



Sept- November 2003

Ramble List & News

1930-2003

www.stfrancisramblers.org.uk

Dear Ramblers,

Many of us have had a wonderful time by taking part in the walks listed in the last programme. In the main the weather has been in our favour and there have been many of us that have come out to enjoy the walks. The Eastbourne walk on 29th June lead by Maurice Hickman was a memorable day. It was a glorious sunny day and there was over twenty of us in our group. When we stopped at the Tiger Inn, East Dean there were past and present Club members who came there specially to meet us. Tony and Josey Hare who first met through the Club met our group and they invited us back to their home. They used to live in Carshalton until they retired to Eastbourne. There also were Patricia and Michael O'Meara who also met through the club and who now live in Hove. Patricia specially asked me to let it be known that she and her husband are life members as apparently some time ago this fact was not mentioned in the newsletter.

When we got to Birling Gap everything looked so beautiful and I could hear remarks all around me like, "Oh it's beautiful!" "Oh isn't it lovely!" "Oh it's like the Mediterranean!" "Oh isn't it great to be alive!" There were seven of us that could hardly change our clothes fast enough in order to plunge into the blue sea. The sea was calm and it felt great to swim fearlessly. Many of us went beyond our depth and gleefully I heard someone shout out that we should have had a ball. Even though we did not have a rubber ball we did have a ball.

Another great walk was on 15th June where there was a long and a short walk that ended with both groups coming together in a large

beer garden in Dorking. There were 23 out on the short and 8 on the long walk. The day ended with a large number of us commandeering a good spot in the beer garden where we sang happy birthday greetings to Tony Finnegan our leader and then helped him to celebrate.

The Summer Picnic was an event that was very special but sadly not well attended. Once again thank you to those of you who did attend. The scene and the setting were perfect where we had a cool shady area under the bandstand in Queens Park. We feasted on our strawberries and cream. We also sipped our wine and chatted whilst in the background we listened to the voice of Pavarotti. There were 33 punnets of strawberries and those of us there ate so many strawberries, that it felt like they were coming out of our ears and still there were lots left over.

The evening meal in the Corrib Rest was more like a banquet as we were provided with a large room and bar to our selves. At 9.30 PM the band started to play and then I heard remarks such as "This band is great and we should book them for the Christmas Party." Our group then took to the dance floor and never stopped dancing until midnight. Finally after the goodbyes I had a group come home with me where another couple of happy hours were spent chatting. The following morning one of our group still had plenty of energy as he set off early to join the Sunday Ramble.

St Richard's Anniversary Pilgrimage Dover to Chichester 9th to 24th August

By the time this newsletter drops through your letterbox the St Richard's Pilgrimage will be in progress. Maurice Hickman informs

me that for those who may wish to join the Pilgrimage at some point enroute then they could join on 15th August at Coogden Beech Station or Glynde Station. On 16th they could meet up in the Berwick Pub. For details:

www.thepilgrims.org.uk/2003/details

Forthcoming Events

Reunion 27th September

This annual event is an informal reunion of members who will meet at the Royal Festival Hall. Meet at 12.30pm at the main box office. The group will then eat and find a space to sit and catch up with all the news just like last time. Details from Maureen Furlong Tel 07950 766346.

The Club AGM will be held on Saturday 11th October at 3.30pm with tea and scones served at St Mary Moorfields Hall, 4-5 Eldon St., London EC2M 7LS

The AGM will be followed with Mass in the Church. Thereafter there will be a party in the Church Hall where there will be music and dancing. Please bring your friends and together with food to share and your own drinks.

Mass for the Deceased Members 15th November 6.00pm At St Mary Moorfields.

After mass the venue for a drink and a meal will be decided.

Christmas Ramble and Social.

14th December. There will be a buffet meal in the Royal Oak, which is highly recommended. Please make sure that you get your tickets.

New Year Party. 10th January

Mass at St Mary Moorfields at 6.00pm followed by a party in the

Church hall where there will be food drink and disco. Please make sure that you get your tickets.

Club's 75th Anniversary

Since my last newsletter I have no further news on the celebration of the club's 75th Anniversary. We have recently written to our Archbishop for him to join us in a celebratory Mass in Oct 2005 and so far we have not heard from him.

I would gladly recommend you to view the Franciscan web site www.franciscan.ie It has a lot of the history of the Franciscans together with a lot on the life of St. Francis.

Obituaries.

In the last newsletter I mentioned that Olivia Delargy was struggling with cancer. Sadly I have now been informed that she died on 15th May and will be sadly missed especially by her husband John and family. She will be remembered in Mass which will be said for the deceased Club Members. Some of you will fondly remember her when she was Secretary of the Club

Gerald Dowling also passed away and Tony Norton passed me the following:

It is with great sadness that I along with three other club members attended the funeral of Gerald Dowling on 2nd June at St Anthony's Catholic Church, Anerly SE20.

I first met Gerald just five years ago. It was at Victoria Station and I had just arrived for my first long walk with the Blackheath Group Ramblers. There was an atmosphere of pressure and panic in the air along with a gigantic queue in front of the booking office. At the head was Gerald lending others walkers his network card and helping out generally. Gerald had the capacity of always having time for people and he never ever spoke ill of others. Over the five years that I have known him one of his many qualities that stood out for me was his great reserve of inner strength. In the last twelve months of his

life through out his entire illness he never ever solicited sympathy or ever complained about his lot in life.

Lastly we have all lost a good friend who is truly irreplaceable.

Please promote our club.

If you know a spiritually minded person please feel free to recommend the club to them.

Welcome to new members

Marie Guye from Mottingham,

Farewell

Monsignor Peter Grant of The Apostolic Nunciature will be returning to Leeds. Monsignor Peter has been with our Club since 1997 and many of us will fondly remember him and wish him every success in his new role. There will be four members from our Club who will be attending a farewell ceremony and Mass held for Monsignor Peter in the Apostolic Nunciature.

Additional walks

If you feel that the main walk on Sunday is too long or hilly and the weather is reasonable, then please phone Hania or Witold for a short or a long walk with lots of leisurely breaks.

Tel 0208 543 5494

If you fancy an occasional midweek walk then please contact Dorothy Hickman Tel 01737 765 231

For those of you who are wondering what is going to appear on Page 3 this time around I can confirm that it is another story, which is in a similar vein to that of Mrs Thompson. As I heard so many pleasing comments about the story of Mrs Thompson I am relating another and I hope that you will find the story of the Cab Ride also pleasing.

Items for the next newsletter should reach me by 31st October.

God Bless and Happy Rambling

Bill

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THE CAB RIDE

Twenty years ago, I drove a cab for a living. When I arrived at 2:30 a.m., the building was dark except for a single light in a ground floor window. Under these circumstances, many drivers would just honk once or twice, wait a minute, and then drive away.

But, I had seen too many impoverished people who depended on taxis as their only means of transportation. Unless a situation smelled of danger, I always went to the door. This passenger might be someone who needs my assistance, I reasoned to myself.

So I walked to the door and knocked. "Just a minute", answered a frail, elderly voice. I could hear something being dragged across the floor.

After a long pause, the door opened. A small woman in her 80's stood before me. She was wearing a print dress and a pillbox hat with a veil pinned on it, like somebody out of a 1940s movie.

By her side was a small nylon suitcase. The apartment looked as if no one had lived in it for years. All the furniture was covered with sheets. There were no clocks on the walls, no knickknacks or utensils on the counters. In the corner was a cardboard box filled with photos and glassware. "Would you carry my bag out to the car?" she said. I took the suitcase to the cab, then returned to assist the woman. She took my arm and we walked slowly toward the curb. She kept thanking me for my kindness.

"It's nothing", I told her. "I just try to treat my passengers the way I would want my mother treated". "Oh, you're such a good boy", she said.

When we got in the cab, she gave me an address, then asked, "Could you drive through downtown?" "It's not the shortest way," I answered quickly. "Oh, I don't mind," she said. "I'm in no hurry. I'm on my way to a hospice".

I looked in the rear-view mirror. Her eyes were glistening. "I don't have any family left," she continued. "The doctor says I don't have very long." I quietly reached over and shut off the meter. "What route would you like me to take?" I asked. For the next two hours, we drove through the city. She showed me the building where she had once worked as an elevator operator. We drove through the neighbourhood where she and her husband had lived when they were newlyweds. She had me pull up in front of a furniture warehouse that had once been a ballroom where she had gone dancing as a girl. Sometimes she'd ask me to slow in front of a particular building or corner and would sit staring into the darkness, saying nothing. As the first hint of sun was creasing the horizon, she suddenly said, "I'm tired. Let's go now." We drove in silence to the address she had given me. It was a low building, like a small convalescent home, with a driveway that passed under a portico. Two orderlies came out to the cab as soon as we pulled up. They were solicitous and intent, watching her every move. They must have been expecting her. I opened the trunk and took the small suitcase to the door. The woman was already seated in a wheelchair. "How much do I owe you?" she asked, reaching into her purse. "Nothing," I said. "You have to make a living," she answered. "There are other passengers," I responded. Almost without thinking, I bent and gave her a hug. She held onto me tightly.

"You gave an old woman a little moment of joy," she said. "Thank you."

I squeezed her hand, then walked into the dim morning light. Behind me, a door shut. It was the sound of the closing of a life.

I didn't pick up any more passengers that shift. I drove aimlessly, lost in thought. For the rest of that day, I could hardly ta

What if that woman had got a rotten and angry driver, or one who was impatient to end his shift?

What if I had refused to take the run, or had honked once, then driven away?

On a quick review, I don't think that I have done anything more important in my life.

We're conditioned to think that our lives revolve around great moments.

But great moments often catch us unaware--beautifully wrapped in what others may consider a small one.

PEOPLE MAY NOT REMEMBER EXACTLY WHAT YOU DID, OR WHAT YOU SAID,

~BUT~

THEY WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER HOW YOU MADE THEM FEEL.

COPY DATE FOR THE NEXT PROGRAMME : 20th October 2003



Autumn will be upon us soon, and with it the shortening days, so dust down your torches, and remember, Lead thou Kindly Light, but please bring your own!!

Please also bear in mind that new timetables are effective from the end of September and some train times may change, so the leaders would appreciate your forbearance if this does occur.

Sunday 31st August (os map 199) Leader : Maurice Hickman

- MEET : East Croydon 0845 for 0905 train to Buxted (arr 1002) – **Trains to East Croydon**
 From London Bridge 0840 arr East Croydon 0856 or Victoria 0832 arr East Croydon 0850
- LUNCH : The Blackboys Inn, Blackboys (There is a Woodland Trust place across the road for those who have their own food)
- TEA : Cock & Bull, opposite Uckfield station
- DISTANCE : 13 miles returning from Uckfield
- FARE : £7.85 cdr Uckfield with NSE discount – Maurice will meet the ramblers at Buxted
- In the morning the walk follows the Wealdway and Vanguard way, and in the afternoon the Framfield 9 path made famous by the infamous hater of ramblers Nicholas Van Hoogstraten!!

Weekend away on the Kent coast ; Leaders : Chris McNicholas and Catherine Scott (os map 179)

Saturday 6th September

- MEET : Charing Cross 0840 for 0900 train to Dover Priory (arr 1050)
- LUNCH : TBA, or bring sandwiches
- TEA : Early arrival in St Margarets for tea shop/pub/swim/botanical gardens
- DISTANCE : 8 mile circular walk mainly flat/gently undulating terrain
- FARE : £13.20 cdr Dover with nse discount or £15.00 return with nse discount if returning Sunday
- Staying overnight in St Margarets; B & B's :** Lennox House 01304 853 253 / Mezanich 01304 852 260 Homeoaks 01304 852 990. Please mention SFACRC when booking. Please check with Chris & Catherine about eating arrangements for Saturday evening.

Sunday 7th September

- MEET : Charing Cross 0840 for 0900 train to Deal (arr 1059)
- LUNCH : Saracens Head, Alfred Square, Deal
- TEA : ???????
- DISTANCE : 8 miles returning from Deal
- FARE : £13.20 cdr Deal with NSE discount **11am Mass at church near Deal station for**
 Weekenders and the Sunday walkers

Sunday 14th September (os map 166 plus a hint of 153) Leader : Paul Connolly

MEET : Kings Cross 0925 for 0948 train to Baldock (arr 1028)
 LUNCH : The Cricketers, Weston
 TEA : Stevenage Old Town
 DISTANCE : 13 miles returning from Stevenage
 FARE : £8.20 cdr Baldock with NSE discount

Sunday 21st September (os map 197) Leader : Maria Darroch

MEET : Waterloo 0855 for 0915 train to Petersfield (arr 1017)
 LUNCH : The George, East Meon
 TEA : Probably
 DISTANCE : 14 miles returning from Petersfield, Steep hills in the afternoon
 FARE : £10.15 cdr Petersfield with NSE discount

Sunday 28th September (os map 166 & 167) Leader : Robert Slater

MEET : Liverpool Street 0920 for 0940 train to Ware (arr 1031)
 LUNCH : Jolly Wagoners, Much Hadham
 TEA : Where else but Ware
 DISTANCE : 14 miles returning from Ware
 FARE : £6.80 cdr Ware – Robert will meet the ramblers at Ware

Sunday 5th October

Long Walk (os map 197) Leader : Tony Finnegan

MEET : Victoria 0845 for 0904 train to Arundel (arr 1038)
 LUNCH : Maypole Inn, Yapton (os 978042)
 TEA : The Hatters Inn, Queensway, Bognor Regis
 DISTANCE : 14 miles returning from Bognor Regis, long hill climb in the morning
 FARE : £11.75 cdr Bognor Regis with NSE discount

Short walk (os map 197) Leader : Maurice Hickman

MEET : Victoria 0945 for 1004 train to Arundel (arr 1138)
 LUNCH : Maypole Inn, Yapton (os 978042)
 TEA : The Hatters Inn, Queensway, Bognor Regis
 DISTANCE : 11 miles returning from Bognor Regis, long hill climb in the morning
 FARE : £11.75 cdr Bognor Regis with NSE discount

Maurice will meet the ramblers at Arundel

Sunday 12th October (os map 174) Leader : Phil Evans

MEET : Paddington 0935 for 1000 train to Newbury (arr 1058)
 LUNCH : The Furze Bush, Ball Hill
 TEA : Perhaps
 DISTANCE : 14 miles returning from Newbury
 FARE : £9.40 cdr Newbury with network card discount

Sunday 19th October (os map 165) Leader : Tony Norton

MEET : Marylebone 0920 for 0940 train to Princes Risborough (arr 1024)
 LUNCH : Wendover, choice of pubs and cafes
 TEA : Unlikely
 DISTANCE : 12 miles returning from Princes Risborough
 FARE : £7.75 cdr Princes Risborough with NSE discount

Sunday 26th October (os map 179) Leader : Paul Brunning

MEET : Charing Cross 0910 for 0930 train to Chilham, Kent (arr 1109)
 LUNCH : The Chapters Arms, Chartham Hatch – Good Grub
 TEA : Canterbury
 DISTANCE : 9 – 10 easy miles
 FARE : £8.90 cdr Canterbury with NSE discount – Paul will meet the ramblers at Chilham

Sunday 2nd November

Long walk (os map 187) Leader : Maurice Hickman

MEET : Victoria 0910 for 0934 train to Littlehaven (arr 1042)
 LUNCH : Lamb Inn, Lambs Green – good food and beer
 TEA : Whistle Stop Video Café, Horley station
 DISTANCE : 13 miles returning from Horley
 FARE : £11.40 cdr Littlehaven – Maurice will meet the ramblers at Littlehaven

Short walk (os map 187) Leader : Tony Finnegan

MEET : Victoria 1010 for 1034 train to Ifield (arr 1136)
 LUNCH : Lamb Inn, Lambs Green – good food and beer
 TEA : Whistle Stop Video Café, Horley station
 DISTANCE : 10.5 miles returning from Horley
 FARE : £9.60 cdr Ifield

Sunday 9th November (os map 197) Leader : John Burbage

MEET : Waterloo 9.20 for the 9.45 train to Petersfield (arr. 10.59)
 LUNCH : White Horse Inn, Rogate
 TEA : Too dark for tea!
 DISTANCE : 10 scenic miles returning from Liphook
 FARE : £10.15 cdr with Network card discount

Sunday 16th November (os map 167) Leader : Paul Connolly

MEET : Epping Station (Central line, approx 45 mins from Oxford Circus), 1015 for 1030 start
 LUNCH : The Moletrap, Tawney Common
 TEA : Maybe at Theydon Bois
 DISTANCE : 9 reasonably easy miles, may be muddy especially in the afternoon
 FARE : One day travelcard up to £5.10

Sunday 23rd November (os map 177) Leader : John & Marta Hayworth

MEET : Victoria 0900 for 0925 train to Petts Wood (arr 1000) or
Charing Cross 0900 for 0920 train to Petts Wood (arr 0951)

LUNCH : Ye Olde Greyhound, Eltham

TEA : aah, glad you asked.....

DISTANCE : 10 miles returning from Erith

FARE : One day travelcard up to £5.10

John & Marta will meet the ramblers at Petts Wood

Sunday 30th November (os map 177) Leader : Paul Brunning

MEET : Charing Cross 0930 for 0953 train to Hayes, Kent (arr 1031)

LUNCH : The Queens Head, Downe

TEA : Farnborough - hopefully

DISTANCE : 10 easy miles returning from Hayes

FARE : One day travelcard up to £5.10

Paul will meet the ramblers at Hayes



Don't forget Sunday train services can be affected by engineering works. Information on these can be obtained by calling 08457 484950 or see the relevant ceefax or teletext pages on tv.

Please ensure you bring your Network cards or Gold cards so that you can get the 1/3rd off full fares for yourself and up to three guests travelling with you. You can also get 50p off all zone travel cards even if purchased at underground stations.

Unless otherwise indicated the fare shown is the full fare from the London terminus.