**Circular from Billingshurst, Saturday 6th November 2010**

19 walkers, 20 miles – leader Jerome Ripp

A lovely autumn day, with beautiful colours, amazing light and perfect weather. There was a short sharp shower but it conveniently came when we were ensconced in the pub. A sizeable contingent of 19 for our 20-mile walk headed east across the fields to Coolham for a morning stop at the polish war memorial in the village. Then beside the nearby airfield that had been used by the fighter pilots of WW2 preparing for the D-Day missions. Trees along the route commemorate those who did not make it back, appropriate route for this remembrance time of year. The deer park at Knepp Castle gave us a few more snippets of history; the largest hammer pond in Sussex, the new ornamental castle and the remains of the original Norman castle. The church at West Grinstead has a poetic memorial to another fighter pilot and an ancient herringbone masonry wall. Lunch at Dial Post was fine but the presence of saga tours made for a lengthy stop and a finish in the dark. Early on the return, trumpets and tally ho was heard, a drag hunt with all the trimmings of redcoats and dogs chasing a piece of scented cloth. A literary break at Shipley to admire the windmill next to the house where Hilaire Belloc lived and later another fine Tudor house The Blue Idol where William Penn and his Quaker friends used to meet before leaving to America where he founded Pennsylvania. The last 3 miles was now taken at a gallop as the light was fast fading and unfortunately some of the group without torches became detached but I think we all made it back although the leader might have to face some punishment from some of the group next time we meet.