

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

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

# ***NEWSLETTER***



**Pauline Barnett 1931 - 2018**

**Number 105**

**April 2018**



**These photos were taken by Dianne Marsden and Sarah Turner on the Lewes Loop on March 11. The walk was led by David Weatherley, from Sussex Group, as Graham Smith – who was down to lead it – found himself double booked.**





## **SOCIAL WALKS PROGRAMME – APRIL TO AUGUST 2018**

### **Fri March 30 (Good Friday) A South Downs Way Loop**

26 or 20ml. 09.00 Meet in Eastbourne at western end of promenade (B2103) by South Downs Way marker post, park nr school on left. (GR TV600972). 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 visits Firle Beacon before rejoining the 20ml route. C: Graham Smith

### **Sun Apr 8 Tin Cup 19**

19ml. 09.30 Sandown Castle, north Deal. (GR TR375543). Lunch in Ash. C: Richard Frost

### **Sat Apr 21 Dianne's Alkham Valley**

18ml. 09.00 Kearsney Abbey CT16 3DZ. Meet in c.p. near café. (GR TR287438). Alkham valley with some steep hills. Pub lunch Jackdaw at Denton. Booking recommended for food. C: Dianne Marsden.

### **Sat-Mon May 5-7 Cinque Ports 100 Marshals' walk**

See Events Diary in Strider.

### **Sat-Mon May 26-28 Cinque Ports 100**

See Events Diary in Strider.

### **Sat Jun 2 Elham Valley Way**

23ml. 08.30 Hythe Public Library. (GR TR161345). Part of Elham Walking Festival. C: Graham Smith

### **Sun Jun 10 The Law Tree**

21ml. 09.00 Sellindge church. (GR TR094384). C: Peter Jull

### **Sun Jun 17 A Walk With The Smugglers marshals' walk**

For details C: Neil Higham

### **Sun Jun 24 Midsummer Madness**

45ml. 04:39 Dover Patrol Memorial, St. Margaret's at Cliffe. Start GR TR373451, Finish GR TQ859649. Sunrise to sunset walk on longest Sunday of the year. Start from where sunrise first reaches England each new year, hilltop sunset across Medway estuary 21:17 before nearby finish at Newington station. £10 mini bus return trip. Please advise leader of participation before June 17. C: Peter Jull

### **Sat Jun 30 Summer French Challenge**

c23ml. 05.50 latest (tbc) Western Heights c.p. Dover (GR TR314407), to arrange cars. Take the 06.40 (tbc) P&O Ferries sailing from Dover to Calais, then a short drive to Coquelles. A circular walk in the Nord Pas de Calais visiting the viewpoints of Mont de Couple and Cap Blanc-Nez. Lunch stop at Wissant and finishing with some shopping at the Auchan hypermarket and a meal. Please contact leader by June 6 at the latest. Don't forget your passport! C: Graham Smith

### **Sun Jul 8 A Walk With The Smugglers**

See Events Diary in Strider.

### **Sun Jul 15 Alliteration A - Aylesford and Addington**

23ml. 09.10 Aylesford railway station. (GR TQ720586). C: Peter Jull

### **Sun Jul 29 Alliteration B - Benenden, Bethersden and Biddenden**

23ml. 09.00 Biddenden village c.p. (GR TQ851383). C: Peter Jull

### **Sat Aug 4 White Cliffs Challenge marshals' walk (52 mile walk)**

Will start at 7am the car park at the junction of Kingsdown Road and Granville Road, Walmer (GR TR377505). Contact Graham Smith

### **Sun Aug 12 Cream Tea Walk**

20ml. 09.00 Meet Boughton Malherbe Church. Park in field opposite. (GR TQ882495). C: Neal O'Rourke

### **Fri Aug 24 Fish and Chip Walk (part of White Cliffs Walking Festival)**

10.25ml, meet 5pm at Walmer railway station. (GR TR363503). Linear - Walk to Dover via the White Cliffs. Fish and chips in Dover and return (at your own expense) by train or bus. C: Graham Smith

### **Tues Aug 28 Alkham Adventure (part of the White Cliffs Walking Festival)**

15ml, meet 9.30am in c.p. at Kearsney Abbey, near the café. (GR TR287438). Figure-of-eight. Part of White Cliffs Walking Festival. Map Ex- 138. C: Graham Smith

### **Sun-Mon Aug 26-27 White Cliffs Challenge**

See Events Diary in Strider.

## KENT GROUP COMMITTEE

Chairman/newsletter editor – Graham Smith,

Secretary – Stephanie Le Men,

Treasurer/walks secretary – Peter Jull,

Membership secretary – Neil Higham

Website - Michael Headley,

Life President – Brian Buttifant,

Members

Joy Davies, Nick Dockree, Neal O'Rourke, Davie Thornton

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.

## PAULINE BARNETT

Kent members will be very saddened to hear of the death of Pauline Barnett at the age of 87. Pauline had been a dedicated Kent Group member (LDWA membership number 3249) since the early 1980s to the end of her life. She was a great checkpoint/kitchen organizer, proving very versatile on our group events and a very useful team member on the 100s support. For several years, she performed the role of entries secretary on our White Cliffs Challenge, beginning in 2005, when it became an annual event.

She was a great help to husband Peter – one of the Kent LDWA legends, who completed 12 Hundreds and who died in 1999 - making a good partnership to ensure group success. After his death her interest and involvement continued with the group.

Always with a cheery smile and helpful words, Pauline was an inspiration to us all: just a lovely lady.

She took part in social walks/events in the South East, as well as our winter social weekend in the Brecons.

Generally loved by all she will be greatly missed. Her memory lives on.

Pauline, who lived in Belvedere, leaves a son, Chris and a grandson, Peter. Our thoughts go out to her family at this sad time. Pauline's funeral will be held at on April 5 at Falconwood Crematorium, starting at 2pm. Chris Barnett says: "Any Kent Group members wishing to attend will be more than welcome, also to come along to a wake afterwards. We are planning to have a joyous celebration of her life, much as we did when Dad died... much wine was drunk on that occasion! All I ask is that I get an idea of how many might want to join us, so that I can plan appropriately."

**Brian Buttifant**

## NEW COMMITTEE – WELCOME TO DAVID

Twenty-one Kent LDWA members turned up for our annual general meeting, held at Harrietsham Village Hall on January 28. Before the meeting, we had a very pleasant six mile walk led by Michael Headley, and an extremely tasty meal prepared for us by Joy Davies and Eve Richards.

The meeting saw David Thornton elected to the committee. Dave, who lives in Leybourne, near Maidstone, is a very strong walker

who completed his first Hundred in Dorset two years ago. He will be a very welcome addition to the committee.

Graham Smith was re-elected chairman, Stephanie Le Men secretary, Peter Jull treasurer and Neil Higham membership secretary. Life President Brian Buttifant was re-elected to the committee, as were Michael Headley, Joy Davies, Nick Dockree and Neal O'Rourke.

Mike Pursey has stood down from the committee, as has Phyl Butler, although Phyl is continuing to carry out the role of entries secretary for us on all our events (and with the Cinque Ports 100, he has been a very busy boy these last few months!).

This means there is a vacancy on the committee, so if anyone is interested in joining, please contact chairman Graham Smith or secretary Stephanie Le Men.

The AGM also saw Mike Granatt, Kent controller of RAYNET, make a very interesting presentation on the work of the organisation, which has around 8000 licensed radio amateurs and has been used on every LDWA Hundred (and will be used again on the Cinque Ports 100 in May).

The full list of committee members, with contact details, is above, and the AGM minutes are included with this newsletter.

Sarah Turner, while not on the committee, is happy to continue to compile a list of Kent Group equipment. If any Kent members have equipment for group use, then can they please let Sarah know.



**Pauline with the Kent Group team at the Biggin Hill CP on the Games 100 in 2012**





**Walkers about to set off for the Sevenoaks Circular marshals' walk.**

## **NEWS OF KENT CHALLENGE WALKS**

### **Sevenoaks Circular**

Sadly, the 'Beast from the East 2' meant that we were forced to cancel our Sevenoaks Circular on March 18. Snow and ice made conditions for getting to the event HQ, the West Heath School – and to what would have been the actual conditions for walking – treacherous. Organisers Brian Buttifant and David Sheldrake waited and assessed conditions on Saturday evening, before making the decision to scrap the event. It was a great shame – particularly as the event had been fully subscribed, with 200 entrants – but we clearly did the right thing.

Michael Headley got a message out on the Kent website, and entries secretary Phyl Butler ensured a message got out to all entrants via SiEntries. Also, Neil Higham went to the school at 7.15 on the Sunday morning to inform the few people who still turned up, and who had not been able to receive the news in time, that the walk was not on.

But the marshals' walk – which took place in conditions which were pretty muddy – did take place on March 4, with six walkers doing the 31.4-mile route and two doing the 20-miler. As conditions were so muddy, it had been decided to give entrants an extra 30 minutes for the 31.4-mile walk, which is purely academic now! But it seemed like a good idea at the time.

Many thanks to Michael and Phyl for getting the information out to entrants so quickly, to Neil for getting to the school so early to meet would-be walkers, and to all the Kent members who had offered to checkpoint on the event. Any expenses incurred will still be reimbursed by our treasurer Peter Jull, so please contact Peter with your receipts.

Members of the committee had considered re-staging the Sevenoaks Circular later in the year, as some other groups – whose events were similarly affected by the 'Beast from the East 2' over the weekend of March 17-18 – decided to do. But what with all our other commitments – mainly the Cinque Ports 100 May, and the 52-mile White Cliffs Challenge in August – it was felt our volunteers would have enough to do for the remainder of the year.

Details for the 2019 Sevenoaks Circular will be in the next newsletter.

### **Walk With The Smugglers**

This year's Weald challenge walk will be on Sunday July 8, and will be based at Goudhurst Village Hall. Distances will be 26, 20 and 15 miles. The marshals' walk will be on Sunday June 17. Offers of help to marshal will be gratefully received, so please contact organiser Neil Higham (details above).

### **White Cliffs Challenge.**

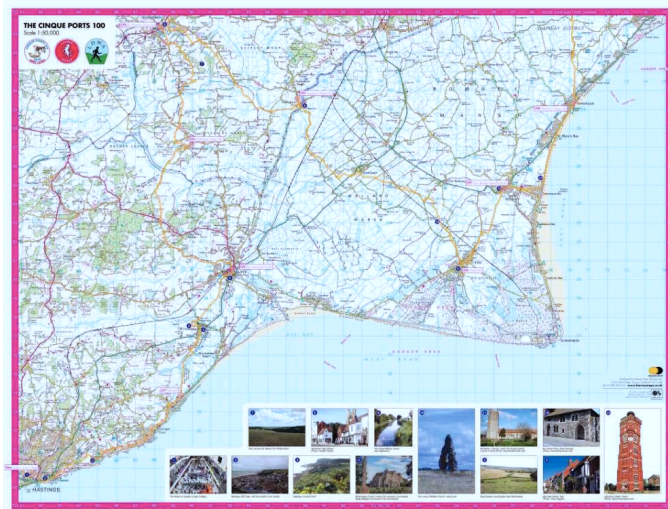
This is on Sunday August 26, and it will be the 52-mile WCC as it's our turn to host the Kent leg of the KSS (Kent Surrey Sussex) Triple Challenge of 50-mile walks. There will also be an 18-mile version of the walk, and as usual the event will be part of the White Cliffs Walking Festival.

This year's WCC will be based at Deal Town FC's ground, in Charles Road, Deal. This is not far from Deal and Betteshanger



Rugby Club, the venue when we last held the 52-mile walk in 2015, so this will involve minimal changes to the route. The venue has a good clubhouse which we will use for check-in, plenty of car parking, showers and even a room used by visiting directors, which we will be able to use as a room where walkers can get some sleep before driving home.

The marshals' walk will be on August 4, and will be starting at 7am from the car park at the junction of Granville Road and Kingsdown Road, Walmer (GR TR377505). Anyone wishing to marshal on the event and/or take part in the marshals' walk should contact organiser Graham Smith (details above).



**Sarah Turner models the Cinque Ports 100 polo shirt for women while Peter Jull models the sweatshirt.  
Also pictured above is the souvenir map.**

### THE CINQUE PORTS 100

Well, we're really counting down now, and there are only weeks to go to the LDWA's big event on May 26-28.

Entries are still coming in, and we decided to put the closing date back a week, to April 23, as several people have effectively pre-entered the Cinque Ports 100 by entering it on the basis that their qualifying event is the Wye Forest 50 on April 14-15. Previously the closing date was April 16, which was obviously a bit tight. Entries secretary Phyl Butler – who has been doing a fantastic job coping with the deluge of entries and inquiries from all over the country, and beyond – reckons we will end up with about 470 entries.

We've got a new venue for the marshals' walk, on May 5-7. It's The Whitfield Club and it's very pleasant, with an adjoining bar (which we are sure walkers and marshals will make use of). The reason for the change was that there was small chance we would not be able to have the venue we had originally booked, the community centre at Burgoyne Heights, so it was felt prudent to go for a new venue, as we didn't want to run any risk of losing the marshals' walk base at the last minute. Obviously the new venue has meant a slight adjustment to the marshals' walk route (which is now slightly shorter than the route on the main event – which should please the entrants on the marshals' walk, of which there were about 50 as this newsletter went to press).

Neal O'Rourke, who took over the route description part of the Cinque Ports 100 from Mike Pursey, who fell ill last year (but has continued to make a good recovery and has been going out on walks, although he doesn't yet feel up to challenge events), has been getting the route checked, re-checked and checked again at night. The route description is on the event website [www.ldwa.org.uk/2018Hundred](http://www.ldwa.org.uk/2018Hundred). Neal has also been ensuring that the checkpoints are staffed, so he has probably been working harder than anyone else on the team.

We must give credit to Andrew Hutchinson and the public rights of way team at Kent County Council. Issues with paths on the route such as broken stiles, bridges and overgrown vegetation have been given priority, which has probably not been that easy in these times of budget restraints. But work has been done, and Andrew has kept group chairman Graham Smith informed of progress.

Neal's wife Jan and 'the magnificent Joy Davies', with help from transport manager Peter Jull, have been working very hard on the checkpoint menus and ensuring that the food and drink will get to the 16 checkpoints in plenty of time. John Elrick has been a huge asset to the team as coordinator for the walk venue, the Duke of York's Royal Military School.

Neil Higham, apart from being the event's treasurer, has been liaising with Sussex Coast College, Hastings, where the walk will start. The plan is that walkers will be transported by bus from Dover to Hastings, where they will be addressed by the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, Admiral the Lord Boyce, and the Mayor of Hastings (there is due to be a new Mayor just before our walk). They will then make their way to Hastings seafront, where the walk will start, and they will be led for the first couple of hundred yards by Kent LDWA Life President Brian Buttifant – and then they will be off.

The Cinque Ports 100 merchandise was due to be delivered as this newsletter went to press, so go onto the website above to order your polo shirts, sweatshirts, T-shirts – and buffs. And map specialist Harveys have done a superb job on the Cinque Ports 100 souvenir map (pictured above). It has the route, plus checkpoints, photos of 32 points of interest and background articles about the Cinque Ports by Ian Russell, Registrar of the Confederation of the Cinque Ports, and about the story behind the Cinque Ports 100 by group chairman Graham Smith. There are plenty of spare copies of the map, so if you want one, contact Graham (details above).

### OTHER HUNDREDS

Kent Group will be providing a checkpoint at the Hadrian Hundred next year. This will be at Watersmeeting Farm, a remote location near Cross Fell and Cow Green Reservoir, and is after 69.2 miles. Brian Buttifant is organising personnel, so if anyone is



interested in helping on the event, please contact him (details above).

We have offered to run a checkpoint on the Sir Fynwy 100 in 2020, which is likely to be close to the breakfast stop, and we have also offered to provide a checkpoint on the Trans Pennine 100 in 2021.

### **WALK LEADERS – PETER NEEDS YOU**

We have a very good range of social walks in our programme, but we always need more. The job of walks secretary is one of the most onerous in any walking club or group, and Peter Jull is doing a fine job, considering all the other responsibilities he has. So if you would like to lead a walk for the group, please contact Peter (details above). He would particularly like new walks in the west of our county. And if you have not led a walk before and are a bit nervous about the prospect, just contact any of the committee members if you would like someone to walk it out with you beforehand. Telephone numbers and email addresses for all the committee members are above.

### **LOCAL GROUPS WEEKEND**

This year's national LDWA Local Groups' Weekend will be held in Kent, being based at YHA Medway, in Gillingham, over the weekend of November 16-18. Local Groups' Secretary Julie Cribb is planning a full weekend of participation and activity, and Kent Group will be putting on a walk, which Stephanie Le Men has offered to lead. For those representatives who don't fancy the walk, there will also be a visit to a tourist attraction, with Chatham's Historic Dockyard suggested.

More details in the next newsletter. For a report and photos on last year's Local Groups' Weekend, see the current Strider.

### **NEWSLETTER – IT CAN BE EMAILED**

Most people, even in this digital age, seem to like having paper copies of the Kent LDWA newsletter. But it can be emailed to those members who request it. So if you would like it emailed, just contact Bryan Clarke, who prints the newsletter for us. While on the subject of the newsletter, the December one was the last newsletter with which members will be sent the list of Kent LDWA members, with their addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses, as this will no longer be possible due to data protection legislation. The LDWA's NEC is in the process of looking at how new data protection legislation affects our organization, and there is likely to be communication about this in the near future.

### **WHITE CLIFFS WALKING FESTIVAL**

Plans are in full swing for this year's White Cliffs Walking Festival, which takes place between August 23-29 and includes our White Cliffs Challenge on August 26.

This will be the sixth year of the festival, organised by the White Cliffs Ramblers – to which several Kent LDWA members belong - and it will include a range of walks to suit all abilities. Last year's festival attracted a record number of 1,252 walkers.

The walks programme – which will have 43-45 walks – is now being finished. It will include several festival favourites, like Graham Smith's Fish and Chip walk from Walmer to Dover (on Friday August 24 – see Social Walks Programme above) and the White Cliffs Coastal Trails, and there will be at least nine new walks. It will also include Graham's Alkham Adventure, a 15-mile figure-of-eight walk (see Social Walks Programme above) on August 28.

The festival will be opened by Vanessa Griffiths, chief executive of The Ramblers, in a ceremony in Dover – venue to be announced – on Thursday August 23. Festival organiser Bev Cussans said: "Preparation is now in full swing. We will have at least nine new walks and four walks with new features.

"The programme includes walks which are old favourites, such as beautiful walks along the iconic White Cliffs; but we also have some new and exciting walks planned. Why not try foraging for fauna and flora along the coast or discover the industrial heritage of the Dour Valley, or enjoy breakfast after an early morning walk through some of Dover's beautiful coastal countryside?

"Take part in a 19th century mystery or appreciate the natural and social history of the ash tree before we lose it to ash dieback. Or perhaps learn about the industrial and social history of Kearsney Abbey and Russell Gardens and the restoration of both parks to their original designs before ascending through the woodland for fine views of the Alkham Valley."

A colour leaflet, detailing all the walks, will be available in June. All the walks, with instructions of how to book them, will also appear on the festival's website [www.whitecliffswalkingfestival.org.uk](http://www.whitecliffswalkingfestival.org.uk)



**Luigi del Duca receives the certificate from former Dover Mayor Pam Brivio.**

### **SPECIAL AWARD FOR DOVER CHIPPIE**

A Dover chippie has been rewarded for feeding walkers during the White Cliffs Walking Festival.

Graham Smith's Fish and Chip Walk is an annual event for the festival, with walkers hiking 10 miles from Walmer to Dover, and having a meal at the Castle Take Away, in Castle Street, at the end.

Apart from providing 20-30 portions of fish and chips with only a few minutes warning, the chippie also has also handed out copies of the festival's walks booklet to customers and promoted the festival on its Facebook page.

Now the takeaway has received a Certificate of Appreciation by the festival organisers, the White Cliffs Ramblers. It was presented to takeaway owner Luigi del Duca by former Dover Mayor Pam Brivio, a member of the White Cliffs Ramblers who led the bid to secure Walkers Are Welcome status for the town.

Cllr Brivio said: "It gives me great pleasure to present this award.

"Luigi and his staff do a fine job for Dover, and helping on the Fish and Chips

Walk illustrates one of the main aims of Walkers Are Welcome - a business demonstrating how Dover welcomes walkers.” The Fish and Chip Walk will be on Friday August 24 (see Social Walks Programme above) during the walking festival. A festival Certificate of Appreciation has also been awarded to the Rohan Canterbury Outdoor & Travel Clothing shop, based in the city’s Palace Street, for the efforts made by the store to promote the festival.

### **TRIP TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT**

A trip for Kent members to walk the Vectis Trail on the Isle of Wight – 75 miles in four days – is being arranged for Monday June 11-Saturday June 16.

Itinerary as follows:

Monday: arrive on the island and stay overnight at B&B (book your own accommodation).

Tuesday: meet at Brading Station (time tba) and walk the Vectis Trail to Shorwell for overnight.

Wednesday: continue the walk from Shorwell, transport to Shorwell for overnight. Thursday: transport to continue the walk, transport to Shorwell for overnight.

Friday: transport to continue the walk, finishing at Brading, overnight at B&B as before.

Saturday: return home.

Send a cheque for £20, payable to Jill Green, as deposit to secure your place to Jill Green, Fernleaf, Alverstone Road, Apse Heath, SANDOWN, PO36 0LF.

Accommodation at Shorwell may be caravan or tent, depending on numbers, at a cost of about £16 per night.

More details about the trip on the Kent LDWA website [www.ldwa.org.uk/kent](http://www.ldwa.org.uk/kent)

### **BLUEBELL WALK**

Some Kent LDWA members (those not involved with the Cinque Ports 100 marshals’ walk!) may be interested in the annual Heart of Kent Hospice Bluebell Walk, starting and finishing at Harrietsham Village Hall on Sunday May 6.

The walk follows the traditional six-mile route among the bluebells on the North Downs and through some of our county’s most beautiful countryside.

Cost of Early Bird entry is £10 per adult/£3 per child or £25 for a family of two adults and two children if booked by April 8. You can start the walk any time between 8.30am and 10am. There will be a ‘picnic pit stop’ three-quarters of the way round the route, and there will be hot food available at the end of the walk.

To book your place, visit [www.hokh.org](http://www.hokh.org) – contact [fundraising@hokh.co.uk](mailto:fundraising@hokh.co.uk) or call 01622 790195.



**Walkers on Kent Peaks - Thanet**

### **KENT PEAKS – THANET: Sunday November 5 By Peter Jull**

Eleven left the start but were soon 13 with two late arrivals from the wrong car park. Included were a Staffordshire LDWA member who remembered me from a 100 or checkpoint somewhere and a returnee who recalled me guiding her the last miles on the 2009 WCC, my first LDWA walk. What is it with my greying visage that it is so unforgettable to ladies?

Skies were blue but it was the chilling wind that had a silver lining, drying the early arable fields to perfectly passable despite non-reinstatement. Morning mist or mistaken turnings added maybe a mile but elevenses were taken at Grove Ferry picnic spot at 11 on the dot. The Stour Valley Walk was whizzed at up to 4mph and switching to the north bank at Plucks Gutter it had been mostly mowed, making it easier underfoot than at some seasons.

Lunch was munchd at Minster from where blistered Staffs feet took the train back to Herne Bay. Cumulus were accumulating and sun outside The Bell had hidden by the top of the hill just when it was needed to brighten the photograph in front of Thanet’s highest point, unreachable yards inside Manston Airport’s security fence. Turning away from the traffic Thanet Earth’s orange glow, even in daylight, beckoned us thither. There the tomato thousands under glass felt not the sprinkle that fell on us which almost became a shower but relented the moment waterproofs were reached for. Reaching the seawall just west of Birchington, Reculver towers were three miles distant crawling closer, wind off the sea bracing faces. Post Reculver the promising sunset turned unspectacular but clear again skies were bright enough to reach the finish without resorting to torches.



## **AROUND THE PLANET THANET: November 26**

**By Graham Smith**

Best laid plans ...

I had geared this walk closely to the railway timetable, getting the 0906 train from Sandwich to Margate, changing at Ramsgate, so that we could start walking just after 10am. When I did a walkout two weeks previously, I checked at Margate railway station and found there were no scheduled delays on this line caused by works on the track over the weekend of November 25-26. Then on the Sunday of the walk, just as I was about to set off for Sandwich station, I received an email from Jim Biggs, asking if I was aware that there **were** delays and our train was not due to leave until 0925. I got to the station, to find Jim waiting with four others. All we could do was wait, so we got our later train, changing at Ramsgate, and met four others at Margate. So it wasn't the best of starts to a walk, and I guess the lesson is to check about works on the railway line a couple of days in advance next time, and get something posted on the website. Hindsight is a wonderful thing.

But we set off, the sun was out and the wind was behind us as we marched along Margate seafront, and it didn't take us long to reach Foreness Point at North Foreland. According to the Ordnance Survey, this is the most south-easterly point of mainland Great Britain, something which really ought to be marked on this very pleasant and quite underrated stretch of coast. We then diverted to the road to go past the lighthouse, shortly afterwards taking a pathway down to the seafront, which we followed to Broadstairs. Here we were treated to coffee and mince pies courtesy of Marshall Elliott – a new Kent LDWA member who was on the walk – and his wife Susan, who then lived in Western Road (but have since moved to Sandwich). Suitably refreshed, we moved on and took the beach to Ramsgate, then followed the seafront before a slight rise to Pegwell Bay, where we had lunch at the excellent Sir Stanley Gray pub. A table had been reserved for us, food arrived swiftly after being ordered and the prices were good – so we were pretty impressed.

We then followed the bay, with fine clear views across to Deal, and past the Viking ship (the Hugin, a replica of a *Viking ship* which commemorates the 1500th anniversary of the arrival of Hengist and Horsa at nearby Ebbsfleet). Then it was through the delightful Pegwell Bay Nature Reserve to follow the cycle path alongside the A256 to take the road through Discovery Park into Sandwich just as the sun was starting to set. Don Arthur's GPS made the distance 17 miles (a mile shorter than the advertised 18 – but no one complained that they were short-changed!)

I live in Deal and I walked home, as it only another six miles. Don wanted to come with me, so we went on part of the Cinque Ports 100 route, via Worth and Ham (with its famous HAM SANDWICH road sign), and then part of my Four Pits Walk to Hacklinge and the Waiting Miner statue, before taking the cycle path by the A258 to Deal, where Don went one way for the station and his home in Ashford, and I went the other way for home.

It had been a good day. Just a shame about those train delays.

## **CHRISTMAS CRUISE AROUND CALAIS: December 9 By Graham Smith**

We were very lucky with last year's 17-mile Christmas Cruise Around Calais. We were blessed with good sunny weather which wasn't too cold and came just in time, as the following day things changed dramatically, with sleet, plummeting temperatures and appallingly fierce winds which meant a cross-Channel ferry ran aground and the Port of Calais had to be shut.

On the day of the walk, our only problem was Sarah Turner having difficulty finding anywhere to park in Dover before joining the party. After eventually finding somewhere just off the seafront, she hurtled along to the docks to join the group just as we were about to board the bus for the ferry.

Then after a smooth crossing, us nine walkers took the usual route out of Calais to Coquelles and then GR128 to Cap Blanc Nez, where we had fabulous views across the Channel to the White Cliffs of Dover we had left behind. Then after a quick beer (fruit juice, coffee or hot chocolate for some) we took the usual road to the village of Peuplingues and then headed back to Coquelles for some shopping in the Auchan hypermarket. By then it was just about dark, and we marched into Calais and saw the town's fabulous Christmas lights. The day was rounded off with a very good meal at the Histoire Ancienne restaurant, found for us by new Kent LDWA member Peter Sinden. Then a quick walk through the town for the ferry home.

In Sarah's words: "Sunny and sea state smoothish crossing, brisk walk along to Cap-Blanc with light winds, bit chilly temps but morale not deflated as bar found at lunch stop. Onwards and roundwards to annual Leffe beer and goodies grab at Auchan. Finale boasts the 'Best Ever Post French Walk Supper' c/o Peter's knowledge - top French nosh. And the Calais lights glistened leading us to Le Ferry. Twas fab."

See page 14 of this newsletter for pictures.

This year's Summer French Challenge – 22 miles – will be on Saturday June 30 (see Social Walks Programme above).



**Walkers outside the then home of Marshall Elliott (he and Susan have since moved to Sandwich) at Broadstairs.**

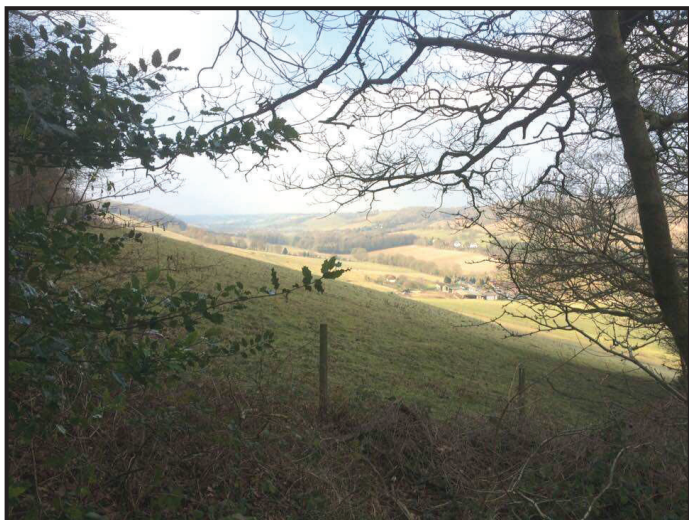


**Walkers adopting Option C.**

### **OPTION C: February 11 By Peter Jull**

Despite an unintended clash with The Punchbowl, 22 gathered under clear blue skies and sheltered from the forecast strong winds at Higham station including one Neil Higham (eventually). Split half from Venus and half from Mars, one from Sussex spoilt an equal split betwixt London and Kent. Once off road it was across fairly flat fields to the village of Cliffe. Leaving through the churchyard revealed a sparkling in the sunshine and positively perceived view across the Medway estuary, albeit dominated by the Grain oil terminal, which was over appreciated by one who paused too long photographing and when combined with a bush break was lost off the back. Mutual mobile numbers enabled successful recovery directions to be given.

A lakeside gravel track was a break from mud but weaving round plentiful puddles added distance. More weaving through puddly sheep fields was beside a well graffitied freight train waiting to collect gravel from the quarrying that had created the lakes. Across its tracks a few times (twice unintentionally) and Chalk churchyard was chosen for a picnic lunch stop. Walking on was ear bitingly exposed during explanations of which fields would succumb to the cutting and tunnel entrance of the Lower Thames Crossing Option C and across the golf course which would soon become two halves. Local youths on off road motor bikes were churning up woodland paths used to traverse between two footpaths in fields nearest the new A2 junction which will be truncated by the connection. Heading for home involved skirting Shorne Woods Country Park and village and Dickens' Gads Hill home with up and downs now more pronounced. Gathering clouds had produced only one brief whitey shower before the final fields down to the station completed a pleasant winter walk.



**Left: a view of Alkham Valley. Right: walkers during the afternoon stop at Coldred.**

### **LOVELY LYDDEN VALLEY: February 22 By Graham Smith**

Twenty LDWA members and/or White Cliffs Ramblers (21 if we include Florence the spaniel, who belongs to White Cliffs Rambler Margaret Milsted-Williamson) turned up at Kearsney Abbey on the Lovely Lydden Valley figure-of-eight walk. Leading joint LDWA/Ramblers walks is always something of a balancing act, and before the walk, I said the pace would be 'brisk Ramblers' and certainly not 'fast LDWA.' I often try to put my walks on both programmes, as it is good to encourage Ramblers who may want something a bit more challenging than a usual 6-8 mile ramble. The Ramblers – apart from being a vitally important organisation to all walkers, as it is largely responsible for the network of footpaths that we have in this country – is also an important source of members for the LDWA. And as it happens, we were able to recruit at least one Rambler to the LDWA after this walk.

There were a few climbs on the walk, the first one being shortly after the start, when we went up from Kearsney Abbey through the mud. But we were rewarded with fine views of the Alkham Valley (see photo) when we had a gap in the woods. We then carried on through the woods to the road at St Radigund's Abbey, before taking a road, a cross-field path and then another road which crossed the busy B road at Alkham Valley. Then there was another climb to our mid-morning break, a nice clearing offering more fine views of the valley. Then it was a nice track before turning right to descend to Alkham, with the best views of the morning. From Alkham we had a very steep climb up to Ewell Minnis. I explained to everyone that it wasn't a race, so we were going to take it nice and steady. After everyone had got their breath back, we moved on, following a lane, field path and woodland path before



descending to Temple Ewell and Kearsney Abbey.

It was too cold to stay too long in the open air at Kearsney Abbey at lunchtime, so I cut the lunch break short by 15 minutes. Five Ramblers (plus Florence) dropped out after lunch, but we gained one, so there were 16 of us for the afternoon walk. We climbed up the hillside at Temple Ewell to cross the A2 via an underpass, then it was a lane and field path to Coldred, where we had a nice afternoon stop by the village pond. Then we walked to the A2, which we crossed carefully, before descending to Lydden and its valley. Lydden Valley is open access land, which means it can be walked without having to stick to defined footpaths, and it is one of the gems of south-east Kent. It offers good, clear paths and fine views. As the name of the walk says, it is lovely, and we finally got back to Kearsney Abbey at 4.15pm.

We had a very nice crowd of people, and everyone loved the Alkham and Lydden valleys. I am putting the same walk on again later this year, during the White Cliffs Walking Festival, on Tuesday August 28. The only difference is that it will have a different name – Another Alkham Adventure. Not sure I should be admitting that really, but the secret is out now!



**Left: new Kent LDWA member Dale Moorhouse at the summit of Firle Beacon on the Lewes Loop walkout. Right: the view from Mount Caburn.**

## **LEWES LOOP**

The photos above, and those on the inside front page of this newsletter, were taken on the Lewes Loop walk. The group walk, on March 11, should have been led by Graham Smith and it was advertised as being led by Graham ... but due to a mix-up of dates, Graham could not be there, as he was required to attend the LDWA's national AGM at the Forest Pines Hotel in Lincolnshire that weekend. To cut a long story short Graham, who can only plead senility, asked Dave Weatherley to lead the walk for him, and by all accounts Dave did a marvellous job, with 16 walkers and one dog going on the walk.

From Lewes railway station, the route went to Kingston, where it got up to the South Downs, then the ridge was followed before dropping down to Southease for a quick stop by the church. Then the ascent of Itford Hill and along the ridge to the wonderful viewpoint of Firle Beacon, then down to Firle for lunch. After that it was the Sussex Stride route to Glynde and the ascent of Mount Caburn, before dropping down into that lovely valley before going up to the golf course, and down to Lewes.

In the words of Sarah Turner: "The clouds did part & rain stayed away to allow for the Sussex Downs to shine during Kent's Lewes Loop, fantastically led by Sussex's Dave Weatherly. A duo county mixed group with regulars Rex doing a bit of classic Rex off-piste in said photo (see inside front cover of this newsletter), with Janet enjoying/enduring her hill climb alongside Michael H, + myself taking some moody light shots ... 19 miles of Great LDWA Stuff."

But Graham did do a Lewes Loop walkout two weeks previously, taking new Kent LDWA member Dale Moorhouse with him. It was one of the toughest and hilliest walks Dale had ever done, and he was an absolute star. Welcome to the LDWA, Dale, and many thanks for leading the walk on March 11, Dave.

Graham plans to put the Lewes Loop on again next year – and he promises to be there to lead it next time.





Three of David Thornton's pictures from the Peddars Way.

#### A PEDDARS WAY: FEBRUARY 21-24 By David Thornton

It's always a little risky choosing to take on a trail at this time of year. You never know what kind of weather is going to come your way. Consider February 2017 when I did The Ridgeway and was buffeted about all over place by Storm Doris's 70mph winds throughout day two.

It would seem, however, that I was going to be very lucky this week. The weather across Norfolk on Monday 19th and Tuesday 20th had been pretty grim to say the least, but with a significant change on Wednesday morning which was set to last the duration of my walk, I had been given quite a break. And also bear in mind that as I write this piece now, just a week later, the whole country is gripped by the 'Beast from the East.' On reflection, lucky isn't the word!

Leaving West Mallory by train at 5.45am, I arrived in Thetford just before 10am to start my first day's walking and about 21 miles. I suspected that the first day, after all the excitement of the first few steps, would be rather underwhelming and so that turned out to be the case. It was very flat and very straight and very

straight and very flat, with not a lot to either side. So what did I clock? Two very large pig farms, two very large mass chicken production farms and several farmers completing what looked like a bumper sugar beet harvest. They do say that Norfolk is the larder of the nation. I sort of studied the fence of the estate belonging to Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, who seems to own pretty much everything around Thetford. The taxi driver, who took me the short ride from the station to the start, said that he'd even offered many millions to buy the A1066, because it cut through the middle of his vast estate, but was declined because the road, built by the Romans, was of significant historical importance. Oh, and in Stonebridge I spotted an inflatable Father Christmas half way up a roof, hanging on to a plastic ladder. I say inflated, but he had obviously been stuck there for a couple months and looked a little deflated in both senses of the word!

After a comfortable bed and breakfast stay in Sporle, run by Ian and Pam Rodie, I was off on day two and 25 miles. This was equally as straight, and flat but with just a tad more substance about it. Castle Acre was an interesting place through which to walk as was the remains of the medieval village of Great Palgrave, whose inhabitants were wiped out by the plague in the 12th century. I was particularly interested in this, because it reminded me of a book I read last year called *The Black Death*, written by John Hatcher, based on a village in Suffolk. It's a historical novel and starkly reflects the fear felt by the village inhabitants as the plague rapidly approached and the impact caused by the huge loss of lives on both the church and the community. Anyway, late in the day I eventually hit the Norfolk coast at Holme-next-the-Sea. As I turned west to Hunstanton for my overnight stop, the sun came out and I was rewarded with a spectacular sunset.





A comfortable overnight stop at the Beaumont Guest House run by Des and Mo, I then set out on day three and the second half of my walk, which runs along the north Norfolk coast, the section I was really looking forward to. It was a super day, taking me through the lovely villages of Thornham and Brancaster and then onto the amazing Holkham Bay, which stretched all the way into Wells-next-the-Sea. While on Holkham Bay, I got chatting to a couple, who turned out to come from Bearsted and then later on a young lady who came from Meopham, both of whom kindly took a couple of photos. To then prove we really do live in a small world, Jean Court, who ran the Eastdene B&B in Wells-next-the-Sea, which was to be my third overnight stay, moved there in 1959, having lived in Seasalter near Whitstable. Us Kent lot pop up everywhere! Her husband had been an oyster fisherman up until that year, until stocks collapsed and they moved to Wells-next-the-Sea with their six boats. At 84 she is clearly a pillar of the local town community and a massive supporter of the RNLI.

Over breakfast the following morning, while she served her home laid poached eggs on toast, I told Jean that I was completing the walk into Cromer that day, about 21 miles, before heading home to Kent. She revealed that she had completed that journey, with a group, a few years ago, in order to raise money for the RNLI. "Never again" she piped up, chuckling. "That bloomin pebble beach" she muttered followed by a tut. I sort of clocked the pebble beach comment, but decided not to inquire.

About 10 miles into that final day, having passed through the lovely villages of Blakeney and Cley-next-the-Sea, I came to this pebble beach. Continuing eastwards into a freezing cold and very strong wind, five miles and two hours later I literally staggered off that same pebble beach, using slightly stronger language than the word "bloomin" used by dear old Jean. I can say, without any hesitation, that the two hours spent on that beach into that wind were the hardest two hours of my relatively short walking life so far.

I finally arrived in Cromer, a further six miles on, very wind scorched and completely drained, but in the nick of time to catch the 15.57 train home to Kent, via Norwich, Ely, Finsbury Park, Victoria and finally into West Malling at 21.10. What I presumed would be a relatively uneventful walk, turned out to be particularly memorable.

## COMEDY CORNER

### Subject: Simple guide to Brexit fees

Brexit is becoming like religion: for those who believe, no explanation is necessary; for those who don't, no explanation is possible.

Dave Davis is at the golf club returning his locker key when Mr Barnier, the membership secretary, sees him.

"Hello Mr Davis," says Mr Barnier. "I'm sorry to hear you are no longer renewing your club membership, if you would like to come to my office we can settle your account."

"I have settled my bar bill," says Mr Davis.

"Ah yes Mr Davis", says Mr Barnier, "but there are other matters that need settlement".

In Mr Barnier's office Mr Davis explains that he has settled his bar bill so wonders what else he can possibly owe the golf club?

"Well Mr Davis," begins Mr Barnier, "you did agree to buy one of our club jackets".

"Yes," agrees Mr Davis "I did agree to buy a jacket but I haven't received it yet. As soon as you supply the jacket I will send you a cheque for the full amount."

"That will not be possible," explains Mr Barnier. "As you are no longer a club member you will not be entitled to buy one of our jackets!"

"But you still want me to pay for it!" exclaims Mr Davis.

"Yes," says Mr Barnier, "That will be £500 for the jacket. There is also your bar bill."

"But I've already settled my bar bill," says Mr Davis.

"Yes" says Mr Barnier, "but as you can appreciate, we need to place our orders from the brewery in advance to ensure our bar is properly stocked."

"You regularly used to spend at least £50 a week in the bar so we have placed orders with the brewery accordingly for the coming year. You therefore owe us £2600 for the year."

"Will you still allow me to have these drinks?" asks Mr Davis. "No of course not, Mr Davis. "You are no longer a club member." says Mr Barnier.

"Next is your restaurant bill," continues Mr Barnier. "In the same manner we have to make arrangements in advance with our catering suppliers. Your average restaurant bill was in the order of £300 a month, so we'll require payment of £3600 for the next year."

"I don't suppose you'll be letting me have these meals either," asks Mr Davis.

"No, of course not," says an irritated Mr Barnier. "You are no longer a club member."

"Then of course," Mr Barnier continues, "there are repairs to the clubhouse roof."

"Clubhouse roof!" exclaims Mr Davis, "What's that got to do with me?"

"Well it still needs to be repaired and the builders are coming in next week", says Mr Barnier. "Your share of the bill is £2000".

"I see," says Mr Davis, "anything else?"

"Now you mention it" says Mr Barnier, "there is Fred the barman's pension. We would like you to pay £5 a week towards Fred's pension when he retires next month. He's not well, you know, so I doubt we'll need to ask you for payment for longer than about five years, so £1300 should do it."

"This brings your total bill to £10,000," adds Mr Barnier.

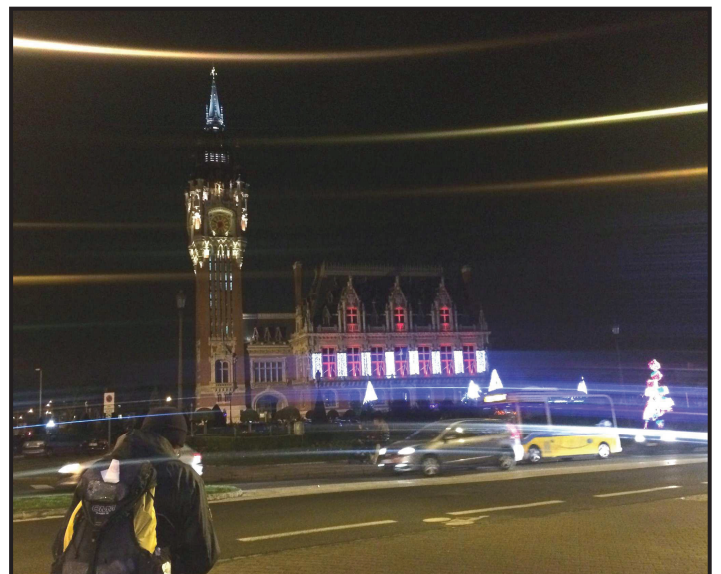
"Let me get this straight," says Mr Davis. "You want me to pay £500 for a jacket you won't let me have, £2600 for beverages you won't let me drink and £3600 for food you won't let me eat, all under a roof I won't be allowed under and not served by a bloke who's going to retire next month!"

"Yes, it's all perfectly clear and quite reasonable," says Mr Barnier.

"\*\*\*\*\* off!" says Mr Davis.

Now we understand what Brexit is all about.

**These pictures were taken by Sarah Turner on the Christmas Cruise Around Calais on December 9. Three of the pictures show the Christmas lights in Calais and Coquelles and the other one shows the walkers heading for the viewpoint of Cap Gris-Nez.**





Cinque Ports scenes ... pictured are places which walkers on the Cinque Ports 100 will be seeing. Clockwise, from top left, Hastings Country Park; the Cinque Ports logo; the view from Lympe; coming down into Hythe; Folkestone Harbour; Walmer Castle; two people some of you might recognise by the famous Ham Sandwich signpost near Northbourne!

