

LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION – Kent Group

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

NEWSLETTER



Sarah Turner at Kingsdown on the White Cliffs Challenge. *Photo by Eric Rolfe*

Number 92



December 2013

www.ldwakent.org.uk/

Pictures taken on the White Cliffs Challenge in glorious sunshine on Sunday 8th September 2013



KENT GROUP SOCIAL WALKS DEC 2013 to APR 2014

Sun Dec 1 Christmas Lunch Preceded by a walk of c7ml, led by Neal O'Rourke, starting from London Beach Hotel at 9.30am. Walkers will be able to use the hotel's changing rooms on return. Lunch will be served at 1.30pm.

Sat Dec 7 Christmas Cruise around Calais c14ml. Meet 7.30am by P&O Desk, Dover Eastern Docks for 8.30am sailing (return 9pm local time - 8pm British time). Ring P&O reservations 08716 646464 for foot passenger day return. Don't forget your passport! Please ring Graham for confirmation of times. L: Graham Smith

Mon Dec 30 Post Christmas Sevenoaks Stroll c17 ml. meet 08.45 for 09.00 start at Shipbourne church on A227 GR TR592522 Map: Exp 147. Park in road opposite church. Lunch stop at Wetherspoons, Sevenoaks. L: Dave Sheldrake

Wed Jan 1 New Year in Sussex Again c23ml. Rye to Hastings & return. Meet 09.00 Rye rlwy stn c.p. (£1 charge) GR TQ919205 Map: Exp 125. Bring torch. Lunch stop at Hastings. L: Mike Pursey.

Fri Jan 10 Winter Night Walk c17ml. Meet 21.30 for 22.30 start at the Bell PH, Kemsing GR TQ556587 Map: Exp 147. Park 50yds away at village hall c.p. L: Dave Sheldrake.

Sun Jan 19 Invicta 100 Part 1: Sevenoaks to Linton 18ml. Meet 09.15 Sevenoaks rlwy stn. Linear route with bus options at finish to Maidstone or Staplehurst for train connections for return journey or contact leader for potential car share. First of a series of walks in celebration of Kent Group's 40th anniversary, a reminiscence of the 1992 event. Pub lunch stop. Maps: Exp 147,148. L: Peter Jull.

Sun Jan 26 AGM At Lenham Village Hall, preceded by a walk of c7ml. See newsletter item below for further details.

Sun Feb 2 Invicta 100 Part 2: Linton to Charing 21 ml. Meet at Staplehurst rlwy stn for 09.46 bus to Linton to commence walk from The Bull PH, Linton at 10.15. This provides best independent return route. Linear route finishing at Charing rlwy stn for return journey or contact leader for potential car share. In celebration of Kent Group's 40th anniversary, a reminiscence of the 1992 event. Pub lunch stop. Maps: Exp 148,137. L: Peter Jull.

Sun Feb 16 Invicta 100 Part 3: Charing to Cuxton 23 ml. Meet 09.00 at Charing rlwy stn. Linear route including high level crossing of River Medway finishing at Cuxton rlwy stn for return journey or contact leader for potential car share. In celebration of Kent Group's 40th anniversary, a reminiscence of the 1992 event. Pub lunch stop. Maps: Exp 137,148. L: Peter Jull.

Sat Feb 22 The Four Pits Walk c40ml. Meet 08.00 by the bridge over the River Stour at Fordwich GR TR179598 Maps: Exp 150,138. A circular walk taking the sites of the former Kent Pits of Chislet, Betteshanger, Tilmanstone and Snowdown (this is an Anytime Challenge and certificates are available for completions, and badges can be obtained for £2). Various stops en route. Likely to be a late finish so bring a torch (or more appropriately miner's lamp!). L: Graham Smith

Sun Mar 2 Invicta 100 Part 4: Cuxton to Dunton Green 18 ml. Meet 09.40 at Cuxton rlwy stn. Linear route finishing at Dunton Green rlwy stn for return journey or contact leader for potential car share. In celebration of Kent Group's 40th anniversary, a reminiscence of the 1992 event. Pub lunch stop. Maps: Exp 148,147. Part 5 will be covered by the Sevenoaks Circular challenge event. L: Peter Jull.

Sun Mar 9 Not Quite the W W Wander c29ml. Meet 08.00 at Lower Green Road, Pembury GR TQ624407 Maps: Exp 135,136. Bring lunch as pub stop at 21.5ml at Eridge Green. L: Neal O'Rourke.

Sun Mar 23 North Downs Way Loop, Part 1: Dover to Canterbury . c20ml. Meet 09.00 at Dover Priory rlwy stn GR TR314414 Map: Exp 138. Poss pub stop but bring lunch. Return by train. L: David Jones.

Sun Mar 30 Sevenoaks Circular Marshals' Walk For details contact Brian Buttifant..

Sun Apr 6 Ashford Circular c26ml. Meet for 08.30 start at Hothfield Common c.p. GR TQ970459 Map: Exp 137. Pub stop at Mersham, food available. L: Neal O'Rourke.

Sun Apr 13 The 4gotten Pits Walk 22.8 ml. Meet 9am Lydden Church GR: TR264457 Map: Exp 138. Limited parking at church; please leave front gate area clear. Parking near Bell/duck pond & walk up, 500m. Not the Four Pits anytime challenge but a route linking the four collieries that never achieved commercial production. They are Stonehall at Lydden, Guilford at Coldred, Hammill near Eastry and Wingham but the visual highlight will be Temple Ewell Nature Reserve. Pub lunch stop. L: Peter Jull.

Fri Apr 18 (Good Friday) A South Downs Loop. c26/20ml. Meet 09.00 in Eastbourne at western end of promenade (B2103) by South Downs Way marker post, GR TQ600972 Map: Exp 123. Park near school on left.. The 20ml is a circular route on the South Downs via Beachy Head, the Seven Sisters and the Cuckmere valley; return on the South Downs Way. The 26ml is the same but with the addition of Firle Beacon and Willingdon Hill. Lunch stop at Alfriston. Ls: (26ml) Graham Smith (20ml) Joy Davies.

Sun Apr 27 Sevenoaks Circular Main Event See Events Diary.

Fri May 2 Cinque Ports Challenge c100km. Meet 21.00 at Hastings rly stn GR TQ804094, Maps: Exp 124,125,138. An unsupported walk from Hastings to Sandwich, linking the Cinque Ports and associated towns. Finish at Sandwich rly stn. Includes night walking - bring warm clothing and torch. Several pubs and cafes along the route for refreshments. For more detail contact L: Graham Smith.

KENT GROUP COMMITTEE

Chairman - Brian Buttifant,

Secretary/newsletter editor - Graham Smith,

Treasurer - Neil Higham

Walks secretary - Mike Pursey

Membership secretary - Neil Higham

Webmaster - Michael Headley

Members

Phil Butler, Joy Davies, Stephanie le Men. 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.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE RUNNING (OR WALKING!) OF OUR GROUP

OUR AGM will be on Sunday January 26 and will again be held at Lenham Village Hall. Michael Headley will be leading a short walk before the meeting, as he has for the past two years, and a free meal will be provided for everyone attending. The walk will start at 10am, leaving lots of time for us all to socialise and enjoy our meal before the meeting, which will start at 2pm.

We want to know the views of you, our members. So please feel free to let committee members know how you feel about the group before, during or even after the AGM. Are our social walks too fast, or too slow? Or are they too long, or too short? Are there enough of them? What about our family dinner? Numbers were down this year, so should we hold it somewhere other than London Beach Hotel at Tenterden, where we have held it for the past six years? If you feel we should go elsewhere, please feel free to suggest an alternative venue. Would you like to see other social events for the group? We want to know your views, so please don't be shy about contacting us. Feel free to contact our secretary Graham Smith, whose details are above.

Nomination slips for the committee are with this newsletter.

NEWS OF KENT CHALLENGE WALKS

Sevenoaks Circular

The 2014 Sevenoaks Circular will be on Sunday April 27, and will again be based at Sevenoaks Rugby Club. The routes, which have proved very popular over the last three years, will be the same as this year - 30, 20 and 15 miles. The marshals' walk will be on Sunday March 30.

The Sevenoaks Circular will be much later in the year than we would like, as we usually hold the event in March. And unfortunately, this means an events clash with Sussex Group's South Downs Marathon, a clash we accept is likely to affect numbers of entries on both events. The clash was unavoidable, as the date of the Sevenoaks Circular could not be arranged until we got the fixture list from the rugby club, and April 27 was the only date which could be offered. Chairman and Sevenoaks Circular organiser Brian Buttifant has sent apologies to Sussex Group.

White Cliffs Challenge

Next year's White Cliffs Challenge will be on Sunday September 7, and will again be based at the excellent venue of St Margaret's Village Hall. There will be two routes - a longer one of 30-32 miles, and a shorter one of around 15 miles. As this newsletter went to press, we were planning to make a slight alteration to the longer route, by including the delightful Alkham Valley. The marshals' walk is likely to be on August 19. More details in the next newsletter.

KSS TRIPLE CHALLENGE

Following the huge success of the Sussex Stride in September - the event was fully subscribed - 2014 sees the return of the Surrey Tops in the Kent Surrey Sussex Triple Challenge of 50-mile walks. The Surrey Tops will be held over the weekend of September 20/21, and as usual, there will be a checkpoint manned by Kent Group. The marshals' walk will be over the weekend of August 20/21.

KENT GROUP 40th ANNIVERSARY

Anniversary barbecue

NEXT year we celebrate our 40th anniversary, and there's going to be a few things happening. The main events will be a social get-together at Roger Munn's farm at Staplehurst, and the return of the Wealden Waters 100k walk, which was our first challenge event.

The social get-together will be a barbecue (with a vegetarian option for non-meat eaters) on Sunday June 1. This will be preceded by a 4-5 mile walk which Roger has agreed to lead, and which will probably start at 11am. There is also going to be some post-meal entertainment, which we are hoping Merv Nutburn's group of Morris dancers will provide. We are hoping that lots of old and new members come to the social get-together, as it should be a wonderful occasion to talk about the 40 years of our group and meet people we haven't seen for some while. There will be no cost for the meal, but people are asked to bring drinks. Partners will be welcome. This 40th anniversary get-together will replace our usual post-100 meet. More details will appear in the next newsletter, but people interested in going are asked to contact secretary Graham Smith.

The return of the Wealden Waters

July 26-27 will see the return of the Wealden Waters, our first challenge walk, which was discontinued in 2003. There will be two distances - 100k and 40k (25 miles). The venue will be at the new sports pavilion at Hawkenbury, about 1.5 miles south of Tunbridge Wells (the pavilion is being built now, and we have been assured it will be completed early in the new year, well in time for our event). There will be seven checkpoints, and we are setting a limit of 150. There has already been keen interest in the return of the Wealden Waters from members from around the country, so we are likely to get a good

turnout. We are planning to have a special commemorative badge, as well as a certificate. Roger Dean and Keith Warman are working on the route description for the longer route, with Neal O'Rourke doing the route description for the shorter route.

SPECIAL 40th ANNIVERSARY NEWSLETTER

TO mark our big anniversary, secretary and newsletter editor Graham Smith is planning to make the April newsletter a special commemorative one. He would like to include as many stories and photographs from our 40 years as possible. And to do that he needs your help, particularly as he has only been a member himself since 1995. So please send Graham your memories of Kent Group of the LDWA - good and bad, funny and sad, or just downright quirky. Write about challenge walks, social walks, marshalling, social events - Graham promises to use everything (well, within reason!) in the special anniversary newsletter. Please send your memories as articles or just as anecdotes. They can be emailed, or for those without computers, they can be sent as typewritten sheets. Also please send photographs, ideally emailed or if not send prints and Graham can scan them in. The deadline for all these articles, anecdotes and photographs is the end of February. Graham looks forward to receiving them.

WHITE CLIFFS WALKING FESTIVAL

THERE is to be a White Cliffs Walking Festival next year.

This follows the huge success of Deal Walking Festival, held in August, with which some LDWA Kent Group members were involved. A total of 674 people came on the 24 walks of the festival, which featured a huge range of walks to suite all abilities and tastes. These ranged from a two-mile sunset photography walk to the 18-mile Three Pits Walk, which links three former mines in the Kent Coalfield: Tilmanstone, Snowdown and Betteshanger.

The Three Pits Walk, led by Graham Smith, was one of three LDWA walks on the programme. The others were a 14.5 mile stretch of Peter Jull's Timeball and Telegraph Trail which started from near Barham and went back to Deal, and a 10 mile evening walk from Walmer to Dover, where those on the walk witnessed a quite spectacular sunset as they approached Dover, before enjoying fish and chips at one of Dover's chippies.

Among those on the walks were Charlie Elphicke, the Conservative MP for Dover and Deal, who took part in a five mile walk from Walmer, and Clair Hawkins, Labour's parliamentary candidate for the constituency, who tackled the Three Pits Walk. Ms Hawkins - the granddaughter of a Kent miner - enjoyed the walk so much she has now joined The Ramblers. She has not yet joined the LDWA, but we're working on it!

Mr Elphicke said afterwards: "Walking is a healthy exercise which gets people into the open air, and the walking festival was a great way to promote the area."

Ms Hawkins congratulated the White Cliffs Ramblers on the festival, and said next year's expansion was particularly good news as the National Trust has named the White Cliffs one of the top walking routes in Britain.

Next year's White Cliffs Walking Festival will be held between August 21-27. It will be a major part of the White Cliffs Ramblers' 25th anniversary celebrations, and will also be a part of our own 40th anniversary celebrations. It is likely to include Graham's linear White Cliffs Walk, starting at Walmer and going along the entire length of White Cliffs between Kingsdown and Capel before ending at Folkestone and taking a train back. Graham is also likely to be repeating his Three Pits Walk (not to be confused with his 40-mile Four Pits Walk - see social walks programme above) and his evening walk to Dover, and we hope Peter Jull can be persuaded to put on a walk. The full walks programme will be produced for early next year.

THE TUNBRIDGE WELLS CIRCULAR by Brian Buttifant

IN September Roger Dean arranged a social walk around the 27.5 miles of the Tunbridge Wells Circular, devised by Kent member Mike Smith for the borough council to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the granting of the Royal Charter.

Five members met at Southborough Church. Roger led, carrying an injury which after five miles got worse, so he was forced to return. But he handed the walkers the guide book to follow the route. I am not able to walk the distance or keep up the social walks' pace myself these days, but when the walks are in the mid or west of the county, I can meet walkers at the pub. So Brenda and I were able to meet the walkers at The George pub in Frant* for a chat and a pint. An hour later the walkers were on their way through Eridge Park, and later Groombridge.

While in the area, Brenda and I decided to look up Celia and Ernie Bishop. Both looked well, but Celia was waiting for an operation and Ernie forgets a lot of the past. We hope that they will be able to come to our anniversary barbecue next June. As recorder of the TWC Anytime Walk, I would recommend members take up the anytime challenge. Since it was set up by Kent LDWA and the High Weald Project in 2001 249 people have gained a certificate.

*Interesting that there is a plaque over the doorway of the pub, saying Lt Col John By founded Bytown, which later became Canada's capital, Ottawa.

FOLKESTONE-RAMSGATE COASTAL ROUTE

An England Coast Path is becoming a reality as the next step has been made in proposals for a 59km coastal route from Folkestone and Ramsgate.

Natural England has now published its final proposals to improve public access along the stretch of seafront and landowners and occupiers can now make objections and the public can make representations on the proposals.

The comments will be taken into account by the Secretary of State when considering whether to approve the new stretch of access.

Jim Seymour, Natural England's area manager for Kent, said: "These proposals present a great opportunity to improve and enhance access to a wonderful stretch of Kent's coastline. We are excited about these improvements and look forward to seeing people's representations."

A spokesman for Natural England said: "If approved, this route will become part of the England Coast Path - the long distance walking route being developed around the entire English coast.

"It will traverse a stunning section of Kent's undulating coastline which goes from sea level at the Sandwich peninsula with its sweeping panoramic views, right up to 110 metres (350 feet) on top of Shakespeare Cliff and including the famous White

Cliffs of Dover.

“The route is the result of in-depth discussions with landowners, partners, stakeholders and members of the public. It is also designed to integrate with other major projects in the area such as the new flood banks along the River Stour near Sandwich. “Existing pathways, like the Saxon Shore Way, Stour Valley Walk, Thanet Coastal Path and the North Downs Way National Trail, are incorporated into the proposals where possible, with the aim of clarifying access rights to the less well-known areas of the Stour estuary and Sandwich peninsula.”

Copies of the England Coast Path report can be viewed in council offices and libraries along the coast between Folkestone and Ramsgate. The full report and all the forms and guidance on how to make a representation or an objection are also available on Natural England’s website.

WALK IN BELGIUM

GRAHAM Smith is trying to get a group of LDWA Kent Group members together for a 100k walk in Belgium on July 18-19 next year. The walk, which is held annually, is called Les Marcheurs de la Police de Binche. It follows a very pleasant circular route, and starts from Binche at 9pm on the Friday, finishing some time the following afternoon. The idea would be to either get the Eurostar train to Brussels, or perhaps to take a car and cross via the Shuttle or the ferry. We would stay in a hotel or hostel before returning. Challenge walks in Belgium are quite different to ours. There are no route descriptions, instead you follow the route by arrows. There are checkpoints, called controle, which sometimes have beer on offer. Anyway, if anyone is interested, they should please contact Graham.

CUMBRIA LDWA - JUST A FEW NOTES FROM THE NORTHERN OUTPOST by Paul and Mary Hatcher

Not much walking has been achieved this year due to our commitments to the local bowling club.

Both Mary and I did manage to help out on the “Three Rings of Shap” although Mary had to leave early as there was a ladies open bowling tournament that she was organiser for on the Sunday. Once the bowling season closed I led my ninth Time for Tea walk for the group, taking in the local Talkin and Simmerson fells and back to 4 Irthing Park for one of Mary’s cream teas.

We plan to come down to Kent for 10 days over Christmas, so may be able to meet up with some of you then. Unfortunately we shall not be down in time to attend the Christmas lunch but trust you have an enjoyable time and we will be with you in spirit.

For those of you that have not ventured to the northern outpost, June 2014 will be the 10th Three Rings of Shap and possibly the last in its present format. The organising team over the time the event has been going have decided to call it a day after that. There has also been some talk that the group could merge with Westmorland & North Lancs. and Morecambe Bay & Bowland to form one Lake District Group, but I think that is now less likely to happen.

Wishing you all the best for Christmas and good walking in 2014.



THE SOUTHERN UPLAND WAY - JILL'S STORY by Jill Green

On Wed. September 11 Jim and I went by train to Berwick on Tweed. We arrived in time for an evening walk. It was a joy to see a salmon leap out of the river. Then had a pleasant evening in the local Wetherspoons pub called the Leaping Salmon. Berwick is a fascinating old town. I found LS Lowry was fond of the town. He made lots of paintings. Next year there will

be an exhibition of these Berwick paintings. We stayed in the YHA, an old converted warehouse.

The next day we set off walking north into Scotland on the Berwickshire coast path - a beautiful coastline, blue sea, blue harebells, dark green butterflies. This coast path is well marked and easy to follow. Halfway we took the bus back to the hostel, the next day we bussed out and completed the coast walk. This was a very enjoyable couple of days. We saw Huttons unconformities in the rocks and we made a small detour to Fast Castle, dating from the XIV century.

It was Saturday the 14th when we started the Southern Upland Way. We had a 19 mile walk to Longformacus. The SU Way was a celebration for Graham. He had done it all 10 years ago with Mike Pursey. They went west to east, this is the normal way. Now we were going east to west. It was my last National Trail so I can claim my diamond certificate. Every walk Jim does is a celebration.

The B&B people at Longformacus were full of doom and gloom - a storm was coming, we would be in the teeth of a gale. Graham turned up at 8:30am. He had also walked from Berwick in his own way. He had spent a night in his tent in a churchyard. So we set out in head-on wind and rain. As we reached Lauder the sun came out, Graham headed off to his campsite and we went to a lovely welcoming B&B. I had suffered a bad nosebleed, some kind forestry men had given me lots of their toilet paper. Jim was worried that (just like Tony Hancock in the famous Blood Donor sketch) that I had lost an armful! I assured him I didn't have an empty arm or an empty anything. I had used up all my hankies and tissues plus all the toilet paper. Wendy, our landlady, came out to meet me with tissues. I discovered my waterproof wasn't so. I had tested it in Isle of Wight rain, the dry clothes in my bag were also wet in spite of all the wrappings. We soon got dried out with the airing cupboard and radiators, goodness knows how Graham got on with his wet things. We met up at 7pm and went out for a meal in a smart hotel. We didn't look too bad. Next stop Melrose, a short walk so Graham and Jim could go up the Eildon Hills. I went round the famous Melrose Abbey.

Then on to Traquair. It was colder now, woolly hat for me but fine views, especially of the three Eildon Hills. Jim kept looking back and saying: "I've been up those". We diverted to the summit of Minch Moor - wonderful views, it really needs a topograph. Graham went on to his camping ground, we put money on the Old Cheese Well, a tradition for a safe journey.

We met up the next day to walk to the beautiful St Mary's Loch. We stayed at the Tibbie Shields Inn. As we arrived we saw Graham putting up his little blue tent. Thursday the 19th - it was now a week since we set off from Berwick on this adventure. There is a statue at the loch to James Hogg. I really liked the poem on it. He was a prolific writer of stories, plays and verses but he remained a farmer all his life. He is known as the Ettrick Shepherd:

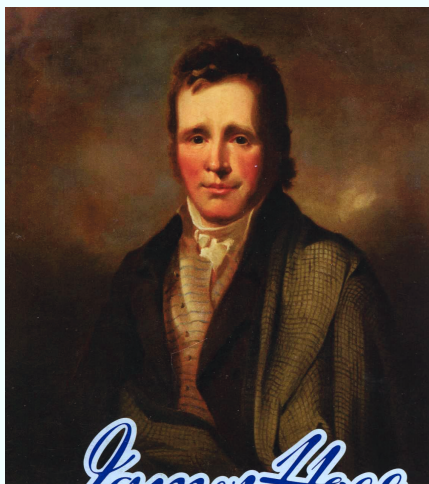
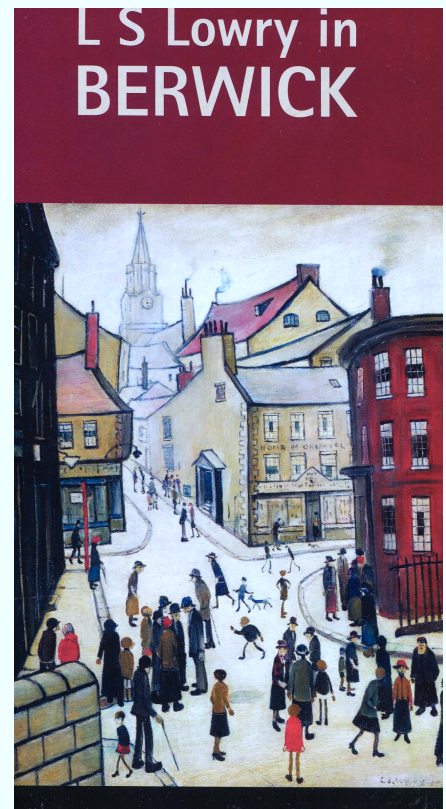
*At evening fall, in lonesome dale,
He kept strange converse with the gale;
Held worldly pomp in high derision
And wondered in world of vision.*

This rang a bell with me. We had left worldly things behind and were travelling in some wild weather with majestic beauty all about us.

So onto Beattock, while Graham camped slightly off route at Moffat. The following day was to Wanlockhead, I had arranged for Graham to camp on the grass at Emily Williamson's B&B. It was a hilly day, to say the least. I couldn't even lift Graham's pack, let alone lug it uphill. I had enough trouble with my bag that contained all I required for this journey. On our arrival no sign of the blue tent. We knew he was ahead of us. He had decided to have a B&B stop with us. He had already had a bath and was heading out to the pub where he enjoyed curried grouse while we had macaroni cheese with Emily. In the morning Jim and Graham went up more hills. I looked after the bags, we visited the lead mining museum before our walk to Sanquhar. This was a good day for me as the following day was 27 miles of difficult walking. It took us 12 hours. We arranged a packed breakfast as we didn't want to be walking in the dark. Good job we allowed time. We needed it because of the bogs and poor signage. Jim's Garmin was invaluable. Graham camped next to the pub. We were cosy, dry and warm in the pub. We did the same again the next day, crept away with our packed breakfast. As we walked along together, Jim and Graham decided they were tired, feet and backs hurting, so it would be silly to go up the mountain that was planned for the following day. I had booked a caravan for two nights especially for the walk up the Merrick. Tuesday

the 24th dawned, misty and damp. You couldn't see a thing and Graham had been up the mountain before. I decided to do washing as the campsite had a machine and dryer, and enjoy a local walk. Graham and Jim set off with small day bags. Just to go halfway, Graham said - well, of course they went all the way to the top in thick mist to be rewarded with a wonderful memorable picture to treasure in the mind's eye, with the tops of the hills popping out of a sea of clouds. Money can't buy that kind of thing.

We met very few people, however it was so nice to meet Alan Walker, LDWA Norfolk and Suffolk area. Like me, he was on his last National Trail. Lucky man had a small bag, he was being supported by his wife. The other person was Carol



James Hogg
Exhibition



Engle from the Calderdale group. She was doing hills. She had also been up the Merrick but not had the good fortune of any view. I saw a big caterpillar of the emperor moth, a lizard as well as frogs and toads. It's surprising, Scotland had many more moths than England.

The final two days were great walks, into New Luce then onto Portpatrick. We got a bus to Stranraer, had an Indian meal followed by a jolly evening in a pub with a band called the Elastic Band. We understood the songs but we didn't understand anything they said.

SOUTHERN UPLAND WAY REVISITED - GRAHAM'S STORY by Graham Smith

THE Southern Upland Way is a wonderful walk, the best National Trail I have ever walked. It's 212 miles and goes through a wide variety of scenery, much of it quite breathtaking. The Southern Uplands are quite underrated, as many people tend to drive through them en route to the Scottish Highlands without stopping. I walked the Southern Upland Way in 2003 with Mike Pursey, going west to east, from Portpatrick to Cockburnspath. I wanted to do it again this year to mark my 60th birthday (and you don't have to tell me, I know I don't look as old as 60. "Oh yes you do!" I can hear you all saying). I fancied going east to west, starting at Berwick and then making my own way to pick up the SUW. The reasons were A) to be different, B) there is very little at Cockburnspath and it's a pretty poor place to start or end a National Trail so I thought I would bypass it, and C) Berwick (although it's in England - at the moment, it's changed hands with Scotland over the centuries) is a very nice town, right on the East Coast railway line. Sadly Mike couldn't join me this year, but Jill Green and Jim Catchpole did. Below is a truncated version of the diary I kept during the walk.

September 13-14 - Berwick-Longformacus

I got the train to Berwick on the Friday afternoon, arriving in the early evening and camping at Ord House Country Park, just outside the town. After pitching my tent I walked a couple of miles to Spittal - right on the coast - so I could dip my shoes in the North Sea to signify the start of a coast to coast walk.

After a fairly cold night in the tent, I walked in glorious sunshine mainly along roads into Scotland, visiting Paxton (where I discovered Chariots of Fire Olympic gold medallist Eric Liddell came from) and Duns (where I saw the rugby team get beaten by North Berwick 36-19) before taking a welcome diversion from the roads to follow a good track which took me up Hardens Hill, with fine views, particularly south to the Cheviots, which looked magnificent. I needed somewhere to wild camp, and as I approached the village of Longformacus (where Jill and Jim were staying) I came across the churchyard - it was ideal, with soft ground to pitch my tent, and (of course!) nice and quiet.

September 15 - Longformacus-Lauder

After another cold night, I awoke to fierce winds, and I was able to pack up the tent before the forecast rain started. I met Jill and Jim at their B&B in Longformacus, and as we started walking from the village, the rain had become heavy and we were walking into a wind getting fiercer and fiercer by the minute. We just plodded on, past the twin cairns of Twin Law, but after that the rain eased, and the weather gradually improved, until by the time we got to Lauder, the sun was out and there was clear blue sky. Jill and Jim went to their B&B and I went to the camp site, the same one where I stayed with Mike 10 years ago. It was quite hard putting up the tent in the wind, but I did it in the end. It was good walking on undulating terrain, with good clear views.

September 16 - Lauder-Melrose

A relatively short and very straightforward 10.2 miles to the delightful town of Melrose, where we all stayed in a nice B&B in the town centre. It had been even colder the previous night, and my hands were numb as I was packing up my tent. We got to Melrose at 12.30, and in the afternoon Jim and I went up the Eildon Hills - three lovely small (about 1300 feet) hills, leaving Jill to explore Melrose Abbey. I had walked the Eildons three times before and they were, as always, excellent, offering extensive views. I was very pleasantly surprised to see a cairn on the north hill, the smallest of the three (when I've been up the Eildons on previous occasions, I've put a cairn on the north hill, only to find it had been knocked down when I next went up). The whole Eildons walk took less than two hours, and it was quite exhilarating.

September 17 - Melrose-Innerleithen

This was a very good day, the best of the walk so far. We set off just after 9, and the first few miles - along the Tweed again, then skirting Galashiels - were pleasant enough. We then got to Yair Bridge, and began the ascent which ended with the huge cairns of the Three Brethren. From then on it was just marvellous - fine views all around and good clear tracks to walk on. There were some climbs, but nothing too strenuous. Extensive views were with us all the way. I left my rucksack on the path while I went to the top of Minch Moor, which was quite spectacular. As Jill and Jim were staying at Traquair and I was heading for the camp site in Innerleithen, we decided to go our separate ways. I arrived just before 5pm.

September 18 - Innerleithen-St Mary's Loch

It was cold again in the night. I had hoped to wake up just after 7, but it was 7.30 before I was awake. I was moving just after 8.30. Jill and Jim had moved on, and I caught up with them after a couple of miles.

There was an initial climb, but after that it was nice steady walking on lovely rolling Southern Upland hills. We took a slight diversion to go up the medieval Dryhope Tower, before moving on to St Mary's Loch. It was an excellent walk around the loch, and I arrived at the Tibbie Shiels Inn just after 1.30, putting the tent up as Jill and Jim arrived.

September 19 - St Mary's Loch-Moffat

This certainly wasn't the easiest of days. We didn't leave the Tibbie Shiels Inn until gone 9am. It had just started to rain when I packed my gear, which meant I was carrying a wet tent. When we set off, it was raining, but not hard. We had a bit of a climb from St Mary's Loch, and then some lovely high level walking. The rain was a bit heavy, but I was still loving the walking. I strode on, leaving Jill and Jim. After coming down from the hillside, there was a fairly long stretch of road walking, which took me to the bothy at Over Phawhope. I had my lunch there, and Jill and Jim caught me up. We decided I would press on, as I was going to Moffat and they were going to Beattock. The route followed good forest tracks and hillside paths, which made for more pleasant going. As planned, I diverted from the Southern Upland Way on a minor road to the A708, which I followed to Moffat, arriving just after 4.30.

Although the sun didn't come out as I had been hoping, the rain did stop. Moffat is a very pleasant town, one of the first in Britain to get Walkers Are Welcome status. It's more than a mile off the SUW but it's certainly worth the detour.

September 20 - Moffat-Wanlockhead

This was a long, hard day, but ultimately a satisfying one. I set off from Moffat at about 8.15am, and the weather was still

overcast, with light drizzle. I caught up with Jill and Jim after the best part of an hour, and the first few miles were fine, on pretty good forest tracks. Then we went over some very boggy ground, made all the more difficult to walk over by yesterday's rain. On some parts, trees had fallen over the path, and it was hard to get any momentum. The parts going uphill were particularly hard, and quite strength-sapping.

I left Jill and Jim after one very boggy bit, but came a cropper route-wise when I got to the Daer Reservoir. I didn't know the SUW route had changed, and I followed a track which took me in a semi-circle to the other side of the reservoir. The sign said the SUW crossed the dam, and I just didn't believe it. I rang Jim, who had an up-to-date guide book, and he put me straight. I was pretty annoyed - with myself, as I should really have bought an up-to-date book instead of relying on the one I used 10 years ago.

We carried on along the track, and I was toying with the idea of following the road to Wanlockhead, to avoid humping my pack over the hills. But I decided to gird my loins and go over the hills, and I was so glad I did. I took all three hills - Comb Head, Cold Moss and Lowther Hill - steadily, doing 100 steps or 50 steps before stopping for breath. It was fabulous Scottish hillwalking - fantastic views on good paths. If I hadn't been carrying my pack, I would have loved it even more. I arrived just before 6pm, and was relieved to find that Emily Williamson had made the spare bedroom ready, anticipating that I might stay there (Jill had arranged that I would camp in the garden). I decided to opt for some luxury - it cost £25, but was worth every penny.

September 21 - Wanlockhead-Sanquhar

Wanlockhead is 1513 feet above sea level, and this morning the cloud was down - it stayed down all day - but Jim and I still went up Lowther Hill and Green Lowther. There were no views, of course, and the moisture made us both a bit wet. We then went back to the B&B, had a coffee and scone at the village café, and moved on. We only had 7.5-8 miles to do, but there were a couple of climbs in that short distance, and the low cloud restricted visibility. It was quite a nice walk, and the cloud did lift on the approach to Sanquhar. I arrived shortly after 3pm, staying in the same camp site by a garage where I stayed 10 years ago. The place seemed abandoned, so I put the tent up and got it dry. Also, the temperature was higher than it had been all week, so it was quite pleasant.

September 22 - Sanquhar-St John's Town of Dalry

At 27 miles, this was a long hard day, the hardest of the trip so far. I set off before 8am, and at first it was fine. I was making good progress, the temperature was higher than it had been, and the views were good. But the going was a bit boggy underfoot.

Then came the climbs, to Cairn Hill and Benbrack, which weren't too bad, certainly not too steep. The Southern Upland Way seemed to disappear before Benbrack, and I found myself on the wrong side of a barbed wire fence after going over a stile. I had to climb over the barbed wire fence to get back on the trail. But the views of the hills were brilliant.

Shortly after that I caught up with Jill and Jim, near the top of Manquhill Hill. We had about 10 miles to go, which proved pretty laborious - the SUW signposting was often bad (sometimes non-existent), and it was often boggy underfoot. Also the route was often fiddly, and there seemed nothing to indicate how close we were getting to St John's Town of Dalry. I was really feeling the weight of the pack, and I was getting pretty tired and annoyed. I eventually arrived at 6.30, put the tent up straightaway, and went to the pub.

September 23 - St John's Down of Dalry-Bargrennan.

This was another long day, when Jill, Jim and myself ended up in a caravan in the Loch Trool holiday village. I was thinking very seriously of not doing The Merrick (at 2766 feet, the highest hill in the Southern Uplands) the following day, as I wanted to get stuff dry and myself properly rested before the 19-mile-plus days on Wednesday and Thursday. I left just before 9am (Jill and Jim had left at 7.30), and the sky was a bit overcast. The route was much easier than yesterday's, more straightforward and certainly better signposted. I was making good steady progress, and finally caught up with Jill and Jim at Loch Dee. We decided to take the cycle path to Glen Trool village. That meant we had to take the road, which was a bit boring. My feet were getting a bit sore, and so were my shoulders from the pack. When we reached the visitor information centre, a very nice lady there offered to take Jill and my pack in her car to the holiday village. It was such a relief not to have to carry it. We arrived before 6, and it was very nice just to relax in the caravan, having had soup and bread (prepared by Jill) for our evening meal. My feet were very sore.

September 24 - The Merrick

The Merrick, and a great day. When I woke up, it seemed a bit overcast, and although I told Jill and Jim I was going to have a rest day, I didn't really believe it. I said, just after 9am, that I was going to have a go, and Jim decided to go with me. We set off at 9.30am. It was cloudy, and as we ascended The Merrick, we walked through the clouds - then we were suddenly above them. We were rewarded with one of the most spectacular views I have ever had in Scotland - looking down on nothing but clouds and a small area of forest. Absolutely stunning and the highlight of the whole trip.

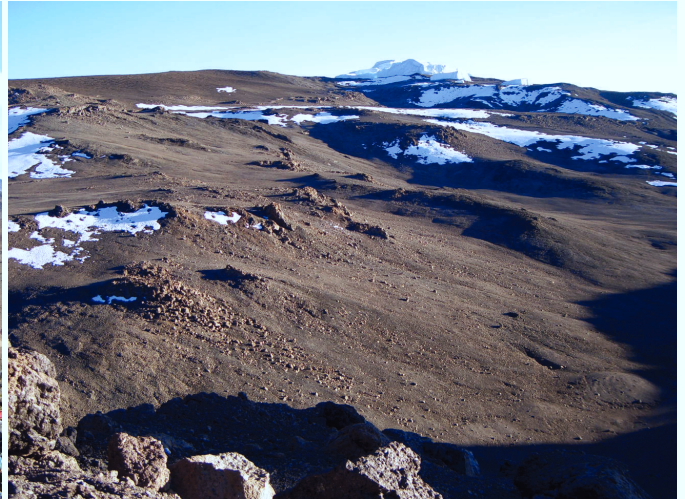
September 25 - Bargrennan-New Luce

We set off at about 8.15am, and the first few miles were quite hard, the going being quite boggy and again there were not enough SUW signs. We reached one point where all the trees had been chopped down, and with them the signs. There were just tree stumps, and as Jill said, it was quite dangerous. We then had a bit of forestry track, which was quite straightforward - the track was good, which enabled us to pick up speed. I went up Craig Airie Fell (Jill and Jim gave it a miss) and found the hill very enjoyable, certainly not too steep. And it was great to see the beehive bothy at Laggangarn, where Mike and I took refuge 10 years ago on a day of continual rain. We followed the tracks out of the forest, and we then had another dodgy section in terms of lack of signs. It was also a bit boggy, but generally not too bad, certainly nothing like as arduous as Sunday's walk. I got to the B&B at New Luce at about 4.20. It was very reasonably priced, at £30. All three of us certainly felt that some parts of the Southern Upland Way did need a bit of TLC, in terms of more signs and path clearing.

September 26 - New Luce-Portpatrick

That was the Southern Upland Way done again, in the way I had been planning since I did it 10 years ago. And we did have a very nice last day. We left New Luce at about 8.25am, and the first few miles were very pleasant - a nice woodland track which crossed the Water of Luce, and then the path by the loch at Castle Kennedy, where we had an elevenses stop. It was then more pleasant walking, on tracks and lanes, before a good path across Broad Moor. Then minor roads to the lighthouse at Killantringan Bay - and we were on the coast. It was then starting to rain slightly, which was a real shame. There then followed a very nice stretch of Scottish coast, and I dipped my toes in the Irish Sea at Maidenhead Bay, to signify that I had

walked from one coast of the country to the other. Then I rounded the coast to Portpatrick, which did seem a very nice place. We had a drink in a very nice pub before getting the bus for Stranraer.



KILIMANJARO - JULY 25 2013 by Geoff Thorpe

My son Richard, my walking partner Giles (now resident in Cyprus) and myself decided to do something different to celebrate my 70th birthday. The challenge would be to summit the peak of Kilimanjaro on July 25, my actual birthday. Only two tour companies could do this. We went with STA, the cheapest option.

I arrived in London on the evening of 18th to discover I'd left my malaria tablets behind. PANIC! Fortunately my son's girlfriend just happened to have a spare packet. We departed London City Airport at 6.30am. On to Amsterdam hub and then to the chaos of Nairobi International. It had about 36 shops selling the same bric-a-brac with no customers and two small cafes with a rugby scrum of passengers trying to get a drink. All flights departed via the same gate, so we joined the long queue. Then my first experience of a prop. aircraft. We flew to Kilimanjaro International Airport, arriving at 11pm, and despite all our concerns, our luggage actually arrived; but our taxi didn't! We waited for an hour then, waving dollars at the last remaining taxi, we were conveyed to our hotel at Moshi to arrive at 1am on the 20th. A long day!

The three of us now rested for two days with a few beers and studied the local way of life. On the 22nd we departed in a minibus to start our walk at the Marangu Gate. Entrance to the park is strictly controlled by rangers, assisted by armed guards. Our group comprised 10 walkers and 30 porters and guides. The first day was very enjoyable as we travelled through thick rainforest accompanied by occasional monkeys. The flora was spectacular with all the ferns and mosses. The accommodation that night at Mandara Hut was in communal log cabins with running water (the last we would see for four days). The cuisine was very basic, so a great way to lose weight!

Day 2 of the walk was again at a slowly, slowly pace to help us all acclimatize to the altitude changes. We soon left the forest behind us, travelling through heather and moorland at 3,000metres. At long last we had stunning views of the mountain in the distance, all covered in snow. We were now in a semi-arid zone which was quite a bit cooler than the 30 degrees at the start. The night was spent in log cabins at Horombo Hut at 3,700metres. Time passed quickly as our international group always had something to say.

Day 3 and the ascent into the foothills of Kilimanjaro. The flora finally thinned out and stopped at the desert-like alpine zone just over 4,000m. This saddle area of Kilimanjaro resembled walking through a lunar landscape. We were walking slower and slower now as the guides checked for signs of altitude sickness. The only thing everyone suffered from was a bit of diarrhoea but a tablet soon fixed that so we were all OK. We arrived to spend a few hours sleep at Kibo Hut 4,700m.

Day 4 and 16 hrs walking. Our group was awakened at midnight to start our final ascent to the summit up the frozen scree pathway to Gillman's Point at 5,861m. All LDWA training of night hiking with no sleep kicked in as an added bonus.

Unfortunately, the lack of oxygen had a bad effect upon me and I suffered from loss of balance, but we were apportioned one guide per two walkers, so I had a guide who kept picking me up every few paces. I was wearing too many clothes to

hurt myself when I fell, and, I understand, my son, a 6ft 3in rugby player, was pushing me from behind. Yes! We made it for the photo shoot at Gillman's. Now it was on walking the kilometre around the rim to the highest point, Uhuru Peak at 5,895m. The temperature was minus 8 and we were above the snow line with fantastic views over the crater and glaciers. It was higher than Everest base camp and approximately 20,000ft.

Day 4 continued. Descent was now back to Kibo hut and a few hours rest, but I was in trouble as my water bottle was frozen. I knocked ice off the top to drink a little. I don't like water at the best of times and found it very difficult to drink much and ended up dehydrated. This, added to my lack of balance, meant that the guides led me off the mountain arm in arm. When we got back to Kibo Hut, one of our party, a doctor, told me nobody in our party had suffered from altitude sickness. However, the reason why we had one guide per two walkers was that at that altitude everyone behaved half-cut because of the lack of oxygen to the brain.

Day 5. After an overnight sleep at Horombo Hut we all arrived back at the Marangu Gate. Because of our lack of altitude acclimatisation we all felt a bit strange and unwell, although at the same time we were all of course highly elated! My lady doctor friend informed me that these symptoms are age related. At my son's age, 27, you recover in about 48hrs, but at 70yrs it would take 3 - 4weeks. She was right! Why wasn't I told this in any of the literature?

End of journey. We all returned safely to our respective homes without any further mishaps or loss of luggage.

DIARY OF A COMMON MAN: THE CAMEL-TEIGN IVOR'S DREAM HUNDRED - May 25-27 2013

by Keith Warman

For the second year running, the Hundred was a linear route - this time being from Wadebridge, nearly on the Atlantic coast, to Teignmouth on the English Channel coast. Disused railway tracks took us onto Bodmin Moor and its highest point, Brown Willy (Cornwall's county top). From there, the route went east across open moorland, through sites of the region's great industrial archaeological past and over the rich pastoral farmland of East Cornwall. It then crossed the River Tamar into Devon to reach the breakfast stop in Tavistock. Next was a sharp ascent onto Dartmoor and the highest point on the route at Princetown. Open moorland led to Ashburton, from where typical Devonian paths, tracks and lanes meandered over the Haldon Ridge to finish on the coast at Teignmouth. The ascent and descent were each around 13,500 feet, spread fairly evenly throughout the distance.

The weather forecast was fine, with little chance of rain. I rather delighted in the prospect of travelling on foot 'from somewhere to somewhere else'.

Taking the marshals' and main events together, there were 21 starters from Kent Group. Fourteen (one on the marshals' walk and 13 on the main event) were fortunate enough to finish. My commiserations to those who had to retire and congratulations to all who completed the challenge. A special "well done" is due to Peter Jull, who finished his maiden Hundred.

At the start . . . sunshine greeted us at Wadebridge for the scrum at registration in the town hall. All too soon we were shepherded out, past bemused locals and motorists, to gather on the Jubilee Field beside the River Camel. This was the official start and the Wadebridge Town Band added to the atmosphere. After a few words from one of the organisers, the Mayor set us off at 9:30 am.

1 mile . . . The start took me by surprise, as I dodged 'twixt galligaskins and lycra looking for Bill Warbrick. A cheer went up and the swarm moved off - thus I found myself in the peloton but soon settled into my usual ambling pace. There was plenty of room along the Camel Trail for most to overtake me. Any self-respecting railway anorak worth his Thermos will tell you that this easy walking and cycling track is the former line between Wadebridge, Bodmin and Wenfordbridge; it was Cornwall's first standard gauge railway and opened in 1834. It was bought by the London & South Western Railway in 1846, despite being isolated from the rest of the railway network and over 200 miles from its new owner's system! Please concentrate - you might be tested on this later

3 miles . . . Bill caught me up and we chatted incessantly. He told me the latest news of his Lancastrian chum Willie Eckerslike. Bill soon left me shunting in the sidings as he moved swiftly on. This section was sheer delight, with dappled sunlight peeping through the trees and the gurgling River Camel close by.

5 miles . . . Walked into feverish activity at checkpoint 1, Dunmere Halt. 10:50 am. South Wales Group, including one lady beautifully dressed in national costume, ran an efficient operation here. Just as I was about to leave, in steamed chums from previous campaigns - Mark and Joanna Bertoni, Tony 'Bustling Brummie' Francis, Matt Clarke, Mark Van Schalckwyk and Angela and Tony Walton. The banter was first-rate although I received a ticking-off from said Brummie for not being in my usual place at the back of the field!

8 miles . . . On towards checkpoint 2 at Blisland. Another five miles of easy-going up the Camel Trail. I had enough water in my humps to last for two weeks, but hoped to arrive in Teignmouth before then. Strolled through sylvan bluebell glades with Paul Bobby and Carleton Mayer - the latter told me that he was on his first Hundred and lived right on the route at North Hill (a future checkpoint).

12 miles . . . A manned clipper point saw me come off the rails of the Camel Trail and head through rich pastures to the beautiful church at Blisland. Checkpoint 2, run by Surrey and London Groups, was in the village hall. 12:58 pm. Several folk were tending their feet - a little worrying at this relatively early stage.

15 miles . . . A gradual climb with complex navigation among open shrubland, isolated farms and old quarries to the village of St. Brevard. A cooling breeze kept me company.

17 miles . . . After the first self-clipper point, step stiles over lichen-clad granite walls led to the first stretch of open moorland, at the western edge of Bodmin Moor. Lumps of granite claimed squatters' rights in the grass. With a few light flurries of drizzle behind me, I lurched into the warm welcome of Beds, Bucks & Northants Group at checkpoint 3 in the isolated hamlet of Candra Farm. 2:48 pm. A kind householder had laid on a hosepipe of fresh water from his spring - luckily, it did not stop the flow! A brief natter with Norman Corrin about football before he sent me off to climb Brown Willy.

19 miles . . . A superb stretch of grassy moorland. Skylarks were singing the Cornish national anthem and a distant cuckoo provided the descant. With cotton-wool clouds drifting overhead, this was wonderful, but the daunting silhouette of the Brown Willy ridge kept my loins girded (not a pretty sight)

21 miles . . . At last! Steady climbing in gusty conditions took me along the rocky ridge to just below the summit and trig

point of Brown Willy at 1,378 feet. The 360° view was tremendous. The clipper point here was manned by members of the Duddon and Furness Mountain Rescue Team. Caught up and passed Bill Warbrick.

22 miles . . . Straightforward moorland crossing. I had to look down at my feet to check that I wasn't travelling in reverse when I was washed aside by the tsunami of Wendy Thurrell and Andrew Boulden. By the time I'd said, "Hello", they had disappeared over the horizon.

23 miles . . . Opposite The Jamaica Inn at Bolventor, I smuggled my way into checkpoint 4 at the village hall. 5:14 pm. A snug atmosphere and Bristol & West and Wiltshire Groups were doing a sterling job dispensing illicit contraband. I plundered some hidden booty, swigged on duty-free liquor and, under the cover of shadows, I slipped silently away.

25 miles . . . A lonely farm and more sunken tracks led to a steady climb to a radio mast. I passed through the strangely named Halvana Plantation and, at its end, a gate opened onto miles of moorland. Following a bearing for one mile (the organisers had planted helpful flags to aid our crossing), I cantered up to the "Grey Mare Rock". Most of the lumps around were coloured grey and made of rock, but I think I found the equine one. This was just wonderful in the early evening sunshine and even better when I caught up another of my chums from previous Hundred campaigns, The Great Tim Glenn.

29 miles . . . A priceless moment. Tim and I came to a hamlet where a lady walker was sitting on the grass verge with one shoe and sock off, soulfully examining her foot. A local man was strimming in his garden opposite. He came across to ask her what was going on and enquired whether she needed any help. Just 30 yards in front of us was this surreal vision of a lonely lady cursing her foot problem and a man standing beside her with an industrial petrol-driven strimmer strapped to a shoulder harness, wearing a safety hat, ear defenders and visor. Tim said to me, "I know blisters can be painful, but that's a bit extreme!"

30 miles . . . Hove into checkpoint 5 in North Hill Village Hall, very efficiently run by Essex & Herts Group. I had previously told marshals Dave and Sue Wingrove that I was looking forward to a nice cup of tea upon my arrival at approximately 9:13 pm. Somewhat embarrassed, I presented myself to their oasis at 7:32 pm. "What time do you call this, Warman?" screeched Dave. My second ticking-off in the day - blooming heck.

32 miles . . . Darkness loomed during a stiff climb onto the eastern fringes of Bodmin Moor. Found the old mineral tramway around the strangely named Twelve Men's Moor, then off on a bearing (aided by flagging again) across tussocky grassland to Sharp Tor. Here, hidden in the rocks, were Angela and Tony Walton, donning their headtorches. They hail from Arddleen near Llanymynech which, I am reliably informed, is in Wales. We were to walk together to the finish and what wonderful company they proved to be.

35 miles . . . Anoraks alert! In eerie calmness, we chuffed along another old mineral railway, this one being the Liskeard and Caradon Railway. It closed in 1916, but the sleepers (granite blocks) were still there and we relished striding along these remnants of history.

37 miles . . . We rounded the shoulder of the shapely Stowe's Hill, then passed through Minions, Cornwall's highest village. The sign on the post office wall read, "Open most hours for most things". A slog up and over Caradon Hill took us down to the ancient mining town of Pensilva and checkpoint 6, run by Wessex Group, in the primary school. 10:53 pm.

40 miles . . . Narrow lanes, ancient tracks and plush pastureland led us to Scrawsdon Farm. Our mute threesome crept stealthily through, trying not to disturb the animals. It was here that, on the marshals' walk, Ken Falconer had had an unexpected altercation with a free-range territorial turkey, but there was to be no fowl play this night.

44 miles . . . Good grief - streetlights! We ambled into a sleeping Callington and made for the tradesmen's entrance to the luxurious bowls club and checkpoint 7. It was 1:45 am and friendly faces from Kent Group in familiar red T-shirts looked after our needs. My Welsh chums and I, look you, left in good spirits.

46 miles . . . A purposeful climb led to the summit of Kit Hill, with its monumental folly. The lights of Plymouth were visible several miles to the south. Kit Hill was once the scene of great mining activity and, anoraks please take note, a steep inclined plane (upon which we descended) once took minerals on rails to the Callington branch railway several hundred feet below us. The night was calm and balmy with a full moon in the clear starry sky. Perfect.

48 miles . . . More descent to checkpoint 8, manned by Dorset Group, tucked away in the cosy Men's Institute at Luckett. This must have been used by miners of yore, but why were the ladies not invited? We downed our picks and signed on at 4:11 am. I felt very sleepy so insisted that the Waltons did not wait for me. Hopefully, I would catch them up later. On cue, I reserved a tight space under the baulk end of the snooker table, managed to chalk up 38 winks, then left refreshed at about 5:15 am.

50 miles . . . Wow - halfway! I passed (again) Bill Warbrick in the Tamar Valley and the low mist shrouding the river was a beautiful and haunting sight. Crossing the river on the ancient bridge at Horsebridge, I stepped into Devon.

53 miles . . . Walked with George Foot for a while. Good tracks through the fascinating Blanchdown Wood, which was the site of abandoned mineral mines. A long road section was somewhat tedious and I struggled to keep awake, but the thought of meeting Shirlie for the first time and - hopefully - catching up the Waltons spurred me on.

55 miles . . . On the outskirts of Tavistock, I joined the trackbed of another former railway, this time the Southern Railway's main line between Exeter and Plymouth. The going was easy and included crossing two magnificent stone viaducts above the sleeping town.

57 miles . . . Thrilled to be met by a radiant Shirlie, who guided me through the leafy grounds of Kelly College Preparatory School in Tavistock. This was checkpoint 9 and our breakfast and baggage stop - my arrival time of 8:16 am was the nearest I've been to breakfast for many years. Cramped into the men's tiny changing room, there were just three bowls provided for washing feet, and about ten pairs of feet waiting to use them. In sheer frustration, the man opposite me yelled out, "For f...s sake, how much does a couple of plastic bowls cost in Poundland?" In an instant, the ever-helpful Tim Glenn replied, "Er...about two pounds." You cannot fault his maths. Went into the canteen for breakfast and found the Waltons chewing Welshcakes. I was delighted to learn that they would wait for me. Suitably refreshed, our jolly threesome left in bright sunshine.

59 miles . . . This stage was the longest (9.5 miles) and had the most ascent (1,635 feet) on the route. We strode across a golf course, up sunken enclosed paths and across sheep cropped moorland. Clumps of yellow gorse broke up the views. The heat was taking its toll and I was struggling to keep up with my Welsh chums.

62 miles . . . Shortly after the pretty village of Sampford Spiney, we crossed the aptly named River Walkham at Ward Bridge. The never-ending, thigh-straining climb which followed saw Angela and Tony pull away. I hoped they'd wait for

me at the next checkpoint (they did).

64 miles . . . An impromptu drinks stop was never more welcome, but we were rationed to help preserve the supplies. Plodded up to join the trackbed of another old railway line, which we followed on a contour-hugging ascent to Princetown. The heat reflecting from the sharp granite ballast was intense, but at least the climbing was more gradual. Noticed the Waltons chugging along a few minutes ahead.

67 miles . . . Met Shirlie again at Princetown and checkpoint 10, manned by South Pennine Group, in the primary school. 12:56 pm. Relieved to escape from the sun for a while and at having conquered that section. Pleased to see Martin Lawson in attendance here (he did the marshals' walk) and we swapped tales.

68 miles . . . Felt great as our trio set off to seek a self-clipper by a leat (watercourse). The bleak, grey granite walls of Dartmoor Prison across the fields were spine-tingling and I vowed to keep up with the Waltons to avoid further spells in solitary confinement.

72 miles . . . Good progress on a splendid moorland crossing which, with some regret, we left to enter the 'picture postcard' side of Dartmoor. Shirlie met us by a magnificent stone bridge over the sparkling West Dart River and we followed her to checkpoint 11 in an ancient stone 'shippen' (cow-shed) at Huccaby Farm. This was manned by North Yorkshire Group and The Tartan Team. 3:22 pm. A lovely relaxed atmosphere oozed succour.

74 miles . . . Revitalised, we set off in good cheer. Nine miles to the next checkpoint. The descent to Dartmeet, and the crossing of the East Dart River close to a clapper bridge were an easy treat. The stiff climb up the road out of the valley was less so and narrow paths meandering through gorse, ferns and wind-bent trees took us to another drinks point.

76 miles . . . We skirted Mel Tor to join the wonderful Dr. Blackhall's Drive - a long, stony track (built in the 1880s) above the thickly wooded Dart valley.

79 miles . . . At our third drinks point, Angela and Tony pushed on downhill through the delightful, serene River Dart Country Park. I followed alone for a while but soon re-joined them in the car park beside the river.

81 miles . . . We dropped down into Ashburton and Staffordshire Group's 'heavenly' (it was upstairs) checkpoint 12 in the Methodist Church Hall. 7:23 pm. Sadly this year, the refreshments did not include Staffordshire oatcakes. I sank into a deep sofa and promptly fell asleep for ten minutes. It would be dark before the end of the next section so we donned our night-time gear and bade Shirlie farewell.

84 miles . . . On a glorious spring evening, we made our way along verdant paths and lanes to the lonely hamlet of Sigford. Somewhat trickier navigation through more woodlands. Do concentrate, Warman

86 miles . . . As darkness descended, we climbed a steep track to the viewpoint of Ramshorn Down. The night was starlit and Newton Abbot twinkled below. Intricate route-finding through woods with paths in all directions. We passed many walkers with torches also pointing in all directions. Oh dear.

88 miles . . . With relief, we arrived safely at checkpoint 13, run by Teignbridge Scouts in marquees at Liverton. 11:08 pm. Shirlie met us again and we were efficiently attended to by her and the marshals. Our spirits were high as I knew the navigation was easier for the final 13 miles.

90 miles . . . Just after Heathfield, we came across a very wet bridleway, seemingly fed by springs. We joined the end of a line of about a dozen walkers and were invited by marshals to be led along a drier path. How kind. We threaded our way along narrow paths, through mud and chuntered across corrugated tin sheets especially placed for us. It must have been deafening for the adders sheltering underneath

92 miles . . . We slithered across spongy heathland to checkpoint 14 in the village hall at Chudleigh Knighton, run by The Irregulars. 0:56 am. Another bizarre moment. While enjoying a rest and refreshments, I was reluctantly drawn into deep conversation by a walker sitting opposite me. He wondered whether studies had been done to ascertain why folk join the LDWA. Was it to enter the Hundred? He then asked me if I was going to be at the finish. Caught a little off-guard, I said, "Er...that's the plan - why do you ask?" Excitedly, he replied, "Because this is a most interesting topic and, if you were going to be at the end, we can continue this conversation there!" Helpfully, one of his companions intervened, "Of course he's going to be at the finish - he's on the walk." The Waltons were amused

95 miles . . . Slipping the bonds of reality, my hallucinations started late this year. On a long lane section, I was struggling to stay awake and was convinced that the lights ahead of us were torches on tall poles. At a gathering around a self-clipper, I slowly realised the lights were from our torches shining on the reflective patches worn by those folk in front of us.

97 miles . . . A sunken lane took us to checkpoint 15 at Larcombe Farm, Ideford, run by Julian Pursey and family. 3:35 am. Unfortunately, the promise of a barn had not materialised and the marshals were doing a sterling job under gazebos at the farmyard entrance.

99 miles . . . The final miles took us over the Haldon Ridge and the stony climb of 768 feet seemed never-ending. Ah, the top at last! We sliced our way across a golf course and it was all downhill to Teignmouth.

101 miles . . . Our first sighting of the English Channel and we sailed past some slower groups to be met by a beaming Shirlie near the finish. She guided us into the grounds of Teignmouth Community School and, to a wonderful welcome, we arrived at 5:26 am. I was very fortunate to have had Angela's and Tony's company and we thanked and congratulated each other. Shirlie and I saw all the other finishers arrive and the atmosphere was genuinely heart-warming. The final finisher, Tony 'Bustling Brummie' Francis, came in just 15 minutes inside the time limit in 47 hours and 45 minutes, telling us that he was bitterly disappointed with his time. "I'm 10 minutes early," he quipped.

Sincere thanks go to Cornwall & Devon Group, all marshals, helpers and friends for this splendid Hundred. Finally, I thank Shirlie for her encouragement in enabling me to take part in these quirky capers.

HORRENDOUS HUNDREDS IN 2012 PART 2: THE WOW by Don Newman

I WAS wrecked after my 47 hour limp on the Games 100. Luckily I had no work that week, and could become a full-time couch potato, watching endless hours of French Open tennis on TV. The doctor examined my foot, and sent me for an X-ray. By the time the results came back, three weeks later, my foot had returned to normal size with no pain.

I needed to prepare for my next Hundred, the Wenlock Olympian Way (WOW), in just four weeks time. I needed to get out and walk. The ideal opportunity presented itself at the Guildford Walking Festival, with a walk organized by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA). We set off from Guildford along the North Downs Way, and arrived at a micro-brewery at an old farm. They brew four different beers, and we sampled them all before staggering down into Shere. Here there were two

more pubs, and another two at Gomshall ended the day happily. Nine miles walked, and probably as many pints consumed. Well, that was the training done, so what next? How about a recce?

Jane and I travelled up to Shropshire on the weekend before the event. Unfortunately half the county, and lots of the route, were under water. Heavy rain continued to fall, and we were reduced to driving around, hardly leaving the car, just checking points where the route crossed roads. At Church Stretton, a main checkpoint on the event, the route was impassable due to the raging river and deeply flooded fields. I noted some possible diversions, and just hoped that the weather would improve, and the floods subside, before next week. We had an enjoyable weekend, and visited some fine pubs, but I had an uneasy feeling that the main purpose of the weekend, the recce, hadn't really been achieved.

Next Friday I stayed in a local hotel, and contemplated the coming event. It was to be an unusual event in several respects. Instead of a formal route description there was a list of grid references with instructions on what to do at each one. The route was a figure of eight, with the start, 50-mile checkpoint, and the finish all in Much Wenlock. There were only two other main checkpoints, at the 25 and 75 mile points, with drinks stations in between at 12-mile intervals, i.e. a lot less support than on usual LDWA Hundreds. There was also a 40-hour time limit, instead of the usual 48 hour one. I was not overly concerned about any of these factors, nor about my recent lack of recent events or suitable training or recce. I was just happy to be walking without pain again. In the final analysis I'd completed every event I'd ever started, including 30 Hundreds (OK Keith, I know that's 27 'official' and 3 'extra'). I couldn't imagine failing to complete this one.

After a briefing from a jovial Roger Michel, we were soon speeding up and down some of Shropshire's finest hills. The weather was kind at first, and the flood waters had receded. Only the muddy residue delayed our progress. There were some 200 participants, of which 92 had opted for the 100-mile route, and the rest for the 50-mile alternative. I hesitated over the instructions several times, but in daylight and with other walkers in sight, it was easy enough to stay on track.

Apart from the mud, I enjoyed the first morning, but by the afternoon it was sunny and uncomfortably hot. Late in the day, a happy group of lady runners caught me up, and slowed to navigate carefully on a tricky section. I was soon enthralled by them with tales from my Hundreds repertoire. The talking stopped abruptly when I tripped on a root on a steep, muddy, overgrown slope. I dived head first down the slope. Attempting to right myself, even with arms fully extended in the press-up position, my head was still in nettles, and my feet tangled in brambles. My new friends started to pull me up. Not a good time to get cramp in both legs, but I did. I eventually regained a more dignified upright posture. My helpers wished me luck, waved goodbye, and sped off. Obviously listening to my stories was one thing, but they didn't relish having to pick me up and carry me!

I caught up with a less welcome group soon after. A bunch of 'lemmings' all chatting happily together, making no attempt to navigate, just following the guy in front, as if on a social walk. Such groups are difficult to overtake, as they all queue up to negotiate stiles and gates. However, I had a cunning plan. A route amendment had warned of a bridge being washed away, and had detailed a longer diversion. Roger had updated the situation, saying that the waters had receded, and the stream was now crossable by stepping stones. The lemmings were heading for the diversion. I headed along the original route in the gathering darkness. At the stream there were indeed some nice flat stepping stones. However, the nearest 'stone' was actually a very round log on its side. I could see no way that I could step from the bank onto the log without ending up in knee-deep water. Others had already tried and failed. The bank was like a scene from a wildlife film, where muddy hoof prints marked the demise of zebras dragged in by crocodiles. Not encouraging. I shone my torch along the bank, and there was the upturned bridge, complete with muddy footprints where other walkers had crossed.

I suppose that, festooned as I was with a pack, walking pole, route notes and map, and a torch, something was bound to give. As I scrambled up onto the upturned bridge, my torch tumbled into the muddy water, leaving me in the dark. Never mind, I had another torch in a handy pocket, so vision was soon restored. The first torch blinked mockingly at me from the muddy depths. I reached down with my pole and scooped it up. It refused to obey instructions, and was in fact still blinking at me when I got home two days later!

I scrambled off the bridge and onto the far bank without further mishap. Annoyingly the lemmings were long gone. I strode on alone into the night, hindered occasionally by some very ambiguous written instructions. Twice I was obliged to wait for someone to catch me up and offer a second opinion on which way to go. I reached Much Wenlock and the 50-mile checkpoint just before 3am.

I could not believe the scene in the hall. Numerous LDWA superstars were relaxing, having opted to switch, quite legitimately, to the 50-mile route. One day of muddy slithering in the hot sun was enough for them, and they opted to go no further, despite my good-natured attempts to wind them up. Of the original 92 Hundred entrants, 10 had retired before the 50-mile point, and another 50 opted out. This left just 32 actually continuing on the second 50-mile loop. Of course, I am too stubborn to opt out, so after a change of clothes and sustaining food and drink, I set out again into the night. I was two hours behind my schedule, but with the potentially easier half of the route to do, and with half the 40 hours still available, my confidence was still high.

I was joined by Martin Lawson as I left the hall, and he proved to be good company throughout the day. Dawn broke as we descended to the banks of the Severn. Leaving the built-up area, the route instructions then stated 'if the path is flooded continue on the cycle track'. The path wasn't flooded, so we stayed on the riverbank. I heard later that wiser walkers and runners had opted for the firm surface of the cycle track, and had sped down to Bridgenorth. Our path was clear at first, but then deteriorated into a narrow quagmire, with the fast-flowing Severn on one side, and a steep bank and barbed wire fence on the other. We eventually reached the Bridgenorth checkpoint, just an hour inside the cut-off time.

At that stage we were still confident. I knew from my brief recce that the geology changes as the route leaves the river bank, and there would be no more mud. Unfortunately it was getting hotter, much hotter. On a section of open fields, we strayed off route. After our detour we had to jog to get into the next checkpoint just before the cut-off time. The friendly checkpoint marshals were relaxed about our brinkmanship, but I was not. For the second time in two months I was facing a possible failure to complete an event. Did this matter? Oh yes! I have always found my 100% record very motivating, and I was desperate to retain it. My record goes back nearly 30 years, and I don't know many other walkers who can match it. Super-septuagenarian Jill Green has a better record, and the young upstart Andrew Boulden is trying hard to catch us up, but there aren't many others in our league.

As the afternoon wore on it got hotter, and Martin and I got slower. At Ironbridge, again on the banks of the Severn, we stopped for a cold sports drink, and assessed our situation. I reckoned that if we could reach the next checkpoint (88 miles)

within half an hour of the cut-off time, surely the sympathetic marshals would let us continue? We trudged on through Ironbridge, climbed a thousand steps, cruised down to into the next valley and up again on a steep track. By this time we were hardly moving.

We arrived at the checkpoint an hour and a quarter outside the closing time. A sympathetic marshal greeted us 'Gentlemen, for you the walk is over'. OK those weren't his exact words, but for me they were just as dramatic. My long proud record of successful completions, more than 300 events, was indeed over. I slumped against a wire fence, shattered and very unhappy. I phoned home for some sympathy.

Back at Much Wenlock I sat quietly, oblivious to the cheerful chat of others who had finished the event. Tara consoled me with the thought that I'd only been retired, and hadn't given up, so my record still stood. Just 25 of the original 92 entrants had gone the distance within the time, surely the greatest 'casualty rate' on any Hundred?

This year has been far less traumatic. I breezed round the Camel Teign 100, in perfect conditions and with an excellent route description, in 37 hours. I've also returned to the scene of my demise, and completed the WOW 50. There are two more 50s, and then another WOW 100 in 2016. By that time I may be a bit slower, but I will have memorized the route. Hopefully there will also be a more generous time limit. Whatever, I will be there!

COMEDY CORNER: PUNS FOR EDUCATED MINDS - with Neal O'Rourke

How does Moses make his tea? Hebrews it....

Venison for dinner again? Oh deer!

A cartoonist was found dead in his home. Details are sketchy.

I used to be a banker, but then I lost interest.

Haunted French pancakes give me the crepes.

England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.

I tried to catch some fog, but I mist.

They told me I had type-A blood, but it was a Type-O.

I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.

Jokes about German sausages are the wurst.

I know a guy who's addicted to brake fluid, but he says he can stop any time.

I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.

This girl said she recognised me from the vegetarian club, but I'd never met herbivore.

When chemists die, apparently they barium.

I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.

I did a theatrical performance about puns. It was a play on words.

I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.

Did you hear about the cross-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?

When you get a bladder infection you know urine trouble.

Broken pencils are pretty much pointless.

What do you call a dinosaur with an extensive vocabulary? A thesaurus.

I dropped out of the Communism class because of lousy Marx.

I got a job at a bakery because I kneaded dough.

Velcro - what a rip off!

COMEDY CORNER - with Ivan Waghorn

A group of chaps all aged 40 discussed where they should meet for lunch.

Finally it was agreed they would meet at Wetherspoons in Sevenoaks because the waitresses had big busts and wore mini-skirts.

Ten years later at age 50 the friends once again discussed where they should meet for lunch.

Finally it was agreed that they would meet at Wetherspoons in Sevenoaks because the food and service was good and the beer was excellent.

Ten years later at age 60 the friends again discussed where they should meet for lunch.

Finally it was agreed they would meet at Wetherspoons in Sevenoaks because they could dine in peace and quiet and it was good value for money.

Ten years later at 70 the friends discussed where they should meet for lunch.

Finally it was agreed they would meet at Wetherspoons in Sevenoaks because the restaurant was wheelchair accessible and had a toilet for the disabled.

Ten years later at age 80 the friends discussed where they should meet for lunch.

Finally it was agreed that they would meet at Wetherspoons in Sevenoaks because they had never been there before.

CROSSWORD Compiled by Shirley Higgins

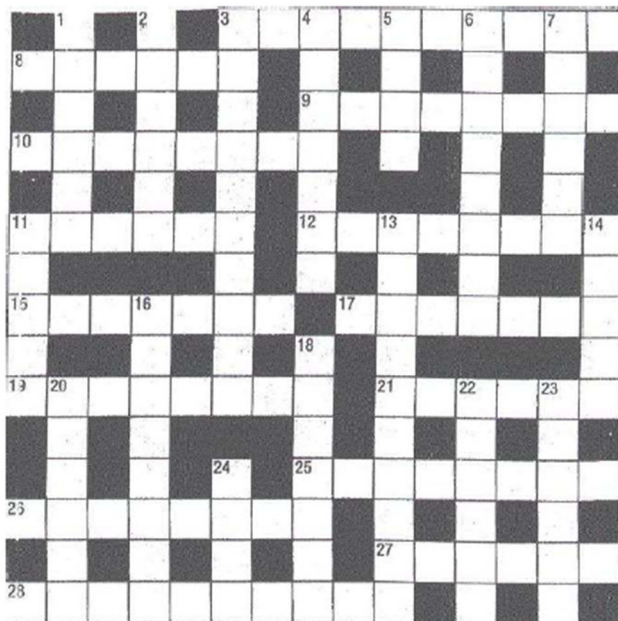
ACROSS

3. Sinking bus turns back at crazy ID scene (10).
8. Out of this after a walk (?) The bar could be the answer (6).
9. Business for river at the start of the rich year (8).
10. Computer network in bird and French (8).
11. Chucked royal seat we hear (6).
12. Obscure cover (8).
15. Unusual SE grant is weird (7).
17. Tearing up hard rock (7).
19. Way in to cast a spell (8).
21. Adjust to the east (6).
25. Secret place to conceal a footpath? (8).
26. Bestride with a leg on each side (8).
27. German song, untruth to the Queen (6).
28. Seaside town for people strangely seen to (10).

DOWN

1. Draw bird on church (6).
2. Look at centre of abbots summerhouse (6).
3. Underhand dealing and trickery (10).
4. Birth is confused to describe someone living here (7).
5. Indian seen in window (4).
6. Direction to college official in Sussex (4, 4).
7. Looking after vehicle in garage initially (6).
11. Flavour could be acquired (5).
13. Come to life on valley? (4, 2, 4).
14. Make an effort to be strenuous (5).

The winner of the August crossword was Shirlye Gill.



16. A stroll in the sunshine. No pub stop? (1, 3, 4).
18. Tiny brave girl, we point to her at circle (3, 4).
20. Up against and adjacent (4, 2).
22. I'm a long time seeing likenesses (6).
23. Consumed after end of run, tidy up (6).
24. Uneven, things seen with ends perhaps (4).

THE LAST WORD - FROM THE EDITOR

WELL, we are coming to the end of the year, and it's been another very good one for Kent Group of the LDWA. Once again we have organised three very successful challenge walks (and I still feel cold just thinking about the icy conditions when I was marshalling on the Sevenoaks Circular in March!), we've held a wide and varied selection of social walks, a few of us either took part in or walked the Camel Teign 100 in May, and we've welcomed a few new members into the group.

Next year promises to be an even better year for us, as we mark our 40th anniversary. We've got the return of the Wealden Waters 100k walk (with a 40k option) in July, with Roger Dean, Keith Warman and Neal O'Rourke currently working on the routes. I only did one Wealden Waters, the last one we put on in 2003 before we decided to discontinue the event. I thoroughly enjoyed the walk, so I'm really looking forward to it. We've also got our 40th anniversary barbecue in June, which Roger Munn has kindly offered to host at his farm in Staplehurst. And we've also got lots of 40th anniversary themed social walks, notably the routes of the Millennium Hundred and the Invicta Hundred, which Peter Jull has planned for us. No doubt a few of us will be going over to Wales to either take part in or marshal on The Valleys 100. Having taken part in the marshals' walks on the last two Hundreds, I've entered the event next year. I haven't done too much walking in Wales, so I'm really looking forward to it. We've also got the White Cliffs Walking Festival in August. This is a festival organised by the White Cliffs Ramblers (to which a few of us in the east of the county belong) but there will be a significant LDWA Kent Group involvement, probably with at least four joint ramblers/LDWA walks. As mentioned in the article above, The White Cliffs Walking Festival is the result of Deal Walking Festival, which was highly successful this year.

As for me, I've enjoyed one of my busiest walking years ever (thanks to my wife Sarah indulging me and hardly ever complaining when I leave her at home and go to all parts of the country on various walking expeditions). I've had two wonderful trips to Scotland this year, the last one being the Southern Upland Way which I've written about above, and enjoyed some marvellous challenge walks. Probably the most enjoyable challenge event I did this year was the Dorset Duddle, a truly spectacular 32-mile walk along Dorset's Jurassic Coast, which I did in August. It's definitely going on my walking programme again next year, and I hope a few Kent Group members can join me.

I always find that on challenge walks it's great to meet people from other LDWA groups and catch up on news from around the country. It just makes me realise what a wonderful organisation the Long Distance Walkers Association is. All right, some non-LDWA people think we're a bit barmy to do some of the things we do (like walking 100 miles in under 48 hours) but so what? I don't mind admitting I'm a bit barmy, and I get an enormous amount of pleasure and satisfaction from the LDWA, both from taking part in walks or helping to organise them. One of the very few regrets of my life is that I didn't join the association earlier than I did.

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to the newsletter this year. Please keep your contributions coming, whether they be in words or pictures. Articles for the newsletter, no matter how long (within reason!) or short are always welcome. From this edition I've introduced a new section, Social Walks Snapshots, so that we can include pictures from social walks. As I'm finding out, many of our members take first class photos, so please keep them coming.

And thanks as always to Bryan Clarke for continuing to do such a first class job printing the newsletter, and to Shirley Higgins for getting the copies posted out to our members. Without Bryan and Shirley there wouldn't be a newsletter.

Wishing all members of Kent Group of the LDWA a very happy Christmas and lots of great walking in 2014, which I am sure will be a very memorable one for Kent Group of the LDWA. I look forward to seeing you soon.

SOCIAL WALKS SNAPSHOTS

Send your snaps of social walks to newsletter editor Graham Smith on ldwaket@gmail.com



**Kent Group members are pictured in the Dover Grand Shaft on Peter Jull's 24.3-mile White Cliffs Anti-dote walk on Sunday May 19.
Picture by Robert Stankowski.**



This picture looking back along the White Cliffs to Dover was taken at Capel by Sarah Turner on Graham Smith's 100k Cinque Ports Challenge on Saturday April 27.



**Mike Pursey's South Downs 30 on August 10.
Photo by Sarah Turner**



This picture was taken by Joanne Brian at St Margaret's Bay on the Cinque Ports Challenge on April 27.



Walkers at the Payday at Snowdown Colliery statue on the Three Pits Walk, part of Deal Walking Festival. Clair Hawkins - Labour's parliamentary candidate for Dover and Deal and the granddaughter of a miner - went on the walk and is third from right in the front.



This picture of walkers near Kingsdown Woods, on Graham Smith's evening walk to Dover as part of Deal Walking Festival, was taken by Rob Riddle.

SOCIAL WALKS SNAPSHOTS

Send your snaps of social walks to newsletter editor Graham Smith on ldwaket@gmail.com



Martin Matthews, Neal O'Rourke, Sarah Turner, Jim Catchpole and Peter Jull on our 23 mile Summer French Challenge on July 7.



**Mike Pursey's South Downs 30 on August 10.
Photo by Sarah Turner**



**Mike Pursey's South Downs 30 on August 10.
Photo by Sarah Turner**



This picture of Kent Group members on Richard Frost's River Stour Nettle Walk, on Sunday June 9, was taken at Richborough Roman Fort by Barbara Hutton.



**Mike Pursey's South Downs 30 on August 10.
Photo by Sarah Turner**



**Walkers on a blowy Mount Caburn, near Lewes, on Graham Smith's Lewes Loop on November 3.
Photo by Jo Taylor who quotes English Victorian poet Gerard Manley Hopkins:**
*"What would the world be once bereft
of wet and wilderness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and wilderness yet."*