



NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 2012

ICKNIELD WAY ASSOCIATION

AGM 2012

**Burrough Green,
south of Newmarket**

Saturday 13th October

**Meet at the 'Reading Room'
(between parish church and
school, with parking to rear via
side gate) for a walk along the
Icknield Way**

**commencing at 10.30am.
Reconvene at the hall at 2pm
for the meeting.**

For more information about Burrough Green, see page 2

This will be the Association's twenty-eighth AGM and the first to be organised and chaired by our new committee, so please do try your hardest to attend and give it your support.

The meeting marks a return to Burrough Green but most members will probably not remember the last time the AGM was held here back in 1987! It is therefore an excellent opportunity to explore some Icknield Way country that may perhaps be unfamiliar to many of us.

In addition to the traditional walk, we are delighted that Luisetta Mudie will be presenting her new film about the Icknield Way during the afternoon. Luisetta has been studying for a Masters Degree course in Documentary at the University of Bedfordshire. Her film aims to catch people's imaginations and will explore how a variety of people use the Icknield Way today. Why not come along and find out more?

In addition to a walk, a pub lunch, a film and tea, there will be a couple of important matters to respond to at the meeting and we need some people there to give a show of hands.

See you there!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Burrough Green Info	2
Knettishall Heath Update	2
Fancy a Walk?	3
Constitution Changes	3
Membership Subs	3
A Book Review	4
Centenary Celebration Update	4
Snippet	4
Great Stones Way Thetford—the Sikh Connection	5
Route Warden Info	6
Committee Contacts	6

The Icknield Way Path

A Walkers' Guide
Sixth Edition



110 miles along the 'oldest road in Britain' linking the Ridgeway Path to the Peddars Way following footpaths close to the ancient route

The Icknield Way Association

GUIDE BOOK SALES

Less than twenty copies of the guide book remain unsold of the first print run of 150! Phil Prigg has been keeping fit taking several packets each week to his local post office for despatch! This is a most encouraging start to the sales of the 6th edition, so encouraging, in fact, that the Association has ordered another print run.

Many people have told us how eye-catching the cover is with its splendid painting on the front.

At the moment, sales are only via the website. Please help us to promote the new edition and - don't forget - Christmas is coming soon and a copy would make a very acceptable present for a walking friend or relative!



Burrough Green Reading Room

BURROUGH GREEN - some geographical notes!

The parish of Burrough Green, which covers about 908 hectares, lies almost 9km south of Newmarket. It stretches 9.6km from north-west of the main London-Newmarket road to the Suffolk border in the south-east. There it is over 0.6km wide, but narrows to less than 0.3km in the north-west. So from this description it is clear to 'see' that Burrough Green is an unusually narrow parish!

The parish is well wooded, especially in the southeast. Park wood and Out wood are recorded from the early 15th century. The land rises from a lowly 45m on the north-west to just over 90m on Cambridge Hill. It then falls a little before rising again to a plateau at 112m on which the village stands. It falls again to 106m in the south-east. The parish lies on the chalk, covered on the higher ground by boulder clay. The chalkpit near Underwood Hall, designated as of scientific interest, provides a section through the chalk rich in fossils. The soil on the chalk is a brown or red loamy sand.

There are two moated sites, one of which may be of Saxon origin, and from which Burgh, as it was originally called, took its name. The name Burrough Green first occurs in the 16th century. The village is grouped around a triangular green of some 2.2 hectares, with the manor-house, church and rectory on the western side. Along the north-eastern side runs the main street, with most of the older houses looking across it to the green.

The early eighteenth-century school is situated at the northern corner of the green and nearby is the Reading Room, built in 1887 as a memorial to her husband by Mrs Charles Porcher.

KNETTISHALL HEATH - Update

We reported in our Summer newsletter on the successful purchase of the Heath by Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

As part of the celebrations following the purchase, SWT held a number of events for those who had supported the appeal, one of which was a series of guided walks at the Heath. Four members of our committee were able to take part and it was good opportunity to better understand the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. While both of these are huge in scale, it was encouraging to learn that SWT are adopting a very tightly targeted and incremental approach. There will be no large scale clearances, instead almost surgical interventions, steadily over time that will nonetheless cumulatively extend and enhance the range and diversity of habitats across the Heath.

And to prove it, we spent some time watching a relatively scarce White Admiral butterfly exploring the area around the former rabbit warrens.

John & Gill Boardman



Photo © Pete Eales

The White Admiral is generally found in deciduous woodlands but can also occur with conifer trees if its larval foodplant, honeysuckle, is present. It prefers shadier places, mainly because honeysuckle is also a dappled shade plant.

FANCY A WALK?

Sunday September 30th 10am
Icknield Way—Shelterhouse Corner



Richard 01284 755744
(Newmarket RA Gp)

Wednesday November 28th 10am
Bridgewater Monument , Ashridge.
A hilly walk of 11-12 miles in the
Chilterns via Cow Roast, Pitstone Hill
& Ivinghoe Beacon



Carol Howe 01442 249416
(Chiltern Society Walk)

Tuesday December 11th 10am
Woodditton, Cambs



Jim 01638 780415
(East Cambs RA Group)

Sunday January 6th 10am
Ramparts Field near West Stow, a
10-mile walk visiting Icklingham,
Tuddenham & Cavenham Heath.
Meet at car park off A1101



Dave 01638 712030
(Newmarket RA Group)

Wednesday March 27th 10am
Three Churches Walk via Moulton,
Dalham & Gazeley. Meet on ap-
proach to Moulton church. 6-7 miles.



Phil 01638 751289
(Newmarket RA Group)

Sunday April 7th 10am
Thetford - a Historic Town Trail -
something a bit different! 5-6 miles.
Meet at Bridge St CP/bus station



Ralph 01284 703969
(Newmarket RA Group)

CONSTITUTION CHANGES

During the months last year when the committee was becoming anxious about the future of the Association if 'new blood' could not be persuaded to emerge, two important aspects of our organisation were discussed.

The first of these was what might be done with the Associations' assets if it had to cease its activities. The second was what might happen regarding our Life Members and the 'up-front' subscriptions they had generously paid. Neither of these aspects are included within the Association's Constitution.

The new committee, and especially Lesley Blundell our new secretary, has been investigating how other similar organisations deal with this - without a great deal of conclusive success.

However, following the example of National Trust Volunteer Associations, the Committee is proposing that the following simple clause be included within the Constitution:

"Any point not included within this Constitution will be decided by the Executive Committee."

This will enable the Committee to make appropriate decisions, with the help if necessary on advice sought from elsewhere.

The AGM will provide an opportunity for this amendment to be discussed and we hope that members present will give their support.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Committee has also been scratching its 'corporate' head with regard to subscriptions! For a very long time, there have been several tiers and categories of membership which appear to complicate what should be a relatively simple situation. Again, a little research has been undertaken to find out if the IWA might reduce the number of its membership categories.

Accordingly, at the forthcoming AGM, members will be asked to consider the following subscriptions and accept them as new rates commencing in January 2013:

	Individual	Joint
1 year Membership	£5	£7
5 year Membership	£25	£30
Life Membership	£75	£100

BOOK REVIEW

The Old Ways – A Journey on Foot by Robert Macfarlane; Hamish Hamilton 2012, hardback, 433 pages, £20

When we walked the Icknield Way, we didn't hurry it but lingered it, savoured it and kept going back to some parts again and again. This book requires the same approach. Although the ancient tracks, hollow-ways, drove roads and sea paths are the ostensible subject, the narration draws from many disciplines including history and romance, geology, cartology, mysticism and myth. A typical example is the revelation that the deepest linguistic origin of the word "to learn" is (in the Proto-Indo-European *leis-*) to "follow a track". So walking becomes learning. As Macfarlane walks, he learns and we share the learning without being oppressed by erudition (though the last 70 pages are glossary, notes and index demonstrating the depth of the research and its wide ranging sources).

From his home in Cambridge, Macfarlane starts with the Icknield Way, and with Edward Thomas. Thomas is a constant point of reference, an inspiration and a test. For both Macfarlane and Thomas, the journey is as much an inward as an outward journey. And this applies whether on the Icknield Way, the sea ways beyond the Outer Hebrides, the disputed lands of Palestine or the sacred landscapes of Spain and Tibet. It is about connections, the inner with the outer, place with mind, past with present. These connections are sometimes revealed through solitude, at other times as a result of crossing paths with walkers or spending time with friends, or through drawing on others' thoughts and experiences captured in the words they have written. As he shares his thoughts, his feelings, his experiences and his knowledge, he also describes the natural world in a way that is fresh, and often thrilling: "At four o'clock on a late May morning, on a hilltop somewhere near Letchworth Garden City, I discovered one of the most effective alarm clocks in the world: a sky full of skylarks".

At the close of the book, Macfarlane takes us to the Downland with Eric Ravillious and the Battle of Arras with Edward Thomas – two special talents lost through war. When we reached the end of our Icknield Way walk (the end, not the finish – it is never over and always new), we looked around for other trails – perhaps the Peddars Way, or The Ridgeway. So it was with reaching the end of this book. The Old Ways is the third in what Macfarlane describes as "a loose trilogy about landscape and the human heart", the others being Mountains of the Mind (2003) and Wild Places (2007); so there are more paths along which to follow him.

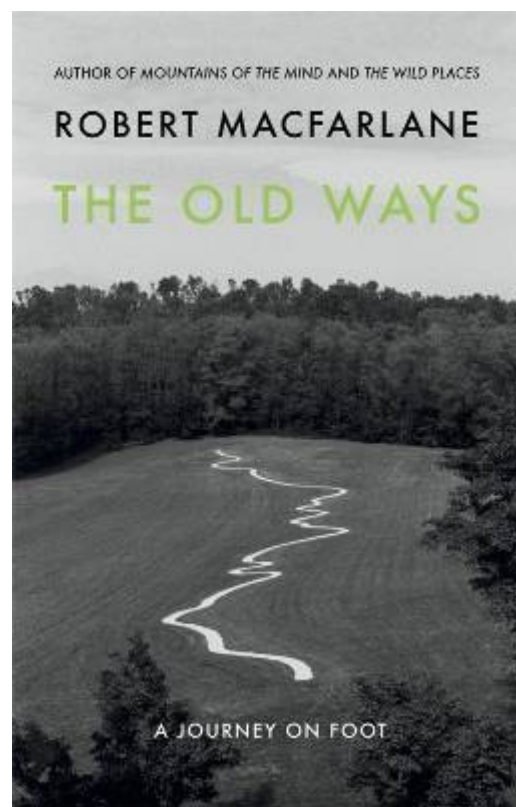
And as it happens, I already have my own connection – Mountains of the Mind was shortlisted for the annual Boardman Tasker Prize for Mountain Literature in 2003 and in 2007 Wild Places was the winner.

John Boardman

A CENTENERY CELEBRATION

- update

Two of the committee have had a useful and constructive meeting with the Secretary and Chairman of the Edward Thomas Fellowship and made good progress in identifying options for working together to commemorate the centenary of the publication of Edward Thomas's book next year. One of the top ideas is for a day of "walk and talk" combining a morning walk, a lunch venue and an afternoon speaker/film or combination. This would probably be sometime at the end of May or early June and ideally at the western end of our trail. We are currently exploring venues and continuing our dialogue with our friends in the Edward Thomas Fellowship.



SNIPPET

A COMMEMORATION

Wearing a different hat, John Boardman is also Treasurer of The Boardman Tasker Charitable Trust which this year is commemorating the 30th anniversary of the deaths of his brother Peter with Joe Tasker on the North East Ridge of Everest.

John has led the production of a 30th anniversary calendar covering 12 of the boys' expeditions between 1975 and 1982. The calendar comprises stunning images and supporting stories and the profits will support the annual Boardman Tasker Prize for Mountain Literature, which is itself almost 30 years old. Have a look at www.boardmantasker.com.

"Strangely enough it is not all hard here, on the brink of our adventure. Now I have no need to wander, to read edifying or instructive books, I need only that ridge – the tunnel to go through before a new, ever more dazzling daylight." (From Pete's diary, Everest, April 1982.)



THE GREAT STONES WAY - News from Friends of the Ridgeway

Our colleagues in the Friends of the Ridgeway, have been working hard on a new project and I am hoping that they will not mind me borrowing material from their excellent and informative website to help them publicise their endeavours to our members!

The Great Stones Way is a new, 45-mile, walking route being developed by The Friends of the Ridgeway along existing public rights of way through the ancient landscape and varied, stunning scenery between the World Heritage Sites of Avebury and Stonehenge. The route is proposed to run from the Iron Age hill-fort of Barbury Castle on The Ridgeway National Trail south of Swindon, past the current end of the trail at Overton Hill near Avebury, along the Avon Valley to Amesbury to end at historic Old Sarum near Salisbury.

It is intended that The Great Stones Way will be the central part of the ancient Ridgeway trail which follows the chalk escarpments across southern England from the Wash to the coast of Dorset. The Ridgeway is studded with prehistoric remains and hill-forts and The Great Stones Way passes an extraordinary wealth of archaeological and historic monuments in the chalk downs and vales of West Wiltshire. The Great Stones Way will soon complete The Ridgeway as one of the foremost heritage trails in the country.

A feasibility study was successfully completed in April 2010, generously funded by grants from the Sustainable Development Fund of the North Wessex Downs Area of Natural Beauty, the LEADER fund of the Plain Action Local Action Group and by Wiltshire Council's Rights of Way Department.



West Kennet Avenue, looking towards the Ridgeway
Photo: Chris Cole Copyright @2010 Friends of the Ridgeway

The Friends of the Ridgeway has consulted parish councils, landowners, and a range of interested organisations and community groups on the proposed route before launching The Great Stones Way. Encouraging support and approval has been given by a number of local organisations but sadly there is still some opposition in some quarters.

We hope FOTR will be prompted by this article to send us an update about this exciting project but in the meantime, do visit www.ridgewayfriends.org.uk for much more information about all their activities.



THETFORD - THE SIKH CONNECTION



The statue of the Maharajah Duleep Singh on Botten Island on the Little Ouse, Thetford

Here is a little more to tempt members to join the walk to be led around the town in April. The walk leader may not include this very remarkable statue on his walk, but it is worthy of note nonetheless. For this statue, located close to the Icknield Way at the end of the Thetford Link, commemorates the life of the first Sikh to settle in Britain. The Maharajah Duleep Singh became the last Maharajah of the Punjab in 1843 aged 5 but, following the annexation of the Punjab by the British government in 1849, he resigned his colonial rights and came to Britain to become a favourite of Queen Victoria. In 1863, with money from the British government, he bought the Elveden Estate near Thetford. This 17,000 acre estate allowed him to live the extravagant life of an English country gentleman, developing quite a reputation as he did so! With two wives and several mistresses he produced three princes, three princesses and probably a number of other children, not all of whom survived to adulthood. But it is his second son Prince Frederick who fell in love with Norfolk and became a historian. The Prince was a great benefactor of Thetford and in 1921 he purchased the Ancient House, a 15th century merchants house to give to the town as a museum.

This bronze statue of his father was commissioned by the Maharajah Duleep Singh Centenary Trust and officially unveiled in 1999 by the Prince of Wales. An excellent trail guide can be found at www.explorethetford.co.uk

VOLUNTARY ROUTE WARDENS

Maps 1-3	Ivinghoe Beacon to A5	Helen Fletcher-Rogers	hfrogers@dial.pipex.com
Maps 4, 33-34	A5 to Sundon Hills Country Park	Tom Chevalier	tom@chevalier.me.uk
Maps 5,6	Sundon Hills to Hexton-Lilley Rd	Carol Bond	carol.bond@hotmail.com
Maps 7-10	Hexton-Lilley Road to Baldock	Liz Hunter	elizabethhunter671@btinternet.com
Maps 11-15	Baldock town centre to Heydon	David Allard	david.allard@ntlworld.com
Maps 16-19	Heydon to Linton	James Quantrill	01279 653899
Maps 20-21	Linton to Willingham Green	Roger & Janet Moreton	roger.janet@care4free.net
Maps 22-27	Willingham Green to Icklingham	Phil Prigg	phil@prigg.co.uk
Maps 28-29	Icklingham to D-house	Tom & Gill Caple	tom.caple@btinternet.com
Maps 30-32	D-house to Knettishall Heath	Edward Wortley	ewortley@tiscali.co.uk
Maps 35-36	Thetford Link	Mike Gee	ramblergees@hotmail.co.uk

IWA COMMITTEE

Chairman: Tom Chevalier

22 Byfield Close, Toddington, Dunstable, LU5 6BH.
(01525 873986)

tom@chevalier.me.uk

Secretary: Lesley Blundell

7 Church Street, Shillington, Nr Hitchin, SG5 3LH.

lesleyblundell@btinternet.com

Treasurer: John Boardman

11 Green End Road, Sawtry, Huntingdon, PE28 5UX.
(01487 831937)

john@windgather.com

Editor: Chris James

56 Back Street, Ashwell, Baldock, SG7 5PE.
(01462 742684)

chrisjames56@btinternet.com

Website, Membership and Guide Book Sales: Sue Prigg

1 Edgeborough Close, Kentford, Newmarket, CB8 8QY
(01638 751289)

sue@prigg.co.uk

Auditor: David Allard

david.allard@ntlworld.com

Committee Member: Gil Boardman

Address as for John

gil@windgather.com

Committee Member: Phil Prigg

Address as for Sue

phil@prigg.co.uk