



Newsletter March 2021

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March Zoom Meeting

'Sandhurst Walk' - talk given by Graham Harding 1st March 2021

Graham and his wife walked from Sandhurst to Sandhurst to Sandhurst. If you weren't one of the 58 members who were able to join the Zoom talk on Monday you might well be thinking 'Eh? Did they just go round in circles?' Well, no! Did you know that there are three Sandhursts in England? They decided to set themselves the challenge of walking between all three and this was the subject of his talk. You could draw a straight line on a map and it would pretty much align along the three, with about 120 miles from Sandhurst, Gloucestershire to Sandhurst, Kent with the Berkshire Sandhurst at approx. the half way point.

They did this walk in sections, following parts of national trails as much as possible. As the public footpaths did not always follow the straight line, they in fact walked 170 miles. Graham illustrated his talk with many photos, often showing some of the quirky and interesting things they found along the way.

How well do you know your national trails? These are some of the ones that they followed – can you correctly match up the path or Roman road to the counties that they link at each end? The counties here are in the wrong order. Correct answers at the end.

Path or road	Counties linked ?
The Ridgeway	Hampshire to Kent
The Palladian Way	Devon to Lincolnshire
The Fosse Way	London to Hampshire
The Pilgrims Way	Somerset to Buckinghamshire
The Kennet and Avon Canal	Wiltshire to Buckinghamshire
The Devil's Highway	Somerset to Berkshire

They started with the Sandhurst just outside Gloucester which is a village of 450 residents on the River Severn. The surrounding area regularly floods and in 2007 the village was completely cut off, the only way in or out being by boat or tractor. Here is a quiz about some of the features they encountered on the way in this section. Answers at the end.

1. According to myth, what took place at Bradbury Clumps?

PTO...

Things to note

1. Our next meeting is on the 5th April when Paul Whittle will talk about 'Rocky Mountain Railroad: The Colours of Colorado'. This will be held over Zoom.
2. Trading Hut – Hut to re-open for 2021 on a "click & collect" basis (as we did in 2020) on Wed 10th March from 2.00 – 3.00p.m. and again on Sun 14th March from 11-12 noon. Then weekly on a Sunday morning from then onwards
3. Member's articles. See in newsletter for more details.
4. See inside newsletter for the results of the March photo competition.

2. Why is the village of Bibury very familiar to us?
3. What unusual form of transport can you take to do a tour of the Cotswolds?
4. What is a 'Thankful village'?
5. What is the Vale of Lambourn famous for?
6. What is the name of the theatre on the river in Newbury?
7. What is special about the River Lambourn?
8. In which county is the Uffington White Horse?
9. What is special about Monkey Marsh Lock?

Graham showed just one photo of our Sandhurst – the Happy Christmas bridge. As a Sandhurst resident myself, I was happy to see this local landmark. Graham moved to Sandhurst a few years ago and was struck by how locals always give directions starting with either 'Go under the Happy Christmas bridge' or 'Don't go under the Happy Christmas bridge'. This I can vouchsafe as true. Before someone painted on that graffiti, there must have been a lot of confused people wandering around the town, not being able to receive any directions!

The Berkshire to Kent set of walks started with the River Blackwater where they were pleased to see a kingfisher and a heron. The itinerary then took them through Wanborough to Guildford and the River Wey. They followed an old railway track through Bramley and Womersley and once in the Surrey Hills, came across an interesting installation called 'Perspectives' which is covered in shingles with thought-provoking words on them. They climbed Leith Hill, the second highest point in south-east England with beautiful vistas across to the South Downs. Another thought-provoking encounter was one of the war memorials in Crawley Down, West Sussex. Local people have researched the life of each of the soldiers commemorated on it and on the anniversary of their death, a memorial service is held. Other notable experiences along the way were:

- woods full of wild garlic and bluebells
- the village of Hartfield on the outskirts of Ashdown Forest with its connections to Winnie the Pooh
- Eridge Rocks – popular for rock climbing
- Frant Deer park
- Bodiam Castle

Finally, they arrived in Sandhurst Kent, a village of 1500 people. Two of our members recommended this for a visit, with a nice B&B, hop fields and a winery.

Path or road	Counties linked
The Ridgeway	Wiltshire to Buckinghamshire
The Palladian Way	Somerset to Buckinghamshire
The Fosse Way	Devon to Lincolnshire
The Pilgrims Way	Hampshire to Kent
The Kennet and Avon Canal	Somerset to Berkshire
The Devil's Highway	London to Hampshire

Answers to quiz

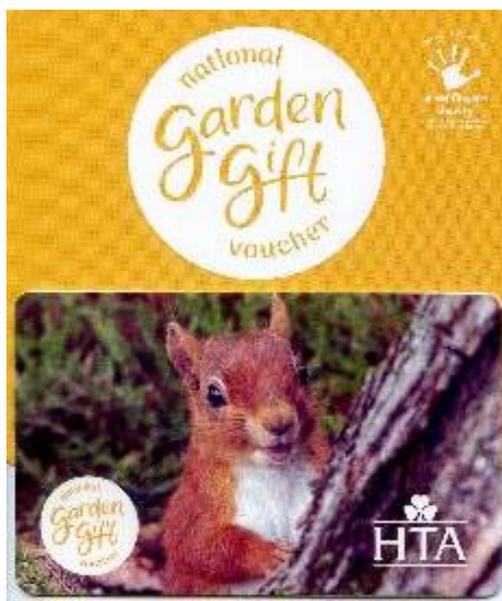
1. King Arthur defeated the Anglo-Saxons in a battle.
2. It is depicted inside the cover of UK passports and is renowned for being very picturesque
3. A tuk tuk
4. Where all the soldiers of the war returned home
5. The hundreds of racehorses that are trained there
6. The Watermill Theatre
7. It is a rare chalk stream

8. Oxfordshire
9. It is a turf lock, rather than being built of solid materials

Arlington Row, Bibury, as depicted in British passports



Julia Goodall – (Publicity Secretary)



Big thank you to Peter Turner

Peter volunteered in 2013 to become the Show Secretary for our Spring and Summer Shows. It was at a time when it looked as though we would have to abandon the shows through lack of a show secretary. Over the following eight years he did a great job organising the judges, stewards and general helpers to put on fourteen shows. He even managed to convince his wife to calculate the prize money and make up the little bags of winnings for the competitors to collect. The club owes Peter and Pat, his wife, a debt of gratitude for taking over and running the shows so successfully. To thank him, the club has bought him a National Garden Gift Voucher. Thank you from all the clubs members for giving us the opportunity to enjoy the shows.

March Photo Competition Results

Well done to the 33 members who entered the competition this month. The standard was amazing. I'm still not impressed with the quality of judging; I didn't score into the double figures again but I did better than my February's score of 1.



First place goes to Ray Little who attracted a whopping 56 points.



Second place was Pauline MacBrayne with 35 points



Third place goes to Julia Goodall with 32 points

Club Facebook Group

Would you enjoy sharing gardening news with other club members? If so, join our Facebook group! It is a private group which means that only club members can join and post. The only part of it visible to the public is the cover page with general information about the club. None of your information is visible outside the group.

If you are new to Facebook, you need to register first to set up an account. Search for Facebook in your browser and use either your mobile phone number or your email address to set up an account. Once you have done that:

- Search either within Facebook for the club's page with this number: 207934410581605
- Or go back to your web browser and type in: www.facebook.com/groups/207934410581605/
- Or simply go to the club's website and you can click on the link and start from there.

Make a join request and as soon as I see it, I will admit you. We really would like more members in this group to make it a lively forum. The kinds of things you could post need to be gardening related and so, for example, could include:

- Photos and news of what is happening in your garden
- Gardens you have visited
- Gardening and growing tips
- Gardening humour
- General gardening news
- Any wildlife in your garden
- Any other gardening topics you can think of

Once you get going, you can start searching for and following a whole host of interesting people, businesses and groups based on your hobbies and passions! Give it a go!

Julia Goodall – (Publicity Secretary)

We Need a Committee Member

We are looking for someone to take over as membership secretary. If you can handle a basic spreadsheet then you qualify. Please contact Dick if you would like to try it out.

RHS card

Our club has a RHS Card which we can make available to members from the beginning of March this year.

It enables two people to gain entry to all RHS gardens throughout the country (this includes RHS Bridgewater from Sept).

Presentation of this card will give you and your friend a 30% discount on the entry fee.

From March, as a member of our club, you will be able to borrow it by contacting Chris Spinks (number at the end of newsletter) and arranging to pick it up.

Free membership this year

Big thank you to all those members who decided to pay their £5 membership fee this year even though it is a free year. We, the committee, appreciate this demonstration of your support. I must also go further and say thank you to a few who have made voluntary donations on top of their subs. Very kind of you. If you would like to pay your voluntary subs at the Trading Hut then Stuart will be willing to take your details etc.

The clubs bank details are: Sort Code: 40-47-09, Account number: 71301608 (don't forget to give your name as the reference).

Topical Tip – March

At the beginning of the season, it is worthwhile testing the pH of your soil.



The pH is a measure of the acidity or alkalinity of the soil. Although the pH scale runs from 1-14, it is usually only the numbers from the acidic 5.0 to the alkaline 8.0 which are really relevant. A simple testing kit for pH is available at most garden centres. It will include a colour chart similar to the one in the picture. Most plants grow best at a pH of around 6.5 to 7.5. Plants such as azaleas and rhododendrons thrive in more acidic soil. Brassicas such as cabbage and cauliflowers often thrive at a pH of nearer 8.0, this is often because soils with a high pH help to discourage club root disease. Consequently, potatoes do not like a particularly alkaline soil as this tends to increase the risk of the potatoes getting scab.

If your soil is slightly on the acid side you can easily raise the pH by adding lime. Every 30 gram per square metre will raise the pH by 0.5. Now is the ideal time to apply lime.

Ian Gillott (Deputy Chairman)

Members' Articles

Why not try your hand at an article for the newsletter.

We have had two great articles from members so far which demonstrates there are members chomping at the bit to be authors. It can be serious, funny or a combination. Share your tricks in gardening; your special way of dealing with garden problems. Just email it to us and we will do the rest.

Trading Hut

We are aiming to open the Trading Hut on the 10th March. Have a look at the club's website to see what is available and start your shopping list.

In early April we will have various plants for sale at the Hut. There will be:



Tomato Picolino

A vigorous cherry tomato, that can be used in salads and sandwiches. It is a cordon variety that can be grown in the greenhouse, and also outdoors in a sunny location, in planters on the patio.



Ailsa Craig - Popular and reliable tomato seeds with medium-sized fruits of fine shape and flavour. Ideal for greenhouse and outdoor growing. Medium fruited variety - an essential element of your summer salads!



A Spanish black tomato

Used in salads, it is a dark chocolate coloured tomato with a tangy yet sweet flavour and excellent texture. Shows good disease tolerance.



My personal favourite is Santini. It is a small plum shaped variety. It has a delicate thin skin, a sharp flavour and a lovely just-picked aroma.



We hope to have geraniums and fuchsias too but this is only if restrictions are lifted and we feel comfortable going out to source them.



Monthly talks

This is a call to all members:

If you have any ideas/requests for the subjects of the monthly talks, please let us know. Either reply to this email or give Hermione a ring (number below).

Members emails

We have been informed by one of our members that Dulcie Josling passed away last December. Dulcie was 102 and enjoyed life to the full. Dulcie used to walk around the garden, at Lovat House, 6 times every day. Dulcie and her husband were great supporters of the club and ran the entertainments at the Christmas parties for many years.

Members emails



Mary E.

I came across this today at Emmbrook post office. Have you seen any other dressed post boxes locally or is it unique? Mary

Chairman: Dick Hawes 0118 979 3730	Hon. Treasurer: Peter Radband 07976 640989	Programmes: Hermione Lewis 0118 989 1671	Committee Member: Jayne Male 07967639808
Deputy Chairman: Ian Gillott 0118 9892649	Trading Hut: Stuart Slocombe 0118 9734531	Membership: Kerry Eaton 07736 022361	Co-opted Member: Marise Radband 01344 774310
Hon. Secretary: Chris Spinks 0118 978 1432	Show Secretaries: Daryl & Katie Phillips 07980 160169	Publicity: Julia Goodall	