

# ***LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION – Kent Group***

**Aim: to further the interests of those who enjoy long distance walking**

# ***NEWSLETTER***



Some of the Sevenoaks Circular team at The Vine Pavilion

Photo by Christophe Delogne

**Number 78**



**April 2009**

**[www.ldwa.org.uk/kent](http://www.ldwa.org.uk/kent)**





The Sevenoaks Circular. Pictures by Christophe Delogne and Bryan Clarke

## **KENT GROUP SOCIAL WALKS APR TO AUG 2009**

### **Fri April 10 (Good Friday) ANOTHER SOUTH DOWNS WAY LOOP**

c.26mls(or 20 alternative). Meet 9am at Eastbourne, western end of seafront (B2103) by South Downs Way marker post (GR 600972). Pub stop (or two!). Ldr: Graham Smith.

### **Sun Apr 12 VANGUARD WAY 4 (Chiddingly-Newhaven).**

c.18 mls. Meet 9am at Newhaven ferry terminal car park (GR 450009) to arrange cars before driving to start of the walk at Chiddingly. Pub stop. For further details contact Graham Smith

### **Sat May 2 THE FOUR PITS WALK**

c.38mls. Meet 8am just past bridge over the River Stour at Fordwich (GR 179598) for a walk which will visit the sites of the former Kent pits of Chislet, Betteshanger, Tilmanstone and Snowdown. Unsupported, but with refreshment stops. Ideal preparation for the Hundred! Ldr: Graham Smith.

### **Sun May 3 LATE AROUND THE MAYPOLE**

c.20mls. Meet 9.00am at Shoreham Village car park (GR TQ 518615 – L/R 188). Lunch at Romney Street (pub available). Ldr: Mick Dodge.

### **Sun May 10 THE ISLE OF GRAIN**

c.21mls. Meet 9.00am Northward Hill R.S.P.B. Nature Reserve (Woodlands Car Park), High Halstow – GR TQ 782757. Pub stop at Cliffe. Ldr: Mike Ratcliff.

### **Sun Jun 7 THE STOUR VALLEY**

c.24mls. Meet 8.30am Perrywood Car Park, near Selling (GR TR 045557). Pub stop at Hastingsleigh. Ldr: Mike Ratcliff.

### **Sun Jun 14 A STROLL ALONG THE MEDWAY**

c. 24mls. Meet 8.30am Maidstone (south) by Fire Station, Loose Rd (A 229) GR 765535 (Postcode ME15 9QB). Parking in Cripple St., opposite. Pub & tea rooms on route, for lunch. Ldrs: Stephanie Le Men & Christophe Delogne.

### **Sun Jun 21 A FORAY AROUND THE FORSTALS (1)**

c.21mls. Meet 8.30am at Charing Station car park GR 950492. Probable pub stop. For further details contact Ldrs: Neal & Jan O'Rourke.

### **Sun Jun 28 ANDREDSWEALD MARSHALS' WALK**

For details contact Neil Higham.

### **Sat Jul 4 CROSS CHANNEL CHALLENGE**

c.23mls from Coquelles, just outside Calais, after taking Le Shuttle at approx.7am. For further details contact ldr: Graham Smith. (NOTE: Please contact leader by May 29 LATEST).

### **Sun Jul 12 ANDREDSWEALD MAIN EVENT**

See below.

### **Sat Jul 18 GREEN CHAIN WALK (linear - Crystal Palace to Erith)**

c.19mls. Meet 9.30am at Crystal Palace station GR 342705. Lunch (late) Oxleas Wood Café. Pub (optional) at finish. Ldrs: Marita & Malcolm Sanders.

### **Sun Jul 26 IT'S A MINT**

c.10 + 8mls figure of eight. Walk either or both: 10mls morning and "after eight". Starts: 8.30am and 2.00pm at St. George's Church, Wrotham GR 612592 (EXP 147/LR 188). Food available at the Rose and Crown. Ldr: Ivan Waghorn.

### **Sat Aug 1 SOUTH DOWNS THIRTY**

c.30mls. Meet 8am at Eastbourne, western end of promenade (B2103) by South Downs Way marker post GR 600972. Park near school on left. At least one pub stop! (bring packed lunch as food probably not available until c.22mls). Ldr: Mike Pursey.

### **Sun Aug 9 CREAM TEA WALK**

c.20 miles. Meet 8.30am Pluckley B.R station GR 921433. Pub stop - food available. Ldrs: Neal & Jan O'Rourke.

### **Sat Aug 15 WHITE CLIFFS CHALLENGE MARSHALS' WALK (54-mile route only).**

For details contact Gordon Harker.



## Sat Sep 12 WHITE CLIFFS CHALLENGE MAIN EVENT

(54mls or 22mls). See below.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman – Brian Buttifant,

Secretary – Bill Gillibrand,

Treasurer – Neil Higham,

Members

Bryan Clarke –

Joy Davies –

Christophe Delogne/Stephanie Le Men –

Gordon Harker –

Mike Pursey –

Michael Ratcliff –

Graham Smith –

Footpath problems –

Newsletter editor: Graham Smith –



*New Committee members Christophe Delogne, Stephanie Le Men and Mike Ratcliff*

PUB meetings are held on the first Monday of each month (except if that coincides with a bank holiday, when they are postponed to the second Monday) at the Rose & Crown, Wrotham. Meetings commence at 8.30pm. All welcome.

THIS year's annual buffet, held as a celebration for Kent Group members who have taken part in the Hundred, will be held on Monday June 1.

PICTURES in this Newsletter taken on the Sevenoaks Circular held on March 22, by Bryan Clarke and Christophe Delogne.

### MEMBERSHIP STILL ABOVE 100

AT the last count, Kent Group had 105 members. As usual, we have gained some and lost others, but the total of Kent members appears to have remained steady for the last few years.

Sadly, we have lost Roger and Hilary Thornburgh and Jean Dunton.

Roger and Hilary have organised have Wealden Waters in the past, as well as organised family dinners. Roger and Hilary have been unable to sell their house in Loose so they have bought a flat in Blockley, Gloucestershire, where they plan to spend quite a few weekends and their holidays. In a note to secretary Bill Gillibrand, Roger says: "It's much nearer our daughters and so we hope to see more of them. I shall continue working in Maidstone for the time being so we will still be around. I have missed the walking with the Kent Group and although we do hope to join you on future walks I think they may be few and far between ... but we would still be pleased to man a checkpoint now and again." It's fair to say that Jean, Roger and Hilary have been group stalwarts, and we of course wish them all good luck in the future.

## **MARSHALS WANTED ON THE HUNDRED**

KENT Group will be running a checkpoint on the Wessex Hundred. We will be doing Checkpoint 6 – Coronation Hall at Slindon, 40.7 miles into the route. The CP will be open between 1900 hrs on Saturday (May 23) and 0530 on the Sunday. Kent Group members wishing to help man the checkpoint are asked to contact Brian Buttifant on the above telephone number.

## **... AND ON THE MARSHALS' HUNDRED**

THE Wessex Hundred marshals' walk takes place over the Bank Holiday Weekend of May 2-4. As this newsletter went to press, there was a desperate shortage of marshals for the event. Anthony Mitchell, secretary of Sussex Group – one of the Wessex Hundred organising groups – has contacted us to ask if any Kent Group members who have entered the event itself would care to marshal on the marshals' walk. Any offers will be gratefully received, even if it is just for a few hours. Anyone interested is asked to contact Anthony on 01342 811361.

## **HEART OF SCOTLAND HUNDRED**

NEXT year will be the first time the LDWA Hundred will have been held in Scotland. Former Kent Group chairman Paul Hatcher is Deputy Organiser of the event, which will be based in Dunkeld, Perthshire. It has been provisionally agreed that Kent will be running a checkpoint with Cumbria Group. This will be at Fortingall at 72.5 miles. Further details will appear in the Kent Group newsletter.

## **KSS (Kent Surrey Sussex Triple Challenge)**

FOLLOWING last year's Surrey Tops, it's our turn to host a KSS 50-mile event this year with the White Cliffs Challenge over the weekend of September 12-13.

Plans for the event are well under way. As reported in previous newsletters, this year's WCC will be at Fowlmead Country Park, two miles outside Deal. There will be two routes – of 54 miles and 22 miles. Apart from the new venue, the routes themselves will be very similar to the previous WCC routes. The longer route will take in the entire stretch of White Cliffs, with the shorter route taking in the Kingsdown-Dover stretch of cliffs.

Plenty of marshals will be needed, so all offers of help will be gratefully received. Please contact Graham Smith on the above telephone number. Surrey and Sussex groups have offered to man checkpoints for us. The marshals' WCC walk will be on Saturday August 15, and will be from Shepherdswell (see above). Keith Warman is currently designing a KSS badge. We hope to have more details of this in the next newsletter.

The third leg of the KSS will be the welcome return of the Sussex Stride next year. This will be the first Sussex Stride since the event was discontinued in 2005. The date for the event has not yet been finalised, but it is likely to be in mid-September, with an announcement due soon after the Wessex Hundred has been completed.

## **ANDREDSWEALD**

AS previously reported in the newsletter, Neil Higham has taken over the organisation of our summer High Weald Challenge from Neal and Jan O'Rourke. The event is on Sunday July 12 from Forest Row, with the marshals' walk on June 28.

Marshals are needed on the event, so anyone able to help is asked to contact Neil on the above telephone number.

## **SUBS UP (BUT YOU KNOW THEY'RE WORTH IT!)**

AT our AGM in January, it was agreed that Kent Group subscriptions should go up. From next year, these will rise from £3 to £5 for single members, and from £4.50 to £7 for couples. It will be our first increase in subs for several years.

## **NEW BLOOD ON OUR COMMITTEE**

CHRISTOPHE Delogne, Stephanie Le Men and Mike Ratcliff were voted onto the committee at the AGM. As the longest serving members, our constitution dictated that Joy Davies and Graham Smith stepped down, but they remain committee members as our constitution also means they have been co-opted back on. A full list of Kent Group committee members, with telephone numbers and e-mail addresses, is above.

## **FOOTPATHS OFFICER**

SHIRLEY Higgins has been suffering severe discomfort from an old ankle injury for several months, and because of this she has not been able to enjoy many walks during this time. She has, however, bravely offered to continue in her role as Kent Group Footpaths Officer for the time being. So if members encounter any rights of way difficulties on social walks or challenges, they should contact Shirley on the above telephone number, and she will do what she can to help.

## **JILL GREEN AND TOM SINCLAIR**

JILL and Tom have both had health problems recently, with Jill recovering from an operation. All Kent Group members will wish Jill and Tom speedy recoveries, and we all look forward to seeing them both soon.

## **DAVE TIES THE KNOT**

KENT Group members will be pleased to know that Dave Sheldrake married Lesley on Saturday March 21, the day before the Sevenoaks Circular. Congratulations to them both.

## **HARRY BISHOP**

KENT Group members will be saddened to hear of the death of our one-time member Harry Bishop. Harry, who died on January 15, was a member of the group from about 1982 to 1990 and will be remembered by long-standing members as quite a character.

Several of our newsletters had his cartoons on the front cover and his homespun poetry found its way into many issues. He was a strong and determined walker who completed, along with many social and challenge walks, six Hundreds (including the 1983 Snowdonia in atrocious conditions).

Latterly he was living in Esher, Surrey, and died following a long illness. He was in his mid-70s.

## **STRIDERS AND GROUP NEWSLETTERS**

**by Ernie Bishop**

IN 1979 the Seventh AGM was held in West Yorkshire. I was asked to look after the event's insurance and in the following year became Membership Secretary.

In 1978 - October 7-8 - the Longmynd Hike had its 12th occasion: 50 miles over the scenic South Salop hills. The winner was J. Wagstaff in 10hours 15minutes. The ladies prize once again went to Ann Sayer in 13hours 39minutes. Of the 300 starters only 173 managed to finish the course.

For the seventh Hundred, Dartmoor was used for the first time. Celia and I went down with Chris and Margaret Steer and spent a few days looking at areas which were unknown to us.

On the day those who were participating were taken out to the starting point. The start was a bit of a scramble for half a mile across heather (I think) to then jump across a stream which resulted in most having one foot with a shoe full of water. In another mile we were all stretched out on a quiet road and ready to go north on a gradual climb for a few miles. Then a path to the right and five of us on a track.

Peter Rickards and three others plus I made up the group until we had to go uphill on a road. I decided to press ahead and realised by the top that I was about 100 yards ahead, so I pressed to keep going on a path in some woods. I came out on a road alongside a river with a few people rowing. After a few hundred yards I had to give my number and name to two marshals to ensure we were on the correct route. I realised that I was in the lead. I had a few hills ahead.

The next hill was very open and I saw nobody in the rear so I felt that I could continue at a reasonable pace. Then the rain started. It fell down for a few hours and some hills didn't make it any easier. One particular

field, in the middle of the night, seemed to be about a foot in water, no matter where I stepped. I eventually slipped downhill although I didn't fall. I went down to Okehampton, where they fed me well. On then south towards Princetown. A few miles before that in a very tight gully, I came across a sheep that was on its back, with its eyes open, unable to move. I tried to lift it and pull it, but couldn't move it an inch and had to leave it and hope that a group might pass and get it on its feet.

From Princetown a few miles south then to the left with a river on the left to where we started. A few more miles to the River Plym which had to be crossed and was about three feet deep in the middle. Then a few roads out to the main road and about a mile (uphill) to the finish. Time 25hours 37minutes.

Ann Sayer, the first lady, and Martyn Greaves finished together at 27.11. The first of the runners, who had a later start, were Keith Arnold and Roger Baumeister who took 20.38. I couldn't have run as fast as that.

One month later I took part in the Ewhurst Hundred, organised by the Surrey Walking Club, with 113 entries (with over half from the Continent). Road walking 100 miles, for ten laps of ten miles, in Surrey.

Phil Hastings had road walked for a few years and had persuaded me to have a go. I completed a 100 at a time of 21.03. Phil was not far behind in a time of 21.58. In fact 10 members of the LDWA took part and completed within the 24hours. Phil Hastings entered for a 100 miles the following year, from Leicester to Skegness. I agreed to meet him at various points with food and drink. Phil finished inside the 24hours but I can't find the actual time.

On March 18 1979 Kent Group had fine weather for its fifth Sevenoaks run or walk, with over 200 entered prior to the event and 70 on the day. Mark Pickard led the field in the fastest time yet, 4hours 45minutes.

The first walkers home were Ann Sayer and Patrick Marchant, in 6 hours 58 minutes.

On the last weekend of January 1979, a small group of Kent members set out to walk 43 miles of the North Downs Way from Dover at midnight. They had breakfast at Canterbury, and continued via Boughton Lees and Charing to arrive at Harrietsham soon after dark.

IN Strider N<sup>o</sup>.25 Alan Blatchford reprinted an article from Country Life which you may like to read.

Recently the diary of a Victorian policeman has been returned to the Leicestershire Constabulary. It was kept by police constable William Issett who was stationed at Market Harborough. For 90 pence a week he helped to keep law and order, always on foot patrol. His headquarters were some 15 miles away and he often had to make the trek there and back in full uniform and no boot allowance. He worked seven days a week with no annual holiday and his daily round was anything from 14 to 16 hours. It was normal to walk up to 30 miles regularly and his diary is full of entries such as 'walked to Foxton and Lubenham', 'walked to Wistow', 'walked to Kibworth' and on several occasions he had to be at his HQ by 08.30. On one case he walked 50miles in two days. When one realises what state the roads were in in those days of the police force, it gives some indication of the fitness required to be a policeman. It would be interesting to see how many modern police officers could cope with such marathon walking.

More to come.

## **NEWS FROM CUMBRIA**

**by Paul and Mary Hatcher**

IT certainly doesn't seem like five years since Mary and I left Pluckley, Kent, for Brampton, Cumbria. However we are now well settled into our retirement and are accepted as part and parcel of the LDWA Cumbria group, helping with group social activities and our only event, the Three Rings of Shap. Brampton Bowling Club, Garden Club, local fell walkers group and recently formed Friday group the Irthing Wanderers also form part of our social life.

This July I will lead a fifth Time for Tea Walk (Cream tea walk when in Kent) and Mary's Cream Teas are becoming as renowned "up north" as they were in the deep south. I have endeavoured to get out on group social walks when possible but have often preferred to capture a few Wainwrights with Mary instead when the weather was agreeable.

We have now finished the round of the 214 principal fells and have started on the 104 in the Outlying Fells book. We are now both enjoying full retirement so are able to walk whenever the weather and mood take us. I have not fitted in events since we arrived although there are plenty to choose from, but this could be the year to rectify that. In October I was asked to take over as chairman of the group and was duly elected.



Although we have only 22 members most are active and only one did not attend our AGM, they did send their apologies. We also have a long weekend away each year and last October it was The Dales Way that eight members completed over the five days. We average around 10 on our social walks. On our February walk we had 15 LDWA members - only seven from our own group, the rest were made up by guests from four other groups. For report and pictures of this and all other Cumbria group activities visit <http://www.ldwa.org.uk/cumbria>.

Our other LDWA commitment is the 2010 Hundred. We are on the organising committee and as Deputy Organiser responsible for staffing the event and checkpoints, plus organising the Marshals' Walk. Nine groups have so far committed to helping out and running a checkpoint. Cumbria group are planning to have an away week, the week before the event, staying in self-catering accommodation and walking the route over six days, then helping at event HQ and a checkpoint. I have pencilled in Checkpoint 11 at Fortingall, 72 miles for the group, and it is hoped that our friends from Kent Group will be able to join us. There is self-catering accommodation nearby!

We are planning to be at the start of the Wessex 100 and get round to see as many groups as we can to update those already committed and to hopefully engage a few more. We will of course put in a stint with Kent Group at Slindon. See you there.

**Paul and Mary**

### **ANOTHER CHRISTMAS CRUISE AROUND CALAIS      by Graham Smith**

LAST year's winter French walk, on December 6, took place in very different weather to our 2007 Christmas Cruise. Then we had heavy rain and fierce winds for just about the whole time, whereas this time it was dry and sunny – all things considered, we really couldn't have asked for better winter weather. Five of us met by the SeaFrance desk at Dover's Eastern Docks to get the 7am ferry. After a smooth crossing, and a continental breakfast on board, we started walking as soon as we left the departures/arrivals hall at Calais. We walked through the town on the route we have come to know so well in recent years, before taking a track on the outskirts of Calais which brought us to Fort Nieulay, and then we followed a footway by the main road to Coquelles. Here we picked up GR (Grande Randonee) 128 and followed it to Mont d'Hubert, getting good views of the White Cliffs of Dover we had left a couple of hours previously. As usual, the GR provided good, firm walking, apart from one stretch of about 10 yards (although it felt like 100!) where the track was just about underwater, the result of heavy rain during the previous few days. We just had to inch gingerly along the side of the track, clinging to tree branches to help progress. After Mont d'Hubert, which has a restaurant (but it was much too pricey for us, and anyway it was too early to eat) we dropped down to the road and then walked up to Cap Blanc-Nez, a great viewpoint when the weather permits and one of the most impressive parts of the whole Nord Pas de Calais region. Then we dropped down to the village of Escalles, where we had hoped to find a bar to stop for lunch. Sadly, one of the three bars in the village had stopped serving food, and the other two seemed a bit too up-market for us. So we decided to crack on, following the road to the next village, Peuplingues. Here we found what we were looking for – a nice down-market bar which was obviously a 'local' for the village. It was clearly some while after the bar usually stopped serving food, but the people who ran it were very happy to serve us, three of us enjoying very tasty and filling omelettes. Mike Pursey and myself enjoyed some equally tasty Leffe Ruby beers – a new line from the Belgian brewer, which has a lovely fruity taste. It was pleasant enough in winter, but must be even better in summer.

After that we left the road to pick up GR 128 again, which we followed back to Coquelles. We had a stop at the Auchan hypermarket (and I purchased two six-packs of Leffe – and yes, one of them was of Leffe Ruby) before following the main road into Calais. We had made very good time – so good, in fact, that we were unable to enjoy the town's Christmas lights, because we had arrived back before it got dark! So we walked through the town as day was dimming for our ferry back to Dover. It had been a most enjoyable day, and a fairly easy 14 miles.

\* This year's Not So New French Challenge will be on Saturday July 4 (see Social Walks programme above), and will follow the same 22.7-mile route as last year's. We are planning to make the same transport



arrangements as last year – i.e. taking cars and using Le Shuttle. Some members who had wanted to go were disappointed last year when the cars were full up, so we are asking people wishing to go this year to let myself or Joy Davies know by May 29, so that we can make the necessary arrangements. Our telephone numbers are above.

## **WINTER NIGHT WALK – FRIDAY JANUARY 9**

**by Ivan Waghorn**

IN the week leading up to the night walk the temperature was as low as -8c, with a forecast of severe weather conditions for the rest of the week. The temperatures for early January had been the lowest for 30 years.

With this in mind I decided to reduce the mileage to approx. 10 miles rather than cancel the walk.

Ten of us set off from Wrotham at 11pm into the very cold, clear moonlit night. After several miles following fields, tracks, lanes and the Gypsy Tail, we joined the Wealdway at Ryarsh Woods.

For the next mile we would be following a Ley Line:-

Many ancient sites are built along straight line networks that stretch for dozens – even hundreds – of miles. Some believe they were meant to utilise a mysterious property of Earth Energy.

Our first stop at the Coldrum Long Barrow, a Neolithic burial mound, was brief due to the cold night (-9c).

Following the Wealdway up to the North Downs, we came to a junction of the North Downs Way, WW and PW (Pilgrims Way) before the steep climb up to the Trosley Country Park. Halfway up this narrow, steep-sided gully we hear and then see a Land Rover heading up towards us. We scrambled up the gully sides in fear of our lives! You do not expect to see a motor vehicle at 2am on this track, although it is a byway (unsuitable for motor vehicles).

The NDW path is followed to the Country Park centre where our second brief stop is taken.

We then briskly walked the last two miles back to Wrotham and our frozen-over cars. It is now 3am and we have survived another winter night walk.

See you next year.

## **NEW YEAR ON THE SOUTH DOWNS AGAIN**

**by Graham Smith**

NINE LDWA MEMBERS gathered by the South Downs Way information plaque at the end of Eastbourne seafront at 9am on January 1 for Kent Group's fifth New Year's Day walk. We started these New Year's Day walks in 2005, with the South Downs Way loop from Eastbourne, and they have now become an institution, alternating between an SDW walk or Rye-Hastings, which we did last year. We tend to get people from various groups coming along to join us, including Thames Valley, London and Surrey. Apart from anything else, the walk is always a hangover cure!

Although nine LDWA members turned up at the start time of 9am, the figure should have been 11. Nicola Foad, who lives in Sturry, had not got to bed until shortly before 3am the previous night, and – understandably – had had a bit of difficulty getting up for the drive of two hours plus to Eastbourne. But not only did she make it, but she caught us up shortly we had passed Beachy Head. We done Nicola – you showed the spirit which makes Kent Group what it is (i.e. we're all barmy). Jim Kelly, from London Group, should also have been with us, but he was also a bit late and so he missed us. However, he still had a good walk, taking roughly the route we took, albeit by himself and not with us.

Anyway, the weather was a bit cloudy and a bit cold, as forecast. But – most importantly – it was dry, and not windy. We set off at about two minutes past 9am, and followed our usual route – past Beachy Head to Birling Gap, where we had our first stop. Then it was over the Seven Sisters, which to me didn't seem as arduous as they usually do (perhaps because the weather conditions were pretty good, and we weren't walking into a fierce head-wind, as we did on our Good Friday walk last year). As usual, at the end of the Seven Sisters, we were rewarded with a delightful view over the Cuckmere Valley, which we drank in as we descended to the river and our second short stop.

After that we took the riverside path to Alfriston, where we planned to stop for lunch. At the bridge near Litlington we had to decide whether to take the left or right bank, as one of them was likely to be a bit muddy. I was asked to decide as leader, and I opted for the left bank (well, I've always been a left-winger).

This was probably the wrong choice, as we encountered quite a bit of the sticky stuff before we reached Alfriston. Whether there was more mud on the other bank we will never know and no one complained (not even Joy Davies!).

We reached Alfriston at 12.30, and a few of us spent our lunch stop in the Star Inn, which we have often used before. It was at Alfriston that we lost one of our party – Brian, from Sidcup. Brian had been cracking on way ahead of the rest of us – in fact cracking on so quickly that one of two of us wondered if he was starting the FLDWA – the Fast Long Distance Walkers Association (there are probably quite a few group members who would qualify for that one!) We lost sight of him after our coffee stop by the River Cuckmere. One of our number met him at Alfriston, when he indicated that he was going to make his own way back to the start.

After lunch we decided, on Joy and Nicola's advice, to follow the South Downs Way route, which was very pleasant. It led to a fairly easy climb onto the Downs, followed by a lovely green carpet of a path virtually all the way to Jevington. We were able to crack along at a rate of 3.5-4 mph, with very nice views all around. At Jevington we passed the restaurant which claims to have invented banoffee pie (sadly it was closed, so we couldn't try it out). Then we just pressed on along the blazed SDW track back to Eastbourne, keeping to our quick pace. We arrived back shortly after 4pm, having done 18.8 miles, according to Mike Ratcliff's GPS. A good walk, fine scenery – the best in the South East in my view – and a good pace. As Nicola said at the end, "Was that good or was that good?"

Next year's New Year's Day walk will either revert to Rye-Hastings or we may make it Dover-Canterbury. I'll keep you posted.

## **BASIC BATHROOM**

**by Shirlie Gill**

A VERY fussy and proper lady began planning a week's camping holiday for her and her Baptist Church group. She wrote to a campsite for reservations. She wanted to make sure that the campsite was fully equipped and modern, but somehow couldn't quite bring herself to write the word 'toilet' in her letter. So, she decided on the extremely old-fashioned term 'bathroom commode'.

Once written down, it didn't look right and she was still not comfortable with it. Finally, she decided on the abbreviation 'B.C.' and wrote "Does your campsite have its own B.C.?"

When the campsite owner received the letter, he couldn't work out what she meant by B.C. He showed it to several of the campers, one of whom suggested the lady was obviously referring to a Baptist Church since there was a letterhead on the paper, which referred to a Baptist Church. So he sent his reply:-

"Dear Madam,

"The B.C. is located nine miles from the campsite in a beautiful grove of trees. I admit it is quite a distance if you are in the habit of going regularly. No doubt you will be pleased to know that it will seat 350 people at one time, and it is open on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday of each week.

"Some people like to take their lunch and make a day of it. It may interest you to know that my daughter met her husband there. We are also having fund-raising to purchase new seats, as the old ones have holes in them. Unfortunately, my wife is ill and has not been able to attend regularly. It's been a good six months since she last went. It pains her very much not to be able to go more often. As we grow older, it seems to be more of an effort, especially in cold weather. Perhaps I could accompany you the first time you go, sit with you, and introduce you to all the other people who will be there.

"I look forward to your visit. We offer you a very friendly campsite."

## **TRUE OR FALSE**

**by Bill Gillibrand**

- 1) Apples, not caffeine, are more efficient at waking you up in the morning.
- 2) A pack a day smoker will lose approximately two teeth every 10 years.
- 3) People do not get ill from cold weather: it's from being indoors a lot more.
- 4) When you sneeze, all bodily functions stop, even your heart!
- 5) Only seven per cent of the population are left handed.
- 6) Babies are born without kneecaps. They don't appear until they are 2-6 years old.

- 7) The average person over 50 will have spent five years waiting in queues.
- 8) The toothbrush was invented in 1498.
- 9) The average housefly lives for one month.
- 10) A coat hanger is 44 inches long when straightened.
- 11) The average computer blinks seven times a minute.
- 12) Your feet are bigger in the afternoon than any other time of day.
- 13) Most of us have eaten a spider in our sleep.
- 14) The REAL reason ostriches stick their heads in the sand is to search for water.
- 15) The only two animals that can see behind themselves without turning their heads are the rabbit and the parrot.
- 16) Prince Charles and Prince William NEVER travel on the same aeroplane, just in case there is a crash.
- 17) The first Harley Davidson motorcycle, built in 1903, used a tomato can for a carburettor.
- 18) Humphrey Bogart was related to Princess Diana. They were 7<sup>th</sup> cousins.
- 19) If colouring wasn't added to Coca-Cola, it would be green.

ALL OF THE ABOVE ARE TRUE!

(Now go back and think about No.13!)

### **MANY THANKS**

SHIRLIE and I returned home one afternoon in early March to discover a mystery package (in the form of a plastic bag) in our porch. The bag contained some walking guidebooks, but no accompanying note or indication as to the identity of the person who left them.

If it was you, thank you for your kind thought and I am sure we will be able to put them to good use.

**by Keith Warman**

### **CAN YOU HELP?**

NEAL and Jan O'Rourke are planning to walk the Sussex Border Path but they cannot get hold of a guidebook, as it appears to be out of print. If anyone has one, or knows where one can be obtained, please contact Neal or Jan.

### **COMEDY CORNER with Bill Gillibrand**

THOUGHTS for today:-

Once you get over the hill, you'll begin to pick up speed.

If the shoe fits, buy a pair in every colour.

Everyone has a photographic memory but some, like me, just don't have any film.

Just going to church doesn't make you a Christian – not any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.

Bills travel through the mail – at twice the speed of cheques.

Middle age is when broadness of the mind and narrowness of the waist change places.

Opportunities always look bigger going than coming.

Junk is something you've kept for years and throw away three weeks before you need it.

Experience is a wonderful thing – it enables you to recognise a mistake when you make it again.

By the time you can make ends meet, they move the ends.