

ICA Graffham Meet

13th to 22nd June 2021

Organisers: John & Tina Walker

Six units attended this meet at Graffham Camping & Caravanning site. This is a beautiful site and is quite unusual in that the majority of pitches are set in woodland. As this was the first ICA Meet that Tina and I have organised we were not sure to begin with as to how to approach it but matters were easily resolved in that on the first night everybody gathered at our caravan with bottles and glasses clasped in their hands ready to sort out what they wished to do. Tina and I were prepared to offer some local walks; others wished to arrange cycle rides; and visits to local attractions were also agreed.

Throughout the rest of the Meet occasional evening gatherings were held to sort out what was happening on a day-to-day basis. It worked really well and our initial uncertainties evaporated given the enthusiasm of the group to participate and share events.



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One unit arrived on 14th June, and we welcomed Dawn & Bob Chedd as new members who arrived on 15th June.



The Meet was a week of two halves weather-wise.

In the first four days we had glorious sunshine with quite high temperatures and then the rain came – very heavy rain to boot.

Nonetheless, despite the weather, various activities went ahead. It was pleasing to see that all participants wanted to enjoy the area and get the best from it. Activities included walks in the local area, cycle rides, visits to Petworth, Petworth House and Singleton Open Air Museum (home of the BBC's Repair Shop programme), a Wednesday Steak Night and Sunday lunch at the Foresters Arms in Graffham.

The first local walk that we did was to The Unicorn Pub at Heyshott. The weather was very hot and it was fortunate that it was not that long a walk. We stopped for drinks and really good bar snacks before walking back to the site in the heat. Before the weather turned, we were able to organise a very enjoyable joint barbecue at which there was much laughter and amusement.

Steve Harvey nearly gave one of the site managers a close haircut. Steve had his drone hovering in order to take a picture of the group. This was heard by a site manager who came to see what was going on.



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When she stopped walking, she didn't realise that the drone was about six inches above her head! The site manager explained that drones were not allowed on site, so that was that, but Steve did manage to take a group picture before being asked to stop.

On Wednesday 16th June Tina and I led a sponsored walk raising money for a Motor Neurone Disease charity. This was organised by Beth Parry-Evans, daughter of Mike and Sue.

Sadly, Mike is suffering with this terrible disease and

Beth is on a mission to raise £5000.00 for the MND charity. Knowing that we were at Graffham she asked whether we knew of a suitable 8 mile walk to do as part of her fund-raising efforts. One such walk immediately leapt to mind in which Mike was involved several years ago during an ICA Rally. The walk took us through a delightful spot called Gumber Bothy where there is a blue plaque commemorating writer, poet and author Hilaire Belloc. At that point Mike recited a poem by Hilaire Belloc called 'Matilda', so the choice of walk was entirely appropriate. During the course of the walk Tina was able to give Beth £50.00 that had been donated by the group.

We think it is fair to state that this was a very enjoyable Meet; all participants made their own contributions to the event and a good time was had by all.

John and Tina Walker

