

## Tributes paid to Derby pensioner, who championed hiking until her death

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A PENSIONER who clocked up thousands of miles in a lifetime of rambling, including five years walking with two artificial knees, has died at the age of 91.

Mavis Burton championed the cause of hikers to have the right to roam the countryside and inspired hundreds of people to lace up their boots and take to the hills.

For the past 85 years, she has been well-known for walking the hills and dales of British beauty spots, as well as visiting 21 other countries as part of her hobby.

She passed away at Derby City General Hospital.

But friends from various hiking clubs she was involved with said her memory would live on, as she was one of the county's best-known characters.

Mavis, who lived in Osmaston Road, Derby, and was never married, was fiercely protective of the Derbyshire countryside.

In her youth, she supported the landowners' versus ramblers debate in the 1930s.

An argument was raging over whether walkers should be able to access open countryside irrespective of ownership.

Mavis spoke about the debate to the Evening Telegraph a year ago.

She said: "I remember the Duke of Devonshire at the time being a very kindly man who understood our cause.

"He wanted everyone to share in his inheritance.

"We are very fortunate in Derbyshire to have such fantastic scenery and I can honestly say I have enjoyed every minute of my very active life."

Mavis, a former Dunstan's School pupil and typist at Rolls-Royce, said her introduction to rambling came in 1919 when, at the age of three, she sat on her father's shoulders when he went walking in the countryside.

One hiking pal, Ivy Ryalls, said Mavis would be missed as she brought so much knowledge to Derbyshire hikers' groups.

She said: "I last went hiking with her about 15 years ago. She always used to know so much about the countryside and pointed features out to people."

Mrs Ryalls, 85, of Strathmore Avenue, Alvaston, said she convinced many people to stick with walking as a hobby even if they found it difficult.

She said: "Mavis was always so thoughtful.

"She would always give tips on what people could do to make hiking more enjoyable."

Another friend, Roy Lister, 88, said he remembered rambling with Mavis before the Second World War, when they hiked together in the Ramblers Association.

He said: "She was dedicated to the hobby and will be sadly missed."

Mavis told the Evening Telegraph that her passion for walking continued even after her second knee replacement operation in 1987.

She said: "It's been my total life.

"Nothing can make you feel better than being in the fresh air and the beautiful countryside."

Mavis' funeral will be held at Nottingham Cemetery Chapel on Friday at 10am.