

Chris Bancroft's version of the week – in verse....

I've been asked to remind you what we did so here goes

You'll hear that it takes the form of verse prose

SUNDAY

This was the day we'd all been waiting for
To go on our SDR holiday once more
Last year was France, this year not so far.
We were just going to the foreign land over the Tamar
To Cornwall for walks short and long
And where jam and cream are put on scones WRONG!

There were a baker's dozen of us picked up at Wellswood
A pick up at this point is VERY GOOD
So future organisers, please take note
A pick up at Wellswood gets our vote.
There were more pick-ups on the way and then
Our last stop was to pick up Janice, Chris and Ken
Then over the border we all did go
To spend a couple of hours in Truro.
The Victorian cathedral was very fine
And we all got back to the coach just in time.

Sean drove his coach extremely well
And soon we were at Membly Hall Hotel
Where 5 nights in Falmouth we were to stay
With a choice of 2 walks on each day.
We had time to unpack and relax or explore
Some went to find out what Falmouth had in store
But two gentlemen we know didn't go very far
Chris and old Ken were the first to the bar

MONDAY

After breakfast, a walk into Falmouth town
Where the Prince of Wales pier could be found
To take the ferry over the harbour was our cause
In order to visit the village of St Mawes.
Janice was to be our long walk leader today
And a large turnout of 31 ramblers went her way.
Rosemary couldn't decide which walk for her was best
And finally decided on the shorter led by Les.
Our tea break was in a lawn with lots of benches on which to sit
With a view of St Mawes castle immediately below it
Then along the Fal estuary we all did lurch
Until we reached St Just in Roseland church.
Here was to be lunch for an hour or more
With old church and gardens for us to explore.
All morning waterproofs had gone on and off a lot
Depending on whether walkers were too wet or too hot.
In the afternoon only one uphill did Janice deliver
As we went up, then down to the Percuil river
But on this walk a branch attacked Celia's head
And caused some concern as it bled and it bled
But we all returned safely to board the ferry
From a walk where some had eaten many a blackberry
For Marguerite and Geoff a special day, this
Celebrating 57 years of wedded bliss
"Surely you are not old enough," I said
Geoff replied he was a child bridegroom when he wed.
In the evening was a quiz, a few people heard
And they managed to come first, second and third. (It seems... there were only three teams!)

TUESDAY

We all went by coach to Mawgan Porth
From where the long walkers would set forth
The shorter walkers to Harlyn did go
In order to walk the coast to Padstow.
There were 17 of us on the longer route
Including a guest couple from Doncaster to boot
At Mawgan Porth it was 20 pence to use the loo
So we went through the turnstile two by two
When we came out Val turned and said to me
There's a sign here...we've been captured on CCTV!
Our leader today, Tessa, is famed far and wide
If you open the latest Walk magazine you'll find her inside
Where *heavenly* and *Devonly* she had managed to rhyme
Even though she taught languages in her time.
She described this walk as 'flattish'but still
Managed to start off up a significant hill.
We had a lovely walk along the cliff top
And Bedruthan Steps were easy to spot.
We saw a kestrel mobbed by both gull and crow
And Peter's Celia spotted a seal down below.
At Treynon our sandwiches were absolutely fine
But for our guests from Doncaster it was chips and wine.
After our lunch stop at Treynon Bay
We walked around Trevoise Head all of the way.
Meanwhile Celia on the short walk tripped up and fell
It seems not only branches, but tree roots attack her as well.
The short walkers got to Padstow but could not stay
As Sean's coach came along to take them away.
We all met at Harlyn and into the coach huff and puff
And Colin told us all about a bird called a 'clough'!
Two lovely walks this day but some ladies were heard to remark
They were rather disappointed they hadn't seen Poldark.

WEDNESDAY

We went to the Lizard peninsula today
And Colin would be the one to lead the way
Although we got off the coach at quarter to
We didn't walk till 10 as the ladies queued for the loo
Colin's sense of direction went a little astray
So we didn't visit the lighthouse on the Point today.
There were 39 of us on this walk
But our leader Colin did not balk
He took us on the cliff tops and down the hollows
And wherever he went, 38 of us followed.
Kynance Cove was a wonderful sight
The ascent out of it was quite a fright
We were chuffed to see a pair of choughs,
A seal, gannets, stonechats and other stuff.
Tessa said, "Look, another seal ahoy"
Her eyesight is dodgy...it was a buoy.
A rock tripped Celia and over she went
A hat trick of incidents – quite an achievement!
Walkers needed a rest, it was time to stop
So we all had our lunch on the cliff top.
Sixteen went ahead, Mullion Cove to find
But the other 23 were not far behind.
Yet the 16 had a couple more miles to go
To reach the church on the beach at Gunwalloe.
Colin had a terrible shock when he found
A dead body lying on the ground
But he was in error: it was Bernard prone
Lying so that Val could massage his foot bone.
In the evening we were treated to a poem by Chairman Bernard Parker
So now we are all well aware of the virtues of the backmarker.

THURSDAY

Some stayed in Falmouth for the day
Some visited Penzance for a short stay
A Magnificent Seven did the short walk
Of the 20 on St Michael's Way I will now talk...
Jenny led this walk from Carbis Bay
And she went uphill straight away
To the monument of the eccentric Mr Knill
Where 10 girls in white dance around the hill still.
From here we could see coasts south and north
And after tea break we set forth
But Jenny took us all down the wrong hill
We had to walk back up the monument of Knill.
In narrow lanes motorists travelled with care
Except one angry man who at us did swear
Twenty walkers held him up just a moment
And he showed us that he was no gent.
Alan got out his secateurs the brambles to trim,
Problem was, he was last, no one behind him.
A man was lost in a field, we called him back
And made sure we got him on the right track.
We had lunch on the summit of Trencrom Hill
We could see where we came from, the monument to Knill.
And we could see where we would go by all account
On the other coast there was St Michael's Mount.
There were pretty butterflies flying around
Both small copper and wall brown were to be found.
In the field with the bull Peter's Celia filled with fear
While Tessa simply stood and admired the bull's rear.
And a mystery as we walked along a field edge....
Why were so many spades hanging from the hedge?
And as we came to the end of our 9 miles
Celia was pleased to see the back of Cornish stiles.

For most, the day ended in Marazion
And St Michael's Mount with its castle high on
We were given some time to explore
Before returning to Membly Hall once more
Where we ate good food served by friendly staff
And had a few drinks, had a few laughs...
Cris and Bernard left us today to return to Torbay
Let's hope his foot operation tomorrow goes the right way.

It's been a good trip – I'd like to say
Thanks to Les for organising this holiday
And thanks to all leaders who led the way
And to Sean who drove us safely each day.
I hope I speak for all when I say
We had a good time here
And I hope to see you all in France next year.

Chris Bancroft
September 2016