**Winter Wimbledon Wander, Saturday 28th December 2019**

14 walkers started, 2 left after 11 miles, 3 left after 16 miles, 9 finished, 19.3 miles – leader Jerome Ripp

A perfect winter afternoon for the 70th and final walk of the London group year. Most of the day was spent in the vast green spaces of Wimbledon common, Putney Heath and Richmond Park. There were a number of cultural highlights: a loop around Cannizaro park with a sunken garden and statues of Emperor Haile Sellase and Greek Goddess Diana with fawn. A tour around the grounds of the Thai Buddhist monastery, Buddapadipa; views of the massive construction works around the famous Tennis courts and St Mary's church with the imposing tomb of Bazalgette who devised the sewer system for London which still operates.

Coffee break in Wimbledon Park and then in and out of the Capital Ring route across Putney Heath with the military monuments  of the Tangier Stone referring to an era where this was a parade and training ground for the army, and the WW1 memorial of locals which included 3 VC's, well spotted by 2 of our eagle eyed group. Penn Ponds and Sidmouth Woods lead to our lunch stop at Pembroke Lodge where we suddenly met the crowds who were not at the Sales.

Steep drop to Petersham meadows and a short section on the Thames towpath where we saw the Hammerton ferry crossing. Ham House, Ham avenues and common, Ham gate and another crossing of the park to exit at Ladderstiles. Warren Road contains the elaborate Warren House and Telegraph cottage. A previous building on this site had been on the 18th C Semaphore route and housed Eisenhower from 1942-1944 as he planned the D-Day invasion. A brief estate agent tour of multi-million properties before the final crossing of Wimbledon common over Caesar's camp, a hillfort with a very dubious link to Caesar just complete with the last vestiges of daylight, and finishing through Wimbledon village with its boutique style shops.

Photographs by Ian Watson; more by Ian are on the group Facebook site.