



DORSET FOOTNOTES

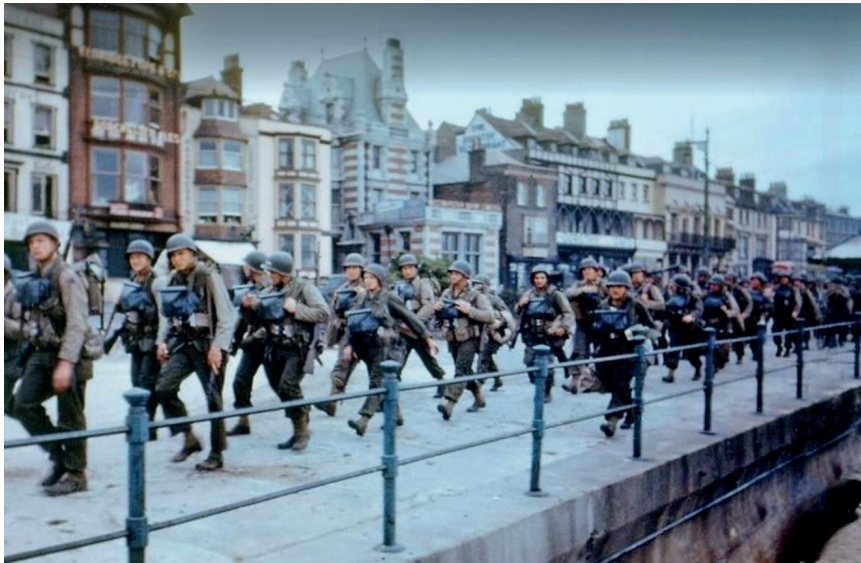
Newsletter of the Dorset Area of the Ramblers Association

ISSUE NO. 97

SPRING 2024

Hiking Amidst World War II What happened to hiking during World War II?

During World War II, hiking in the UK was affected by the broader context of the war, with significant impacts on civilian activities and countryside use. The 80th anniversary of D-Day will take place on 5th June 2024, making this an appropriate time to look at how World War II influenced hiking and outdoor activities.



Under the authority of the British government, access restrictions were imposed on certain rural and coastal areas during World War II. These areas, deemed sensitive for national security reasons, included potential invasion spots along the coast and regions near military installations. Other areas were repurposed for military training and exercises, closing many traditional hiking areas.

The war effort's demand for significant resources led to restrictions that made long-distance travel and outdoor activities like hiking more challenging. Petrol rationing, for instance, made travelling to distant hiking trails by car difficult, if not impossible, for most citizens. The scarcity and high demand for crucial materials for outdoor equipment, such as metal and rubber, further affected the availability and cost of hiking gear. Yet, despite these challenges, outdoor enthusiasts found ways to adapt and continue their love for hiking.

The threat of air raids and the imposition of blackout regulations in urban and rural areas added an element of risk to evening and



nighttime outdoor activities. Despite these challenges, hikers showed remarkable resilience, adapting their outdoor activities to the new circumstances. This resilience is a testament to the indomitable spirit of the hiking community during the war.

Significant changes in land use were witnessed in some regions due to the war. Military bases, airfields, and factories were developed, often restricting access to previous hiking areas. These physical transformations had a lasting impact on the hiking landscape.

Despite its hardships, the war served as a catalyst for change. It underscored the importance of access to nature for public health and well-being. This realisation led to significant post-war efforts to secure public rights of way and establish national parks and trails, underpinned by the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. These initiatives, born out of the war's lessons, continue to shape our relationship with nature today, offering hope for a future where public access to nature is prioritised.

The war led to a **shift in societal priorities**, focusing on the collective effort for victory. Leisure activities such as hiking became less of a priority. However, for some, the outdoors provided a respite from the stress of wartime living, leading to a diminished interest in hiking and nature.



The British government **encouraged "Holidays at Home"** during the war to avoid unnecessary travel that could hinder the war effort and alleviate the transport system's strain. Local authorities organised events and activities, including walks and rambles, to keep citizens entertained within the confines of these restrictions. This initiative sustained some interest in hiking and walking, albeit closer to home.

Despite these restrictions and challenges, interest in hiking and outdoor pursuits remained in the UK during the war. **The war's end saw a desire to reconnect with nature** and the peace it represented, combined with the return to civilian life, which encouraged a post-war boom in outdoor recreation.

What part did the coast comprising the Jurassic Coast play in WW II

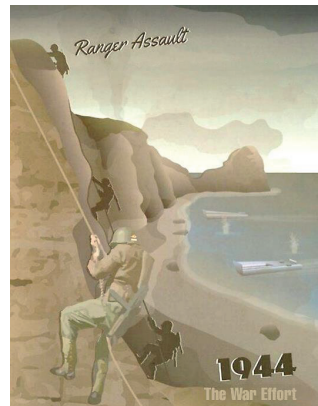
The Jurassic Coast, a 95-mile stretch of coastline along the English Channel in southern England, known for its stunning landscapes and geological history, played several vital roles during World War II.

This area was **used as a training ground for British and Allied forces**. The varied terrain, including cliffs, beaches, and open water, provided an ideal setting for preparing troops for various aspects of warfare, including amphibious landings that would be crucial for operations like D-Day.

The Jurassic Coast was part of Britain's **defences against potential German invasion**. Given its location along the southern coast of England, it was considered vulnerable to Nazi invasion attempts. As part of Britain's coastal defences, areas along the coast were fortified with gun emplacements, pillboxes, and other defensive structures. The coast also saw the creation of beach obstacles and anti-tank barriers to hinder any potential landing operations by the enemy.

As was common in many coastal areas of Britain during the war, **civilians in some parts of the Jurassic Coast were evacuated** to make way for military use. Homes and property were requisitioned for defence purposes and to accommodate military personnel and equipment.

In summary, the Jurassic Coast played a multifaceted role in World War II, serving as a defensive bulwark, a tragic site of loss during preparations for D-Day, and a backdrop to the extensive military training and preparations necessary for the liberation of Europe.



The hiking gear used by walkers during WW II

During World War II, civilians and military personnel who engaged in hiking or walking for leisure, training, or operational movements used gear that was quite basic by today's standards. The equipment at the time was a mix of military-issued and civilian items, reflecting the technology and materials available during the early-mid 20th century.

Footwear Heavy leather boots with hobnailed soles were common among civilians and military personnel. These boots were durable and provided good traction on rough terrain but were not particularly comfortable by modern standards. Soldiers often had to treat their boots with dubbin or other substances to improve their water resistance.

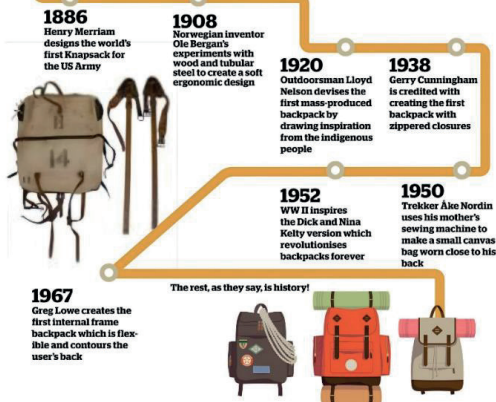


Clothing Wool was a predominant material for clothing due to its durability and insulating properties, even when wet. Hikers would wear woolen trousers, shirts, and sweaters. Military personnel would wear their standard-issue uniforms, also primarily made of wool. Waterproofing was limited so rain gear could include basic rubberised or waxed coats and capes.

Backpacks were made of canvas and had leather straps. They were more straightforward and had less capacity than modern backpacks. External frames were used to carry larger loads, but they were cumbersome and less ergonomic.

History of the BACKPACK

From its humble beginnings in the 19th century, the 'backpack' has enjoyed an exciting journey through creativity and problem-solving



Navigation Maps and compasses were essential. These tools required a good understanding of traditional navigation techniques, as GPS technology was decades away from being accessible to civilians or infantry soldiers.

Food and Water Rations for hikers might include tinned foods, hardtack, and dried fruits or meats. Water was carried in canteens, usually made of metal. Filtration and purification systems were not commonly available, so water sources had to be chosen carefully.

Sleeping Gear Sleeping options included wool blankets and basic canvas ground sheets. Tents, when used, were also made of canvas and were heavy and bulky. Insulated

sleeping pads were not a standard item, so comfort was minimal.

Lighting and Tools Handheld torches (flashlights) and lanterns provided light, with batteries being a valuable commodity. Multi-use tools or simple knives were carried for various needs, from repairs to preparing food.

First Aid First aid kits contained bandages, antiseptic, and basic medications. Knowledge of first aid was important, as medical assistance could be far away.

The limited technology and materials of the period meant that hiking gear was functional but not necessarily comfortable or efficient by today's standards. Hikers and soldiers alike made do with what was available, focusing on durability and simplicity.

Changes to Rights of Way in Dorset

Orders affecting changes to the following rights of way have been confirmed since DFN Issue 96. Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs) and Public Path Orders (PPOs) are again being processed by Dorset Council and can be found at www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/current-definitive-map-modification-orders-and-public-path-orders

Confirmed Orders (# identifies any New Numbers)

Portland FP34 (part): } **Diversion (T & CP A 1990, Section 257)**
Portland FP35: }



Please note that unless otherwise stated, the above Orders are also made/confirmed under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981(Section 53A (2)).

Long Term Temporary Closures/Diversions under Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984: Section 14(1) or 14/2 (unless otherwise stated) all are needed to comply with H&S Regulations.

- Bridport FP25:** } From SY 464 902 to SY 474 897 from 30.04.24 initially for 21 days, due to severe erosion and danger from cliff falls.
Burton Bradstock FP18}
Colehill BR24 (part): From SU 0201 0133 to grid reference SU 0219 0120, from 30.03.24 for 26 weeks. Due to unstable ground created by badger sett. No alternative
- Gillingham FP78 (part):** From GR ST 819 252 to ST 817 253 from 29.04.24 initially for 21 days, anticipated longer. To allow construction of residential development. Alternative route.
- Marnhull FP91 (part):** From GR ST 780 191 to ST 778 193 from 02.10.23 extended until 02.04.25. To allow development. No alternative.
- Osmington FP12 (part):** From GR SY 7354 8174 to SY 7354 8166 From 29.04.24 for 26 weeks due to landslip.
- Osmington FP13 (part):** From GR SY 7354 8174 to SY 7338 8175 weeks
Owermoigne FP19 (part): extension to 27.01.25 To allow works on caravan site. (Ringstead). Alternative route.
- Shillingstone FP10 (part):** } at footbridge. From 13.05.24, for 26 weeks, to reinstate banks
Child Okeford FP37 (part): } and repair bridge. Anticipated completion June 2024
Studland FP22 (part): From GR SZ 036 828 to SZ 036 830, from 5th March 2024 for 26 weeks, due to safety concerns as erosion is causing the cliff edge to collapse.
- Sturminster Newton FP10:** From GR ST 7933 1434 to ST 7910 1413 from 08.03.23
Sturminster Newton FP12 (part): From GR ST 7902 1425 to ST 7910 1412 } to 08.03.25
 Extension to allow construction of residential development.
- Verwood BR11:** From GR SU 0962 0731 to SU 0930 0727 from 16.03.24 for 26 weeks. Due to the surface being undermined by badgers. Alternative route.
- Weymouth FP92 (part):** From GR SY 660 783 to SY 663 783 } From 03.05.24 initially for
Weymouth FP130 (part): From GR SY 662 537 to SY 662 557 } 21 days, but anticipated longer. To allow construction of residential development.
- Winfrith Newburgh BR9 (part):** From GR SY 817 848 to SY 832 848 from 09.10.23
Coombe Keynes FP5 (part): extended until 09.10.25. Extreme Health and Safety Risk from expansion of dairy, and slurry lagoon. Alternative route signed.

(Please Note: All the above closures are for Health and Safety reasons. Any person who uses or permits the use of the footpaths in contravention of any of the above orders will be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1,000.)

Jan Wardell

For Your Diary

2024 The 50th Dorset Area AGM – Morning of 30th November 2024

The 50th Dorset Area AGM will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, November 30th, 2024, at Broadmayne Village Hall, Cowleaze Road, Broadmayne, DT2 8EW. This will be followed by a shared 'finger-buffet' style lunch (each person bringing a contribution) and celebratory cake. We are also calling on any long-standing members who remember the early days of the Dorset Area to share their stories.

2024 Purbeck Plod – 23rd June 2024 - Page 8

2024 Dorset Area - Inter Group Walks and Picnic Sunday 14th July 2024 – Page 8

Walking and Talking - The Happiness Cocktail

Walking and talking with a regular group of people isn't just a leisurely activity; it's a powerful tool for boosting mental health. This simple yet effective combination offers many benefits to well-being and happiness. Rambling is the ideal metaphor for walking the talk.

You all know from your experiences that walking is a proven mood booster. The rhythmic movement of your foot on the ground, fresh Dorset air, and exposure to raw nature all work together to release the brain's endorphins, those feel-good chemicals. When combined with engaging conversation, the effects are even more pronounced. Chatting with others while walking helps distract from negative thoughts, reduces stress, and promotes relaxation. If you want a break, you can always drift back to the relative solitude of the back marker.



Regular group walks foster a sense of belonging and community. Sharing experiences, stories, and laughter creates bonds and strengthens relationships. This sense of connection is vital for mental health as it combats feelings of loneliness and isolation, which are significant contributors to conditions like depression and anxiety.

Walking in a group also provides accountability and motivation. Knowing that others rely on you to show up encourages consistency and helps establish a routine. Additionally, the social aspect adds an element of enjoyment to the activity, making it more likely that individuals will stick with it in the long term. You can

always take the next step and become an occasional walk leader, adding that touch of positive stress that we all need now and again.

Group walks offer a supportive environment for open communication. Being surrounded by trusted individuals willing to listen without judgment can facilitate conversations about personal struggles or concerns. This can lead to increased self-awareness, improved coping skills, and greater empowerment. What's talked about on the walk stays on the walk.

Even though we all know it, walking and talking in a group also promotes physical well-being. You don't even need to know where you are going; just follow the leader. Regular exercise is essential for maintaining a healthy body and mind, and walking is a low-impact activity accessible to people of all ages and fitness levels. Step on out to improve that immune system.

In conclusion, walking and talking with a regular group of people is a simple yet effective way to improve mental health. By combining the physical benefits of walking with the social and emotional support of group interaction, individuals can experience reduced stress, enhanced mood, and overall well-being. So, grab your walking shoes, check out one of our Local Rambling Walks and ramble on and on towards better mental and physical health.

Increased longevity will bring profound social change.

I wrote the "Walking and Talking" article after reading Martin Wolf's FT article, "Increased longevity will bring profound social change." The article argues that people must work longer and that pension systems need to be transformed.

A big question is how people will age. Will they enjoy a vigorous old age and then suddenly drop dead, or will they live on "sans eyes, sans teeth, sans everything" for many helpless, hopeless years? He imagines four scenarios:

- The first is Jonathan Swift's Struldbruggs, immortal but ageing eternally.
- The second is Oscar Wilde's Dorian Gray, who lives young and then suddenly dies old.
- The third is Peter Pan, who is forever young.
- The fourth is Marvel Comics' Wolverine, who can regenerate.

We need to rethink old age as individuals and societies. We must not shuffle a considerable proportion of our society into unproductive and unhealthy "old age." The Struldbruggs appears to be the current trajectory; if we live long enough, we tend to fall slowly apart. But maybe combining a better diet, more exercise, and medical advances might deliver other possibilities.

The Ramblers can make a difference by promoting and delivering more beneficial exercise. Walking and talking with a regular group of people isn't just a leisurely activity; it's a powerful tool for boosting a lifetime of mental and physical health—could this be The Dorian Gray cocktail?

I saw it On a Walk

In desperate need to persuade some of my imaginary readers to prove they exist, I grabbed an idea by 'Big Derek' to tempt you to send me a photo 'as it says on the tin; I saw it on a walk.' The image is just the 'eye candy'. Some commentary must also go beyond where, when and time. A little prose, a poem, a short description of why the photo captures your imagination, literally anything that links the image to you.

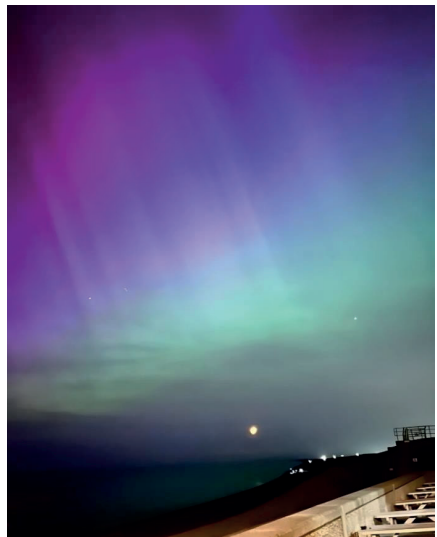
As always, there has to be an example. Canny Derek sent me the idea, but not his realisation.

In mid-June, we saw the Aurora Borealis, commonly known as the Northern Lights, in full display down here in the deepest south.

My pictures weren't spectacular, but I liked the one from The Cove Inn in Portland, taken by the staff as they wrapped up after a busy shift.

The picture of The Northern Lights reminded me of the clear night skies in my native deepest Northumberland, where I would occasionally see aurora Borealis and regular shooting star displays accompany me as I strolled and rolled back from the pub.

Midnight by © Loraine Griffin
Nighttime is a heavy, mysterious darkness that fills the world.
 Darkness is the tune she weighs,
 Starrily is the tune she plays,
 Gently is the wind she blows,
 And where it leads, no one knows.



I'm sure you can do better than that. The next Footnotes starts its journey on 1st September 2024. I usually have it put together by the middle of the month.

DORSET AREA EVENTS

Dorset Area - Inter Group Walks and Picnic Sunday 14th July 2024

Choose a walk (or make your own way to the venue) and meet for a picnic at Hardy's Monument (GR SY 607876) between 12.30 and 13.00 (Explorer Map 116)

Meeting Place: Maiden Castle car park GR SY 668 889
 Start time: 10.30am Distance: 9.5 miles. Grade: Moderate
 South Dorset Ridgeway to Hardy Monument, returning via
 Martinstown
 Leader – Kevin Horton - Contact: edgsec@outlook.com
East Dorset Group



Meeting Place: Black Down car park (just west of Hardy's Monument) GR SY 607876
 Start time: 10.00am and 13.30pm (afternoon start time but please join us for lunch)

Distance: 10.5 miles (morning walk is 6 miles with 313 metres of ascent, afternoon walk is 4.5 miles with 212 metres of ascent). Grade: Moderate
 Morning walk, Jubilee Trail, Valley of Stones, Littlebredy
 Afternoon walk, Portesham Farm, Corton, Hell Bottom.

This is a figure of 8 walk, walkers are welcome to join for whole walk, or either in the morning or afternoon. Anyone joining afternoon only, must book with the leaders in advance.
 Leaders - Chris and Sarah Moyle: 07403 104180

South Dorset Group

Meeting Place: The Kings Arms, Portesham. GR SY 60195 85735 Post Code DT3 4ET
 Street parking: please park responsibly and car share if possible.
 Start time: 9.45am Estimated finish time: 3.30pm Distance: 12 miles. Grade: Moderate
 Old railway, Abbotsbury, Ashley Chase Dairy, Portesham Hill.
 After lunch, Jubilee Trail, Hell Bottom.
 Message or text Dave to book 07766 473720
 Toilets at Abbotsbury, 2 miles into walk.
 On return optional refreshments at The Kings Arms
 Leader – Dave: 07766 473720

Dorset 4050 Walkers Group

Remember to bring a packed lunch and ample drinks if the weather is hot. Kindly note that dogs are not allowed unless specified otherwise.

Ramblers – East Dorset Group

Purbeck Plod – Sunday, 23rd June 2024

Start at Swanage Pier at 0830 and 09 35 (12-mile route only) walkers – 09:30 runners
(Entry on the day, please arrive at least 20 minutes earlier)

25 miles via SWCP, Kimmeridge, Ridgeway Hill, Corfe Castle, Nine Barrow Down, Ballard Down
 A shorter **16-mile** route is available for walkers only, Coast Path, Corfe Castle and Ulwell – 08 30 start
 and an even shorter **12-mile** route for walkers via the Coast Path and the Priest's Way – 09 35 start

All finish by 20 00 at All Saints Church Hall, Swanage

Entries and Information – please get in touch with the Event Secretary – email
PurbeckPlod@eastdorsetramblers.org.uk or click on the Purbeck Plod page online at

www.eastdorsetramblers.org.uk

Please can you help out on the day?

We need marshals to help out at the Start, finish, and Checkpoints. If you can help, please get in touch with Gill Hale (edgsec@outlook.com).