



Surrey Group  
**NEWSLETTER**  
Autumn 2003



**Items for Newsletter**

The Newsletter is published three times a year, Spring, Summer and Autumn. Reports of past events, letters, and other items should be sent to the Editor one month before the publication date of the next Newsletter. Preferably they should be sent by email or typed, but manuscript will be accepted.

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**Surrey Group LDWA**

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### Editorial

Autumn is now upon us and winter lies ahead; as I write this editorial the wind is blowing hard and the leaves are flying from the trees. What we can be certain of is that the temperatures will drop and it will become pleasant again to take energetic walks. It might even rain. This summer has been noted for its heat and dryness, the effect of this can be seen in two of the walk reports in this Newsletter, the Downsman Revisited on the 10<sup>th</sup> October starts with a comment on the temperature, the Missing Link on the 15<sup>th</sup> July comments on the enervating effects of the high temperatures on that day and so does the Punchbowl Pathfinder, Part 1 on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. Is this to be the pattern of the future in the south of England? If so, it might be necessary to rethink the summer programme, doing fewer and shorter walks maybe or choosing walks which are mainly in woodland and so are shaded from the burning heat.

In the recent planning meeting an interesting statistic was revealed; fewer people are doing Kanters, there were only 23 on the Bramley Kanter, and the Surrey Inns had less than 50 entrants. Have walkers become so used to having it easy, an accurate route description to follow, that requires no map reading, and ample food at frequent checkpoints, that to have to route find between grid references and to face the prospect of carrying food and water is too much for them? I hope that this is not the case and all who didn't turn up for these two Kanters had valid reasons. This is not necessarily an plea for returning to basics or turning back the clock but there is some evidence on challenge walks that groups vie with each other in presenting more and better food at check points. Also those who have laboured hard over route descriptions feel very annoyed by walkers who complain of inaccuracies when all they needed to have done was to check their position on the map. As Tony Cartwright points out in his report of the Summits revisited, the present day member has little idea of the 'privations' the founders of the LDWA went through on their walks and they felt that that was what you should expect on long distance walks.

*The editor*

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• **--- Xmas Walk - Xmas Walk - Xmas Walk ---**

- If you are intending to come to the annual Christmas Walk and dinner (but in particular the dinner) on Saturday Dec 13<sup>th</sup> would you please let Louise Cartwright know not later than Nov 1<sup>st</sup>. She will then send you a menu to make your meal selection. Louise can be contacted on 01483 503768 or by email at L.Cartwright@fam-ct.ac.uk
  - (note: this does not apply to those who put down their names during the Exmoor weekend).
  - Partners/spouses welcome of course - and remember if you want to do either the walk or come to the dinner but not both then that's equally fine.
  - Do let her know...
- .....

### **Wey Navigation**

Walking along a canal towpath is very different from walking through the countryside in general. Clearly, it is much flatter and smoother, route finding is not a problem, and you are always seeing wildlife, even if it is mallards, swans and moorhens, but also the countryside looks very different when viewed from the towpath, and familiar areas are entered from new directions. Another point to remember is that a canal side walk in good weather means that there are many other people out and about. The ones who are messing about in boats are no problem but the towpath cyclists are. They never have bells to warn of their approach and they seem incapable of shouting a warning before they are upon one demanding their right of way. How it is that neither a walker nor a cyclist falls into the water I will never know.

Such was the walk done by 12 members of the Surrey Group on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> August under the able leadership of John Lay. In outline, the group walked from West Byfleet along the Wey Navigation towards Guildford, leaving the canal at Sutton Green to cross the countryside through Worplesdon to Woking and then along the Basingstoke Canal to its junction with the Wey Navigation in West Byfleet. Lunch was taken in the Farmer's Arms in Worplesdon and an excellent afternoon tea at the leader's home in West Byfleet. There were many stops for drinks of water along the way. The actual length of the walk was subject to much discussion. Before we set off, John said it would not be the 20 miles as published because of some canal side work in progress; rather it would be 16 miles. However given the time taken, the consensus of opinion was that it was 18 miles in length. Sufficient for the conditions and the temperature, though, I hasten to add, nowhere near as hot as the previous Sunday's walk.

There is an interesting juxtaposition of means of transport where the Basingstoke Canal joins the Wey Navigation; a bridge carries a twentieth century motorway over a nineteenth century railway which runs alongside the eighteenth century waterways.

Our thanks go to John for organising and leading the walk including his intrepid leadership through a patch of dense bracken, taller than at least one member of the party, and to his wife and daughter for the splendid afternoon tea.

*Peter Waterhouse*



Autumn 4day event - 27/30<sup>th</sup> Sept. *Richard Ireson*

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September saw 22 members going to the Holiday Fellowship at Holnicote House, Selworthy on North Exmoor. This year we spent four nights away. On the Saturday afternoon John Lay led us six miles from the House, up to Selworthy village and then to the top of Selworthy Beacon (308m). We dropped down to Bessington, on to West Luccome and back to Holnicote.

On Sunday we met Terry and Louise Cartwright at Exford. They led us through 17 glorious miles of central Exmoor. We went south, via Road Hill, dropping down to the picturesque village of Withypool. Then ascending to the west, before dropping down to the ancient Tarr Steps across the River Barle. Lunch was taken in full sunshine before heading up Winsford Hill and along the Exe Valley. Following the Exe north we returned back to Exford and its tearooms!

On Monday John Lay led us for 15 miles. We parked at Porlock Weir to join the South West Coastal Path as it went west. We stopped by Culbone Church (which is of Saxon origin and is claimed as the smallest full Church in the country!). Then onwards towards County Gates on the Somerset/Devon border. From the Coastal Path we had been able to watch a mounting rainstorm move across the sea towards us. Luckily a very substantial walker's shelter, at County Gates, gave a refuge for us to eat lunch and the rain passed us by as we emerged for the afternoon. Then descent towards Malmsmead before heading for Oare, onto the Moor and down to Robber's Bridge. We climbed up to the Culbone Inn, though its closure for refurbishment was disappointing, then down through Worthy Wood and back to Porlock Weir. There, everything having closed for the season, we had to go to Porlock itself to find tearooms!

Tuesday was Dave Challenger's turn to lead us 17 miles from the coast to the highest point of Exmoor. We drove to Dunster, parked near the renovated Mill, and started through Natcombe Bottom to

head over Croydon Hill. This involved forestry land where compass (and GPS!) were used. Past Clicket ruins along a path into the woodland. Alas the path became less than distinct and the brambles predominated. Eventually we came out in Allercott where Finger Posts were propped against the wall with the possibility of being pointed in the direction of choice! We lunched above Stowey Wood before taking Slade Lane to Pitt Bridge. Then Elscombe Lane to Ford and the ascent of Dankery Hill (where Stag and Hinds were spotted alongside the Exmoor Ponies). At Dankery the party divided. Dave, at great pace, led back along the Macmillan Way through Wotton Courtney to ascend Wootton Common before dropping back into Dunster. Others continued to the top of Dankery Beacon (519m), before dropping down to Horner Wood and returning to Holnicote via Luccombe. Apart from these main walks, each day there was also a varied group of visits or accommodating routes for those of our number who wanted an alternative. After last year's lashing rain we were particularly fortunate with the weather. Each day's forecast warned of the possibility of precipitation but, for the most part, the sun shone and the ground was bone dry.

On Wednesday we travelled home. The weekend had its usual social activities. Much 'Oh Hell' was played. HF's food and hospitality was splendid as ever (with a good supply of wine and drink!). It is, however, difficult to claim that calories used outweighed those indulged in! On Tuesday evening we had an interesting slide presentation about Exmoor from Jim Webber, the National Park Ranger for the Porlock area. Surrey Group rather dominated Holnicote, though some explanation was sought of why the majority of those attending did not live in Surrey! Our thanks to Molly Groundsell for organising. Already thoughts are turning to a similar trip to Whitby and the North York Moors for next year (with Sedburgh a possible alternative.)

### **Downsman Revisited, Part 3 or Surrey Group do the 100**

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of August, the 1<sup>st</sup> day in UK's history that a temperature of 37.7 degrees Celcius (100F) was recorded, a group of 10 Surrey Group walkers showed that the traditions of LDWA foolhardiness are still alive and well. Janet Chapman would not let a little warmth get in the way of her walk.

The walk set off from Cheesefoot Head (near Winchester) at 9am, although the Group programme said 9.30 – Reg waited for any member who had foolishly believed what was in the programme – no one had! (I had for the 2<sup>nd</sup> week misread the start time, thought it was 8.30 and had arrived just after 8). We followed the South Downs Way to arrive at the delightful Pub, The Millberry, for a coffee stop, not too harassed. Coffee was delayed a little as the barman couldn't find the bar keys! We then continued on the SDW and passed Lomer Farm, where we saw a solitary figure looking like a CP marshal sitting under a tree. Later, past Beacon Hill to the Shoe in Exton, where the beer was good and the sandwiches filling. Peter Edwards left us here, as he said he preferred the beach.

The heat really kicked in after lunch as we followed a muggy path through Coehampton forest and the Wayfarer's Walk by Betty Munday's Bottom. We reached Lomer Farm again with the same man still sitting there. Apparently he had to watch some agricultural process to ensure its success. But he was also giving passers by water – we all availed ourselves and 2 or 3 of us filled our hats with water then put them on. Very cooling. We moved slowly on to the NT Hinton Ampner house, where I (and the rest) was looking forward to a big pot of tea at the tearooms. Unfortunately, a member of staff did not approve on one of our number without an NT membership card going in, so Plan B was evoked; cakes and refreshments taken from Reg's car and eaten sitting on the grass outside the NT property.

Because Keith was feeling the effects of the heat after 16 miles walking, he was taken back to the start by Reg. The now depleted party continued to Cheriton, where they cooled off by 'bathing' in the stream. The final mile back to Cheesefoot Head was described by one of the party as the longest two miles he had ever walked!

Our thanks to Janet, helped by Avril, for organising this prolonged sauna, and to Reg for watering us and helping throughout.

*Keith Chesterton*



### **The Missing Link.**

The most recent 'long distance' foot path - St.Swithun's Way - was inaugurated on St Swithun's day last year thus forming the final link between Winchester and Canterbury by joining Winchester to the North Downs Way at Farnham. The new foot path is 34 miles long. St. Swithun is the patron saint of Winchester, who also gained a reputation as a superb administrator and was often linked to miracles like restoring broken eggs. It was after yet another removal of St.Swithun's bones to a new location that Swithun - in anger - generated a violent storm providing us with a well known poem:

St. Swithun's day, if thou dost rain,  
For forty days it will remain;  
St. Swithun's day if thou be fair,  
For forty days 'twill rain nae mair.

Precisely one year later on 15th July a few bold men from Surrey LDWA decided to take on the first - of two - 17 mile walks with temperatures well into the 90's (33.5C). It also proved to be the hottest July day since 1989, which created its own problems with dehydration. The official walk starts from the West Door of Winchester Cathedral and passes through historic Winchester and along the river Itchen, which is one of the clearest chalk rivers, famous for its very prestigious - and expensive - trout fishing.

Most of the morning's walk was under cover of trees, which helped; but after lunch, at the Cricketers in Alresford - one of many attractive towns/villages we walked through - it was heads down walking across melting asphalt for a considerable distance with no opportunity for changing the route and without any cover whatsoever from the now baking sun. Luckily our group found a small Post Office in Ropley with cool, fresh and bottled water for sale and an outdoor tap which cooled feet, heads, scarves and whatever else needed cooling before the last assault on St.Swithun's Way 1 and the final bit through Four Marks.

As I write this the day after the walk and glance out of the window it is noticeable that it is raining 'cats and dogs'; So two fingers to St. Swithun's 'forty day rule' and the accuracy of the little poem above.

And finally the commercial: Part 2 - and the final part - of the St. Swithun's Way walk will take place on Wednesday, 22 October and features Jane Austen's House in Chawton, Alton, more pretty villages, and Farnham.

*Erling Horsen*

### **Punchbowl Pathfinder, Part 1**

Although this was not the hottest day of the summer, that came later with Janet's walk, this day, I think, came a close second.

The soaring temperature kept many away but I enjoyed the company of five veterans, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August, who also joined me for this epic route retracing of this particular version of the Punchbowl, last used as a challenge event back in 1991.

This time we went roughly northeast towards Bramley along the Greensand Way and along the disused railway embankment. After just over 9 miles we stopped for an early lunch at the Parrot in Shalford, with the temperature above 35 we were simply very thirsty and it proved to be an excellent time for fast service and cold beer.

Northwards, after lunch along the Wey Navigation and then west along the North Downs Way over Putterham Heath to stop at the Good Intent in Putterham village. The reader must understand that this second stop was absolutely vital for the well being of this small band of intrepid walkers now, incidentally, reduced to four. Dehydration would undoubtedly have taken over if this wise precaution had not been taken.

We completed this route in just nine hours, having got temporarily lost on Witley Common. Before the start, I thought that after twelve years there bound to be some changes necessary for the new route but, remarkably, the Surrey countryside continues undisturbed and full of interest for the next Punchbowl Marathon in February 2004.

*John Lay*

### **Bramley Kanter 21<sup>st</sup> Sept.**

The day was perfect, not too hot, the route was excellent and dry underfoot yet only 23 people turned out for the Bramley Kanter. The added interest of a Kanter, over and above a walk through the countryside, is to plot one's route from grid reference to grid reference and to prove you have done it by finding the answer to a simple question related to the grid reference.

There were two routes to choose from, a 12-mile and a 20-mile, starting with a common route. The common route followed the Downs Link from Bramley to the foot of St. Martha's Hill. That means there was short distance northwards along the disused railway track and then cross-country on excellent paths over Blackheath and down to Chilworth. The Downs Link ascends St. Martha's Hill to join the North Downs Way about halfway up the hill on the east side but our route climbed straight up to the church and then turned eastwards to descend to the car park. From the car park the route took us along the Pilgrims Way to Water Lane and on to Albury where the routes separated.

The 20-mile route went south-eastwards from Albury over Albury Heath to Dilston Farm and from there via Knowle Farm to Peaslake. At this stage the four of us, one Peter, two Johns and an unnamed man from Halifax took a much-needed drink. While we were there we were joined by a second group of two ladies and one man and, just before our augmented group left, two other walkers arrived. The route went up past the church, cemetery and the famous triangle to continue westwards along the Winterfold switchback to the well. There we turned southwards through the forest to emerge on the road immediately opposite Jelley's Hollow. Down the Hollow, at one time a very wet track but now bone dry, to turn westwards via Alderbrook to join the Greensand Way at Woodhill. The Greensand Way was followed via Plonk's Hill, through fields of standing maize almost as tall as the walkers, to Rooks Hill Farm where a field inhabited by a magnificent bull with his herd of cows had to be crossed with great discretion. Departing from the GSW at Brookwell the route picked up the track going north-eastwards to Bramley.

The 12-mile route diverged from the 20 mile one in Albury. It went southwards over the edge of Blackheath past the car park on Farley Heath to turn westwards near Manor House Farm. The route then went along the edge of the extensive sand pits above upper Woodhill Farm to turn southwards down Dibdene Lane to join the Greensand Way and the 20-mile route at Woodhill. The routes diverged again at the crossing of the disused railway track with the 12-mile route returning to Bramley along the railway track.

Our thanks go to Tony and Louise Cartwright who devised the route and stayed all day in Bramley village hall in order to provide tea and biscuits for the returning walkers. A Kanter is great fun because it provides both physical and mental effort, it is a pity that so few people realise this

*Peter Waterhouse*

### **--- Xmas Walk - Xmas Walk - Xmas Walk ---**

- If you are intending to come to the annual Christmas Walk and dinner (but in particular the dinner) on Saturday Dec 13<sup>th</sup> would you please let Louise Cartwright know not later than Nov 1<sup>st</sup>. She will then send you a menu to make your meal selection. Louise can be contacted on 01483 503768 or by email at [L.Cartwright@farn-ct.ac.uk](mailto:L.Cartwright@farn-ct.ac.uk)
- (note: this does not apply to those who put down their names during the Exmoor weekend).
- Partners/spouses welcome of course - and remember if you want to do either the walk or come to the dinner but not both then that's equally fine.
- Do let her know...

**Group Programme** (Unless indicated, all walks have a pub stop for lunch)*If you intend to go on a walk, please tell the organiser or leader beforehand*

<b>Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October</b> 19 miles Start: 9.00am; CP at Darfold Wood, Picnic lunch with optional pub stop Leader: Jerome Ripp; Tel. 02085 462830	Explorer 133 GR 993330	<b>Sussex Border Path, Part 1</b>
<b>Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October</b> 26 miles in 9.5 hours Start: 9.00am; Peaslake Memorial Hall More information from organiser; See also Future Events, page 105 Strider Organiser: Bill Thompson; Tel. 0208 992 0991	Explorer 145 GR 085446	<b>Founder's Challenge</b>
<b>Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October</b> 17 miles Start: 9.30am; CP in Four Marks off A31, Bus to Winchester; Returning by bus from Farnham Leader: Erling Hawser; Tel. 01372 375776	Explorer 132 GR 672360	<b>St. Swithin's Way, Part 2</b>
<b>Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> October</b> 18 miles Start: 9.00am; Jack & Gill CP nr. The Clayton Windmills; Picnic option for lunch Leader: Norma Newman; Tel. 01372 726332	Explorer 122 GR 303134	<b>South Downs Saunter</b>
<b>Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> November</b> 20 miles Start: 9.00am; ; Witley Church CP, Church Lane, Witley Leader: John Lay; Tel. 01932 346596	Explorer 133 GR 947397	<b>Punchbowl Pathfinder, Part 2</b>
<b>Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> November</b> 17.5 miles Start: 8.30am; Top CP, Puttenham Common Leader: Keith Chesterton; Tel. 01483 563392 This is the fifth of a series of walks to climb all 41 tops over 150m in Surrey There will be two more walks to complete the series	Explorer 145 GR 920462	<b>Hogback Group of Tops</b>
<b>Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> November</b> 20 miles Start: 9.00am; CP in Rabies Heath Road, Tilberston Hill Leader: Dave Challenger; Tel. 01372 277138	Explorer 146 GR 350501	<b>Rabid Ramble</b>
<b>Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December</b> 15 miles Start: 9.00am; Drummond Arms, Albury, Rear CP over stream bridge Dinner at 7.30pm at the Drummond Arms, Albury, Please book your places with leaders Leaders: Tony & Louise Cartwright; Tel. 01483 503768	Explorer 145 GR 049478	<b>Christmas Walk &amp; Dinner</b>
<b>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> December</b> 12 miles Start: 9.00am walkers, 10.00am runners; RAF Memorial CP, Coopers Hill Road, Englefield Green Small charge for route description Organiser: Ralph Henley; Tel. 01784 252104 (MAYBAC Running League)	Landranger 175 GR 996748	<b>Windsor Winter Wander</b>
<b>Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2004</b> Start: 7.00 for 7.30pm; Drummond Arms, Albury Supper afterwards, Please inform group secretary by 6 <sup>th</sup> Jan. if planning to stay Secretary: John Lay; Tel. 01932 346596	GR 049478	<b>Annual General Meeting</b>



**Group Programme** (Unless indicated, all walks have a pub stop for lunch)*If you intend to go on a walk, please tell the organiser or leader beforehand*

<b>Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> January</b> 21/30 miles in 13 hours Start: 7.30-9.30am Leatherhead Municipal CP GR 163567 More information from organiser, See also Future events in Strider Organiser; Barry Harrison; Tel. 020 8949 1547	<b>Winter Tanners</b> Explorer 145, 146
<b>Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January</b> 25 miles Start: 8.00am; Witley Church CP, Church Lane, Witley GR 947397 NB; Self supporting; bring adequate food and drink Leader; John Lay; Tel. 01932 346596	<b>Punchbowl Marathon Marshall's Walk</b> Explorer 133
<b>Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February</b> 23/28/33 miles in 10 hours Start: 7.30am walkers, 8.30am joggers and runners; Witley Village Hall GR948394 Full details in Strider Offers of help with Marshalling urgently needed Contact organisers: Peter Bull; Tel. 01344 842508, John Lay; Tel. 01932 346596	<b>Punchbowl Marathon</b> Landranger 186
<b>Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> February</b> 18 miles Start: 9.00am; Farnham Railway Station GR 844665 Leader; Tony Cartwright; Tel. 01483 503768	<b>Farnham Leap</b> Explorer 145
<b>Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March</b> 20 miles Start: 9.00am; Northchapel Green GR 953295 Leader; Mervyn Harvey; Tel. 01798 344309	<b>Northchapel Round</b> Landranger 186
<b>Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March</b> 17 miles Start: 9.00am; Lingfield Leisure & Squash Centre CP (opposite race course) GR 396432 Leader; Jackie Barker; Tel. 01883 344410	<b>Lingfield Races</b> Landranger 187
<b>Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> March</b> 18 miles Start: 8.30am; National Trust CP, Headley Heath GR 205538 Leader; John Dixons; Tel. 0208 6433166	<b>Chipstead Bottom and Back</b> Explorer 146
<b>Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March</b> 19 miles Start: 8.30am; National Trust CP, Hydons Ball GR 979403 Leader; Keith Chesterton; Tel. 01483 563392 This is the sixth of the series of walks to climb all 42 tops over 150m in Surrey There will be one more walk to complete the series	<b>Hascombe Group of Tops</b> Explorers 133, 134, 145
<b>Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April</b> 15 miles Start: 9.30am under the clock at Waterloo Station Leaders; Molly Groundsell; Tel. 01483 762843, Elizabeth Bryan; Tel. 01483 776985 Picnic lunch with optional pub stop	<b>London Parks</b>