

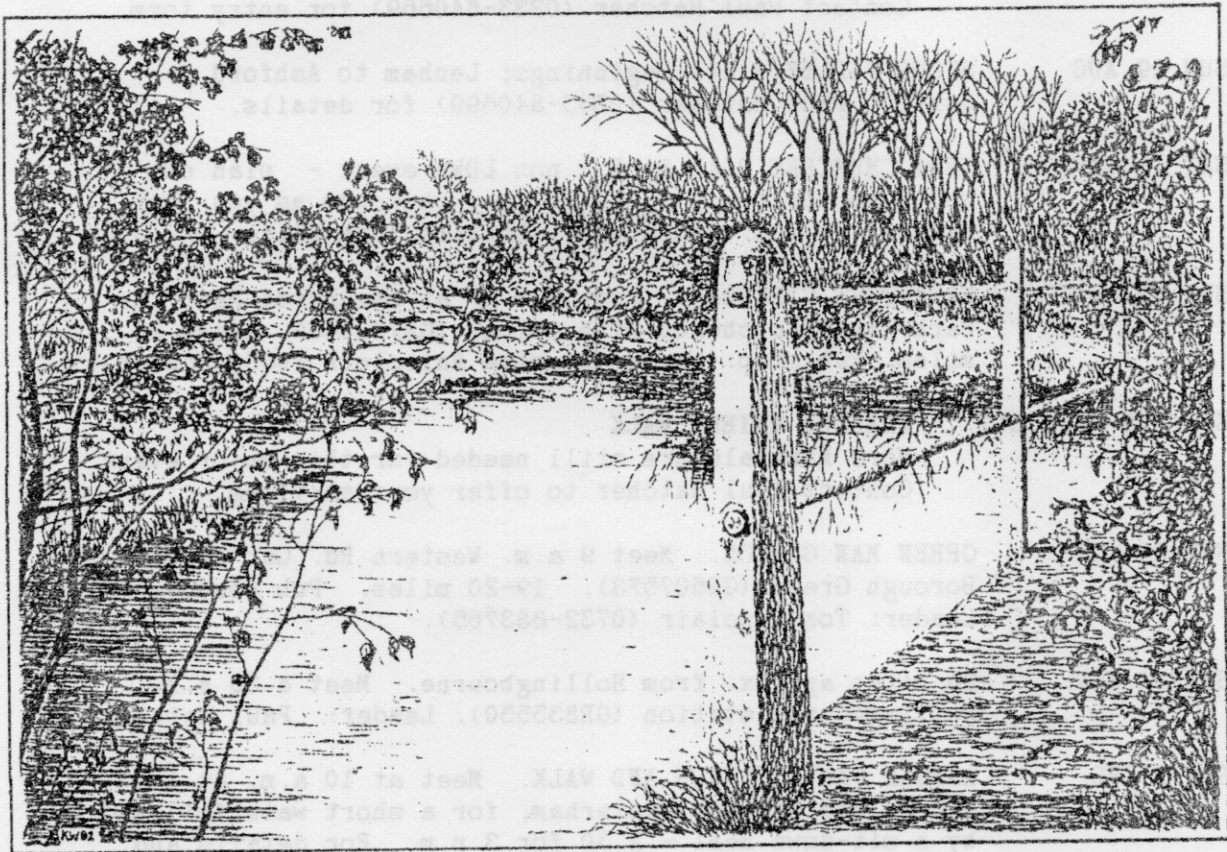


LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION

Kent Group

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

NEWSLETTER



River Meon, Exton.

NUMBER 31

AUGUST 1993

COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN.....RON ROWETH [REDACTED]
TREASURER.....ALAN BALL [REDACTED]
SECRETARY.....DAVID SHELDRAKE [REDACTED]
MEMBERS:- ANN BEECHING [REDACTED], TREVOR BLAKE [REDACTED]
ANDREW BOULDEN [REDACTED], BRIAN BUTTIFANT [REDACTED]
BRYAN CLARKE [REDACTED], PAUL HATCHER [REDACTED]
TOM SINCLAIR [REDACTED] (Newsletter Editor).

KENT PROGRAMME TO DECEMBER 1993

SUN 15 AUG Meet at 9 a.m. at Bell Lane Car Park, Staplehurst,
(GR 786431). Leader: Kevin Puttock [REDACTED].

SAT/SUN 21/22 AUG **WEALDEN WATERS MARSHALS' WALK**
Contact Paul Hatcher [REDACTED] for entry form.

SUN 29 AUG STOUR VALLEY - Its Beginnings; Lenham to Ashford.
Contact Paul Hatcher [REDACTED] for details.

SAT 11 SEPT KENT CHURCHES BIKE RIDE - non LDWA event - plan own
route to visit, on foot, as many churches as you can
between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Details from Editor.

SUN 19 SEPT HAWKHURST CIRCULAR. Meet 9 a.m. at Hawkhurst Main Car
Park, next to church with spire, (GR762305). About 20
miles. Pub stop. Leader Maurice Faircloth [REDACTED].

SAT/SUN 9/10 OCT **WEALDEN WATERS WALK**
More Marshals are still needed for this major event.
Contact Paul Hatcher to offer your services.

SUN 24 OCT GREEN MAN GAMBOL. Meet 9 a.m. Western Rd. Car Park,
Borough Green (GR607573). 19-20 miles. Pub Food.
Leader: Tom Sinclair [REDACTED].

SUN 14 NOV 20 miles approx. from Hollingbourne. Meet 8.30 a.m.
Hollingbourne station (GR835550). Leader: Paul Hatcher.

SUN 5 DEC ANNUAL FAMILY LUNCH AND WALK. Meet at 10 a.m. at the
George and Dragon, Westerham, for a short walk followed
by a sit-down meal - 2.30 for 3 p.m. For details and
bookings contact Trevor Blake [REDACTED].

GROUP 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 White Hart, Brasted, near Westerham.

Dear Fellow Kent Group Members,

Many thanks to all of you who have sent in reports, reviews, drawings, quotations or any other printable material. I am beginning to put it all together on the day after the July pub meeting in the hope that the 'finished article' will be ready in time for the August meeting. It has been drawn to my attention that, although Ann Beeching's article on the Haute Route des Alpes began on page 11 of the last issue, the authorship was not revealed until the foot of page 17. (Sorry, Ann!)

The drawing on the cover is by Keith Warman and is an illustration of his 'Downland Delight' which appears later on. You will see that it is described as 'No. 5 in an occasional series of offbeat excursions'. Those with eagle's eyes and elephant's memories will tell me that No. 1 in the series appeared in the December 1992 issue. The reasons for this are known only to the author/artist and the past and present editors.

As mentioned in the report on the 1993 Sevenoaks Circular, a new route is planned for the 1994 event on 20th March, Marshals' Walk 6th March. 20-mile route is also planned but it may be necessary to exclude runners from that option so as to avoid long opening hours at later checkpoints. Make a note for next year's diary and watch this space.

The Wealden Waters route is also different this year. If you haven't yet entered the Marshals' Walk on 21/22 August there is still room for more and time to contact Paul Hatcher for an entry form. Whether you wish to do the Marshals' Walk or not we still need more volunteers to offer help with many jobs on the event on 9/10 OCTOBER.

Answers to Shirley's quiz and the winner of the handsome book she is kindly presenting appear on page 12. No 'puzzle corner' this time but hope to have something to stimulate the grey matter for the December issue. Dave Sheldrake tells me that a number of new members have joined the Kent Group recently. Welcome to them all. Tom Sinclair.

From a lyrical writer on the Appalachian Trail 1990:-

LADY WINTER

"Lady Winter is beautiful and alluring but not to be trusted. One day she whispers a gentle invitation and flashes you a quick sunny smile. "Come along", she says, "we'll have fun". The next day she turns on you, becoming icy, angry and aloof. Flirt with her if you like, court her if you will, love her if you must, but never, ever trust her."

Sent in by John Probert - of whom more anon.

P.T.O. for the 2nd part of Ann Beeching's 'Haute Route des Alpes'

WALKING THE HAUTE ROUTE WITH RON + Ann + Jill + Dave by ANN REYNOLDS

We slithered down the icy slope from where we had our first view of the Matterhorn, at the head of a valley of snowy giants. Then we walked down steeply but easily through the forest to Zinal where Ron's priority was to buy a sun hat.

Another short day. But this one had good weather and after an initial slog upwards for about half an hour we sauntered along a fairly level path, stopping for long periods enjoying the sun and looking back to the spectacular view at the head of the valley. We reached the Hotel Weisshorn mid afternoon, not knowing what to expect. Kev Reynolds said it was dilapidated and old fashioned, and we would need sleeping bags but it was an experience not to be missed because of its ambience and the view. They'd done it up. It had double glazing, showers, heating, comfortable beds, absolute bliss. The ambience was still there but I felt the comfort improved it enormously.

Another easy day followed. We were already high up and only had 600 m. to climb to the Meidpass, but Ann started to find the ups difficult and she was lagging behind. None of us worried as she was always last due to stopping to take photographs (super ones - we had a slide show at Christmas). But this was different, and she complained of not being able to keep up on the ups. Still, we got to Gruben by lunch time and enjoyed a lazy afternoon. Ron, Jill and I walked up the valley to the barrage at the head. En route we were entertained by the antics of a large herd of very pregnant, very large cows, being brought down from the high pasture for the winter. If at all possible, they trotted back up the mountainside where they could see another succulent bush. The dogs, men and children had all their work cut out to get them moving in the right direction. Once on the valley road they processed along in a stately fashion, ignoring people and cars.

Our last Col. the Augstbord Pass (2894m) brought us to the Mattertal valley which has Zermatt at its head. Journey's end. But we had 16k to walk and the Col to cross. As we left the hotel I was astonished to see Keith Hewitt from the Surrey Group coming in for breakfast. He was also walking the route, but camping. He was on his own and had had a nasty fall on the crossing of the Cols after Cabane de Mont Fort. Still, he was only grazed and bruised. We all plodded slowly up with no reward of a view this time as the mist was down. We stayed overnight at Jungen, high above St. Nicholas, and we should have had a spectacular view of the Dom. We had a brief glimpse next morning before the rain came but that was all.

We plodded down in the rain to St. Nicholas, where we stopped for coffee and kuchen (delicious), then on up the valley to Zermatt. Ann was really suffering by now and our progress was slow. We all wanted to walk the whole distance, so eventually we split up so that our accommodation could be booked. The mattertal valley as it approaches Zermatt is not a thing of beauty. More a vast car park as no vehicles are allowed into Zermatt. But Zermatt itself was interesting once one got past the cement works. And of course, the Valley beyond with the Matterhorn and the Monta Rosa, is spectacular, and beautiful. We stayed at the Hotel Bahnhof the first night. Not recommended. The second night we stayed in a good, old fashioned hotel.

It rained all night so there was fresh snow on the tops. Off, over to the Lac de Dix and along to the valley head through meadows full of edelweiss, to a choice of passes. A slog up the scree or a climb up two very long ladders. Dave was very unhappy about the ladders so, whilst the two Pauls went up the ladders, we toiled up the scree. It wasn't too bad, but the Pauls were in Arolla long before us.



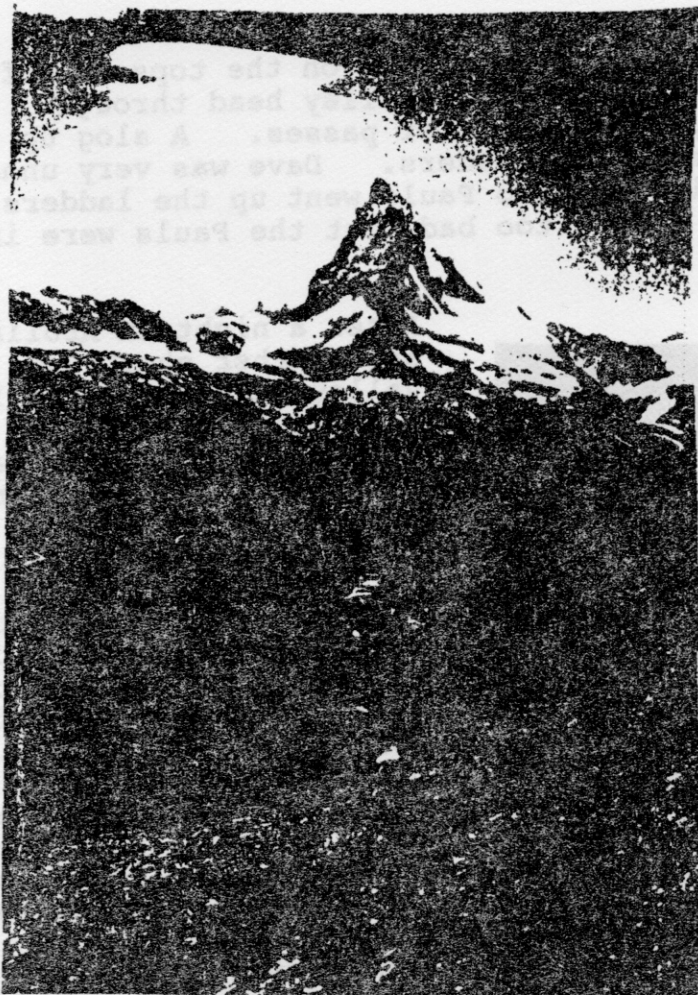
Descent to Arolla: Mont Collon
with the sharply peaked L'Évêque on its right

After a night in Arolla and another short day valley walking in pouring rain (and snow) we set off from Le Sage on Saturday for the Lac de Moiry in very snowy and icy conditions.

Our path over the Col de Torrent was obliterated and the waymarks hard to find. A young couple from Northumberland, Paul 2, plus dog, blazed the trail. The dog attached himself to us just above le Sage and followed us all the way over the Col. We tried kindness (chocolate thrown down the mountain. He gobbled it up and came back for more) and cruelty (sticks and stones) to get rid of him, to no avail. He was a good route finder until he veered off and swam across a lake. We didn't follow him after that. The day was hot, and Ron discovered he had lost his sun hat so Jill lent him hers - a floppy brimmed floral effort. He looked very fetching.

The route took us to the Cabane de Moiry at the head of the valley but we stayed at the Barrage end; in the Cabane which turned out to have super heating, hot showers and every comfort. In hindsight a wise choice since the Cabane de Moiry was frozen up and had no water. Also the only way down from it was on your backside, the steep paths were rivers of ice. But we had not got rid of the dog. When we went to the restaurant for dinner there he was on a makeshift lead. We told the story of the dog who had followed us all the way from le Sage, in English, and we learned next morning he had been taken down the valley to the police. Poor dog, he looked as if he needed a good home.

Next day after an icy climb to the Col de Sorebois brought the most spectacular view. A 360 degree feast dominated by the Weisshorn. All it cost was a 100 metre climb from the col and the six scouts from Maidstone went walking by below ignoring the view. "Seen enough mountains," they said when we reproached them later.



Next day we walked up the valley, past Zmutt, with the Matterhorn in full view, to the Shonbiel hutte where we sat on the terrace eating soup with the Matterhorn and the Dent d'Herens, and their glaciers, in front of us. It was a fitting end to our holiday.

It was a pity Ann wasn't well enough to come.

Next day, the long journey home. Calling in at Chamonix where Ann went to the doctors. A little pneumonia was the verdict. No wonder she had found the going hard!

The route is highly recommended. Very different from the Pass route in that it is more remote, and the passes higher. But definitely in the league of the best walks in the world.

A Book for your Bookshelf, by John Probert, LDWA 524.

BLIND COURAGE by Bill Irwin

Blind courage is a story about a blind man and his Seeing Eye Dog walking the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine in the U.S.A. What was a blind man doing trying to walk two thousand, one hundred miles across America through days so wet and cold that he would have been better off at home with a comfortable fire and cups of tea?

His first day was marred by his friend taking the wrong road to the start which he was unable to find for hours. Eventually he started out from the sign post that said: "This is it, just follow the white markers six inches long and two inches wide and you can't go wrong".

He had up days, he had down days, days of heat, days of cold, days of despair and depression but most of it was good fun. A very religious man after his rough start in life who really had the courage and determination to do all of something that a lot of people start but never finish. A good read and a definite book for your shelves - or borrow mine or steal* one.

*usual editorial denial of responsibility!

1993 SEVENOAKS CIRCULAR RESULTS AND REPORT

Name	Club/Group	Time	Name	Club/Group	Time
C. Boakes	LDWA	04.32	C. Foster	Enfield Harriers	07.47
G. Gee		04.45	R. Powell	LDWA	07.47
M. Grant	LDWA	04.45	G. Smith	Enfield Harriers	07.47
D. Whitehead	LDWA	04.49	B. Grace	LDWA Surrey	07.49
N. Costiff	LDWA	04.54	H. Papworth	LDWA BBN	07.53
J. Parker	Crawley AC	04.54	P. Papworth	LDWA BBN	07.53
C. Powell	Crawley AC	04.54	R. Neuff	Chis & Sidcup GS	07.56
R. Sharp	Crawley AC	04.54	P. Dentten	Cornwall/Devon	08.04
D. Moore	Cornwall/Devon	04.59	B. Lansky	Thames Valley	08.04
G. Tucker	LDWA	05.06	P. Sorensen	LDWA	08.07
J. Mackenzie	Redhill Beagles	05.09	I. Waghorn	LDWA Kent	08.08
D. Smith	LDWA	05.09	S. Williams	LDWA	08.08
M. Greaves	LDWA Sussex	05.16	J. Dunster	LDWA Surrey	08.09
T. Williams	LDWA	05.16	S. Cullen	LDWA	08.11
M. Aris	Surrey WC	05.20	P. Hogg	Chelmsford MC	08.11
N. Fennel	LDWA	05.20	N. Mainwood	Chelmsford MC	08.11
R. Harrison	Sutton Rnr/LDWA	05.20	R. Mainwood	Chelmsford MC	08.11
G. Ives	LDWA/100k Assoc.	05.20	J. Probert	Breakaway SS	08.11
M. Kavanagh	Sutton Runners	05.20	D. Larkin	LDWA Essex/Herts	08.18
G. Woodman	Sutton Runners	05.20	E. Larkin	LDWA Essex/Herts	08.18
M. Nutburn	Dartfd Harriers	05.21	M. Stewardson	LDWA	08.23
M. Hyde	LDWA	05.33	D. Tibbals	LDWA	08.23
C. Byatt	Sutton Runners	05.35	S. Clark	LDWA BBN	08.25
R. Spinks	LDWA	05.42	G. Young	LDWA Nor/Suffolk	08.30
J. Lipczynski	Sutton Runners	05.43	N. Dockree	LDWA Sussex	08.31
J. Moss	Sutton Runners	05.43	B. Adcock	LDWA Essex/ Herts	08.32
J. Campbell	LDWA	05.48	J. Mather	LDWA/Croydon YHA	08.32
T. Cheetham	LDWA Surrey	05.54	T. Parker	LDWA Nor/Suffolk	08.32
I. Cotterill	LDWA	05.54	B. Wilson	Croydon YHA	08.32
K. Irving	LDWA	05.54	J. Bean	LDWA	08.38
T. Cadogan	Gravesend RR	05.59	R. Rowe		08.38
M. Cotterill	LDWA	05.59	P. Wells	LDWA	08.38
A. Giles	Gravesend RR	05.59	P. Brookes	LDWA	08.40
N. Potts	LDWA	05.59	B. Roberts		08.40
J. Robinson	LDWA Surrey	05.59	K. Hamon		08.42
J. Bird	Stamfd Harriers	06.12	P. O'Brien		08.42
A. Costiff	LDWA	06.12	C. Bhagwanji		08.43
G. Pacer	LDWA	06.12	G. Fitzgerald	LDWA & Met Police	08.44
M. Waddell	LDWA	06.21	H. Rennie	LDWA	08.44
D. Bades	Sutton Runners	06.26	T. Earey	Chelmsford MC	08.49
R. Brown	LDWA	06.31	N. Beddoe		08.51
A. Downing	LDWA Sussex	06.31	R. Pearson	LDWA	08.51
R. Beeley	1066 Triathletes	06.33	R. Toombs	LDWA	08.51
G. Herfield	1066 Triathletes	06.33	B. Bowers	LDWA	08.53
J. Stoddart	LDWA Sussex	06.33	D. Macey	Chis & Sidcup GS	08.53
K. Fancett	LDWA	06.41	A. Peal	Chis & Sidcup GS	08.53
N. Summers	Dartfd Harriers	06.41	D. Plumb	LDWA Essex/Herts	08.53

Name	Club/ Group	Time	Name	Club/Group	Time
S. Hackney	LDWA	06.54	K. Noble	LDWA Essex/Herts	08.55
G. Beatie	LDWA Kent	07.03	A. Sayer	LDWA Surrey	08.55
D. Abbott	Chelmsford MC	07.18	P. Ryan	LDWA Essex/Herts	08.56
B. Harrison	LDWA Sussex	07.20	R. Heaton	LDWA	08.57
M. Rolfe		07.23	C. Butterfield	Thames Valley	08.58
M. Gregson	LDWA	07.25	J. Oddy	LDWA Kent	08.58
A. Allen	LDWA	07.26	A. Hawkins	LDWA Surrey	09.00
S. Eades	Sutton Runners	07.26	J. Allen	LDWA	09.04
E. Heardman		07.26	B. Nicholls	LDWA	09.07
M. Kirk	Sutton Runners	07.26	R. Corkhill	LDWA	09.10
B. Aris	Surrey WC	07.41	D. Rolls	Chis & Sidcup GS	09.10
P. Clark	Thames Valley	07.44	G. Carr	Maidstone RA	09.12
D. Massie	LDWA	07.44	P. Cowdry	LDWA/Maidstone RA	09.12
P. Clark	LDWA	07.46	D. Maries	LDWA	09.12
G. Costello	LDWA	07.46	R. Thornburgh	LDWA	09.12
J. Knight	Chis & Sidcup GS	09.15	R. Stokes	LDWA Surrey	09.49
M. Woolmer	LDWA	09.23	D. Ives		09.50
D. Walker		09.27	G. Thomas	LDWA	09.50
V. Walker		09.27	J. Henton	LDWA	09.53
J. Rees	Chis & Sidcup GS	09.29	K. Sussex		09.58
M. Crawley		09.31	J. Jackson	LDWA	09.59
P. Crawley		09.31	J. Nicholson	LDWA	09.59
K. Grainger		09.31	T. Towler	LDWA	09.59
R. Hannant	LDWA	09.31	G. Bateman	LDWA	10.00
D. Holberton	LDWA	09.31	H. Brown	LDWA	10.00
A. Knight		09.31	R. Brown	LDWA	10.00
P. Knight		09.31	P. Clifford	LDWA Sussex	10.00
L. Penn		09.38	S. Easton		10.00
N. Penn	LDWA	09.38	H. Perkins	LDWA Sussex	10.00
A. Beaton		09.39	J. Wild	LDWA Sussex	10.00
D. Hoare		09.39	A. Dolan		10.02
M. Berry	LDWA	09.44	J. Johnson		10.02
M. Hudson		09.44	C. Dee		10.10
S. Hudson		09.44	M. Dee		10.10
G. Bull	LDWA Surrey	09.49	R. Whatley		10.10

On the third Sunday in March (our usual date) 168 walkers and runners set off from the gates of Knole Park. The conditions were dry and the weather brightened as the event progressed; these good conditions were reflected in the extremely low retirement figure of 4. The going looked good in the early spring weather and the views of the North Downs and Greensand Ridges were clear and spectacular.

We used the route of last year which had included part of the Invicta 100 route and which had been so much appreciated by the Invicta entrants and others who took part. If this route is not used next year (another is being planned) it certainly should be in the future. Entries were down this year, perhaps because of other events on or near to our date. We have much potential in this area so by planning with other events in mind we hope to return to the entries of previous years.

Our grateful thanks to all our members and friends who willingly gave their time to make the day a success and to all who came to Sevenoaks. WE HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL NEXT YEAR FOR THE TWENTIETH SEVENOAKS CIRCULAR! Acknowledgements to: Sevenoaks RFC, Knole Estates, Kent County Council, Knockholt and Lady Boswell Schools, St. Andrew's School, Limpsfield Chart and Ide Hill Scouts for the use of their land and/or halls.

MARSHALS WALK RESULTS

Name	Club/Group	Time	Name	Club/Group	Time
P. Barnett	LDWA Kent	07.36	S. Higgins	LDWA Kent	08.30
A. Beeching	LDWA Kent	07.36	K. Warman	LDWA Kent	08.36
E. Bishop	LDWA Kent	07.36	N. Higham	LDWA Kent	08.37
A. Boulden	LDWA Kent	07.36	J. Cossey	LDWA Kent	08.43
M. Fox	LDWA Kent	07.36	N. O'Rourke	LDWA Kent	08.43
I. Needham	LDWA Kent	07.36	D. Sheldrake	LDWA Kent	08.43
J. Rickwood	LDWA Kent	07.36	B. Morgan	LDWA Kent	08.46
P. Amos	LDWA Kent	08.01	P. Hatcher	LDWA Kent	08.47
K. Puttock	LDWA Kent	08.01	A. Smith	LDWA Kent	08.47
G. Betts	LDWA Kent	08.10	B. Buttifant	LDWA Kent	09.09
R. Lawlor	LDWA Kent	08.10	D. Cowley	LDWA Kent	09.09
L. Lowe	LDWA Kent	08.28	T. Emery	LDWA Kent	09.09
T. Blake	LDWA Kent	08.30	M. Hartley	LDWA Kent	09.09
B. Clarke	LDWA Kent	08.30	M. Richards	LDWA Kent	09.09
E. Emery	LDWA Kent	08.30	A. Knight	LDWA Kent	09.28

Brian Buttifant.

After all those lists it seems a good place to put in the following:-

DATA PROTECTION ACT

For the purposes of distributing newsletters AGM papers etc. a list of members' names and addresses is maintained on behalf of the Group on a computer retrieval system. The membership list will not be sold, hired or lent out. It will only be used in connection with Group activities. Under the provisions of the Act you should advise the Secretary immediately, in writing, if you object to these details being held on a computer retrieval system.

After all that formality it is time to turn over a new leaf (literally) for something completely different. Putting in a couple of extra sentences should also prevent me from starting the next page in mid-paragraph and from having too big an expanse of white at the foot of this one.

DOWNLAND DELIGHT by Keith Warman

(Number 5 in an occasional series of offbeat excursions)

Being the possessor of a Network South East card I was sent details of an offer to buy a rover ticket for £5. Out came the map. The opportunities were many. After much planning I decided on a November walk along the South Downs Way extension from Petersfield to Winchester. This meant leaving home at 4.20 a.m. to catch the first trains from both Orpington and Waterloo, the first bus from Petersfield to Queen Elizabeth Country Park and my breath upon my 8.30 arrival at the latter.

It was misty, but settled, as I left the park with its tree-clad hillside and followed the guide under the A.3 and up to Butser Hill, an Iron Age enclosure. The Radio mast atop the highest point of the South Downs at 888 feet beckoned me across and up sheep pastures with a hint of morning dew. Views were far-reaching yet haunting, autumnal cloud formations were parting for the dawn and the silhouette of Gibbet Hill was poking his head out of the mist - just like those evocative postcards available from up-market gift shops. In the opposite direction, St. Boniface Down was visible.

On the lane towards Tegdown Hill a huge, docile bull was quite happy for me to stroke his head. However, with just three strands of barbed wire of an unstable fence between me and possible disaster, I decided to press on along the lovely green lane over Hyden Hill. The scarp to the north plunged away forming typical chalkland dry valleys, but the sheltered lane was very wet in places.

H.M.S Mercury seemed tidy, with much activity, as I passed along the public road through the complex. The perimeter fencing was 'Heras' brand (from Sittingbourne), which may explain their posh new premises in that town. Passing the football pitches, a quaint cottage named 'Spion Kop' was skirted to join another green lane over Wether Down, gradually descending between ancient hedgerows to Coombe Cross.

Mist was hanging in the hollows but the tops were clear; the rolling downland, where not under plough, being dotted with sheep. Another sunken track brought me to the foot of Henwood Down, where I took a long drink from the flask and a short eat from the lunch-box. A rather muddy lane was followed to the well-tended, tree-lined drive to Whitewool Farm, complete with anglers' lake and smart flint and thatched barns. The sun emerged to match my peace with my surroundings.

After a steady climb up Old Winchester Hill, I was soon inside the Nature Reserve, striding across cropped turf and admiring the huge north-facing hollow I was circling. How this hill was named is a mystery as the city is 15 miles distant.

Aiming westwards, I entered the Iron Age hill fort and followed the ramparts to the trig. point at 648 feet. I propped myself against the indicator base and took an early lunch whilst soaking up the view. The daylight hours meant I couldn't afford to "tarry awhile amidst such loveliness" for too long and anyway, Winchester beckoned. The descent along confined paths joined Garden Hill Lane, an ancient track prone to flooding. It was bone-dry, but awash with a sea of fallen leaves obscuring loose flints. There was a higher path on the bank and where this crossed from side to side, cutaway steps and stepping stones have been provided.

Under the red-bricked arch of a disused railway, I squelched along a tricky section adjacent to the capacious River Meon. Wild watercress was prominent in the crystal-clear water and the environs of the footbridge were a delight to the eye. Melodious birds darted around, proclaiming the bountiful berry harvest.

Over the A.32 and through the quiet village of Exton, complete with pink cottages and a tidy churchyard. The diagonal field paths up to Beacon Hill were perfectly reinstated following recent ploughing and along here I passed a bunch of ramblers: were they Exton's Retired Gentlefolk? (Sorry, Mr. Editor, it's only jealousy really.) The stiff pull up at the end took my breath away for a while so I rested on a tree stump in the now warm sunshine of early afternoon.

Suitably refreshed and down to shirtsleeves, I cracked on along high tracks past the site of Lomer, a deserted medieval village with cows happily munching amongst the grassy mounds and hollows. Lomer Farm, where the Wayfarers' Walk is crossed, presented tidy cottage gardens and, soon after, six all-terrain cyclists were lazing in the sun, on terrain, their muddy machines providing an unexpected obstacle.

A sideways glance at Wind Farm found an airstrip with a few planes and a tiny hangar big enough for just one of them. Leaves and more mud led to a tarmac stretch past the popular Milbury's Inn at Beauworth, from where a delightful green lane with darting rabbits led to the A. 272 crossing. At Holding Farm I used my 'Dazer' against an angry collie who immediately shot back into the farmhouse.

With the sun sinking I donned the jersey and waddled over Gander Down along another fine green lane between hedgerows. Pheasants and crows abound here, together with muddy shooting-brakes dispensing wellied strollers. The autumn stillness was illustrated by the thin wisp of smoke rising vertically from the woodman's cottage in Temple Valley. The plod up to Cheesefoot Head saw me following a female pheasant with ten offspring trying to keep up. As my presence became too close, a crescendo of flapping wings took them to the safety of the scrub. The easy path over Telegraph Hill gave mystical views of the setting sun over Deacon Hill and Twyford Down. After the quiet hamlet of Chilcomb a diagonal path took me to the M.3 footbridge. And so to Venta Belgarum.

Residential roads led to King Alfred's Statue where I changed into clean shoes and socks, reflecting on a most exhilarating journey. A slalom course through late shoppers ensured I made the 17.05 train home. A 16-hour day, but pleasure in the planning, which had paid off.

Guidebook: "Along the South Downs Way to Winchester", £3.40 (including postage) from Eastbourne Rambling Club, 254 Victoria Drive, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN20 8QT.

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THE SOUTHERN TRIPLE CHALLENGE

by Laurie Lowe

By now all Kent Group members will have heard of the Southern Triple Challenge. To recap:- it is a unique award, consisting of a badge and a certificate, available to anyone who completes the Wealden Waters, the Surrey Summits and the Three Forests challenge walks in an unbroken sequence.

As I remember it, the idea for a special award was born during a conversation between Jill Green and myself as we struggled round a particularly wet Wealden Waters in 1987. We had both completed the Surrey Summits earlier that year and felt that our heroic efforts were worthy of a special award. It was later that the idea of including the Three Forests emerged. These three 60+ miles events were then the longest in the LDWA calendar, apart, obviously, from the annual '100'.

Later Jill mentioned the idea to Ann Sayer, who formulated what was needed to set up the scheme - and then she skilfully lumbered me with the task of acting as Recorder! Sums of money were provided by the Essex & Herts Group, the Essex Ramblers' Association and the Kent Group, so that badges and certificates could be designed and ordered. Thus I started recording completions in October 1989. We had decided that the award should be retrospective, i.e. it was to be applicable back to the earliest date when all three events took place. This was 1981, when the youngest event, the Wealden Waters, was first run. I laboriously went through all past results lists for all three events and identified those who had completed a qualifying sequence (this was all without the aid of a computer!). At the same time an article in 'Strider', describing the idea, invited applications from those who thought they had qualified.

In fact, I discovered that Jeff Ellingham had been the first to complete the challenge (although he did not know it at the time since it had not then been invented), when he completed the Three Forests in November 1982. Bill Grace also qualified in the same event, but as his time was slower than Jeff's I gave certificate number 1 to Jeff.

To date, July 1993, 147 certificates have been awarded but there may be a few more claims to come following the 1993 Surrey Summits. The last sequence was:- WW92, 3F92, SS93; the current sequence is:- 3F92, SS93, WW93. As the 3F is only run every two years the sequence is broken in 1993; the next run will be when the three events are all held in 1994.

Now for a few statistics - Henry Bridge has completed an unbroken sequence of all three events no less than five times! He has certificate numbers 6, 7, 25, 42 and 108. Remarkably his shortest aggregate time for all three events (66 hours 36 minutes) was achieved with his latest completion in 1992 - he improves with age! John Wharman and Bill Grace have each had four claims.

The fastest man to date is Nicholas Kaye who had an aggregate of 45 hours 53 minutes with his 1990 sequence. Martyn Greaves has an aggregate of 45-53 and Jeff Ellingham's first completion in 1982 is still the third fastest in 46-15. Those were the days Jeff!

For the ladies, Debbie Cooper achieved 48-17 in 1988 and Louise Cartwright recorded 55-53 in 1990. Jill Green (57-34) and Shirley Hu (58-53) are the next fastest of the gentle sex.

Some alarm was caused several years ago when nasty rumours spread that the Surrey Summits would no longer take place. Fortunately this threat did not materialise and requests for the award continue to arrive at the end of each new unbroken sequence of the three events. It generally seems agreed that interest in the challenge has had a beneficial effect on the number of entries for each of the events.

Finally, on the financial side, we have been able to pay off the loans from both the Essex groups and are progressing towards the day when the Kent group loan will have been repaid. So, a reasonable success story! But the moral of the story is - don't mention half-baked ideas, which pass through your head when you are cold, wet and tired, to Jill Green!

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ANSWERS TO A KENTISH QUIZ BY SHIRLEY HIGGINS

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|----|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| A. | 1. Woodchurch | 6. Flaxton |
| | 2. Paddlesworth | 7. Petteridge |
| | 3. Brook | 8. Nettlestead Green |
| | 4. Sole Street | 9. Fairbourne Heath |
| | 5. Markbeech | 10. Hamptons |
| B. | 1. Land in front of farm buildings | 6. Chapel |
| | 2. Rough Common | 7. Gate |
| | 3. Woodland pasture | 8. Wooded hill |
| | 4. Farm or manor granted by charter | 9. Common land |
| | 5. Headland | 10. Heath |

- C. 1. Westerham 6. Hever
2. Allington 7. Small Hythe
3. Tenterden 8. Downe
4. Pluckley 9. Shoreham
5. Lullingstone 10. Maidstone
- D. 1. Brasted; no windmill 6. Ightham; no station
2. Lit. Stour not Medway tributary 7. Allington Castle not N. Trust
3. Cowden church has a spire 8. West Malling; not on N.D. Way
4. Westerham has no castle 9. East Malling; not on R. Medway
5. Paddock Wood; not on G'sand Way 10. Borden; not on Saxon Shore Way
Some alternative answers were acceptable in Section D.
- E. 1. Westerham Hill 6. New Romney, Hythe, Dover, Sandwich
2. Beltring 7. Hadlow
3. Offham 8. Dover Castle, Roman lighthouse
4. Hops 9. Hever Castle
5. Biddenden 10. Cherries

Three sets of answers were received. Congratulations to Keith Warman who scored full marks. He will be given a copy of the book 'Kent Curiosities' by John Vigar.

Shirley Higgins

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THE DUDDON LANDSCAPE WALK by JOHN PROBERT

(A fell challenge walk of 23 miles with 6,000 ft. of ascent - not for the faint-hearted or the poor traveller).

Arriving in Broughton in the Lake District on Friday evening I thought that we were in for a wet one but Saturday turned out to be bright with a promise of some sun. I started off with no more than 250 other walkers from Broughton Square to High Cross Inn where we could see what was in store for us. Ahead on a fell road to cross the river at Duddon Bridge to turn R. then L. into a wood. Then the trouble started with sketchy paths and following stone walls uphill all the way through tufted grass and bracken. It might have been as well if waterproofs had been put on as most of the group struggling up the hill were wet through but we pressed on across Thwaites Fell, aiming for a col, if and when visible through the mist, before climbing a rock band to reach the summit of Buckbarrow and Checkpoint 1.

At this stage I thought: "If it gets no harder than that it's a piece of cake" - how wrong can you get?! Burnmoor and Whit Fell are in full view in clear weather but on the day we steered by compass to a trig. point on Whit Fell - a daunting task in the mist with visibility down to 50 M.

Punching our cards at the unmanned checkpoint on the summit we descended aiming N.N.W. for Holehouse Tarn on our left and roughly following the parish boundary which skirts the summits of Yoadcastle and Woodland Heights to reach Devoke Water. At this point water was the appropriate word: peat bog and water meadow with heather and tufted grass and the occasional stream to cross. One big chap in front of me jumped over a stream and was promptly up to his waist in peat: it was only with a great effort and a lot of help that he was able to get out.

As a change from uphill and water, from the lake a track is followed for about two miles to the Birker Fell road and Checkpoint 3. The tea is very welcome and the fare is very good but don't get complacent; this one hasn't finished with you yet.

On to the road again for half a mile then on to a farmtrack to Birkerthwaite Farm before turning right over one of the very few stiles on this route. Walking across heather and somewhat boggy ground crossed High Beck and ascended the slopes of Great Worm Crag to Checkpoint 4 (unmanned) by its summit cairn. Here there was bright sunshine and lovely views and what? some lovely place-names on this walk. The route description will tell you that the Fell road from the summit marked on the map is, for the most part, non-existent on the ground so 'regardez' the compass along the ridge to Far Hill (the locals knew which was Far Hill but, don't be fooled, there are locals walking in all directions).

Descended, contouring round yet more boggy ground to the headwaters of High Ford Beck and Smallstone Beck, then ascended the rocky ramparts of Green Crag to the summit and Checkpoint 5. Here the winds were so high that when I dropped a crisp packet it hit the ground fifty yards further down from the summit - to make a point I saw several people picking up paper, sweetpapers, etc. that had been dropped by others: a good group the S.W. Lancs. Descending north with Crook Crag ahead steered E.N.E. for a stile (No.2) at the base of Harter Fell (or should it be Heartbreak Fell?). Here choose your own route across very boggy terrain climbing towards the summit rocks only to descend E.S.E. to a National Trust boundary fence. Down a very steep hill through trees to a forest road and Birk's Farm (Birk is right).

At this point, in fact for the next ten miles, I am on my own: the faster ones have gone and the slower ones are behind or all gone home. On forest tracks for about an hour, turn right or left when the route description tells you to or else you end up at Birk's Farm again and that wouldn't be so funny. Out of the trees to cross Grassguards Gill Ford and continue through farm buildings. The ford was fast and deep and very refreshing to the feet. Leaving Wallowbarrow Farm to crags on the left I came to a beautiful stone footbridge over the River Duddon to the main valley road which led to Checkpoint 7 in a Church Parish Room where there was stacks of food of all descriptions with about 20 walkers tucking in.

One chap of about 25 collapsed with dehydration and hypothermia and was rushed off to hospital - only a fool walks in this terrain with inadequate gear and no water bottle. However from Seathwaite Parish Room a short road walk led to Newfield Inn then through sheep pens and on to a good track rising diagonally across the slopes of Caw (a small hill on the map) and on uphill for about 4 miles to the highest point on the Duddon Valley - Broughton Mills road. Across the road we ascended on a good track to a col below Stickle Pike following on open moor by Tarn Hill to Great Stickle and Checkpoint 8 on its summit. Grand views right down to the Duddon Valley and out to Morecambe Bay, about fourteen miles away.

Off the summit descending to a gate in a stone wall below Hovel Knott then through the gate to a farm and a lane leading, in about 2½ miles, to Checkpoint 9. Fields and footpaths led to the main road to Broughton and to the finish. Excellent food at the finish and the people helping out are great. Summing up: it was as tough a walk as I have ever had but it was well worth the trouble.

John Probert 524.

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CLEVELAND HUNDRED 1993

As Bryan Clarke's report on the first shift at the Kent Group's checkpoint is beautifully presented on one page I shall save myself some typing by quoting, to begin with, a letter from Bernie Pearson, Secretary of the Cleveland Group to our Secretary, David Sheldrake:-

"Dear Dave,

"Now that I have got my brain functioning again, may I, on behalf of the Cleveland Group, say a big thankyou to members of of your group for manning Hutton-Le-Hole checkpoint. May I also, on behalf of Edith and myself, say a special 'thanks' to the members for performing magnificently in the catering department under what could be described, at times, as hectic conditions.

"Despite the terrible conditions the walkers had to cope with, the initial feedback has been magnificent; a lot of the credit for this goes to the people on the checkpoints who lift the spirits with their cheerfulness.

Once again thanks, Yours, Bernie."

Congratulations to all the Kent Group members who completed what was, by all accounts, a very tough '100!', and commiserations to those who, for various good reasons, didn't finish. Don't forget the Dartmoor Hundred Marshals' Walk on 30th April 1994. We have agreed to run a checkpoint on the event on 28-30 May.

Cleveland 100 - The Kent Group checkpointing at Hutton-le-Hole

The evening before the Cleveland 100, a group of 14 dined in Stokesley, near Great Ayton where the event was to start and finish, and a fine time was had by all there.

The following afternoon our team for the first shift assembled at the Village Hall in Hutton-le-Hole, a very picturesque village which has the Ryedale Folk Museum situated in the main street.

Our leader, Ron Roweth, was at the hall to organise the preparation of the hall, food and drink for the 1700hrs opening time. Ron and those there who were on the second shift then left to have a leisurely evening meal before returning to man the second shift.

By 5 o'clock we were all ready, except for the unfortunate Raynet people who had technical problems and were unable to give us any information from the start at Great Ayton. At around 10.30pm when we handed over to the second shift we still did not know who the non-starters were and did not officially know who had retired previous to our Checkpoint!

The first participant arrived at 5.10 complete with controversy, as he apparently was being paced by a non-entrant (we heard that he had more than one person taking turns at the pacing task). But is this against the rules? We had a debate while we awaited the next entrants and did not reach a conclusion. How is one to differentiate between a pacemaker and a guide? A poorly sighted person may need a guide. Most of us have sometimes left the navigation to another when walking in a group, is this being guided? Can non-entrants be stopped from passing along the route of an event? Perhaps we should not take this too seriously, if a person wants to be more competitive than another person is that not their choice? LDWA events are not races so it does not really matter that one person is faster than another.

The next two people came in together at five to six (were they pacing/guiding each other?).

At five to seven our Peter Barnett arrived, but unhappily he had previously retired with a back problem and had come along to see us. Later we were joined by Brian Buttifant who had also retired.

The evening progressed with an ever-increasing number of entrants passing through after partaking of the refreshments offered by the cheerful Kent Group workers. Hardly anyone left the checkpoint without saying "Thanks, Kent". Only one "complaint" was mentioned by a few; there was no HOT vegetarian food on offer. This was, of course, not under our control as we had to use the food provided.

The handover to the second shift took place smoothly after around 150 entrants had passed through.

The first shift drove off into the rainy night thinking of those out in the refreshing night air as they strode happily along in the rain and mud!

The checkpointers enjoyed themselves and we hope the entrants did too. It was inevitable that comparisons were made with the Invicta 100, but that too was part of the grand weekend in the North Yorkshire Moors.

Bryan C.

CLEVELAND 100 - KENT CHECKPOINT - SECOND SHIFT

Our tour of duty commenced at 10 p.m. and we slotted ourselves into the various jobs as the first shift stood down. With only 150 entrants through during the previous shift's spell of duty we knew that the main 'peak' was still to arrive - and arrive it did! At one time three groups, each of 10 walkers, arrives within two minutes and we processed well over 100 in the course of the busiest hour. We were hard-pushed to manage but we just about coped, although the queue for hot drinks nearly reached back to the door at one time. It was fortunate that we had extra help in the forms of Brian Buttifant and Ann Beeching's brother. I do not think that the original six would have been able to manage during the busiest period.

Conditions throughout the night were pretty grim for the walkers with plenty of heavy rain and mist on the hills which made for difficult navigation. I believe that it was the poor overnight conditions which caused so many retirements. The Raynet people were having their problems and, frankly, they were not much help to us until towards the end, when we were accounting for stragglers.

Gradually the flow of customers dwindled. Once, when I stepped outside for some fresh air, I was very concerned to see large numbers of sheep wandering down the road through the village. Had some walker left the gate open? Were we to be confronted by an angry farmer? My mind was eventually set at rest when two policemen arrived and casually remarked that the sheep did this every night and that they would be rounded up and driven back through the village and on to the hills in the morning.

As is usual on these occasions, there was a long, boring period at the end when we were waiting for the last few to arrive. Finally everyone was accounted for and we were able to clear up and get our heads down for an hour or so of well-earned rest.

Laurie Lowe

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My thanks to Bryan and Laurie for those two reports and my apologies to them both for holding over until the next issue their articles on the Hertfordshire Hobble and the Robert Louis Stevenson Trail respectively. It was good to see a large turnout on Keith's Saxon Shore Loop and, as usual, on the Rotingdean Windmill Walk. By the time you read this I hope to have seen many of you (well, not too many) on Paul's Cream Teas Walk. I must now go to bed if I am to be up in time to go out with the 'Wednesday wrinklies' in the morning.

Tom Sinclair.