

Sevenoaks Ramblers

A Walk into the Queen's Arms - Edenbridge - 10 miles

Sunday, 30th August

The walk started from the Edenbridge Market Place in ideal walking conditions, sunny with scudding clouds and a pleasant temperature, though the forecast was for showers later. The 15 walkers passed through the mediaeval quarter of the town before following the River Eden to Lingfield Lodge with its almost dried up duckpond before we gently ascended towards Dry Hill Fort, looking back towards the Greensand Ridge. We cut off before entering the iron age monument, towards Crippenden Manor where we joined the tarmac drive along Gilridge admiring the views to the High Weald to our right, and the mansions lining the road on our left.

We reached the Queens Arms at the end of the drive – built in 1841 as a pub and run by the same family from 1913 to 2015 and from 1937 to the end by Annie Maynard and latterly her daughter Elsie, who kept it as she had inherited it – no lager, no juke boxes, minimal food. We enjoyed the step back into the past as the present owner has committed to maintain the tradition and hardly changed the roughly furnished public bar and the highly respectable saloon. We were lucky to have amongst us someone who used to drink there in the 1990's and vouched for its authenticity while he regaled us with gossip about those days.

After we tore ourselves away from the pub we returned to Edenbridge via the Eden Valley Walk, under glowering skies which threatened, but did not deliver, rain.

The day was only marred by the news of the death of one of our friends and a stalwart of the group, Ray Ratcliff, and I can only think how he liked to be on this type of walk and could picture him gently taking the mickey.

Thanks to Yannan and Kate for pictures, Richard for the memories and to Peter for accepting the responsibility for keeping the rain off by putting his raincoat on whenever it threatened.



