

As we bid farewell to one year and welcome the next we can proudly declare that 'We are still here!' and once again able to offer a varied and challenging Winter Walk Programme and also opportunities for volunteering with Valeways in many different areas.



This has been made possible by new funding sources from:-

The Foyle Foundation  
The Oakdale Trust

We have also received generous donations from:-

Yorkshire Building Society (Cowbridge)  
Cowbridge Town Council  
Penarth Town Council  
J's Line Dancing Group  
Dow Corning

**Photo: Brenda and Phil Gibbins (Valeways Trustees) receiving cheque from Alun Cairns MP on behalf of Yorkshire Building Society.**

If you have ever wondered who benefits from all those tiny green disks provided by Waitrose, we are pleased to announce that as a result of participating in their scheme we received a donation of £410! Thank you to those of you who helped make this happen.

### Volunteers

As we look forward to the new year, it is also a time for some reflection; to consider what we have achieved, to recollect some notable highlights and to say a big 'Thank You' to you all – volunteers, Walk Leaders, Trustees and of course walkers!



Geographer, rambler, examiner, author and long suffering Cardiff City fan, **Graham Woosnam** has worn many a hat during his active life. A founder member of Valeways, Graham has been a lynchpin in the organisation from the outset. At a special lunch recently, Valeways had the opportunity to thank him. As a recognition of all his hard work Valeways have renamed the walk, In and About Welsh St Donats, 'The Woosnam Walk'.

**Photo: Graham being presented with his named walk by Val Warlow.**



At a recent ceremony near the home of **Alan Wilson** at St Mary's Church, Valeways unveiled a small plaque to thank Alan, another pioneer of Valeways who also made a huge contribution to its success over the years. Not many can complain that Valeways don't do things in stile!



**Photo: Phil, Brenda, Val, Carolyn and Ian with Alan's wife Lyn and his sister Margaret.**

## Goodbye and Hello

Since our last newsletter, our Volunteer Coordinator Mark Rosoman has left Valeways. We thank him for his contribution. During his time he was responsible for introducing some innovative ideas which made a valuable contribution to what Valeways has to offer.

We are now pleased to welcome Rebecca Exley, our newly appointed Volunteer Coordinator who, in her own words, *'Hit the ground running'*! In the short time at her post Rebecca has continued the good work and has established a number of promising links for future activities. Here is her first report.



*'Hopefully I have met or contacted most of you by now and everyone I have met has been very welcoming and supportive, so thank you for that.'*

*The Walk and Clear sessions continue on Tuesdays and Thursdays with groups of eight or more tackling vegetation overgrowth.*

*If you encounter any such problems please let me know. It is amazing what eight people can achieve in a few hours.*



These photos show a recent example of a stile near Llysworney. The day also turned out to be a bit of a wildlife walk as we spotted ducks, rats (shh), a frog, a fox and a dead sheep!



**Stile before**



**Stile after**

We attracted six new volunteers during November and so far two more in December so do keep asking friends and relatives if they can help with leading walks, clearing footpaths, writing press releases, taking photographs, using Facebook and Twitter.

I also plan to run a Walk Leader Training Course in the New Year, so do let me know if you are interested.

I look forward to hearing from you!

Email: [Rebecca@valeways.org.uk](mailto:Rebecca@valeways.org.uk)

### **AGM 2013-14**

Our AGM this year was held at St Andrew's Golf Club and again was well attended. It gave Valeways an opportunity to inform all of the current situation and progress made during the year.

Jane Hutt AM praised Valeways for developing new opportunities and referred to us as '**an important body**'. Thank you Jane for your continued support.



**Photo: From left to right, Rosemary Cook (Penarth Deputy Town Mayor), Gwyn Teague (Vale Council ), Cllr. Chris Williams, Cllr. Peter Knapp (Cowbridge Town Mayor), Tim Fowler (Chairman Llanmaes Community Council), Jane Hutt AM, Meirion Morgan (Valeways Chairman), Rebecca Exley (Valeways)**

## Guided Walking Programme



During this year of remembrance, the occasion threw up many a story – each one tinged with sadness.

One particular story of interest was unearthed during the planning of the three Frank Roper Memorial Walks in the previous programme.

Thanks to Ray Price, attention was drawn to the stained glass window known as The Gibbs Window at All Saints Church, Barry. The window is dedicated to the infant, Melville Vaughan Gibbs, son of George and Kathleen Gibbs. During an attack by the Luftwaffe on the Romilly Park area of Barry in April 1941 Kathleen Gibbs moved her four year old infant son from his cot to what she considered to be a safer refuge, downstairs. Unfortunately a bomb hit the house and Melville was killed. Ironically, the cot in the bedroom remained intact.

Over the years the grave of the infant in the Merthyr Dyfan

Cemetery fell into disrepair and although an appeal was launched, it seemed that there were no living relatives in the area to be responsible for its upkeep.

In 2012 however, following some research into the tragic story, local historian Dr Jonathan Hicks and his wife, Wendy, with practical help from cemetery staff, embarked on the restoration of the grave.

Maybe the time is ripe for an enterprising Walk Leader to design a guided walk which includes a visit to Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery – any takers?

In our next programme we hope you will join walk leader Dave on the ever popular New Year's Day Walk.

Thinking ahead to warmer times, look out for three walks in March heralding the onset of Spring. The first walk, on Saint David's Day is appropriately named 'Taith y Cennin Pedr / Daffodil Walk'.

For those of you who like to stretch your legs further, John is offering a longer walk intriguingly named 'Fore!'

## Walk & Clear in the Community

**Barry Boys Comprehensive School** started the new school year by continuing to support our 'Walk and Clear' project.



In October we were also able to contribute practically to the continued development of the **Aberthaw Conservation Project**. Thank you those who turned up on the day to volunteer.

**Photo: Altogether now 1, 2, 3 "What a load of rubbish!"**



As part of our links with Business in the Community, five volunteers from **Mondelez** (formerly Cadbury's) joined Phil and Rebecca in a 'Walk and Clear' in the Bonvilston area. We are very grateful for their help.

### **Vale of Glamorgan Walking Festival 2015**

Plans for next year's Vale of Glamorgan Walking Festival are already under way! Please note that the Walking Festival next year coincides with the Vale of Glamorgan Festival (Thursday 21 May – Sunday 24 May 2015) and provides opportunities for some inventive walks! Please let the office know of any ideas! Is there any truth that one 'Walk and Clear' session will be called 'Haydn in the Bushes'?

And finally...

