



Surrey Group

# NEWSLETTER

Summer 2011



In Isabella plantation

## 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.

Editor: Peter Waterhouse, Lime Trees, Ottways Lane, Ashtead, Surrey. KT21 2NZ  
Tel. 01372 272595; email, waterhouse.peter@virginmedia.com

<b>Chairman: Tony Cartwright</b> Tel. 07891 335523	<b>Secretary: Avril Stapleton</b> Tel. 01344 776621
<b>Treasurer: John Stovell</b> Tel. 0208 3930786	<b>Membership: Joan Wrenn</b> Tel. 01483 538685

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

### **Editorial**

This will be the last Newsletter and it is to be regretted that this is the case. The procedure that has been used for obtaining contributions is to ask the walk leader to nominate someone to produce a write-up of the walk. However, over the last few editions the contributions have become less and it has become increasingly difficult to raise contributions. Therefore, rather than let the newsletter fade away, it has been decided to cease publication. This will cause some difficulties to those few who receive a printed version because they will no longer get a printed version of the walks programme. However, for this group of the membership, arrangements have been made for them to receive a printed version of the walks programme when they apply to the membership secretary, Joan Wrenn.

*Peter Waterhouse*

### **Welcome to new members**

The following members have joined the Surrey Group since our last Newsletter. Please welcome them on our walks.

Victoria Churton	Brockham	30749
Andrew Frost	Farnham	30847
Rosemary Gray	Normandy	30786
Les Hereward	Oxshott	30739
Gary Lee	Shepperton	30988
Tom Mitchell	London	30658
Alison Wright-Reid	Ewell	30927
Ivor Taylor	Haslemere	30084
Derick Wilkie	Epsom	30072
Edwina Wardle	Walton-on-Thames	30637
Nicholas Yellop	Petersfield	30717

As the Newsletter is no longer to be produced, in the future new members of Surrey Group will be advised to you in some other way

*Joan Wrenn, Membership Secretary*

## How Now to Talk to each Other?

Peter has said why this Newsletter is the last one he and the Surrey Group will produce.

I'd like to thank Peter and previous Newsletter editors for all the work they've put into providing interesting accounts of what Surrey Group has done - and for passing on other useful information.

I accept that we have to change but I shall miss it. I've been missing a lot of walks recently, partly because of timetable clashes and partly because I find some of the distances too far for me. The Newsletter has kept me in touch, showed me what I've been missing, and has been inspiring me to try more again. The old Newsletters are also interesting showing what the Group used to do – 50mile+ social walks, coach trips, away-days to do events or challenges such as the Purbeck Plod or the Welsh 3s. At the Surrey Group meeting that agreed this closure, others said we didn't need it anymore – we could pass on information via the website or email via our Surrey Group email list. I don't think they will replace the Newsletter. The website is too public an area, and who's going to keep looking to see if there's anything there in some new section. And it would seem very presumptuous to write a walk report and just email it to everyone. Apart from there being no incentive, or critical date to encourage anyone to write.

So – is there some new way we can replace the Newsletter?

I started using computers over 50 years ago, but I have long since ceased to be up to date with computer comms.

So here are one or two suggestions.

Could there be some discussion space on our website – password protected – where members could discuss their walks? I've noticed that most websites including the national LDWA site soon have contributions to these become very sporadic.

Perhaps there could be some form of communal blog – is this possible?

Could there be the equivalent of the FlickrR (is this right?) only with words/reports rather than photos and opps for comments. This would then save the reports for posterity.

Would Facebook or some other social site be suitable? I know nothing about this and have never tried because I am worried that lots of personal information would be seen by all and sundry.

I hope that there are members out there with much more to date knowledge than I have who could put forward a practical suggestion to replace the Newsletter.

If they have, because of the want of any alternative, we would have to communicate via the Surrey Group email system. I have given my email address, but I feel contributions should be to all.

Don't let us lose a vital part of our communal experience.

*Keith Chesterton ([strider100@ntlworld.com](mailto:strider100@ntlworld.com))*

## **Serpent Trail      12 March**

A group of 22 met at Liphook Station on a mild sunny spring day. Newcomers were made welcome, and the group set off joining the Sussex Border Path / Serpent Trail near the station. The group moved quickly along the path to the Black Fox on the old A3 and crossed onto Chapel Common where latecomers caught us up so that we became 24 plus 3 dogs.

The path re-joined the old A3 as far as The Flying Bull which commemorates two old London-Portsmouth coaches, "The Fly" and "The Bull". We dropped into West Sussex, and continued along the edge of Rake Hanger, before turning east and stopping for mid-morning refreshments in a forest clearing. We moved on east, southeast along paths and roads, sighting a fox, before turning through the Fyning Hill Estate. Having belonged to King Hussein of Jordan, and then Kerry Packer, the property is now owned by Mrs Abramovitch.

Passing through Rondle Wood, we reached cross-roads before following the Serpent Path down to Borden Lane. Via Kingsham Wood, Iping Marsh and Titty Hill, we arrived at the lunch time stop in Redford. Elizabeth had phoned orders ahead and the group was able to enjoy good food at a fully licensed coffee lounge and shop.

Having completed nearly twelve miles in less than four hours, the route was shortened slightly to return to Liphook more directly to enjoy a celebration. We passed the farms of Slathurst, Alford's, and Wardley, before climbing up Wardley Hanger on an old bridleway with gnarled roots displaying sculptural qualities.

We crossed the outbound route at right angles to pass amidst the large houses of the Wheatsheaf Inclosure, before zig-zagging to the railway line and Glenys's home to celebrate Molly's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. The mix of open heathland and woods on a fine spring day was enjoyed by all. Though no serpents were seen, the mystery of why the trail is more than 60 miles long when less than 15 miles lie directly between Haslemere and Petersfield was solved. Including stops, the group and dogs completed nearly 17 miles in less than seven hours, and thanked Elizabeth and Molly for a well-planned walk.

There is an official guide for the Serpent Trail at  
<http://www.visitsouthdowns.com/files/1696/serpentcomb.pdf>

*Roderick Smith*



Two of our stalwart walk leaders, Chris Haywood and Jerome Ripp (with other walkers)

### **Churchyards and Flowerpots 19 March**

Nineteen walkers met up, having met the first navigational challenge of locating the secluded car park. We then proceeded along the disused railway line together with the ghosts of Churchill and Eisenhower and up on to the South Downs, passing the first churchyard. The historical theme continued as we passed a former medieval village and came out on to a Civil War battlefield. At this point we crossed the road and spotted a bridge opportunity. So the group dutifully posed in single file on a very narrow plank bridge – and all managed to stay dry! And so, through a churchyard, to lunch at the Flowerpots where the home brewed beer was much appreciated. In the afternoon we skirted the other side of Hinton Ampner house and over the fields, through one more churchyard and back to the start. All in all an enjoyable sunny day's walking.

*Mary Dumble*



## Another Walk with Glynis 26 March

Again we assembled in at Liphook Station car park for another delightful walk led by Glenys Kirkpatrick. Nine of us set off including accomplished walker Victoria who was new the LDWA and Surrey Group. It was a sunny morning and felt like to start of summer. Going south we then turned to the southwest to join the Sussex Border Path and then south to Milland. We visited both the restored Norman Tuxlith Chapel and the adjoining Victorian Gothic St Lukes 'New' Church. Both are of historic and ecclesiastical interest and worth your time. Then to Langley and north to open views on Weavers Down. Skirting the eastern edge of Woolmer Forest we went through Conford to Bramshott Common. This was varied undulating scenery mostly on dry sandy soils. The local knowledge of our leader led to more direct, if impermissible paths. Bramshott, we were told was the most haunted village in the country (as may match the former home of Boris Karloff) but we failed to see the phantom coachman and horses (and had to settle for an elderly Miss Marple-like lady on a trotting coach instead). Then through the NT ponds of Waggoners Wells.

Arriving at Grayshott, having walked almost 13 miles, we were rewarded by a satisfying visit to Fuller's *Fox & Pelican* (who served both Gales Ales and good food). Refreshed we went the other way round Waggors Wells and then towards the A3 where, in 1995, a new avenue of Canadian Maple Trees had been planted to replace those which had marked the site of the Canadian Military Hospital (where 418 Canadian soldiers had died after seeing active service in two world wars; many, however, had fatally suffered the Spanish Flu epidemic). Passing under the A3 and through the hospital site we took an easterly circular route towards Hammer to join the Sussex Border path (and Serpent's Trail) back to the edge of Liphook. We finished after a light shower during which Dave learnt that horses do not like umbrellas! Glenys then spoilt us all with a splendid cream tea at her house. All agreed we had had a great day over 20 miles of mixed ground and realised that again starting a walk at Liphook Station was not a recipe for just returning over boring paths we had previously walked!



Molly (caught eating an apple) and Jan

## Tillingbourne Watershed

22 May 2010 & 9<sup>th</sup> April 2011

Before Alan Blatchford died in 1980, he talked of doing a Tillingbourne Watershed walk, though he was never able to do it. Looking at maps last year, this suddenly popped into mind and I thought I'd see what it entailed. The idea is that on the watershed, the streams on one side flow into the Tillingbourne and on the other, a different river – NOT a tributary of the Tillingbourne.

The source of the Tillingbourne is at Tilling Springs on the slopes of Leith Hill. It then flows north for about 2 miles before turning west, flowing between the chalk of the North Downs and the Greensand Hills till it joins the Wey at Shalford waterworks just south of Guildford. I surveyed maps carefully, often using those from the distant past, to avoid development obscuring contour lines so I could see where streams went. This was not as easy as it sounds as, in the chalk area water goes underground and there are few streams. I had to look at the contours and work out where they would have gone. I devised a route as close as I could to the watershed using footpaths and other open access land. However, largely being on ridges, it has large gaps without pubs or other refreshment points.

The total length is 27 miles and in Alan's time, we would probably have done it in one go. But now I am rather slower, I split it into 2 walks.

Our 1<sup>st</sup> walk was on 22<sup>nd</sup> May last year on a beautiful sunny day, when 11 of us set out from Guildford station at 9am and walked by the Wey to the start at a little bridge over the Tillingbourne just by the Shalford waterworks. We then went to Shalford, across its common and by the Downs Link to the Villagers at Blackheath – far too early, unfortunately, to use it. Then by Farley Heath and past Mayor House Farm to the top of Jelleys Hollow with our memories of night-time struggles through its mud. I realized on this stretch I had forgotten my compass but Don Bolton kindly lent me his.

Over the line of Greensand Hills - Reynards Hill, for a drink stop and to admire the view, Windmill Hill, Pitch Hill and a look at the Founders' Toposcope, on Holmbury Hill - and down to the Kings Head at Holmbury St Mary. It had been 12 miles from the start and we relished the Hophead beer, from the Dark Star brewery (in Sussex) - and the food, of course!

The watershed part ended here, but we had a pleasant three mile walk across fields to Abinger Hatch. Three or four rushed to catch the bus but most of us took our time at the café and caught the next one.

After rather a long time gap, due to Avril, our ultra-efficient secretary, filling all the dates, the 2<sup>nd</sup> part took place on 9<sup>th</sup> April this year.

Again we had a beautiful warm, sunny day and I dug my shorts out from their winter rest. Twelve of us caught the 8.50 bus from Guildford to Holmbury St Mary. It was a scenic run to Holmbury, where we were joined by four others who had driven there.

We followed the Greensand Way to Leith Hill tower. Only two miles but we couldn't pass by without stopping for tea & cake. Then down to Coldharbour & on Woolvens Lane – a byway with quite a few cyclists and some motorbikes - to the Wotton Hatch hotel. It was only four miles from Leith Hill so we were there early at 11.45. We had a very friendly welcome and again enjoyed Hophead ale. They had a wide selection of good food, which we also enjoyed, sitting outside looking at the views of the North Downs. Don left us here as he had an opera engagement in the evening, but not before quite rightly, he reminded me of my slowness in returning the compass he had lent me. (I posted it back, as soon as I got back!).

After lunch, we went past Wotton church to Park Barn, where one of our number, who was ahead, shot off up the hill and didn't hear my call. The rest of us went west on what is now part of the NCN22 – we met a few cyclists – past the Wilberforce memorial, through the Surrey Roughs (Margaret Steer remarked in 1973 when a group of us including Chris Steer, were walking the cross-Surrey route, that we were the Surrey Roughs!) and up to the North Downs Way at Blatchford Down.

### **Tillingbourne Watershed (continued)**

We then had four miles on the NDW. John Lay tripped on the edge of the path on this section and fell heavily. He had a lump but, typically, volunteered to carry on walking, though we slowed down a bit. We reached Newlands Corner, where we had a tea stop and gave time for John - and the rest of us – to have a rest. One more left here to walk home. We then went along the ridge to Pewley Down and its Toposcope and cut down Pewley Hill road, past Semaphore House back to Guildford. 17 miles in all, but with three refreshment stops. All seemed to enjoy it.

*Keith Chesterton*





## Another Walk in the Park 14<sup>th</sup> April



We assembled in the 'free' car park and the twelve walkers led by Gillian Bull departed promptly at 9.31. It was good to see Peter Groundsell, who had not walked with Surrey Group for some years, walking with us again. The weather was cloudy with a chill in the air but within the hour fleeces were being removed

We started at Wick Road carpark, then circled round to pass the Totem Pole (a gift from British Columbia to the Queen in 1958, the nearby line of Oaks on Canadian Avenue was planted by the Canadian Forestry Battalion during the First World War). Then up through the 'Darkhole' to the top of the Valley Gardens. A circuit round the Heather Garden followed by an extensive exploration of the Valley Gardens in their spring colours (rhododendrons, camellias, magnolias, Japanese Cherries, Acers, Kurume Azaleas). Coffee stop at the Plunket Memorial looking down main valley. Then round the western edge of Smith's Lawn (Guards Polo Club) to pass the Prince Consort's (Albert) statue and then skirt Savill Garden to the circle the Obelisk Pond. Up past the Savill Garden main gate to lunch at 'The Sun' (where we were joined by a 'battered' John Lay who was recovering from previous injuries). From The Sun back into the Great Park and past Cow Pond (undergoing remedial work) towards Bishops Gate, past Royal Lodge to enter the Deer Park. Dropping down we did a wide circle crossing the Long Walk (sights of the Copper Horse and Windsor Castle) to pass large herd of deer to go to the Royal Village (tea was taken at the Royal Post Office). Up to the Queen's Jubilee statue and then past the Royal School and Cumberland Lodge and then on to pass the Obelisk and then Wick Pond, at the eastern edge of Virginia Water, and so back to Wick Road car park at 5.00pm. 16 miles.

I would personally like to thank Gillian whose knowledge and humour made the day a delight. I learnt more in a day about the history of the Great Park than in the 10 years I spent working in Windsor. I should also thank Richard Ireson who helped with the report and who kindly invited me on the walk.

*Les Woods*

**Pastiche Percynal Pilgrimage**

**20<sup>th</sup> April**



Turnout was excellent – 15 and this included a number of new and friendly faces, which is always encouraging to see.

Olive leading and Roy tailing the rear, we set off. The woods were bursting with spring greenery and beautiful carpets of bluebells with their heavenly scent.

We were warmed up with a steep hill within the 1<sup>st</sup> mile up the Southern Scarp, but were rewarded with many stunning views from the North Downs on this gorgeous spring day.

We followed the NDW to Newlands Corner and had a brief stop there drinking tea and the views looking towards the South Downs, I am sure Dave and I could see the sea!

Every so often John Westcott pops up out of nowhere, with his camera to take candid shots of us in the countryside.

We walked through many fields of bright yellow. The smell of the oil seed rape is very pungent and actually quite unpleasant, but none the less – very striking.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> climb was to get our appetite up for lunch at the Percy Arms in Chilworth.

Afternoon treat was a brief stop at Peaslake, to refresh with drinks or ice creams from the village stores.

John always surpasses himself with areas I think I know fairly well, finding new paths that link up to familiar tracks and stiles, 16 in total. Then we disappear to a new field with another view.

We travelled 19½ miles and climbed 2800 ft.

All in all, it was a lovely walk, with fabulous weather. Well worth taking the day off for. Hope all the new people that joined us will be back to bond again.

*Jackie Barker*

## **Ditchling Diversion      30 April**

Dave warned us it would be a short, flat walk in the morning, an early lunch at the pub and up hill most of the afternoon, before the final descent to the car park. Did it put any of us off? No; we were game for a good walk, so Dave was not relieved of his duties as leader! Unlike the group who did this walk in 1984 with Surrey LDWA and suffered "a sudden violent squall" causing them to descend to Ditchling a little early, we had fantastic views for miles all around us, bluebells abound in the woods as well as smelly garlic plants! Beautiful blue skies and a warm day with not too much wind. We took group photos on a wooden bridge in the woods, at the Horse Gin House (a horse engine to operate farm gear) at Barcombe and at breaks - which included an ice cream stop; probably not something the 1984 group enjoyed. The labradors - Timba and Tilly - swam in every water hole and were very well behaved under Elizabeth and Denise's watchful eyes; Timba had a very keen eye for our apple cores - want not, waste not was her theory! You cannot get much better than a walk encompassing the South Downs on a sunny day.

*Victoria Churton*



**A3 Hindhead Tunnel Walk      14<sup>th</sup> May**

On Saturday 14th May 2011 members of the Surrey group included in their social walk the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to walk through the A3 Hindhead Tunnel before it officially opens to traffic in July. At 1.2 miles in length it is the UK's longest underland road tunnel. This involved some torturous organising as everyone had to be specifically named (before the day) and identified (on the day). Thanks go to Keith Chesterton for his patience and tenacity and a great walk was had on this historic occasion.

*Avril Stapleton  
Surrey Secretary*



A well-earned rest!