

MOORLAND RAMBLERS GROUP - WEEKEND AWAY 2016

6 - 8 May.

Based around Corfe Castle in the Purbeck District of Dorset.

All walks start at 10 o'clock.

Maps: OS Explorer, 1:25000, Sheet OL15, Purbeck & South Dorset. OS Landranger 1:50000, Sheet 194, Dorchester & Weymouth and Sheet 195, Bournemouth & Purbeck.

Walk 1 - Fri 6 May 16.

Start: The Tank Museum at Bovington. Grid SY 830884. Museum Car Park (no charge).

Proposed Route and Distance: North to Clouds Hill, North to Briantspuddle village, South to Cull-peppers Dish, South West to Affpuddle Heath and Pallington Heath, South East to Moreton village, East back to Bovington Camp. 11 miles.

Information: The start of this walk may allow us to see some of the armoured fighting vehicles (tanks) currently in use by the British Army, as well as tanks from the past. A walk through the picturesque village of Briantspuddle in the Piddle Valley. The village takes its name from Brian de Turberville, who was lord of the manor during the reign of Edward III. The Old Dairy was the first dairy in Dorset to have large scale milking machines installed. In the 1920's, up to 1000 gallons of milk a day were brought in from surrounding farms for processing and bottling. The sculptor and artist Eric Gill was commissioned to sculpt the 'Madonna and Child' war memorial. A column of Portland stone, the unusual memorial was dedicated by the Bishop of Salisbury one day after the Armistice was signed in 1918. Cull-peppers Dish is one of the largest sinkholes in Dorset; 90m in diameter and 40m deep. This concave depression in the ground was caused when water dissolved an underground chalk layer and then the overlying material collapsed into the underground hole leaving a surface depression. During the walk there is a chance to have a look at some aspects of the life of Thomas Edward Lawrence CB DSO (Lawrence of Arabia). Lawrence was attempting to remain in obscurity by enlisting as a private in the Tank Corps, based at Bovington. Lawrence's cousins, the Frampton family, owned Moreton Estate and he rented and subsequently purchased from them a cottage at Clouds Hill. His death, near his cottage, was an accident and his sudden demise left little scope for planning, and thus his mother contacted the Framptons to ask whether he could be buried at Moreton; and that's where he is! The walk also passes through several large areas of rhododendron forest.



THE OLD DAIRY - BRIANTSPUDDLE



T E LAWRENCE

Walk 2 - Sat 7 May 16. Start: Lulworth Camp (Armoured Fighting Vehicle Gunnery School). Grid SY 835815. Officers Mess Car Park (no charge!) There is controlled access to the camp and Graham Wilding will be at the camp Main Gate to oversee access from 9:20 to 9:55; arrive between these 2 times and you will be permitted entry.

Proposed Route and Distance: East and then South to Arish Mell, North East and then South to Tyneham village, West to Warbarrow, North West back to Arish Mell, West to West Lulworth village via the Fossil Forest, West to Durdle Door. North to Newlands Farm, South East back to West Lulworth village, North East back to Lulworth Camp. 15 miles.

Information: The first 9 miles of the route goes through an MOD Range area and so most of the route will be well marked and fenced off. However, it does give us access to areas of countryside that are not frequently visited and despite constant military activity and firing, the flora, flora and wildlife lies undisturbed. Tyneham is Dorset's famous 'lost' village. In November 1943 notice was given to the 225 villagers that they would be required to leave within 28 days as the area was needed for forces training. On 17 December 1943 the last villagers left; with the last person leaving a notice on the church door. Fossil Forest (East of Lulworth Cove). Near the end of the Jurassic period, 144 million years ago, the sea levels dropped and a number of islands emerged in the Purbeck area. For a short period, soil formed and a tropical forest grew up. It then flooded under a shallow saline lagoon. The remains are now preserved as the Fossil Forest. This provides the most complete fossilised record of a Jurassic forest in the world. The 140-million-year-old trees bear similarities with modern day Cypress, with foliage having the characteristics of a 'Monkey Puzzle' tree. Lulworth Cove was formed by the combined forces of the sea and a river swollen by melting ice at the end of the last Ice Age. This horseshoe cove and pebble beach has recently been added into the World Heritage Jurassic Coastline. Lulworth has its own butterfly species, the Lulworth Skipper, discovered near Durdle Door in 1832.



CHALLENGER II - LULWORTH RANGES



LULWORTH SKIPPER

Walk 3 - Sun 8 May 16. Starting from the vicinity of Corfe Castle village; exact start point yet to be confirmed and dependant on parking facilities. Centre of village is Grid SY 961821.

Proposed Route and Distance: North to Scotland (yes, Scotland!), North East to Wytch Farm, East and South East to Goathorn Plantation and Studland, South to Ballard Down, West and North West to Nine Barrow Down, Brenscomb Hill and back to Corfe Castle. 15 miles.

Information: Corfe Castle was built by William the Conqueror. The castle dates back to the 11th century and commands a gap in the Purbeck Hills on the route between Wareham and Swanage. It was one of the earliest castles in England to be built using stone when the majority were built with earth and timber. For the whole of the Medieval period, Corfe was a Royal Castle. Kings used it as one of the five royal castles. King John kept his crown jewels here. Edward II was imprisoned here. Much torturing and murder took place. Henry VII gave it to his mother but later it reverted to Henry VIII. In 1572, Corfe Castle left the Crown's control when Queen Elizabeth I sold it to her Chancellor, Christopher Hatton, who fortified it further in readiness for the Spanish Armada. Sir John Bankes bought the castle in 1635, and was the owner during the English Civil War. His wife, Lady Mary Bankes, led the defence of the castle when it was twice besieged by Parliamentary forces. The first siege, in 1643, was unsuccessful, but by 1645 Corfe was one of the last remaining royalist strongholds in southern England and fell to a siege ending in an assault. Lady Mary Bankes was overcome by the treachery of one of her own officers, Colonel Pitman. Following an Act of Parliament, the Castle was then blown up from the inside by engineers. It is now protected as a Grade I listed building and a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Wytch Farm is an oil field and processing facility, and is the largest onshore oil field in western Europe. The field was discovered by the nationalised British Gas Corporation in December 1973 and began producing oil in 1979. It was operated by BP but is now owned by Perenco. Oil and natural gas (methane) are both exported by pipeline; liquefied petroleum gas is exported by road tanker. Ballard Down forms the easternmost part of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site, which stretches West for 96 miles.



CORFE CASTLE



OIL WELL NEAR WYTCH FARM

Social Events. Dinner on Saturday evening. All details still to be confirmed.

Accommodation. According to the many web sites for Corfe Castle, there appears to be a wide variety of accommodation (hotels, guest houses, B&B, and self catering) including dog friendly places. There are 2 campsites near to Corfe Castle that open in March. Norden Farm and Burnbake, both are about one a mile from the village centre (dogs allowed on both).

Corfe Castle Village. The village is constructed almost completely from the local grey Purbeck limestone and comprises two main streets, East Street and West Street, linked at their north end at the Square. Around the square, with its cross commemorating Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee of 1897, are clustered the small collection of shops, the post office, church and pubs.

