



Walking



Sandra Brown completed her 200th race of 100 miles or more in Dublin. An amazing achievement. Details are in the race report. (photo: Mark Easton)

Welcome to Gazette no. 472 Any material Emailed to p.crane7w@hotmail.co.uk would be welcome. Also see our website www.surreywalkingclub.org.uk .

We welcome new members:

Leah Collins

Gavin Fuller

Andrew Porter

Roderick Smith

Ron Williamson

Condolences to Malcolm Wishart on the death of his wife, Pat.

We have also heard that Rev. David Watson has died recently aged 82. After heart surgery and strokes he succumbed to pneumonia in his care home. David was a very active member both as a stroller and long distance walker until his health meant he had to curtail his walking. I remember him as a very gentle and caring and thoughtful man. He was for many years, Vicar of St.Bartholomew's Church in Horne (a district of Horley), in Surrey. He made his 100 Miles' debut at the 1991 Ewhurst 100 Miles, becoming Centurion 881 in 21:17.26. He relished a challenge of 100 miles, and completed another 4 UK 100 Miles races in under 24 hours - joining that group of race walkers who've completed such distances within the time allowed, on both road and track. When he qualified 45 started/31 finished of whom 10 became new Centurions - David being the first of them.

He was a member of SWC 28 years. He was a committee member for some time. Our condolences to his widow, Diane.

Congratulations to Roger Michell who will celebrate his 50 years of membership on 28 September. If you would like to join him for the celebration please contact Trevor Sliwerski (asap).

RACE RESULTS

9 February: Steyning AC 15km, Steyning

The annual 15km out and back in the pleasant if hilly countryside near Steyning saw the usual turnout of nine of whom 5 represented Surrey Walking Club. Although the temperature was normal for the period there was a cold northerly breeze which seemed to affect the stationary spectators more than the competitors. Standards were rather varied so gaps soon appeared with the front two separated from 3rd by over 10 minutes although times were for the most part in line with or better than might have been expected. Trevor Jones of the home club held the Hungarian Olympian, Dudas, for two thirds of the distance and was only 16 seconds down by the finish in the centre of this pleasant and busy town. Paul Gaston continued his run of good form finishing 10 seconds faster than last year. In 6th place Chris Flint had a good result having raced with Colchester's Stephen Cartwright most of the way but tiring to lose over a minute in the latter stages. The course suits David Hoben who came in ahead of Mick Harran who was not at his best. Not far behind Kathy Crilley, in preparation for imminent longer races, was two and a half minutes quicker than her last, 2016, time with an even paced effort with her return journey just one second different from the outward.

1. G.Dudas (Hungary) 90.38; 2. T.Jones (Steyn) 90.54; 3. **P.Gaston** 103.30; 4. S.Maidment (Steyn) 106.38; 5. S.Cartwright (Col H) 107.54; 6. **C.Flint** 109.23; 7. **D.Hoben** 114.138. **M.Harran** 115.33; 9. **K.Crilley** 117.13.

16 February: Enfield League 5 Miles Enfield QEII Park

There were slightly more out for the second Enfield League event this year as the total passed the 30 mark with good weather for the time of year and more encouraging results than slower times. Surrey Walking Club had 7 out although only 5 in the main race with a couple coming back from lay-offs completing only 3 miles. Francisco Reis was first home for SWC in 3rd place after the first three changed order several times. George Wilkinson set of in the lead with Francisco and David Annetts together, not far behind. Annetts made a strong effort to get to the front mid-race with Francisco holding on but at the end George, made a big effort but could not quite catch Annetts while Francisco fell back a little but still with a slightly above average time. Malcolm Martin, steadily returning from injury, was a couple of places behind Francisco although he was separated also by three of the women's strong and very welcome participation. The rest of the SWC team were well down the field as Shaun pushed on after a slow start but Chris Flint ended in front by a minute or so. David Hoben had a good race to finish immediately behind Shaun in position and only half a minute in time.

1. D.Annetts (N Herts) 38.53; 2. G.Wilkinson (E&H) 39.02 3. **F.Reis** 41.56 5. **M.Martin** 47.19 15. **C.Flint** 56.2118. **S.Lightman** 57.3819. D.Hoben 58.09

3 Miles

1. **A.Martin** 36.21; 2. **P.Hannell** 39.06

10 February British Indoor Championships, Birmingham

Two SWC members were invited to take part in the 5km walk featuring in the prestigious British Athletics Indoor Championships. This was a technically difficult event on the banked track and with strict 'A' race judging David Crane, like almost half the field, was removed. Francisco Reis' normal flawless style meant a satisfactory completion in a fair time although twice the age of the winner, the excellent Tom Bosworth. Tom was careful to survive even at sub 20 minute pace although a minute outside of his 18:29 record last year.

1. T.Bosworth (Ton) 19.22.56; 2. C.Corbishley (M&M) 20. 29.4 ; 3. C.Snook (AFD) 21 41.47 6. **F.Reis** 25.21.4

23/24 February: French 24 Hours, Bourges The French National Women's 24 hours walking Championships were headed by an English guest who is all but 70 years old. This amazing fact only becomes realistic when we find, unsurprisingly, that Sandra Brown was the lady in question. She was over 5 miles ahead of the actual French champion, Marie Cain, and completed 4.5 miles more than last year. Marie naturally received the appropriate Cup and National medal however the organisers recognized Sandra's achievement, not for the first time, and presented her a special medal and cup. Mid-field was Kathy Crilley, who is herself already in the W70 group and also completed a greater distance than last year. Sandra was 9th in the overall placings.

Men (47 finished)

1. J.Rouault (France) 198.716; 2. A.Forestieri (France) 190.588km; 3. C.Laborie (France) 190.076km.

Women (14 finished)

1. **S.Brown** 176.568km; 2. M.Cain (France) 167.902km; 3. E.Bizard-Planchot (France) 166.145km; 7. **K.Crilley** 147.143km.

10 February SCVAC/VAC Indoor 3km Championships, Lee Valley

The combined SCVAC and VAC Indoor Master's Championships were rather down in numbers this year however SWC had two out of the eight starters including overall men's winner, Malcolm Martin. Malcolm was not isolated with the much younger women's winner, Penelope Cummings, 20 seconds ahead by the finish. On this strictly judged banked surface all times were down compared with flat races however there were two Championship Best performances from Penelope herself and Arthur Thomson who is almost 83. Angela Martin, SWC's other participant had a difficult time as she recovers from a long injury layoff but successfully survived the steep bends and the judges.

Men

1. **M.Martin** 17.24.1 2. I.Torode (SW Vets) 18.21; 3. A.Thomson (E&H) 21.01;

Women

1. P.Cummings (AFD) 17.05; 5. **A.Martin.** 22.50

24 February Masters Indoor Inter-Area 2km, Lee Valley

Most of the best sprint walkers from all areas of GB & NI were here. Four SWC athletes were selected with Francisco Reis, Angela and Malcolm Martin representing SCVAC while Roger Michell appeared for the Midlands. This was unsurprisingly, a very competitive event with a quarter of the competitors significantly above other recent races and Francisco in second place among the best. As usual Roger was his consistent self while both of the Martins, coming back from layoffs, were nearer to form than recently.

Men

1. D.Annetts (N Herts M50) 9.11.8 2. **F.Reis** (M55) 9.22.6; 3. M.Williams (Tam M50) 10.10.8 ; 6. **M.Martin** 11.12.4 10. **R.Michell** 12.03.9

Women

1. C.Derbyshire (Nun W40) 10.39; 2. P.Cummings (AFD W40) 10.54; 3. M.Peddle (Loughton W50) 11.22; 10. **A.Martin** 14.19

3 March Molly Barnett 10km incl. English Champs, Coventry Cecil Gittins Memorial 10km (9/3):

On a cold wet and windy afternoon Surrey Walking Club's interest focused on two of the races - the girl's under 15 3km and the senior men's 10km. In the girls U15 Abi Smith, trained by Surrey's Shaun Lightman, started with Mia Dunwell (IoM) and Katie Stringer (Medway and Maidstone) but was dropped in the first kilometre however she finished well ahead of Charlotte Wallis (Aldershot Farnham and district) in similar time to other races but with others improving for this major event.

In the national 10km, attention focused on Francisco Reis, who had a pleasing race having battled with Ana Garcia (Sheffield) with Ana getting the better of him at 8km. He was also caught by Maddie Shott (Belgrave) but held off her late challenge to finish 1st in the V55 race in 52m 46s. At the front of the field Tom Bosworth (Tonbridge), 6th in the Rio Olympic Games, had had a battle with Cameron Corbishley for the first 4km before Corbishley received a 60 second penalty for technical infringements. This is the first time the "Pit Lane" pause has been used in a UK race. In third position Chris Snook (Aldershot Farnham and District) walked well. The first three made the qualifying time for an invitation to an international in Podebrady (Czech Republic) and the European Cup in Lithuania.

Men 1. T.Bosworth (Ton) 41.26 2. C.Corbishley (M&M) 42.51 3. C.Snook (AFD) 44.29; 10 (guest in the Champs). **F.Reis** 52.46

Girls U15 3km

1. K.Stringer (M&M) 16.34; 2. M.Dunwell (Northern IoM) 16.22 3. A.Smith (B&B) 17.20; 4. C.Wallis (AFD) 17.44

9 March Cecil Gittins Memorial 10km

The annual Cecil Gittins Races were as usual promoted by VAC at the Gravesend Cyclopark with the most popular 10km supplemented by a 15km option and shorter options in multiples of the 2.5km lap. In all over 30 turned out on a very windy Saturday on this hilly but interesting course. The favourable aspect was the direction of the breeze as it was behind the walkers for the long ascent to complete each lap. While some were deterred by the conditions and were a few percent below par others took on the challenge and there were several personal best and thus a wide range of performances. Surrey Walking Club were represented by two in the 10km and another two going on for the 15km including comfortable race winner Francisco Reis. The 10km was won by promising Enfield youngster George Wilkinson with a 9 minute gap to second place. SWC's Mick Harran and David Hoben were not far apart down the order although in times not too far from normal. The 15km was not a popular distance in the wind but SWC provided two out of the four with Chris Flint accompanying Francisco, if 20 minutes behind. In fact Chris' time was a little below his best for the distance but compared well with other recent races. The 5km included two of Shaun Lightman's Blackheath coaching group with Isabelle Bridge winning the race by a minute and Abi Smith 3rd in a personal best. A well-attended presentation, considering the range of race times and distances, was a pleasant event with all competitors and officials glad to be out of the cold after up to two hours.

Girls 5km

1. I.Bridge (B&B) 29.04; 2. G.Whittingham (Ashf) 29.09; 3. A.Smith (B&B) 30.14.

Men 10km

1. G.Wilkinson (E&H) 50.58; 2. T.Jones (Steyn) 59.51; 3. S.Zennaro (Belg) 60.48; 8. **M.Harran** 75.24 9. **D.Hoben** 75.37

Men 15km

1. **F.Reis** 84.31; 2. S.Bennett (Ilf) 97.33; 3. **C.Flnt** 108.24

16 March Steyning AC Slater/Bryce Memorial 10km incl. Sussex Champs, Horsham

Another Saturday beset by cold winds saw 20 facing the starter at Horsham track including four of Peter Selby's young coaching group from Tonbridge and Lewes. Now, walking at around the same pace as the older masters, they were encouraged to good times with a personal best from Lewis Burr. In the senior race Surrey Walking Club had three out with Paul Gaston first home in 9th and 4th in the Sussex Championship and battling with Steyning's Stuart Maidment and only a second adrift at the finish. Chris Flint and David Hoben completed the team with the former just outside 71 minutes while David Hoben was isolated down the field. Peter Hannell opted for 5km after injury. At the front the winner, David Annetts (N.Herts) was also isolated but dropping the rest spurred him on to a personal best.

Men 10km

1. D.Annetts (N Herts) 48.29; 2. G.Dudas (Hun) 52.40 3. I.Richards (Steyn) 52.47 9. **P.Gaston** 67.46 11. **C.Flnt** 71.09; 13. **D.Hoben** 75.20

5km

1. **P.Hannell** 37.26.

10 March BMAF Indoor Champs 3km, Lee Valley :

The National Masters Indoor Championship at Lee Valley included SWC's normal attendees at the Masters races here and abroad. Roger Michell was not at his best but sufficient to take the M70 victory as he almost held W60 winner Cath Duhig only a second or two ahead. Cath, over from her French home, had also competed at Gravesend the previous day. Angela Martin, in the W60 bronze position, was also down on her best but is moving in that direction with each recent race. Unfortunately husband Malcolm was removed by the judges on this difficult surface with a number of other walkers.

Men

1. M.Williams (Tam M50) 15.35.3 2. P.Boszko (Bir M65) 16.03 3. S.Bennett (Ilf M60) 17.04; 5. **R.Michell** (M70) 18.26

Women

1. C.Derbyshire (Nun W40) 16.24; 2. M.Peddle (Loughton W50) 16.48 3. E.Dyos (Ilf W40) 16.49; 4. **A.Martin** (W50) 22.09

6/7 March Chateau Thierry 24 hours, France

SWC's two regular 24 hours walkers were again in action in France with Sandra Brown winning the ladies event with 168km, about the same as last year, and 6th overall. Kathy Crilley completed 139km which is some 14km more than 2018. The regularity of Sandra's news in no way detracts from its outstanding nature as she approaches 200 races of 100 miles or more all well inside 24 hours.

1st lady/6th overall. S. Brown (Sy WC W65) 168km; 5th lady. K.Crilley (Sy WC W70) 139km.

29 March Dublin to Belfast 107 miles including Sandra Brown's 200th 100 mile race

Sandra Brown celebrated the remarkable achievement of completing her 200th long distance race walking event of 100 or more miles by completing the 107 mile race from Dublin to Belfast in the company of husband Richard. This event also marked her 70th birthday a few days later. This was no ordinary 100 miles event, if such exist, as water, food, torches and waterproofs had to be carried along the old roads joining the cities, which is a far from flat route. Besides the historic monuments, historic towns and villages and the Mourne Mountains, were much less pleasant stretches of busy main roads. The couple completed the course in just under 28 hours in company of the 42 finishers with a further 14 attempting the double journey back to Dublin three of whom completed all 214 miles in about 60 hours. Richard McChesney completed 162 miles of the return journey having reached Belfast marginally ahead of the Browns. The completion of the race did not leave Sandra Brown too exhausted to celebrate her birthday on 1st April which included among other things a cycle ride.

107 miles

1. P.Cronie (Springwell) 17.44.46; 2. E.Melbourne 17.57.26; 3. K.Russell 18.20.16 ; 24. **S.Brown** 27.50.03; 25. **R.Brown** 27.50.03

Sandra wrote "We were in Ireland at the weekend for the 107 miles Dublin to Belfast race where I completed my 200th event of 100 miles or more. It was good to complete the 200th in this very special journey event, and to do it together with Richard. The journey along the old roads between the two cities takes you through historic towns and villages, past castles and

crofts, megaliths and monuments, along the coast and through the lovely rural landscape of the Mourne Mountains. It's quite a tough event, at times very rural but also with long stretches along busy roads, far from flat, and if you're unsupported [no crew] like us, you need to carry a pack with all necessary gear including clothing, torches, food and enough drink for sometimes longish distances [a bit like an LDWA event in that regard]. We had a great day in Dublin beforehand and enjoyed a Guinness in historic bars at both ends of the road.

The event was swiftly followed by my 70th birthday on Monday 1 April, when I had the pleasure of giving a talk in the morning to 150 in a packed hall in Dorchester – members of the U3A who were keen to hear about and discuss the proposed Dorset National Park [just as well I was still full of adrenalin!] My afternoon birthday treat was to have a bike ride to Corfe to see the legendary steam locomotive the Flying Scotsman, which is visiting our local heritage railway for a few days. Having grown up in Grantham on the line between London and Edinburgh where such express trains made their record-breaking journeys, it was fun to be in the cab of this beautiful engine, which was reunited for the first time for decades with one of its observation cars that Swanage railway bought and brought back from Canada. So – a super day to round off a special weekend.”

10 April Veterans AC, Surrey, Middlesex & Herts County 10km, Battersea

This event, sponsored by Veterans AC as their age-group 10km championship, incorporated the Senior County Championship for Surrey, Middlesex and Hertfordshire and was a popular start to the track season for many athletes. It was held during this spell of warm sunny days but by race time the sun was almost down and conditions were cold with a slight breeze which became unpleasant for the many officials judging and lap counting. The walkers were less affected though few in number with nine starters (including one dnf) in a race which saw twice this number five years ago. The small competition and cool weather did not however prevent a couple of personal bests although not among the four Surrey Walking Club starters. First home among the SWC was Malcolm Martin as he carefully returns from injury and had a race long battle with Steve Allen (Barnet) who ended only 12 seconds ahead. Mick Harran was isolated for much of the race but held on for a time much in line with other recent races while some way behind him came Angela Martin, not at her best, bravely completing the field. Among the personal bests was the Surrey female champion, Madeline Shott (Belgrave), who did her best to hold the winner and Herts, champion, David Annetts (N.Herts), to half a lap in an excellent performance. Mick Harran's race was rewarded by the Surrey male gold medal. The Martins were Kent guests in the County results and several of the others were guests in the VAC event.

Men

1. D.Annetts (N Herts 1st M50) 48.54.7 2. S.Allen (Barn M60) 59.15; 3. **M.Martin** (M60) 59.27;; 5. **M.Harran** (1st M80) 73.43

Women

1. M.Shott (Belg W) 49.53; 2. M.Noel (Belg 1st W55) 65.40 3. **A.Martin** (W50) 79.13

16 April VAC Summer 5 mile League, Battersea Park

The first of Veteran AC's 2019 Summer 5 miles league in Battersea Park was held on a warm if humid evening and using a new 3.5 lap course avoiding the Battersea Park Japanese Peace Pagoda. Numbers were about typical with half the field being Surrey Walking Club members – the rear half as it happens. At the front David Annetts (N Herts RR) was well clear of the rest with another personal best in sub 39 minutes. Two guests, Melanie Peddle (Lough) and Stefano Zennaro (Bels), almost ten minutes behind David, completed the frame with a battle for the line and a difference of just one second and a p.b. for Stefano. Of the SWC contingent Shaun Lightman was ahead by a minute of Paul King as he had let 80 year-old Tom Casserly go by about the same amount. Only half a minute behind came Mick Harran and David Hoben only a few seconds apart.

1. D.Annetts (N Herts M50) 38.47; 2. M.Peddle (Loughton W50) 48.33; 3. S.Zennaro (Belg M45) 48.34; 6. **S.Lightman** (M75) 56.47; 7. **P.King** (M65) 57.44; 8. **M.Harran** (M80) 58.20; 9. D.Hoben (M65) 58.23.

20 April Enfield League 5km (Race 4), Lee Valley Track

In hot conditions the 4th Enfield League race, over 5km, was held with a light wind which affected the majority of the competitors including the three Surrey Walking Club competitors - Francisco Reis, Angela & Malcolm Martin in the main 5km. Also racing were two of Shaun Lightman's coaching group - Abi Smith and Jonny Ellerton, both Blackheath & Bromley, in the 3km although their results are unfortunately not available yet and the published 5km results are also provisional. Francisco walked a steady race for 4km but then appeared to find the pace difficult but was still third man although somewhat down on current form. Malcolm started cautiously with a group and gradually pulled away to a reasonable time where most others were slowed by the unfamiliar heat. Abi had a good first kilometre but then wilted under the conditions as did Jonny.

Men

1. D.Annetts (N Herts) 23.24 2. G.Wilkinson (E&H) 24.47; 3. **F.Reis** 26.14; 4. **M.Martin** 28.44;.

Women

1. M.Shott (Belg) 25.06;2. J.Benson (Ashf) 26.56; 3. H.Middleton (E&H) 31.02; 10. **A.Martin** 37.32.

6 May Pednor 5 Miles, Chesham The May Bank Holiday Monday once more marked the Pednor races in Chesham with almost 300 runners and 30 Walkers appearing at this beautiful country lane course on a fine evening. Surrey Walking Club had two contestants out, both regular attendees. The scenery adequately compensates for the hills on this two lap course and the consequent slightly slow times, on average, but there were exceptions and among these was SWC's David Hoben whose position up in the top 2/3rds of the field indicated a performance among the best in the field perhaps due to his liking for the ascents. Chris Flint, unusually behind David, was less successful in terms of position even though almost a minute faster than in 2018.

1. N.Bates (Chilt) 45.13 2. S.Uttley (Ilf) 49.36 3. J.Constandinou (Bir) 49.41; **D.Hoben** 58.12
16. **C.Flint** 58.29.

28 April National RWA 10km Champs

The biggest National event of the year, the 10km plus full range of younger age-group races, attracted 73 starters split in roughly equal parts between the seniors and all of the Under 20 groups. We had four in the older section and interest via coaching in two youngsters from Blackheath & Bromley. The first home for SWC was Francisco Reis in an isolated 5th. Times were on average a very slightly down and this was true of Francisco and Malcolm Martin in 8th however Roger Michell down in 11th had a good race as he broke sixty four and a half minutes. Although Fransisco was ineligible for the SWC team being classed as Portuguese, the other two claimed third team place and had all three scored they would have been second behind an excellent turnout from Manx Harriers

10km Sen Men

1. T.Partington (Manx) 45.21 2. A.Cowin (Manx) 49.09; 3. D.Annetts (N Herts) 49.56; 5. **F.Reis** 53.33; 8. **M.Martin** 60.13; 11. **R.Michell** 64.28

Teams:1. Manx Harriers; 2. Leicester; 3. Surrey Walking Club.

29 May Joint Blackheath & Bromley HAC/Surrey Walking Club Track 3km Championships, Bromley

Norman Park track saw the annual 3,000 metre championship races with a joint race with Surrey Walking Club in the race-walking event last Wednesday. Of the seven out, three were BBHAC members of whom two were also SWC members joining the other four SWC. The race was won by SWC's David Crane whose time, just inside 15 minutes, was a best. A parallel road running career seems to have improved, rather than harmed, his walking fitness and, in spite of the effect of previous wins on his handicap, he once again triumphed to win the Handicap Cup as well. In doing so he lapped the entire field despite the presence of BBHAC's young, excellent competitor, Abi Smith, who was not at her best. In this she was not alone as the field was very spread out giving little competition and slowish times apart from David at the front. The nearest thing to a competition was between Chris Flint and David Hoben with the former having marginally better race to open a 45 second gap by the end. David Crane was naturally the SWC winner while Abi won the BBHAC event. Another of Shaun Lightman's group, Under 13 Carla Forsyth is not allowed the full distance under the UKA rules but made excellent work of her 1km effort.

(SWC Handicap in brackets)

1(1). **D.Crane** 14.56.6; 2. A.Smith (B&B) 18.05.4 3(5). **D.Maskell** 19.52.8; 4(2). **C.Flint** 21.12.6 5(3). **D.Hoben** 21.57.2 6. **P.Hannell** 23.52.4 7(4). **K.Burnett** 26.17

1km

1. C.Forsyth (B&B U13G) 5.37

May - Six days of Hungary, Balatonfüred, Hungary:

Three members of Surrey Walking Club participated in the “6 Days of Hungary” running/walking race held on a circuit round a camp site next to a popular lakeside resort on Lake Balaton.

Richard Brown, who has enjoyed innumerable ultra-distance marathon successes, had the best result, opting to run as well as walk on this occasion and coming in 29th overall out of 97 starters. He completed 565.360k, and set new M70 category 48 hour and 6 day national records.

Kathy Crilley, who specialises in this kind of event, broke the 400k barrier for the first time and walked well from the start and throughout coming in 69th overall and completing 404.66k. She achieved W70 category 48 hour and 6 day national records, and in addition a W70 6 day world best for walking. David Hoben walked a total of 353.118k in 74th place overall, slightly ahead of his target of 350k.

The tough event was blessed with fine weather for only for one and a half days, but the remainder of the time was beset with conditions more suited to late November with either very strong winds covering the circuit with tree debris or persistent rain that continued for many hours at a time, which made the distances covered harder to manage. Many competitors dressed like Sherpa Tenzing while the autumnal conditions were ongoing!



Kathy Crilley, whose remarkable achievement in Hungary is shown above (photo:Mark Easton)

1 June Moulton 5 miles

On the warmest afternoon of the year 36 walkers set out in the beautiful Suffolk countryside around Moulton in Suffolk. Surrey had five walkers out. The first three walkers in the field were well clear of the rest and separated from one another. Current International Dominic King led the field home in 36m 26s followed by under 20 George Wilkinson (Enfield and Haringay) in 39m 49s Surrey's David Crane came in third in 43m 22s. Further down the field Dan Maskell had a race long battle with Dave Kates and George Nibre (both of Ilford) before losing out to Kates whose style drew the judges attention but did not lead to a disqualification. Maskell finished in overall 17th position in 54m 52s. David Hoben battled with Arthur Thompson (Enfield and Harringey) to get the better of him even though he was slowed by a wedding party! Hoben finished in 58m 35s. In 30th position Mick Harran walked with Angela Martin also of Surrey and just forged ahead in the final to finish in 61m 37s to Martin's 62m 26s.

Men

1. Dominic King (Col H) 36.26 2. G.Wilkinson (E&H) 39.49; 3. **D.Crane** 43.22 14. D.Maskell 54.54; 18. **D.Hoben** 58.35;23. M.Harran (Sy WC M80) 1 hr 1 min 37 sec.

Women

1. E.Dyos (Ilf W40) 48 min 41 sec; 2. M.Peddle (Loughton W50) 48 min 55 sec; 3. J.Benson (Ashf U20W) 49 min 49 sec; 8. **A.Martin** 62.26.

2 June Surrey and Sussex Masters T&F Championships at Kingsmeadow, Kingston

In sunny, humid conditions (28 centigrade) four walkers towed the line for the 3km race walk in the Surrey and Sussex Masters T&F Championships at Kingsmeadow, Kingston, KT1 3PB. Two judges were in attendance, namely Verity Snook and Ian Statter. Paul Gaston (SWC and Sussex) quickly opened up a lead followed by Ron Penfold (Steyning AC and Sussex) whilst Jules Del Nevo (Croydon Harriers AC and Surrey nee Williams) settled in third position with Chris Flint (Surrey WC and Surrey) tail end charley, and these positions did not vary throughout the 7 lap race. Ron Penfold did manage to reduce the gap separating Paul and only 8 seconds separated the two at the end.

We are grateful for Verity and Ian presence throughout the race.

1. P.Gaston (Sussex) 19.47.8 2. R.Penfold (Sussex) 19.55.7; 3. J.Del Novo (Surrey) 20.27.6
4. C.Flint (Surrey) 21.23.5.

4 June: Bill Collins Memorial 3km, Tonbridge School Park

The Bill Collins 3km was poorly attended with conflicting events and difficulties in finding a date but the presence of several youngsters and parents on a suddenly dry sunny evening after a wet day made this a cheerful occasion. Of the three doing the full distance two were Surrey Walking Club even though not the club's A team. Chris Flint, though not at full speed with a more significant race at the coming weekend had no difficulty in dropping Peter Hannell after the first of the six laps.

1. G.Manzotti (Ton) 17.28; 2. **C.Flint** 21.41 3. **P.Hannell** 22.57.

11 June VAC 5 miles League, Battersea Park

The VAC 5 mile league & championship race was held in cool conditions with a slight breeze but there were still large puddles on the course which did not however hinder the competitors. This second fixture of the season had a lower than expected attendance due to proximity of other events. From the start, guest, Belgrave's Stephano Zennaro went into a commanding lead to finish over 6 minutes clear. The competition for second place was between Surrey Walking Club's Dan Maskell and Mark Culshaw. They dead heated in 52m 14s which was a personal best for Mascall over the last four years to take the VAC Men's Championship for the first time as well as M70 gold. They were trailed by Maureen Noel (also Belgrave) who was unable to close the gap finishing near her usual, respectable time. Bringing up the rear in another close battle were Dave Hoben and Paul King. Hoben managed to get away from King on the first of the three laps but King fought back to get on level terms on lap two with Hoben making a final effort on lap three to finish 19 seconds ahead.

1. S.Zennaro (Belg) 46.12 2. **D.Maskell** 52.14; 3. M.Culshaw (Ilf) 46.12 5. **D.Hoben** 59.29 ; 6. **P.King** 59.48.

8/9 June OLAT/AV Weert International Walking Race, Weert, Holland

Four members participated in the biennial OLAT/AV Weert International Walking Race in Weert, Holland, which was held on a circuit round residential roads, parkland and an athletics track near the small town of Weert close to the German border. The event had a total of 116 entrants and was well organised by the host organization, OLAT, with the excellent track and clubhouse facilities of the local running club, AV Weert. Conditions for the first few hours were not easy with high winds, lots of tree debris on and off the track, and squally showers, in contrast the early evening was a complete change with clear skies, little wind and a very pleasant temperature to race in which continued to the end of the 24 hours.

Sandra Brown, who has had many continental 100 mile (Centurion) successes, added another to her list and also achieved W75 world record status in a time near to her recent events and as 3rd lady. Sandra was later presented with an award by SWC to commemorate over 200 completions of 100 miles or more and total dedication to the long distance scene. Chris Flint, who has also completed a very large number of Centurion events went for the 50 mile option on this occasion, his first race over that distance for some years, and though slower than usual was pleased to complete the distance without problems.

B.Cools (Ned) 19 hrs 41 min 53 sec; 4 (1st W). M.Zerifi (Bel) 20 hr 46 min 13 sec 10 (3rd W). Sandra Brown (SyWC GBR) 22 hr 22 min 34 sec (W70 world record); 15 (4th W). C.Bass (GBR); 18. R.McChesney (GBR).

Outside of 100 miles – 24. C.Arosanyin (ex-SyWC NGR) 99.49 miles; 43. S.Shah (GBR) 52 miles; 55. **K.Crilly** (SyWC W GBR) 40.00 miles in 10 hr 3 min 55 sec; 61. S.Beardsmore (W GBR) 10 miles.

Three of the 100 mile competitors went on past 100 miles to complete 24 hours with P.Asselman (Bel) completing 114 miles.

50 miles

1. R.Brand (Ned) 9 hr 22 min 4 sec; 28. **C. Flint** (SyWC M70 GBR) 13 hr 37 min 42 sec.

50k

1. L.Droogendijk (F Ned) 6 hr 46 min 48 sec; 2. **D. Hoben** (SyWC M65 GBR) 7 hr 17 min 53 sec.

16 June Enfield League 5km race 7, Allianz Stadium

Last weekend the Enfield League 5km was, unusually, held on the Sunday, which also happened to be Fathers' Day. Despite this numbers were not too bad at 20 but Surrey Walking Club only had David Hoben out. David was a little below par and unable to catch the great Arthur Thompson. Despite intermittent showers the race was more or less dry. The results show a clear and encouraging victory for young George Wilkinson, brother to International, Callum, while five of the next six places were occupied by ladies showing the men a fast, enthusiastic and determined example.

Men

1. G.Wilkinson (E&H) 23.09 2. S.Uttley (If) 29.10 3. M.Culshaw (If) 30.56; 10. **D.Hoben** 36.36

22 June Jack Fitzgerald Memorial 10km, Tilgate Park, Crawley

On this weekend's warm summer Saturday afternoon 24 competitors faced the starter at Tilgate Park Crawley for 7 laps of the lake with some attempting shorter distances. The annual Jack Fitzgerald 10.325km incorporated the Surrey Walking "7" which was postponed from last November due to fixture congestion. Although the overall participation was healthy and improved only two SWC did the main distance. Some of the field, less prepared, found the heat exhausting and slowed drastically during the latter stages. Two leaders soon emerged - Trevor Jones and Jim Ball (both Steyning AC) They were together for the first 5 of 7 laps when Jones eventually drew away from Ball to beat him by half a minute and record an improved time. The ladies race was won by Emily Ghose (Tonbridge) by a couple of seconds from Penny Cummins. Emily had had a considerable lead over Cummins in the middle of the race. However the latter made a sterling effort over the last two laps but just failed to catch Ghosh, who also made a great last push to finish ahead. Melanie Peddle finished third. Surrey Walking Club interest centered on Dan Maskell who built up a commanding lead over David Kemp only for Kemp to claw back Maskell's advantage by the end of lap 7. However Maskell out-sprinted Kemp in the last 400m. Further down the field, race organiser David Hoben, SWC's only other competitor at the full distance, had a solitary race to finish 12th overall in a improved 75 min 43 sec. The poor SWC turnout would have made their handicap and Championship presentation an embarrassment but for the record Dan Maskell was first home whilst Hoben performance gave him a narrow win in the handicap.

Completing the shorter distance of 4 laps Peter Hannell and Peter Selby both Surrey walked together at a steady pace due to lack of fitness and dead-headed in 48m 02s. Finally Nolan Simmons, who started with the Peters, but was troubled by hip injury completed 3 laps in 37m 06s.

Men 10.325k

1. T.Jones (Steyn) 59.52 2. J.Ball (Steyn) 60.33 3. M.Culshaw (If) 65.58; 4. **D.Maskell** 69.47; 8. **D.Hoben** 75.43.

Mixed 5.9 km

1. A.Ingram (Lewes) 38.36; 2. J.Carder (B&H) 42.07; 3eq. **P.Selby**; 3eq. **P.Hannell** 48.02

4.425 km

1. **N.Simmons** 37.06

30 June Jim Sharlott Open/BMAF Championship 10km, Leicester

This has been a busy period for racewalking with events clashing recently. The most prominent was last week-end's National Masters 10km within the usual Jim Sharlott Open. The race was well attended with thirty out including two Surrey walking Club. The winner was Under 20 George Wilkinson, whose elder brother Callum was also winning not too far away at the Senior 20km Championships on the same day. The SWC pair were second team in the Leicester event with a fourth place from Francisco Reis despite a slightly slow time due to injury while Roger Michell was slightly above his recent average. Needless to say Francisco was first M55 while Roger, unfortunately among two outstanding walkers who happen to be in his group, took M70 bronze.

Men

1. G.Wilkinson (E&H) 47.48; 2. M.Crane (Bexley) 48.14 3. I.Richards (Steyn) 53.52; 4. **F.Reis** 57.49 13. **R.Michell** 64.43
1.Leicester; 2. **Surrey Walking Club**; 3. Enfield.

3 July BBHAC Johnson Bowl plus SWC Gazette Cup 4miles, Norman Park, Bromley

Ourown 4 mile promotion, in conjunction with Blackheath and Bromley, had quite a good showing of six for the Gazette Cup which was won by Roger with some of the Blackheath youngsters, who might have given him a battle, unable to attend. Roger's time in this race was, like David Hoben's, relatively good and they were not far apart in the handicap result with Roger just ahead by 25 seconds although 7 minutes ahead on actual time. The rest of the field was much more bunched but there was little overtaking. The last of these was Nolan Simmons who was much welcomed, after a long spell, for his first complete race and though at the rear he was up in third in the handicap as he was not too far from his previous times a long while before. The rest all appeared tired after a very warm day and failed to impress the time keeper.

4 Miles

1. **R.Michell** 40.25; 2. **D.Hoben** 47.30; 3. **M.Harran**48.35; 4. **C.Edwards** 51.35 5. **C.Flint** 53.19; 6. **N.Simmons** 54.09

6 July Lewes AC Open Track 5km Walk

Peter Selby organized a pleasant if very hot 5km race in Lewes including a 1km race for his young coaching group. A healthy total of 14 starters set out with five doing the full distance despite the temperature with David Hoben a SWC's representative and, though down the field, he made good time and seemed more used to the heat. Three individuals including Peter Hannell opted for 3km. First was Emily Ghose of Tonbridge who time was 50% faster than the other two who stuck more or less together in a successful attempt to push each other to better times and regain some fitness.

5km

1. P.Cummings (AFD) 28.58; 2. M.Culshaw (If) 31.26 3. J.Killick (Steyn) 33.26; 4. J.Carder (B&H) 36.09; 5. **D.Hoben** 36.35

3km

1. E.Ghose (Ton) 16.42 2. C.Killick (Steyn) 23.23; 3. **P.Hannell** 23.26.

1km

1.C.Forsyth (B&B U13G) 5.49; 2. H.Perry (Lewes U13B) 6.12; 3. C.Perry (Lewes U11B) 6.22; 4. S.Claydon (Lewes U13G) 6.22; 5. R.Gaugham (Lewes U13B) 6.22; 6. E.Bell (Lewes U13G) 6.22.

9 July VAC 5km Championship, Battersea Park

The third Veterans AC 5km Championship took place at Battersea Park. This was a busy event with a large number competing in the running section while the race walking group was in line with past experience. It was a cloudy evening giving an ideal temperature for racing once again. There had been many VAC 5k championships previously in conjunction with other organisers' races, but this was the first stand-alone event and made Penelope Cummings from AFD a new VAC championship winner. Half of the field were Surrey Walking Club members with Dan Maskell first home after a Belgrave's Maureen Noel. David Hoben and Paul King were also close and this pushed David to an improved time just 8 seconds clear and a couple of an out-of-form Shaun Lightman.

1. S.Zennaro (Belg M45) 26.42; 2. P.Cummings (AFD W40) 28.14; 3. M.Noel (Belg W55) 32.04; 4. **D.Maskell** 32.22; 5.; 6. **D.Hoben** 34.55; 7. **P.King** 35.03; 8. **S.Lightman** 37.12

13 July Midland/BMAF 20km Championships, Coventry

The Midlands 20km hosted the National Masters Championship with 20 travelling to Warwick University's track in Coventry on a fortunately cloudy and relatively cool Sunday. A few of these were committed to only 10km. Three SWC were present with two assisting and just Sandra Brown competing in the not unjustified hope of new British and World records. This was not to be as the organisers failed to ensure enough fully qualified timekeepers despite the nature of the event. Worse still, the event saw the application of strict judging that 60% of the field was disqualified including Sandra at almost 10km. She had performed well before this point and was inside the 5km record at that point and would have broken the 10km UK record by several minutes had she been permitted to complete another 150 metres. The only people having a really good day were Olympian female and overall winner Lisa Langford while first man, Peter Bosko, was also well ahead of his expectation and pleased to survive the judges with his strong style. Needless to say many departed as soon as possible and there was no cheery presentation of medals.

Men

1. P.Boszko (Bir M70) 2 hr 5 min 55 sec; 2. I.Torode (SW Vets M60) 2 hr 19 min 38 sec; 3. J.Constandinou (Bir M45) 2 hr 21 min 20 sec.

Women

1.L.Kehler (W&B W50) 1 hr 54 min 19 sec; 2. C.Derbyshire (Nun W40) 2 hr 7 min 26 sec; 3. M.Peddle (Loughton W50) 2 hr 9 min 2 sec; **Sandra Brown** d.q.

27 July Enfield League 5km, Allianz Park, Hendon

There was a reasonable number of almost 30 on the start line. The heavy overnight rain had eased by the beginning of the race on Saturday. The two front walkers, Maddie Stott (Belgrave) and young George Wilkinson (Enfield) shared the lead with Stott moving just ahead. Wilkinson caught her after 8 of the 12.5 laps and a furious battle ensued with Wilkinson gaining the lead only during the final 200m. Surrey WC interest centered on Francisco Reis, who was, returning after a lay-off, but kept in front of Jacqueline Benson (Ashford) from start to finish. They were close enough to share the same time. Further down the field was Dave Hoben who had newly returned from the 4 days' marches in Nijmegen (The Netherlands) - 50km per day for 4 days. He fell away early and finished in near the back although his time was only slightly down and faster than last time.

1. G.Wilkinson (E&H) 23.58; 2. S.Zennaro (Belg) 26.57; 3. V.Panico (BSC France) 26.57; 4. **F.Reis** 28.01; 13. **D.Hoben** 35.43.

6 August Veterans AC 5 miles, Battersea Park :

The fourth fixture of this season's Battersea Park races had a lower than expected attendance on a moderately sunny evening giving an ideal temperature for racing once again. Surrey Walking Club had four starters out of the original seven however Kevin Burnett and Peter Hannell opted for two laps. AFD's Penny Cummings and Stefano Zennaro (Bels) led from the start of the three lap course. At the end of the first lap Zennaro dropped back and on the last lap was overtaken by the fast finishing Mark Culshaw. Mark and Penny took advantage of the good conditions to post very good times with Penny's win matching her previous 5km victory and her time only a few seconds outside of her PB from a few years back. After the first three followed a long gap of almost ten minutes before the rather older SWC contingent came in. However at fifty seven and a half minutes Dave Hoben recorded his best time this year and got the better of Paul King who was a little down two minutes later, They had had a long duel with Hoben eventually getting the best of King with one lap remaining as the former pushed on strongly while Paul fell back after his earlier battle with David.

1. P.Cummings (AFD W40) 45.57; 2. M.Culshaw (Ilf M50) 47.44; 3. S.Zennaro (Belg M45) 48 .40 4. **D.Hoben** (M65) 57.30; 5. **P.King** (M65) 59 .26

14 August SWC Open 5km, Tonbridge School Track

The weather during the early part of this race was un-promising with intermittent heavy showers and mainly drizzle in between, so the evening Open 5km surprised us with only slight dampness and a good racing temperature. Races at 5, 3 and 1Km were offered and a total of 11 out was not too bad in the conditions. The winner was Hungarian ex-international Gyula Dudas who beat SWC's David Crane by a few metres after a strong start from Gyula which David eventually recovered to take the lead only for a fast last lap from his opponent who overtook again by the small margin. It was also good to see Malcolm Martin coming back in cheerful form and not too far behind with David and himself being only 30 seconds down in the incorporated handicap calculation. The other two SWC were rather further down with David Hoben still recovering from his 100km the previous weekend (see below) while injured Hannell managed to complete the distance and break 40 minutes. Mention should also be made of the personal best Achieved over 3km by Blackheath & Bromley's Johnny Ellerton.

David Crane obtained a silver medal in the Southern Area Championships.

5km

1. G.Dudas (Hungary) 25.55; 2. **D.Crane** 25.58 3. E.Ghose (Ton) 27.06 ; 4. **M.Martin** 29.35.
6.**D.Hoben** 36.40; 7.**P.Hannell** 39.55.

3km

1. J.Benson (Ashf) 16.14 2. C.Hobbs (Ashf) 16.34; 3. J.Ellerton (B&B) 20.06

1km

1. L.Burr (Ton) 6.11.

Other results

A piece of good news shows the result of the International Masters Championship which includes just the USA, Canada, Hong Kong and UK and is a virtual contest based on an age related formula and won by SWC some years ago. The latest figures are still very positive for the Club as our A team (Maskell, Crane and Harran) were placed second while a B team (Flint, Lightman and Hannell) were 14th. The leading teams were 1. Shore AC (USA), 3. Hong Kong RWA and 4. Ilford AC. Individual placings were David Crane 1st M35, Dan Maskell 2nd M70, Shaun Lightman 3rd M75, Peter Hannell 4th M75 and Mick Harran 1st M80.

Several individuals race walked the London Marathon including SWC's Kathy Crilley and David Hoben. First known walker is Emma Achurch (Leicester under 23) in four and a quarter hours. Kathy's five and three quarters was a strong walk while David was up 28 minutes on last year with almost six hours. 18,398. E.Achurch (Leic WC U23W) 4 hr 14 min 7 sec; 25,153. D.Allan (Sarnia W45) 4 hr 39 min 34 sec; 33,511. G.Smolinski (Leic WC M65) 5 hr 18 min 56 sec; 37,468. K.Crilley (Sy WC W70) 5 hr 45 min 38 sec; 38,956. D.Hoben (Sy WC M65) 5 hr 59 min 49 sec.

Two weeks before London Rachel and David Crane, completed, running and walking, the Brighton Marathon in around 5 hours 25 minutes, after a battling the last 5 miles against a sea-front headwind.

Sandra Brown's 50km time in her excellent Bourges 24 Hours last year, has been ratified as a world W65 record despite it being her last year in the group and less than a third of the total distance she walked that day.

In addition to our normal races we also have a not unusual piece of information in relation to Sandra Brown concerning a 24 hour race – the Belfast Energia event on 23rd June in this case. Having secured the W70 world 100 mile and 24 hour race walking records comfortably she decided to attempt to break the equivalent, but more stretching, running records (even though, in fact, progressing by walking). I hardly need to add that she succeeded with the following marks – 21:15:33 and 182.62Km (113.5 miles) respectively. This challenge was of course much more difficult than her usual events but with adequate planning and much determination to keep to her schedule the records are hers.

David Hoben was the sole SWC entry in the Belgian Death March event. His report follows: Dodentocht 100k (Death March), was started in 1970 by a group of cadets in Belgium (Kadee) who returned from the larger Nijmegen Marches (Holland) with a view to create a 24 hour event that would be much harder to complete. The numbers started in the hundreds in the early 1970s, and on the day of the 50th edition 13,000 had entered within two hours of entries going online, and a further 4,000 rejected, such is the popularity of this walk, with its combination of endurance, competition and some street theatre as an effigy is carried in a coffin just before the start and after the finish. The weather during the day and night was perfect on this occasion, 20C or so, with a constant breeze, and plenty of sun in the daytime, the only rain shower lasting just a few minutes. The event is still sponsored by one of the major breweries in the region, who also provide refreshments in one of the checkpoints, disappointingly the half way checkpoint used to be housed in a second brewery which no longer sponsors the walk but nonetheless the route still goes past the buildings. David completed the 100 kilos in 17h 21m.

Stroll Reports

Saturday, 16 February Little Kimble to Haddenham (Linear) -

Conductor: Lynne McKenzie

Participants: Carole, Casilda, Cathy, Charlotte, Claire, Dave, Gavin, Jeff, Joelle, Keith, Nick, Paul and Ron

Fourteen of us made the journey to Little Kimble to walk various iterations of the Aylesbury Ring. The day was overcast which the leader thought may hamper the views but the weather brightened slightly as the day progressed. Luckily the week had been dry which meant for much more solid conditions underfoot than had been experienced in the recesses and speeded up our traverse of the Buckinghamshire countryside into Oxfordshire.

The morning was 10 miles but neatly punctuated with a stop in the church at Dinton to sample some Elderflower and Poppyseed cake. It was at this point that the leader was reunited with her special purple pen which had been lost in the final recess. Nick had spotted it on the ground and hung on a hedge only to then be spotted by Gavin who remembering the leader's tale of woe of losing a pen took a punt on it being the one and same which it was. Happiness and incredulity all around. This also backed up the observation of a few members of our party that this was a less walked area as very sparse of other walkers during the whole day.

On to lunch in Waddensdon with views of the large Manor house as we tackled a couple of tricky stiles at Waddesdon Stud. These being 2 out of 35 encountered in the day, ably counted by Paul. A fewer in the afternoon as we made our way to Nether Winchenden where before a downhill to the village we met some large men and Keith made friends with these fierce fellows.

It had been an early start from Marylebone so we skipped the tea stop for an early finish to catch the 4.14 train back to London. A happy bunch of walkers after a good 18 mile walk. An area to be further explored I feel.....

Saturday, 27 April Epsom to Dorking (linear)

Conductor: Keith Lane

Participants: Andy, Carol, Dave, Debbie, Gail, Gavin, Gillian, Gosha, Kate, Natasha, Neil, Rachel and Ron

This Stroll has its roots in the Dorking Circular Stroll that the Conductor led in March 2018 when we were hit by the "Mini Beast from the East" and instead of a picnic on Colley Hill we took refuge in the Skimmington Castle, Reigate Heath which offered a very warm welcome literally and emotionally. The stroll was curtailed to take the shortest route back to Dorking to get out of the freezing conditions. As such there was unfinished strolling business.

The intention was to complete the original route but from a different direction and it was originally put in the Programme last September but was derailed by the South West Trains guards' strike. When the conductor recessed the walk the Saturday before it was sunny all day with temperatures of 25°. So what could possibly go wrong? A big depression and Storm Hannah to be precise.

However despite the cold morning 14 of us departed from Epsom station in good spirits and the storm “breeze” that hit us as we walked over Epsom Downs was fortunately travelling in the same direction as we were. However, the Conductor did keep spirits up by telling the group how lovely the weather was the week before!

We continued ascending to Walton on the Hill to have a brief refreshment break at the pond before the very pleasant walk over Banstead Common and Colley Hill. Swiftly descending to Reigate Heath, we once again experienced the warm atmosphere in the Skimmington Castle before taking a route via the village of Leigh and finishing at Dorking station.

Following a brief discussion on who wanted to catch the next train and who wanted refreshments 10 strollers heading for the station and 3 lingered over tea coffee and cake.

Foot Note

The Conductor wishes it known that he has no financial interest in the Skimmington Castle.

Saturday 11 May Chilterns Villages: Chalfont & Latimer to Amersham (linear) –

Conductor: Nick White

Participants: Lynne, Michelle, Casilda.

We arrived on time at Chalfont & Latimer station to start this lovely walk through the Chilterns, only a short train journey from London. Leaving the station we joined the Chess Valley Walk past Latimer House, a red brick Tudor style mansion, once a home of members of the Cavendish family who became the barons Chesham. During the Second World War, it was also one of three stately homes where captured German U-boat submarine crews and Luftwaffe pilots were initially held before being transferred to conventional prisoner of war camps.

Continuing along the Chess Valley Walk, we passed the tomb of Mr William Liberty of Chorleywood, nonconformist brickmaker, who died in 1777. In his will he had categorically stated that he was not to be buried anywhere within the bounds of a church! We were now following, then crossing, the River Chess and, climbing through some woods, we passed Chenies House. Crossing the main Amersham Road we then joined the Chiltern Way through Carpenter’s Wood and Philipshill Wood to the attractive town of Chalfont St Giles for elevenses.

A quick tea or coffee at a local Costa was very welcome before continuing our route alongside the River Misbourne and then climbing gently up a hill to continue along undulating paths giving fine views across the Chilterns. We then continued on through the pretty villages of Coleshill and Winchmore Hill to Penn Street for lunch. The Squirrel is a delightful pub of the “old school” but as we all had our own food we relaxed on a bench on the green by a war memorial and enjoyed the sun and a local cricket match. Then it was on through Penn Wood and past Beamond End and along the long and winding Toby’s Lane to Little Missenden. By now we were on the South Bucks Way and nearing the end of our stroll. Here we were walking through the more open Lower Park past a lake with many geese until, eventually, we arrived at Old Amersham for our tea stop at Seasons.

Tea, coffee, scones and cake were all very welcome after our long sojourn. Unfortunately, the steepest hill is at the very end and Casilda was not looking forward to it, but your conductor knew a better route and, after a short walk through a wood, we reached our final destination, Amersham station, for the journey home.

14 July – Cowden Circular

Conductor: Kate Copeland. Distance 18 miles.

Participants – Bola, Gail, Jill, John, Lawrence, Lynne, Michelle and Paul.

We had a lovely day in the Kentish Weald. It provided an undulating landscape with virtually deserted footpaths. In fact we probably encountered more guard dogs than we did fellow walkers. We had a nice balance of woodland, cereal crops and cow pastures to navigate throughout the day, with some pretty stunning views. We particularly enjoyed the outlooks from our elevensies spot at Smarts Hill, our lunchtime perch in the churchyard at Bidborough and from the garden of the Kentish Horse at teatime. There were a lot of crickets, butterflies and dragonflies en route too. The ground was hard-baked and much in need of rain. (Though, selfishly, we were grateful to only encounter a 60 second shower as we set off).

We'd expected to see people bathing in the Medway but the cows had commandeered that spot. However, there were quite a few folk taking a dip in the River Eden when we passed. Many of the group were surprised to discover we had reached the outskirts of Tunbridge Wells at our most easterly point. Polytunnels vied with Penshurst Place for top attraction of the day. The latter probably just won, especially as we found the path to Penshurst church was scattered with lavender and rose petals. This appears to have been for a wedding rather than our arrival but we really appreciated the scent they created, and the flower arrangements in and around the church. We also noted the rare Dole Table just outside the church door.

The afternoon became more tense than the morning as we caught up with the nail-biting scores from Lord's and Wimbledon, whenever network coverage permitted.

The Hansard of country crossings, Paul Tilley, noted that we climbed 29 stiles in total. Many in a pretty precarious state, too.

We arrived back in plenty of time for the 18.02 back to London.



Our Treasurer appears to be setting the pace on the Cowden circular stroll (photo:Kate Copeland)

Future Strolls

Sunday 15 September Godalming Circular. Conductors Gail and John Elrick. Start Godalming Station at 09:34 (London Waterloo 09:10). Regular return trains.

Route Description. We will pass through some very pretty countryside and small villages. The route is yet to be finalised as this is a late entry to the programme but the morning will most likely take in Compton and Puttenham with lunch at Tilford. The afternoon will include Elstead Common and Milford returning to Godalming.

Explorer 145. Distance 20 miles (approx.).

Sunday 29 September Overton Circular.

Conductor Lynne McKenzie Start Overton at 09:16 (London Waterloo 08.13). One train back every two hours and we shall be catching the 16.58 back from Overton; unfortunately this means there shall be no afternoon tea break.

Route Description: In the morning we leave Overton heading towards the Harrow Way and crossing the railway line using the only two stiles we shall encounter. We walk onwards through lovely shaded paths to Watership Down. We shall follow the gallops taking in the wide open views of the Hampshire countryside. At White Hill we descend Freemantle Park Down to follow more gallops to Kingsclere for lunch (10 miles). Kingsclere offers all the walker could wish for in a lunch stop - 3 pubs, 1 tea shop, a Spar, newsagent, public toilets (hopefully open) and a shaded spot in the graveyard of the church with benches for those with picnics. After lunch we head back towards the edge of Hannington to reconnect with the Wayfarer's Way (which we encounter earlier in the day) with more wonderful open views and some lovely quiet paths to meander back to Overton and the 16.58 train.

Explorer 144. Distance approx. 18 miles

