



The Poly Rambler

Members' Newsletter of the Polytechnic Rambling Club

www.polyramblers.org.uk

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Chair's message continued

Mike will continue to be on our committee and has agreed to continue his lead role on the website and record of walks.

The committee has benefitted from two new members Susan James and Jennifer Mackenzie. We continue to be well supported by the tireless efforts and efficiency of all of the committee members without whom the club would not function.

The AGM was well attended and Gillian ensured that food was provided along with plenty of drink in spite of a last-minute hiccup by the university. The Rambler of the year award went to Sunita Shah for the second year running. A very well done to Sunita!

Chair's message

Following Mike's decision to stand down at the AGM, I was duly elected as the new Chair. I have been a member of the Poly Ramblers for around eighteen years and more recently a committee member. My retirement last year has given me the opportunity to become more involved in the planning of our weekends away and weekly walks.

Mike had been the Chairman of the club for the past five years and during that time has transformed our website with Clive our website co-ordinator. The website is really informative and updated regularly ensuring that the walk programme and pictures of past and current events are easily accessible.

The club continues to provide a varied programme of walks and arranging weekend trips. These can only be achieved by willing leaders. We are keen to encourage members who have not previously led a walk and would be happy to ensure that you are well supported to do this.

On a more personal note I have enjoyed many years of being part of a great group of ramblers who are all keen to experience a variety of walks not put off by rain mud or snow and look forward too many more trips away and new places to explore.

Best wishes

Hilary Abbey

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**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

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Susan James
Dominique Le Marchand
Jennifer MacKenzie
Geoffrey Waters

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Club's Facebook page:

<http://tinyurl.com/qclyyfq>

* Articles for inclusion in the
newsletter are welcome from all
members. They should be walk
related, but do not necessarily
have to be about a club walk,
e.g. walking holiday or what the
club was like in the past.

Spring bank holiday 2019

The Spring bank holiday trip for next year will be to the Dolomites, Italy, for four days walking, plus three days sightseeing for those who wish to stay longer.

More details to follow regarding location, accommodation and flights in the next newsletter.



Photo - Country walkers



Photo - rei.com

Best wishes

Susan

The Annual YHA weekend trip to Street in Somerset 2018

The 16th rent a hostel weekend was held near the historic town of Street in Somerset. Twenty one PolyRamblers participated. Street Hostel is the oldest YHA Hostel still in operation, opening in 1931. The accommodation was surprisingly warm and comfortable for a weekend with a number of weather challenges of wind, some rain and plenty of snow!



After we had settled into the Hostel and the food had been delivered, minus the bread, we walked to Street to wander through the Clarks Village shopping outlet. It is also the location of the shoe museum, which details the history of Clarks and footwear manufacture in general. Danny managed to find a shop still open to buy most of their stock of bread for the weekend!

We had an evening meal at Wetherspoons and then stopped off at a local pub to listen to some music with a decibel level that tested our hearing!

On Saturday, Danny led a nine mile walk from the hostel along part of the Polden Way, enjoying extensive views from Walton Hill. We then went down to the Somerset Levels to visit the church at Dundon, followed by a circuit around Lollover Hill and then a reward for our efforts with lunch in Compton Dundon. A few opted to stay at the church, whilst the rest began the circuit of Lollover Hill. Predictably the lead walkers decided that the best views were at the summit of the hill. A somewhat disorganised descent followed with members going in all directions downhill! In the afternoon we climbed back up to the Polden ridge to see the Hood memorial and a view of Glastonbury Tor in the distance, before a somewhat muddy walk back to the hostel.

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YHA weekend continued

In the evening, we enjoyed a meal of Vegetable Curry and Portuguese Pork, which Lorna coordinated, followed by rhubarb crumble and very creamy white chocolate mousse. The cooking was excellent and everyone pitched in to make it a great success!



On Sunday we awoke to a white vista outside and with snow still falling it felt reminiscent of the snow walking weekend in Bavaria! After breakfast, we caught a bus to Glastonbury and undeterred by the snow a good number of us started the somewhat slippery climb to the top of Glastonbury Tor. The views from the top made it all worthwhile. We returned back to the hostel for our trip back to London and luckily there was no significant disruption to trains and buses despite the mini Beast from the East.



Many thanks to Danny for all his hard work in the organisation of the weekend and ensuring everyone's travel arrangements went to plan and a special thank you to Lorna for organising Saturday's dinner.

Hilary

SNOW-WALKING WEEKEND IN BAVARIA 12-15 JANUARY 2018

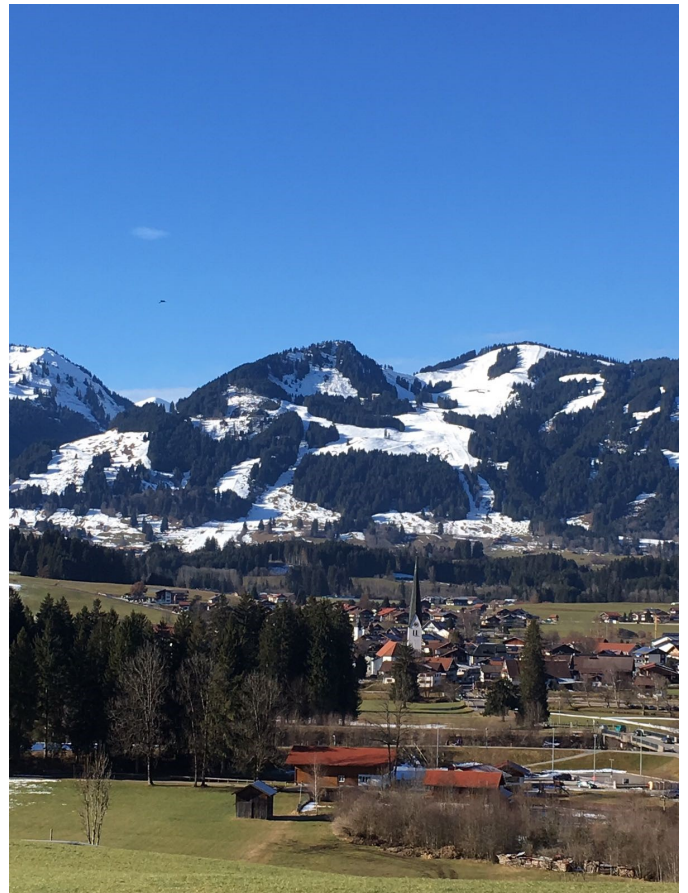


After flying to Munich and a smooth train journey to Fischen, 12 Polyramblers arrived in gastehaus Luitz-Kennerknecht where we received a very warm welcome from the Kennerknecht family. Because the owners of the guest-house do not speak fluent English, their daughter and son-in-law – who speak English – came to stay to look after us. Instead of doing a walk around Fischen, we drank beer in the lounge with our hosts (Katja, Alex and their parents) and had a lovely glass of apricot

schnapps. We had a nice dinner in Beim Kreuzwirt (booked by our hosts) accompanied by a musician and his accordion. Back at the guesthouse, a few of us had a nightcap while the rest went to bed after a long day of travel.

On Saturday, there were low clouds when we got up and, after a hearty breakfast, we made our way to the bus station where we caught a bus to Bolsterlang. We took the Hornerbahn cable car and arrived at the top of the mountain above the clouds in the sunshine. It felt like being on top of the world. We did a lollipop-shape walk, stopping after a mile at Berghaus Schwaben for a drink. We left the Strollers there and continued the walk. We stopped for a light lunch at Berghaus Schwaben on the way back and the Strollers were still there. They made their way back to the cable car but stopped at the café for lunch. After their lunch, the Hikers took the cable car down and walked back to Fischen across fields and woodland, stopping from time to time to put on or take off our shoe grips. The Strollers also took the cable car down and walked back to Fischen along the road. Julia and Steve took the wrong bus back to Fischen and ended up arriving after everyone else. Dinner was at the Bauernkeller restaurant followed by a nightcap in the guesthouse.

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SNOW-WALKING WEEKEND CONTINUED



On Sunday after breakfast, on another sunny but very cold day, the Hikers and the Strollers took the train to Oberstdorf and then the bus to Kleinwalsertal in Austria. The Hikers walked from Mittelberg to Baad along the Promenadenweg and the Hohenweg. The snowy mountain scenery with the blue sky was fabulous. We then followed the river Barguntbach on a high path and arrived at the Bargunthutte where we met the Strollers who had taken the bus to Baad and then walked up the river along the low path. After lunch, the Hikers walked back to Baad and Mittelberg and, as it was a lovely day, we continued to Hirschegg where we took the bus back to Oberstdorf and the train back to Fischen. The Strollers walked down to Baad where they had quite a long lunch stop. They then took 2 buses to Schöllang and walked back to the guesthouse. In the evening, we had dinner at the guesthouse. We were served specialties of the Allgau region and a delicious dessert made by Katja's brother. The meal was copiously accompanied by beer, wine, schnapps and conversation.

For our last day, the Strollers strolled in Fischen and, in Danny's case, had some 'me-time' reading the paper. The Hikers walked to the Hinang waterfall, one of the prettiest in the Allgau. The path was very slippery around the waterfall with ice shining like diamonds. We then walked up through pastures and woodland with beautiful views of the valley and the mountains. We descended through Schöllang and Au and made our way to Fischen for lunch – passing the river where Stuart's pet trout was waiting for a treat. It was soon time to say goodbye to the lovely Kennerknecht family who had looked after us so well during our stay. After a smooth train journey to Munich, we flew back to London after another lovely weekend in Germany. We'll be back in January 2019 after seeing Bavaria with its spring colours.

Dominique



Pat House 1947 - 2018



Patricia House was born on 1st January 1947 to Albert and Lillian McCall, a market porter and a part time seamstress. Her early life was spent in Hornsey, in the borough of Islington, North London.

Although there was little money in her family, Pat grew up in a very loving environment, in a community that went out of its way to support and look out for each other. For those that knew Pat, the influence of this upbringing would be evident in the unquestioning love and support that she gave to her family and friends throughout her life.

When it was time to settle down and start a family, Pat married Brian and moved to Bushey, a place that remained special to her for the rest of her life.

She played an active role in the community in which she lived. She regularly helped out at her children's schools, spent many evenings washing muddy football kit for Bushey Rangers, and later in life even when her illness was affecting her, helped to organise the Bushey festival. Working for Social Services and the Care Quality Commission again Pat showed her dedication and desire to help others. She was absolutely committed to the work she was doing and nothing was ever too much trouble, if she thought that she could make a difference.

Pat was someone who enjoyed an active social life and developed a wide network of friends. I got to know Pat through mutual friends in Bushey. For quite a number of years we would just meet at parties and other social functions, but when we both found ourselves on our own we became closer. Our first holiday together was to Dubrovnik, which we both enjoyed. A short time after I decided to join the Polyramblers and Pat joined too. I remember our first weekend away was to Pickering on the August Bank Holiday, I think it was in 2005. We had such a good time and the members were so welcoming, we knew we had made a good decision. From then on we tried to make at least one weekend a year. I cannot name them all, but some we remembered fondly, particularly Pat's last one to Berwick. An area she was very keen to go to.

Pat was a great listener and would always be ready to hear anyone's problems. She was incredibly private and never liked to make a fuss, even when she was struggling with her illness. She had an amazing ability to see things from a different point of view, extremely passionate about her beliefs and was not afraid to speak her mind. And to the last she showed great courage and unrelenting concern for her family.

She will be sadly missed by her children, grandchildren and her many friends.

Judy Cleveland

Update on the AGM catering

Those of you who attended the AGM this year in early March may remember seeing me running around looking harassed before the meeting started due to the non-appearance of our catering order, which we had ordered and paid for in advance. When I went down to the canteen to investigate, everything was locked up but I did find a helpful member of catering team who seemed to think I had cancelled the order. I assured her that I had not done so and she was able to partially save the day by rustling up a few sandwich platters, some very large oranges of the hard-to-peel variety, an enormous bowl of crisps and the requisite number of bottles of wine. The cheese platter, crudité platter and full fruit bowl could not be produced as the chef was not in. So we didn't go hungry but it was disappointing that we were not able to enjoy the full spread ordered, especially as David and Mary Stevens and Danny were kindly funding the catering to mark milestone birthdays.

Needless to say I contacted the University the next day for an explanation. It turned out that the problem arose because of the snowy weather that week. The doom-laden forecasts of snow-related travel disruption led the University conference team to contact everyone who had bookings to check if they were still going ahead. I phoned back on Friday morning to confirm but had to leave a message as no one had made it in to answer the phones. In the meantime, unbeknown to me, the hospitality manager had decided to cancel our order on the assumption that we would be unable to travel to London or the meeting! An 'interesting' decision given that the catering was booked and paid for. I am pleased to report that after a couple of email exchanges I managed to secure a full apology from both the University and the hospitality manager, and more importantly, a 50% reduction on the total catering bill. It is clear that the University have learnt a few lessons from this experience and hopefully this won't happen again.

Thanks to the 34 members who battled through the snow (!) to attend the AGM and apologies that the catering was not up to scratch this year.

Gillian

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