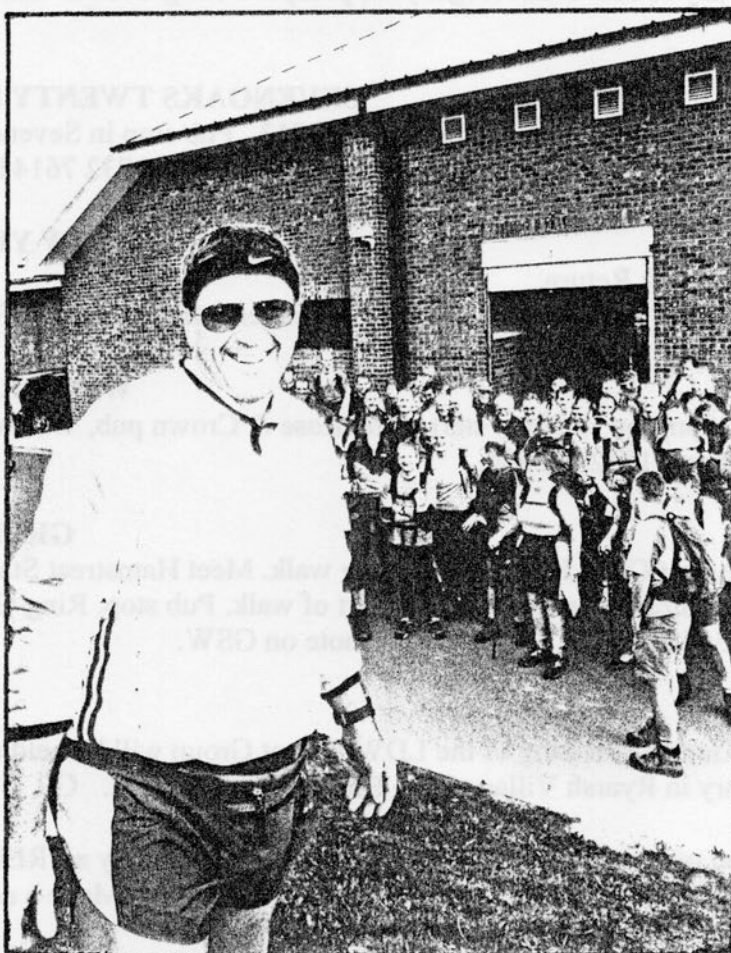


LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION — KENT GROUP

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

NEWSLETTER



Gordon Harker prepares to send off the walkers on the White Cliffs 50.

Photo.....Kent Messenger Group copyright.



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Sun Dec 4th**ANNUAL FAMILY LUNCH & WALK**

This will be held at "The King's Arms", Meopham Green. The traditional Christmas lunch will be preceded by a short, gentle walk, suitable for all the family, starting at **11am** and lead by Ivan Waghorn (This event is for members who have previously booked)

Sat Dec 10th**CHRISTMAS CRUISE AROUND CALAIS**

c.14 ml. Calais - Escalles & Return.

Meet by SeaFrance desk, Dover Eastern Docks at 7.30am for 8.15am SeaFrance sailing to Calais. Return on or before 10.45pm sailing. Ring SeaFrance reservations on 08705 711 711 for foot passenger day return. Don't forget your passport! Ring Graham Smith for more details on [REDACTED].

Wed Dec 28th**SEVENOAKS TWENTY SOCIAL WALK**

Start at 8am from Weald Village scout hut, GR531 513. Pub stop in Sevenoaks. Parking at scout hut (entrance beside cemetery) Leader: Brian Buttifant, [REDACTED]

Sun Jan 1st**NEW YEAR IN SUSSEX**

c.22ml. Rye - Hastings & Return.

Meet Rye Station (GR 919205) at 9am. Pub stop. Leader: Mike Pursey, [REDACTED]

Fri Jan 6th**WINTER NIGHT WALK**

c.20ml. Meet at 9.30pm for 10.30pm start at the Rose & Crown pub, Wrotham. GR 612592. Leader Ivan Waghorn, [REDACTED]

Sun Jan 15th**GREENSAND WAY 1**

c.18ml. Folkestone East Cliff- Hamstreet. Linear walk. Meet Hamstreet Station (GR 001337) at 8.30am. Will then arrange cars to drive to start of walk. Pub stop. Ring Graham Smith for more details on [REDACTED] See page 5 for note on GSW.

Sun January 29th**GROUP AGM**

The 2006 Annual General Meeting of the LDWA Kent Group will be held at 2.00pm on Sunday, 29th January in Ryarsh Village Hall, Birling Road, Ryarsh. GR 671600.

The AGM is a good opportunity for a short social walk followed by a FREE buffet lunch as well as being a chance to have a say in how YOUR group is run. Make a note of the date in your diary and come along on the day.

The walk will start from the Hall at 10.0am and will be a leisurely 6 or 7 miles led by Shirley Higgins so that we can get back in good time for lunch at 12.45pm. Neither walk nor lunch is obligatory but a good walk helps to build up an appetite for the free lunch.

Sun Feb 5th**GREENSAND WAY 2**

c.15ml. Hamstreet - Pluckley. Linear walk. Pub stop. Meet 9am - ring Graham Smith for meeting details on [REDACTED]

Sun Feb 19th**GREENSAND WAY 3**

c.19ml. Pluckley - West Peckham. Linear walk. Pub stop. Meet 9am - ring Graham Smith for meeting details on [REDACTED]

Sun Feb 26th**SEVENOAKS OUTCROPS WALK**

c.10ml. Start 10am from One Tree Hill c.p. Map: Landranger 188, GR 559532. Finish about 4.00pm. No pub stop, bring packed lunch. Short in length, plenty of incident. Leader: Martyn Berry. Tel: [REDACTED]

Sun Mar 5th**SEVENOAKS CIRCULAR MARSHALS' WALK**

Contact Brian Buttifant for details on [REDACTED]

Sun Mar 12th**GREENSAND WAY 4**

c.22ml. West Peckham - Limpsfield Chart. Linear walk. Pub stop. Meet 9am - ring Graham Smith for meeting details on [REDACTED]

Sun Mar 19th**SEVENOAKS CIRCULAR MAIN EVENT**

See Events Diary in Strider for full details.

Volunteers are required for this event – offers of help to Brian Buttifant, [REDACTED]

Sun Apr 2nd**GREENSAND WAY 5**

c.20ml. Limpsfield Chart - Brockham. Linear walk. Pub stop. Meet 9am - ring Graham Smith for meeting details on [REDACTED]

Sun Apr 9th**GREENSAND WAY 6**

c.18ml. Brockham - Shamley Green. Linear walk. Pub stop. Meet 9am - ring Graham Smith for details on [REDACTED]

Fri Apr 14th (Good Friday)**A SOUTH DOWNS WAY LOOP**

c.26ml. Meet at Eastbourne, western end of promenade(B 2103) at South Downs Way marker post (GR 600972). Park near school on left. Leader: Graham Smith, [REDACTED]

Sun Apr 16th**GREENSAND WAY 7**

c.18ml. Shamley Green - Haslemere. Linear walk. Pub stop. Meet 9am - ring Graham Smith for details on [REDACTED]

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 **8.30 p.m.** All welcome.

Chairman.....Brian Buttifant...

Secretary.....Bill Gillibrand...

Treasurer.....Neil Higham.....

Members.....Bryan Clarke....

Gordon Harker..

Mike Pursey.....

Keith Warman...

Duncan Brice

Social Walks Programme.....Mike Pursey.....

Footpath Problems.....Shirley Higgins.....

Newsletter Editor.....Laurie Lowe.....

WHITE CLIFFS 50.

This new event replaced one that the Kent Group organised some years ago. The original route passed through Canterbury during the early hours of the morning and we received a number of adverse comments from walkers who had not enjoyed dealing with the remarks made by some drunks in the city centre.

Gordon Harker undertook the job of redesigning the route to avoid Canterbury, and with the help of other members of the group, the new version of the White Cliffs 50 challenge walk came into existence. The event was well publicised in Strider and attracted 104 entries.

The Marshals walk took place on 10/11th September in warm, humid weather and was supported by mainly mobile checkpoints and a meal stop at Elham.

The main event took place on 8/9th October and was also run in fine weather. Of the 104 entries, 91 started on the day.....editor.

Praise for Gordon in particular, plus Mike and Graham for a successful White Cliffs 50, and for the staging of the Marshals' Walk. Also thanks to the many that helped out - Pat & Bryan, Brian, Pauline, Liz and Joy are the names that stand out as having done the most on the day, as far as I could tell.....Neil Higham.

Mike Pursey wishes to thank everyone who gave their time to marshal at the checkpoints on both the marshals' walk and on the main event.



Shirle Gill gets down to sorting the provisions for the checkpoints at the start of the White Cliffs 50.

Photo – Kent Messenger Group copyright.

Tom spotted the following in the Members' Forum on the LDWA website:

"I would like to thank everyone involved in organising the White Cliffs 50. It was a really challenging event with some tricky night navigation across fields with no obvious paths which added to the challenge. Good food at the checkpoints and the hot dog was great. Well done." Rebecca Lawrence, Heart of England, (2003) 10.10.05, 8.55

"We totally agree! This was an excellent event, very well organised with a lovely route, good food and an extremely well-written route description! Well done Kent Group."
Geoff & Kath Deighton, High Peak, (1981) 12.10.05. 21.06

We sold about 43 badges at the event, which means that we have about 59 left. If you completed either the marshals' walk or the main event and require an additional badge, please send £1-50 plus an SAE to Keith Warman at [REDACTED]
[REDACTED].....Keith.

See Committee Notes below for more news and comment on the event.

SEVENOAKS CIRCULAR - 2006

The Marshals' walk will take place on **March 5th**. Anyone wishing to do this event, and who is willing to help on the day of the main event, should contact Brian Buttifant [REDACTED]

The main event will be on **March 19th**. Plenty of willing volunteers are needed to make the event a success. Please contact Brian with your offers of help. (You do not have to do the Marshals' walk in order to qualify to help!)

HIGH WEALD WALK

The event in 2006 will start at Forest Row and will present a choice of either 15 or 26-mile routes. The date of the main event is **9th July** and a Marshals' walk will take place on **18th June**, for those who are willing to help on the day of the main event. Neal O'Rourke is concerned that we have enough helpers for both events in order to make them a success. Please put the dates in your diary and contact Neal (01233 663011) with your offers of help.

NORTHUMBERLAND 100

Bill Gillibrand has received a letter from Peter Morrill about the 100, which will be on 27-29 May 2006. He says:

"Next year's event takes place astride the English/Scottish Border, a land once fought over, but now very welcoming of walkers. Our route crosses the Cheviot Hills on St.Cuthbert's Way and returns via the Pennine Way down the Coquet Valley to the breakfast stop in the market town of Rothbury. The remainder of the route passes through mixed farmland and moor, passing through isolated communities to reach the finish point in Wooler."

Bill has several entry forms and they are also available on the website at www.northumberland100.org.uk

COMMITTEE NOTES from the meeting of 4th November, 2005-11-12

White Cliffs 50 - The event had been very successful and feedback from entrants was good, but the situation with headquarters had been unsatisfactory. Bryan had submitted a written report which was circulated. It was found that there was a separate Booking Secretary but understood that she has since left. We have been assured that the situation will be better next time but the booking needs to be made early so that the management can avoid a clash and our requirements must be set out very clearly.

Cleaning up after the event had been done by Gordon, Mike and Graham. The telephone situation had not been good and we should use our own next time. The bar area by the bowling club could be used as a sleeping area. Etchinghill was felt to be better than Elham for serving hot food. The supply of food needs to be revised and there should be a team to get and allocate the food for the checkpoints to collect.

It was agreed to run the event again next year with a time allowance of 22 hours and a 30 mile option in 12 hours. Brian was to speak to Pat Ryan to check suitable dates. A date in September was suggested. (This has subsequently been set as 23/24th September 2006 – a date left vacant by Surrey Tops.)

Footpaths - Shirley had reported by letter that she had recently done a lot of walking in East Sussex and had to write several letters to PROW office in Lewes. In some parishes the situation is good and in others appalling. The team under Matt Harper is working hard but there is still much to be done. Brian said he gets good co-operation from the West Malling office and the situation in Kent seems satisfactory.

Any Other Business:- As Keith is our contact for the Kent Wildlife Trust, he receives their appeals. It was agreed that a donation be considered. After discussion, it was agreed that, subject to Neil's approval, a donation of possibly £100 be made to the White Cliffs Project. In future such donations could be noted on the results sheet. Keith will get some Trust membership forms to be put out at the AGM.

Reference was made to the new Group badge with the Invicta horse. It was agreed to keep the simple outline and not adopt the elaborate design of the county logo, which would probably cause copyright problems. It will be presented at the AGM for approval. It seems that approval will have to be sought from the Executive Committee before it can be used in Strider.

DISCOUNTS – It has been reported that Cotswold Camping will give a 15% discount to all LDWA members giving the reference L 2079. Millets and Blacks may give a discount but it is at the local manager's discretion. (Blacks at Bluewater and in Tunbridge Wells will give a discount on production of a Ramblers membership card – Editor.)

THE GREENSAND WAY

Graham Smith is organising a series of seven walks to complete the beautiful Greensand Way from east to west in the New Year, starting on January 15th from Folkestone's East Cliff. Folkestone? Doesn't the Greensand Way start at Hamstreet? Well, although the official start of the Greensand Way IS at Hamstreet, Mike Pursey reckons the Greensand ridge actually starts at East Cliff, so the first 18-mile section of the walk will go from there to Hamstreet. After that the official path will be followed all the way to the end, at Haslemere in West

Surrey. All the seven walks will be linear, with walkers arranging cars to drive to the start of the walks. The seventh and final section of the walk is on Easter Sunday, April 16.

Details of all the Greensand Way walks are on the social walks programme.

CINQUE PORTS CHALLENGE

Graham Smith is planning an unofficial Cinque Ports Challenge walk on Saturday April 29th and Sunday April 30th, a bank holiday weekend. The 60-mile walk will start from Sandwich and finish at Hastings, taking in all the Cinque Ports (Sandwich, Dover, Hythe, New Romney and Hastings). It will also be an excellent training walk for anyone planning to attempt next year's 100.

Anyone wishing to take part in the walk, or assist in back-up, is asked to contact Graham on [REDACTED]

CALAIS-HESDIN

Graham Smith

On November 8th-10th Mike Pursey and Graham Smith walked from Calais to Hesdin in the Nord Pas de Calais region of France, a distance of 65 miles, following grandes randonnées (GRs) all the way.

The Nord Pas de Calais, while not the most beautiful part of France, is certainly very pleasant, and provides some fine walking. Its rolling, open countryside is not unlike Norfolk, albeit with a few hills. The GRs, clearly marked by parallel red and white waymarks, follow fine, firm tracks or minor roads and make for good going.

For the first two days of the walk the weather was almost freakish for November – sunny and so hot Graham was wearing his shorts (and obviously frightening the locals!) and Mike was wishing he had packed his.

On the first day they took the P&O ferry to Calais, to start walking at 11am. They had a lunch stop at Wissant and got to their destination of Wimille, a couple of miles off GR 128 and just outside Boulogne, at 7pm, where they had booked a hotel. The 18 miles were excellent, with some tremendous views across the Channel to the White Cliffs of Dover – in fact they could see a fair chunk of our White Cliffs 50!

The second day was a long one, 30 miles to the delightful ancient town of Montreuil. They started walking at 9am and followed minor roads to pick up the GR. There was then a fair bit of tough bog and a slog through the Dom. de Boulogne forest, which slowed them up quite a bit. The GR bypasses Samer – 13 miles from Wimille – after which it climbs the hill of Mont Corbeau and follows a superb ridge for a couple of kilometres: in fact at this point the countryside is quite like the South Downs.

Also at this point, darkness was not far off and Mike had some blister trouble. Although a hotel had been booked at Montreuil, it was thought wise to crack on and get there in case the patron didn't think the two English walkers were going to arrive. So Graham cracked on in the dusk and then dark, and arrived at 8pm, Mike cracking on slightly slower and getting there an hour later. Despite the tough day, the walking was generally very good.

On the last day, Mike and Graham left Montreuil at 9am, now following GR 121. Initially there was sun, but rain arrived mid-morning and hung around for most of the day. The rain wasn't heavy but meant waterproofs were required until they reached their destination of Hesdin, another ancient and very pleasant town.

The 17 miles between Montreuil and Hesdin follow the GR above the lovely Vallée de la Canche. The walking is good and the views are clear. Here the GR signposts – and there is never a shortage of them – tell you how many kilometres you are from Hesdin and how long it is going to take to get there. Before dropping down to Hesdin, the GR follows good paths through the forest of Dom. d'Hesdin.

Mike's blisters meant the pair split up again, and Graham arrived at 5pm, Mike shortly afterwards. No accommodation had been booked at Hesdin but they had no problem finding a hotel. Once they had booked in they found a very good, and reasonably priced, restaurant in

which to celebrate their walk. The next day it was a train back to Calais and then the ferry for Dover.

Calais-Hesdin is a very enjoyable walk, and most hotels in the Nord Pas de Calais are good and reasonably priced, as is the food in most of the restaurants. Graham and Mike are thinking seriously of doing the walk again next October – after the 2006 White Cliffs 50, of course – but in four stages instead of three: Calais-Wimille (18 miles), Wimille-Samer (13 miles), Samer-Montreuil (17 miles) and Montreuil-Hesdin (17 miles). If any Kent Group members are interested in joining them, please let Graham know.

FISH AND CHIPS AGAIN – November 13th

This 20-mile social walk, over Romney Marsh to Dungeness, was certainly full of incident. The incidents began when Mike Pursey, who lives a few miles away from the St Mary's Bay meeting place, in Hythe, didn't make it for the 8am start. He thought the start was 8.30am, and a telephone call to find out where he was found him in the middle of his breakfast!

So the five who were waiting – Joy Davies, Nicola Foad, Roger Munn, Graham Smith and Lyn Abbott, doing her first LDWA walk – set off without him, and it's fair to say the walk went downhill (not literally because it was, after all, Romney Marsh) from there.

On the map the first few miles over the Marsh look straightforward. But the party found that most of the route's paths between St Mary in the Marsh and Ivychurch were overgrown with crops and had not been reinstated. The problems got worse when the party found a footbridge over a dyke was broken and impossible to walk over. Kent LDWA members are nothing if not resourceful, and as the fearless five couldn't walk over the bridge they crawled over it instead. All these delays meant that Mike, having by now finished his breakfast, was able to catch them up.

On a serious note, the state of these paths and the broken bridge were, obviously, causes for concern, and a formal complaint has been made to the South Kent footpaths authority in Dover.

After these adventures, the walk improved immensely (it could hardly have got worse!) The party decided to take lanes to Old Romney, and then more paths after the A259 – which WERE walkable, and extremely pleasant – across fields to Lydd. From Lydd it was Dengemarsh Road to Dungeness, which is extremely bleak and where you really feel you are in wildest Kent, but it has a unique appeal for all that.

Then it was a bit of shingle bashing to get past the power station before finding the excellent Britannia pub, where the party all enjoyed fine meals of fish and chips (hence the name of the walk) and some liquid refreshment.

After that it was a bit of road walking before dropping down to the beach – and in this part of Kent the beaches are of clear, firm sand – for a couple of miles to Greatstone, then the last stretch was along the sea wall back to St Mary's Bay.

On the day the weather was very good – a bit cold but sunny, dry and very clear. The last few miles offered great views right across the South Kent coast to the White Cliffs, and at the end the setting sun turned the sands a spectacular shimmering red. A satisfying end to an eventful day.

Graham Smith.

"Old Road Will Lead To Rome Again"

So ran the headline in the 'London Times' on 15/11. It referred to the 'Via Francigena' ("The Way of the Franks"). It was originally founded in the 10th century by Sigeric, then Archbishop of Canterbury. Romano Prodi, former European Commission President and former and prospective Italian Prime Minister is promoting its revival as part of his election campaign. The route starts in Canterbury and during its 1,200 mile course, passes through East Kent, Calais, Arras, Rheims, Besançon and Lausanne before crossing into Italy via the Great St.

Bernard Pass and continuing to Rome via Aosta, Piacenza, Parma (of cheese fame), Lucca, Siena and Viterbo – no, I haven't heard of some of these places either).

Sognor Prodi also hopes to revive the Via Carolingia from Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle) by way of Strasbourg, Basle, Como, Bergamo, Mantua, Ravenna, Ancona and Assisi to Rome. This is believed to be the route taken by King Charlemagne on his way to being crowned by Pope Leo 111 on Christmas Day 800 A.D.....submitted by Tom Sinclair.

TOAD RACING

Bill Gillibrand.

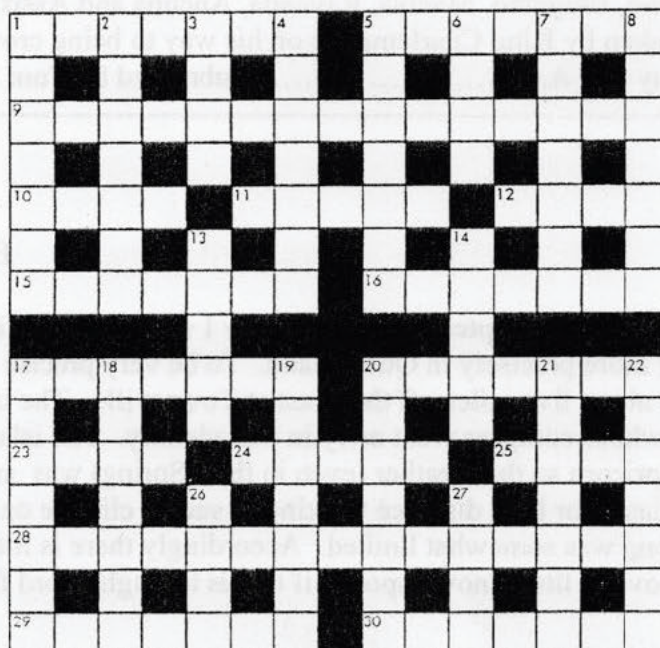
You may be aware that for most of September and October I was away visiting my daughter who lives in Australia, or more precisely in Queensland. To be very precise she was on Magnetic Island which is about five miles off the coast at Townsville. The island was so named by Captain Cook whose compass went awry in that vicinity. The island is well to the north of the Tropic of Capricorn so the weather (even in their Spring) was around the nineties and quite humid. Enthusiasm for long distance walking in such a climate on an island that is hilly but only six miles long was somewhat limited. Accordingly there is little I can report in that respect but I did discover a little known sport – if that is the right word for it – of toad racing.

In Queensland the growing of sugar cane is a major industry and the cane beetle has long been a pest. In 1935 the cane toad was introduced from Hawaii where it was a natural predator of the beetle. It proved to be an ecological disaster as the Australian beetle is different and is about the only thing that is not subject to the predations of the toads, which have multiplied by their millions. The toads have few predators of their own as they are highly poisonous.

Being what they are, the Aussies have devised a form of gambling by use of the toads that are obviously in plentiful supply. They have a racetrack consisting of two concentric circles. The inner one is about a foot in diameter and the other (the finishing line) is about six feet away. A plastic cylinder, divided into eight sectors, is placed on the small circle. Each toad is introduced with a brightly coloured ribbon tied round its neck and given a fictitious pedigree such as, "This is Ivan who was specially flown in from Moscow where he had been trained under Vladimir Putin". The one with a green ribbon was, of course, called Paddy. Each one is put up for auction, with prices going up to about £15, and then dropped into one of the compartments. The winning 'owner' can look forward to getting about half of the proceeds with the rest going to a charity.

Once all the spaces have been filled, the cylinder is lifted and they're off – or some of them are. A few of the competitors will make a sprint for the outer circle while some of the others will choose to stay where they are. I have attended only one race meeting so details may vary. It seems that the same toads are used for more than one race but form in one event gives no indication as to the performance in the next. Finally the winning 'owner' is given the privilege of kissing the winner. None of those that I saw turned into a beautiful princess.

Crossword puzzle set by Shirley Higgins. Please send your solutions to her at [REDACTED]



ACROSS

1. Hesitation at end of path for straggler. (7)
5. Continue with vehicle on outskirts of railway? No, go back! (5,2)
9. Policies for freedom concerning circles round the globe. (5,2,8)
10. River in North French island. (4)
11. Dug over for material. (5)
12. Equal in the Gallic language. (4)
15. Extend part of the route. (7)
16. Gravity alright at start of airy race through space in low vehicles. (2-5)
17. Up, up, before dropping down initially, Mr Maple, or you might get your boots wet here! (7)
20. Pope is soft on quarrel. (7)
23. Against a buckled tin. (4)
24. Calculate tally. (5)
25. Insignificant lake. (4)
28. A walk in the Alps? Unfortunately cannot I'm troubled without iodine. (4,2,4,5)
29. We hear sibling is at bird reservoir. (7)
30. Choose us, you'll have chosen Latin. (7)

DOWN

1. Gifts for Al who is camping. (7)
2. Ring shaped run, Alan is spinning. (7)
3. Lots have gone astray twice! (4)
4. This about new jog. (7)
5. Concerned about hospital in Kent village. (7)
6. Ramblers in wet weather. (4)
7. Juvenile queen is less mature. (7)
8. Require the French off the Isle of Wight. (7)
13. Fashion, we hear, is an obstacle for walkers. (5)
14. Broke membrane at the start. (5)
17. Flexible floor covering for checkpoints. (7)
18. Diversions of French trails. (7)
19. Abominable, this white sculpture. (7)
20. Punishment for grandma stuck between sport and church. (7)
21. Former play is inaccurate. (7)
22. Charges exorbitantly for lightweight jackets. (7)
26. Lied carelessly, lazy. (4)
27. Having the opportunity to look back at island. (4)