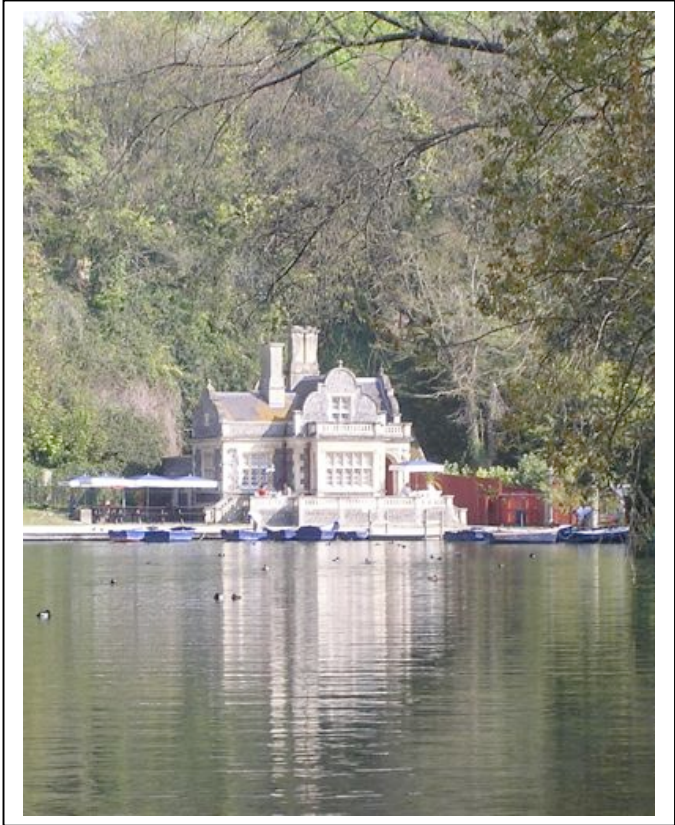




Surrey Group  
**NEWSLETTER**  
Summer. 2007



Arundel Park 21<sup>st</sup> April 2007

**Items for Newsletter**

The Newsletter is published three times a year, February, June and October. Reports of past events, letters, and other items should be sent to the Editor one month before the publication date of the next Newsletter. Preferably they should be sent by email or typed, but manuscript will be accepted.

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Visit the group website at [www.ldwasurrey.co.uk](http://www.ldwasurrey.co.uk) to see more pictures of events, links to other groups and organisations, an archive of past events and lots of useful information.

### **Peter Bull: 1937-2007**



Peter, a long-standing member and ex-Chair of Surrey Group, died on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2007. He was Chair of the Group for 3 years and organised the Surrey Inns Kanter from 1996 to 2000. He was a willing volunteer, despite his busy life and so was a regular marshal on many of our events. He wasn't a Challenge walker himself but was a regular participant in our Social walks.

He was an enthusiastic alpinist and had a place in North Wales so he could climb there. He was also a keen skier and in later years had problems from a leg broken while skiing. But his chief recreation was as a scuba diver and he lectured around the country on this.

Peter had a dry humour and I shall remember forever my holiday with him when the two of us walked the Kungsleden in Lapland. (see Strider 71) We both hated carrying heavy rucksacks, so our food was rather spartan. After I'd made a breakfast from a few grains of macaroni with crushed saccharine and dried milk, he said he preferred starvation to my cooking and went without. He said he hoped he wouldn't have to lift his arms above his head or his trousers would fall down!

We also shared a tent when we climbed Kilimanjaro with a small group. I found the altitude difficult so he shared his pills with me and we both made the summit. We had lots of ideas for future treks – walking across Sinai to Jerusalem, going with camels in Mali, doing the Carpathians. The talk was good but Peter's increasing frailty meant they were not to be.

Peter leaves a wife – Gillian, another keen member, and 3 daughters- Philly, Nicky & Joey, to whom he was a great father. They will all miss him dreadfully – and so shall I.

*Keith Chesterton*

### **Thank you Barry**

After many years as organiser of the Winter Tanners, Barry Harrison has decided to hand over the reins. Fiona Cameron. has agreed to be the new organiser. We are certain that this Challenge walk will remain a tough winter's day walk in what can be, on a January day, a demanding enterprise.

### **Punchbowl Marathon - Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> Feb.**

After a filthy storm during the night before this year's event the day started under a blue sky with very little cloud. However, one mile into the walk, a very painful toe stopped me in my tracks. I couldn't put any weight on it and wondered how I was going to limp embarrassingly back to the start. In desperation, my partner Shirlie offered me painkillers which, amazingly, went straight to my feet and meant that I was able to gingerly hobble on.

Sporadic drizzle was encountered at the A.3 crossing and around the lower part of the Devil's Punchbowl, but the wintry hues of brown, purple and green were a joy to behold. The descending gullies towards Kettlebury Hill were glutinous in places and made for tricky progress; the sort of going which Tim Glenn would claim as being "somewhat sporting".

The ridge after Kettlebury Hill was relatively calm and wind-free, which enabled us to take in the lovely heathland on both sides. At Tilford, more painkillers were administered and the general consensus was that the toe problem was gout. It was here that John Lay twisted my toe and chivvied me into penning this report. Suitably refreshed, and having decided that 30 miles was possible after all, we set off confidently across the swollen River Wey towards Crooksbury Hill. The steps to the top seemed steeper this year and a short breather was needed. From there, the clear tracks were easy to follow, until we became navigationally disadvantaged on Puttenham Common. We caught up another couple here, checking their map, and they believed me when I said gleefully "It's this way". Oh dear! If they are reading this, I apologise. We had to enact a short corrective manoeuvre to regain the required track.

Checkpoint three at Puttenham was passed through and soon we joined Gordon Harker from the Kent Group. I was looking forward to the riverside footpath just before Elstead which, in the past, has been muddy after rain. (My vague memory was of a far-off Surrey Summits along this path in the night when it was under water!) On this occasion, someone had thoughtfully removed a three-plank footbridge across a tributary brook, so I now know how hurdlers feel when faced with the water jump.

The easily-missed enclosed footpath out of Elstead was found and Shirlie and I were strolling steadily towards Thursley Common. Peaty-black swamps infested with adders and sand lizards needed wading to reach the sanctuary of checkpoint four in Moat Lane car park. The rest of the Common was rather drier until we reached the ford before the A.3. I have been able to wade across in the past, but the torrent of swirling water rushing by on this occasion meant the footbridge was put to good use. In fading light, familiar paths were trodden to arrive back on the verandah at Chichester Hall just before torches were necessary.

Certain parts of Surrey may be renowned for winter mud, but we were pleasantly surprised at just how dry some of the paths and tracks were.

Shirlie and I thoroughly enjoyed our day and would like to thank the Surrey Group marshals and helpers for their part in that enjoyment. Our experience knows that a lot of effort goes into putting on a challenge event, and not just on the day itself. Special thanks to those marshals who were on duty at more than one checkpoint.

*Keith Warman, 3800, Kent Group.*

### **SPRING IN THE GREAT PARK – Thursday 26 April 2007**

It was clever, and sensible, of Gillian to call it "Spring" in the Great Park, not to promise bluebells or daffodils. Spring it certainly was. The weather was beautiful, and the azaleas fantastic. Every colour you can imagine. We quartered that area thoroughly. Almost in as much detail as policemen doing a detailed search after a terrorist incident. But we were not on our knees. Just as well as quite often we had to sprint to avoid the only showers of the day, which came from all different sorts of sprinklers. You have to stand and watch, to see what the pattern is, then rush past at the appropriate moment.

Seventeen of us met up, to be joined for lunch by two more, plus dog. During the 16 miles I am sure we visited or had sight of all the monuments in Windsor Great Park, some of them several times. Once the leader admitted that we were cutting through some bushes, so that Richard did not spot the Totem Pole again. Our start in Wick Road was only a hop, skip and a jump away from The Sun, where we had lunch in the garden, but we walked all morning to get there. The spanking new restaurant in Savill Gardens is not far away either, but again we found a convoluted LDWA route to earn our tea and cakes. A marvellous day.

*Joan Wrenn*

## Unexplored Surrey - Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> Feb.

Despite a gloomy sky and forecast of heavy prolonged showers, a group of 12 were ready for the off at 9.00. John our leader, pronounced that as he was not sure of the way, anyone forging ahead would be left to their own devices. He did promise however, that he would find the Pub offering a choice of 5 real Ales. Also we were promised muddy conditions before lunch and even worse afterwards.

We set off at a brisk pace, but after an hour we were reduced to a much slower pace negotiating innumerable stiles, not to mention the immense depth of mud. Admittedly there were no hills, but underfoot conditions were tiring.

We arrived for lunch at "The Surrey Oaks" near Newdigate. Tables had been reserved for us, and were all made welcome by mine host (including our Chairman!).

A fine menu for walkers, both food and drink. It was a little worrying to observe our leader downing his second pint of "home brewed" Cider (6.3%). Would we ever see Reigate again! Incidentally, our leader bought the writer a pint PRIOR to his coercive approach towards "volunteering" a composition in the Newsletter!

The "lunch hour" was extended by 7 minutes, as certain individuals hadn't downed their 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> pints! We left at 14.20hrs, Nicole, the speediest walker, and from the London Group, complete with a pair of lightest poles ever seen, asked our leader if she would catch the 4.30 train from Reigate. With 9 miles to go she had no chance if she was to stay with the Surrey group.

In the first hour after lunch we climbed over 11 stiles, the final after lunch total was 24. There were also a greater number of stiles crossed before lunch, so I guess we climbed over 60 in all.

The climax of negotiating the mud was near Bushbury Farm near Brockham, where Janet's shoe was left for Peter to rescue, only to bring himself on to his knees !

The promised rain did not arrive until 16.39hrs and even then did not warrant wearing overtrousers. We arrived back at Reigate 17.20hrs, bedraggled and dirty and tired. It was certainly the muddiest 19 miles of Surrey previously UNEXPLORED.



## Pirbright Perambulation - Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> April

It was all a bit of a rush!! I got into the car at 7.40 thinking I was heading to Guildford for this walk, glancing at Strider on the passenger seat then the road map, told me otherwise - M25 followed by M3 .( so much for being organised!) I needed to put my foot down not having a clue where I was going arrived at destination with minutes to spare.

The rest of the day continued in much of the same vein. I am not sure if our leader, Jan, was making the route up as she went. She led us around some large well-fenced area, *why* we could not have found the stile to cross it I do not know, it looked much more scenic over there, instead, she insisted taking us right round the perimeter fence and through bogs when there was even a perfectly sound and dry path to the side, but we did as we were instructed and followed our leader.

Round 3 sides of this big fence, listening to the noise inside, shooting pheasants I think - not sure there would be much bird left to make a pie by the sound of the **very loud** bangs going off in there! We continued on around past the firing range at Bisley. Fortunately, **that bit** was fairly straight- forward, just keep the big fence on our right at all times, I am convinced Jan or her assistant did not have a clue where they or we were going that day! She would keep insisting on leading us through all the overgrown and muddy paths when there was a perfectly good paths along side also keeping us fooled all day, one minute she was in front of the group then at the back as we turned around yet again, up this path, ' Oh, No-' up that one!. It was wonderful and kept us all amused.

It was an informative day as well, read the inscription outside Brookwood station, known as the funeral line, we walked through and into Brookwood cemetery. This is for military and not a soul stirred inside. Rows and rows of headstones made it deeply moving.

Lunch was lovely, at a pub called the ' Fox . something ', somewhere but not sure where. Having quietly ordered our drinks and lunches and sat down, only to be interrupted by a youngish female coming in and having a big row with the very pleasant barman - all about some soup her and some friends had the previous night, he diplomatically moved the heated discussion into the next bar, so we never heard the end of what it was about unfortunately but thoroughly enjoyed our meals. Including the free one!

The afternoon carried on in the same chaotic manner, weather turned even warmer it was a gorgeous day. Walked through Merrist Wood College over fields then into the woods, bluebells just coming out. We found a rope hanging from a tree branch with a stick knotted on the bottom, obviously used for the fit and able as a swing, tempting for some. Once astride, one poor old soul could not get his leg over to get off again, not as able as he thought! We continued on our way, after about 10 minutes we looked back knowing there were a few in front and one maybe two, behind only to see no one! Waited a few moments then seeing a pair of long skinny legs running down the track (which could only belong to one person we are all familiar with) saying, "we were ahead **AND** going the wrong way, turn back and where were the others ahead of us?" That is where mobile phones do become useful, as the lead group were hauled back. Tails between our legs and a lot of muttering, we all assembled once again and of course were duly reprimanded. All on a tight leash now, no-one allowed to wander now. Were led bank along the very scenic route along side the Basingstoke Canal then back round ' THAT ' fence again and home.

Where all was redeemed again by Jan and Reg handing out tea, coffee and a wonderful selection of cakes, whilst we sat in their lovely garden even the chiminea had been lit ,it is, one of those garden chimney things that sit on the ground, it was fantastic. A lovely day all round, including the company.

Thank you to everyone for a great day,  
*Jackie Barker*



### **The Fox Way, Pt.1.-.Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> March**

The walk was to start from Clandon Station, so some of us met at Tony and Louise's, some at Guildford Station, and some at Clandon. The rail service to Clandon was suspended for some Perrinesque reason, and so we travelled by coach. Fifteen set out on a fresh and slightly overcast morning. Although the sun was soon shining the wind never lost its cold bite.

The first part of the walk took us through Clandon Golf Course, across the busy A246, past Old Scotland Farm, home of the Surrey Hills Brewery (no free samples unfortunately) and up onto Clandon Downs, the highest point of our journey at 200m. We dropped down to the Silent Pool where we posed for photographs, across the A25 and into the Albury Estate. It was interesting to hear some of the history of the place as related by some of our number. We left the estate and followed a narrow lane through Little London (William IV looks a nice pub) under the railway and then by footpath to Blackheath. We stopped by the cricket ground for refreshments, having covered about a third of the 23 miles.

On leaving Blackheath we took a slight detour from the route, as we were running a bit behind time. Unfortunately the lane we took was quite narrow, and flooded at its lowest point. There was room to walk beside the water, but one of the local 4x4 matrons decided not to wait for us to get clear and created a minor tsunami which left a couple of us with wet feet.

We left the lane to cross Barnett Hill, dropped down into Wonersh and thence to Bramley. We stopped at the Jolly Farmer for lunch, at just under the ten-mile point. Tony had already taken our orders and phoned them through, so a table was already set up and the food soon arrived, washed down by some of their excellent ale (the Fursty Ferret was particularly good).

After lunch we set off, skirting Bramley Golf Course and Farley Hill, dropping down onto the River Wey at Godalming. We followed the Wey, leaving at the railway line for a pit stop in the Station. The path climbed to Upper Eashing, then dropped down to the Wey (almost literally for one of our party) at Lower Eashing. Here we posed for a photograph on the medieval stone bridge. We left the Eashings over a more modern bridge over the A3 and moved on to Shackleford Heath at the 16-mile point for a quick refreshment break.

Beyond Shackleford we climbed onto the North Downs towards Puttenham, passing a pair of very large Highland cattle at Lydling farm. Here we left the Fox Way to return to Guildford via the North Downs Way. We left the North Downs Way and took the steep climb to Sunnydown, then along the Hog's Back to Onslow Village and chez Cartwright.

This was my fifth walk with the Surrey Group, and now that I've been asked to write up the walk I feel that I've 'earned my spurs'. I still have tired legs and sore feet at the end of a 20-mile plus walk, so have a long way to go to become a hardened walker.

*Chris Stockwell*

### **Thai at Stedham – Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> May**

It was an overcast day but we were a hopeful bunch leaving Petersfield; 40% wearing shorts and 20% wearing sandals. Glynis promised that we would have sunshine by 11.20 and at 11 the sun came out. I bet you did not know that she was a weather diviner.

It was a walk characterised by variety, some gentle and long inclines and descents with the odd steep climb. No walk would be complete without the odd stile, but this walk was well and truly punctuated, complete with the highest stile that many of us had ever seen.

Our coffee break was taken in a field that resembled a well kept lawn of a country manor house.

The flora was out in style with a vista of wild flowers from Milk Maids, to Buttercups and Dandelions. What did you play with Dandelions? Was it the Dandelion clock or she loves me/he loves me not? The fauna were there to keep us on our toes with a herd of skittish cows that tried to stampede as we made our way two-thirds of the way across a field; plus a beautiful herd of polo horses.

Glynis led us through Stedham village to The Hamilton Arms, where lunch was a Thai/English affair. I understand the beef noodle and sweet and sour came highly recommended. There was also a picnic area for those who had sandwiches in a field opposite complete with picnic benches.

We walked past Trethwick mill with its remnants of the mill stone and sluicing gate, through woodlands speckled with sunlight, alongside the River Rother and its glassy appeal. We could see for miles past the South Downs in the middle distance: then through Fernhurst for a brief stop on the Post-Mistresses bench outside the quaint post office.

Due to the good weather that we have had most of the ground was dry and firm under foot, although sandaled-clad Tony managed to find a nice bit of glutinous mud to wrap round his left and lower calf. Finally we made our descent down into Haslemere; the end of the walk.

Thank you, Glynis for a beautiful walk.

Virginia

## The Fox Way, Pt.2.-.Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> April

A group of 13 walkers congregated at Clandon station for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the Fox Way, a 39mile circumnavigation of Guildford. Although the weather was forecast to be dry and warm as it had been for most of April, the group set off in somewhat chilly conditions with the sun only appearing as we reached Ripley. Crossing the green we picked up the Wey navigation and headed SW passing the picturesque setting of Papercourt Lock and the long disused Newark Priory. Pausing for a coffee stop in the increasingly hot sunshine Roy Barnsley tempted a swan from the river onto dry land and almost donated his hand to it in the process! At Warehams Bridge we crossed the navigation for the last time and another mile saw us at the Olive Tree in Sutton Green. Both John Lay and Reg Chapman were tempted by the sunshine (and John no doubt by the ham, egg and chips on offer) to join us there for lunch.

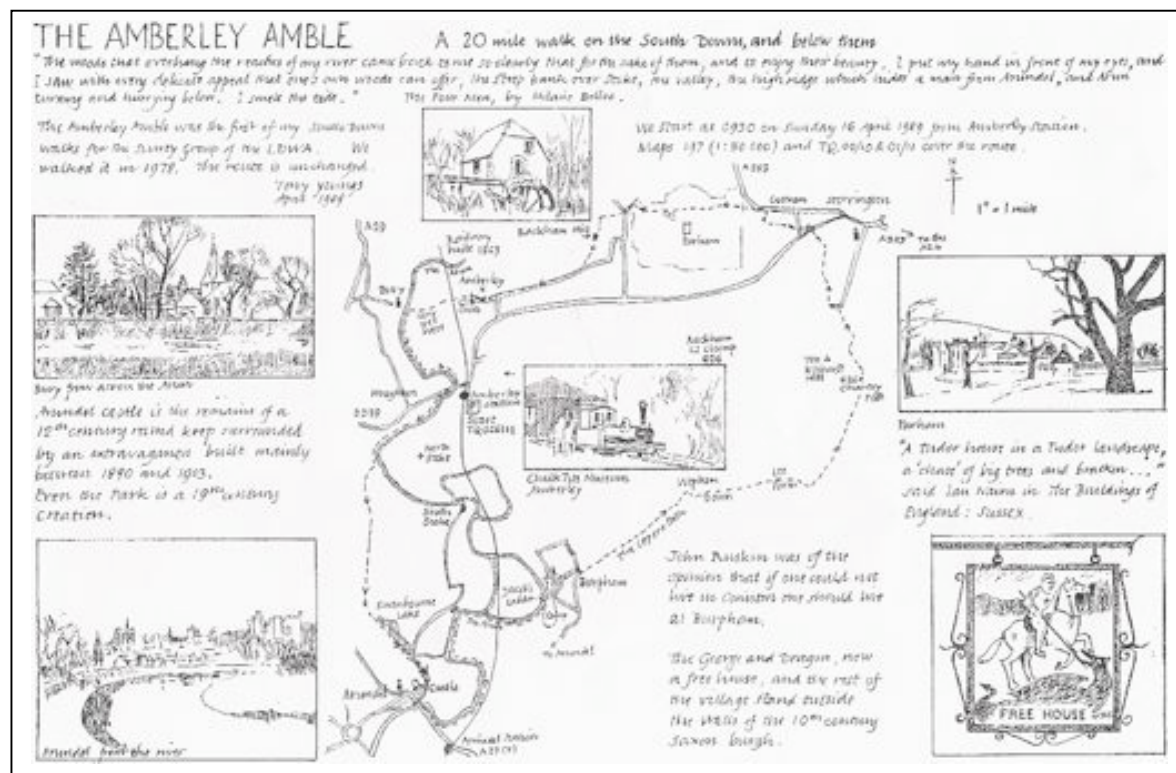
An hour later saw us heading towards Whitmoor Common via Pile Hill & Worpleston station and then on to Worpleston itself which, confusingly, is nowhere near the station of the same name! On through Merrist Wood where interestingly no-one ventured to indulge in either tea or ice-cream at the open day in progress: maybe something to do with the leader intimating that anyone so doing might be seen as being a little weak!

After Cobbet Hill a detour off the official route was taken to avoid (so we were told) some really unpleasant underfoot conditions before Normandy. With the ascent of the Hogs Back looming ever closer the welcome stash of tea and cake at Flexford took everyone (well, all but two) by surprise. Fortified, the group set off across the fields to Wanborough and then, with a democratic decision, took the easier (and certainly more pleasant) route diagonally up and over the Hogs Back and then following the NDW with a final sting in the tail up Conduit Farm hill and down to the finish (and more tea) in Onslow Village.

On a more salutary note, during the day we overheard two separate references to us as 'ramblers'. This stung some members a little and maybe, just maybe, we need to inwardly digest and think on?

*Tony Cartwright*





Fourteen of us set off from Amberley Chalkpit Museum led by the cheerful and confident leadership of Dave Challenger who had a treat in store for us. We made our way along the Arun riverbank, and through Arundel Park to ascend our first hill. The path was bone dry but signs of high tides seeped into pools of water on the wayside, accompanied by the smell of sea air. Brilliant additives to the beaming sun, and the breezy air. We savoured further delights in Arundel when we had a civilised early stop for scrumptious coffee and homemade cake. We then eagerly continued on our way along the riverbank peering back to take in the superb views of the castle, and lingering to capture the shot! An early lunch 1hr later awaited us at Burpham amidst the ageing Tudor stones and the culinary delights of the George & Dragon.

The route then meandered along the Lepers Path which in more contemporary times is well trodden by our friends of the bovine kind, and set solid by the burning sun! A gentle climb then got us to Chantry post and onto Kithurst Hill where we took in some more of the views on top of pastures green, as we sat awhile. The chalk hills, and the sand stone ridges were relished all around, and the chalky path we continued on reflected the sun to illuminate our vista even more and to deepen our tans.

More delights awaited us as we traversed Parham grounds full of rustic natural beauty, and intriguing stone-clad estate house and outbuildings, amidst undulating land. As we departed Parham walls, further culinary home-made delights awaited us at Rackham as Pat Challenger displayed and provided her home-made Delia Smith fruit cake, and lemon sponge, which we did not hesitate to wash down with fresh cups of tea. Lovely! Thanks Pat!

This spurred us onto our final trek across the not so boggy flood plains outside Bury, which lies below sea level and is a haven for nature lovers and twitchers I am told. Past Rackham Mill and through the tranquil sleepiness of Amberley village and castle, then down to the Arun riverbank and back to the Museum. The sun was magnificent, the views outstanding, and the company was exhilarating. I thoroughly enjoyed my introduction to the West Sussex and South Downs countryside. Thank you to David and to all!

*Maria Tymrakiewicz  
Beds Bucks & Northants group*



Joan Wrenn writes - "As most of you will know Ashley and Caroline Saunders (LDWA membership number 2799) moved to Australia during 2006 to live nearer to their family. They have recently written to say how much they enjoyed walking with the Surrey Group over many years, and thank all the people who "put on such excellent walks, with wonderful company".

Ashley and Caroline were also willing, hardworking and cheerful workers at lots of checkpoints over the years.

If any of you are heading to Victoria and would like to look Ashley and Caroline up, the membership secretary can provide their full address."