

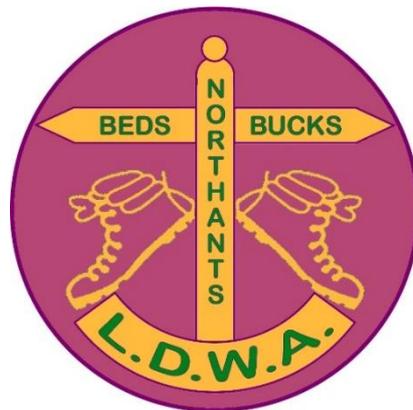


LONG DISTANCE WALKERS ASSOCIATION
AIM: TO FURTHER THE INTERESTS OF THOSE
WHO ENJOY LONG DISTANCE WALKING

BEDS, BUCKS & NORTHANTS GROUP

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2019



Dear BBN Members

Many congratulations to the BBN members who completed the 'Hadrian Hundred' marshals' walk at the beginning of May and the main event held over the Whitsun weekend; commiserations to those who retired. It was always going to be a tough event, ascending Cross Fell, England's highest peak outside the Lake District, but the appalling weather conditions on the main event made it even tougher.



Special mention must be made of Brian Layton who completed his 20th Hundred and Dee Brockway who completed her 10th. You can read Dee's account of her 'Hundred Journey' elsewhere in this newsletter.

Other finishers were: Martin Lawson (Marshals' event), Luis Broz, Glyn Dimmock, Philip Friede, Alan Hatton, Paul Kitson, Matthew Lane, Brian Layton, Kim Reed, Tony Hill, Jared Walbridge and Lisa Joanne Walbridge.



Dee's 10th Hundred



Brian's 20th Hundred

Those who retired were Andrew Gilbertson, Stephen Hatton, Andy Hoddle and Matthew Ma. Hopefully you will be able to try again next year.

Many thanks to those BBN members who helped out: Anne Addison, Christine Bramley, Andy Carpenter, Norman Corrin, Dave Findel-Hawkins, Merrian Lancaster and Martin Lawson.

Next year there will be a BBN checkpoint – Checkpoint 4 at Abergavenny, so there will be more opportunities to get involved with marshalling the main event.

We held a successful challenge event in June – The Hannington Hike. Thanks to Alan Leadbetter for masterminding this event and for organising near perfect weather conditions within a period of significant rainfall. Thanks to everyone who marshalled and helped to make the event the success it was. Next year the Hannington Hike will be held again but earlier in the year (and then alternating with the Chiltern Kanter). The date has been set for Sunday 1st March so get this in your diaries.

You can read the minutes of our recent Committee meeting on the website at https://www.ldwa.org.uk/lgt/downloads/BedsBucksAndNorthants/2019-05-30_Minutes.pdf It was very much business as usual. Our finances are in a healthy state. We agreed to make a donation to the Northumberland Mountain Rescue as they helped on the Hadrian Hundred. We also agreed that, when possible, we should make a donation from any challenge event surplus to National LDWA based on the number of non-members who enter. We're aware that the LDWA NEC are fundraising for much needed website redevelopment and we felt that this was a good way for non-members to support and contribute to this work as they have free access to the website information.

We agreed to have a plaque on the BBN Founders Bench at Ivinghoe to commemorate Sybil Davies. We're also looking at getting the Group's six Greensand Ridge Walk benches looked at and replaced where they're no longer sound or safe.

We still need more walk leaders – so I repeat the plea I made in the last newsletter about this. Please don't wait to be asked personally – email our walks Secretary Mary Knight on bbn.walks@ldwa.org.uk to offer your services. Talking of Mary, I was sorry to hear that she broke her ankle recently and will be out of action for a couple of months. We wish her a speedy and full recovery.

We discussed a couple of new ideas for Group social events. Firstly we thought it would be nice to offer a weekend away based around a challenge event, doing the event one day and a group walk in the area the day after. This is in the

planning stages but we are going to put this on next year, possibly based around The Irregulars' Marsden Moors event on Saturday 9th May 2020 from Marsden near Huddersfield. There are two routes, one 23 and the other 18 miles.

The other idea is to hold a Summer Social Day, similar to the Essex and Herts Group's Walks Day, with a selection of shortish walks and plenty of food for members to bring their families and friends along to. Again we are at the planning stage and will let you know more as soon as we can.

That's all for now – many thanks for supporting the Group and please get in touch with any comments or ideas you may have.

Happy walking

Terry Brown, Chairman

bbn.chair@ldwa.org.uk

GROUP WALKS

Please see below all planned walk dates for the first 6 months of 2020.

Below are available dates for **Thursday walks 2020**:



Jan	9	
	23	
Feb	6	
	20	
Mar	5	
	19	
April	2	
	16	
	30	
May	14	
	28	
June	11	
	25	

And these are available dates for **weekend walks 2020**. Please remember walks can be Saturday or Sunday – just e-mail me to reserve your date.

Jan	4/5	
	18/19	
Feb	1/2	
	15/16	
March	Sunday 1st	Hannington Hike Challenge Event
	14/15	
	28/29	
Apr	11/12	
	25/26	
May	9/10	Possible group weekend
	23/24	
	Sunday 31st	Pick & Mix Challenge Event
June	7	
	20/21	

If you would like to lead a walk on any of the available dates please let me know, or if you would like to arrange a walk on any other date that's fine too, but please do let me know.

In addition if you would like to lead a walk on any either of the following dates please contact me or any member of the committee:

- Weekend of 26th October
- Thursday 26th December

If you would like us to update and communicate your walk information at any time please do not hesitate to let us know. Updates through Facebook, the website and our newsletter can be made quickly and easily.

Best wishes and happy walking

Mary Knight
Social Walks Secretary
maryknight@hotmail.co.uk

20TH CHILTERN KANTER MARCH 3RD 2019

This year's 20th Chiltern Kanter was the latest stretching back all the way to 1981, when it was organised by Brian Graves. At first the event was jointly organised with Essex Herts but then BBN took it over in its entirety. The only break was in 2001 due to Foot and Mouth.

To quote DFH we must be doing something right as this year was the largest number of entries that we'd had with 288 pre-entering. Along with it being a record pre-entry it was also a record turnout on the day with 220 participants starting. The conditions were not as bad as in previous years, but they were still (to quote DFH yet again) 'iffy'.

The LDWA Chairman David Morgan from South Wales entered and enjoyed the joke at Clue 2 which helped put a smile on his face. This sign had been put up very speedily by Mike Hyland and Dave Yorston who also legged it over to put 'Beware Walkers' signs before Wigginton Village Hall.

In previous years when using Pitstone Memorial Hall we've been able to use Safran Power Systems for car parking but this year we couldn't. To quote the great Dutch footballer Johan Cruyff "Every advantage has its disadvantage and every disadvantage has its advantage". Because of the loss of Safran we used the grounds of Pitstone Memorial Hall and the Pitstone Museum opposite which made things easier for the entrants and for us as the organising group. It also provided some free publicity for the Museum.

The event used similar routes and the same checkpoint venues as in 2017, although there were slight variations such as to the climb up Ivinghoe Beacon and the loop on the long route from Wigginton Village Hall which was done in reverse.

For a change this year we did not include a clue about the BBN Founders' Memorial Bench in Ivinghoe but chose one about The Rose and Crown pub in Ivinghoe. You could say that in 2017 the first clue referred to walkers' first favourite hobby of sitting down after a walk and this year's clue referred to walkers' second favourite hobby of drinking on a walk. That raises the eternal question of "Are you a drinker who walks or a walker who drinks?" Discuss!

Once all of the entrants had set off this gave time for Karen, Sandra and Pat to start prepping the food.

The conditions on top of Ivinghoe Beacon were better than in previous years and

at CP1 at Little Gaddesden, some 6 miles away, Dave & Lynn, Glynn Dimmock (first time checkpointing), Alan Leadbetter, John Davies and Ian Sage were comfortably ensconced in the Scout Hut feeding the entrants.

If the entrants were doing the 18 or 26 miles routes they headed west to Wigginton Village Hall crossing the Golden Valley, passing in front of Ashridge Business College and heading towards a warm welcome from Gill and her gang of sister Jackie, Beryl & Mike, Val Hayward and another first time checkpointer Sara Waldron.

From Wigginton it was an option of an 8mile loop towards Buckland Common and returning back to the hall or carrying on to the finish at Pitstone and drier conditions.

From about 1200 onward the entrants started arriving to receive their certificates and 20th edition souvenir badges. Whichever route the entrants did some of the route answer sheets made very nice papier mache models which Dave, Merrian, Mike and Roy on the desk were trying to decipher!

Entrants continued to troop in in various states, helping themselves to the heart-warming food served up by Karen, Sandra, Pat and Lucy. Alison Roberts had run the 13 mile route and very kindly helped with the serving of food from the kitchen and tidying up of the hall.

These events could not happen without the people who do the various jobs which I've mentioned previously. I'm very grateful to you all who helped on the day and responded to my email plea for helpers. I've listed below who did what.

Entries & Route Designer: Mike Hyland

Start/Finish Booking In: Dave Findel-Hawkins, Merrian Lancaster, Mike Hyland, Roy Carter, Andy Carpenter

Car Parking at Pitstone Memorial Hall and Pitstone Museum:

Alan Leadbetter, John Davies, Ian Sage and Gordon Shaughnessy

Checkpoint 1 Little Gaddesden Scout Hut: Dave & Lynn Yorston, Glyn Dimmock, Alan Leadbetter, John Davies and Ian Sage

Checkpoint 2 & 3 Wigginton Village Hall: Gill Bunker, Jackie Burnett, Beryl & Mike Bowley, Valerie Hayward and Sara Waldron

Meeters & Greeters at Pitstone: Glyn Dimmock, Gordon Shaughnessy, Ian Sage

Kitchen at Pitstone: Karen Earwicker, Sandra Hyland, Pat Sage, Lucy Tink and Alison Roberts

Certificate Design: Christine Pendlebury

Writing Certificates: Helen Gardner

Marshals' Walk Sunday 10th February 2019:

Mike Hyland, Gill Bunker, Roy Carter, John Davies & Norman Corrin

Lost Property: The items left behind are listed on the BBN website. Please contact Merrian to claim at her email address on the website.

Statistics: Times and actual results are published on the BBN website.

Over to you Roy for the 21st coming of age in 2021!

Remarks from the entrants

Just wanted to say a big thank you to you and the other members of Beds, Bucks & Northants Group who put on such a fantastic event yesterday. I thoroughly enjoyed myself, despite the weather (it could have been a lot worse!) and the slightly soggy going underfoot. The welcome at the start/finish and all checkpoints in between was magnificent. It was my first Kanter and I thoroughly enjoyed bringing out the Anneka Rice within; although even she may have had trouble finding the rum in Dacorum! Pete Colley, LDWA London Group

LDWA Chiltern Kanter completed. Great event. Jo Hercules

What a wonderful day on the @LDWA1 @LdwaBbn 20th Chiltern Kanter. Clue 2 was hilarious. Name the vegetable on the footpath sign. Photo attached! Despite dire weather warnings very little rain. Thanks to all volunteers for providing a great day out. David Morgan LDWA Chair

Norman Corrin

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Sunday 24th November 2019
2 pm Church Hall, Flitton**

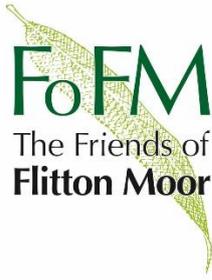
Morning Walk 9 miles 09.00 from the Flit Valley Discovery Barn,
Flitton Moor, Brook Lane, Flitton MK45 2EJ.

Park at the barn - 300 mts NW of the church.

Lunch at the White Hart.

(Lunch details in Autumn newsletter/email.)

The AGM starts at 14.00 in Church Hall next to the White Hart.



As there are no social walks planned for this weekend I would like to invite any BBN members who would be interested to our annual event at the Jack Crawley barn.

Please be aware that there will be no parking on site but there are places in the village where you can park and then walk along the river to the venue. If you need more info please give me a ring.

David Sedgley

FAMILY BARN STORM

Saturday 24th August

from 1.00 till 6.00pm

Art exhibition

focusing on work by local artists and including some of Jack Crawley's work

Calling all local artists: If you would like to show your work at this event please get in touch

BBQ from 1.30pm

Themed guided walks, including
History walk & Nature Trail

Children's activities – including bug hunting, tree trail, animal orienteering etc.
Displays by local wildlife groups: Greensand Trust, Wildlife Trust, Beds Geology Group etc.

DUCK RACE – c. 4.00pm

And much more on the Moor

For more info contact David Sedgley on 01525 714961



With thanks to my work colleagues for the first two and Tim Vine for the rest.

What do you call a girl with a tray of drinks on her head playing novelty shots in snooker? Beer tricks potter.

What do you call a nun with a washing machine on her head? Sister Matic.

I'd like to start with the chimney jokes – I've got a stack of them. The first one is on the house.

I did a gig in a fertility clinic. I got a standing ovulation.

The advantages of easy origami are two-fold.

I rang up my local swimming baths. I said: 'Is that the local swimming baths?' He said: 'It depends where you're calling from.'

I've spent the afternoon re-arranging the furniture in Dracula's house. I was doing a bit of Fang-Shui.

Uncle Ben has died. No more Mr Rice Guy.

Eric Bristow asked me why I put superglue on one of his darts. I said 'you just can't let it go can

Black Beauty – now there's a dark horse.

A friend of mine always wanted to be run over by a steam train. When it happened, he was chuffed to bits!

This bloke said to me: 'I'm going to attack you with the neck of a guitar.' I said: 'Is that a fret?'

Norman Corrin

A 1,000 MILE JOURNEY

I can walk 500 miles (The Proclaimers, 1988)

Well I can walk that twice! (Dee, 2019).

To clarify, 2 x 500 miles = 10 x 100 miles.

It's a bit like giving birth. You prepare and await the event with eager but nervous anticipation. On the day(s) there's some exhilarating and uplifting experiences accompanied by a fair bit of pain. Then it's all over and the selective memory kicks in and you only remember the good bits and the tremendous elation that accompanies personal achievement. Then you do a complete U-turn. Acute amnesia prevails, forgetting that 'never again' pledge when next year's 100 entries open.

I finished the Hadrian 100 this year; my 10th completion. For me, it was a hugely rewarding accomplishment but, compared to the achievements of many others (20+, 30+ or in the case of the incredible Roger Coles 41 completions) it pales to insignificance. I have never done a fast time; I don't belong in the super fit league of walkers or runners. Time has always been a secondary consideration, finishing my absolute priority. I guess I always thought I maybe could dip under 40 hours.....if I hadn't gone off route.....or had to have a snooze at the last checkpoint or.....hadn't slowed down with a friend who eventually dropped out.....and so on and so on.....but I never did break that 40 hour barrier so I obviously couldn't do it. End of story.

I have, and could only have done it with a HUGE amount of support, not least from the many, many selfless volunteers. You need to experience the TLC lavished on each and every tired competitor at the checkpoints to understand. Tired folk who, quite often have been up all night, attend to your every need, nothing seems too much trouble. It is quite humbling. I particularly looked forward to the amazing reception from my friends at the BBN and Essex & Herts checkpoints. Thank you to all concerned.

Other vital support came from fellow walkers including those with whom I started the various walks (Betty Sherry, Gordon Shaughnessy, Ian Sage, Jill Green, Jim Catchpole, Phil Friede (ended up marrying that one!) and to those I met en route, often finished with, and are now good friends (Vivienne Pike and Roger from East Lancs; Gill Struthers, Mike Childs). Then the numerous others, largely nameless to me, who gave me that little bit of help and encouragement just when it was needed.

Last, but most certainly not least, the support of so many friends; whether it be their wise words of wisdom, numerous messages of good luck or helping me on



Dee & Phil, Hadrian Hundred

the walk itself. Mentioning by name risks omitting special people but I'll mentioned three anyway. Storming Norm, he did all the driving and some non-compulsory kit carrying on my first 100 (now I realise may have been cheating) and he has been at the end for a big hug on 9 out of my 10. (Blame Liverpool in the Champions League final for the missing one!). Steve Clark for, like Norm, giving me so much support in the early days and making sure he photographed me at my worst on numerous occasions. Steve Smith who, on The Wessex, Camel Teign and The Red Rose 100, ignored the unwarranted abuse and nonsensical ravings of a 'not quite with it' 80 plus miler, walked me through the second night and got me home.

All my 100s have presented some of the same benefits and challenges. Walking 100 miles, climbing lots of hills, suffering sleep deprivation walking through two nights, enjoying magnificent countryside and views all over the UK, eating for England en route and getting very emotional as I've enjoyed the amazing reception at the end. I have had these experiences on of all of them. Then there's been those unique to one event, mostly due to weather conditions. (I'll

deal with The Hadrian 100 separately.) The Wessex and Cinque Port 100s were very hot but it I found the torrential, persistent rain on The Games 100 and Welsh Valleys a bigger challenge. I remember thinking at a CP on the 2nd night of The Games 100, listening to the rain hammering down on the corrugated roof, only an idiot would go back out in this, but I, and many others, were those idiots. Sadly, I didn't have the same resolve on the wet Welsh Valleys but, in my defence, wandering into a bog and injuring my knee during the subsequent rescue, was probably the overriding reason for stopping at 70 something miles.

And so to this year's Hadrian 100, in my opinion the hardest of the lot. It was always going to a toughie, over 14,000 feet of climb, a lot of inaccessible open checkpoints and tough terrain. It was unfortunate, but not that unpredictable, that the weather conditions were atrocious with the mist down, gale force gusty wind and heavy rain for most of the time. We were sent over Cross Fell at night, having 40 miles already in our legs. At 893m, the highest point ever reached in a 100, the event was always going to fulfil the organisers' wish to provide a hard Hundred. After watching the mountain rescue 4 wheeler passing us on the long stony ascent to Greg's Hut, we found walkers being treated for hypothermia. Yes, in some cases the compulsory survival bags were required. We were grouped for the crossing and watched a small lady being almost carried, or perhaps dragged along by 2 other walkers. We made it but I was scared up there. I have heard many other accounts, first hand, of similar frightening experiences of others.

The possible safety of the crossing in bad weather conditions was questioned on the forum before the event. Following, I presume, health and safety guidelines, the organisers advised of an alternative low level route to be used in the event of very bad weather. No route description was provided for this route. We were later told this route was not possible on the night due to flooding. A safe alternative route in the event of bad weather prone to flooding in bad weather, rather a predictable "catch 22". It is not easy being critical of organisers who spend so many unpaid hours over many many months to make it all happen. The Hadrian 100 was no exception to others; it was well organised and provided excellent food, checkpoints and route description but in their quest to make their event particularly hard (I was told this by organisers on previous events) it became dangerous. If this had been my first event I think it would have been my only 100. I am sure lessons will be learnt.

Are you maybe thinking of trying your first 100? Don't worry if you think your chances of success are slim. I certainly did, they weren't. You need to enjoy walking, do the appropriate training and listen to the advice of the experienced. Most of all you've got to really want to do it. Is it all worth it? A resounding YES, it was an amazing journey.



Dee & Phil, Cinque Ports Hundred 2018

Time to put something back. I'll be there next year to help, hopefully at a BBN checkpoint. I don't feel capable of leading a CP, I hope one of our members feels able to take up this mantle.

**Happy safe walking.
Dee x**

AND THE LATEST NEWS IS

BBN HAVE A CHECKPOINT ON THE 2020 Y 100 SIR FYNWY

Great News!

BBN have been offered checkpoint 5, the Guide Hall, Fairfield Car Park, Abergavenny.

This will be a busy checkpoint at 43.2 miles, offering hot and cold food and drinks. It will be open from Saturday evening until late Sunday morning so we will need as many helpers as we can get.

Please put the dates in your diary now, 23rd/24th May 2020.

Please let Mary Knight or Dave Findel-Hawkins know if you are able to help.

maryknight@hotmail.co.uk / davefh@gmail.com



The BBN team at Rosedale CP on the 2017 North York Moors Hundred

The Hundred is a super event to be part of, both as a walker and a helper. It's a great experience – meeting all the walkers as they come through the CP and encouraging them on their way, refreshed and re-energised. If you haven't yet helped on the Hundred do think about coming along and helping in Abergavenny next May. You will definitely enjoy yourself!

LIFE IN DERBYSHIRE

At the time of writing (late April) we have been living in Belper in Derbyshire for about 4½ months. The time has gone very quickly. The main reason for the move was financial with Pearl retiring and the house prices being so much cheaper here, but we also wanted to live in a nice part of the country. For many years I have been coming up to Derbyshire for walking weekends and it's still hard to believe we are actually living here.

I have been on three LDWA group walks. The first was with High Peak on a very windy day in February. The second was with Sherwood a couple of weeks later. They actually went from Belper so it was just a short walk for me to the start. We had a beautiful warm sunny day and 33 people turned up for the walk. The third one was a complete contrast. It was one of Tim Glenn's Anytime Anywhere walks starting at a reservoir just outside Macclesfield. It was very wet and windy and only three of us turned up, but it was still a nice walk.



*Steve & Pearl on
Norman's recent Cream Tea Walk*

Pearl and I have joined our local walking group, the Amber Valley Ramblers, They have 7½ mile walks on a Wednesday and 4½ mile walks on a Friday. Quite coincidentally, one of the guys used to run with Dunstable Road Runners and knows Ian Sage.

We are making our way through two books of Derbyshire pub walks. Our aim is to finish them all. This is our equivalent to doing all the Wainwrights or the Munros!

We have also had two BBN members up to stay with us. Mick Smith on two occasions and Norman Corrin. The weekend that Norman came up we took him on a walk round Belper on the Saturday. On the Sunday we took him on one of our pub walks along part of the Tissington Trail. It was a very nice day and we were getting close to the end of the walk when I tripped over a rock and dislocated a finger. It was my own fault as I think was walking and reading the route description at the same time. Luckily Norman had a first aid kit and was able to bandage it to my little finger, He wanted us to go straight to A&E but we had agreed to watch the Liverpool -v- Tottenham game after the walk. This we did, and then Pearl made Norman something to eat before he headed home.

We then headed to our local A&E but there was nobody to operate the X-ray machine on a Sunday night so we had to head to Derby Hospital about 10 miles away. After the sat nav took us into a housing estate we stopped at a Chinese takeaway to get directions! Finally we got to the hospital and had about a two hour wait in A&E. I had my finger examined and then the nurse yanked it back into place. That was painful! We finally got home about 1am when Pearl made us some scrambled eggs on toast as we were starving. My finger is fine now. It will just teach me to look where I am going.

As well as walking, I have been playing walking football once a week. Coincidentally, the only woman who plays there used to live in Sandy about ten minutes from where we used to live. I've also joined the local tennis club and will be joining the bowls club as well.

We tend to go back down to Bedfordshire about once a month as most of Pearl's family still live there. In fact on the occasion we were down there in February I managed to go on Dave Sedgley's walk. So we may manage to go on one or two more BBN walks this year.

If anyone is up this way, just give us a call.

Steve Smith

10TH ANNIVERSARY CROAGH PATRICK HERITAGE TRAIL (WELL ALMOST!) 8-10 MARCH 2019

I was in Ireland last year for the Castlebar 4 Days walks in June along with Steve Cee and had a thoroughly good time with lots of sun, scenery, Smethwicks and Soccer on in the background. Honestly is there any better way to spend a holiday?

During the course of the 4 days walks I picked up a leaflet for a walk called the Croagh Patrick Heritage Trail held every March. It was an event I'd not heard of and 2019 was going to be the 10th Anniversary year. As I'd had a run of anniversary events (50th Castlebar, 50th Haervesjmarsh, 100th Nijmegen) I thought I should continue this tradition.....

Whilst in Castlebar I became friends with a Dutch lady Jenny Van den Noort and a Belgian gentleman Patrick Maes. After meeting up with them again in October I asked if they'd be interested in taking part. Patrick wasn't keen on it so it was just Jenny and I who agreed to do the event and we met up in Castlebar this March.

The trail is spread over 3 days from the Friday to the Sunday and is a linear walk starting in Balla and ending up in Murrisk just in the shadow of Croagh Patrick, which is known as Ireland's Holy Mountain. It passes a lot of historical landmarks in County Mayo. The distance each day is approximately 16km on Day 1, 25.5 km on Day 2 and 19km on Day 3. Day 3 is the most difficult as this would take us on the main path towards Croagh Patrick and then ends in Murrisk.

Jenny and I arrived at the finishing point of the first day's walk at Ballintubber Abbey where we were then taken by mini-bus to the start of the walk at Balla. There were several speeches by people who'd been involved with the event since it started and much nourishment provided such as scones, tea, coffee, the normal walkers' fare..... There was also a special anniversary cake which had been baked to mark the 10th anniversary of the trail. At about 0930 between 60-70 of us set off to the sound of bagpipes swirling and went on our way.

At a few places along the route one of the Croagh Patrick Heritage Trail official guides would be standing to tell us about the history of that particular spot. Lunch was at Clogher where we were provided with endless cups of tea, coffee, scones (or scownes) and cake. As is normal if you're walking with me, Jenny and I were towards the rear of the group and one of the organisers Brendan was one of the sweepers. He was able to give us a good history of the founding of the walk which has now become known as Ireland's Camino.



After being suitably refreshed we set off passing through the graveyard at Drum where Brendan explained about the history of the Celtic Cross. We also passed a rock in the ground with an indentation in it known as St Patrick's Footprint.



From there we passed the Clogher Heritage Complex featuring a display of vintage farm machinery, a water feature and a picnic area. It was then onto the finish via quiet country roads (boreens) and boggy tracks. I did alarm Brendan at one point when on hearing traffic from behind I would shout “CAR”. But you’re used to that on BBN walks anyway.....

We finished at Ballintubber to copious amounts of food. From there we looked around the Abbey (recommended by Marcus Rogers). I’ve always liked looking around religious buildings as I think they’re very calming and peaceful places and this was no different. With its white interior and Jenny explaining about the various designs of stained glass windows in the Abbey (which by all accounts are unique) I thought it was a fascinating building. Marcus’s recommendation was spot on!

Day 2 which was from Ballintubber to Aughagower started off in a bit of a panic as by mistake I'd put the finishing point as Aughagower instead of Aughagower Church. When we reached a farm in the middle of nowhere with a stream in front of us and a locked gate I realised my mistake! Luckily the walk was running on Irish time and Jenny and I were able to get to the church on time. That does not cue a song okay?

We returned to Ballintubber Abbey and set off on day 2 being led by the marshals and sweepers along the road and then off onto the various bogs and forestry that made up this section.

The official guide Brian gave us a particularly poignant lecture about the burial of victims of the potato famine (including infants). It was shortly after this that we caught our first view of Croagh Patrick, a mighty impressive mountain which dominates the area. The only way to describe it from a distance is that it is like the one on Paramount Pictures.

Lunch was at the village hall of Knockadrum where again we were fed heartily with sandwiches, pea soup and the anniversary cake. At one point we nearly walked past the hall not realising it was a checkpoint till one of the people outside said "Do you want to come in for a cup of tea?". Certainly did!

From there it was return along more bogs and bogs with the inevitable discussion about Brexit helping to while away the kilometres. We reached a minibus where we were told that was the end of the day's walk and we were then taken back to the village of Aughagower.

Whilst in the hall I noticed a sign which commemorated the centenary of the Easter Uprising and those who had lost their lives in the cause of Irish freedom. A reminder if ever there was one of the battles that have been fought on the island of Ireland in the past. We both thought that on the first two days of the trail we had been blessed with beautiful scenery and gorgeous weather.

Day 3.....well there wasn't a Day 3! Jenny and I arrived at the finish point at Murrisk car park to be greeted by a marshal who informed us that the day had been cancelled due to the expected arrival of Storm Gareth at about 1400. This is when we would have been arriving on the ridge towards Croagh Patrick. It was disappointing for the organisers who had put so much effort into it particularly for the 10th anniversary and prepared such sumptuous food. But safety comes first.

For the rest of the day we visited the religious shrine of Knock and spent a few hours around there as it's a place I've always wanted to visit. Due to going to

Castlebar via the airport I've never had the chance to do so. Following that it was to John McHales bar in Castlebar to watch the Ireland v France Six Nations. Normally in July during the walks you can't get a seat but this time there was a lot of room. We arrived just in time to hear the start of the French national anthem (one of my favourites). For the record Ireland thumped the French!

The official walk was over but we had both wanted to climb Croagh Patrick which we did on the Monday. I'd asked DFH for advice about it beforehand. You couldn't go wrong (we didn't) and it's a relatively easy climb but an extremely stony path underfoot (it was) and the last 500 yards were quite tricky.



We spent 20 minutes or so up at the top looking at the views of the bay and islands down below and resting at the church on top.

Having said our three Hail Marys we then set off on the descent as the weather was beginning to turn. It's at this point that I forgot I was on a Holy Mountain and my language was anything but sacred, more like sacrilegious! I found it a real ordeal coming down particularly as the wind was quite strong, almost as if St Patrick was chasing us off his holy hill.

Jenny was able to get down very easily and for a lady who lives in a country where most of the land is reclaimed from the sea and is quite flat she was very agile in walking up the mountain and down it!

This was then followed by a final Irish pint and with both of us having fulfilled our mutual objective it was time to say “Tot Ziens” and for Jenny to return to the Netherlands and me to Brexit Land.

Norman Corrin

For more information on the Croagh Patrick Heritage Trail and Knock Shrine see the links below

<https://croi.ie/tc-events/heritage-trail/>
<https://www.knockshrine.ie/>

BLANKENBERGE 50TH INTERNATIONAL WALKS MAY 4TH/5TH 2019

The Blankenberge 2 days walks in Flanders is part of the series of events organised by the International Marching League. The league co-ordinates events throughout Europe, Asia, America and Australia encouraging people to walk distances of up to 42km in a non-competitive ethos.

This year's event celebrated its 50th anniversary with the choice of distances each day of 7, 15, 24, 42 km and a special distance of 50 km on the Saturday. By chance it fell on the weekend before the Waendel Walks in Wellingborough which is a similar event and was celebrating its 40th anniversary.

Peter Simon pointed out at a BBN committee meeting in October last year that it was some 11 years earlier that a small party from BBN and London group did the same event. Nicole from London Group recently sent me a picture of four of us on the ferry on the crossing over back in 2008. We were all much younger then!

On the Thursday I'd worked on a polling station on the council elections in Milton Keynes so I was pretty tired and decided to treat myself and take the Eurostar from London St Pancras to Brussels Midi and then catch the train to

Blankenberge. Daniel and Therese Jamin had kindly offered to let me leave my car at their house so I caught the train from Luton to London.

This was the first time I'd been on Eurostar (people have said to me before You're a Star but this was different) so I was quite excited about it. As we queued up at London St Pancras and went through passport control it reminded me of why I went to my first large overseas event at the Nijmegen 4 Daagse in 1975 and have been hooked by foreign walks ever since.

The journey passed at high speed through the Garden of England (Kent) and then all of a sudden into darkness. I was fascinated by all of the messages on the video screens in different languages, the European and UK plug sockets in each seat and the mix of people. The passenger in the seat next to me was on his way to Brussels for a brewers' beer tasting festival. A job to die for!

Then out of darkness and into the French countryside at a pretty impressive rate of km/h. Some 3 hours after leaving London we pulled into the capital of Belgium Brussels and one of its many train stations...Brussels Midi (or Brussels Centraal). From there it was by train to Blankenberge. Patrick Maes from Belgium who I'd met in Castlebar last year joined me at Gent and from there it was on our way to the station at Blankenberge.

After booking into our hotel it was out for a tour of Blankenberge and whilst walking past a bar I could hear someone shouting my name. I thought "Oh no the Belgian Police haven't found me already have they?" As it turned out it was Marcus Rogers from BBN who'd seen us walking by.

After a short chat Patrick and I carried on for a tour of the unusual sculptures in the town and eventually ended up re-joining Marcus in the original bar where we met up with more of the well-known English faces on the IML scene.

The next day we met up with a work colleague of Patrick's Peggy Baeyens for whom this was to be her first 25 km walk.

After a brief but intense shower of hailstones we set off along the beach heading west towards De Haan. We came off the beach to be met by the sad sight of someone who had collapsed and we found out later had subsequently died. Even worse was that his 17 year old grandson was with him.



The three of us stopped to take some Brandy schnapps which Patrick just happened to have with him in his rucksack. These Europeans think of everything!

From then on it was continuing on forest and tarmac tracks in company with walkers of various nationalities of the world. The countryside in Flanders is pretty flat but even so it was nice looking at the different style of houses in the pretty Belgian villages.

We were passed by various military units singing their various songs (practising for Nijmegen no doubt) till we reached one of the split points for the various distances. Peggy was suffering a bit then so decided to cut short whilst Patrick and I carried on through the village of Zuienkerke where there was an antiques market plus a band playing. We returned to the outskirts of Blankenberge meeting up with Peggy who was much refreshed and rested after a long break at the penultimate checkpoint.

One of my memories of the weekend was at that checkpoint. Two locals were saying the organisers were handing out cans of non-alcoholic beer at the end of the walk. The look of disgust on my face when I was told this caused the two locals no end of amusement. Non-alcoholic beer in Belgium! You'll be saying no chocolate chocolate next!

We returned to the central square in the town where we collected our badges, 50th event mementos and other stuff and then retired to a bar to sit outside in the cold wind and reflect on the day.

Patrick and I returned to our hotel and decided to have a short nap at 6 to get up and go out at 9. When I woke up and saw how peaceful he looked it seemed a shame to disturb him so I went back to sleep and we both woke up the next morning thinking "Wha?"

The next day saw just the two of us heading east once again along the beach and reaching the first checkpoint at the end of the pier. At this point I remembered what Lucy Tink had said on our 2009 trip about how ugly the skyline was along the coast. Very Stalinist and Eastern European structure type of apartments.

The 42 km route headed towards the port of Zeebrugge but luckily our route turned off before that and we headed inland through pleasant wooded areas and the very picturesque village of Lissewege where it was pointed out to me that the majority of the buildings are white. We discussed stopping here but carried onto Zwankendamme where Patrick suggested a café for us to stop at. I went in to use the rest room and couldn't believe it when I saw the sign (photo p.27) and had to take a photo of it. My bird follows me everywhere!

Checkpoints on overseas events consist of either marquee tents or cafes where you purchase food and drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) and this was proving to be no exception.

We then walked along a brand new cycle path** following the Boudewijnkanal to return to Lisseweg and then begin the return journey to the finish.

We continued along the road running parallel to the main railway line and then finally arrived at the last checkpoint. There I managed to meet Philip the Belgian policeman who I used to see regularly on the Welsh 4 Days in Llanwrtydd Wells. He had retired some 15 years ago from the Belgian police force and was



enjoying a long and happy retirement. At his peak he was built like a brick outhouse but age had taken its toll.

Patrick and I arrived back at the finish to be greeted by Peggy who was still suffering a bit from her walk on the Saturday. I bought myself a tee shirt and then the three of us retired to the same bar as we did on the Sunday. Although we will be leaving the EU soon (at the time of writing anyway) some customs of a post-walk drink remain the same no matter what the culture.

The next morning it was catch the train from Blankenberge to Brussels Midi. Patrick knows Brugge pretty well and gave me a tour of this beautiful town which quite rightly has gained the nickname of the Venice of the North. If you ever get the chance, go there. Our tour was not as long as it could have been due to time constraints (me catching the Eurostar and not being able to find a decent locker in Brugge Station) but even so it was well worth it.



Patrick got off at Gent and I carried on to Brussels Midi where I was totally confused as it bore no resemblance to the station I'd arrived at. As it turns out I was in a different part of the station but eventually I found my way back to the Eurostar terminal and made my way through customs and back to good old Blighty.

Norman Corrin

** 2 footpaths are standing at a bar having a drink as footpaths do. In walks a Milton Keynes redway. One of the footpaths turns to the other and says "Don't mess with him mate, he's a cycle path"



WALKS PROGRAMME
AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2019



Sun Aug 4 2019

Discover Stockwood

19ml. 09.00 Stockwood Park, Luton LU1 4BH. Maps: LR 166 Exp 193 (GR TL085201). Park in the first c.p. on right hand side after B4540 Farley Hill entrance. No pub stop. **C:** Peter Simon **T:** 01582 513827.

Thu Aug 8 2019

TBA Roy Carter

Please check website for details. **C:** Roy Carter **T:** 01234 301182 **M:** 07784 208997.

Sun Aug 18 2019

Wendover Gap 26 mile

26ml. 09.00 From the public c.p. (p&d) in Prestwood High Street, next to the Co-Op store. Nearest postcode is HP16 9EU. At the present time the c.p. is FREE on a Sunday - there are also toilets there. Map: Exp 181 (GR SP872008). Lunch stop will be at the c.p. site within Wendover Woods where there are toilets, a cafe and a picnic area. Although the cafe sells a good range of refreshments, they may be very busy so you are advised to carry your full supplies for the day. **C:** Dave Yorston **T:** 01494 868371 **M:** 07808 384670 on the day only.

Thu Aug 22 2019

Nine and Six Approx

15ml. 09.30 From The Fox Inn, 35 High St, Carlton, Beds MK43 7LA. Map: Exp 208 (GR SP954554). A figure of eight ramble returning to the Fox Inn for our lunch break (bring your own or order from The Fox on the day). We aim to re-start from here at 1.15 so join us for the morning, afternoon or both. **C:** Christine Bramley **T:** 01234 822557.

Sun Sep 1 2019

Oranges and Lemons Again!

16ml. 09.30 Meet between The Gilbert Scott restaurant entrance and vehicle ramp to the St Pancras Renaissance Hotel (at St Pancras International Station), Euston Road, London. Maps: LR 176,177 (GR TQ301828). A re-run of the circular walk visiting churches mentioned in several versions of the Oranges and Lemons rhyme. Optional Wetherspoons stop on our way back to the station. Plenty of opportunities to shorten the walk. Bring food/drink for breaks/lunch. Further details, including notes on the churches and rhymes, will be on the BBN website nearer the time. **C:** Terry Brown **T:** 01462 631057 **M:** 07932 627476.

Thu Sep 5 2019

On Safari

16ml. 09.30 From c.p. Woburn opposite Church MK17 9PG. Map: Exp 192 (GR SP951331). **C:** Sara Waldron **T:** 01525 872266 **M:** 07850 665454.

Thu Sep 12 2019 **Beds Wooded Wolds**
17ml. 09.30 From c.p. Harold Odell Country Park MK43 7DS. Maps: Exp 208,224 (GR SP956566). Pub at lunchtime. **C:** Roy Carter **T:** 01234 301182 **M:** 07784 208997.

Sun Sep 15 2019 **TBA Therese Jamin**
Please check website for details. **C:** Therese Jamin **T:** 01582 571455 **M:** 07779 227675 on day only.

Thu Sep 19 2019 **Return of Doris**
16ml. 09.30 From c.p. Three Locks (corner of Leighton Road/Ivy Lane), Stoke Hammond. Map: LR 165 (GR SP892283). **C:** Geoff Hancock **T:** 01525 377764 **M:** 07762 428091.

Sun Sep 29 2019 **Through the Woods to Woburn**
18ml. 09.00 From c.p. Three Locks (corner of Leighton Road/Ivy Lane), Stoke Hammond. Map: LR 165 (GR SP892283). **C:** Linda Marsh and Gill Bunker **T:** 01908 321308 **M:** 07790 976090.

Thu Oct 3 2019 **Where the Wind Blows**
15ml. 09.30 From c.p. Felmersham Gravel Pits Nature Reserve. Maps: LR 153 Exp 208 (GR SP987583). **C:** Bob Safford **T:** 01933 356609 **M:** 07531 883829.

Sat Oct 12 2019 **Bricks, Hills, a Church and a Tea Shop**
17ml. 09.00 From c.p. Bow Brickhill Station (c.p. free). Map: Exp 192 (GR SP896349). Tea shop with a view half way. **C:** Peter Engledow **T:** 07733 323641.

Thu Oct 17 2019 **Going Underground?**
15ml. 09.30 From c.p. Caldecote Arms, off A4146 eastbound, MK7 8HP. Map: Exp 192 (GR SP888354). A linear walk using train from Bow Brickhill to Lidlington. Lunch in Woburn Sands nr p.h. **C:** Mike Bowley **T:** 01908 616589 **M:** 07933 066784 on day.

Mon-Fri Oct 21-25 2019 **Group Trip to the Isle of Wight**
Walking the 74 mile Vectis Trail - 3½ days walking, Tuesday 22nd October to Friday 25th October 2019.

Sat Oct 26 2019 **TBA Leader Needed**
Or Sun Oct 27 2019.

Thu Oct 31 2019 **The Reverse of an Old'n**
15ml. 09.30 Please check website for details. **C:** Roger Skerman **T:** 01525 405540 **M:** 07757 057440.

Sun Nov 3 2019 **Steppingley Step Marshals' Walk**
26, 18 or 12ml. 08.00 From Barton-le-Clay Village Hall. Parking at rear of the hall on the rough part of the car park. Maps: LR 153,166 Exp 193 (GR TL083306). **C:** Dave Yorston **T:** 01494 868371 **M:** on day only 07808 384670.

Sun Nov 10 2019 **Steeple Chase 4**
18ml. 09.00 From C.P. Aldwinckle. Map: Exp 224 (GR TL008813). 14 mile option. Pub stop regardless of distance. **C:** Wayne Rowlett **T:** 07388 026676.

Thu Nov 14 2019 TBA Jim Robinson

Please check website for details. **C:** Jim Robinson **T:** 07845 909750.

Sun Nov 17 2019 Steppingley Step Challenge Walk

26, 18 or 12ml. in 10.5hr. From Barton-le-Clay Village Hall; postcode: MK45 4JY (GR TL083306). The walk follows mainly field paths, tracks, woods & some roads through undulating countryside with good views from the hills traversed. Start: Walkers from 08.00; Runners/Joggers/Fast Walkers from 09.00. Entries open 1st Jun & close 15th Nov or when full. Limit 300. Strictly no entries OTD. This walk is part of BBN triple challenge. Online entry only. Entry: £7.00, Non LDWA £10.00. (Under 18s free) incl hot & cold drinks & biscuits at start, drinks & snacks at all Cps and a light meal at finish. Cert for all finishers. Badge free on request while stocks last. Online entry at: <https://www.sientries.co.uk/>. **C:** Mike Hyland. **E:** bbn-sswalks@ldwa.org.uk **W:** ldwa.org.uk/bedsbucksandnorthants

Sun Nov 24 2019 Walk and AGM

9ml. 09.00 From Flit Valley Discovery Barn, Flitton Moor, Brook Lane, Flitton MK45 2EJ. Park at the barn - 300 mts NW of the church. Map: Exp 193 (GR TL057360). Morning walk followed by lunch at the White Hart. Lunch details in Autumn newsletter/email. AGM starts at 14.00 in Church Hall next to the pub. **C:** David Sedgley **T:** 01525 714961 **M:** 07583 091770.

Thu Nov 28 2019 Thanksgiving Day Special

15ml. 09.30 From French's Avenue, Dunstable (on street parking, from bend in road). Maps: LR 166 Exp 193 (GR TL005227). No pub stop. **C:** Peter Simon **T:** 01582 513827.

Sat Nov 30 2019 A London A-Z

16ml. 09.45 From King's Cross Station. Meet by Platform 9¾. (GR TQ303831). Another stroll through the alphabet from the Angel to the Zoo (the same route as our walk in March). More info on BBN website under Specials. **C:** Gill Bunker **T:** 01908 321308 **M:** 07790 976090.

Sun Dec 8 2019 Santa's Seasonal Saunter from Sandy

12ml. 09.00 From c.p. by Ghandi Restaurant, High Street, Sandy. If barrier is down park in local streets. Map: Exp 208 (GR TL174492). Please bring wrapped gift value £1. Santa will once again lead us with carol singing at churches, mulled wine and mince pies en route. **C:** Santa's Secretary Norman Corrin **T:** 01908 608667 **M:** 07980 378656 (on day).

Thu Dec 12 2019 Will She Won't She?

15ml. 09.30 From c.p. Chackmore, just off Stowe Avenue. Map: Exp 192 (GR SP685357). **C:** Mary Knight **T:** 01280 700185 **M:** 07554 661519.

Sat Dec 21 2019 Don't Bother Shopping

..... Come for a Wander Instead!

16ml. 09.00 From c.p. Brackley Leisure Centre, Springfield Way, Brackley NN13 6JJ. Map: LR 152 (GR SP580382). **C:** Mary Knight **T:** 01280 700185 **M:** 07554 661519.

Thu Dec 26 2019 TBA Leader Needed

2020 Diary Dates

Sunday 1st March 2020 Hannington Hike Challenge Walk
Sunday 31st May 2020 Pick & Mix Challenge Walk

BEDS BUCKS & NORTHANTS GROUP COMMITTEE 2019

Chair: Terry Brown T: 01462 631057 E: teresa.j.brown@ntlworld.com
bbn.chair@ldwa.org.uk

Secretary/Local Group Rep: Peter Simon T: 01582 513827
E: bbn@ldwa.org.uk peterandmooi@ntlworld.com

Treasurer: Peter Engledow T: 07733 323641 E: pete@excel121.com

Social Walks: Mary Knight T: 01280 700185 E: maryknight@hotmail.co.uk
bbn.walks@ldwa.org.uk

Membership: David Findel-Hawkins
T: 01908 216476 E: davefh@gmail.com

Newsletter/Website: Gill Bunker T: 01908 321308 1 Abbey Way, Bradville,
Milton Keynes. MK13 7AN E: gillbunker@googlemail.com

Member: Alan Leadbetter T: 07775 887493 E: acleadbetter64@gmail.com

Member: Roy Carter T: 01234 301182 E: roycarter367@hotmail.com

Member: Sara Waldron

*Please remember to keep your contact details and
e-mail preferences up-to-date on the LDWA Website
https://www.ldwa.org.uk/membership/update/view_details.php*