



LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION

Kent Group

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

NEWSLETTER



NUMBER 19

August 1989

CHAIRMAN.....PETER BARNETT
TREASURER.....RON ROWETH
SECRETARY.....DAVID SHELDRAKE
LIAISON OFFICER..BRIAN BUTTIFANT

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:-

TREVOR BLAKE
BRYAN CLARKE
JOHN PROBERT
SUSAN VERRELL
JOHN VINNELS

David Sheldrake, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
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Newsletter Editor - Laurie Lowe, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

GROUP PROGRAMME - AUGUST 1989 to JANUARY 1990

- W/E AUG 26/27 Wealden Waters Marshals' Walk-Out of the route. Meet at the Pantiles at Tunbridge Wells at 9am. For details phone Dave Sheldrake [REDACTED] or Brian Buttifant [REDACTED].
- W/E SEP 16/17 Vanguard Way - 62 miles from Croyden to Seaford. Start at East Croyden Station at 8 am. Lunch and evening pub stops will be arranged. Contact Peter Barnett for details.
- FRI SEP 29th Video/Slide Evening at St Edith's Hall, Kemsing, 7.30 for 8 pm
John Vinnels will be showing some scenes of Katmandu and Ernie Bishop will talk on walking in Nepal.
- W/E OCT14/15 Wealden Waters Walk. The 100 km challenge walk. See Future Events in Strider. Help needed at start/finish and for manning the checkpoints.
- SUN NOV 12th Ashford Circular - 20 miles approx. Meet at Potters Corner on the A20 (GR 991 449) for 9 am start. Pub stop. Leaders are Paul Hatcher [REDACTED] and Neal O'Rourke.
- SUN NOV 26th Family Walk and Lunch at The Moat, Wrotham. Meet at 10.30 for short walk before the meal at 2 pm. Full details and bookings from Trevor Blake. [REDACTED]
- FRI DEC 15th Christmas Drinks Evening at The White Hart, Brasted. Meet in the Upper Lounge 7.30 for 8.00. Light refreshments provided.
- FRI JAN 12th Night Walk. Details to be confirmed. Leader is Ernie Bishop.
[REDACTED]
- FRI JAN 26th Group AGM at St Edith's hall, Kemsing. 7.30 for 8.00 pm.

EDITORIAL - LEADERS NEEDED FOR GROUP WALKS!

A check through the Kent Group's programme of walks over the last three years reveals that out of a total membership of about 110, only 14 individuals have offered to lead walks. Of these, several have led more than one walk.

Thus we seem to have a small nucleus of members who are willing to go to the trouble to organise a walk for the group and the same few names crop up again and again in the programme details.

Speaking as someone who has led several outings in the last 6 months, I know the time and effort that is required to organise a successful walk. This is particularly the case when the walk is in an area some distance from where one lives. Nevertheless, there is a great deal of satisfaction to be had from completing a successfully led walk.

Elsewhere in this bulletin, there is an article by Keith Warman which gives good advice on how to go about it. So there is really no excuse - you must all be familiar with your own immediate locality - so plan a route and take the opportunity to show the rest of us what your patch is like! Let us see some new names in the next programme of walks.

BRECON HUNDRED

Once again the Kent group was well represented in this year's one hundred mile event. The route was a clockwise circumnavigation of the Brecon Beacons area. Of the 417 starters, 16 were listed as members of the Kent group. The weather was dry and hot during Saturday, followed by a dry but relatively cool night. Sunday dawned fine and bright and the temperature rose steadily throughout the day. By Sunday afternoon, distance and heat were beginning to tell and the several extra water points - hastily arranged by the organisers - were much appreciated by the walkers.

14 Kent members completed the full distance. Congratulations to Ron Roweth, Ernie Bishop and Phil Hastings who all completed their tenth hundred and thus qualified for that special LDWA award.

1992 HUNDRED

The 1992 hundred is set to be organised by the Kent Group. A provisional booking was made at the Association's AGM and the group committee gave its full support at the meeting held in April. At the present time it is not certain whether a linear or circular route will be chosen. However, a linear walk using the North Downs Way from Guildford to Canterbury (as was the case in 1982) would provide a straightforward route with minimal route finding.

Further details will be given at a later date.

NATURE CONSERVANCY

At a recent committee meeting it was decided that the Group should become affiliated to the Kent Trust for Nature Conservancy.

ORGANISING A GROUP SOCIAL WALK

by Keith Warman.

This article has been prompted by the fact that group walks in recent years have generally been led by a nucleus of stalwart members, and that there may be others who would like to do so, but who feel unsure how to organise walks, not having done so before. The following notes may offer some guidance and hopefully inspire the new walk leaders which the group needs.

LOCATION - Try to look for unknown or unwalked areas and look for a route which may have a variety of landscape features. A familiar area to one person may be an unknown one to the next.

MEETING PLACE - A circular route is the most popular; if a linear walk is proposed, consideration must be given to arrangements for transport etc. Details of car parking should be stated (including charges, if any) Remember, public car parks are usually empty and free on Sunday. Is there a station nearby? Only mention this if trains actually run on the proposed date! Will a pub stop be included in the route? Do remember to describe the meeting place accurately and give the grid reference. Consider putting your telephone number into the programme details so that people have a contact if they need more information.

DISTANCE - Ideally 20 - 25 miles for a day walk. Try dropping a loop of string, calibrated with a pen in miles, onto the map from the start to give a rough idea of the possible area which can be covered for a set distance. If a longer walk is planned, consider the possibility of an early start and late finish, and perhaps having a packed-lunch stop rather than the more time-consuming pub-stop.

DATE - When you have a walk in mind, liaise with the group secretary who will help to identify gaps in the future calendar. Be prepared to offer a few dates and to plan well in advance in order to meet deadlines in both the Newsletter and Strider.

PUB STOP (Optional) - A bit of research may be required to establish a suitable venue, some say this is the most difficult aspect to organise! Check if a garden is available (for summer walks) or a public bar (for winter walks) and also if food/snacks are available. Some pubs do not serve food on Sunday. Tell the landlord that you are considering bringing a party of walkers one lunchtime and his reaction may give a clue to the likely warmth of the reception, or otherwise. (ED - I have always found landlords most helpful - welcoming the prospect of the extra trade 20 or more walkers bring) When a pub is chosen, confirm the date but beware of committing yourself to ordering food which may not be required. It may be possible to obtain a menu in advance, and even phone from the starting point to give numbers of people who are likely to want food and the approximate time of arrival. Aim to get to a pub as early as possible to avoid a long wait for food. 12 to 12.30 is a good time - pubs tend to become more crowded after 1 pm. on Sundays. Don't forget to thank the landlord when leaving if the service has been good.

ROUTE RECONNOITRE - It is very important to walk the intended route beforehand to check paths, etc., are where they should be and to assess likely time taken. Remember that it takes considerably more time to get 20 or more people over an awkward stile than it does for one. Allow for the fact that a group walk inevitably takes longer than a solo walk. It may be helpful if a back-up leader is aware of the route, either by joining you on your walkout or at least having a map with the final route marked on it. This is an insurance against the leader not turning up on the day, due to illness - or as nearly happened recently - failure to get to the start because of car problems.

REMINDER - Consider attending the monthly meeting prior to the walk to remind members about the walk and also to advise on further information or changed details.

These notes are not exhaustive but if you think that you can lead a walk sometime, any of those leaders whose names appear regularly in the walks programmes published in Strider will be happy to give further guidance if required.

ACCOMODATION IN YORKSHIRE

LDWA Member Ted Marsh has recently opened a nine-bedroom hotel in Scarborough and is able to offer accomodation at very reasonable prices :

e.g. Bed & Breakfast at £9.00 per day

Bed & Breakfast and Evening Meal at £11.25 per day

If anyone is on holiday or doing an event in the area they are promised a warm welcome with good food. Packed lunches can be arranged. The address is:-

Mr & Mrs E W Marsh, "Highbank", 5 Givendale Road, Scarborough,
N. Yorks. YO12 6LE. Tel. 0723 365265

JOHN'S JAUNT - Sunday 23rd April 1989.

A cold morning with an overcast sky greeted the twenty four walkers and one dog as they assembled at Bedgebury Pinetum car park for a 25 mile social walk. At nine o'clock we put our money in the 'honesty' pay box and set off through the Pinetum to wend our way to Bodiam. The route was varied and very interesting; we passed some old cottages and houses and in a quiet rural setting, a car breaker's yard ! A herd of cows gave the dog a curious once over as they followed her (and us) across a large field. The woodlands were full of bluebells and wild garlic, a strange combination of scents for us to savour.

Bodiam was reached at about 1.30 and provided a good selection of refreshment places. Brighter and warmer weather had now arrived and we enjoyed this until late in the afternoon, and fortunately it remained dry for us.

Around 2.30 we set off again and enjoyed another varied and scenic route back to Bedgebury, arriving at about 6.45. Some footpaths seemed to be little used and went through very remote places, yet there were plenty of yellow way-marks. Many stiles were in a disgraceful condition and caused us delays as we struggled across them.

Thank you John Vinnels for a good day out !

by Bryan Clarke

NEW CHALLENGE FOR MATURE MEMBERS.....The following item was seen in Kent County Council's publication "Guided Walks In Kent". 'For the over 50's, a gentle 1½ mile ramble through Trosley Country Park. Leader Don Pryce, KCC Senior Ranger.' If you are interested - you are too late, it was on 14th May. Watch out for a repeat next year !

Here it is, hot from the quill of the group's bard, an account of his view of this year's hundred :-

OUR PLEASURE

Harry E Bishop (4734)

2nd June 1989

By Heck it was hot on the Brecons,
I'd planned for the rain but didn't reckon
That a heat wave in May,
On a walk for two days,
Would cook me like Sunday's Welsh Mutton.

By a shady canal we ambled along,
Yet something was wrong, for out of the throng
Came this potentate from the Near East,
A fierce-visaged Arab without beast
Or was it one of these new-fangled priests ?

His head-dress was flowing and beautifully white,
Held in place by his garters, they looked a bit tight,
He came up and fixed me with a steely bright eye
Had I stolen his camel, I thought, could I lie ?
No, it was only our chairman, dressed up, 'cos he's shy.

On top of a hill at sometime towards tea,
Sweeping the sweat from my brow I could see
That lying about on the ground at my feet
Was this elderly hippie in an untidy heap,
Had he been at the bottle, in spirits neat ?

One eye blearily opened, a grin came over his face,
A rumbling from his belly announced the end of his own little race,
Up he arose and leaden footed, stumbled from pillar to post,
Gracefully retired at the check point, sat down to tea and hot toast
And inclined two fingers towards us, the rest of the poor bloody host.

For two very long days we put up a fight
Wearily plodding through the heat and the night,
Pulled up at a checkpoint "I'll have a quick nap",
Woke up with a start, my bag in my lap,
To find I was solo, alone with my map.

Ah ! horror of horrors to be on Welsh hills,
With no friend of comfort save my blood pressure pills,
No telephone box to call up an old friend,
Safely tucked up in our bed, at sleep's end,
Dreaming as always of how my money to spend.

We've finished, we've done, the last bit was fun,
For when I saw how the blisters stood firm in the sun
And despite the high mileage, legs weighing a ton,
I came home with a dash and a spirited run,
In time for some breakfast, cottage pie and a bun.

"Will I do it next year" you ask with concern,
Certainly dear, for with the money I earn,
I'm going to buy a big bike
And instead of a hike,
I'll burn up the passes, the cols, keep the lead,
On a wonderful mountain type velocipede !