**The Poet’s Stone and Wild Garlic, Sunday 9th April 2017**

9 walkers, 15 miles – leader Roderick Smith

After many requests for a Sunday walk, a group of 9 met at Petersfield Station at 10:45 for a “pop-up” walk to mark 100 years to the day since the poet, Edward Thomas, was killed in action at the Battle of Arras in WWI.  The idea for the walk arose from a chat between two Committee Members, both of whom were part of the group.  The originally planned 20-mile walk south and west via East Meon was discarded, and a shorter 15-17-mile route to the north was substituted when it was found that Network Rail planned an hour-long bus ride from Woking to Haslemere.  After an interesting short walk through the town centre, we joined the Hangers’ Way (HW) for a short distance to Steep.  Both Edward Thomas and John (Day of the Triffids) Wyndham lived in Steep.  Diverging from the HW we walked through wild garlic in a shaded gully up ‘Little Switzerland’ to the Edward Barnsley furniture workshop, and along the ridge to the top of Shoulder of Mutton hill to enjoy the dramatic view down the hill and across to the South Downs.  We descended to the Poet’s Stone to read Thomas’s “In Memoriam” and “Adlestrop”. Returning up the hill, we continued on the HW for a 40-minute lunch in Hawkley.  Minor paths took us to the trackbed of the Longmoor Military Railway and Liss Station.  All joined Tankerdale Lane and the Shipwrights’ Way to pass the rural Harrow Inn, and back to Petersfield Station for a train to London at 5pm, arriving Waterloo 19:45.  c.15 miles, >3mph moving, on a very warm, sunny day under a cloudless blue sky throughout.

Photographs by Roderick Smith and Keith Lane