt almost vertical as I huffed and puffed my way up them, and I was certainly totally horizontal as I collapsed at the top, gasping for breath before attempting the next equally challenging ascent!

From the very quaint and pretty thatched village of West Lulworth, a short walk down to the fish-bowl shaped Lulworth Cove, we girded our loins and started the climb to Durdle Door, about 2 miles westward. The green grassy chalk hill, with stunning views at the top, looking out over the Door/ archway, that sticks out on a tiny bit of land attached to the rest of the cliff. People swarming over it like ants along the perilously narrow gauge of a path not yet eroded away by the sea swishing around 3 sides of it. The climb was well rewarded by the view, enhanced by the blue sky and blue sea, white chalky cliff-face, and the green green grass of, well, in my case, home, as I've been living 20 minutes drive from this for the last 9 years!



We divided into 2 walking groups – basically the faster group going 3 miles further west, to Ringstead. I discovered I'm the slowest of the fast and the fastest of the slow....

Two more hills after Durdle Door, just as steep as the first one. Another beautiful vista from the top as I looked back from Swyre Head. One more hill (must be good for me I told myself, as it really got the heart pumping!), with a view down to Bats Hole Cove and a smaller eroded chalky archway jutting out of the cliff with sea swishing through it.

At the top of the third ascent was an obelisk, where Danny, Almas and I sat and ate our lunch. We were still on the cliff path, facing the sea, but at that moment the sea mist rolled in thick and fast, and I was lucky to find my sandwich, let alone the view!

After our short lunch break we 3 went through a new gate into a field, and doubled back along the flat path beside the arable fields. Back to the huge Durdle Door blot-on-the-landscape caravan park, but with a decent bar, café, and loos! We arrived at the same time as the faster group who'd walked further than us!

Evening meal in YHA, well prepared by Lorna and her team. A social chatty evening spent over a yummy meal. The previous evening, we had all eaten at the Cove Inn, down, not surprisingly, near the cove... And we managed 2 or 3 visits to the pretty thatched Castle Inn at the end of the YHA road leading in to the village.

Sunday morning, we walked northward, just at the edge of West Lulworth, then joined a footpath leading west, through farmland, finishing very high above that same caravan park, with good view of the coastline and countryside.

Continued on next page

Dorset YHA Weekend continued

Back down to the caravan park café and loos, where again the group split – Some directly back to Lulworth; Some directly onto the coastal path and *down* that first steep hill. And some through Scratchy Bottom. Yes. I even got the itch to go there myself. It's an easy and pleasant walk along a valley between two hills, as I suppose valley's tend to be from the caravan park, back out to the coastal path just west of Durdle Door. I have since been told by a local that she thinks its so-named because there used to be lots of prickly bushes in the valley before it was cleared for farmland. Apparently she once went to a party where everyone had to dress as a local place name. There were a lot of prickly bushes around bottoms at this party!



At the highest point of Durdle Door I caught up with those in the fast group who had stopped to admire the view, and the last group to leave the café who had taken the shorter route direct from the bar to the Door (isn't that usually the other way round?).

Back down the hill into Lulworth Cove, where I showed whoever was around STAIR HOLE: A different view on the edge of the cove, with fascinating geology in its exposed rocky cliff-side. Then back down to sea level, to the only café on the seafront: Best view. Worst menu. Basically scones or scones. Sweet or savoury. Takes your choice.



Dorset YHA Weekend continued

Finally, the 2 mile or so walk back to the hostel, and a relay of taxis to Wool train station.

My own fond farewells to everyone, as this will probably be my last Poly event before I return to Australia – unless you would like me to organise one over there!!...

I would like to take this opportunity to say that I have really enjoyed my 6 weekends and one Christmas dinner with you over these few years. You're a great social group as well as a walking group, and thanks to Hazel for introducing me!

The Polytech Ramblers are a walking group who meet
And socialise together. It's not all about their feet.
They leg it here and leg it there
Round Britain and beyond.
In winter and in summer, they ramble on and on....

An interesting collection of people of all sorts.
Colourful personalities all gather for the walks.
Camaraderie is good, and friendships have been made,
And I'm going to miss you all, and partly wish I'd stayed....

But 3 little pigs are calling in my new straw bale abode
As I travel far from Dorset and prepare to hit the road.
Adventure in Australia, as my caring here is done.
No family here to keep me now I've lost my mum.

So if you come to Perth, as an English Pom,
Then contact if you like
My email's: mapyessam@hotmail.com



Weekends away planned for 2017

Destination	Dates (all provisional)	Organiser
Snow walking in Oberammergau, Bavaria	January – exact dates to be confirmed	Dominique le Marchand
Rent-a-Hostel weekend-Portland	March 24-26th	Danny Duffy
Aosta Valley, Western Alps, Italy (train or coach from Turin)	Spring Bank holiday weekend (end of May)	Susan James
Icknield Way weekend walk from Great Chesterford	June/July	Gillian Swan
Devon and Dartmoor – based at Exeter University campus	August bank holiday weekend	Mike Coyle
Autumn weekend to be decided	October	Who knows?!

Gillian Swan

Discover
a whole new world of walking

Experts in
FREEDOM
since 1913

Call NOW
for the latest
holiday offers

Speak to the experts
0345 470 7558 or visit
www.hfholidays.co.uk

hfholidays
walking and activity holidays
.co.uk