



LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION

Kent Group

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

NEWSLETTER

No. 4



April 1984

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LDWA: KENT - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held at St. Edith Hall, Kemsing, Sevenoaks
on January 29th, 1984

Those Present: Keith, Win and Roy Warman, Harry Bishop, Bryan Clarke, Trevor Blake, Charlie Heather, Ken Nottage, Dave Cowley, Ron Roweth, Jack Burgoyne, John Stew, Peter Major, Moira, Simon and Peter Rickards, Keith Porter, Joy and Kevin Bishop, John and Christine Skinner, Martin Bartlett, Andrew Melling, Don Scott, Pete Barnett, Phil Hastings, Joanna Gow, Nick Woollett, Alan Ball, Laurie Lowe (Chairman), Ernie Bishop (Treasurer), Mike Smith, Ted Launden and Brian Buttifant (Secretary).

1. Apologies: Margaret Moore, Brian Moule, Derek Vine, Chris Sainty, Celia Bishop and Mike Slingo.
2. Minutes of the 1983 AGM were approved at the Committee Meeting held on March 1st 1983, in accordance with wish of the A.G.M.
3. There were no matters arising.
4. Chairman's Report: Our membership over the last three years has been: 1981 - 41; 1982 - 56; 1983 - 64.

Laurie spoke of the successful monthly meetings, out of these much walk planning and travel sharing was being done amongst members.

The annual lunch held at the end of November was very successful, the venue was the Spinning Wheel north of Westerham, the individual room proved to be very nice and it was felt we may well use the venue again. Another enjoyable occasion was the traditional 'Bull evening' where members met for pre-Xmas drinks.

Seven social walks were held during 1983, ranging from 18 to 38 miles. These were enjoyed by those participating but support was variable and sometimes disappointing. There was a call to support these walks, particularly as the leaders put in considerable thought in route planning for the enjoyment of others. The Chairman invited comments about our social walks.

The group was able to provide a checkpoint on the Snowdonia 100 and the Chairman offered thanks to those who represented the group in this way. The two challenge events staged in 1983 were: The Sevenoaks Circular from a new venue near Knole Park and using a new route, many good reports were received from participants. Arrangements will be the same this year. The Wealden Waters Walk took place - appalling weather conditions but seemed to run very smoothly and again we received some gratifying reports. Thanks were expressed to the organisers of both events, and also the dedicated helpers particularly those non-walkers who are willing to help with checkpoints and catering.

5. Treasurer's Report: Ernie submitted a report to the meeting and copies were available for examination.

The report showed a bank balance of £275.42 at the year end. The minimal loss against the Sevenoaks Circular was a figure which did not take into account the large stock of badges in hand. These were paid for in the first year of purchase.

6. Election of Chairman and Committee:

- a) Laurie had indicated that he was willing to stand for a second term of office, and as there were no other nominations, Laurie was re-elected.
- b) There had been 16 nominations for 8 committee places. Three people had declined nomination, so a ballot was held for the remaining 13 members. The result showed a tie for eighth place and the Chairman decided that both nominees should be invited on to the committee.

The new committee are: Martin Bartlett, Pete Barnett, Ernie Bishop, Brian Buttifant, Bryan Clarke, Phil Hastings, Andrew Melling, Margaret Moore and Keith Warman.

A warm welcome was then given to those joining the committee.

The nominees not elected were Jack Burgoyne, Ted Laundon, Ron Roweth and Roy Warman.

7. Future Group Activities: The previous committee had just arranged the April to August programme for inclusion in 'Strider' and the following details were given to the meeting:-

April 13/16th: Dales weekend for group members - for details see below.

May 10th: Evening walk. Meet Bricklayers Arms, Chipstead, 7 pm
Leader: Pete Barnett

May 26/28th: Dartmoor 100 weekend. Contact Peter Rickars for details of group camping.

June 10th: Hever Hike. Meet at Hever Village hall, 9 am for 20 miles. Leader: Nick Woollett.

June 21st: Evening walk. Meet Five Pointed Star, West Malling, 7 pm. Leader: Martin Bartlett.

July 15th: Shoreham Shuffle. 20 miles, meet Shoreham (Kent) Station 9 am. Leader: Bryan Clarke.

August 4th: Surrey Hills Walk. 50 miles from Hampshire border to the Kent border. Meet Frensham Pond Hotel 12 noon. Leader: Ernie Bishop.

August 25/26th: Wealden Waters GROUP walk, 100 km from Tunbridge Wells 9 am. Some support. Leader: Mike Smith.

Mike Smith had suggested that the W.W. event should be held during the summer months and possibly each year.

This was discussed, but as this was the year for the Andredsweald (which alternates with the Wealden Waters) two events were considered enough for the group to put on this year. It was agreed that serious consideration be given to making the W.W.W. an annual event, starting in 1985, and with a possible change in the time of year when the event is held.

Sevenoaks Circular - Phil spoke about his suggestions for three routes, 26, 30 and 36 miles, plus a cut off at Chipstead giving 24 miles. Keith P. suggested a 10 mile route which would be a suitable one for enthusiastic youngsters who would not be able to tackle 30 miles. It was felt that these changes could not be included in this year's event. Brian B. pointed out that the entry forms were printed in November and therefore we had to stick to the distance mentioned therein. It was, however, agreed that any alternative format for the event should be discussed and decided at a committee meeting to be held after the running of this year's event.

John Stew spoke about the group's Yorkshire weekend. He would arrange food and a charge would be made according to length of stay. Accommodation is available for 18 people. It is planned that the Three Peaks and the Dales Traverse walks are to be attempted during the weekend.

8. Any Other Business: Peter Rickards asked whether the present committee structure was really necessary, and suggested the possibility of running the group on a more open system, with club business being conducted at the monthly pub evenings. Peter proposed that "an open style committee be adopted, retaining only a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer as club officers. Group business being conducted at the monthly evening meetings by a quorum of at least 4 group members plus any two of the group officers."

The proposal was seconded by John Skinner.

During the discussion which followed, it became apparent that the evening meetings would need to be held in a private room rather than the present arrangement of meeting in public house bars.

A vote showed - 8 in favour: 15 against.

Charlie Heather proposed (seconded by John Stew)

"that at committee elections, if more than the required 8 people are nominated, then the two longest serving nominees should stand down."

An amendment to this proposal was put forward by Andrew Melling (seconded by Keith Porter). This was that "each year, the two longest serving committee members should not seek re-election."

A vote showed - 19 in favour: 5 against.

The original proposal was thus amended to read:

"that each year, the two longest serving members of the committee should not seek re-election, but that after a period of 1 year off the committee, they would be eligible for nomination."

Voting showed - 18 in favour: 5 against.

There being no other business, the meeting was closed.

OLD SAYING

"Death is Nature's way of saying that you
need to slow down."

Phil Hastings.

WEALDEN WATERS WALK - 16th & 17th OCTOBER 1983

This year's event attracted an entry of 77, rather down on last time, partly as a result of ~~xxx~~ some hiccups on the publicity front. The day of the event saw 67 walkers gathered on the Pantiles waiting for the rain to start. At 10am the starting bell was rung, and, true to form, the rain started along with the walkers. In the next 12 hours $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches of rain fell, most of it finding its way inside anoraks, rucksacs etc. At the 20 mile point two dozen wet Wealden Waters walkers decided it was no kind of fun and returned to Tunbridge Wells the easy way. Another 21 dropped by the wayside as the night wore on, suffering from blisters, drowning, cold and general fatigue. Congratulations to the 22 who stuck it out to the bitter end, in times ranging from 17hrs 45mins to 26hrs 54mins.

Had there been a group trophy it would have gone to Sussex, three of whom finished first together (Martyn Greaves, Leslie Smith, Ron Voyce). A large contingent from Thames Valley gave us another four finishers, whilst our own group entered nine, with three completing the course:- Peter Barnett (22:40); Ivan Verell (24:40); Jack Burgoyne (25:13). Pete Barnett also holds the distinction of being the oldest person to have done the walk.

Most of those who took part have said how much they enjoyed it; some didn't like the weather; a few have even complained about the route; many have asked why we don't promote the Wealden Waters every year. In spite of the weather several of those who took part, both successfully and otherwise, have said how much they are looking forward to 'having another go'. It appears that we have unintentionally formed an elite club, almost as hard to get into as the Centurions, of Wealden Waters Walkers. If anyone would like to try their luck without waiting for the next event let me know and we might be able to arrange it as an 'off the calendar' led walk.

I must not finish without expressing my very great thanks to all who helped in so many ways both before and ~~xxx~~ during the event. Thank you everybody (including John Skinner who has already offered to run a checkpoint next time - anything to get out of walking it again!).

MIKE SMITH

Footnote: In the month since the event it has not rained at all!

SEVENOAKS CIRCULAR WALK - REPORTS

4th March - Marshal's Walk.

Ten group members set out to walk the above course on a route-proving exercise, as well as much needed training for the coming season. As Pete Barnett was fitter than the rest of us, he kept our pace going and got us to the 'Post Boy' at Wrotham for opening time! Good conditions in and out of the pub made it a very enjoyable day. Phil's route description had not lost or confused us, so with a minimum of alterations we agreed that again he had compiled another clear description in his own unique style.

18th March - The 10th Sevenoaks Circular attracted 463 entries, including 28 runners, both our largest numbers yet. After at least four weeks of drying weather, the route was extremely dry underfoot. The preparation done (or should have been) we started at 7am on the 18th to prepare the Raleys Centre to receive both the pre-entries and the many who entered on the day - action stations!

It was as well that we had acquired the use of Lady Boswell's School playground for extra car parking space, this helped to relieve the overcrowding of last year. Soon the Centre was filling up and our willing helpers were coping with the crowds. The walkers were set on their way at 9.10am by the Mayor of Sevenoaks, Cllr. Tony Branson and LDWA vice-president Chris Steer. This is Cllr. Branson's third period of office so he was no stranger to the event and enjoyed a return to our activities.

The weather was fine with a cold wind and the conditions underfoot made for ideal walking. These fine conditions prevailed throughout the day, which helped all concerned, walkers, runners and marshals. The moving of CP3 to Otford scout hut was appreciated by all - it certainly gave the marshals more room. The hot blackcurrant at CP4 was another appreciated addition this year. Provision was made for walkers falling behind schedule at CP4 to return to Sevenoaks by a shorter route, but the good conditions made this unnecessary. It was these conditions that helped almost all of the finishers to get back to Raleys in daylight, and therefore caused no poor souls to flounder in the dark.

From my point of view it was gratifying that so many group members had volunteered their help, it made my job easier. I feel it was a good cohesive effort by the group.

Brian Buttifant

25th March - Post Mortem Walk.

Ivan and I decided to do the 1984 route, starting at Otford, and by coincidence Laurie, on his way to Knole Park for a stroll, saw us in the station car park and decided to join us.

In overcast conditions we set off at 8am - a steady pace was maintained and we agreed that the previous week's event had left no damage to paths and tracks. With the recent rain, much of the going was heavy, particularly the field around the lake at Chipstead. After 16½ miles we reached Ightham Mote and Susan met us with much appreciated refreshments.

We shall remember our encounters with three animals en-route: the over-friendly lamb at Wickhurst Manor who didn't really want us to leave his field, the infamous bull who was happy to stand in 12 inches of mud and feed, and the Alsatian at Yopps Fruit Farm who couldn't even muster a bark as we crept past.

In the afternoon, the odd shower from the morning became steady rain, slowly soaking us. The North Downs Way from Wrotham was very muddy, but our spirits were lifted when Roy and Winnie surprised us near Cotmans Ash with largesse to help us back to Otford.

Allegations of Sevenoaks Circular entrants straying from rights of ways and cutting across cropped fields were seen to be totally unfounded.

Our estimated mileage was 28, as we cut across the top of Knole Park. An enjoyable (and wet) day was had, and the three of us thank Susan, Roy and Winnie for their much appreciated support.

Keith Warman

Sevenoaks Chronicle, March 23, 1984

Ian walks tall as the young are out in force

YOUNG Ian Scott set off with 462 other walkers on Sunday on the 10th Annual 30 mile Sevenoaks Circular Walk, and came in eight hours and 43 minutes later the youngest finisher — at 10 years of age.

Walking with his parents Donald and Elizabeth Scott from Lyndhurst Drive, Sevenoaks, this was Ian's second long distance walk. The Amherst School pupil, who is also a keen soccer player, completed the Eastbourne Marathon recently — part of a field of 2,500 in the 26 mile walk.

Organised by the Kent Group of the Long Distance Walkers Association, Sunday's walk was started in Knole Park by Town Mayor Tony Branson, with walkers from all over the country, including Hull, Plymouth, Shrewsbury, Cambridge and the Isle of Wight.

In all, 336 completed the course in what were ideal conditions for walking.

"It was the driest event we have

held," said Kent Group secretary Brian Buttifant, who co-ordinated the walk together with local members. "It was good to see so many youngsters taking part, who are going to be the walkers of the future."

Fastest finishers were Martin Greaves from Puiborough, Sussex, and Beckenham's Tony Bounds, who finished in four hours 23 minutes, while the oldest to complete the course was 73-year-old Henry Bridge from Soham, Cambridgeshire.

Many were doing the walk for the first time, and there were a large number of youth groups, including scouts, school parties and 16 from a local Dr Barnardo's home.



IAN SCOTT

Most experienced of the walkers could well have been Alan Bali, from Coombe Road, Otford, the only one to have completed all 10 of the Sevenoaks Circular Walks.

The route started and finished through Knole Park, and went via Igham Mote, St Mary's Platt,

Circular walk report

Wrotham, along the North Downs Way to Otford, and then to Chipstead and Weald village. Certificates were presented to those completing the course within 10 hours.

Mr Buttifant paid tribute to the behaviour of the walkers during the event, and also to the local group members who helped spread the work in organising the walk. He also thanked the town council for the use of Raleys Youth Centre as a base during the day.

Further information about the Kent Group of the Long Distance Walkers Association is available from Mr Buttifant on Sevenoaks 61440.

COMMENT :-

I have read down the list of future events in 'STRIDER'. I am concerned to note the number of times that the comment is made by organisers that there is no road walking involved. In the promotional blurb of their event, mention is made about heathland, farmland, canal bank, etc, and then they go on to stress 'no road walking involved'. I know a great number of members who express a view that they would prefer not to walk on roads. Fair enough! But with tongue in cheek, who wants to walk across Bleaklow Head at 3 am, on a snowy winter's day? I know rock climbing friends who only walk from the campsite to the nearest crags or pub! Dr Gibson, who is the general secretary of the Short-Distance Walkers Association and great white chief, does view with disdain the idea of walking across the North Yorkshire Moor in one big leap. For my part, I enjoy my walking, despite the blisters and I enjoy a short ramble as much as I do attempting the Yorkshire Crosses route or tackling a Centurion 100 mile road walk. I do get a bit browned off with this constant bleat expressed by event organisers about walking on roads. I think members are being influenced - let them draw their own conclusions about road walking. How often do we see L.D.W.A. members walking along roads at night, in spite of supposedly not liking road walking? Let members draw their own conclusions about road walking without feeling it is some catching disease. I say 'Don't knock it unless you have tried it.' Give long distance road walking a chance, a growing number of L.D.W.A. members have done so with great success. Life is never the same again after you have done your first centurion 100 mile walk in 24 hours. Give up the idea that road walking is dreadful. People may not like the idea of walking on roads but it is unnecessary to pass unqualified remarks about another aspect of the sport. Perhaps I am getting too wound up or should I just think of it as only the organiser politely drawing your attention to the fact that there is a certain amount of road walking? The event organiser has found a route that does not involve road walking and is anxious to let everyone know!

Phil Hastings.

THE BIG APPLE

Once Celia and I had decided to take our holiday in the USA with our son and family, it seemed too good an opportunity to miss not to do the New York Marathon. Of course, I had to convince Celia that late October was an ideal time to take a holiday on the east coast of America. I duly received a confirmation that my entry had been accepted - from Durham, where it had been sent in error to another entrant, Johnny Johnson. We made contact and agreed to meet up out there before the race.

We arrived in New York on the Wednesday before the race and on registering at the Sheraton Centre, I actually met someone I knew - John Parsons. He and I have run on LDWA events over the Surrey hills in the past. I then proceeded to follow a last minute training plan which I'm sure would have been frowned upon by Cliff Temple. It involved three days' sightseeing which seemed to include every sizeable building and street within a wide radius of our base. I seem to have looked down on New York from every conceivable angle.

There were plenty of runners in Central Park, as there had been in Washington, many at incredibly slow speeds, practically running on the spot. I did get a run on Friday by contacting Johnny and travelling on the subway out to Brooklyn for a run round Prospect Park. On Saturday morning there was a fun run for overseas entrants from the United Nations, along 42nd Street and up 6th Avenue to finish at the Tavern on the Green in Central Park, where we were given breakfast (and another T-shirt to add to the shorts and shirt from the registration) That was the nearest I got to Greta Weitz !

On Sunday morning I seemed to be one of a silent army gradually converging on the bus departure point near Columbus Circle. Buses started running at 5.30am. We arrived at the Verrazano Bridge by 7.15, had some coffee - the promised doughnut turned out to be a dry roll which I found uneatable - I then found a spot to sit in one of the four large marquees. The wise ones brought a little food of their own and had it with their coffee. The race started at 10.45, so there was plenty of time to while away. Although I used my bin-liner to sit on, it was quite cold and when I came to take off the track suit to put in one of the buses, I caught my foot and pulled a back muscle. A great start !

In the congestion to get to the start on the bridge itself everyone disposed of their old sweat shirts and a great mass of old clothes sailed over our heads from the middle of the crowd to the sides. After a few seconds there was a return salvo and most sailed back again to cries of "Have you got a large?" We then had a five minute bombardment from all directions.

By then it had started to rain gently and conditions seemed ideal. There was the usual excitement at the 'gun', but because of the width of the two levels of the bridge, there was less congestion than at the London Marathon. The bridge is about two miles long and there are no spectators until you come off into Brooklyn. There was plenty of enthusiasm from the crowds in spite of the rain, which became more persistent.

The route passes over five bridges, some covered in matting because of the metal grills underfoot. The state of some of the roads left a lot to be desired with plenty of potholes (full of water) and some cases quite slippery with oil. In fact it was quite a job removing oil from the legs afterwards. It was interesting going through the various districts and seeing the different ethnic groups.

I ran steadily without feeling particularly inspired, but determined not to go too fast in the early stages. It paid off as I overtook a lot in the second half of the race and very few came past me after the halfway mark. The last three miles of the route were good, once we approached Central Park, but generally I felt that London was a better route. Those last three miles were the hilliest part of the route, the road undulating as it goes through Central Park. By that time it was raining heavily and the slower runners must have

been quite cold.

400 yards from the finish I caught Johnny and we finished together in 3hrs 24.57. That was his first marathon and at 61 years of age he had every reason for feeling delighted. Celia managed to take a photograph near the finish and I am actually recognizable, although looking shattered.

It was then a case of collecting the medal, being draped with tinfoil like an oven-ready chicken and shuffling to the bus to collect clothes. Why is it that when your name begins with B you always approach them from the XYZs ?

I paddled through the mud to find Celia and we then made for the hotel as fast as tired legs would manage, feeling cold and soggy by then. A hot shower, a rest and some food worked wonders.

As far as I was concerned that was the last event for 1983. Now it's a case of looking for something interesting and different for 1984.

Ernie Bishop

COMMENT :-

It has always been the aim of the committee to provide a wide variety of 18 to 25 mile socially paced walks throughout the county of Kent. This we have achieved with a varying degree of success - from two people turning out on the Military Canal walk, to groups of 25+ on other walks. The latter is all very satisfying for the organisers. If we stop to think of what we are doing, it can be seen that this success has to be achieved and does not just happen. Before the last group outing from Canterbury, our esteemed Hon. Sec. took on the task of ringing up people to drum up local interest. We expect the appointed leader of a group outing to be familiar with the route. Equally it should also be his responsibility to try to organise members to come along on the day. This can be done by talking to people at our Tuesday meetings or by phoning around. This is an expensive procedure but it does seem to be a necessary one. I feel that it should really be up to the member to ring up to say that they are coming (or not) . In this way the leader is able to gauge the amount of support he can expect on the day and then endeavour to arrange some transport to and from the event. In this way I would suggest a lot more people would turn out instead of travelling by train or public transport. I paid out £5.70 for a day return to Canterbury and I am sure other people also laid out a similar amount. It has all become rather expensive. There is also the very early morning rise and long tedious journeys to and from the event. As I have mentioned before, we have endeavoured to provide a variety of walks to attract people from all corners of the county to join us. If we fail to induce these people to come out for the day, we may have to move back into areas where we get our main support. At present it would seem that the centre of the universe is around Sevenoaks. This all puts a burden of responsibility on the leader to organise not only the selection of his walk, but also advertising and arranging transport wherever possible. These group outings are a wonderful opportunity to meet other members who we may only see all too briefly at an organised national event.

Phil Hastings.

KENT GROUP PROGRAMME

All programme enquiries and suggestions to :- Brian Buttifant

- Thursday 10th May - An evening walk. Meet at the 'Bricklayers Arms', Chipstead at 7 pm. Leader is Peter Barnett
- 26th - 28th May - Dartmoor Hundred. Some members will be going down to the area during the week before the event. Contact Peter Rickards for campsite details etc. [REDACTED]
- Saturday 9th June - "Beat the Bounds" A 10 mile sponsored walk. Start at 10 am at Hever village hall. Refreshments at the finish. Forms are available from Nick Woollett, Tel Four Elms 376 A joint sponsoship for Hever village hall fund and Blue Peter Weather Beater Appeal. Nick will make available camping space so that you can stay over in the area for the group walk the following day.
- Sunday 10th June - A 20 mile walk led by Nick Woollett. Meet at 9 am, at Hever village Hall.
- Thursday 21st June - Another summer evening walk. Meet at "The Five Pointed Star", West Malling High Street at 7 pm. Led by Martin Bartlett.
- Sunday 15th July - "Shoreham Shuffle" - a 20 mile walk led by Bryan Clarke. Meet 9am at Shoreham Station (Shoreham, Kent!) Pub lunch at the "Tally Ho", Knockholt.
- Saturday 4th August - "Surrey Hills Walk" This is a repeat of a walk we did some years ago and is a 50 mile route starting at 10 am from Frensham Ponds, Surrey. We walk across Surrey to finish near Biggin Hill. Our esteemed leader on this occasion is Ernie Bishop.
- 25/26th August - Mike Smith is planning a Wealden Waters Group Walk over the 62½ mile circuit used for our notorious event. Meet 9am, at the Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells. Some support is possible. More details from Mike nearer the date. Tel. [REDACTED].

SOCIAL MEETINGS take place on the first Tuesday of every month. Turn up from 7.30 onwards at The Bricklayers Arms, Chipstead. Enjoy a pint and a chat.

The SECRETARY reports :-

GROUP BADGE - The group now has its own badge, based on the Association's design. For members who have not yet had the opportunity of buying one, two or more, they are available at any group activity or direct from Brian. The price is £1.10p. S.A.E. please.

MEMBERS - We are publishing a list of paid up group members at the back of this issue. If your name is not there and you would like to continue to support your local group, please send your £1 subscription to Brian Buttifant [REDACTED]. This will ensure that you remain on our mailing list and that you receive our next newsletter.

FAMILY LUNCH RAMBLE - For the last 5 years we have held, on the last Sunday in November, our family ramble followed by a lunch. This, the sixth, was at a new venue at 'The Spinning Wheel' on Westerham Hill. 17 members and wives assembled on a wet morning for a short ramble before lunch. The walkers were pleased to get into some dry clothing as we were joined by others for lunch.

We sat down to roast beef etc, and it was the first time that we were all together in our own dining room. There were 47 people at the lunch, which is the second highest gathering and all enjoyed the meal. That's a good reason for returning to the same venue this year. This occasion was made memorable by Phil doing a strip in the car park. Some people you can't take anywhere !

Brian B.

PAST EVENTS

'Middle Medway MUDDle' - 20th January

John Skinner led another of his mid-winter allnight walks. On this occasion some dozen or so members decided to risk life and limb in his company.

The group left Watlingtonbury at closing time and headed west on a circuit which encompassed that section of the Medway between Mereworth and Maidstone. John had chosen the date well and our jaunt coincided with a bright moon and a very sharp frost. This made for good walking as most of the MUD in the 'muddle' was frozen hard. There was one minor panic when three of us inexplicably became separated from the others. One minute they were there, the next they had vanished. More by luck than judgement we regrouped a mile or so later.

A good walk in perfect conditions!

L.L.

'Apples & Oysters' - 12th February

On the second Sunday in February we met at Canterbury West station for our second group walk of the year. Our leader Mike Smith took us up to Whitstable and back using a walk, plus a bit more, taken from Roger Smith's book of country walks. Mike must have thought he was popular all of a sudden as 20 members assembled for the walk - the best attendance for a long while. It was gratifying to see so many and to be able to welcome new members from that area. Our sortie into East Kent had been to attract new members as well as for general enjoyment.

Although the day started off dull and slightly misty after overnight rain, the sun got out in the afternoon to make a very pleasant day. We had our mid-day refreshments at a pub just behind the sea wall in Whitstable. Oysters were on the menu but I don't think anyone could afford them after paying their subs, buying group badges and sampling the local ale. The walk had no gradients or surprises but was as expected, mainly on the level - no complaints! Of course, we found a generous amount of mud which if nothing else caused some fun. Thanks Mike for an enjoyable walk.

Brian B.

Addendum :- There is no truth in the rumour that Mike will issue a certificate and badge. Nor is he likely to produce a result sheet. Mike was taking some verbal flak and a certain amount of dissent from the ranks as we crossed that ploughed field. Many thanks all the same for a very pleasant walk in an area of Kent that we have not ventured into before.

Phil Hastings.

KENT COUNTY 20KM RACE WALKING CHAMPIONSHIPS - 25th February

This year's championships were held in the grounds of the Joyce Green Hospital at Dartford. There was a disappointingly small entry for this event, but I was there!

The most significant thing to happen was young Ian McCombie of Cambridge Harriers A.C., who qualified in this race for a place with the British team to go to the 1984 Olympics.. He raced around in 84 min 14 sec on a bitterly cold raw Saturday afternoon. Once the starter had set us off, Ian went down the road at a blistering pace to record one of the fastest times ever in this country. We are all behind you Ian, but in my case some 44 minutes behind!

I had previously warned the population of Dartford of this forthcoming attraction and I was very pleased to see Bryan Clarke and his son Keith turn out to form a crowd to cheer me on. They arrived just in time to see me come along the final long straight to finish in 128 mins.

Phil Hastings.

HIGH PEAK MARATHON - 2/3rd March

Ernie Bishop and I were part of "The Slithy Toves" team in this Year's event. We were filled with doom as we approached Edale on the Friday evening, the surrounding hills were covered with snow. It was also snowing at the time of our arrival and it appeared to be a daunting prospect that lay ahead of us all. There were thoughts of cancellation or the use of a special low level route. The strong prevailing wind seemed to die down and the organisers had no ideas of cancellation - it was on!

The bitterly cold conditions (-6°C) made it possible for us to walk over the top of the frozen water and the usual foot of mud and peat bogs. It turned out to be the very best conditions for this event and for the first time ever I was able to see where I was going. The normal conditions mean that teams make their way around on compass bearings in thick mist and fog and there is usually driving rain and thick mud to add to the entertainment.

In the morning we were treated to a spectacular panoramic view of the Derwent watershed covered in snow. It was indeed a special privilege to be there. Our team made steady progress around the course ably directed and navigated by the Association chairman Geoff Saunders, aided and abetted by that man-about-town Peter Dyson. This year, as a real veterans team, we were able to finish the course some $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours quicker than last year. 44 teams set out and 33 finished. The High Peak Marathon really is a classic route.

Phil Hastings.

THE PEARL ASSURANCE $\frac{1}{2}$ MARATHON - Thamesmead, 1st April.

The Cambridge Harriers were the club promoting this event, which is one of a series of runs sponsored by the Pearl Assurance Co. I promised to help on the day and bravely stood on a slip road with a placard directing 3500 runners of all shapes, sizes and ability. It was a bitterly cold day and everything went without a hitch. I was very pleased to see our Kent Group committee member Keith Warman come shuffling around the course in a very creditable time. Well done Keith!

Phil Hastings.

DALES WEEKEND - 12th - 16th April.

In mid-April a group of seven Kent members spent a most enjoyable long weekend in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales. The trip was arranged by John Stew, whose family kindly offered us the accomodation that was to be the base for our walks over the three days.

Eileen and I arrived on Thursday afternoon to find John and Keith Warman already in residence and busy preparing a stack of logs for the fire. The building had been a small church school which had fallen into disrepair until purchased by John's family a few years ago. Since then they have been gradually restoring the structure and adding a few modern comforts. The school is situated in the tiny community of Oughtershaw, which is made up of two farming families totalling eight persons!

Later that evening we travelled back down the valley about 4 miles to Hubberholme to take some refreshment, both liquid and solid, at The George Inn. William, the barman, seemed somewhat out of character with the surrounding rugged countryside - in fact we soon decided that he 'seemed a nice boy'. Anyway, the beer and food were most welcome and a pleasant evening was spent in front of a roaring log fire. Later, back at the school, we stoked up our fire and retired to the sleeping platform for a good night's sleep.

The next morning, after a fairly late breakfast, the four of us climbed up the fellside immediately behind the school to arrive at Oughtershaw tarn and then headed out across Fleet Moss and Yockenthwaite Moor to eventually drop down again at Hubberholme, where we again took refreshment at The George Inn. From here we were able to follow part of the 'Dales Way' up Langstrothdale and back to Oughtershaw. The circuit of some 12 miles had been in dry if somewhat chilly weather. The conditions underfoot were remarkably dry for the time of year, although there were some patches of deep snow remaining along the fell tops.

Later that afternoon we were joined by Susan and Ivan Verrell and Brian Buttifant who had travelled up together. Although John had got in a stock of food for us, we again decided to sample the delights of The George for sustenance. On this occasion William had excelled himself. Delicately perfumed and weighed down with masses of chunky jewellery, he clattered about the bar sounding for all the world like a medal-loaded IVV walker going at full bore on a 10K event! His interest was increased when I made my entry carrying my best handbag and Ivan ordered a Campari and soda. Later, back at base, we prepared sandwiches for the next day and set the alarm for 6am.

Promptly at 6 everyone was up and preparing for the day ahead. We had a quick breakfast and then drove via Hawes to Horton-in-Ribblesdale - the official starting point for the Yorkshire Three Peaks route. John, Ivan, Brian and Keith clocked in at the Pen-y-Ghent cafe and set off on the anticlockwise route over Pen-y-Ghent, Whernside and Ingleborough. Being a Saturday morning, there were many walkers setting off and it had all the atmosphere of a challenge event. Susan, Eileen and I set off at the same time taking a somewhat easier route. We headed up the track to the foot of Pen-y-Ghent and then on to Hull Pot where we picked up the official route and followed it out to Ribbleshead. We had a cup of tea at the refreshment van and waited about 10 minutes for the others to arrive. They were going well and obviously enjoying it. After a quick cuppa, they headed under the famous viaduct and on to Whernside, while we three walked along the road to Chapel-le-Dale and the start of the path leading to the top of Ingleborough.

There was still a chilly wind blowing and it was obviously going to be very cold on the summit. The hard scramble up the final steep section warmed us up, but once on the main ridge we were exposed to a very strong wind. Before attempting the final climb we sheltered in a hollow for a welcome warm drink from the flask and a bite to eat. We arrived at the summit cairn in thick mist and paused only briefly before carefully finding the correct way off to the track leading to Sulber Nick. After descending several hundred feet we came out of the mist and

had a very pleasant walk down over the extensive limestone pavements of Sulber and eventually arrived back at Horton in the late afternoon.

We sat in the cafe consuming pint mugs of coffee until the others came in some 15 minutes later. In the warmth of the cafe we recall our experiences :- Eileen and Susan had been dumbfounded to see a woman walker at the summit of Ingleborough with a 6-week old baby! John had remarked how dry the conditions were and then promptly gone into a bog up to his knees. Brian had lost his shoes (again) on a muddy section. Keith had discovered a new delicacy - produced by mixing marmalade and garlic pâté sandwiches in a plastic bag previously used to store dirty socks! Ivan had so enjoyed the route that he had to be restrained from buying a set of Three Peaks cufflinks! I was just relieved that I had been able to find the correct route off Ingleborough in the mist.

That evening we dined in, with a superb meal produced by Susan and Eileen and then retired early in readiness for the next day.

Enthusiasm was still evident as we awoke with the 6am alarm on Sunday. This time we set off for Kilnsey and the starting point for the Dales Traverse. Again we split into two parties. The hard men taking the full 25 mile route, while the ladies and I took a shorter way by riverside to Arncliffe and then along Yew Cogar Scar to Malham Tarn and back to Kilnsey via Mastiles Lane. It proved to be a warmer day with bright sunshine throughout the afternoon. We finished well ahead of the others and spent some of the timetaking afternoon tea in a very nice 'tea shoppe', where we looked somewhat out of place among the blue rinses, cardigans and pearls!

The hard men were now beginning to show the strain and staggered in about an hour later than I had expected, having got caught in a couple of heavy sleet showers on the final section.

Later that evening the ladies concocted another meal from what was left of the food and then it was back to the George for a few drinks. We awoke the next morning to discover that John's brother-in-law had arrived unexpectedly at about 2am, been unable to find a vacant bed in the dark and so had slept in his car. In fact there was a spare foam mattress in the ladies section of the sleeping quarters - it would have been amusing to see their reactions on waking to find a tall, dark stranger between them! Anyway we thawed him out with hot coffee and a cooked breakfast. He then made a week's supply of porridge, which we promptly ate!

We were all packed and ready to leave for home when an emergency occurred. A young boy from the farm called and asked Johnathen to help him rescue a new-born lamb which had fallen into a drainage culvert. We set off up the field armed with spades, pickaxe and fire tongs to try to extricate the animal. Keith and Johnathen set to digging down to where the lamb was thought to be. The rest of us stood around with hands in pockets offering advice! Eventually Johnathen was able to get his head and shoulders far enough into the hole to grasp the lamb and pull it to safety. For two days Eileen and Susan had been walking through fields full of new-born lambs, unable to get near enough to touch them. At last they had the chance to cuddle one of these appealing creatures as it was carried in triumph to the barn where its mother and twin were waiting.

So ended a most enjoyable weekend. I would like to thank John for making it possible and his relations for allowing us to use their house in this unspoilt part of the Yorkshire Dales.

Laurie Lowe

THE YORKSHIRE THREE PEAKS

Keith Warman.

John, Brian, Ivan and myself arrived at Horton-in-Ribblesdale keen to get going in overcast conditions. Only John had completed the circuit before, and was therefore relied upon for navigational and inspirational purposes. Several people left the cafe at Horton with us, most clad in apparel which we thought to be more akin to alpine conditions. However, our trainers fared us well, with 3 of us managing to keep them firmly on our feet at all times (sorry Brian)

The first peak, Pen-y-Ghent, was attained with little difficulty. The long and often boggy section to Ribbleshead was concluded with the sight of the mobile tea wagon, to which we repaired for refreshments. Here we met Susan, Eileen and Laurie who were doing their own 'one-peak' walk. The route was very eroded in places, with a wooden 'staircase' installed on the ascent of Pen-y-Ghent.

We continued under the crumbling masonry of the Ribbleshead viaduct heading for Wharfedale summit (which we could not see in the mist) The final 300 feet of ascent was quite tricky, being up a rather steep incline composed of gravel and loose rocks. From the triangulation point we descended to the Hill Inn for the necessary lubrication in a bar full of walkers.

Our third peak, Ingleborough, was reached via Simon Fell. The six miles from the summit back to Horton were all downhill and we freewheeled straight into the Pen-y-Ghent cafe where our thirsts were assuaged with giant mugs of tea. The 'one Peak' party had just beaten us back. Our time was 8½ hours. (I am somewhat bemused how a certain Jeff Norman apparently did this route in 2 hours and 32 minutes during the annual Three Peaks Race.) An invigorating day - and no rain!

THE DALES TRAVERSE

Keith Warman.

This 25 mile challenge, starting and finishing at Kilnsey Crag in Wharfedale, is described on page 22 of 'Strider' no. 36, and affords good views of Upper Wharfedale and Littondale.

After climbing out of Conistone, Brian, John, Ivan and myself strolled at high level towards Kettlewell, the early sun giving hopes of a fine day ahead. From Kettlewell we took the steep Top Mere Road onto Cam Head and the going to Tor Mere Top and eventually Buckden Pike was somewhat tedious, through marshy ground, bogs and hard-packed snow. Just before the Pike we paused at the cross marking the spot where five Polish airmen crashed and were killed during World War 2. The memorial was erected years later by the sole survivor. The view from Buckden Pike was far-reaching in all directions, and included the outlines of the three peaks conquered the previous day.

We dropped down to Buckden village, passing several people presumably 'doing the Pike', and called into the Post Office for supplies. The river Warfe was crossed and the climb over Old Cote Moor, again with lovely views, took us down to Litton. The Queens Arms had a magnetic attraction for us and our marmalade and garlic pate sandwiches, washed down with beer, were enjoyed al fresco in the midday sunshine. From Litton we followed the river Skirfare downstream to Arncliffe, and then headed up the narrow valley above Yew Cogar Scar towards Malham Tarn. On this wild and lonely traverse, a sudden horizontal sleet shower caught us unawares and we eventually reached Masiles Lane, an ancient drovers road. This took us, somewhat laboriously back to Kilnsey Crag, where our three companions were waiting for us, having done a different circuit. Another enjoyable day's tramping.

1984 LDWA KENT MEMBERSHIP - TO DATE

SIMON ALLEN
MIKE ATTEWELL
ALAN BALL
PETE BARNETT
MARTIN BARTLETT
GORDON BEATTIE
EDWARD BENNETT
CELIA BISHOP
ERNIE BISHOP
HARRY BISHOP
JOY BISHOP
KEVIN BISHOP
TREVOR BLAKE
JEFF BLOWERS
JACK BURGOYNE
BRIAN BUTTIFANT
PAUL BOUCHER
PETER CARTER
MARGARET CARTER
JOSPHINE CARTER
BRYAN CLARKE
MIKE COCKLE
DAVE COWLEY
PAT DRURY
JOHN FERGUSON
CLIVE FOWLER
IAN FRYER
MIKE GANLY
JOANNA GOW
PHIL HASTINGS

DAVID HAYWARD

CHARLIE HEATHER

KEN HODGKIN

ASHLEY INWOOD

ANDREW KEAN

JACQUELINE KILBOURNE

TED LAUNDON

LAURIE LOWE

HAROLD MANN

PETER McLEAN

ANDREW MELLING

MARGARET MOORE

BRIAN MOULE

KEN NOTTAGE

KEITH PORTER

SUE PORTER

ROBERT VAN DER
POORTEN

BRIAN RANCE

MOIRA RICKARDS

PETER RICKARDS

SIMON RICKARDS

RON ROWETH

CHRIS SAINTY

DON SCOTT

JOHN SELLENS

CHRISTINE SKINNER

JOHN SKINNER

MIKE SLINGO

NIGEL SMETHAM

KIM SMETHAM

DEREK SMITH

MIKE SMITH

IAN STEPHENSON

JOHN STEW

REX STICKLAND

RICHARD TOMES

SUSAN VERRELL

IVAN VERRELL

DEREK VINE

KEITH WARMAN

ROY WARMAN

JACK WICKS

PAUL WOODISON

NICK WOOLLETT

DAVID FERGUSON

BRIDGE

31.3.84