



# The Poly Rambler

Members' Newsletter of the Polytechnic Rambling Club

[www.polyramblers.org.uk](http://www.polyramblers.org.uk)

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## Chair's message

We have had a busy summer programme of walks and walking weekends, all of which have been well attended. The weather has been very kind to walkers and members who have recently joined our club have been some of the best attendees. Trains have presented some difficulties as there have been last minute cancellations necessitating changes to the programme. Reading the website will give you up to date information in addition to emails!

Our summer walk programme included a well-attended visit to the Angels Costume Museum organised by Sandra. We had an informative guided tour of the extensive collection of costumes for television drama. These visits add to the richness and variety of our programme, any ideas for other tours or visits are very welcome.

The club funds are in a healthy state and so we have made a donation of £250 for a metal gate in the Chilterns. The gate will have a plaque in memory to Peter Gould who worked hard to ensure that the Poly Ramblers had an increased membership, he also organised a number of walks and trips.

Gillian wrote to the Vice Chancellor of Westminster University Peter Bonfield who was delighted to accept an invitation to be an Honorary Member of the Poly Ramblers Club. The Vice Chancellor has also offered to arrange a tour of the Westminster Campus.

Christine Bignold has written a letter to express a special thank you to Poly Ramblers who wished her a speedy recovery from a recent injury and hopes to attend our Xmas meal.

The annual Xmas lunch will soon be upon us please see the menu in our newsletter.

I am looking forward to as good a turnout for our Autumn Programme.

**Best Wishes Hilary**



Material for this edition collated by the committee.  
Production by Kim Chowns

## 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

#### Honorary members

Christine Bignold  
Peter Bonfield  
Rosemary MacLoughlin

### GENERAL COMMITTEE

#### CLUB OFFICERS

##### Chair

Hilary Abbey

##### General Secretary

Gillian Swan

##### Treasurer

Daniel Duffy

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Pam Beach

Kim Chowns

Mike Coyle

Susan James

Dominique Le Marchand

Jennifer MacKenzie

Geoffrey Waters

#### CONTACT FOR

#### CORRESPONDENCE\*

Kim Chowns

k.chowns@yahoo.co.uk

#### Club's Facebook page:

<http://tinyurl.com/qclyyfq>

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\* 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 past  
memories of events and walks.

## SNOW-WALKING WEEKEND – FRIDAY 17 TO MONDAY 20 JANUARY 2020

This time, the snow-walking weekend will be in Scharnitz in the Tyrol region of Austria close to the German border and less than an hour by train from Innsbruck. Scharnitz (964m) is situated in a narrow valley close to the springs of the Isar River. Accommodation will be in B&B. <https://www.seefeld.com/en/scharnitz-tyrol>

Danny and I have booked flights with BA, going from London Gatwick to Innsbruck and coming back from Munich to London Heathrow on the later flight. Prices are correct as of 20 August 2019.

If you are interested in taking part in this weekend, please book your flights with BA: <https://www.britishairways.com/en-gb/home#/> you have to choose the **Multi city option**

Book flight BA2690 on 17 January from **Gatwick** at 9.00, arrive **Innsbruck** at 12.00.

£66 with hand luggage and £86 with luggage in the hold.

*There is also a BA flight from Heathrow at 9.25, arrive Innsbruck 12.25.*

£61 with hand luggage and £77 with luggage in the hold.

Returning from **Munich** on 20 January on BA flight BA0961 at 20.30, arrive **Heathrow** at 21.35.

£55 with hand luggage and £65 with luggage in the hold.

*There is also a BA flight from Munich at 17.55, arrive Heathrow at 19.10.*

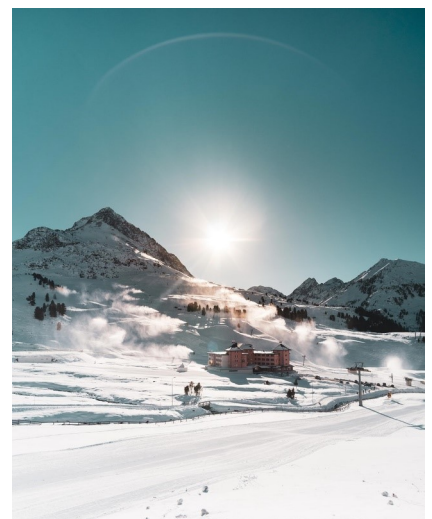
£43 with hand luggage and £53 with luggage in the hold. *This means an early start from Scharnitz at around noon.*

The alternative is to book a return flight to Munich with BA or Lufthansa and make your way to Scharnitz by train via Munich main station to Scharnitz, changing at Garmisch-Partenkirchen. Easyjet also flies to Innsbruck and Munich. The itinerary from Munich Airport to Scharnitz will be provided.

Once you have booked your flight, please let Dominique know by emailing me

[tonybyrnes@compuserve.com](mailto:tonybyrnes@compuserve.com) or  
phoning or texting me on 07908  
623 207.

**Dominique**



## PEDDARS WAY, STAGE ONE: KNETTISHALL HEATH TO SWAFFHAM 21-23 JUNE

The Peddar's Way begins at Knettishall Heath in Suffolk and runs for 46 miles north to finish at Holme-next-the-sea on the north Norfolk coast. The path is characterised by being very straight and pretty flat. In this trip I aimed to get us half way to the coast. Thetford is the nearest town to the start point but is severely lacking in affordable accommodation. For this reason, most of the group stayed at the Best Western in Bury St Edmunds, while Geoffrey and Harriet stayed in the only B&B in Thetford. The Bury St Edmunds group enjoyed an excellent meal at Francela's in the town centre while the Thetford group ate with Harriet's god daughter who lives locally.

Next morning the two groups met at the start point at Knettishall Heath car park where we finished the Icknield Way a year ago. I hadn't quite realised there was another larger car park three quarters of a mile down the road so Harriet and Geoffrey had to start the day by walking back to the start point. We headed off on a woodland path and within half a mile crossed the Little Ouse river into Norfolk. Our first challenge of the day was crossing the extremely busy and fast A14, not easy at all. The Ramblers should really campaign for a footbridge or tunnel here. Later we crossed the Ely -Thetford railway, where a tunnel was provided, in spite of there being only a few trains per day. Ironic really.



Our first goal was the Dog and Partridge pub at East Wretham, about 6 miles in. Most of us were starting to flag by then in the warmth of the day and our heavy packs so we were happy to sit down for a reviving drink.

We carried on and soon stopped for lunch on the edge of some woods. We came upon a large military training area on our left which seemed to go on for miles. Some villages in this area were evacuated in WW2 for military use and remain MoD property. This was also the area for Pingo Ponds. Pingoos are not water fowl as the name suggests, but ponds formed in the Ice Age. We didn't actually see any as they were off the main path; whether we missed anything is open to question.



We also saw the first two Norfolk Songline Sculptures, an arts project inspired by the Peddar's Way. It's a shame they were quite weathered and difficult to read. Later we stopped for half an hour on the edge of a field to rest and soak up the sun before the final push into the town of Watton. I offered a shortcut into town but everyone declined. Some may have regretted this after a two mile slog along the road to our accommodation. Meanwhile

Dominique and Sunita had a similar long walk to their B&B. Both the Willow House in Watton, where we also had dinner, and Phoenix House near Little Cressingham were excellent.



**Continued on next page**

## PEDDARS WAY continued

The distance for Sunday promised to be shorter – 12 miles rather than 15. About half the group decided to book a taxi to avoid another slog down the road back to the route.

We were back on the Peddar's Way again by 10am and this time the majority of the walking was on hard surfaces so our feet soon started to suffer.

The guidebook suggested various detours to interesting old churches with wall paintings but our goal was the Blue Lion pub at North Pickenham which we were pleased to find open. The landlord was friendly and welcoming. After lunch on the village green we started on our last couple of miles of the Way before turning off to the market town of Swaffham. We arrived in Swaffham in time for an ice cream before catching the bus to Kings Lynn and the train to Cambridge and London.

Looking forward to the last 26 miles to the coast next year. After that we hope to tackle the North Norfolk coast path. **Gillian**

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### August Bank Holiday Weekend - Lancaster

*Friday 23 August 2019:* 37 Polyramblers descended on Lancaster university for a long weekend of walking and sightseeing. After a walk around the city centre led by Hilary, we had an excellent dinner at the Wagon and Horses.

*Saturday 24 August 2019:* We all had breakfast at the university. The hikers left early and travelled to Caton where they started their walk. They followed the river Lune through lovely countryside - with some mud at the beginning of the walk and a lot of stiles - to Kirkby Lonsdale.



The strollers left a bit later and travelled to Kirkby Lonsdale where they did a circular walk following the river Lune, turning west towards the village of Whittington (nothing to do with Dick!) and returning to Kirkby along a bridleway which had turned into a river (or a raging torrent according to one of the strollers). All Polyramblers met at the end of the walk and had a beer / ice cream / tea before catching the bus back to Lancaster.

*Sunday 25 August 2019:* After travelling from Lancaster to Arnside on a rail replacement bus (shortage of train drivers) the hikers joined around 200 other walkers in support of Galloway's Society for the Blind for a walk across Morecambe Bay led by the Queen's Guide to the Sands, Michael Wilson. The walk started on a very hot day in the picturesque village of Arnside and continued across the famous sands for approximately 8 miles. The walkers sometimes had to wade into water up to their knees or thighs, until they reached the village of Kent's Bank. After receiving their certificate, they headed to the pub for a well-deserved drink.



**Continued on next page**

## Bank holiday weekend in Lancaster continued

The strollers were also affected by the shortage of train drivers. They took a train to Carnforth and had an hour to wait for the train to Arnside. No brief encounter, but time for a visit of the lovely station heritage centre and coffee (and cakes). Once in Arnside, they started the walk up to Arnside Knott (159m) and had a quick picnic at the top while admiring the view. It was very hot so the walk was cut short. They went down to New Barns Bay and walked along the coast to Arnside where they headed to the pub for a drink (not as well-deserved as the hikers’).

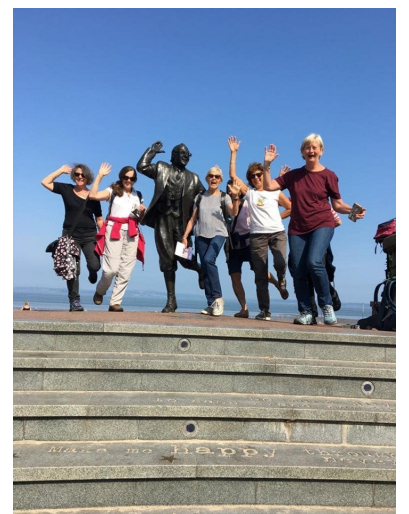


*Monday 26 August 2019:* The day started very cloudy, but the sun appeared after lunch. The Hikers took the train to Wennington for a lovely walk in undulating countryside and through villages. They had to battle nettles and thistles through a field of hens and eggs, go through a field of inquisitive cows and climb a few challenging stiles. They had a picnic lunch by the river Lune and a pub stop. They then followed the Lancaster Canal to Carnforth to catch the train back to Lancaster.

The strollers’ walk did not involve any transport. They left the university and walked along country lanes before reaching the Lancaster Canal which they followed for a while. The walk took them along a disused railway line which they followed to Condor Green for lunch at the Stork Inn. They returned to the university through farmland and along the canal. For the last evening, the whole group had dinner at the Lancaster House Hotel.



*Tuesday 26 August 2019:* On their last day in Lancashire, the Polyramblers went to Morecambe and followed a self-guided heritage trail. They stopped at Eric Morecambe’s statue and at the iconic Art Deco Midland Hotel. After lunch and retrieving their luggage from the university, it was off to the station to get the train back to London.



Thank you Hilary, Geoffrey and Danny for an excellent weekend.

**Dominique**

## Spring Bank Holiday Weekend Friday 22 to Tuesday 26 May 2020 – 4 nights

This weekend will take place in Orbey in the Alsace region of France, in the north east, near the German border, south of Strasbourg. We will stay in a holiday centre similar to where we stayed before. It is situated on the outskirts of the lovely village of Orbey, in the middle of hilly forests. There is an indoor swimming pool, sauna and gym.



Accommodation will be en-suite in twin/double rooms. It includes full board: continental breakfast, lunch or picnic lunch and dinner including wine. Vegetarians will be catered for.

Full board is approximately 240 euros per person. Single supplement: 16.50 euros per night per person (limited availability). In addition, there will be the Eurostar/TGV ticket to Colmar (£150 approximately) and expenses for coach and guides if necessary. As usual, there will be two choices of walks: short walks with sightseeing and slightly more strenuous walks with some sightseeing.

If you would like to come on this weekend

1. Send a deposit of £100\* - the balance to be paid at the beginning of 2020 - to Danny Duffy, Honorary treasurer, 28 Dunraven rd. London W12 7QZ or a bank transfer (club account number 29935940, sort code 05-02-00) no later than 29 November.
2. Email /text /phone confirmation to Dominique on 07908 623 207 or [tonybyrnes@compuserve.com](mailto:tonybyrnes@compuserve.com).
3. Let her know if you want her to book your train ticket as Eurostar releases tickets 6 months in advance.

Here are a few websites to whet your appetite:

<https://www.vvf-villages.fr/villages-vacances/vacances-orbey-vvf-villages.html>

<https://www.orbey.fr/decouvrir/village-orbey.htm>

<https://www.kaysersberg.com/>

*\*Please note that this is a non-refundable deposit which will be paid to the holiday centre to secure our booking.*

**Dominique**

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### Club Christmas Lunch, Sunday 15 December 2019

It's the Freemasons Arms again, our popular Central London venue! A form is set out on the *next page* giving details of how to book places for the lunch and to say which dishes you would like to order. A short walk through Soho, Fitzrovia and Bloomsbury in the footsteps of Karl Marx will precede the lunch. It starts at Leicester Square Station at 11am

**Danny**

**The Polytechnic Rambling Club**  
**Christmas Lunch - Sunday 15th December 2019 - 1.30pm**

Freemasons Arms Public House, 81-82 Long Acre, London WC2E 9NG

Nearest tube: Covent Garden - Piccadilly Line

**Members £25 for three courses or £20 for two courses (excludes gratuity).**

This price includes a subsidy from the Donations Fund, as agreed by the Committee.

Guests of members are welcome. £30 for three courses or £25 for two.

**STARTERS**

**Mid-Winter Vegetable Soup (V)**

**Ardennes Pate**

**Prawn Cocktail**

**MAINS**

**Traditional Roast Turkey**

*Served with all the trimmings*

**Grilled Fillet of Sea Bream**

*Served with buttered green beans & sugar snaps, herby new potatoes, chive butter sauce & tomato chutney*

**Twelve Hour Pressed Pork Belly**

*Served with roast potatoes, chef's vegetables of the day & apple sauce*

**Mediterranean Vegetable Cheese Wellington (V)**

*Individually baked mozzarella sauce with Mediterranean style vegetables in a pesto & tomato sauce wrapped in puff pastry*

**Mushroom Stroganoff (V)**

*Served with vegetable basmati rice*

**DESSERTS**

**Christmas Pudding with Brandy Sauce**

**Warm Triple Chocolate Brownie**

**Fresh Fruit Salad with Ice Cream**

**Blackcurrant Delice (V)**

**Warm Chocolate & Orange Torte (V)**

**Cheese Platters**

**Followed by Coffee & Mince Pies**

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**Booking form**

Detach & send with your cheque to Dan Duffy, 28 Dunraven Road, London W12 7QZ no later than 2nd December. Alternatively pay by bank transfer to The Polytechnic Rambling Club (account: 29935940, sort code 05-02-00) and email [qprduffy20@hotmail.com](mailto:qprduffy20@hotmail.com) to confirm your payment & to give your menu choices.

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ place(s) for the Christmas lunch - £25 (£20 for two courses) or £30 (£25) for non-members

Names: \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a cheque for £ \_\_\_\_\_ made out to the Polytechnic Rambling Club

Menu Choices: Starter: \_\_\_\_\_

Main: \_\_\_\_\_

Dessert: \_\_\_\_\_

## Annual Youth Hostel Weekend

My article in the last newsletter called for views on the future of the youth hostel weekend, but did not elicit many replies. Those that were received suggested restricting the weekend to those staying at the hostel, having simpler food options and recruiting more walk leaders.

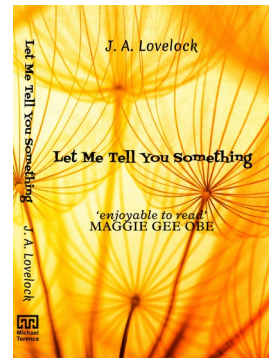
Over the years we have been to almost all the hostels within reasonable travelling distance of London which offer exclusive hire at an acceptable price. Therefore one of the possibilities for 2020 is to suspend the exclusive hire option for a year and go for a non-exclusive one. A wider choice of hostels is thus likely to be available and there would be less financial risk to the Club.

Please e-mail any comments that you have on this suggestion to me at [qprduffy20@hotmail.com](mailto:qprduffy20@hotmail.com). If we proceed with this option, details will be provided in the January newsletter and programme.

Danny

### Joyanna's new book published!

We have another author in our midst. Joyanna Lovelock's book, *Let Me Tell You Something*, is about satirical musings and observations on modern life. Joyanna asked me to mention the book as several members were keen to know when it had been published. As many a talk show host might say about a guest's work - its available in all good bookshops and of course Amazon!



Editor

With over 100 years' experience providing walking adventures across the globe we're the perfect choice to help you explore the world on foot.

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