

Surrey Group
NEWSLETTER
October 1997

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Items for the Newsletter 9

Reports of past events, letters and other items should be sent to the Editor before the end of December for inclusion in the next Newsletter. Preferably they should be typed but legible manuscript will be gladly accepted.

We met at the railway station and then set off to tramp the newly launched Thames Path. Not all of it, just the 24 or so miles from Henley on Thames to Eton. It was a motley crew, eight walkers including two national committee members and John Westcott -making a welcome return to social walks. Richard Ireson led the walk at a leisurely pace though it was a hot, humid and muggy day - actually quite tiring for walking. Ascent was minimal (a hill at Aston and two steep bridges). For those who were not able to join us the walk is one that could easily be done by any Surrey member. It was an enjoyable walk so the conventional report is replaced by a set of DIY mini-instructions for readers to check out this linear walk for themselves. There is a new Countryside Commission/OS National Trail Guide which describes the whole 180 miles from Cirencester to the Thames Barrier (*The Thames Path*, David Sharp, Aaram Press). The route is well waymarked and easily followed with a map. I may still have some spare copies of his route description, give me a ring on 01344 777444 if you would like to have one.

Park at Slough Station (50p at weekends) and take the half hour train trip to Henley (change Twyford) - the Sunday service starts later hence the group walk was on a Saturday to make a 9.00 walk start. From the station go down to the river and across to the south bank. This is the straight section used for the Regatta (avoid the first week of July). After Hambleden lock the path goes away from the river through Aston (some mild climbing!). Then past Harley lock to cross to the north bank over the impressive 1989 Thames Water Authority footbridge. Having walked for a couple of hours the sight of Temple lock will be welcome, not the least for the pleasant Tea Rooms (and their spotless toilets!). A refreshment stop will be enjoyed here. Then on through Marlow, past the mock castle and over the pleasant meadows.

Lunch may be taken, after 11 miles, at the Spade Oak Inn (slightly north of the railway crossing). Brakespear's and Marland's Speckled Hen go with the efficiently provided and extensive Brewer's Fare. Next, on to Bourne End, across to the South Bank on the footbridge hung on the side of the railway bridge, and down to Cookham. Off the river through the Churchyard (and the mortal remains of Stanley Spencer and his memorial gallery) and a country walk past the cricket pitch to rejoin the river below the slopes of Cliveden.

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A moment's aberration in the hot sunshine pattern of the last few days produced a few drops of rain as a dozen enthusiasts assembled in the car park on the hill at Tilburstow for this mid week walk. Our leader, Dave Challenger, was joined by Keith, Jim, Peter and Molly, Ann, Joan, Dee (from the London Group) Cynthia, (from even further away - New Zealand) and the writer. We descended the hill to find a meadow filled with the wild flowers of summer; we were to see and pass through many such fields this day coloured with the red and gold, the yellow and blue of summer's rich beauties.

We weaved our way through woods on paths, coming out from time to time to gaze on a sun bathed landscape. It was warm, later to be hot, but a welcoming breeze relieved the closeness. Not having seen my companions for some time, tales were recounted and listened to of deeds of derring-do in other wilder parts. Jim pulled out his map as we sniffed the first slight whiff of hops on the mid-day air. He and I proceeded to lead the party at a faster gait towards, and into, our lunchtime stop, the Royal Oak at Staffhurst Wood. Most members departed to the garden but two of us feeling a little chilly in our sweat soaked shirts decided to stay within a few feet of the bar where immediate resuscitation was readily available.

After an hour, Dave, everting stern authority begged us to leave which we did, not without some regrets, into hot sunshine of the afternoon. A stop here and there gave me much needed temporary rest and time to gaze on green woods, fields of corn and hazy hills through which our party was trekking. What a lovely way to spend a day! It was good to be alive in this grand, little corner of England. We passed through a herd of frisky cows and an excited large bull which magically appeared as we quickly climbed the exit stile. Jim, Gillian and I brought up the rear as we took the long climb back, my feet dragged but Dave's re-appearance assured us that the end was nigh and so it was, for soon we arrived at the flower strewn field first noticed this morning. A short climb and we were back at the start point. The forecast had been for 16 or 17 miles but I'm counting it as 19 on my chart. Congratulations and thanks having been made to Dave for his route on a splendid day out we left to mail over our good fortune for the walk and the weather.

Harry E. Bishop

PROG

Sunday 26 October

Founders Jubilee Challenge

25 miles. Entry form is enclosed with this Newsletter.

Sunday 16 November

A Walk in the Park

20 miles. Start 9.00 am in Bourne car park at Virginia Water railway station. Pub stop for lunch. Leader: Gillian Bull, tel. 01344 842508.

Thursday 27 November

Dunsfold Diversion

18 miles. Start at 9.30 am from Village Hall in Dunsfold. Pub stop for lunch. Leader: Brian Haigh, tel. 01483 303020.

Saturday 6 December

Christmas Dinner

Once again at the Sun Inn in Dunsfold. Only 28 places so give your order to Morvyn early to avoid disappointment. Optional walk starts at 9.00 am from the Village Hall, GR 007 362, OS 186. Changing facilities are available. More details from Morvyn Harvey, tel. 01483 417973 or 01798 344309.

Thursday 1 January 1998

Surrey Inns Kaster

12 or 20 miles. Start 9.00 - 11.00 a.m. from Christchurch Hall, Virginia Water, GR 999 679. Bring map OS 176, compass and pen/pencil. Late finishers could need a torch. ENTRY AND ROUTE DETAILS ONLY ON THE DAY. LDWA members £2, non-members £2.50, U-16 50p. Organiser Peter Bull. PLEASE NOTE NEW VENUE.

Sunday 11 January

Winter Tanners

30 miles from car park in Leatherhead, GR 164 567. SAE for entry form to Reg Chapman, 63 Yockley Close, CAMBERLEY, Surrey, GU15 1QQ.

Tuesday 20 January 1998

AGM

7.30 for 8.00 at the White Horse, Shere. Resolutions and nominations for Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer should be sent to the Secretary by 31 December 1997. PLEASE NOTE NEW VENUE.

RAMME

Thursday 22 January Pottenham Perambulation

About 16 miles. Start at 9.30 from upper car park on Pottenham Heath, GR 921 460. Pub stop for lunch. Leader : Dave Challenger, tel. 01372 277138.

Sunday 1 February Punchbowl Marathon

30 miles challenge walk from Chichester Hall, Witley. SAE to Reg Chapman, 63 Yockley Close, Camberley, GU15 1QQ.

Sunday 15 February Shamley Shambles

20 miles. Start at 9.30 am from Guildford railway station. Lunch at Bricklayers Arms in Shamley Green. Tea stop in Cateshall. Leader : Don Bolton, tel. 01483 823429.

Saturday/Sunday 28 February/1 March Surrey Summits Marshals Walk

62.5 miles. For more information contact Roger Moss, tel. 01252 659553.

Thursday 12 March Downs Dooladdle

19 miles. 9.30 am start in car park at Newlands Corner on A25 GR 044491. Lunch at Stephan Langton pub in Friday Street. Leader : Don Bolton.

Saturday/Sunday 28/29 March Surrey Summits

62.5 miles in 28 hours from Downsend School, Leatherhead. SAE to Dave Challenger, 44 Agnes Lane, Ashford, KT21 2ND. (Tel. 01372 277138)

Sunday 19 April A Walk in the Land of Nod

About 20 miles. A walk not to be missed. More details later. Leader Chairman Keith, tel. 01483 563792.

The temperature was already in the 80's before we left Haslemere station car park. It promised to be a day to remember! One or two sent apologies because of the expected heat but before long the party, fourteen strong, headed up and out of town following the Greensand Way to the A3 at Hindhead where we stopped for an early tea break, just one of many stops during the day. From there we dropped thankfully downwards through the heather of the Panchibowl towards Kettlebury Hill and beyond, over the sand dunes to Rushmoor. Soon we reached the Chart Road and crossed Frensham Common to pick up the path along the eastern bank of Frensham Little Pond. It was one of those typically humid August days so we stopped again for drinks in the shade of some trees. A fisherman, offshore up to his neck in the cool water, received many envious glances.

A strong indication that lunchtime was now approaching were questions from 'you know who'. "How far are we from the pub?", "What's it called?", "Which direction?". Fortunately it was only 20 minutes brisk walking through the Tilford Reeds to the Barley Mow on the Green. The thermometer on the wall in the saloon bar registered 93 degrees and the time was just 12.20. We placed our orders just before the rush started. Good timing.

After enjoying the extensive pub menu and taking in plenty of fluid in anticipation of the hot afternoon we set off again to pass Stockbridge Pond and over Yagden Hill - the depth of sand prompted Glynis to wonder if she was an extra training for a remake of 'Lawrence of Arabia'! Absence of shade on Hankley Common made this the hardest part of the walk but some welcome shade near the Panchibowl provided another excuse for a stop. We then had a debate about the proximity of the cafe at Hindhead which led to me becoming the sweeper instead of leader as a mutinous splinter group headed towards the tea urns. From there it was a little under one hour back to the car park at the station. We had started at 9.10; we finished at 17.10; we had two hours of stops and averaged over 1mph for the distance of 19.56 miles. Not bad for the hottest day of the year.

Apart from the usual gathering of Surrey stalwarts we were pleased to welcome David Stockley from Wessex, and Don Bolton and Vala West from the London Group. I hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did and you will come back for more.

John Lay

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before passing Boulton's lock to reach the outskirts of Maidenhead. There the Jenners Tea Rooms in the pleasure gardens at Ray Mill demand an afternoon tea stop (very good home made cake!). Cross the Bridge at Maidenhead and then a stroll gently down Dorsey reach. Through Bray (the Roux Brother's Waterside Restaurant is, unfortunately, on the opposite bank!). Pass Boveney lock and, on the other side of the river, Windsor Race course. Here Windsor Castle comes into view. At Eaton leave the river path to join the High Street by the College Sanatorium (shown as church with spire on map). Continue up the High Street to pass the main college buildings. Then right onto the public footpath across the first of the playing fields of Eaton. Next pass the cricket pitch and then leave Agar's Plough playing field at the NW corner where (in the thicket) there is a gate to join the Slough Road under the M4. A short straight walk soon reaches Slough station.

So there it is. Something different for the Surrey walker. An easy way to walk 25 miles, enjoy the river and take advantage of several refreshment stops. Over to you!

Richard Ireson

Thirty-three Enjoy Celebratory Dinner

27 September 1997

After an excellent meal in the Hartwood Inn, very near to where it all started, the diners were entertained by a speech from Chairman Keith recalling the early days and the individuals who provided the basis for the LDWA as we know it today. In his reply, Sir John Johnson, the President of the LDWA, remarked on how impressed he was by the way the success of LDWA depended exclusively on the contributions of volunteers at all levels; in the local groups and also at national level. Among those who attended were Barbara Blanchford, Margaret Steer and the new editor of Strider, Richard Bradbury. Photographs of the Downman 100 and congratulatory letters received by Janet and Reg were on display.

Just prior to the dinner a fax arrived carrying best wishes from San Francisco where Gillian Bull was on holiday. Many thanks Gillian, it was kind of you to drag yourself away from the attractions of the Golden Gate city to send us a message. We hope you had a good holiday.

White Peak 100 : 23rd - 25th May 1998

The joint organisers, the Sherwood and Staffordshire Groups, have accepted the offer of the Surrey Group to host a checkpoint. We have been allocated CP 6, 29.3 miles from the start. The CP, the third feeding station, will be in the Birchever Village Hall, GR 239622. It will be open from 14.00 to 22.00 on the Saturday requiring the Surrey Group to be present from midday to midnight. There is ample parking in the village along with two pubs. The quality of the beer is not known.

Offers of help should be sent to me on e-mail RegChapman@compuserve.com, or by tel./fax on 01276 65169. I estimate a team of twenty will be needed.

Janet Chapman

Commons Clump

Thursday 11 September

Sadly John Westcott was unable to lead this walk because of a broken leg. Roy and Olive Barnsley stepped into the breach and from what I have heard from Harry Bishop it was 'a most enjoyable day's romp'. Perhaps the high spot of the day was when John arrived at the lunch stop and bought everyone a drink. Harry is hoping this precedent will be followed by others!

A Big Thank You to ----

Juan Wrenn for leading the New Alresford Ambic on 12 June; and to Barbara Blatchford for her Midsummer Walk on 25 June. Both walks were very much enjoyed by those who turned out. Anyone wishing to lead a walk should contact the Secretary before the AGM on 20 January 1998.

August Strider received in August

Congratulations to new Editor, Richard Bradbury, for issuing his first Strider in the same month as that printed on the cover. It is a good start which promises well for the future.