LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION — KENT GROUP

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

NEWSLETTER

The Pantiles, Royal Tunbridge Wells (1880)

Number 60 April 2003

KENT GROUP WALKS PROGRAMME – April to October 2003

SUN APR 6 — WEST KENT KANTER REVISITED II

20 ml. Meet 8 a.m. Ide Hill car park (GR 488 518) for prompt 8.15 start. Pub stop at 12 miles, food available. Same area as previously but with 86% different paths. Leader Laurie Lowe, tel. [redacted]

SUN APR 13 — HIGH WEALD LANDSCAPE TRAIL, part 1

*See below for details.

SAT APR 26 — A ROYAL STROLL

c.20 ml. Meet Harrietsham B.R. station (GR 867 529, Pathfinder 189, Explorer 148) for 8.30 a.m. start. Passing through Leeds Castle grounds. Possible pub stop, contact leader nearer time. Leader Neal O'Rourke, tel. [redacted]

SAT/SUN MAY 3/4 — NORTH DOWNS LOOP

56 mile circular on the North Downs Way in approx. 24 hours, walking as a group and following the O.S. Trail Guide. Start 10 p.m. Saturday evening at Chilham and passing through Wye, Dover and Canterbury and close to Folkestone (all rail connected). Self-supported with café breakfast in Dover. For further details contact Ivan Waghorn on [redacted]

FRI – SUN MAY 9 – 11 — WHITE PEAK WEEKEND

Warslow – GR086 586. **Please note change of date.** Places still available, contact Paul now! 01233 840669. **See page 6** for more details and late bookings.

FRI MAY 16 — TOM'S TODDLE

c.5 ml. Meet at Rose & Crown, Wrotham (GR 612 592) at 7.30 p.m. for a short stroll. Leader Tom Sinclair, tel. [redacted]

SUN MAY 18 — HIGH WEALD LANSCAPE TRAIL, part 2

*See below for details.

SAT JUN 7 — MILLENNIUM HUNDRED

Commence Wye car park (GR 053 468) at 00.01 hours for a 50mile unsupported social walk. Finish Eastry car park (GR 309 548). For further details contact Joy Davies on [redacted]

SUN JUN 15 — HIGH WEALD LANDSCAPE TRAIL, part 3.

*See below for details.

SUN JUN 22 — HIGH WEALD MARSHALS' WALK

Contact Ernie Bishop on [redacted] for further details.

SUN JUN 29 — HIGH WEALD WALK MAIN EVENT

See "Future Events" in "Strider".

SAT JUL 5 — BOULOGNE TO CALAIS

c.31 ml. Meet Dover Eastern Docks to catch ferry to Calais and then train to Boulogne. Walk back to catch approx. 11 p.m. ferry to Dover. For further details contact Graham Smith on [redacted]

SUN JUL 13 — ROUND THE CORNER FOR FISH AND CHIPS

c.21 ml. Start 8 a.m. from St Mary's Bay Village Hall, Jefferson Lane (park on road) GR 090 275. N.B. 14 miles to lunch stop – food available at pub. Leader - Mike Pursey, tel. [redacted]

SUN JUL 20 — HIGH WEALD LANDSCAPE TRAIL, part 4

*See below for details

WED JUL 23 — EVENING STROLL

6/7 ml. Meet 7 p.m. at the George Inn car park, Trottiscliffe (Landranger 188, GR 641 599) Leader Ivan Waghorn, tel. [redacted]

SUN JUL 27 — THE HEIGHTS OF CAPEL

20 ml. Start from Dover Western Heights car park (Aycliffe side, GR 315 405) at 9 a.m. Pub stop at Paddlesworth. Route includes restored path at Capel. Leader – Graham Smith, tel. [redacted]

SUN AUG 3 — PAUL'S BIRTHDAY BASH

Walks around Pluckley for family and friends. Choose your own distance from 4 to 20 miles – route description provided. Please bring map and compass. All routes covered by Landranger 189, Explorer 137 or Pathfinder 1230. Start from 8.30 a.m. to noon from 1 Yew Tree Cottages, Pluckley, GR 926 453. Bring food if you intend to do longer walk. Refreshments will be available for all at the finish from 3.30 p.m.

SUN AUG 10 — THREE PITS WALK

c.18 ml. Visiting the former Kent pits of Betteshanger, Snowdown and Tilmanstone. Start from Northbourne church, near Deal (GR 334 523) at 9 a.m. Lunch stop at Nonington. Leader – Graham Smith, tel. [redacted]

SUN AUG 17 — HIGH WEALD LANDSCAPE TRAIL, part 5

*See below for details.

SAT/SUN SEP 6/7 — WEALDEN WATERS MARSHALS' WALK

For entry details and offers of help, please contact Neal O'Rourke, [redacted] by mid-August.

SUN SEP 14 — HIGH WEALD LANDSCAPE TRAIL, part 6

*See below for details.

SAT/SUN OCT 11/12 — WEALDEN WATERS MAIN EVENT

See "Future Events" in "Strider" for details.

* HIGH WEALD LANDSCAPE TRAIL – Each section will be about 15 miles. You will need to bring food and drink on all days, as pubs are not conveniently placed. Contact Paul on [redacted] or Keith on [redacted] during the week before the date for each section for details of start place, time and to make transport arrangements.

PUB MEETINGS continue to be 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 p.m. All welcome.

FUTURE HUNDREDS – 2004 - Exmoor
2005 - Chilterns
2006 - Northumberland

COMMITTEE

Chairman.....Paul Hatcher [redacted]
Secretary.....Tom Sinclair [redacted] email: [redacted]
Treasurer.....Neil Higham [redacted]

Trevor Blake [redacted]
Duncan Brice
Bryan Clarke
Bill Gillibrand
Keith Warman [redacted] email: [redacted]

Social Walks Programme – Neal O'Rourke [redacted]
Newsletter Editor – Laurie Lowe [redacted]

Committee Meeting 10th January, 2003. Notes from the minutes:-

Southern Triple Challenge events – Tom had received a reply from Dave Wingrove of Essex & Herts Group which stated that they wished to continue to run the Three Forests Way in its current format; also that they were willing to man a checkpoint on both the Wealden Waters Walk and the Surrey Summits. Both the London and the Thames Valley groups had made offers of help with the WWW. After discussion, it was suggested that if the WWW is held this October 2003, then perhaps the SS could be held in Spring 2004 and the TFW in Autumn 2004 (possibly brought forward to WWW October slot). The pattern of walks could then be as follows:

2003 WWW in October
2004 SS in Spring and TFW in October or November
2005 WWW
2006 SS and TFW etc.

Thames Towpath Walk – A letter from the London Assembly had been received indicating that it was proposed to extend the Thames Towpath Walk from the Thames Barrier to the GLA boundary at the mouth of the river Darent. This would then link up with the Darent Valley Path. It was suggested that a further extension to Gravesend would enable links with both the Wealdway and the Saxon Shore Way.

FOOTPATH NEWS - from Shirley Higgins:-

It recently emerged that Bromley Borough Council were planning to introduce parking charges at their countryside car parks. It was proposed to charge 50p per hour with a maximum stay of 3 hours. This caused alarm among the several walking groups who regularly start walks from these convenient locations. Walkers were encouraged to write to the Council explaining the difficulties these proposals would make for people accessing the countryside.

Letters recently received from the Council state that the proposals have been dropped, which shows perhaps that councils do listen if enough people complain about unreasonable changes.

Stiles – I have been told that there is a new approach to replacing broken stiles. The first option is to leave a gap if there is no stock in the adjacent fields. The second option is to replace the stile with a gate. If a stile is necessary there is to be a new British Standard with two steps and an increased width for the whole structure. I will supply further details when I have information that is more definite.

PAUL'S NOTES

I was pleased with the Group's AGM, the turnout could have been better although it was good to see some new members present.

Getting volunteers to help organise and run events continues to be a problem but I refuse to stop trying, and I apologise to anybody who has been offended by any remark that any of the team or I make when we are tired or under duress.

White Rose Hundred - we are serving the meal at the finish at Ripon School, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Sunday 25th May. I have 16 volunteers who I will contact before 1st May, so if anyone has a time preference, will they let me know A.S.A.P? Also, if anyone else would like to join us please contact me now.

Exmoor Hundred - (May, 2004) – We now have details of this event for which we are on checkpoint duty at 79 miles. I hope to take part in the Marshals' Walk. If anyone would like to join me, please get in touch and I will get the entry forms.

Wealden Waters Walk – We have had offers of help for this event from Essex & Herts and verbally from other groups, so it looks as if this event will be continuing, all-be-it on a biennial basis. Whether or not we can keep the Southern Triple Challenge going remains to be seen. We are hoping for more discussions with the Surrey Group.

White Cliffs walk – We are looking into the possibility of staging this event again – Organiser, etc. WANTED!

I have been approached as to when we are going to run another Hundred! As it was in 1994 when Kevin and I first had the insane idea of the Millennium Hundred, I thought maybe it's time to put the wheels in motion again. I must say that I did (despite everything) enjoy the 2000 Hundred. SO HOW ABOUT IT? "The Wealden 100"? May 2008/9/10?

National AGM – Tom Sinclair was elevated to Chairman, but nobody was willing to take over as General Secretary, so the position is vacant – if you are interested, contact Tom. Motions to change the constitution regarding (1) tenure of committee and officers and (2) the number of members needed to form a quorum at a rearranged AGM following one postponed because a quorum was not present. Both were passed unanimously. The Membership Secretary stated that it costs over £1,500 to send out reminders to those who forget to renew their LDWA membership, to say nothing of the 15 hours it takes the team of 4 volunteers to stuff them in envelopes! I hope that no Kent Group members are among them, although I am aware that Tom has had to include a number of Kent Group reminders in with this newsletter.

Finally, my THANKS to all who helped on the recent Sevenoaks Circular!

From *The Daily Telegraph*:- Nicholas Hoogstraten, the millionaire tycoon serving 10 years for the manslaughter of a business associate, yesterday lost his fight to prevent ramblers crossing his land.

His attempts to block a historic footpath across his country estate near Uckfield, East Sussex, collapsed after the local authority ordered that obstructions should be cleared within 28 days. Ramblers – dismissed by Hoogstraten as "scum" – are now expected to be able to use the path by early March.

This is the latest in a series of blows for Hoogstraten who, since being jailed for the manslaughter of Mohammed Raja, has had his property handed over to a sequestrator*. The family of Mr Raja has been awarded £5 million damages against Hoogstraten after his defence against a Raja fraud claim was thrown out by the High Court.

* sequestrate - to vest the property, assets, etc of a bankrupt individual in a trustee for distribution amongst creditors.

Has anyone tried to use this path recently? …Editor.

THE THREE FORESTS WAY - 2nd-3rd November 2002 Keith Warman

The recipe for this event is simple. The sole ingredient is 63 miles of arable fields full of Essex (and a sprinkling of Hertfordshire) mud. Next, include 13 hours of darkness and add 12 hours of steady rain. Stir into a slippery consistency and serve to 80 willing invitees at £12 per head. Delicious!

This biennial event had a new venue and approximately 30 miles of new route for this year. The headquarters at Blackmore village hall was superb, taking advantage of footpaths close by for both the start and the finish.

A typical Essex November morning - dull, misty and with no wind -greeted Paul Hatcher, Brian Russell and me. We set off at the back of the field, and remained there for most of the way. When we met roads, we knew which way the route went by following the trail of mud which those ahead of us had tramped off the fields (much to the consternation of one lady with stiff broom in High Ongar). We made our way steadily northwards via Fyfield and into the drizzle just before White Roding, where a bunch from The Irregulars caught us up after the first of their several pubs stops en-route. On through Hatfield Broad Oak we slithered to reach and enter Hatfield Forest. This was the first time I had seen it in daylight and the free-range cattle in the autumnal mist evocatively reminded me of a Constable painting.

The rain was now incessant from here to the checkpoint at Sawbridgeworth (26 miles), where we dripped but didn't dry. The canal section to Roydon was without difficulty, except for a fallen tree onto which we had to clamber then ease ourselves down to land on the plank of a submerged stile. The fireworks in and around Harlow were both noisy and colourful and the warm comforts of the meal stop in Roydon church hall were most welcome.

Suitably replenished, 9 of us set off wandering around the adjacent churchyard seeking the exit stile. We soon split into smaller groups before the next checkpoint at Epping Long Green. We then skirted Epping Forest before veering eastwards on the new section back to the finish. It stopped raining at about 1 a.m. and I didn't regret wearing shorts as the night was quite still and not cold.

Kind encouragement was given at the next checkpoints (Theydon Bois and Lambourne End). Upon leaving the latter, we passed through Hainault (and the third) Forest, to do battle with an enclosed bridleway, described in the accurate route description as "extremely muddy". It wasn't too bad, but our traverse was accompanied by Brian's bold assertion that a particular set of bright lights in the clear sky was the Space Lab. Despite much lobbying, none of our foursome agreed with him - (sorry, Brian!)

Just prior to the last checkpoint at Navestock Side, we met the most incredible arable field. It had been ploughed into wide, soft ridges with deep crevasses in between. The tsunami-like vertical sides required roping-up to ascend them, although other teams were observed crossing them using lightweight aluminium snow ladders. The welcome delights of the village hall included toasted cheese sandwiches - just right to tackle the last stage in perfect autumnal sunshine.

We finished just after 10 a.m. Thank you Paul and Brian for your company and, to Carl who walked with us from Roydon to complete his first overnight walk, despite very sore feet, hearty congratulations. Brian's success means that he has now earned the Southern Triple Challenge award seven times - more than anyone else.

There were 85 entrants, 70 starters and 52 finishers. My sincere thanks go to Essex & Herts Group (and helpers) for an excellent event with frequent friendly checkpoints and superb support. The exercise wasn't bad either!

WHITE PEAK WEEKEND – 9-11 May, 2003.

Boys and Girls Brigade Camping Barn, for our exclusive use. Sleeping up to 30 in bunk beds (3 rooms x 8, 2 rooms x 3). Oil heating, fully equipped kitchen, two showers/washrooms, one inside toilet. £1 coin electricity meter.

Proposed Itinerary:-

Friday – arrive afternoon/evening, settle in, visit local pub for meal.

Saturday - after breakfast join Staffs Group on their 17 mile "Railway and Pits Walk Around the Potteries", starting from Hanley Forest car park. For those not wishing to walk there is a bus that travels around the potteries, factory shops and museums. Get on and off at will. All return to barn to prepare and cook meal together , so we can eat and have a glass of wine or two.

Sunday - after breakfast join Staffs Group for 22 miles (or 12 or 15 mile options) from Hollingclough via Hartington, Alastonfield, Wetton and Butterton. For non walkers, Buxton is only 5 miles by car and I will seek information on local villages and places of interest (NT, tea rooms, etc) All return to barn for repeat of Saturday evening, or if preferred, Hollingclough has, I am informed, four pubs supplying good food.

Monday - vacate barn after breakfast and make our way home. A short walk of 5-6 miles first, could be arranged if wanted.

Cost £4.50 per person per night. We will need to take own bedding, (only mattresses supplied), tea towels and all food and drink. Coins for meter. Also anything for your own specific needs.

Please note change of date. Places are still available. Contact Paul now! [redacted]

FREE BOOK OFFER! - I am disposing of a number of walk guides (in order to make more shelf space for more books!) The following books are available free to anyone who is interested:-

Along and Around the High Weald Walk – K.C.C. 1994. (1st edition)
The Eden Valley Walk – K.C.C. 1991.
The Stour Valley Walk – K.C.C. 1990.
The Vanguard Way – Vanguards Rambling Club. 1980.
The Sussex Diamond Way – Ramblers' Association, Sussex Area. 1997.
The Weald Way – Wealdway Steering Group. 1981.
The Greensand Way, East Kent Section – Ramblers' Association, Kent Area.
The Greensand Way, West Kent Section – Ramblers' Association, Kent Area.
The Three Castles Path (Windsor, Odiham, Winchester) East Berkshire R.A. Group.1992.

Walking in France by Rob Hunter. Oxford Illustrated Press. 1982.
The Way of Saint James, GR65 by Hal Bishop. Cicerone Press. 1989.
The R. L. Stevenson Trail Through the Cévennes by George Osborn. 1990.

The Complete Wicklow Way by J. B. Malone. O'Brien Press. 1990.

Contact Laurie Lowe on [redacted]

POSER MUD

Registered office:

[redacted]

Dear Purchaser,

Congratulations on your purchase of Warman's Superior Poser Mud! You have bought one of the most innovative new products to hit the outdoor market in recent times. Years of extensive research and field testing have gone into the introduction of this product and sales over the initial three months' period tell us that this is something the outdoor world has been eagerly awaiting!

Poser Mud is a boon for the aged and infirm, or for those for whom slogging up the fells just isn't worth breaking into a sweat for! Poser Mud is the answer to your dreams - applied in strict accordance with the instructions supplied with every tin, you will deceive whoever you wish. Your secret is safe between you and your handy tin of Poser Mud!

Please use your Poser Mud sparingly - it is a highly-concentrated product and a fingertip covering should suffice for one pair of leather hiking boots and the bottoms of one pair of trousers. Any unused Poser Mud can be safely returned to the tin for next time!

Should you have any queries or comments (both good and bad are very welcome!) about Poser Mud or wish to tell us of your personal tales of deception, our 24-hour Customer Services Helpline will be delighted to hear from you. Our specially trained Customer Services Advisers are waiting right now to receive your call. Please ring now on [redacted] and follow the instructions (Calls cost £3.70 per minute at all times). Our Helpline is very busy at most times and until our new £7 million Customer Services Call Centre opens in December 2003 we would respectfully ask you to be patient - so many people wish to tell us of their experiences!

The Poser Mud range currently includes 24 varieties and more are being added to the list following successful market and field testing. Some of the original varieties are now no longer available as source quarries have been exhausted beyond commercial viability - we have heard stories of such varieties becoming keenly sought after with unused tins changing hands for several hundreds of pounds. Whilst we do not advocate purchasing Poser Mud purely for investment purposes, we are in the process of setting up local Collectors' Groups to enable potential buyers and sellers to contact each other. We strongly recommend that anybody considering investing in Poser Mud should consult an Independent Financial Adviser. Further details, together with a list of currently available varieties, can be found by visiting our dedicated website at www.posermud.co.uk.

Thank you once again for your wise purchase - we hope it will give you many years of enjoyment!

Keith Warman
President

Shirlie Gill
Chief Executive

It is normal policy of the LDWA, and therefore the Kent Group, not to include advertising of commercial products in their newsletters. However, I have made an exception in the case of the above article, as two of the directors of the company concerned are members of the Kent Group.....Editor.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.....

Dear Sir,

I feel that I must protest in the strongest terms regarding the inclusion in Newsletter no. 59 of the article titled "Poser Mud – New Developments Possible?"

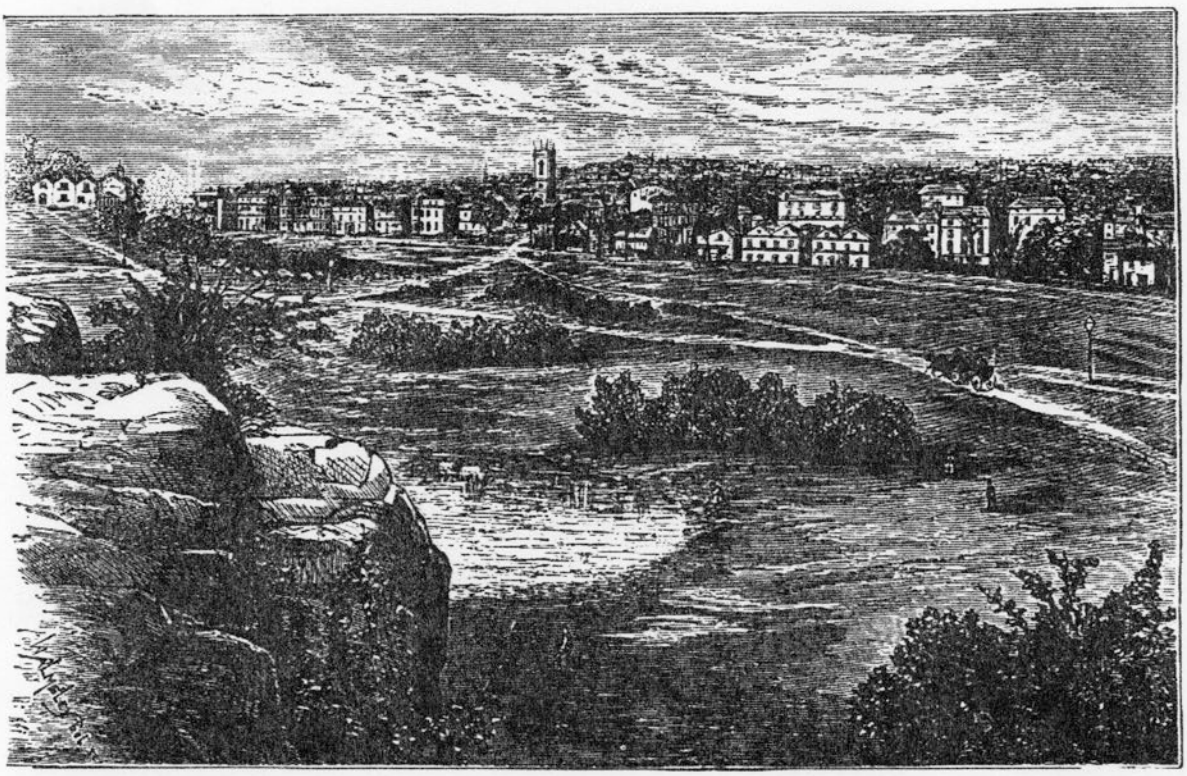
My objections are twofold: - First, it has always been LDWA policy to exclude advertisements for commercial products from our journals – the fact that those who would gain financially from such advertisements are members of the LDWA is not a reason to abandon these principles.

Secondly, I feel that it is unnecessary to resort to the use of such basic Anglo Saxon words as those used in the offending article, even with the liberal use of asterisks!

The Newsletter has proved an excellent organ for the dissemination of group information and it should be allowed to remain unsullied by such cheap attempts to boost the circulation figures.

Yours sincerely,

"Very Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells". (see below)



The Common and Tunbridge Wells from Mount Ephraim

POWER STROLL – From the *Shropshire Star*: "Market Drayton District Ramblers are running a nine mile walk on December 30th.