**Another Loopy Walk, Saturday 12th November 2011**

11 walkers, 23 miles – leader Jerome Ripp

This was the sixth and penultimate walk in a series of walks around the entire LOOP that began three years ago and will finish next year. A lovely day mild with some sun and more like late spring than late autumn with some splendid colours and lots of rural pleasures despite the proximity of urban sprawl, motorways and Heathrow. The number in the group changed several times as people both joined and left but in total 11 walked most of the way. From Hayes and Harlington we followed the Grand Union Canal and the Colne Valley all the way to our lunch stop at the Coy Carp in Harefield west. On the way we passed Stockley park created out of millions of tons of rubbish, Little Britain Lakes created out of old gravel pits, posts marking the old London boundary and used as staging posts for coal tax and other posts marking the distance on what used to be called the Grand junction canal. There is a lot of industrial and economic history in this area.

After lunch we left the waterways and headed east to climb some hills, cross some stiles and go through delightful woodland glades. Everything was going to plan until we entered Bishops Wood. On the map it looked short and fairly simple but on the ground it was quite different and very muddy in places. This lead to two nasty falls, much uncertainty and a lot of wandering around in the woods. Past Moor Park we climbed to a lovely viewpoint for the sunset and now it was a race against the fading light as we pushed on through Oxhey Woods and then out into a spectacular twilight view of Wembley and much of London. However we were now in the dark and the path had vanished so we improvised through fields and a fence crossing which involved some acrobatics/yoga/limbo dancing depending on your style. Finally into Hatch End but even here the roads were deceptive and it was 5.20 before we reached the station after a thrilling 23 miles.