

The Day in the Life of a Spring Walker May 2013

The weather forecast was for rain during the morning and maybe we would get away with a shower in the afternoon. Guess what, they got it wrong again.

I worked in the garden all morning and a hail shower drove me indoors at 12.30. Well that was fine, had to have an early lunch so we could get to the Village Hall for 2.00p.m.

Now what to wear as the rain became a steady pour. It might stop and become too warm for many layers, might need over trousers? No! I get far too hot in those if the sun comes out. Now we're running out of time to chase around the house looking for the right clothes.

Run to garage, rain now heavy, load car with correct wellies, (aren't we lucky to have a choice), make sure broly comes along for the ride.

Arrive at the Hall at 1.50pm. Doing well! Tony and Jill waiting in their car and Yes!, Lindsey our trusty refreshment maker in hers, all sheltering from the persistent rain.

The Cricket Team have just run off the pitch. It's their second match of the new season and they've decided to postpone. Good decision, lads.

It's good to see that us walkers aren't put off by a drop of rain as twelve hardy villagers with four dogs set off on the Red Route.

This is an easy route to follow and on a clear dry day the view across the Fen valley is quite beautiful, but we won't dwell on that today.

We begin by going across/around the 'Hallowed' turf towards Broad Green by the ex Chapel, now offices of 'The Forge'. We discuss the name of this road as it's always been under question.

I lived on this road for 15 years and apart from Mid Suffolk Council addressing it as Chapel Road we were just known as Broad Green. I have an old map that call it Brames Lane going into Stearn Lane at the triangle junction that goes down to Fen Lane. Anyone out there with more information on this, I'm always interested to know more.

We continue across the fields opposite the 'Limes' and behind 'Broadlands'. Follow the path that runs parallel to the drive of 'Mud Hall' and then cross the drive just before coming to the house itself. On the O.S. map you will see this is called Valley Farm but the previous owner did intensive research and found it to be called 'Mud Hall'. I just love people who take the time and find out the history of these places. The present owners are doing a marvelous job of renovating and making it quite a spectacular looking family home.

The walk continues across the paddock of 'The Orchard'. We thought the styles here have a rather high top bar, flexible knees required. By the way, it's still raining, but the sky over Stowmarket is looking brighter.

Now back on the road that leads to Fen Lane, there is a sudden halt of walkers. If you, like me, worry about the young people of today, well don't. It was good to see the caring

side of one of our young walkers who wanted to save a worm from getting squashed whilst trying to cross the road. I'm glad it's not just me who does this. We weren't sure about the worm's direction but sure hope he/she landed on the correct side of the road. Continue----

On the right hand bend take the Footpath on your left across the field to the back of Red House Farm, this brings you out onto Fen Lane. Oh! by the way, it's stopped raining and I do believe the sun has come out and yes, the coat is being unzipped.

The walk now continues along Fen Lane and left onto the A1120 as far as Hawfield Cottage where we cross the road and take the Foot Path to the left of the property. At the 'T' junction take a right and then a left around the edge of the field. The Foot Path sign here says straight on but this has not been in use for many years when the field was ploughed up. It is now in new ownership so may be reinstated in the future. Likewise the signing at the top of the field where we take a left across the bridge back towards the village. The path, when looking right should go straight across to the Oak tree which stands on the edge of a ditch and bank between two fields.

It is a well trodden route so there is no mistaking the way back to the Village Hall and a nice cuppa and, thanks to the Cricket Club for the donation, left over match tea cakes. Much appreciated and well worth getting rained off for, in my opinion.

Now no one can blame me for the rain, I went home and cleaned some windows, the sun came out and made me feel guilty, so in the words of the song, 'I can see clearly now the rain has gone'

Rain or shine do try and join us for our Autumn walk on Sunday 6th October at 2.00p.m.

Jen Henderson-Hamilton