

STRIDERS WALKING 2017

January 2017: COTGRAVE

14 of us braved the fog and mud and enjoyed a figure of eight walk around Cotgrave. The first part of the walk took us through Clipston Wood (not that Clipstone, we weren't that lost!) This was the muddiest part of but things improved under foot in the second part of the walk which was along the Grantham Canal and back through Cotgrave Country Park.

Unfortunately the fabulous views across Colwick, Netherfield and Gedling were obscured by the fog, but the company was good and the beer at the Rose and Crown was excellent.

February 2017: GUNTHORPE

The arrival of storm Doris meant we had to change our plans at the last minute and instead of going to Derbyshire we did a shorter walk around Gunthorpe, Caythorpe and Hoveringham.

Surprisingly 10 people turned up and were rewarded with an exhilarating walk in extreme conditions. Defying the wind and rain, everyone managed to stay on their feet (2 only just) and returned safely.

Hopefully the weather will be kinder to us next month.

March 2017: BELPER AREA

We returned to Derbyshire in March and 18 of us enjoyed our first walk in fine spring weather. The route was a lot less muddy than earlier in the month and we enjoyed good visibility and magnificent views across the Derwent valley. We were disappointed to find that our planned watering hole at the Poet and Castle was closed for refurbishment but most of the group returned to The Willowbrook for refreshments.





April 2017: ASHFORD-IN-THE-WATER

After warnings of steep climbs and lots of stiles a select group of 11 enjoyed a spring walk in Derbyshire. The flora was not as impressive as when we walked in this area in May 2015 but there were still plenty of spring flowers to enjoy along the way. Although it was quite cool we only experienced one April shower and the visibility was excellent providing spectacular views while we recovered from the climbs.

U3A walking groups seem to have taken over from Duke of Edinburgh groups in the Peak district and we met a large group from Staffordshire at the Magpie Mine before continuing to our picnic spot at Over Haddon.

A short road walk towards the end of the walk helped us to avoid the worst of the stiles and refreshments were enjoyed at The Bull in Ashford in the water at the end of the walk where the convenor was particularly impressed by the Dizzy Blonde (beer that is!).



May 2017: MONSAL HEAD

A select group of 13 Striders enjoyed a sunny day in Derbyshire with excellent visibility. We started the walk from Monsal Head and descended into Millers Dale where we followed the river Wye past Cressbrook Mill and Litton Mill before ascending to the Monsal Trail. We then followed this back to the start, passing through two of the tunnels on the way. Refreshment was taken at the pub at Monsal Head before some of the party enjoyed the local ice cream while admiring the magnificent view from the car park. Thanks to Keith for planning the route and commiserations on being unable to join us.





June 2017: CARSINGTON WATER

Fortunately the temperature dropped on the day of this month's walk (you don't hear that very often in Derbyshire) and 14 of us enjoyed an easy walk around Carsington Water. A number of easier tracks have been added along the south side of the lake, which meant that those who wanted to could avoid most of the steep climbs.

An interesting walk past the old and beautiful buildings in Hopton village brought us to The Miners Arms in Carsington where refreshments were enjoyed before the journey home.

July 2017: DUFFIELD

There were 4 car parking bays free at Duffield station, there were 16 of us in 4 cars and it wasn't raining. Good start.

The terrain was easy walking following the river Ecclesbourne for a short way. The walk became a little more arduous when I lost count after 15 stiles. It was a slow going at Hole farm behind the farmer and his 40 cows but at least all the gates were already open for us. How many men does it take to remove a large blackthorn through the sole of a walkers shoe the answer is 4.

Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves with some of us retreating to the Patternmakers Arms for a welcome pint.

Sue Fairweather



August 2017: MONSAL TRAIL

16 of us enjoyed a sunny summers day in Derbyshire. After extricating some of the party from the coffee shop at the craft centre we set off from Rowsley through cow pat tunnel and made our way to Carlton Lees Farm before ascending to Carlton Lees House. After a short ridge walk and a brief shower of rain we stopped for lunch before descending through the woods to the Monsal Trail just short of Bakewell.

A short walk, with magnificent views of the famous wooded knoll brought us back to the car park. Some of the group enjoyed refreshments at the Grouse and Claret before returning home while others returned to the craft shop.



October 2017: MILTON & REPTON

A walk in South Derbyshire countryside starting at The Swan Inn and Cygnets tea rooms in Milton then up gentle undulating hills (Not Brian's undulating) for the views at Foremark. It was lovely to walk through the beautifully kept grounds of Foremark Hall. The Hall is the former home of the Burdett family of Bramcote and is now Repton public School.

We had our picnic overlooking the River Trent at Twyford sitting in the long grass on anything vaguely waterproof that we could find. After negotiating the only really muddy section of the walk we arrived in the historical town of Repton then back to Milton and a well-deserved cuppa / pint and warm scones recently out of the oven.

Sue Fairweather



November 2017: WYSALL & WILLOUGHBY

15 of us enjoyed a gentle stroll in the bright autumn sunshine. The first loop of the walk was a 4.5 mile circuit in the area between Wysall and Willoughby, taking in some of the Midshires Way. Our picnic was enjoyed by the Church in Wysall, where Keith demonstrated his demolition and dry stone walling skills.

Everyone declined the option to return to the pub at this point and continued around the second loop which involved a slightly muddy route to Bunny Wood and back.

Most of the party enjoyed the hospitality at the excellent Plough Inn before returning to Gedling.

Brian Shield

December 2017: KINOULTON, VIMY RIDGE AND HICKLING

A select group of us enjoyed a beautiful winters day with blue skies and plenty of sunshine. The overnight frost had frozen the ground making the muddy sections much easier than they were earlier in the month. The walk allowed us to learn a little about the battle the area was named after and the clear air provided us with good views from the ridge.

To our dismay, the pub in Kinoulton was closed when we returned, however, undeterred we made our way back to the Plough in Hickling where refreshments were enjoyed by all.

