**Timeball and Telegraph Trail Part 5 – Chilham to Deal, Sunday 14th April 2019**

13 walkers, 27 miles – leader Peter Jull

A giant from Dorset seduced away several stalwarts and engineering works messing travel plans may have deterred others so it was 13 who left Chilham to retrace up Julliberrie Down back to the Trail proper. Through woods, budding bluebells were not yet blueing the undergrowth as they would in a week or two. Down and up Yockletts Bank is the steepest climb of the day and the valley views from the top impressive but short and one sided so not a semaphore spot.  Through a pinking orchard we’re too soon for the soon to come full effect. A rape field is fully yellow though before down and up to Bossingham village hall at a timely moment for lunch. Chairs stacked outside surreptitiously supplemented its jubilee bench. On a day when sheltered sunshine was warm but exposed cloudy was chilling, the stop coincided with a cloudy spell so we soon moved on. Down and up to reach a later field, two resident horses quietly joined the queue for our exit stile but they weren’t Aintree entrants so were left behind. Down and up some more and the peaceful rurality enjoyed so far was noised away by traffic as we approached and crossed the A2 but soon blown away on the breeze as we reached telegraph station No1 of the day on Barham Downs at Womenswold. Crossing the approach field had a better view of the Admiralty bound line of sight though a gap in nearer hills which was blocked by trees at the actual spot as was the Deal bound view.  A mid-afternoon, two thirds distance, stop in Nonington churchyard caught a sunny spell allowing a longer linger. With downs and ups now shallower the hill on which Telegraph Farm marks the spot is only relatively high and new (<200 years) trees block the view again. A more narrowly reinstated rape field yellows trousers before the busiest road walked on all day which was still not very. More fields to minimise the urban distance of the last stretch into Deal and 27 miles was done in 9 hours at the Timeball Tower on the seafront. Debbie Wilkes, Cathy Waters, Jackie Barker, Peter Jull, Rex Stickland, Michael Headley & David Thomas from Surrey, Kent and London groups completed all 5 legs and 103 miles of the Timeball & Telegraph Trail.

Photographs by Peter Jull, more by Barry Arnold on the group Facebook site