

LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION — KENT GROUP

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

NEWSLETTER

1 Hethpool NT 894280	LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION Northumbria Group	Glendale School NU 997278
2 Town Yetholm NT 820282	NORTHUMBERLAND 	Self Clip J NU 010290
Self Clip A NT 781938		18 East Horton NU 027310
3 Morebottle NT 773249		17 Chetton NU 055284
4 Towford NT 759133		16 Quarry House Farm NU 105246
Self Clip B N 19105		15 Eglington NU 109195
5 Mountain Refuge Hut NT 804129	Emergency telephone No. Wooler HQ 01668 281470	Self Clip I NU 063159
6 Scotchman's Ford NT 851146	ENTRANT NUMBER	14 Bolton NU 108138
7 Barrowburn NT 869107	114	Self Clip H NU 101112
Self Clip C NT 10102		12 Wandycstead Farm NU 097068
8 Arlington NT 921063		11 Hope Farm NU 098016
Self Clip D NT 95040		Self Clip G NZ 090094
9 Low Trewhitt NU 003045	Self Clip E NU 010026	10 Rothbury NU 058019
	Self Clip F NU 044027	

Number 70



August 2006

KENT GROUP WALKS PROGRAMME..... August 2006 to January 2007

Sat 12 - Sun 13 AUG

WHITE CLIFFS FIFTY – Marshals' Walk.

Contact Gordon Harker for entries and more details. Tel: [REDACTED].

Sat 16 - Sun 17 SEP

WHITE CLIFFS FIFTY - Main Event

See Events Diary in August "Strider". Please contact Mike Pursey [REDACTED] with offers of help on the day

Sun 24 SEP

FOUR PITS WALK

c.30mls. Meet 9am. at Northbourne Church, GR 334523. Pub stop. Further details from Graham Smith on [REDACTED]

Sun 15 OCT

GREENSAND WAY 3 (Re-run).

For those who may have missed February's walk, c.19mls. Pluckley - West Peckham. Linear walk. Pub stop. Meet 9am. Ring Graham Smith for meeting details on [REDACTED]

Sun 5 NOV

ANOTHER MINNIS MEANDER

c. 18mls. Meet at Ivy House, Stelling Minnis, GR 147483 for 8.30am. start. Leader: Liz Keeler. Tel: [REDACTED]

Sun 3 DEC

ANNUAL FAMILY LUNCH & WALK

This will be held at "The King's Arms", Meopham Green. A traditional Christmas lunch will be preceded by a short, gentle walk, suitable for all the family, starting at 10 am. Lunch at 2pm. Full details and a booking form are included as a separate sheet enclosed with this newsletter. Please donate items for the raffle.

Sat 9 DEC

CHRISTMAS CRUISE AROUND CALAIS - ENCORE UNE FOIS.

c. 14 mls. Calais - Escalles & return. Meet by SeaFrance desk, Dover Eastern Docks at 7.30am. for 8.15am. 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] NOTE: Possible crossing by CAR/FERRY. Please contact Graham.

Mon 1 JAN

NEW YEAR AGAIN ON THE SOUTH DOWNS

c.20mls. Meet 9am. in Eastbourne at western end of promenade (B2103) by South Downs Way marker post, GR600972. Park near school on left. Pub stop. Leader: Graham Smith. Tel: [REDACTED]

Fri 5 JAN

A NIGHT ON THE TERRACE

c.20mls. Meet 9.30pm. for 10.30pm. start at the Wheatsheaf PH, Kemsing. Landranger 188, GR555587. Leader Ivan Waghorn. Tel: [REDACTED]

Advance notice – The WHITE CLIFFS CHALLENGE 50 Main Event will be on Sat/Sun 16/17th September. We hope to repeat the success of last year's event but to do so, the Group will need plenty of willing volunteers to run the Start/Finish venue and the 7 checkpoints.

For this reason, Kent Group members who wish to do this walk should enter the Marshals' Walk in August. The Group will need all available help on the day in order to run the Main Event efficiently. Please contact Mike Pursey [REDACTED] with your offer to help.

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.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairman.....

Secretary.....

Treasurer.....

Members.....

Footpath Problems..

Newsletter Editor...

DIARY OF A COMMON MAN – THE NORTHUMBERLAND HUNDRED

27th – 29th May 2006

Keith Warman



Two weeks in Northumberland relaxing, reconnoitring and hyperventilating at altitude before the Hundred was the perfect preparation. This was the most northerly Hundred ever held, in and around the open landscapes of remote Northumberland, the Cheviots and Scottish Borders. I have many happy memories of the event as set out in the diary below, but the event had one very sad occurrence. David Mitchell from Wessex Group died, whilst taking part in the event, from a suspected heart attack.

At the start . . . Final preparations were made, including ensuring that all the required kit was carried. Lovely atmosphere at the start at Wooler Middle School, including a lady calmly meandering amongst the throng gently playing Northumbrian pipes. Several route description changes to note. Ushered outside into the sunshine for our welcome and final instructions from John Stewart. Then the field was off at 10:00am but I stayed behind with my companion, Tony Lewington, to avoid the rush. At 10:12am, a concerned Ann Sayer suggested that "it was about time you weren't here" so we bade farewell to our Kentish well-wishers and set off on our adventure.

1 mile . . . Passed a local and I remarked that it might rain later "Yul nae nid tae worrie, laddie!" came the encouraging reply, the gist of which I think I was able to translate.

3 miles . . . Striding across open moorland on wonderful clearly marked grassy paths. Prominent summit of The Cheviot (2,676 feet) away to our left. Skylarks everywhere and the haunting cry of the moorland curlew occasionally.

4 miles . . . Route description said 'SLOT', an abbreviation (or an abbrev.) for 'same line of travel'. We didn't know it then, but there would be an awful lot of slotting over the weekend.

6 miles . . . The enormous rising hulk of Yeavering Bell, with its large Iron Age hill fort on

the summit, to our immediate right.

8 miles . . . Checkpoint 1 at Hethpool, in the delightful and unspoilt College Valley. Gorse alongside the College Burn was vivid yellow and smelt of coconut. Caught up the back of the field here, and joined Neil Higham. We would stay with Neil for the next 34 miles. Meat pie and cheese pasties at this and (we didn't know it then) the next 14 checkpoints.

9 miles . . . Loins girded for the next section, with the most ascent on the route (1,532 feet in 6.74 miles). Up the road, then steeper up through forestry and open moorland.

10 miles . . . Down to lonely Trowup Burn, with the Border Ridge looming ahead. Guessed there would be only one way out of this valley (up again) and was right.

12 miles . . . Clouded over, another steep climb to the Border Ridge and joined the Pennine Way. Into Scotland, and noted that skylarks now singing with Scottish accent. Very windy and nasty sleet shower for 20 minutes. Character-building stuff!

14 miles . . . To Kirk Yetholm. The last time I was here was in 1975 (when still in short trousers) at end of Pennine Way. We passed the Border Hotel where I had a pint of beer in 1975 on Wainwright. Meadows to checkpoint 2 at Town Yetholm. More meat pie.

16 miles . . . A zigzag climb on St. Cuthbert's Way to follow airy ridge of Wideopen Hill (1,210 feet). First self-clipper here. Cheviot Ridge to left and surrounding hills grassy, rounded and inviting.

21 miles . . . To Morebattle and met Shirlie for first time. Checkpoint 3 in Temple Hall Hotel and met John and Lesley Sparshatt marshalling here. Cheese pasty to augment meat pie.

23 miles . . . Straightforward route along tracks and field edges in remote landscape, climbing gradually. Nearly trod on wild haggis that ran out of hedgerow.

25 miles . . . A deer ran across cereal crop in front of us and hurdled barbed wire fence into sanctuary of woodland.

28 miles . . . Joined Dere Street between stone walls, just like The Ridgeway without the ruts. Quietness and emptiness baa a few sheep. Black cattle also.

31 miles . . . Checkpoint 4 at Towford Outdoor Centre, run by Cumbria and Kent Groups. Very cramped but lovely atmosphere. Kit check here. Meat pie and pasty, for a change. Torched up for the night, which would soon engulf us. Shirlie again.

32 miles . . . A long, steady climb up Dere Street to the Border Ridge.

34 miles . . . Dark now, but found self-clipper on gate leading to Pennine Way.

35 miles . . . Following Pennine Way with acorn way marks and occasional flagstone paving but, oh dear, torches way off to the left! Some flagstones under water and black wet peat in heather to each side waiting to suck in unsuspecting Hundredeers.

36 miles . . . Checkpoint 5 outside remote mountain refuge hut at 1500 feet on Yearning Saddle, run by mountain rescue team. Two Land Rovers here! Pennine Way walkers inside hut must have had little sleep, but had good introduction to joys of T'Undred.

40 miles . . . Along Border Ridge to highest point on the route at Windy Gyle (2030 feet). Very cold night but wind had dropped a little. Turned right off ridge and back into England to tent and checkpoint 6. A lonely and thankless vigil for the marshals, another mountain rescue team.

41 miles . . . Downhill into Coquetdale. First light at 2:45 am, heard first skylark at 3:01am and torches off. Neil and Tony in disbelief when I said "It's all downhill now - trust me, I'm a doctor." "With a degree in lying" mumbled Neil.

42 miles . . . Camping barn checkpoint 7 at Barrowburn very busy. Ran short of food so ordered more. Apparently, it arrived in the form of vanload of meat pies and was promptly sent back by marshals. Checkpoints now beginning to understand why walkers groaning at sound of "We've got meat pie, cheese pasty,...."

43 miles . . . Out of barn and straight up probably the steepest ascent on the route. Neil dropped back slightly and Tony and I waited for him at self-clip point near summit of Shillhope Law. Neil sent us on, but we noticed that he had soon caught up another group of

four. Another swift drenching as rainstorm swept down Coquetdale.

49 miles ... Caught up Avril Stapleton and Ian McLeod at Alwinton, checkpoint 8, another barn. Tony Francis was also there, struggling to fold double-sided Explorer map and exclaiming, "Oh, it's the Lake District, no wonder I missed that left turn back there." Familiar faces of marshals from Essex & Herts.

50 miles ... Halfway! A much gentler section ahead, with only 558 feet of climbing to checkpoint 9.

52 miles ... 6:30 am and a wonderfully clear and quiet morning. Pleasant fields and lanes on the northern side of Coquetdale.

55 miles ... Route description said "uphill" but it was about 1 in 500, not quite like the 'uphills' we had conquered earlier.

56 miles ... And so to checkpoint 9, in a barn at Low Trehwitt Farm, to be welcomed by Terry Griffiths and his team. "Well dun ladth, we've got meat pieth, cheethe pathtieth,....." As I was resting tired limbs, Terry approached and asked surreptitiously "Now then my friend, can I intereth you in a glath of beer?" I quietly thanked him and declined, my head having just cleared of a headache, which I'd had all night. Looked around to see every other walker surreptitiously sipping unknown liquid from brown cups. Tony imbibed, telling me that it was rude not to. We were surprised that the beer was not some brain-scouring northern brew with a 3" head of foam but weak southern flat stuff (Young's Special!). A lovely gesture, though. Caught up with Tim Glenn here, and the three of us left together.

59 miles ... Delighted to meet Shirlie at Thropton, before quite a long climb up to Rothbury Common. She told us we were all looking good and we felt it, too.

62 miles ... Nasty descent on stony path through heather to breakfast checkpoint, number 10, at Rothbury. Very well looked after here. Hot water in bowls for washing feet was bliss. Baggage collected, clothes changed and supplies replenished. Left in good spirits with 38 miles to go. Rothbury is a lovely small town.

66 miles ... Clear path across the only arable field (all 200 yards of it) on the route.

68 miles ... Several difficult gates and uneven field edges brought us to isolated Hope Farm and checkpoint 11. Groaning tables of meat pie and pasty caused partial eclipse of sun.

70 miles ... More uneven ground and told to go to right of gorse bushes as "going to the left or through it will lead to very boggy ground". Looked it too.

71 miles ... Better going now on grassy moorland, forestry track and then the world record "approx 1 mile" (it was at least 2) on track to meet Shirlie again at New Moor House. Tony and Tim ahead by about ten minutes.

72 miles ... Checkpoint 12 at Wandystead Farm. Cairns of you-know-what.

74 miles ... Welcome surprise at meeting Jimmy and Margaret Oddy by roadside. Wished each other well in our travels.

78 miles ... In early evening light, reached peaceful village of Bolton and hove into checkpoint 13, run by Staffordshire Group, in village hall. Meat pie and pasty, thankfully brought on from previous checkpoints. Departed and Shirlie pointed us in correct direction. Tony and I in hysterics listening to Tim's stories.

82 miles ... Got across Beanley Moor (first of three tricky moorland crossings with intermittent paths) before nightfall. Then sloshed across very wet grassy field, which Tim referred to as "somewhat sporting".

85 miles ... Met Shirlie at Eglingham and checkpoint 15, and Norfolk and Suffolk Group. Disappointment at being told by Phyllis Facer that "we've no meat pie here, I'm afraid." Tim and I had 40 winks each, while Tony had about 27.

86 miles ... Night now and cold. After another steady climb, we crossed Bewick Moor, but I made a navigational discrepancy here for about 300 yards. I commented on how few cattle we'd seen around the route. "That's because they're all under pastry at the checkpoints," claimed Tony.

88 miles . . . Reached Quarry House Farm and checkpoint 16. A cold and long vigil for marshals. Tony was right about the cattle.

90 miles . . . The last moorland crossing (Sandyford Moor) and the most tricky. Flagging was in place, but was difficult to see. Relief that my recceing had paid off as we found the gate at the far side. Noticed that Tony had been insisting on opening and closing every gate for about five miles and I suggested that he was suffering from repetitive gate syndrome, for which he could get ointment from his doctor. "Yes, it's called WD 40" said Tim.

94 miles . . . Strolled past the B&B in Chatton where Shirlie and I were staying, to arrive, in Cornwall and Devon's capable hands, at checkpoint 17 in the Scout Hut. Hazel was Bound to be chatting, and she was - lifting everyone's spirits. It was 4:00 am and Shirlie arrived! Got too comfortable here and stayed too long.

97 miles . . . Our weary threesome slogged along three miles of weary roads to East Horton Farm and the final checkpoint in a small wooden hut run by Wooler Runners. One male marshal wore a kilt - was he wearing running shorts under his kilt?

98 miles . . . The final section and I'd told Tim and Tony previously that there was another 590 feet of ascent. Now I mentioned that we had to go up Weetwood Bank and they were astonished to learn that it was not some pile of earth on the roadside, but the massive bulk of moorland which lay ahead.

99 miles . . . Crampons were fixed for the ascent of the western face of the Bank to reach the last self-clipper at the top. A lovely traverse across the top on short-cropped grass in the morning sunshine, before descending through heather and gorse to a gate onto a road. Met Shirlie and caught up Gordon Harker here.

100 miles . . . Downhill and back to the school to finish at 7:30 am. We strolled in and received a wonderful reception. Congratulated my companions and thanked them for their company. Tim has now started and finished the last 23 Hundreds, a marvellous achievement. Rested, and then repaired to our B&B for a good long sleep.

I would like to thank all marshals, friends and helpers for giving up their time to look after us, as well as the Organisers for staging a Hundred that was worthy of the challenge. I am very grateful to all the Kent Group members who made the long journey north to assist at our joint checkpoint with Cumbria Group. Thank you Shirlie too, for your support and encouragement.

When we had most of the walk under our belts, Tim said that the welcome and friendliness of the Cumbria/Kent checkpoint at Towford shone above the rest. He stressed that he wasn't just saying that to me, so I'm pleased to pass on his pleasure to those involved. It was a splendid Hundred.

Keith Warman.

The Other Half's Hundred

Sarah Smith

Of course it was a coincidence that our annual holiday was taken in the Scottish Borders. And, of course, it was an even greater coincidence we went on holiday at the end of May. It had absolutely nothing do to with The Hundred, of course. Nothing at all. Hang on a minute, is that pigs I can see lining up on the runway.....

It must have been sometime in the middle of last year that we started to discuss holidays for 2006. Graham has had a love affair with Scotland since he walked across the country from

coast to coast several years ago. Around about the same time he discovered munros and ever since then it has been his number one walking – er sorry I mean, holiday, destination. Actually I like Scotland too, (although I am willing to give other places a chance), so when Graham mentioned returning to the Scottish Borders this year I wasn't averse to the idea. I particularly love the wide-open sandy beaches of the magnificent Northumberland coast and these would be within easy reach. Before you could say 'how far to the next checkpoint' the dates had been agreed and we were looking for holiday cottages that would take two adults and three dogs.

Several months later on 20 May we arrived at the village of Town Yetholm (which was going to be checkpoint 2 – although I did not know this at the time).

Nice village, lovely cottage and everything set for a great break. Whenever we go on holiday, Graham and I have an understanding that although it's good to do things together it's also nice to do our own thing. So it came as no surprise when he started mentioning St Cuthbert's Way, which passed through the village, and how it would be good to get some practice in before the Big One.

So for two days we 'did our own thing' with Graham walking the entire St Cuthbert's Way and me either enjoying walks along the River Tweed at Melrose or exploring the glorious coast just south of Berwick.

But the whole holiday was, of course, geared to The Hundred and on Saturday 27 May, we drove over to Wooler where I deposited Graham for the start. This is the first time I had seen so many mad people together at the same time. I'd met a few before, of course. You cannot be married to a fully signed up member of the LDWA without rubbing shoulders with people who think walking 100 miles in 48 hours is a normal leisure activity.

But you've got to admire their guts. So it was in awe and admiration that I watched them all set off on the very first step of their journey.

I caught up with Graham again later on the Saturday afternoon. We had arranged to meet at checkpoint 2 at Yetholm at 3.00pm but when I got there at 2.40pm I learned that he had already signed in (or whatever it is you do) and was on the way to the next checkpoint in Morebattle. I caught up with him there looking fit and cheerful (him, not me!). That was the last time I saw him until Monday morning.

As a normal person I found it hard to grasp the concept that while I was doing all the usual things like eating meals, catching up on the latest Dr Who adventure, exploring and going up the pub, Graham and his friends were walking. While I was sleeping, they were walking. While I got up, ate meals, walked the dogs, went down the pub and went to bed again, they were STILL walking. It's hard to grasp the fact that walking for all that time is possible!

But, of course, it is and Graham made it back in Wooler on Monday morning. He had caught the sun and although he hobbled like a man who was just learning how to use his legs, he looked remarkably well. There were a few other 'other halves' easing their tired partners into cars but the general feeling among walkers seemed to be one of exhilaration (exhausted exhilaration, but exhilaration nonetheless).

So I don't think I'll be able to escape the madness. And I am sure that Graham will try and convince me that mid-Wales would be a great place for our holiday next year.

**CP. 4 CRAIGVINAN Outdoor centre trust. TOWFORD
NORTHUMBRIAN HUNDRED Paul Hatcher**

Ingredients; One Outdoor Centre, 15 LDWA Stalwarts, Tea, Coffee, Squash, Ravioli, Sandwiches, Soup, Buns and Bananas.

Assembled Team; Vice Presidents Barbara Blachford & Ann Sayer, MBE. Cumbria group members, Barrie Blankenship, Roger Burgin, Jim Crocket, Derek Heathrington, Ian Mosley, Mary & Paul Hatcher (Also Kent). Kent Group Members, Tom Sinclair, Ann Beeching, (from Kendal) Margaret & Jim Oddy, (from Whichford) Ron Roweth, (from Edale) and doing her bit (while waiting for Keith) Shirlie Gill.

We arrive at 3.00 O'clock to find the Raynet team Geoff and Tom (with partners Gil & Norma) already partially set up. The van with the supplies and keys to the centre is not due to arrive until 4.00. It is raining hard so we wait in our cars. By the time the van arrives, the rain has stopped and thankfully the sun comes out and although the wind has a chill to it, the sun remains with us until nightfall.

The first tasks are getting the urn on (a cuppa for us all), making sandwiches and preparing the centre before the first walkers are due. They arrive 50 minutes early. We check with control, to be told that, "as the next checkpoint is in a remote position, we have to hold them". By the time we can let them on their way there are 56 eating away at our supplies.

Ron & Ann B. have taken on the Kit Check and the task is kept light-hearted by getting the walkers to choose a number from 1 to 10 and then having them produce the corresponding item of kit on the check list from their rucksack. Barbara and Ann S. clip and check-in. Mary and Margaret keep the tea & drinks flowing, while the lads from Cumbria work manfully cooking and distributing the food to the grateful walkers. (2 soups and a ravioli, please Ian?) When we had been setting up the local farmer called in to insist that we keep the gate closed, as the Yew trees round the centre were poisonous to his stock. Jim O. volunteered to man the gate and Ron and I alternate with the Kit Check to let him have a warming cuppa. Some of team multitask, with Tom and Shirlie filling any gaps. With around 100 walkers still to arrive food was running low, but this was soon supplemented by extra supplies (cheese & onion Pasties, meat pie, cake and more bread) brought on from the earlier checkpoints.

At 11.30 Ian leaves to make his way home, he is on duty serving breakfast to guests at his B&B in Patterdale in the morning. It is not long before the last of 440 walkers leave and the sweepers, Bobby, Chris & Parsley (well known Norfolk & Suffolk trio and friends of Kent group) arrive. Time is taken checking the paperwork to ensure that all walkers are accounted for so that checkpoint 3 can be stood down and the sweepers sent on their way. Most now make for their bunks while I wait with Raynet for checkpoint 5 to be cleared and we are stood down. After a lengthy delay, the call comes and I roll into my bunk at 4.00am.

In the morning (7.30) we get breakfast and then clean the centre, no doubt leaving it in a better state than when we arrived. Barbara sets out with Ann, who wants to catch the train back to Middlesex. Ron and Ann are off to walk part of the route through the Cheviots. Tom makes his way to the Breakfast Stop to act as courier of retired walkers. Mary and I set off for a walk from the checkpoint with Cumbria Group to the top of the hill, where we leave for a shorter route back to our car while they continue on a proper walk. We set off and, via a tea shop, visit some of the later checkpoints to see how the walkers are progressing.

In the evening we visit the Pub at Chatton (Close to CP17) where we meet Andrew Boulden from Kent (it is his B&B) He has finished the event and we join him for a chat over our evening meal. Andrew is now off to his bed and we head back to Wooler and a night shift in the kitchen at walk HQ. We finally get cleared up at the School around midday before heading home to Brampton and a rest. The result was an enjoyable, if tiring weekend with the two groups working and socialising together. It is hoped that we can do it again sometime. I received a letter to all concerned, of gratitude and thanks from the Northumberland 100 Committee and also a card that reads

“Our Grateful thanks for the time and effort you willingly gave us. You are what makes the LDWA special.”

Hear, Hear!

Paul.

If this gives you an urge to help on a Hundred checkpoint, here are the details for Kent Group's checkpoint next year:-

Cant Canolbarth Cymru – Mid-Wales Hundred, 2007

Kent has volunteered to staff a checkpoint in this event and has been allocated:

CP6 Llangunllo. Grid ref - SO 213 712 @ 40 miles - Well appointed Village Hall.

Presumably the date will be 26-28 May 2007. **Offers of help to Brian Buttifant please.**

Tony Twyman wrote the following article in 1994. It recalls the first occasion on which the Kent Group organized the 62-mile Wealden Waters Walk. In spite of all the effort that had gone into the planning of the event, we had no control over the weather, which turned out to be extreme. It was Mike Smith's idea to devise a route that linked the three main reservoirs of the Weald, i.e. Bewl Water, Weirwood and Bough Beech, and hence the name “Wealden Waters Walk”. Unfortunately, over the years the weekend of the event often coincided with an extremely wet spell of autumn weather. The “Waters” of the title came to take on a deeper significance!

At the time when he wrote this account, Tony had completed the event on each of the 12 times that it had been run. He went on to keep up an unbroken record, completing the full distance on each of the 17 times that the event took place. No other person has achieved this record. Thus Tony can claim (as he often does!) to be “The only person in the whole universe to have completed every Wealden Waters Walk”.

The First Wealden Waters Walk – 1981

Looking back now, 1981 seems such a long time ago, and perhaps with the passing of time the scars of those dark October days have healed enough for me to put pen to paper. For surely in its early days, the “Wealden Waters” earned the reputation of being the nemesis of all the major events, “Nemesis” being the goddess who destroyed those who claimed to be all-powerful.

My walking career had begun some 18 months previously when I joined the local rambling club on a 14-mile walk one Sunday morning. The group comprised mostly of very small,

stern, bow-legged old ladies, whilst I at six-two towered over them like Gulliver, and spent the whole day lumbering along like a Leviathan in their wake.

Three months after this first outing I decided to tackle the Pennine Way, which I managed in 12 days, carrying almost 70 lbs in my rucksack – mostly food, as I was not aware there were shops along the way. With hindsight, I should also have included a gas mask, as I was badly gassed at Gargrave and lucky to escape with my life!

Shortly after this, I joined the LDWA, triumphed in some of the minor walks and soon raised my sights to greater things. My eyes fell on the advert for the soon to be famous 'Wealden Waters', 100Ks, connecting the 3 reservoirs of Bewl Water, Weirwood and Bough Beech, with a 24 hour time limit - held in mid-October with 14 hours of darkness. "Only those who can see in the dark like a cat" should have been included on the entry form.

The great day arrived. What should I wear? I settled for thermals, thick shirt, jumper, boots (the bigger the better), my new Craghopper trousers plus a rucksack full of spare clothes, batteries, and various homemade concoctions that even a hungry bluebottle would not touch!

The journey to Tunbridge Wells was easy enough with a 12 noon start. I arrived at the Neville Ground Tennis Club in good time, and on opening the door came my first shock. The hall was full of fine young men in singlet and shorts, clear-eyed, golden-haired, bronzed thighs that rippled as they bounded from one group to another. God, I felt inadequate!

The start was 1000 yards away at the Pantiles, from where we would retrace our steps past the tennis club and then into the unknown. At the ring of the bell, the Lady Mayoress led us from the Pantiles back to the tennis club where, without breaking step, she climbed smartly into the back of her official limousine, and with a brief wave of hand was gone. This was the signal for it to start raining. A cheer rose up ahead as the young Greek Gods raced off with their blonde curls tossing in the rain.

Soon it became obvious that the rain was in for a long time, as splishing soon became splashing, and we threaded our way on faint paths through ploughed fields and those slimy-surfaced hop fields, where we tripped over loose string or fell over backwards or slithered about wildly with our arms in the air. Viewed from a distance we resembled the inmates of a lunatic asylum on a day out! Not many miles after we had started, I noticed my bootlace was undone, and after a brief stop, I hurried after the others who by now had vanished. Two children emerged from a woodland path on my left, and ignoring their puzzled expressions, I hurried past them through a gate and down a path only to arrive at someone's back door. A gentleman emerged asking if he could help. I explained quickly and asked if I might use his side gate to regain the road, "Yes" he replied, looking over my shoulder as he did so. There coming down the path behind me were about 20 walkers who had followed me. I shot through the gate like a rabbit, rejoined my small group, and we spent the next few miles to Bewl Bridge CP telling lies about our walking abilities.

Neil Higham from the Surrey group did most of the navigation as we progressed steadily - through worsening conditions towards Bowles Rocks CP, climbing wobbly stiles, wading swamps and fending off the dog attacks at Rock Robin Farm, which were to become feature of the Wealden. We arrived at the CP just as darkness fell. From now on, we would be navigating by torch light, a new experience for me.

Neil, his friend Gary and I left the CP together. I found it very hard to navigate by night and began to lose touch with them. My Craghoppers were by now wet and beginning to slip down, causing an uncomfortable lump between my thighs, making walking even more tiring in heavy boots over wet ploughed fields and terrible footpaths, which I'm sure, had not been used since the Romans left Britain.

We trudged on in pouring rain that bent the woodland foliage downwards, forcing us to do the same. We gathered other walkers as we went along until we were about 14 in number. By now, it had become colder, wetter and very dark indeed. All of us were worried about being left behind, and as a result, we tried to walk three abreast on footpaths made for one. We pushed, shoved and jostled our way to Broadstone Warren CP, where we sat in the rain drinking hot soup by a large fire and we were very sullen to say the least.

Next stop was Weirwood Reservoir, CP 4. My Craghoppers were by now so wet and stiff I could not tell if I was holding them up, or them me. Fed up with our progress, I went to the front to try my hand at navigation, as it seemed impossible to cover more than a few 100 yards without some hitch. Holly bushes were confused with oak trees and we crashed into each other in the terrible darkness. It was impossible to see each other in the forest, and almost as bad in the open, and we crashed through a front garden for the second time onto a small lane about 2 miles from the reservoir. We switched off our torches to save our batteries and promptly fell into the roadside ditches.

The walk up until now had been very tough, yet it was to get worse on the path around the reservoir to the CP. I became convinced this path only existed in the tortured minds of incurable meths drinkers - with a high 'peerless' wire fence on our right and 16 inches away on our left was a hawthorn hedge with bramble tentacles, which ripped at our legs, tore hats from heads and map cases from our hands. Exposed roots underfoot tripped one against the fence, thence into the hedge and back again, all punctuated by a dull thump on the head by overhead branches. 1000 yards of this tested every one to breaking point, and we had hardly reached half way at 31 miles.

Weirwood CP gave us the choice of sitting in the warm changing rooms of the yachting club or by the caravan outside. Needless to say I chose the warm on this night, and on the nights in years to come, from which more often than not I had to be persuaded to leave so as to keep my 100% record intact,

Fortified we set off once again. This time our destination was Beeches Farm near Dry Hill Fort. The rain had eased enough for me to open my raincoat allowing me to hang my compass down inside my over trousers to stop it swinging about. We passed through the sailing club gates, turned left up a grass bank, over a stile to cross a field on a 65-degree bearing. I was last over the stile and to my surprise, they were all walking on different bearings. Torches could be seen in the darkness over a large area. Whom should I follow? I reached down inside my over trousers for my compass but could not find it. In a panic I pulled the lanyard hard and almost emasculated myself - I'd put it inside my Craghoppers by mistake. With one hand on my 'near -miss' and whimpering pitifully, I stumbled through the night, reflecting on the life style of some unfortunate tom cats, and by sheer good luck found the gate they were all looking for. All pain forgotten, I called out "Over here. I've found it" in a rather superior voice. Having been congratulated by all, I was elected to lead them across the next field, which I did and promptly got everyone lost again, a feat I was to repeat some years later in the company of Hugh Romer and Janet Chapman.

Passing through Forest Row we picked up the Vanguard Way. This is a steady climb starting on top of an earth bank with exposed roots underfoot, soon to change to overhead foliage which was bent double and caught the tops of our rucksacks and propelled us backwards downhill only to receive a sharp head-butt in the buttocks from the next person in line. I was convinced at the time that all this buttocks butting caused the rain to start again as we trudged uphill, each one of us bearing a striking resemblance to Groucho Marx. A mile further on we passed Thornhill chicken farm where we were almost asphyxiated by the smell of chicken manure brought to life by the rain. The aroma took our minds off route finding and as a result we missed our left turn, and spent 10 minutes thrashing about in the bushes, holding our noses and breath, until for the umpteenth time Neil Higham came to our rescue.

As so often in a major event, life outside the walk itself seems to recede and becomes meaningless as

one struggles with one's mind and body to keep going. As we continued down hill on yet another terrible path, my thoughts turned to the "Greek Gods" ahead. In my mind's eye I saw them impervious to the mud and cold, shaking the rain from their golden locks, gliding through the darkness with smiles on their faces, revealing rows of white teeth which went on forever.

The slippery climb out of the small valley brought my thoughts back to reality. We went through a gate into a field. At last - grass to walk on. My joy was short-lived as generous portions of cow pats lay in great abundance and were very slippery indeed. Those unlucky enough to slip soon found themselves lurching forward in a most undignified manner, with their trailing leg waving wildly in the air like a windsock. Several gates and fields later, followed by a mile or so of steady uphill walking, saw us arriving at Beeches Farm CP, where we sat on bales of straw drinking hot tea and eating cold rice while the rain swept under the roof of the barn onto us. Moving among the weary walkers serving tea was a young man whose voice rose and fell like a rusty hinge on a kissing gate. Yes! Eric Rolfe in need of some Three-in-One oil!

When the time came to leave, only six of the fourteen rose. We shuffled off soon to be enveloped in the bewildering folds of darkness over Dry Hill, down past New Barns Farm, wading shin-deep in goodness-knows-what, over ploughed fields, under and over railways. At one point we walked round and round a field looking for a single plank bridge buried deep in an enormous hedgerow. On another occasion, we crossed the wrong bridge, covered 400 yards of heavy plough only to discover a wide river instead of the railway we were expecting. We retraced our steps, crossed the correct bridge plus more ploughed fields (plough ad infinitum).

At Delaware Farm we saw a flashing light in the distance. "It's the check point" we cried and hurried forward waving our torches in reply. 800 yards later we gathered round the flashing light with no sight of the checkpoint. We little realized then it would be a further 2 hours before we arrived at Winkhurst Green CP having taken 4.5 hours to cover 8 miles and around 20 hours for 50 miles.

Dawn had broken, it had stopped raining. Tray upon tray of food lay untouched on the table. We had barely sat down when someone asked the time. To our dismay we discovered there was less than 4 hours to cover the final 12 miles, or - at our present rate of progress - we would be classed out of time. I stood up, gave my rucksack and wet gear to a marshal and told the others I was going on, as I did not wish to be classed out of time after all we had suffered. They all agreed, and we left the CP with the marshals calling us back to eat some food. But it was too late - we were on our way to Swayland CP 6 miles away. Sadly, we did not know then that only 14 walkers had gone through before us, hence all the food on display. The marshals had had a long vigil for almost nothing. As we hurried away, we began to split up, myself with a man who claimed to have no skin on the soles of his feet because of his Wellingtons. As a result, he walked on tip-toe with his arms at 90 degrees to his body as though he was trying to fly.

We passed through Swayland with just 6 miles to go. By now I was all in and my back was playing up. But worse still, I had left my water bottle in my rucksack and I was becoming very thirsty indeed. I stopped at a puddle wondering if I should risk a drink. Just then one of the original six caught me up and gave me a drink from his litre bottle of orange which he had carried untouched since the start.

We arrived back at the Pantiles with 33 minutes to spare. I was so exhausted I could not possibly walk the 1000 yards back to the tennis club, so Laurie Lowe kindly gave me a lift back in his car. In the club room we sat in complete silence, sipping our tea, heads hung down with fatigue. A few more walkers arrived, one of whom was Keith Wilson from our group. This made a total of 23 home inside the 24 hour time limit. I believe 75% of the starters retired quite early in the event. It transpired that more rain had fallen in the month prior to the walk than in the previous 10 months.

Two years later history repeated itself and once again we slogged through rain, darkness and bitter cold. On this occasion I soloed 40 miles in 13 hours to finish 4th in 20.5 hours.

After the 6th event I became the only walker to have completed every "Wealden", and Mike Smith the founder - organiser became very keen that I should keep my 100% record intact until I had reached 10 "not out". This I promised to do, on the condition I received a gold watch inlaid with mother of pearl! Sadly, Mike Smith was not present when I was invited to the Kent Group dinner in '92 to be presented with a beautiful plaque by their president, Peter Barnett. This plaque was engraved with my name for being "the only person since the Earth broke away from the Sun to have completed all ten Wealdens". This figure has now risen to 12 and I have now set a target of 20. Who knows?

Many memories return as I write this article, mostly of whimpering alone in the dark. Others include fending off dogs, being chased by cows in the night, falling headfirst into a river, lost in fog, moonstroke, *(this was one of the few events when we had clear skies and a full moon overnight, and he still found something to complain about! – editor)*, heatstroke, floods, just being missed by lightning, sleeping in bus shelters, losing my only bulb, frightening a cow which jumped clean over a 5-bar gate and ran away, chased in the night by a farmer who thought I was stealing his cows, of starting over an hour late, terrible thirst, of the time my car fell off the axle stand and landed on my chest a few days before the event so that my arms would not work very well. But perhaps the most lingering memories of all are those of the kindness and encouragement shown to me by members of the Kent Group as I endeavored to keep my 100% record intact over the years. I know that courage is not always enough when you have to leave a CP cold, tired and alone to face many more miles of mud, rain and darkness.

Well I trust you all enjoyed my journey from the past. As for the future, perhaps once again I'll tweak the nose of Nemesis and make it lucky 13. Oh! I almost forgot. What of the Greek Gods you ask? Well, they all retired by CP2. Funny old world ain't it!

Tony Twyman.

Cinque Ports Challenge

Graham Smith

TEN people stepped out on the Cinque Ports Challenge on the 29th and 30th of April: Graham Smith, Jan O'Rourke, Don Newman, Christophe Delogne, Stephanie Le Men and Joy Davies from the LDWA, and non-members John Goodwin and Una Mills, plus David Kelly and Paul Withers, who are both 14 – and very keen walkers.

The Cinque Ports Challenge was actually John's idea. John is a former Deputy Town Mayor of Dover, and he organised the first Cinque Ports Charity Challenge in 2003. John's idea was to link to Cinque Ports of Sandwich, Dover, Hythe, New Romney and Hastings, plus the Ancient Towns of Rye and Winchelsea and the Limbs of Deal, Folkestone and Lydd. Graham went on John's first walk, which went from Sandwich to Hastings in three days, and went again when the event was repeated last year in the opposite direction and taking the same number of days. Both events raised thousands of pounds for various charities.

Graham thought the event could be adapted into a continuous LDWA walk, and John and Una – who also walked the 2003 and 2005 events – were keen, although neither felt they were up to completing the entire 100k of the route in one go. So arrangements were made, a very rough route description written and checkpoints were organised ... and the ten people mentioned above turned up at Sandwich at 10am on April 29th for the off.

It was a colourful start, as Sandwich Bites Festival, to celebrate the town's fine culinary traditions, was being held that morning, and the market square in front of the Guildhall was packed with people dressed in 18th century costume. Nine of the party made it to the planned

start of Sandwich Guildhall by 10am, but Don was late (a challenge walk wouldn't be complete if Don was early, would it?) Don was met coming from the station, and the ten set off through the ancient streets to the quay, where they took the Saxon Shore Way across Royal St George's Golf course to the sea. Then they turned right and followed the coast to Deal, where they arrived at Checkpoint 1 – Graham's house – for lunch provided by his wife, Sarah.

After lunch there was a smattering of rain, but this proved to be the last of the wet stuff until those still walking had almost reached Hastings. The rain soon passed and the party ascended the cliffs at Kingsdown to follow the White Cliffs 50 route to St Margaret's and then Dover, Checkpoint 2. The sun was out, the paths were fine and the views excellent. As Don said, walking doesn't get much better than that. John's parents, Maureen and Harry Beattie, supplied the excellent refreshments before the ten set off again. Instead of following the WC50 route along the cliffs, the Cinque Ports Challenge took a cycle path which runs between the clifftop path and the A20. This took the party to Capel, where they dropped down to Folkestone and Checkpoint 3 – the East Cliff Pavilion right on the outskirts of town.

The party had by now walked more than 20 miles, and some of them were feeling the distance – particularly Paul, who had strained his leg but insisted on carrying on to his intended destination of Hythe. Then it was down to Folkestone Harbour to follow the seafront to Sandgate, Seabrook and the Royal Military Canal to Hythe and Checkpoint 4 – the excellent Torbay of Hythe fish and chip restaurant. There the party split. Joy, John and Una had already decided to finish there, as had the two lads – and how well they did. Neither of them had walked more than 15 miles before, so getting to Hythe meant they had doubled their previous PBs. They have both expressed an interest in joining the LDWA, and they are both hoping to be on either the White Cliffs 26 or the White Cliffs 50 in September. Sadly, Christophe and Stephanie retired at Hythe as well, as Christophe was suffering a leg problem. So Don, Graham and Jan marched into the night.

From Hythe they followed a boring stretch of the A259 to Dymchurch, being prevented from getting onto the sea wall by coastal defence works. But once they were able to reach the sea wall it was fast – 4mph – and flat going, all the way to New Romney and Checkpoint 5: the back of Laurie Lowe's car at the light railway station. Laurie provided some fine and much needed refreshments.

By now it was getting on for midnight, and the next stretch – New Romney-Lydd in pitch black, using just map and compass to avoid a few Romney Marsh dykes – was a bit of a challenge, but the three made it without too much difficulty. Don needed to go to the toilet, and he actually found a mobile loo right in the middle of a field – which he used despite a sign on it saying 'Ladies'! There were no more checkpoints, and the three were on their own now. They followed a road to Lydd and then a cycle track all the way to Camber, where they took the sea wall and then another cycle path to Rye. Rye was a bit of Memory Lane for Don, as it was where he was brought up.

Then it was a quick break by the River Brede before following the A259 to Winchelsea which – even at five o'clock in the morning – looked delightful. The three then followed a minor road out of Winchelsea – and then split up. Graham turned left to rejoin the Royal Military Canal, then took the coast path to Cliff End, before ascending the cliffs above Fairlight Cove to drop down to climb to the former coastguard station at Fairlight. Don and Jan had missed the turning from the minor road from Winchelsea and carried straight on to Pett and more bashing along minor roads to the former coastguard station, where Graham spotted Jan's little

legs pounding along although not quite doing their usual 4mph (well, she had almost walked 60 miles by then).

Then it was paths to Barley Lane which the three followed to the expansive green overlooking Hastings Old Town. They then dropped down to the seafront and walked to the station for the train to Ashford (in Graham's case it was on to Deal). They had reached Hastings by 8am, which meant they covered the 100k in 22 hours. Also, there had been some light rain for the last hour, but by then they really didn't care.

A unique walk, and many thanks to Sarah Smith, Maureen and Harry Beattie and Laurie Lowe for turning out to provide such fine fare at the checkpoints.

Calais-Hesdin

Do you fancy an autumn jaunt in France? During the week beginning Monday October 2nd, Mike Pursey and Graham Smith are planning to walk the 65 miles from Calais to Hesdin just across the Channel in the Nord Pas de Calais, following grandes randonnees (GRs). The walk will take four days, with accommodation in reasonably priced hotels being arranged. Anyone wishing to join them should ring Graham on [REDACTED]

STRIDERS AND GROUP NEWSLETTERS.....Ernie Bishop

In September 1972, Newsletter No. 3 was distributed to the membership, which by then was 300 plus, and badges had been produced and sold at 30p each. A calendar of organised walks was gradually increasing and two members were drafted on to the committee to cope with the additional work. Jeff Ellingham (Treasurer) and Spencer Lane (Membership), joined Chris Steer (Chairman) and Alan Blatchford (Secretary) to form the committee.

Since the Association had been formed, there had been mention of taking out a general accident insurance policy to protect its members. The policy details and contingencies were set out in Newsletter No. 3, and discussed at the first AGM of the Association, held on the 27th January 1973. There seemed to be a number of differences of opinion and various doubts were expressed about the value of the scheme. In view of the doubts raised, it was suggested that the scheme be reconsidered. The scheme seemed to be abandoned from that point and the matter was carried no further.

Each edition of the Newsletter had a list of new members. Although it was useful in the early days to be able to look up members from other groups, as time went by it became an increasing problem. As the membership grew, so did the changes of address, which created more work for the Membership Secretary. It was much more sensible to keep current addresses within the groups as well as maintaining them centrally to ensure they were up to date and annual fees recorded. The last address recorded in Strider was 10,000 in No. 52 (December, 1988). By Newsletter No. 4 it had got into its stride and publications reached the members regularly in April, July and December, apart from one or two minor delays.

I was surprised when reading Newsletter No. 3 that past events included an Inter Hospital Walk. It started with a London to Brighton walk in the late fifties and initially attracted two thousand walkers!! The event was stopped by the police in 1966, because of dangers on the road. In 1972 they tried once again, named as the Inter Hospital Stroll, 30 miles in the Surrey countryside over a linear route, with approximately 1,700 starters. Coaches were used to take

walkers to the start and collection at the finish. It was sponsored by Guinness, but there has been no sign in Strider of it being repeated. It was not organised by the LDWA and I believe that the majority of those walking either walked for or had connection with hospitals in London and the South.

The Purbeck Plod of 1972 had a double page; details were given of numerous interesting points along the route. Chris Steer, having travelled down to Swanage to do the walk, found himself as the only entrant! It did become popular in later years, although it seems to have petered out now.

Newsletter No. 4 appeared in December 1972, with concentration given to details of a meeting for the Downsman Hundred, to be held in the following Spring. Most of the meeting covered the usual facts that needed discussion and agreement when preparing for a walk of this length. 140 entries were expected to participate although, as it turned out, there were only 124 starters, about 25% of the turnout in more recent times. It was interesting to note that although the entrant received a list of equipment and clothing that was only a recommendation.

Also in Newsletter No. 4 it was interesting to note that there was a paragraph under the heading Active Firemen. The Fire Services Sports and Athletics Association had a paragraph advertising three walks, Dales Way Walk, Cotswold Cripples (both of which have now been discontinued) and Six Shropshire Summits, which is now in its 37th year, (3 years before the LDWA was founded). The Fire Service this year advertises 13 challenge walks spread around the country, 3 in the South East and within reach for most of us:-

2nd September - Seven Sisters Challenge Walk

23rd September - New Forest Challenge walk

14th October - The Kent Hop Challenge Walk (Faversham).

Two pages were devoted to the Longmynd Hyke on the 7th October 1972. One page to a description of the route and the resulting finishers, and the second to a map of the route, which gave the contours and distances between checkpoints, this gave a distance of 50 miles and 7,500 feet to ascent.

One or two of the existing Kent Group Members will remember the Longmynd and in particular the hills at the end which were not too long, but seemed real killers. That year Alan Hoare and Boyd Millen finished 2nd and 3rd. Alan was always to the front in the early days, but I haven't seen him for some years and assume he is no longer a member. All the current members will have read from "Strider" that Boyd died in January this year. He will be missed by those who knew him.

Finally, I return to Newsletter No. 5, to the Downsman 100 in May 1973. The original planning was that the distance would be the 80 miles of the existing South Downs Way from Buriton to Eastbourne. It was then decided to add an extra 20 miles and start from Winchester. It has been a 100 mile walk from that time on. Although there were 100-mile races by other organisations (usually on tracks, but sometimes on roads) and there were possibly occasional 100 miles across country, the LDWA 100 has proved itself to be very successful and has sometimes had to close entries. It has been held each year, on the last weekend in May, and including this year, now totals 34 events. One year, in 1990, two were

held, (in May and September,) and one year the 100 wasn't held, because of foot and mouth disease. The only person to complete all of these hundreds to date, assuming he will finish again this year, is Roger Cole. He is a determined person in spite of the fact that it must get more difficult as each year goes by. Keep it going Roger.
More with the next Newsletter.

Notes from Committee Meetings Minutes

April Meeting

FOOTPATHS: Shirley Higgins had sent in a written report. She had attended a PROW workshop on 25th March where Graham Rusling gave a talk. There was general concern about priorities and lack of resources so that the more isolated paths could be neglected and they are the ones of most use to us and the Ramblers. Joy said that her local PROW Officer (Shepway) had achieved excellent results by threatening to obstruct subsidies to farmers if the paths were not kept in good condition.

Shirley had asked about the paths that had been closed during the widening of the West Malling by-pass and had been assured that none would be lost.

June Meeting

SEVENOAKS CIRCULAR: Brian said that he had booked the Vines Cricket pavilion for next year's event. He has confirmed the booking in writing and suggested a payment of £100. Car parking would be as usual but there is limited parking for marshals at the pavilion. Details have been sent to Pat Ryan for inclusion in the next Strider.

The route will be kept the same as for the previous year in view of the favourable comments. No more badges are to be ordered for the present. The number of certificates may be running down and Brian will speak to Bryan Clarke about them.

WHITE CLIFFS FIFTY: Gordon reported that Betteshanger had been booked and all the checkpoints arranged. Graham had received a letter of confirmation from John McGachie. Gordon proposed that breakfast be served from 5.30am with snacks only before that time. Another sub-committee meeting is to be held after Graham and Mike are back from Scotland. Shepherds Well Guide Hut has been booked for the Marshals' Walk on 12th August and it is also available for those needing to sleep.

Graham reported that the shorter route was now about 29 miles rather than the 26 on the entry form. He has arranged that there will be a half-page advert in Strider and all references in the magazine will be to 29 miles. It was felt that the changed distance should be notified to any who booked for the shorter route. There is no provision for marshals to walk the shorter route but Gordon suggested that any wishing to do that distance could walk from Shepherds Well as far as Elham and then get a lift back to the start.

FOOTPATHS: Shirley reported that she had written many letters and more recently found bad conditions on a 14 mile walk from Chartham. She had also asked for a sign at Pooh Sticks Bridge to stop walkers going to a dead end on the wider track.

She had supplied Bill with a list of PROW Officers in Kent and he will arrange for copies for all interested members of the committee.

Here is the solution to Shirley Higgins' Crossword Puzzle, which appeared in the April newsletter.

Three entries were received, of which Mike Pursey's was the only all correct solution, so he wins the prize.



Politically Incorrect Corner

A man spent most of his time either watching sport on the TV at home or at the pub and neglected his house and wife.

One afternoon he was as usual slouched in front of the TV watching football when his wife asked him to fix the front gate before it fell off. "Fix the gate," he replied "do I have Chippy written on my forehead? I don't think so."

"OK!" she said, "Then perhaps you could clean out the filter on the washing machine so I can do the washing?"

He shouted "Does it look like I have Hotpoint written on my forehead? I don't think so! I'm fed up with this, I'm going down the pub for some peace."

After a couple of hours he returned home for his evening meal and found the front gate working perfectly. He went through to the kitchen and saw that the washing machine was operating.

"How did all this get mended?", he asked his wife.

"Well", she said, "After you had gone I was in the front garden crying and trying to mend the gate. A young man came by and asked what was wrong, so I told him. He offered to do the repairs and all I had to do was bake him a cake or have sex with him."

"So what kind of cake did you bake him?" asked her husband.

"Does it look like I've got Mr. Kipling written on my forehead?" she replied indignantly.