



**Hilltop Cloud**

*Time Travellers Club*

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September-16

[www.hilltopcloud.co.uk](http://www.hilltopcloud.co.uk)

Dear Club Member,

I grew up in The Peak District, this was Britain's first national park. It's a stunning chunk of countryside right in the middle of England. One of the reasons why the park was created was an act of willful mass trespass by a group of ramblers. In the 1920's and 30's rambling was a working class pursuit, it was a pastime enjoyed by many of the workers in the big towns and cities. In 1932 it's estimated that 15,000 ramblers left Manchester every Sunday. However there were only 12 "legal" paths, and walking elsewhere often led to walkers being chased away by gamekeepers with dogs and guns. Some ramblers groups negotiated access with the landowners, but people had no right to access most of the countryside. The moors and mountains remained the preserve of the rich, who often used them for grouse shooting and deer stalking.

On 24th April 1932 a group of ramblers left Hayfield in Derbyshire and walked up to the Kinder Scout plateau. At the time it was private land, which meant that the ordinary public had no right to be there. During the walk there were scuffles with gamekeepers, and this led to 5 of the ramblers being arrested. Trespass isn't a criminal offense in Britain, so these scuffles allowed the authorities to jail those arrested for 2-6 months.

The mass trespass got was the start of a rising political movement. The Ramblers Association started a media campaign, and together with the rise of the Labour Party and an increasing drive for more equality in society, over time private landowners were persuaded to allow the public to walk in "our" countryside. It took until 1955 for first access agreement for Kinder to be signed. The Peak District National Park itself having been established in 1951.

The culmination of this was the CROW act of 2000. This enshrined in law the right to access upland areas, and if you look on an Ordnance Survey Map large areas are now encircled in yellow. Members of the public now have the right to be anywhere on those pieces of land. Seventy Five years on Roy Hattersley described the trespass as "the most successful direct action in British history".

The colour of the fibre this month celebrated the heather moors of the Peak District, at this time of year the heather is in flower, turning the hillsides purple.

Happy Spinning,

Katie