

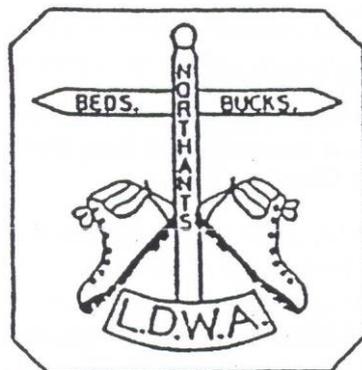


LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION
AIM: TO FURTHER THE INTERESTS OF THOSE
WHO ENJOY LONG DISTANCE WALKING

BEDS, BUCKS & NORTHANTS GROUP

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2012



HAVE A GREAT DAY OUT, WALK WITH THE BBN
www.ldwa.org.uk/bedsbucksandnorthants

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New Members

A very warm welcome to the following who have joined BBN since the last Newsletter:

Trish Brickell, Upper Caldecote, Biggleswade
Tony Dolphin, Luton
John Foran, Luton
Roy Geeson, Caddington, Luton
Evelyn Martin, Bletchley
Rachel Martin, Milton Keynes
Chris Proctor, Milton Keynes
Colin Stoneman, Grimscote, Towcester
David Tassell, Graveley, St Neots

Final Subscription Reminder

***If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2012
you will find a final reminder with this Newsletter***

***A big thank you to everyone who has contributed to this Newsletter.
Please let me have items for the next Newsletter by 15th October please
E: gillbunker@googlemail.com
1 Abbey Way, Bradville, Milton Keynes, MK13 7AN***

THE GAMES HUNDRED

Congratulations to all our members who completed the Games Hundred – a unique event – in what turned out to be very wet and muddy conditions. Commiserations to those who did not finish.

Name	Finish Time	Total Time
John Cheshier	17:52 Sunday	31.52
Jonathan Venning	19:36 Sunday	33.36
Tony Hill	19:39 Sunday	33.39
Colin Scargill	20:38 Sunday	34.38
Brian Layton	20:53 Sunday	34.53
Ruth Bowles	22:37 Sunday	36.37
Luis Broz	23:05 Sunday	37.05
Graham Bayes	03:09 Monday	41.09
Graham Busch	04:23 Monday	42.23
Dee Brockway	08:10 Monday	46.10
Philip Friede	08:10 Monday	46.10
Gordon Shaughnessy	08:10 Monday	46.10
Betty Sherry	09:34 Monday	47.34
Susan Leonard	08:39 Monday	47.39
David Cheshier	Retired CP12	72.9 miles
Jan Williams	Retired CP10	63.4 miles
Chris Bent	Retired CP10	63.4 miles
David Yorston	Retired CP10	63.4 miles
David Sedgley	Retired CP8	51.9 miles
Frances Craven	Retired CP7	44.5 miles

The Marshals' 100

Congratulations to Dave Findel-Hawkins, Martin Lawson and Brian Harwood who completed the Games 100 Marshals' Walk in at times pretty atrocious conditions. There was bad weather through the first night, and the rain and wind churned up the Surrey mud. Commiserations to John Ledger and Josephine Pettifer who came so heartbreakingly close.

Dave Findel-Hawkins	28.09
Brian Harwood	41.08
Martin Lawson	45.57
John Ledger	Retired 89 miles
Josephine Pettifer	Retired 89 miles

The Marshals' Hundred – Lynn Yorston

Been there – done that - and got the T-shirt !!

A massive thanks to all who helped on what was an absolute success. Everything went to plan – well - just about anyway. The walkers all went to the correct HQ – eventually. The coach arrived at Windsor once Martin Lawson had redirected it from the petrol station. Once they arrived in London the passengers didn't have to walk too far to get to the Harriers once Dave had retrieved the coach from a busy junction !!

All the people who said they would help turned up on time and at the right place - some with a little help over the phone. We didn't lose anyone – for very long. We had no reported injuries or incidents. The only big scare was when we went to collect the van and they said – 'what van?' All was sorted within the hour – no problem.

Our congratulations go to all who set off. Well done to all who finished. Special congratulations go to Richard Denby who arrived with 45 minutes to spare. Those who did not complete still deserve the admiration of us who stayed behind.

The helpers list seemed to be a shortened copy of BB&N membership list !! A massive thanks to all who turned out for us. Everyone was where I had asked them be, at the time I had said..... Sweep teams, checkpoint staff, closing marshals, body bus – all did exactly as was asked of them. All the planning would have been of no use if our friends had not delivered. THANK YOU.

Lynn Yorston

A View from the Games 100 Welcome Desk

I helped on the Games 100 welcome desk at the end of the event with Godfrey OCallaghan from London Group for a few hours. He wrote a very eloquent and moving article about his experiences which I thought would be of interest to you - it gives a very good account of being the first contact at the end of a gruelling event.

Norman

I began my day at Gainsborough School, Hackney, arriving by the first train to help with refreshments. The ladies took the glory job of serving up tea and coffee whilst I was put out of the way down the other end of the hall to serve squash. In excess of 480 starters I understand.

At noon I took the coach with Devon and Cornwall group to Trevelyan School just on the edge of Windsor. The M25 was a mass of slow moving or stationary vehicles and it took 2½ hours to do the journey. The afternoon was then spent with setting up the HQ.

On Sunday I was down to marshal the route as it turned out of Windsor Great Park. For some reason, which I was very grateful for, I was given the task at the Welcome Desk recording the arrival times of the competitors along with Norman Corrin. Norman was relieved in the early hours by Ken Fancet who had then recovered from his own efforts in the 100. I opted to stay on. I found the Welcome Desk to be a privileged position.

As such I was right at the heart of the event as it unfolded. Being the first point of contact at the finish I experienced up close the very first emotions in the eyes, faces and bodies of competitors as they finished, some bent and twisted, others leaning at unlikely angles and many hobbling but, it must be said most looked quite in control and in good humour. Even that could be deceptive as some suddenly collapsed, fainted or were ill up to an hour or more later. One young lady bust into in tears.

For most though it was mainly the expression of relief, because the conditions could not have been much worse. Damp on Saturday, but turning much colder with heavy rain overnight. The paths, particularly across the North Downs, were reported to be thick with mud and so slippery that it was difficult to make headway - and of course descents were potentially treacherous. As a consequence some 65 of the final 105 (approx) who quit did so on Saturday night/Sunday morning

Even so, the early finishers on Sunday - the first person came home in 24 hours and 8 minutes - did not look in bad shape. In one or two cases after a shower they left the building in good condition. But as the number of finishers increased and the wet, cold conditions of Saturday night continued on Sunday and into Sunday night it began to take a more serious effect and the Medic along with the angels of BBN and London group were kept very busy administering to the fallen. In the kitchen a very smooth operation by East Lancs group - who created a Jubilee Menu complete with serving wenches in royal face masks - were to be admired as they kept up a constant supply of food and issued forth from their sanctuary to hand out plates of food as appetites began to rise once sensations returned to battered and cold bodies. Many worked, as I did, right through the night. The experience was too good to break away from.

The event was, for me, a powerful display of how the human spirit and sheer guts can rise above mere discomfort and pain to forge a significant and memorable outcome. The Welcome Desk was the first place people came to when asking for information about friends and family it also received a vast amount of praise and thanks for a superb event. I am still in thrall at how so many could actually say it was "enjoyable" as well.

The desk also fronted when one competitor, very frustrated at the end by what he considered to be poor signage, ranted and raved a bit. But that was the only exception. As there were no other complaints one can only assume signage was adequate.

The last people came home at ten minutes to ten - one sweating heavily showing the effort made to get home before the cut. They got a grand ovation from the now crowded hall, the scene captured by a video cameraman who had been busy around the event.

At half past ten the clouds and rain cleared and the sun came out and the world of the LDWA began the process of slipping back into what is considered to be a normal existence.

Godfrey OCallaghan

2013 100 Camel Teign Ivor's Dream 100

The website for next year's 100, Camel Teign Ivor's Dream 100, is now live. No details about the marshals' walk yet.

<http://www.ldwa.org.uk/2013Hundred>

BBN are doing CP3 Candra, GR1191 7796, Farm Barn. It's 16.6 miles from the start, 4.7miles from CP2, 6.8 miles to CP4. It opens at 1345 and closes at 1800. I don't know yet what food/drink we'll be doing. As it's a barn I doubt if we'll be doing much.

Dave's looked at the map, and it's at the end of the farm track, so I guess we'll be off limits to supporters. Anyone who's interested in helping to contact me please. I don't think we'll need as many people as this year.

Merrian Lancaster

COMMITTEE NEWS AND DIARY DATES – Committee Meeting held on 18th May
The minutes of the meeting are on the BBN website.

Chairman's Report

I hope that you are enjoying the walks run by BBN members and entering the odd event or two, despite the onset of early Autumn! Living where we do in the LDWA 'family' the walks on offer from BBN, Essex and Herts, London and Thames Valley give us all ample opportunity to enjoy our leisure pastime. Please do your utmost to support the walk leaders.

On behalf of everyone in BBN I would like to offer my congratulations to Lynn and Dave Yorston for the magnificent London Games 100 Marshals' Event on the weekend of 5, 6 and 7th May. It was very much a BBN event with excellent turnout at all hours and in all weathers – very wet early Sunday morning - to sweep, staff and close checkpoints. The London Group ran Chilworth CP and Surrey ran the breakfast stop, with others (Essex and Herts, Kent, Victoria Harriers, Thames Valley, Nidderdale, Bristol and West, Dorset, High Peak (thanks Colin) contributing at various CPs. Congratulations especially to the brave boys who had ice on car roofs for their gin and tonics at Staple Hill CP – It was quite cold and I was there!

Not forgetting of course the completers overall, with Richard Denby (Bristol and West) an inspiration to all, the magnificent three from BBN, Dave Findel-Hawkins, Brian Harwood and Martin Lawson and commiserations to the retirees, especially from BBN.

Good luck from all in BBN to the BBNers on the main event, it may only be 10,000 feet or so of ascent but you will need your wits about you on navigation and see if you can time it so you finish by walking down to Windsor Castle from the bronze statue. Thanks to Gill Howe, Andrew Gilbertson and Martin Lawson for being in my team for collection of retirees.

Please support your walk leaders whenever you can. We have three walks organised by Martin Lawson for our 30th Anniversary next year and on 23 September this year Martin will lead Hearts of Oak as the BBN Celebratory Walk for the 40th Year of the LDWA. Norman in his report will give details of more proposed events for our 30th Anniversary, including a 30 mile 'social' led by Chris Bent.

If ever you fancy a visit to South Wales in early May then I can recommend the Rhondda Rollercoaster, an excellent route of 26.5 miles and a whopping 5,500 feet of ascent. Great views of the mining valleys (no slag heaps to be seen, all covered in stunted trees or wizened sward) and one spectacular view to the South Wales Coast and across to Somerset or was it North Devon? Good support at the CPs and a first at Ton Pentre CP of smoked salmon sandwiches (brilliant), plus a very eclectic sandwich selection – how about cheddar cheese and marmalade? Nick Vanson had more than one of those!!!. And thanks to Nick for his company.

As always your Committee and others work tirelessly on your behalf to organise events and arrange a very full social walks programme and Thursday programme. Dee will always love to hear from you to propose a walk.

Please think what you could do for BBN and not necessarily what the BBN can do for you, and don't forget 'to have a great day out on a walk with BBN'.

I hope that you all have a good walking summer and stay healthy. I will have a mega August: Herts Stroller, Founders Marshals' and St Peter's Way in a Day - hope to see you around.

Nigel Schofield
18th May 2012

Secretary – Norman Corrin

Norman receives Newsletters/Updates from other local groups - if any members wish to read these please contact him:

Essex Herts: February 2012; Kent: April 2012

London: AGM 28th February 2012 Minutes & Spring 2012 Newsletter

Surrey: Agenda for their Planning Meeting on Tuesday 15th May

Thames Valley: Various items on their website forum

There continues to be a lot of interest in the LDWA. Since the last committee meeting in January, Norman has received notification from the National Membership Secretary of 22 new LDWA members who live within our area. He has contacted them all and sent them information packs. Three members of the public have also enquired directly and Norman has emailed them with information about the LDWA and BBN.

Treasurer – Ian Sage

Ian confirmed that the Santander and National Savings accounts have now both been closed and that the National Westminster account is now up and running. All funds are currently in the National Westminster account, but Ian will be putting approx £2,500 into an interest bearing account. He has also applied for online banking, and will report back on both the interest bearing account and online banking.

The last National Westminster statement (4th May 2012) shows total group funds of £6697.62.

Having checked the position, Ian confirmed that, because of the level of our finances, we do not need to appoint an accredited auditor to audit our accounts, The LDWA Constitution itself does not require an auditor, just that its accounts are checked. Phil Friede, a BBN member with his own accountancy business, has agreed to ask one of his staff to check the BBN accounts. Ian confirmed that in fact anyone could check such club accounts; they do not have to be an accountant/auditor.

Donations

The three donations agreed at the 2011 AGM of £100 each to the Chiltern Society Donate a Gate/Wendover Arm Canal/Berks Oxon & Bucks Air Ambulance have all been made.

Membership – Dave Findel-Hawkins

We currently have 155 members, with 12 new members since the last Committee meeting in January.

Dave reported that a sizable number of members have spoken to him, asking to pay for more than one year and he asked for the committee's views on this, suggesting a payment of £5 for a 5 year period. The committee agrees this to be a good idea, but it was decided to refer it for discussion the AGM, as any new method of payment would, in any event, not take effect until the end of the year. It was agreed there would be no refund for those leaving the LDWA before the 5 years expired.

Social Walks - Dee Brockway

Well that's all done! The BBN social walks programme up to the end of this year is now complete!

As always I have lots of kind folk to thank. Not least Gill for inputting it all onto the web and Gordon for taking the reins and sorting out the Thursday programme. Being still in the ranks of the great (or maybe it's not so great) employed, I do not often meet all our mid-week walkers but rely on Gordon to do a first class job. The early arrival of his Thursday walk list serves to make me stir my stumps and get cracking to meet my own deadline! Again, with the exception of December, we have two Thursday walks per month.

A few weeks ago our programme looked a little bare, compared to our usual bumper package. Not so now! After my final plea, as always, the BBN walk leaders rallied to the cause to produce a great 4-month programme including 14 weekend walks. A new leader, Roy Carter, has offered two walks including, for the third successive year, a BBN Boxing day walk. Courtesy of Phil Hastings, we have another joint walk with our friends from Essex and Herts and Martin Lawson is taking the helm for our contribution to the LDWA 40th anniversary walks in September. Peter Hamson also becomes a new walks leader, Santa is again back to practise for his big day and we have a shorter walk before our AGM. Along with the regular leaders, my thanks to you all.

I am happily now accepting offers to lead walks for our next programme, January to April 2013. As always please book a slot asap and provide the usual final details by 10th September please.

So, absolutely lots to look forward to. Over to our members for their next set of great ideas and offers. Many thanks.

Dee Brockway

Thursday Walks – Gordon Shaughnessy

Gordon said he had put out feelers regarding a few longer Thursday walks, but as these would need to be during the summer months, it was too late for this year's programme. He would include a few longer walks on the programme for summer 2013. He confirmed there was a full programme of walks up the end of 2012; he was just missing a second walk in December, probably because this was the Thursday before Christmas. Gordon confirmed if there was demand for a walk that day one could be arranged at short notice.

Merchandising/Equipment – Lynn Yorston

Lynn said she and Merrian had purchased a supply of metal cutlery Mike Hyland is now good-naturedly engraving each individual item with "BBN". Lynn has checked and updated all the group first aid kits.

Website – Merrian Lancaster

Merrian said she continued to post photos sent by Steve Clark on the website, but no-one has sent any fun ones yet. Merrian said the easiest way to send photos is via a memory stick, which she will then return.

Merrian said that several members had told her there was a problem with walk details disappearing from Future Events on the BBN website too soon, so that anybody looking for information on the morning of a walk found that the walk had already disappeared. Merrian was pleased to confirm that this has now been sorted by Simon Leck (LDWA National Committee IT) and "today's" walk are now displayed, as well as future walks, on the Future Events section of all local groups' sites.

Local Group Representative – Nigel Schofield

Nigel confirmed that the next LGRs' meeting is to be held on 18th November (the same day as the Sundon Saunter!) at Ironbridge (Coalport YHA). If anyone has any issues which they would like raised at this meeting, please refer them to Nigel.

Bedfordshire Walking Festival 2012

It was confirmed that the BBN Thursday walk on 13th September (Another Walk from Maulden Wood led by Gordon) has been included in the Festival programme.

Walking the Greensand Ridge walk again over two days again on 15th/16th September is this year's "RU4 The Challenge" (see p15).

LDWA 40th Anniversary 2012

Martin Lawson will lead the BBN anniversary walk, Hartwell Hearts of Oak, on Sunday 23rd September. This is a 20 mile figure of 8 walk from Hartwell, Northants, to allow folks to come for the longer morning or shorter afternoon walk only, or to meet up at lunchtime with a picnic lunch near the local p.h.

The first 25 anniversary badges we were sent have been distributed, and more are now on order. If you would like to reserve one, please do so via Gill Bunker.

Several members have commented they feel it a shame that a lot of the 40th anniversary events are being held on the same day.

AGM – Sunday 25th November 2012 – Navigation Inn, Cosgrove

There will be an 8 mile morning walk led by Norman from the Navigation Inn, Cosgrove followed by lunch and the AGM at 2pm. Menu choices will be emailed nearer the time and will be in the October Newsletter. Please book your meal beforehand via Gill Bunker.

Note: The Navigation is not in Cosgrove village, but is situated by the Grand Union Canal at Thrupp Wharf on the minor road between A508 and Castlethorpe.

30th Anniversary Events

In 2013 we will be celebrating BBN's 30th anniversary. A full programme of celebrations is being planned, co-ordinated by Norman. Our provisional plans include:

- **A Canal Boat Trip:** A summer walk followed by a canal trip from Cheddington, with buffet and drinks. It has been agreed that the cost of the boat will be met from group funds, but people will pay for their own food/drink. (*Organiser: Norman*)
- **Brewery Trip:** A walk followed by a visit to the Chiltern Brewery (Wendover) and/or Tring Brewery. (*Organisers: Norman/John Davies*)
- **Quiz – Walk and Quiz in October or November** (*Organiser: Norman*)
- **New Year in the Doghouse – Sunday 6th January - Walk and meal at the Doghouse P.H. (Broughton, nr Aylesbury)** (*Organiser: Norman*)
- **3 x 30km group walks - one in each county, with a challenge to complete all 3** (*Organiser: Martin Lawson*)
- **30 mile group walk- Saturday 6th July - from Whittlebury.** Allowing for stops etc the walk will probably take about 12 hours. Why Saturday? This allows people Sunday to recover, and village shops will be open to replenish drinks and food (*Organiser: Chris Bent*)
- **Walking the Milton Keynes Boundary Walk over 3 days - a Saturday, Sunday and Monday in the school holidays (Summer)** (*Organisers: Sylvie Eames/Steve Clark/Gill Bunker*)

The next committee meeting will take place on Thursday 11th October 2012 – please refer any matter you would like discussed to any committee member. (A list of committee members plus contact details appears at the end of the Newsletter.)

Herts Stroller 11th/12th August 2012

Essex & Herts are holding the second Herts Stroller on Saturday and Sunday 11th/12th August. BBN are manning the first Checkpoint at Montgrove Farm which will be open from 10.30 on the Saturday morning. We will be serving cold drinks, biscuits, cake and dried fruit and will be open for 2-3 hours. Provided there is no grain storage the farmer will let us use his barn. If not and the weather is anything like last time bring your umbrellas!

After the 100 checkpoint at Mottingham this will be a gentle stroll in the park by comparison.

As with all events these could not be run without volunteers so I'm asking for help on this event run by one of neighbourly groups with whom we have close ties. You might have had enough of the London Olympics by then and want to tear yourself away from the television for a couple of hours at least.....

So for any recent (or not so recent) members who want to help and see how events are run from the other side of the desk please contact me for further details. It's great fun and not as time consuming or as painful!

Norman Corrin

River Nene

On a recent walk by the Nene there were musings about the different pronunciations of the river's name. It turns out that the pronunciation varies with the locality. In Northamptonshire it (usually) rhymes with "hen" whereas around Peterborough it rhymes (usually) with "mean".

The Nene is the tenth longest river in the United Kingdom, its source being near the village of Badby near Daventry, and is navigable for 88 miles from its junction with the Northampton Arm of the Grand Union Canal to the sea at the Wash.

We have walked by the Nene several times on Thursday walks in recent months, and by chance Roger Story's walk on 9th August starts in Badby, so we may see it again!

BBN WALKS PROGRAMME AUGUST – DECEMBER 2012

**Unless otherwise stated, all our walks are circular, and start at 9am.
Thursday walks start at 9.30am and tend to be a bit shorter, approx 15 miles.**

Thursday August 9 A Daventry Round

15ml. 09.30 from The Green, Badby. Please park considerately. Map: LR 141 Start GR SP559590. **Leader:** Roger Story **T:** 01604 751576.

Sunday August 12 Circling the Quarry

19ml. 09.00 from Hicks Road c.p. Markyate, just W of A5 footbridge. Maps: LR 166 Exp 182 Start GR TL064164. **Leader:** Peter Simon **T:** 01582 513827.

Thursday August 23 Just a Stone's Throw

15ml. 09.30 from Stonepit c.p. off Wolverton Rd, Milton Keynes. Map: Exp 207 Start GR SP844422. **Leaders:** Jenny Greatbatch & Ian Turnbull
T: 01908 607215 **M:** 07891 683422 on day.

Sunday August 26 The Millbrook Warren Walk

20ml. 09.00 from Wilstead Village c.p. (220 yds from crossroads towards Cotton End on rhs). Maps: Exp 193,208 Start GR TL066435.
Leader: Colin Scargill **T:** 01234 740361.

Sunday September 9 Hobble to the HOOP

19ml. Start 09.00 from Motte & Bailey p.h. Great Green, Pirton. Please park courteously on nearby village rds. Map: Exp 193 Start GR TL146316. Includes the 12 mile HOOP (Hitchin Outer Orbital Path). Pub near lunch stop.
Leader: Dee Brockway **T:** 01582 881809 **M:** 07742 433951.

Thursday September 13 Another Walk from Maulden Wood

15ml. Start 09.30 from Maulden Wood lay-by, off northbound carriageway of A6 just N of Clophill. Map: LR 153 Start GR TL072395.
Leader: Gordon Shaughnessy **T:** 01582 518791 **M:** 07518 364036.

Sunday September 23 Hartwell Hearts of Oak

BBN's LDWA 40th Anniversary Walk

20ml. Start 09.00 from Hartwell Church Northants. Please park courteously on nearby rds. Map: LR 152 Start GR SP786504. A figure of 8 walk to allow folks to come for longer morning or shorter afternoon walk only, or to meet at lunchtime. Picnic lunch nr p.h. **Leader:** Martin Lawson **T:** 01933 678594.

Thursday September 27 Park Lane Parade

15ml. Start 09.30 from Wilstead Village c.p. (220 yds from crossroads towards Cotton End on rhs). Map: Exp 208 Start GR TL066435.

Leader: Colin Scargill **T:** 01234 740361.

Sunday September 30 Studham Stomp

20ml. 09.00 from c.p. off Beacon Rd, Ringshall (first c.p. on left after leaving Ringshall). Maps: Exp 181,182 Start GR SP982143.

Leader: Peter Hamson **T:** 01442 245308.

Sunday October 7 Amongst the Spires and Squires

18ml. 09.00 from The Red Lion p.h. High St, Yardley Hastings. Please park considerately around the village. Map: Exp 208 Start GR SP865567. Packed lunch required. **Leader:** John Ledger **T:** 01933 387645.

Thursday October 11 The Two Mills Loop

15ml. 09.30 from c.p. at Marston Vale Millennium Country Park. Map: LR 153 Start GR TL006417. **Leader:** Derek Jacob **T:** 01234 767759.

Sunday October 14 We're Off Again

19ml. 09.00 from Salusbury Lane, Great Offley. Park 200m W of High St. Maps: LR 166 Exp 193 Start GR TL143267.

Leader: Peter Simon **T:** 01582 513827.

Thursday October 25 By Train to the Greensand Ridge

15ml. 09.30 from Lakeside c.p. at Caldecotte Lake, N of A4146 (Bletcham Way), Milton Keynes. Map: Exp 192 Start GR SP887354. Short walk to Bow Brickhill railway station for 10.08 train to Lidlington. Single fare currently £3.50; groups of 3/4 people reduce fare using Group Save. Linear walk, aim to return by 16.00. Break at Woburn village.

Leader: Mike Bowley **T:** 01908 616589 **M:** 07933 066784.

Sunday October 28 Ambling with Andrew

20ml. 09.00 from Market Square, Higham Ferrers. Map: Exp 224 Start GR SP960687. Lunch at The Bedford Arms p.h. Souldrop (own packed lunch may be eaten inside if drink purchased) or nearby village green. **Leader:** Andrew Gilbertson **T:** 07922 068591.

Sunday November 4 Back to Buckland

19ml. Start 09.00 from Heath Sports Centre, off Baldock Rd, Royston. Free c.p., café and toilets. Map: LR 154 Start GR TL348405. Picnic lunch only but option for

extended afternoon tea break next to p.h. Joint with E&H. **Leader:** Phil Hastings **T:** 01763 853744 before 21.00 **M:** 07716 992847 (on day only).

Sunday November 4 Sundon Saunter Marshals' Walk For marshals only.

Thursday November 8 A Chess Valley Walk

15ml. 09.30 from Leyhill Common. Please park on S side of road between fence and rd. Maps: Exp 172,181 Start GR SP993017.

Leader: John Davies **T:** 01442 874875 **M:** 07949 796470 (on day only).

Sunday November 18 Sundon Saunter Challenge Walk

27/18/12ml in 12 hours from Barton-le-Clay Village Hall Start GR TL083307. The walk follows mainly field paths, tracks, woods & some roads through undulating countryside with good views from the hills traversed. Walkers start 08.00; Runners/Joggers 09.00. CP times will be adhered to with NO exceptions. All must finish by 18.30 (the hall closes 19:00). Entry fees: In advance LDWA members £5.00, Non-members £6.00, Under 18s free. **There will be a limit of 300 entrants.** On the day entries if limit not reached in advance all £8.00.

Refreshments at CPs, meal at finish & certificate for all finishers. Closing date for postal entries 13th November . SEF accepted. Cheques payable to LDWA BB&N Group. All must bring own mug (none on route), compass & route description which must be downloaded from website beforehand. We recommend map Explorer 192 & 193 or Landranger 165, 166, 152 & 153, a torch if you expect to finish after dark & waterproofs. Please wear appropriate clothing & footwear for this time of year. This walk is part of a new BB&N triple challenge over three consecutive years.

Contact: Mike Hyland., 55, Broadlands Avenue, Chesham, Bucks. HP5 1AL **T:** 01494 774154. **E:** mike.hyland@ntlworld.com

Thursday November 22 A West Perry Wander

15ml. 09.30 from Wheatsheaf p.h. West Perry. Please park courteously nearby. Map: Exp 225 Start GR TL148669. **Leader:** John Cheshier **T:** 07935 456491.

Sunday November 25 AGM Walk

8ml. Start 09.00 from The Navigation Inn, Cosgrove (MK19 7BE). Note p.h. is not in village, but situated by canal at Thrupp Wharf on minor road between A508 and Castlethorpe. Park at pub. Maps: LR 152 Exp 207 Start GR SP788436. Lunch at pub (menu choices in October Newsletter). Please book your meal beforehand via Gill Bunker (**T:** 01908 321308). AGM starts at 14.00. **Leader:** Norman Corrin **T:** 01908 608667 **M:** 07980 378656 (on day).

Sunday December 2 A Walk to Bozeat

17ml. 09.00 from Market Square, Olney. Map: Exp 207 Start GR SP889514.

Leader: Roy Carter **T:** 01234 301182 (evenings) **M:** 07784 208997 (on day).

Thursday December 6 More Northampton Round

15ml. 09.30 from Pitsford Water Causeway c.p. Maps: LR 141,152 Start GR

SP782701. **Leader:** David Findel-Hawkins **T:** 01908 216476 **M:** 07724 025807 (on day only).

Sunday December 9 Santa from Sandy

12ml. 09.00 from c.p. by Ghandi Restaurant, High St, Sandy (if barrier down, park in local streets). Map: Exp 208 Start GR TL174492. Please bring wrapped gift value £1. Santa will lead us, with carol singing at churches, mulled wine + mince pies en route. **Leader:** Santa's Secretary Norman Corrin **T:** 01908 608667 **M:** 07980 378656 (on day).

Sunday December 16 Ashridge and the Golden Valley

19ml. 09.00 from New Road, just N of Berkhamsted. Please park facing uphill (N) on E side of the castle. Maps: LR 165 Exp 181 Start GR SP996082.

Leader: John Davies **T:** 01442 874875 **M:** 07949 796470 (on day).

Wednesday December 26 The Rudolph Ramble

10ml. 10.00 from free c.p. in Woburn (opp church). Map: Exp 192 Start GR SP950332. **Leader:** Roy Carter **T:** 01234 301182 (evenings)

M: 07784 208997 (on day).

Bedfordshire Walking Festival RU4 The Challenge The Greensand Ridge Path

Over weekend of Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th September the Greensand Ridge Path will be walked in two stages, 18 miles on Saturday from Leighton Buzzard to Ampthill and/or 22 miles on Sunday from Gamlingay to Ampthill. There is the option of joining the led walk or walking at your own pace. Certificates will be awarded for completing the 40 miles over the weekend. It is essential to book with the organiser in advance as transport has to be arranged and there is a charge of £10 per person to cover organisational, administration and transport costs.

To register interest and/or book please email: Organiser@bedswalkfest.co.uk or telephone 01234 353704.

GETTING TO KNOW THE COMMITTEE

A Chat with Dave Findel-Hawkins, Membership Secretary

Dave, what first started you walking? ***The inability to run***

And how did you come to join the LDWA? ***Brian Graves introduced me***

What's your favourite piece of equipment? ***My new GPS with maps***

Your favourite event? ***Champions League Cup Final 2012;
The Six Dales; the Three 3 Peaks Fell Race before Foot in the Clouds was written and every Tom, Dick and Gladys took up fell running***

Who would you most like to walk with? ***Joss Naylor***

And your favourite walk? ***To the pub***

Your best mile (anywhere in the world)? ***4 min 48 sec MK Tour September 1984***

What's your lunchtime snack? ***Beer, tuna sarnie on new bread, crisps***

What luxury item do you carry with you that you don't need to?
***I occasionally carry beer which would count as a luxury item that I don't need.
I've never used my whistle, but that doesn't count as a luxury.***

You're a regular theatre-goer – which recent play did you enjoy most?
Spymonkey's Oedipussy at Royal in February – "Greek tragedy meets seductive 70s"

And fave film? ***Raiders of the Lost Ark and Doctor Zhivago***

Blue is your colour - who is your favourite Chelsea player? ***Gianfranco Zola.
Currently Juan Mata***

Best footballing moment ever? ***FA Cup Final replay against Leeds at Old Trafford 1970 – I was there.***

Any other passions? ***Athletics, Denise Lewis, Cycling, Michelle Pfeiffer, beer, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Terry Pratchett books***

If you could live anywhere in the world where would you chose and why?
Yorkshire Dales – doesn't need an explanation. (I could live there, so why don't I?)

Gold Weekenders

I have been on three of these and they are really good fun. You stay on a caravan site at Great Yarmouth. There's usually four or six of you in a caravan. The price is usually £100 to £120 depending on the type of caravan and how many people are in it. That includes three nights' accommodation and three nights' entertainment. There is also an indoor pool on site as well as a restaurant, takeaways and bars. The next weekend is 12th-15th October.

Artists include the Searchers, Alvin Stardust, The Fourmost plus various tribute acts. There is also a Christmas Party from 30th November to 3rd December. There are also some walks nearby along the coast or by the Broads. Six of us went last October and we had a great time. The weather was great, good entertainment and we did some nice walks.

More details on the website www.goldweekenders.co.uk or phone 01493 857231 for a brochure.

DAG Weekends

DAG stands for Dacorum Adventure Group which is based in Hemel Hempstead.

DAG only do weekends away –no local walks. There is one every month except August. The cost is £25 per weekend which includes two nights' accommodation in bunk beds, two cooked breakfast, two packed lunches and an evening meal on the Saturday night and tea in bed on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Can't be bad!

Details for the next few weekends are:

13th-15th July - Denbighshire

14th-16th September - Lake District

12th-14th October - Lake District

Most people go walking on the weekends and tend to split into different groups, though some go mountain biking or climbing. More details on the website dag4hills.org.uk

For more details of either weekend you can always call me on 01767 220307.

Steve Smith

PS Both types of weekend can involve drinking a lot of alcohol!

Comedy Corner

The Liverpool gift shop has had to recall the Andy Carroll action figure:

- Item goes to pieces in the box
- Left foot is faulty
- Barn door and banjo were not included
- Item crumbles under weight of price tag
- Right foot is faulty
- Parts may be swallowed by gullible scousers
- Far cheaper, superior substitutes available

Liverpool fans have always thought of Kenny Dalglish as one of their own. It's a feeling that's bound to grow even stronger now he's on the dole.

Paddy wanted to sell his car so his mate told him to wind the mileage back as he'd get a better price. When he saw him a few days later he asked how he'd got on. Paddy said when he finished winding it back it only had 7000 miles on the clock -so he decided to keep it.

I was on holiday in Egypt and an Arab offered me 60 camels for my wife. I told him to get lost but if he upgraded to Benson & Hedges he had himself a deal.

I've just seen a dyslexic Yorkshireman wearing a cat flap.

Every time I leave the house this bird with really long legs keeps following me. Do you think I'm being storked?

Everyone's a comedian these days. Even the paramedic who was unable to resuscitate Whitney couldn't avoid the odd gag when he radioed dispatch and said "It's Houston we have a problem".

Whoever the person was who stole my Microsoft Office I will track you down. You have my word.....

The BBC has just confirmed they will be showing live coverage of the world hairdressing championships. I think I will just watch the highlights.

I can't believe my best mate Gav has died of severe heartburn. Gav is gone.

A man who took Ryan Air to court regarding missing luggage has lost his case.

Norman Corrin



**LDWA 40
Early Days with the LDWA 1: Brian Graves
1974/1975**

After seeing an advert for the LDWA in the 1974 January Climber & Rambler magazine, I subsequently joined and became member no 648. I can vividly remember almost being late for work on the day I first received my first LDWA Newsletter (no 7), so enthralled was I reading it over breakfast. With a background of mainly walking in North Wales, The Lakes and Scotland, I was quite taken aback by the variety of events around the country. By modern standards the Calendar was rather sparse –

EVENTS CALENDAR FOR 1974

April 20	Mid-Wales Mountain Marathon	25m(Cader Idris area)
May 4	Ridgeway Marathon	40m(Berks/Wilts)
May 5	Brentwood Walk	20m(Essex)
May 12	Berkshire Twenty-Five	25m(Berkshire)
May 18	Fellsman Hike	50m(North Yorks)
May 25/27	LDWA Peakland 100	100m(Derbyshire)
May 25/26	Parish Walk	85m(Isle of Man)
June 1	Welsh 1000m summits	20m(North Wales)
June 2	Chevy Chase	17m(Northumberland)
June 8	Peak District Marathons	25/40m(Derbyshire)
June 15	Lakes Four 3000' Challenge	45m(Cumbria)
June 16	Punchbowl Marathon	30m(Surrey)
June 16	Purbeck Plod	26m(Dorset)
June 16	Six Shropshire Summits	35m(Shropshire)
June 29	Mallerstang Marathon	25m(Yorkshire)
July 7	Tanners Marathon	30m/50m(Surrey)
July 13	North Yorks Crosses Walk	53m(Yorkshire)
July 14	Cotswold Crippler	40m(Gloucestershire)
July 27	Icknield 80	80m(Herts/Berks/Wilts)
Sept 7	Across Wales Walk	45m(Mid-Wales)
Sept 22	Chiltern Marathon	25m(Bucks)
Oct 5/6	Long Mynd Hike	50m(Shropshire)
Oct 12	Vectis Marathon	30m(Isle of Wight)

My inaugural event was in April 1974, the Mid-Wales Mountain Marathon(22miles/7000' ascent) from Dinas Mawddwy to Kings YHA near Dolgellau over the Cader Idris range including eight 2000'+ summits. The organiser was Neville Tandy and the entry fee was 45p! It was quite an eye-opener with the speed of some

of the entrants, a few jogging down the road in heavy boots before we got onto the first climb. I finished 22nd in 7hours 24mins, the first three cups of tea did not touch the sides, as they say.

It was at the Youth Hostel that I first met Chris Steer, one of the co-founders of the LDWA. A tall, amenable man with an obvious military bearing. I later walked the Berkshire 25m and then the Punchbowl Marathon on a very hot day where I suffered with bad blisters around the 30-miler completed in around 9hours. And we had a short thunderstorm around the "Devils' Punchbowl". Receiving the results I couldn't get over the fact that some had finishers in well under 7-hours; they surely can't have walked all the way! I then completed the famous Tanners 30 (Leatherhead, Surrey) on another hot day and later in the summer walked the Chilterns Marathon which was then based from Marlow. I had met Alan Blatchford at the Tanners (the other co-founder of the LDWA) and again at the Chiltern Marathon where he had run round in about 4 hours and was then helping with the refreshments for the walkers.

A couple of weeks later I broke my right knee-cap playing Sunday football at Great Brickhill. My son had just been born so you can imagine I was not too popular with my family; my wife having just come out of hospital and then me going in. Milton Keynes then did not have a hospital so we both spent time in the Royal Bucks, Aylesbury. I worked hard on regaining fitness over the Winter months and managed to complete the Sevenoaks Circular (30miles) in late March 1975 before tackling the Mid-Wales Mountain Marathon again. Two hours slower but I more than pleased that my knee held up OK. I was also a member of Wellingborough Mountain Club (they had a cottage in Snowdonia) at the time and I had encouraged a few colleagues from there to accompany me.

June that year provided two contrasting events. Firstly the Welsh 1000m Peaks event. Here you are transported to the North Wales coast at Aber and start on the high water mark and finish some 20-miles and 7-hours later on the summit of Snowdon. This is both a walking event and a fell race. A couple of weeks later I went down to Swanage in Dorset with the Surrey Group for the Purbeck Plod. A really hot day but the coastal section was enjoyable with some breeze but once we turned inland towards Corfe Castle and then across Ballard Down the sun was on our backs. I learnt the hard way - just wearing a vest, no hat etc., my back and shoulders were red raw. I could not put my back to the coach seat on the way home! I say learnt a lesson. When I started alpine walking in the early 1990's I had climbed a 3000m summit above Zermatt wearing just vests and shorts. I was so exhilarated with the magnificent scenery - The Matterhorn, Weisshorn et al and mindful that my long suffering wife was waiting for me down below I just rushed around in awe of my surroundings. I suffered for this over the next few days and nearly spoilt our holiday.

However back to the UK and another hot day greeted us for the annual Tanner's Marathon. This was my first attempt to part jog an event and I was well pleased to finish just inside 7-hours; a "goodly 30" said Alan Blatchford in his post event report.

Keith Chesterton, was at this time drafting his book on the “London CountryWay”, a 200mile

route encircling London. I had checked some sections in the Chilterns and Epping Forest for him and in the summer of 1975 many of the sections were walked out by the Surrey Group. I joined them to walk 55miles from Woldingham, Surrey across the North Downs to eventually finish in Windsor (sounds a bit like this year's LDWA 100). Chris Steer was the leader and this was also my first all-night walk. I suffered in the later stages and can still remember the last few miles – “the long walk” from the famous statue of George 3rd (The Copper Horse) to Windsor Castle seemed to take an eternity and I swear I was hallucinating as the image of Windsor Castle swept in and out of my vision.

Later in the year I completed the British Airways One-day International Walk (20miles) in Windsor Great Park and where I first met Martyn Greaves, the Chiltern Marathon and my first Karrimor Two-Day Mountain Marathon based from Ennerdale in the Lake District. Plans for January 1976 included the Reservoir Roundabout and the inaugural Winter Tanners.

Brian Graves



**LDWA 40
Early Days with the LDWA 2: Keith Noble**

I was seventeen in 1946 and from the Valley of the Rocks at Lynton viewed the overlapping promontories to the west wishing I could walk as far as I could see. This dream was not realised for another thirty two years when I spent 10 days walking from Minehead to Marazion. During the following Easter and Summer holidays I completed the South West Peninsula Coast Path, sleeping in the car, setting off at about 6am and returning by bus mid-afternoon. It is still one of my finest memories.

My enthusiasm carried me forward along the Cleveland Way, Ridgeway, Cotswold Way, South Downs Way (a lengthy 4½ days!) and North Downs Way.

A postcard in my local post office offered a sponsored walk in May 1981 following the London Countryway from Tilbury as far as possible in 24 hours, the Haynes Amble. It fired my imagination and, reaching Newgate Street, a four mile walk to my house made this my first 50 miler. Reg Smith approached me and suggested I join the LDWA. At that time I knew nothing of Chris Steer seeing a postcard by Alan Blatchford in Peaslake Post Office and their collaboration to form the LDWA. My encounter with Reg changed my life forever. The following year Keith Wilson and I set a new record

for the Haynes Amble, reaching Chipperfield at 72 miles. In 1983 I managed 79 miles, and for the final event Eric Willsher and I achieved 85 miles.

I began to enjoy the company of other keen walkers and the incredible variety of events leading to 100kms and 100 milers. My first Hundred, intended as a 70 miles South Downs practice, became the full walk from Winchester to Eastbourne making the actual event with checkpoints seem like a luxury. After seven official Hundreds, two Canal Hundreds and two 24 hour events, I had also accumulated four retirements – probably walking too fast for too long with no sensible stops.

Over the years, whether planning my own walks, leading or organising events the process can be enjoyed in triplicate. Studying the map beforehand the route can be visualised for terrain, gradients, scenery and the best places to stop for sunshine (or shade), facilities and views.

The event is the highlight with the exhilaration of a hard and/or fast walk, the company, the great outdoors and mental relaxation.

My third period of happiness comes from tracing the walk (I'm too old for technical recording), adding notes about people or happenings, and photos which are first class reminders as I move from old to ancient.

Essex-Herts from the start, but my association with BBN has been considerable, covering all Shillingtons, seven long Steppingleys and various socials with so many excellent friends. Thank you all very much.

What a wonderful LDWA we have after 40 years, responsible for co-ordinating so many regional groups, the official Trailwalker's Handbook, an extremely professional magazine and thousands of interesting but very different people working and walking together with such a powerful common interest. Long may it all continue!

Keith Noble

*Keith writes that following ill health and a back injury
he is now getting back to 15/18 milers*

The Moon Walk – London By Night

.....and what a fabulous night it was – walking 26 miles with over 17,000 women (and a few brave men) through the night against the backdrop of a city that never sleeps.

Towards the end of last summer my step-daughter Rachel said she fancied doing the Moon Walk as a challenge for her 40th birthday. “Oooh, do you want some company?” “Yes please.” So our entries went in and I have been in a state of excitement ever since. We did a lot of pavement pounding together. Rachel came on the Shillington Shuffle, and enjoyed it so much she joined the LDWA and BBN and came on a few social walks and the Pick & Mix. She also did the local run from Willen Lake on Saturday mornings. I walked everywhere.

At long last the big night arrived. We met at Milton Keynes station at 6.30pm – and there were lots of other excited Moon Walkers already waiting on our platform. I think it was then that I began to realise the scale of the event. This was just one station, just one train. We spoke to a girl who had done the walk twice and was marshalling this year, “See you at Parliament Square”, she said. “22 miles – keep smiling”.

At Euston we got a bus to Marble Arch – upstairs were more excited women. As the bus turned into Oxford Street, we looked down on a sea of women heading for Hyde Park. The pavements were full of Moon Walkers, pink was the colour - caps and T-shirts, tutus, feathers. We got our first glimpse of the iconic Pink City from the bus, and soon we were joining the throng of women heading for the entrance. We showed our walk numbers to get in and were handed our see-thru ponchos and space blankets.

There were 4 start times; we were orange and already knew we would be the second start, though we didn't have a start time. Within the City there were three huge marquees; one for each start colour, with our orange starters sharing with the yellows. There were other huge tents for baggage stores, merchandise, marshals etc. There was hot food ready for us in our marquee, with a choice of pasta or rice. You were asked what you wanted and it was handed straight to you – the whole thing was fantastically organised from start to finish - with a cake as it was the Moon Walk's 15th birthday. A band played rock'n'roll. More and more women were arriving and by the time everyone was there it was standing room only. It was so noisy you couldn't really talk. No matter, the band played and kept us entertained.

Everyone was getting ready for the start. The bras were brilliant – some exquisite, most flamboyant - they sparkled and shone. So very colourful, some glittery, some with twinkling lights. Shimmering and shining. Lots of flags, feather boas, grass skirts, tutus, shiny wigs. Every fabric and colour you could imagine, but of course lots of pink. Rachel and I went patriotic – decorated with Union Jacks, though my flags were a bit bigger than most!

Suddenly, it was the yellow warm up – we all joined in – the yellows left - more pep talk, more music, mounting excitement - our warm up - and then at last it was the orange start. Leaving the tent by the nearest exit, we ended up in the wrong group, lining up with excited greens massing for their start. Rachel realised we were wrong, and we hurriedly tried to make our way through thousands of women to join our start. “Make way for late oranges” a marshal shouted, and we were through, under the starting line at 11.30pm and away.



We started with a lap around Hyde Park, The first mile marker took us by surprise, we reached it so quickly! We had done three miles before we left the park but felt we had scarcely started – a good sign! Out of the park at Hyde Park Corner, with a wait at the traffic lights – we could hear the cheering ahead of us as each group was allowed to cross. Finally, our turn, we surged forward cheering and were away down to Buckingham Palace and to the Thames. Later we passed St Paul’s and then crossed London Bridge with Tower Bridge away in the distance. I was disappointed that all the iconic buildings were not beautifully floodlit, there were just a few dim lights. I thought it was hard times and austerity measures - but then realised it was silly o’clock in the morning and the lights had been switched off. Shard, though, looked absolutely fantastic, lit up against the night sky.

Round the back of Waterloo, and then back to the Thames. When we got to the London Eye – sparkling blue in the dark - the Half Mooners were funnelled off to the left and we saw them above us, passing over Westminster Bridge and heading back to Hyde Park. We still had a long way to go. On, along the Thames looking across the river to the Houses of Parliament, by Lambeth Palace and on through a very dark Battersea Park. Soon we crossed the Albert Bridge and walked the other side of the river, before turning northwards again and up to the Royal Albert Hall. Back southwards again, down Exhibition Road, passing the museums. We zig zagged through quieter residential streets, did a bit of window shopping along the King’s Road, realising the sky was gradually getting lighter. Then suddenly we turned a corner and we were back at the Thames. Across the river, Battersea Power Station looked absolutely stunning, lit by the early morning sunlight.

Back along the Thames, reaching Parliament Square with encouragement from the girl we had met at MK station – still smiling. The clock on Westminster Abbey said 6.15 as we passed by. There was just one lucky family of tourists by the Houses of Parliament. London looked magnificent in the early sunshine and they had it all to

themselves, apart from thousands of women streaming unobtrusively by across the other side of the square.

Back down the Mall, past Buckingham Palace, retracing our steps to Hyde Park. The final 1½ miles were in the Park – through the trees we could see a line of women circling the Serpentine and then turning towards the finish.

We never looked at the time – the night simply passed – every mile walked was marked with a banner, some giving us a lift because we came to them so quickly, some seemed to take forever to reach, but we ticked them off and the miles stacked up.

At the finish walkers are funnelled in, through huge crowds of supporters waiting for their own walkers but cheering everyone. Under the finishing banner and We Had Done It. Tears. We were given our medals. Took photos (the clock shows 7.25) and more tears. We collected our bags, looked at the length of the queues for coffee and plodded off to Marble Arch for the bus. There was a No 30 there, but sadly it was waiting at the terminus and the driver could not let us on. “Turn left at Primark” he said, “You’ve got 10 minutes”. “Drive slowly” we said and limped off.

Back at Euston, which was getting pinker by the minute, there were lots of tired but radiant ladies sporting their medals. We grabbed a coffee and headed down for the train. As the train pulled out the usual announcements were made, and then “..... and I’d like to congratulate all the ladies on the train who have done the Moon Walk”. Revitalised by our coffee, “That’s us” we beamed, showing off our medals.

The marshals were all truly amazing – smiling, clapping, cheering, encouraging. I think they said at the start there were 2,000 volunteers. Thousands had already passed, but the marshals greeted us as if we were the first walkers they had seen all night, and they had thousands more to come. Norman was marshalling near the Thames at about 14 miles. "Good Morning and please take care at the lights" – he reckons that was all he said for 5 hours!

The Moon Walk is very different from our events. Not just the hooting of taxi drivers and cars as they passed and people waving from buses, or checking out the Stella McCartney windows on the Fulham Road before dawn. There are no checkpoints and no food - there were crates of bottled water, but we were carrying our own and didn’t need more. There were orange segments to suck at Battersea Park and oranges again with ½ bananas somewhere in Chelsea, and then hot chocolate by Tate Britain. I had an orange, but didn’t really fancy anything else. There is nothing at the finish, apart from a couple of vans selling hot drinks and food (and long, long queues).

A big thank you to everyone in BBN who so generously sponsored us. The event made over £2¼ million before anyone even started walking, and when I last looked at the website the total raised so far was over £3½ million.

My biggest thank you goes to Rach. The Moon Walk was her challenge - it is something I would never have dreamed of doing. But it was such an amazing experience and I am just so thrilled to have taken part.

How about a BBN team next year ????

Gill Bunker

WHEN I'M NOT WALKING

Since retiring from Town Planning two years ago, I have involved myself in two voluntary projects, reflecting long-held interests of railways and canals.

At Leighton Buzzard I am a newly qualified guard on the Narrow Gauge Railway (LBNGR), a charity which operates passenger trains on a two-foot gauge, former industrial line passing over level crossings in the built-up area of the town and into the countryside towards Heath and Reach. I was originally a volunteer in my schooldays when the preservationists arrived in 1967. The entire operation is volunteer worked, including drivers, firemen and guards, as well as all the support trades of engineers and managers etc. The steam locomotives are a mix of ages, the oldest being a vertical-boilered Welsh slate quarry loco, built in 1877. The line was built from surplus WWI equipment in 1919 and has accredited museum status.

I'm also a member of the "Monday Gang" at the LBNGR – a group of about 10 volunteers who maintain the 3.25 miles of track and sidings. This is great team work, carried out in all weathers, and each winter includes a section of track re-laying.

The second project I am involved with is "Friends of Raymond" – which is a charity operating a traditional pair of steel motor (1936) and wooden butty (1958) narrowboats, with a base at Braunston, Northants. During the months April to October, the boats are taken to canal rallies over the Midlands canal system. To move the boats requires a crew of three people minimum. I usually take my bicycle in the car so that I can return to the car at the end of each day, and also go ahead to ready each lock for the boats' arrival. Steering through the tunnels at Braunston and Blisworth is a highlight of these trips. Volunteers are also needed at the events, for showing visitors the traditionally decorated boat cabins and for the sales stand. The two boats are recognised heritage vessels and have received funding on that basis, although significant upkeep costs each year have to be raised by the efforts of the volunteers.

Mike Bowley

Words of Wisdom from our Members

Pearls of wisdom from the mouths of BBN members on social walks:

On the Mursley Meander

Dee Brockway "Smart phones - aren't they called Blueberrys?"

On the Stoke Hammond Hobble:

Steve Clark: "Best to remain free and single - that way you can only embarrass yourself."

Steve Clark: "I've just seen the film Piranha in 3D"

Steve Smith: "Sounds like a film to get your teeth into?"

Sylvie Eames near the end of the walk "My knee is starting to hurt now."

Steve Clark: "Don't your mean you're getting jaw ache?"

Any more words of wisdom let us know!

Norman Corrin

BEDS BUCKS & NORTHANTS GROUP: COMMITTEE 2012

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