

THE ZENECANS AT ALRESFORD – Tuesday 8 -10 September 2015.

This year the much-anticipated, annual get-together of the Zenecans Walk Group was based in Alresford, Hampshire, at the Swan Hotel.

An area of chalk streams, old drove roads and downlands provided splendid walking over the three days, together with other interesting pursuits. We were fortunate to catch a fine, sunny weather period and together with the first class arrangements by our hosts Peter Rankin and John Gray, a fabulous time was enjoyed by all.

We met up for lunch at the Swan on Tuesday and in the afternoon did a comfortable, broadly circular walk starting from the hotel and following the pristine River Arle, passing the ancient Fulling Mill en route. This led us to the Wayfarers Walk and the Oxdrove Way, taking us back to Abbotstone and Old Arlesford. From here we headed for the Watercress beds closeby where we had an interesting discussion with a Company representative on the culture and marketing of the crop. Some excellent bitter had also been thoughtfully laid on at this point! From here was a short walk back to our hotel. Dinner was excellent and lively as usual, verging on the pleasantly raucous at times.

On Wednesday, we had the novel experience of a ride in the 09.25am public Double Decker bus to the village of Cheriton about 4 miles distant for the start of our walk. As is custom there was the option of a 6 or 12 mile sojourn. The first 5 miles were all done together, the route being circular and taking in the source of the River Itchen and Cheriton Civil War battle site. Reaching Hinton Ampner House and Gardens the party split, those on the longer walk taking the Wayfarers Way south past Kilmeston as far as the South Downs Way. Turning west along it lunch was taken nearby at the isolated Milburys Inn, which also boasted a 365ft deep ancient well. The group continued along the Way, eventually turning north back to Cheriton and Alresford. The less-inclined party made their way back from Hinton Ampner to the celebrated Flower Pots Inn at Cheriton for lunch and then back to Alresford on the bus. There was time for some of us to experience the Watercress Line steam train ride to Alton.

The Annual General Meeting was held at dinner that evening. Sadly, Harry Crossley was not with us and had earlier sent a letter of resignation from the group for unfortunate domestic reasons. It was proposed that Kevin Price should be offered membership, which was subsequently accepted by Kevin.

Thursday morning saw us make our way by car to Selborne, Gilbert White's village. The group again split into two, one climbing the Zig Zag(built by the White brothers in 1753) up the hanger and through the ancient woods to Newton Valence. The other group took the valley route NE from behind the church to the site of Selborne Priory. The parties rejoined and there was time to visit 'The Wakes', Gilbert White's house and also the Oakes Museum

of Antarctic fame. Lunch was at the Selborne Arms and following this we said our farewells and made our ways home. The next meeting is at Ludlow from 13-15 September 2016

Those present were: (Standing) Bob Noon, John Humphreys, Peter Northwood, Kevin Eddison, Alastair Aitken, John Gray, Chris Gooderham, Gary Stoddart, John Coutts, Tony Moran, Mike South, John Cotterill, Ian Stott and (Kneeling) Ray Tucker, Peter Thomas, Peter Rankin, Neil Niblock and Chris Ursell.

Peter Northwood, 25/9/2015.



The Zenecans at Hinton Ampner Gardens.



Mike South, Peter Rankin, Ray Tucker, Bob Noon, Tony Moran and Neil Niblock en route.



John Gray, Chris Gooderham, John Humphreys –Taking the Opportunity



Neil Niblock, Peter Northwood and Peter Rankin at Newton Valence Churchyard.



Ray Tucker All Steamed Up.



Discussion at the Alresford Watercress Beds.



Lunch at The Selborne Arms.



Peter Thomas, Gary Stoddart and Chris Ursell finishing the Weed Assessment.



Weather Could Not Have Been Better.



John Cotterill and Chris Gooderham much relieved.



The Wakes at Selborne.