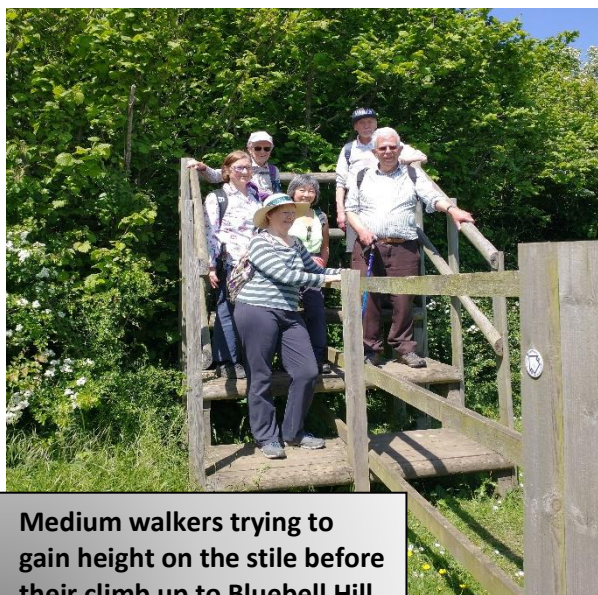


Dear friends... Welcome to our autumn/winter guided walks programme in which you will find walks to dispel those winter blues, if not the summer ones! The walks in June were under clear blue skies but after that, well ...!. Despite this, walks have seen good numbers out each week. Once again, we shall be returning to Darenth Valley Golf Club for our hugely popular Christmas lunch, so be sure to book early to avoid disappointment; and do be sure to come to the AGM. A fascinating talk awaits you. As this will be the last newsletter of 2023, I would like to thank leaders for the splendid walks they have led and the committee for their hard work ensuring the success of holidays, social events and the continuing prosperity of the group. Lastly, may I wish readers a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Prosperous New Year.

Stuart (Chairman)

Group Picnic - Once again lovely weather on 12th July (apart from a short, sharp downpour in the morning) 42 members attended, some walking and others to meet up with old friends. Many thanks to walk leaders and bakers, sale of delicious cakes raised £63.

AGM - The 61st AGM will be held at **13.30 on Tuesday 21st November** at the Hurst Community Centre, Hurst Road, Bexley DA5 3HL. Nomination for election to the committee should be submitted to Secretary, Malcolm Todd (01689 871168). The formal business will be dealt with quickly to give plenty of time for an illustrated talk by group member, Greg Drymer on the history and ever-changing borders of Ukraine. Until his retirement, Greg was a broadcaster with the BBC World Service and has a fascinating tale to tell. Free refreshments will be available afterwards.



Medium walkers trying to gain height on the stile before their climb up to Bluebell Hill

Kent Area AGM - After some 13 years it will be our turn to again host the Kent Area AGM. The meeting will be on **Saturday 10th February 2024**. More details in the next newsletter.

A handy aid to navigation - Did you know that the writing on church gravestones faces east and the highest point of a church e.g. spire or tower is usually at the western end?

England coastal path - The long-distance path, nearing completion in Kent, is to become known as the King Charles III path.

New Members - We are delighted to welcome to the group: Stephen Mulvaney, Jenny Kalitsi, Tahirik Felix, Maxine Baker, Martyyn Greenway, Peter Glenister, Sarah Kay, Mary Otuko, Hannah Burman and Cami Stewart. We hope to meet you soon on one of our walks and/or social events.

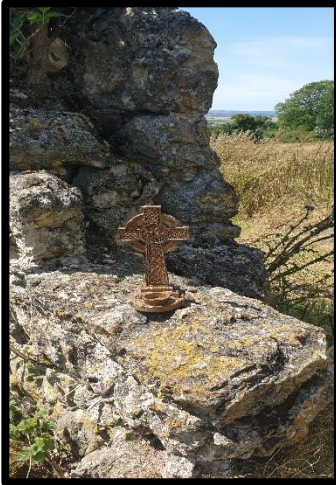
Ramblers' national website - Ramblers' national website on which walks are advertised has been revamped. The grid reference starting point will be supplemented with a "What3Words" reference which will pinpoint the starting point to within three square metres. Google maps navigate function can then be used to find the way there unlike post codes which are not precise in country districts. "What3Words" App is free and can be downloaded. Estimated finishing times will also be a new feature on the website.

In Memoriam – Grete Lindsay - Janet and I along with Pam Lintunen recently travelled down to Devil's Dyke and met up with Grete's relations to scatter her ashes.

We found a lovely place overlooking the South Downs, with gorgeous views. Her niece, Caroline, sprinkled her ashes over an adjacent area, near where Les' ashes had previously been scattered two years ago. This was one of their favourite areas for walking. Afterwards, we all went back to the Pub for a meal, reminiscing about the walks and holidays we had enjoyed with them and the group on UK and Europe over 40 years, including Valkenburg in Holland.

Richard Wilkes

Historic Churches and the Holy Maid of Kent



The Aldington Circular at the end of June took in what little remains of the isolated and overgrown Chapel of Our Lady at Court-at-Street. This is where Elizabeth Barton (b.1506), a young servant girl was cured of a severe illness after praying in front of an image of Our Lady. Following this Elizabeth became known as The Holy Maid of Kent for her prophesies and miracles, and became a popular national figure.

Elizabeth fell foul of King Henry VIII after speaking out against his divorce from Catherine of Aragon. Unsurprisingly, this led to her execution, alongside five of her supporters, in 1534. Hanged and beheaded she is the only woman known to have had her severed head displayed on a spike on London Bridge.

Her legacy however survives as she is still venerated in some Catholic Churches. Also, when we visited the chapel it contained a small cross, fresh fruit and other small objects indicating she is still remembered there today.

The group moved on for a picnic lunch in the churchyard of St Rumwolds which nestles on the banks of the Royal Military Canal. Finally, on the way back to Aldington the group viewed the remains of the Augustinian Priory in Bilsington.

Just another small example of how interesting and exciting walking with NW Kent Ramblers can be!

Paul Philip



Christmas Lunch

We are returning to Darenth Golf Club for our Christmas Lunch **on Wednesday 13 December 2023 at 12noon for 1pm**. If you have given your name to Carole Flowerday, please contact her with your menu choice (see below), on 020 8852 4897/07528 489544 or email flowerdayc@tiscali.co.uk Contact Carole if you wish to join us.

The cost for three courses is £31, payable in advance. To make an on-line transfer (preferable), please contact Carole for our bank details. If you wish to pay by cheque, please make it payable to North West Kent Ramblers and send to Carole at 42A Leyland Road, London, SE12 8DT.



Menu

Roasted Tomato Pepper & Basil Soup (vegan)

Traditional Open Prawn Cocktail with a Spiced Cocktail Dressing

Chicken Liver Pate, Toasted Brioche with Dressed Rocket Salad Cranberry & Citrus Coulis

Roasted Bronze Turkey, Apricot Sage & Garlic Stuffing, Pigs in Blanket & Roast Gravy

Mixed Bean & Lentil Shepherds' Pie (vegan)

Herb Crusted Fillet of Salmon with a Citrus Butter Sauce

All dishes served with Seasonal Vegetables & Thyme & Garlic Roasted Baby Potatoes

Traditional Christmas Pudding with Brandy Anglaise

Bakes vanilla Cheesecake with a Mixed Berry Compote

Fresh Fruit Salad

Tea, Coffee & Mini Mince Pies

For up-to-date news: NWK website: <https://nwkramblers.chessck.co.uk>; Ramblers' website: www.ramblers.org.uk; Kent area website: www.kentramblers.org.uk