



Newsletter

Spring 2017



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VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Irene Ridge

The Committee

There have been a few changes this year. Firstly Rita Cook, who was the first Chair of the group and worked tirelessly for it over many years, has decided in her 90th year that it is time to resign from the Committee of which she has been an honorary member since 2006 when I took her place as chair.

So a very special thanks to Rita without whom there would probably be no NWFG today.

A second change has been the election onto the committee of Lynne Healey who has experience in social media and electronic communication so we are hoping that she might help to modern-

ize our image – perhaps even set up a NWFG Facebook page.

Kathleen Ryan, has taken over from Liz Moore as Treasurer and Membership Secretary. Liz has retired from the committee so I want to thank her now for doing a wonderfully efficient job, which I've greatly appreciated

Finally, Tony Carter who has retired from the role of Recorder after many years and thanks go to Tony, too, for his long and efficient service.

Recording and forays

There were 16 forays last year and John Watt did an excellent job in organising these. Quite a few sites were new and there were also new foray leaders but we still urge people – if you have ideas about a possible new site then do let John know, always bearing in mind the requirement for adequate parking. Lists

of fungi recorded on these forays are on our website (AFTER the Mycogolfer blog, in case you had trouble finding them). The Microscope workshop for beginners again took place in August and went well and despite all our concerns about the Keswick Residential foray, it did happen, managed by Mike Walton and Kathleen Ryan and with Jacqui Dinsdale and helpers again doing a splendid job as caterers.

This year there are 15 forays with a microscope workshop again planned for 20 August IF THERE IS SUFFICIENT DEMAND. On **Saturday 25 March**, at Risley Moss, John Watt has arranged for Stuart Skeates, who has played a major role in setting up the new national database (FRDBI mark 2), to come to explain how to input records and the new features of this system. We are hoping that, in future, all foray leaders will be able to input records from their foray into the new database – or that someone delegated by the leader can do it. So I urge anyone who wants or needs to input records to come to that day – and it would be very helpful if you let John Watt know that you intend to come. Both John Taylor and Tony Carter, who have used the new database, report that there are problems with our Group records and it's to be hoped that some of these problems can be resolved when Stuart visits.

I'm happy to report that the Keswick residential foray can go ahead again this year. I heard the week from the Keswick Convention Centre that we can have the same rooms as last year for our

workroom. The dates are **29 September to 2 October** – so do put those dates in your diary and do come. A booking form will arrive with your Newsletter.

Other Group Activities –

Thanks to Jeanette Maddy who co-ordinated our group's contributions to National Fungus Day last October. I would like to make special mention of the event held at Jodrell Bank in which Liz Moore played a major role. Not only were there several forays round the arboretum but also a display of fungi and a range of activities – there was a lot of interest from members of the public and a lot of happy children. That is part of our mission – telling people about the wonders of fungi, enthusing them, especially children, and we have one member who deserves special mention in this regard: Ali Mckernan who has had great success introducing children at his Primary School to fungi.

A.G.M. 2018

Saturday 24 February

Risley Moss Visitors' Centre

Bowled Over

Mike & Di Hall

It seems likely that few members of the NWFG associate fungi with the game of cricket. No, I didn't either until last October 24th when I had a phone call from the groundsman of Kirkby Lonsdale Cricket Club. It seems he had been on a foray



I had led in 2015 and hence knew me.

The gist of his message was that he had found a purple coral on the outfield. Using books he thought it was probably *Clavaria zollingeri* and wondered if I would be interested.

The next day Di and I went down to have a look and were quite taken aback with what we saw - quite 'bowled over'. The entire outfield was covered in fungi numbering thousands. The vast majority were waxcaps. He was right about the

C. zollingeri and in a walk round the outfield we counted over 120 clumps. We also spotted species of *Trichoglossum* and *Geoglossum*, various spindles, and other grassland associates. It was too dark to do more but next day we went on a foray to Ingleborough NNR where we met a mycologist from Natural England called Andy McLay. He is especially good at waxcaps and visited the site the next day. Andy's paper on *A survey of waxcap grassland habitat at selected NWL landholdings* can be seen at

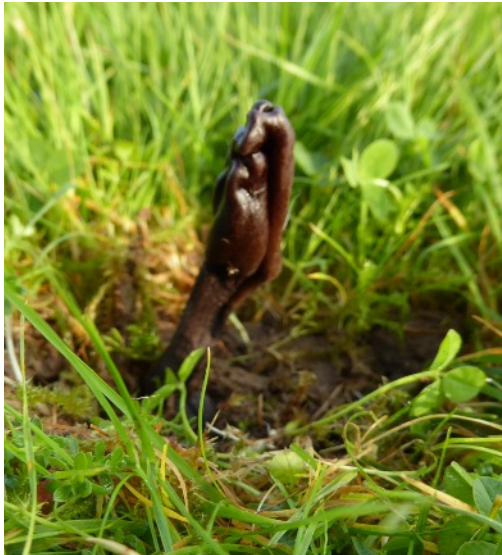
www.nwl.co.uk/_assets/documents/multisite_waxcap_grasslands_2010_survey.pdf

So what is so special about KL cricket pitch? The image shows the closely cut playing area and outfield just north of Devil's Bridge on the edge of Kirkby Lonsdale. The fields around it are rank grass grazed by sheep and are virtually devoid of fungi. However, the pitch has been fenced off for over 70 years. It has never been fertilised and is just cut short during the cricket season. But there is more to it than that. Most of the KL area is



Silurian shale or boulder clay, but there is a tongue of carboniferous limestone underlaying the river Lune and the cricket pitch at this point. So we have unimproved, short grassland overlaying limestone - perfect!

Pooling our finds with those of Andy McLay, we ended up with a total of 18 waxcap species (*Hygrocybe irrigata* right), a range of spindles and earth tongues and an assortment of other grassland fungi such as *Dermoloma cuneifolium*. A quote from Andy's e-mail to me reads, '...I've been surveying waxcap grasslands for over 20 years now and I have to say that this site is one of the very best that I have seen. The score to date of 18 waxcaps, 6 fairy clubs and 3 earthtongue species would easily qualify the site as "eligible for consideration as an SSSI". The single visit count of 17 waxcap species would also suggest that the field is of international importance



for this group. In my experience their presence together with *Clavaria zollingeri*, *Microglossum olivaceum*, *Geoglossum atropurpureum* (left), *Hygrocybe ovina*, *H. nitrata* and *H. punicea* absolutely confirms this.

He went on to say that legal site protection would be desirable but unlikely at any time soon. I have spoken to the club and suggested that they continue with their evidently sympathetic management regime and they seem very willing to do this. The full list of waxcap species found (alphabetically) is;

Hygrocybe calyptriformis, *H. Ceracea*, *H. Chlorophana*, *H. citrinovirens*
H. Coccinea, *H. conica* var. *Conica*, *H. flavipes*, *H. Fornicata*, *H. intermedia*
H. Irrigata, *H. Nitrata*, *H. Ovina*, *H. Pratensis*, *H. Psittacina*, *H. Punicea*,
H. Quieta, *H. Reidii*, *H. virginea*

Other fungi recorded were *Clavaria fragilis*, *Clavulinopsis corniculata*, *Clavulinopsis helvola*, *Cordyceps militaris*, *Mycena adonis*, *Cystoderma amianthinum*, and two common *Rickenella* sp.

So if you live in a limestone area, maybe a look at your local cricket pitch could be worthwhile.

NWFG Keswick weekend 2016: Cliburn Moss

Tim Rogers

We've all had the experience of desperately searching to find *anything* on forays, scrabbling about in undergrowth, pulling up dead stems (though these can be very productive), you know the sort of thing. I remember one recorder being pleased at finding tar-spot, there was so little around (though we ended up with 100+ species, after walking a considerable distance – wouldn't have suited everyone). But Cliburn, for the past two years, has been the very opposite of this. I remember stopping for lunch, and still being surrounded by fruit-bodies (this is an incorrect term, but the only applicable one I can think of), visible even from a sitting position. This may be partly because of the high water table (the centre of the site, most of which is woodland, is Sphagnum Bog), which must keep the soil wet when other sites in the Lake District which we visit, are drier, and so much less productive.

Apart from the quantity of fungi, there was (both years) great diversity. This year there were three rare species found, two by Mike Hall (whose site this is – he's known of it for some time); these include *Tubaria confragosa* (above, right), and *Russula xenochlora* – see the photo of the former, one of many photogenic species; the third species, *Sarcoleotia* (now *Ascocoryne*) *turficola*, was found by Yvonne, in the



bog area of the site, & is somewhat less pleasing in appearance - it was scarcely recognisable as a fungus, at least to me. The identification has now been confirmed by Bruce Ing - I imagine this species is usually overlooked (or perhaps ignored). Mike's group also found (as in 2015) *Gomphidius roseus*, growing alongside the species it is associated with, *Suillus bovinus*, as in the photo below – I've never seen this before, except at this site.



The group I was with, including Yvonne, Sonia, and John Ratcliffe, spent four or five hours on the site, there was so much to see and not just fungi. We went the long way round and just beyond the woodland, in an overgrown field next to someone's

garden we disturbed a Roe Deer, which froze, watching us for some time before bounding off. Amongst the many species we found, was a *Lactarius* which puzzled us – it looked and tasted like *pyrogalus*, but was under birch, not hazel – it turned out to be *Lactarius flexuosus*, not new to the site, but new to us; we also found *Phaeolus* growing, not on the ground, but as a bracket, on a dead Pine – it produced lots of spores, which enabled me to confirm it as *Phaeolus*. Other species which come to mind are *Fomes fomentarius* (Hoof Fungus), *Tricholoma stiparophyllum*, *Cortinarius tabularis* (one of the anomalous group), and *Ischnoderma benzoinum*.

Di Hall took the photographs, with the exception of the one of *Tubaria confragosa*, which was taken by Sue Shiels; the *Elaphocordyceps* is growing on its *Elaphomyces* truffle, the *Coprinopsis* and *Conocybe* on pony dung.



Elaphocordyceps ophioglossoides



Coprinopsis nivea



Conocybe subovalis

Editorial

Some of our members were invited to a 90th birthday party in November last year in honour of Rita Cook a founding member and driving force behind the formation of the NWFG. Robin Dean recalls those early days of the Group in his article and I include an extract of an article detailing the early days of fungal recording in the Northwest written by Rita. Several foray leaders have sent me short articles about forays that they led in 2016 and I would encourage all foray leaders to do this for the current year so that we have enough material to publish the newsletter in good time. As usual any pictures of interesting finds would be most welcome.

Many thanks to all those members who have contributed articles for this issue and to Mike Walton for typesetting and organising the printing and posting of the newsletter. Articles can be submitted to me by email. Pictures of fungi to accompany articles are very welcome preferably sent as separate attachments. Please note that it is important to show due diligence when including any photographs (or other material) that have not been taken by yourself by getting permission and including the name of the photographer (or copyright holder) so that due credit can be given in the newsletter.

Paul F Hamlyn

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How it began

Robin Dean

I don't think I'd ever been to a 90th birthday party before but I went to one in November. It was in honour of Rita Cook, the driving force behind the foundation of the NWFG. Rita was surrounded with friends when I arrived and enjoying the occasion. There was a hubbub of conversation and plenty to eat and drink, including a rather splendid cake complete with fungal decorations.

Amongst the many people who had come to celebrate with Rita were a few "old hands" from the NWFG. As we chatted, somebody wondered exactly when the Group was formed. There was much debate and nobody was certain. I

have since found out the first committee meeting was on 21 March 1994.

I was in at the beginning, having become interested in fungi and had purchased the newly published edition (1987) of Marcel Bon's "The Mushrooms and Toadstools of Britain and North-western Europe". I'd seen it reviewed in the Daily Telegraph and immediately ordered it, thinking that with its help I would be able to identify everything I found! That however, proved to be a vain hope. Seeking further enlightenment, I went on a fungus identification course at Juniper Hill FSC, run by Derek Reid with the assistance of Audrey Thomas. Although it was enjoyable, I remained rather unenlightened, finding there was much more to fungi than I thought and also rather daunted by the fact some people on the course had microscopes!



Somebody on the course mentioned the BMS and suggested that it would be worth joining, as you got a magazine and notice of "official" forays. So I joined, I recall it was £6! By some

means or other I found out that Rita was a BMS member and phoned her. We met up and I learned that she was a member of the NW Naturalists (mycology section). I was working on the rigs at the time, 2 weeks on 2 weeks off and I think Rita had just taken early retirement. This meant we had free time during the week so could go off fungi hunting together. I joined the NW naturalists, in order to take part in the forays.

I got to know Rita well and we used to do a bit of hill walking together too, still with an eye out for fungi though! Rita began to feel we could achieve more as a group if we became independent of the NW Naturalists and had our own funds etc. Thus the idea of the NWFG was born. After much discussion and debate, the NWFG was set up with Rita as its chairperson. It was really quite successful very quickly and the feeling of belonging to a group seemed to appeal to people.

The group went from strength to strength. Day workshops proved very useful and it was good to work together instead of everyone just disappearing at the end of a foray. The advent of email enabled us to communicate efficiently. We started having weekends away, initially at the Blencathra Field Centre and later at the Keswick Convention Centre. Keswick has become something of an institution, a very social occasion with good food and chat! With a bit of mycology thrown in.



Eventually, Rita found that the running the group was becoming too much work for her so Irene Ridge took over from her. Irene, with the help of the committee, continues to pilot the group successfully through the mycological waters.

My completely biased opinion is that the NWFG has become a really special fungus group, very competent but still friendly and welcoming. I've seen it change but always for the better and we have some really skilled members. It is all down to Rita's initial vision.

Happy 90th birthday Rita!

Photos here and on front cover taken by Rebecca Kidd and Robin Dean

Early history of fungal recording in the North-west

Rita Cook

(extracted from Hamlyn & Cook, 1996)

The Group was first set up as the Mycology Section of the North Western Naturalists Union (NWNLU) by Dr Hincks of the Manchester Museum in the mid-1940s. At this stage it was an informal gathering of a mere half dozen or so enthusiasts including professional botanists and keen amateurs.

Minutes and records do not appear until a decade later. Minutes of the AGM held in 1956 reveal that the group remained small and that availability of public transport dictated the choice of venue for forays. The few records listed are included only as a part of the minutes of the AGM. Only names of fungi without habitat details etc were noted, except in the case of a few debatable finds. This format persisted for a further 15 years.

Miss E. Harthan our oldest member, now in her 92nd year and the sole survivor of the original group, became Section Secretary in 1956 and remained in post for 25 years. Her history encapsulates that of the Group and the early work done by amateurs generally. The serious detailed recording she undertook personally from 1941 onwards is contained in 20 notebooks comprising careful notes and paintings of her finds which remain with us today. Her library reflects the advances made over the years in the literature available to amateurs. The early authorities - Masee, Swanton, Carleton Rea and Lister - are

included as are the later Wakefield and Dennis literature and the Leeds University 'Naturalist' keys (1950s). In those early days much more material was forwarded to Kew for identification or confirmation by, for example, Dr Derek Reid or Miss Elsie Wakefield and several firsts attributable to Miss Harthan are described in the *Transactions of the British Mycological Society* (1952; 1958).

The group changed little until, in 1975, Dr George Taylor of the Botany Department of Manchester University became Chairman, bringing with him student members. Dr Taylor offered professional expertise and a more structured approach to recording, though annual lists still included only species names. The first popular field guide, Collins Guide, had appeared in 1963 and remained an encouraging landmark for beginners. In addition Dr Taylor now organised several weekend courses at Manchester University including that led by Dr Roy Watling who inspired many beginners to take up the more serious study of mycology. These developments elicited a steady increase in Section membership. Dr Taylor remained as Chairman until 1982 and continued to be involved as Section Recorder until his early death in 1985.

In 1984 Rita Cook became Chairman. The group continued to function without change for a further five years during which period however more popular field guides appeared - Phillips, Bon and the more serious work of Moser. Then from 1989 onwards several events conspired to produce major changes in the mycological scene, both nationally and locally.

For example, at national level there was an enormous expansion of public curiosity about 'mushrooms and toadstools' inspired by the media. Then, more specifically, the British Mycological Society (BMS) urged its members to forward records of 50 selected species in order to investigate their status through the medium of mapping. This initiative inspired the NWNu Mycology Section to set up its own Common Fungi Survey as a contribution to the national effort and more particularly to encourage amateurs of all grades, both members and non-members, to 'record with purpose'. As a result of both these factors, numbers attending autumn forays more than doubled and the Section suddenly found itself presented with a wide range of people whose demands for knowledge and training were not being met.

At national level the BMS was experiencing a similar problem. Complaints were made that it was not adequately meeting the needs of their Associate Members who were largely, though not solely, amateurs. The Society responded by appointing a National Associates' Co-ordinator with a brief to appoint regional organisers to promote improved provision for the beginner and amateur. At local level, the Mycology Section of the NWNu felt it needed to examine its status and resources. An important consideration was that, with the advent of the Common Fungi Survey, the Botany Department of the Liverpool Museum had become the focus for many of its activities. This situation arose when, in exchange for help from Rita Cook in setting up a regional mycological database, they offered professional advice and very generous

administrative support for the group's recording and mapping initiatives. In addition the Museum could provide resources for other educational projects. The parent body, the NWNu, with its very limited funding could not offer such support, and, sadly for its long association with the Section, many newcomers to mycology were now expressing a wish to join a specialist group rather than a general natural history organisation. For these reasons the Section decided that it must now become an autonomous, self-funding, Regional Group with closer ties with the BMS (Rita Cook was by now Regional Organiser for the Northwest) in addition to its close working relationship with the Liverpool Museum. However, happily, it retained its links with the NWNu by becoming an Affiliated Society.

The change in status took place at an Inaugural General Meeting in 1994 when, after half a century, the former Mycology Section of the NWNu became the independent North West Fungus Group (NWFG). Today it stands as a flourishing regional body with a much increased membership, its own twice-yearly Newsletter, and an increased range of activities to meet not only the varying needs of its members but also to satisfy the increasingly wider interested public whose help it must enlist for the support of current conservation initiatives. Not least, it has established close links with other regional groups.

Reference

Hamlyn, P F & Cook, R. North West Fungus Group goes on-line. *Mycologist*, 1996, 10(4), 177-179.

Pennington Flash Country Park NWFG Foray, 7 August 2016

Christopher Bowden

Flashes are lakes formed from mining subsidence and Pennington Flash, a legacy of Wigan's industrial heritage, is an impressive example of this phenomenon. Towards the end of the 19th century the land now under the Flash was farmland crossed by railways and the meandering Hey Brook. The vast amounts of coal extracted eventually caused the land to sink and by 1905 a large lake had formed. Two farms were submerged and some of the railway lines were flooded.

Open water, scrub, grassland and maturing mixed woodland provide important habitats for a wide variety of wildlife. And so, on a fine August day, I set out to lead my first foray with hope and some trepidation, having visited the site a week previously and noting

fungi a little thin on the ground. Quite a change compared with my visit the previous October when there had been plenty on display.

However, the final total ran to 60 identified species. The generally rather wet terrain, with quite a lot of fallen twigs, rotting wood and vegetation led to finding several resupinates, rusts and mildews, including the widespread but uncommon *Ceriporia viridans*. Again, amongst the more uncommon finds were *Cortinarius decipiens*, *Hebeloma birrus*, *Laccaria tortilis* and *Scleroderma bovista*.

And so, not to be deterred, I hope some of you will join me next October at the Lancashire Wildlife Trust's Wigan Flashes Reserve.

NWFG Keswick weekend 2016 foray at Noble Knott, Whinlatter

John Watt

Many of our members continue to come to enjoy the autumn foraying weekend in Keswick and this year we were blessed with fine weather over the weekend. We were delighted that Jaqui, Louise and Linda could again provide catering, bringing home-made and farm-based produce, and being great company as always to boot.

It was a special pleasure to have our former President Bruce Ing and Ellie with us this time (right).



He was quick to identify a rarity found by Yvonne in moss at Cliburn Moss; *Ascocoryne turficola*, with only 42 records in FRDBI (as *Sarcoleotia turficola*). The presence of Bruce as myxo expert attracted a member from North East Fungus Study Group, John Robinson, who also has a special interest in myxomycetes and has a real photographic talent in this regard (see <http://nefsg.co.uk/myxomycetes>).

On Saturday, eleven of us chose to foray at a site new to us, only 3 miles from Keswick, at the edge of the Whinlatter Forest, starting from the first car park at Noble Knott. This site offered good conditions for easy foraying along trails and forest roads through both deciduous and coniferous woodland with open glades.

We finished with a total of 89 collections though after some turned out to be duplicates and others could not be iden-



tified in the time available, we finished with a species list totalling 69.

As often is the case, we immediately found a few around the car park; one being *Tarzettia catinus* - like a *Peziza* with a nicely frilled margin. Another looked very much like *Otidea alutacea*

growing in the wood chips but the spores totally lacked the two oil droplets so characteristic of this genus, therefore it was left off the final list.

Another interesting asco was *Helvella atra*,

More ascos near our lunch stop at the side of the freshly made forest road included Orange Peel *Aleurica aurantia*; and in the same vicinity, Sonia found some specimens of Eyelash. The



Scutellinia genus has recently been of interest to myself since colleagues had shared with me more detailed keys for this species. It has proved rather more complicated than used to be thought and some labelled in the past as *S. scutellata* may have been misidentified. The present one was keyed out as *Scutellinia subhirtella*, confirmed by Mal Greaves from Mid-Yorks group. At the same site, I found a few groups of *Pholiota mixta*. John Robinson kindly gave me some Patent Blue which enabled me to see pleuro-chrysocystidia *en masse*, and this together with other features helped me confirm its identity.

Other good finds were *Pseudocraterellus undulatus* (below) and *Typhula quisquiliaris* (over page).

Linda spotted a light brown slimy mass on moss stems and Bruce confirmed this as characteristic of the plasmodial stage of *Fuligo muscorum* and as such is one of the few identifiable at this stage in the field. It obligingly progressed to the spore bearing stage next



day.

At the time, I myself got stuck with an *Entoloma* – despite or because just having purchased Nordeloos' *Funga Europea* volume 5 – uncertain as to whether the single pointed cells on the hymenium were basidia or cystidia, characteristic of rare species in the *Versatilius* section. Later at home, I felt these to be basidia and so my collection was same one as Yvonne had also found *Entoloma cetratum*.



In summary, a well-spent day and well worth a revisit another time.

References

Web-based resources for *Scutellinia*:

<http://fungi.myspecies.info/content/scutellinia-key> (Paul Cannon)

http://www.econoweb.co.uk/Carmarthenshire_fungi/Key%20to%20British%20Species%20of%20Scutellinia.pdf (Yin-jian Yao)

Since I can't locate the guides by Jeanerot and Schumacher on-line, I can forward to anyone who is interested.

{Editor's note: some of the photographs were taken by John Ratcliffe}

NWFG foray at Moore Nature Reserve on 23 October 2016

Paul F. Hamlyn

The reserve is a mixture of wet deciduous woodland, heathland (formed on mounds of sand excavated during the construction of the Manchester Ship Canal) and is divided by the dried out bed of an old canal. I first visited the reserve back in October 2003 when invited to lead a fungus walk by the

wardens. Since then I have held a NWFG beginners foray at Moore every year generally in September or October. There have been some noticeable changes over the years. In the earlier visits massive numbers of the Bearded Milkcap, *Lactarius pubescens*, were found growing with birch in the heath-



land area. *Bovista plumbea* (Grey Puffball) together with *Omphalina pyxidata* whose preferred habitat is with grass growing on sandy soils were also found in large numbers. These species are rarely found on forays these days. Admittedly some of the areas that we used to visit have been engulfed by gorse or fenced off by the wardens however this does not fully explain their demise. The woodland areas have remained more consistent. There is a lot of birch and the associated mycorrhizal species *Amanita muscaria* (Fly Agaric) and *Paxillus involutus* (Brown Roll-rim) are found on virtually every foray. Other common species found at Moore include the earthballs *Scloderma citrinum* and *verrucosum* and the deceivers *Laccaria laccata* and *Laccaria amethystina*. It is also common to find several *Cortinarius* and *Hebeloma* species but we still struggle to identify them.

Twenty people turned out for the beginners' foray this year including about a dozen members of the Wilmslow

Natural History Society. Jeanette Mad-dy had previously given a talk at one of the societies meetings and encouraged them to attend one of our forays. Fortunately with such a large group there were a number of NWFG experts on hand including Ken Burgess, Tony Carter, John Taylor and Robin Dean. Ken is particularly good with beginners leaving me time to concentrate on the recording side. I was rather disappointed to find only the black remains of some specimens of *Hygrocybe conica* on the heathland. We normally find several species of *Hygrocybe* at this time of the year. However, there was a profusion of *Cystoderma amianthinum* growing in quite large rings something I had not seen before. Tony Carter's first find was *Lepiota grangei*. He also came across a tiny species on an oak leaf and managed to research it to *Gymnopus quercophilus*. He had great fun showing the naturalist group *Ossicaulis lignitalis* (Mealy Oyster) that has grown in a hole in the same birch tree for many years.

Obituary: Barbara Waghorn

Her fellow forayers will remember that impish grin and warm, Lancashire burr. In her quiet, relaxed fashion she was an enthusiastic supporter of our Group.

Barbara, my wife of 44 happy years, died at home from cancer last November, her family by her bedside. She was 82.

We met through our shared love of the hills, crags and waters of the Lake District and Snowdonia.

Great travellers we visited 30 countries as far apart as Trinidad, South Africa and Thailand. Mountains, birds and botany were our obsessions, together with sailing to remote islands such as St Kilda and its huge Atlantic sea stacks, a spectacular sight 30 miles or so off the Outer Hebrides. Barbara revelled in viewing those “seabird cities” teeming with gannets, fulmars and puffins.

But she was never happier than when tramping the Lakeland fells and foraging around Derwentwater in boots and anorak with binoculars slung around her neck. The Group’s friendly Keswick gathering was one of the highlights of our active outdoor year. She was always fascinated by the shapes and colours of fungi; the semi-translucent porcelain fungus was one of her favourites.

We enjoyed many holidays at our Keswick flat and never missed calling at Derwentwater’s “*Ganoderma* log” near the Lakeside below Great Wood. A huge fallen tree, it usually supported a variety of fungi but is now almost inaccessible due to rampant vegetation.

My soulmate’s funeral service was held at Radcliffe Crematorium with a small party from the Group among the mourners. The ashes of “a very special lady” from the Lancashire mill town of Ramsbottom will be scattered by Derwentwater. Where else?

Tom Waghorn