



Valeways 20th Birthday Newsletter

Summer 2016



*** "It isn't the mountains ahead to climb that wear you out;
it's the pebble in your shoe."**

If you have ever given a thought to what Valeways has in common with Princess Marie-Caroline Immaculata of Liechtenstein then we have good news for you! Both are celebrating their 20th birthday this year! Whilst we have no information regarding the Princess' intentions, we intend to celebrate Valeways' birthday in style!

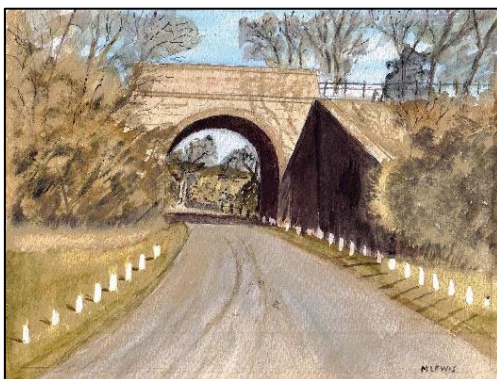
The birthday celebrations will kick off with a Valeways Birthday Party at Porthkerry Country Park on Saturday 16th July. During the morning, four different groups of walkers will set off at different times, converging on the Park at around 2pm. Well-earned refreshments will be available. Please see walk programme for details.

We are delighted to announce that the broadcaster, T.V. weatherman and Barry boy, Derek Brockway, has accepted an invitation to become Valeways' Honorary President. We are pleased that he will join us at the party after the walks to cut Valeways' birthday cake!



Derek is a Welsh meteorologist employed by the Met Office and based at BBC Wales in Cardiff. He is a familiar face on BBC Wales where he presents weather forecasts as well as appearing in other programmes. He is a keen walker as we have all seen during his television programmes, Weatherman Walking. 'Croeso Derek! Let's hope that you will be able to 'pull a few strings' to ensure that warm, dry weather will always accompany our walkers!'

Please Derek, no repeat of Hurricane Bertha which hit North Carolina in 1996, causing damage in the region of 27 million dollars.



This is a painting of the road leading to Porthkerry Park by Maureen Lewis, (Carolyn's mother) who, at 88 years of age has started to paint again after an absence of many years.

Our Summer Walks Programme offers many opportunities to explore our beautiful countryside with a variety of walks – from visits to The Three Saints and Celtic Crosses to Wales’ Southernmost Point and an Anaerobic Digester! – Yes, once again, something for everyone! We are also pleased to see that The Warlow Walk makes a welcome return to our programme. This walk is named after Val Warlow in recognition of her contribution to the success of Valeways from its inception in 1996.

Also included in our Walks Programme is a walk designed to accompany the 150th anniversary of St Augustine’s Church, Penarth. The church has many interesting features including the grave of the famous Welsh composer, Dr Joseph Parry. His most popular song is probably ‘Myfanwy’ but it is also believed that his hymn tune ‘Aberystwyth’ was the inspiration for ‘Nkosi Sikelel’ iAfrika’ the National Anthem of South Africa.

Nelson Mandela visited Britain in 1996.

Coffee Shop Strollers have also been busy throughout the Spring, with many of the walks firmly established in the Valeways calendar. A new Coffee Shop Strollers walk will be launched in Cowbridge on Wednesday, 7 September and we are looking for recruits, including a Walk Leader! The Cowbridge Stroll will be held on alternate Wednesdays to the Llantwit Coffee Shop Stroll. Please note that the Cowbridge ‘Crwydro’ has been replaced by a number of walks on the main walks programme. The Summer provides the opportunity for us to admire the fine workmanship seen in so many of our urban parks – the colourful flowers, the manicured borders and the trimmed hedges are often a delight to see. **When you ‘tiptoe through the tulips’ spare a thought for Tiny Tim who died in 1996.**

By the way, Kofi Annan became the 7th Secretary General of the UN in the same year!

The Seventh Walking Festival was again a resounding success. Almost 300 walkers defied the rain to join a variety of walks around the Vale. Many a themed walk proved very popular. Two walks also gave walkers the opportunity to combine a walk with a musical event as part of the Vale of Glamorgan Music Festival.



Photo: Walkers on the Penarth Scenic Walk enjoying a well-earned rest and taking in the stunning views!

Despite torrential rain, thirteen walkers turned out for the Saunders Lewis Memorial Walk. Their efforts were more than rewarded when the present incumbent of 58 Westbourne Road gave the weary wanderers an impromptu tour of the house where Saunders Lewis penned some of his most significant writings.

The walk around Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery was also well attended, the walkers this time being greeted by a very informative and knowledgeable Cllr. Nic Hodges – and finally, some fine weather!

Amongst many a story, Cllr. Hodges explained how the tragic sinking of the RMS Lusitania during the First World War is linked to Barry.



In 1996 another maritime disaster was capturing our attention when the MV Sea Empress ran aground on the Pembrokeshire coast.

Cllr. Hodges also recalled being asked by an enthusiastic youngster on an earlier tour if any Titanic survivors were buried here. His response was ‘No, we don’t bury survivors’!

This story leads us to remember Eva Miriam Hart regarded as the last survivor with memory of the Titanic disaster. She died in 1996.

Many congratulations to **Jane Hutt AM** on retaining her seat in the Welsh Assembly. Whatever our political allegiances, there is no doubt that Jane’s success is well deserved. She works tirelessly on behalf of her constituents in the Vale, supporting many a good cause and is a faithful friend of Valeways. She defeated the Conservative candidate, Ross England and **thus equalled the feat achieved by the reunified German football team in the quarter finals of Euro ’96!**



Photo: Sian Vaughan, Jane Hutt AM and Julie Morgan (Vale Council) at the launch of the Vale of Glamorgan Walking Festival.

Volunteer Coordinator's Report – Rebecca

Walk and Clear activities have increased with the new spring growth and have included harvesting of wild garlic and a late fungus, yet to be identified. We spent a few enjoyable sessions helping Peterston Super Ely Community Council and Keep Wales Tidy clear a footpath and create views to the River Ely. We learned that the area is designated as an SSSI due to the Monk's-hood plants growing there. Other finds included a long lost seat cleared by Rob and a beautiful bird's nest built out of lichen, probably by a Long Tailed Tit. The lichen was bound together with spider's web! Over lunch we were entertained by a strange looking butterfly with orange wing tips but were rather disappointed when it was identified as nothing more exotic than an Orange Tip!

We have also undertaken a walk and clear session with Innovate Trust who support people with disabilities and mental health problems. They have new funding to develop activities in the Vale and we look forward to working with them again soon.

In April we took part in Clean Coast Week cleaning beaches at Sully and, for the second year, Nash Point. It was interesting to find that there was less litter on the beach at Nash this year compared to last, so a good result.



Photo: It's amazing what was seen during the recent Walking Festival in Llantwit Major!

In 1996 Manchester United won both the FA Premier League title and the FA Cup – a tall order indeed!

The Walk and Clear teams also cleared footpaths in preparation for the Walking Festival and it was great to see some of our Thursday volunteers at the festival's launch walk and event. Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the Walking Festival such a success.

Finally we have received a request from the Wildlife Trust volunteers at Lavernock Nature Reserve to include walks through the reserve as much as possible as there has been a rise in anti-social behaviour there, so please keep it busy with walks and activities.

Thanks again to all our hardworking volunteers.

Keep up the good work Rebecca. Twenty years ago the Eden Project was merely a number of circles scribbled on a piece of paper!

The two windows in our office in the Enterprise Centre have been adorned with very attractive and informative signage. Many thanks to Frank Morgan of 'askfrank' company who produced and erected the signs free of charge!

Photo: Stephen Bell, volunteer, admiring our signage before starting another Walk & Clear outing.



The popular 'do-it-yourself' home improvement show, Changing Rooms was first televised in September 1996.

If **what you want, what you really, really want** is to help Valeways in any way, there are many opportunities available. If you wish to make a donation you can do so online at <https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/valeways>. If you **wannabe** a volunteer then please contact Carolyn on carolyn@valeways.org.uk or Rebecca on rebecca@valeways.org.uk

"Wannabe" is the debut single by the girl group the Spice Girls, released in 1996.

* The quote at the beginning of this newsletter is one of Mohammad Ali's many sayings.

Twenty years ago, at the opening ceremony of the Summer Olympic Games, held in Atlanta, USA, the Olympic torch was lit by Muhammad Ali.

... and finally

