

Feock Parish Council

Roundwalk number 4:

"A Railway, a Port and a New Town"

Route: Carnon Downs Village Centre, Smithy Lane, Wellington Place, Middle Devoran, Belmont, Quay Road, Devoran Quay, Point Tramroad, Tallacks Creek, Higher Devoran, Village Centre.

The walk is generally along wide paths with reasonably good surface or quiet roadways and no stiles. The route contains a hill section and is between 1.5 and 2 hours long.

There is currently one Geocache along the route, check app for details.

Compiled by Phil Allen



The walk starts at the Carnon Downs Village Hall, in the area that was the centre of the village in past centuries. Within a sparse scattering of cottages on the Downs, this provided a distinctive broad crossroad (7 road cross) bounded only by a few cottages; Broadway (previously Gateshead), the Kidleywink (formerly a store, Post Office and water delivery service), Algarnick Farm Cottage and Victoria Cottage next to the Chapel which was built in 1825.



The crossroads is also reflected in the occupations of Carnon Downs people, taken from the first modern census in 1841; of the 130 working people 33% were miners, 20% farm workers, 20% servants and 10% dock workers or seamen. **The village hall has been recently refurbished with grant aid from the National Lottery (pic 1)**

The main road through the village leads down the old turnpike road which followed Old Carnon Hill over the Carnon Bridge and through Perranwell. The new turnpike road was constructed in 1828 taking the current route over the new Devoran causeway and following the creek edge to the Norway Inn and Perran Foundry. The building of the new turnpike was overseen by William McAdam, son of the famous road engineer John McAdam. It formed part of the "Packet" route linking Falmouth with London for the lifetime of the service between 1688 to 1850. Possibly the most famous journey was that of Lieutenant Lapentoire of HMS Pickle who made the trip by Post Chaise in 37 hours on the 4th Nov 1805, in order to deliver the news from Trafalgar of Nelson's glorious victory and tragic death.

The alternative railway route over the Carnon Valley viaduct, built in 1863, was designed and laid out by I K Brunel and no doubt both he and also James Watt the father of modern power engineering, who lived at Cusgarne from 1781 to 1800, passed this way in their time. Such was the importance of Cornwall in the days of the Industrial Revolution that these world famous and iconic engineers were about the byways of Carnon Downs in the course of their work.

Take the road down the hill and turn right at the gift shop and take Smithy lane past the local store (pic 2)



If not carry on to the end of Smithy lane and take the route which effectively carries on in the same direction (pic 4)



i In the field to the left you can see a second Bronze Age Round at the far side of the field (pic 6)



Just past the store you may wish to take a short detour on your right along Parc an Creeg (Field of the Barrow) to view one of four Tumuli in Carnon Downs, this is a round barrow tomb built over 3,000 years ago in the late Bronze age (pic 3)



The route opens up into a wide pathway (pic 5)



To your left the path has a row of mature Monterey pines along its left hedge. These distinctive trees were imported from the west coast of California by Victorian plant hunters. They were grown widely in Cornwall and Devon because of their salt tolerance, wind firmness and rapid growth. They are now a very distinctive feature in both counties and Feock Parish has many fine examples. The original plantings are now old trees many of which are at the end of their lives and safety issues together with replanting has become a priority. A tree at Trelissick Estate resembling these has been estimated at 139 years old, and probably planted in 1875 (pic 7)





At the lane cross roads take the left hand track. Straight on would take you to Carnon Crease and right to Bissoe Road above Ringwell (pic 8)

The track carries below Park Hill (pic 9)



On the right is a short nip down to Carnon Crease, but carry straight on (pic 10)

At the junction with the next lane, turn left towards Old Carnon Hill. The right hand turn again takes you to Carnon Crease (pic 11).



Take the track on your left which leads on to Old Carnon Hill (pic 12)



... which you cross to take the lane beyond (pic 13)



At the next fork bear left (pic 14)



This lane brings you down to the A39 bypass road, which you cross using the central reservation (pic 15)



The concrete reservoir (pic 16) on the left was part of the old water supply to Devoran which was derived from the spring sources above and used prior to the mains supply from Stithians Reservoir being installed after its commissioning in 1967.



This concrete reservoir was built by the Langdon's of higher Devoran in 1934/5 to cater for the growing demand for water and they administered the supply until it was connected to the main Water Board supply. The lawned area on the lower side of the track and shown on the previous slide, was once an older reservoir for the system which was originally installed for the new town of Devoran by the owners and developers, Lanhydrock Estate.

The water supply was not part of the original prospectus for the new town, within which reference was made to the abundance of springs and pure water. Many of the new homes were built with their own wells, however by 1861, some 25 years after the town was started, one resident at least was described as a plumber. In 1864 the Devoran Water Company requested permission to break the Turnpike Road in order to lay pipes to connect the reservoir with the village of Devoran. Such a Water Company was a novel enterprise at this time although in keeping with Devoran's New Town status. The impetus for improvement had come from the national Cholera outbreaks early in the 1800s. After a further severe outbreak the first public Health Act was passed in 1848, coupled with the first Cornish municipal water companies founded in Penzance and Falmouth, which as port towns were in greater fear of the Cholera contagion. The Truro Water Company was only founded in 1875.

Take the path up towards Middle Devoran Farm. A footpath may be seen to the left which goes alongside the main road and leads directly to Carnon Downs, the route to the right leads down to Devoran (pic 17)



Follow the route through the farm complex (pic 18)



... and take the gateway at the bend, following the right hand hedge (pic 19)



Pass through the yard down the hill (pic 20)



... and continue along the right hand hedge (pic 21)



To the pedestrian gate at the bottom, (pic 22)



Turn left along the path (pic 23)



On your right you will see Devoran Church (pic 24). The following is an account of laying the foundation stone posted in the Royal Cornwall Gazette on Sept 15 1854:

"On Monday afternoon the foundation stone of a new Church for the increasing little town of Devoran, in the parish of Feock, was laid by T. J. A. Robartes Esq M.P. the owner of the property, and the Rev. Thomas Phillpotts, the vicar. Devoran. Situated at the highest navigable part of Restronguet Creek, it is a principle shipping place for the mines of Gwennap and its neighbourhood; a mineral railroad, which is now being adapted for locomotives, passing through the district, and having its terminus here. It is consequently much frequented by coastal shipping, and a village, which may now claim to be called a small town, flourishing, and pleasantly situated, has sprung up on the spot. The village schoolroom, to which an appropriate ecclesiastical character has been carefully given, both in outward appearance, and internal arrangements, was licensed a few years since for Divine Services; but this has proved very insufficient to accommodate worshippers, and it has been determined to build a new church."

Similarly a report on 15th September 1856 gave an account of the opening:

"The new Church at Devoran, which for some time has been a conspicuous object on the road between Truro and Falmouth, was opened for Divine Service, under the license of the Lord Bishop, on Monday last.

The church was designed by the vicar the Rev. Thomas Phillpotts, it was carried out in its details by Mr Pearson of London and executed by Mr Gerrish, builder of Feock, and Mr Salmon, carpenter of Truro. Many children had been reserved for baptism in the new church, and it was intended to baptise them on this occasion, but the difficulty in finding room for the sponsors and friends in a church thronged to the utmost, prevented. One however was baptised, an infant of 8 days old, grand-daughter of the mason who built the church, whose claim was admitted that his little one should be the first. The day was closed by a feast for the children of the schools of Devoran and Feock, provided on a liberal scale by the inhabitants of Devoran, who claimed it was their own privilege, and would allow no others to share in the gratification. Above 200 children were present."



Carry on across the stile and turn right
(pic 25)



Down the track into Devoran village (pic 26)



At the Crossroads outside the church entrance, if you look left you will see Devoran recreation ground, given to the People of Devoran by Viscount Clifton in 1919 as a War Memorial. The field was levelled in 1983/4 by the Parish Council and play equipment installed (pic 27)



On the corner opposite are the old buildings of Devoran school built in 1846/7 and designed by the same architect Mr Pearson who worked on the church and later still designed Truro Cathedral (pic 28)



Follow down the hill into Market Street.
This road takes its name from the Market House, the current hall was built in 1862, and now houses the parish Council Office and Devoran Pre-School (pic 29)

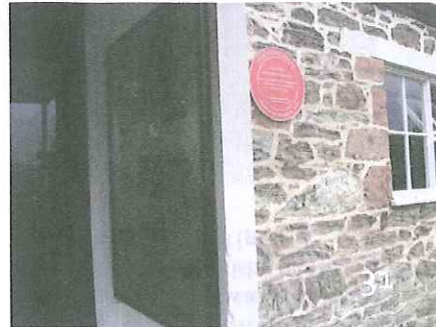


At the bottom of Market Street turn left into Quay Road. Here starts the area of the old Devoran Quays, developed by the Agar Robartes of Lanhydrock, in order to facilitate the trade opened up by the Redruth and Chacewater Railway which opened in 1826 (pic 30).



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Details of the history of the railway may be found in the entrance to the village hall a short distance along Quay Road (pic 31).



At the end of the road turn left and then right in order to follow the old Tramroad to Point. Above you will notice the Old Quay Inn, a welcome break if you are in need of rest and sustenance (pic 33).



Fine examples of buildings associated with the railway and docks are found along the road (pic 32).



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or alternatively take a detour around the waterfront quays (pic 34).



This land is held by trustees of the Devoran Quay Preservation Society.

The Quays were bought by the community in 1987 after the far-sighted and timely intervention of a local schoolteacher, Alan Roskilly.



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Follow the shoreline past the old mineral ore hutches (pic 35)



and walk along the restored lower quay. (pic 36)



Turn round to the left into Narabo Quay (pic 37)



On your right you will see the unusual tidal footpath which takes a route over the old mineral workings embankment at Tallacks Creek on to the foreshore at Carnon Mine (pic 38)



Take the path round to the left which rings you back to the quay entrance (pic 39)



Follow the Old Tramroad which leads on to Point (pic 40). This tramroad provided the final link in the Redruth and Chasewater Railway built to take goods to and from the mines and link to the quays and smelting works of Point and Penpol. Whilst the Main Railway was converted to steam locomotives in 1850, this length remained horse drawn until its closure in the 1920s.



Towards the end of the straight you will notice a small vantage area on the right which is part of the Devoran Quays. This may be a welcome resting place before the return climb up the hill (pic 41)



At the turn in the road before the Tallacks creek bridge, take a sharp left along a narrow track (pic 42)



... called Rocky Lane (pic 43)



Take the track onwards past the refurbished barn complex (pic 44)



and through the yard, continuing onwards through the gate (pic 45)



The path follows the hedge on the right hand side, through this gate and the one beyond (pic 46)



Pass Higher Devoran Farm and cross the bridge over Carnon Downs Bypass (pic 47).



The footpath on the right before the bridge was called Deadman's Lane, apparently recalling the murder of a traveller by a highwayman. It was said that there was a rock at the side of the path forever stained red by the man's blood.



At the far end of the bypass take the footpath on the right, follow this main path (pic 48)

.... back to the starting point at the Village centre (pic 49)



** You have now reached the end of the walk, we hope you enjoyed it **

Feock Parish Council

This round walk has been produced by Phil Allen on behalf of Feock Parish Council and we hope you have enjoyed the walk.

The footpaths are maintained by the Parish Council and if during your walk you have noticed anything that needs attention please phone the Parish Council on 01872 863333 or report it using the online form on our website www.feockpc.com

Alternatively please call into the Parish Council Office at:-

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