

## VILLAGE PROBUS CLUB OF HARPENDEN



# BULLETIN



AN OCCASIONAL REPORT ON CLUB ACTIVITIES

**Issue: December 2024**

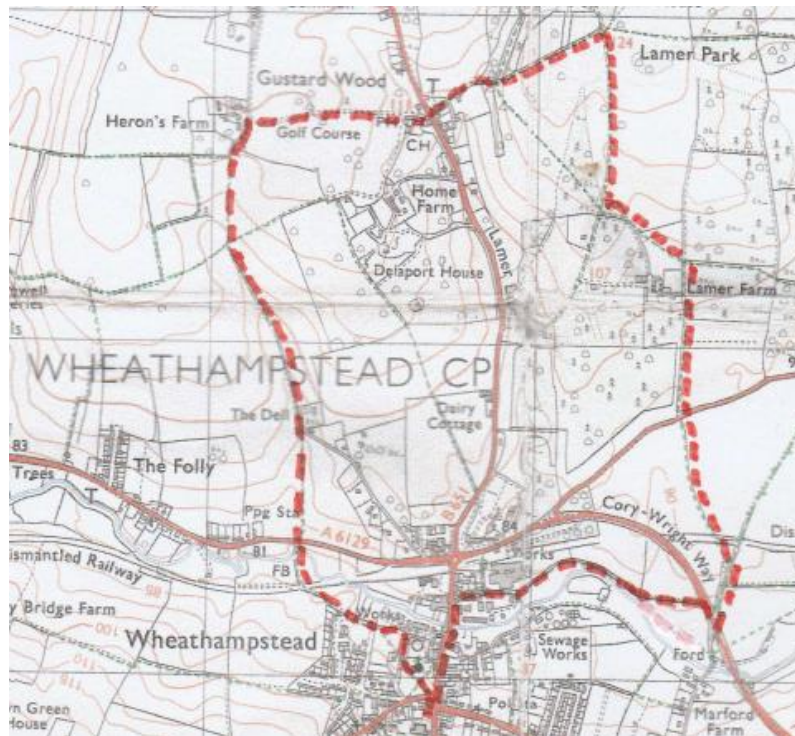
**22 October**

### October Walk

The end of September, together with the beginning of October, was a very wet period. The Met Office reported that September saw exceptionally high rainfall, 243% of the long-term average in Hertfordshire and North London, making it the second wettest September on record.

Our first thought for this walk was a route to the east of Wheathampstead including Bocket and the John Bunyan Pub, but on a recce done by walk organisers Bryan and Tim, who were joined by Graham Westwell, proved a disaster, with paths washed out or muddy, pools of water and at least 6 miles long!

With this as the background it was an interesting task to find a route that wouldn't see us caked in mud. A few of us put our heads together and Doug Hall suggested a route to the north of Wheathampstead which might be suitable. A second recce proved Doug to be correct, with the exception of Lamer Wood, which was very sticky but easily avoided, see walk route below.



The 22<sup>nd</sup> of October proved to be a lovely day; 8 walkers set off from The Swan on the 4-mile circular walk. This walk had been done some years ago and parts of it more recently, however, Tim and Bryan came up with the cunning plan of going anticlockwise instead of the usual clockwise, which seemed to work as none of the walkers thought they'd done this one before!

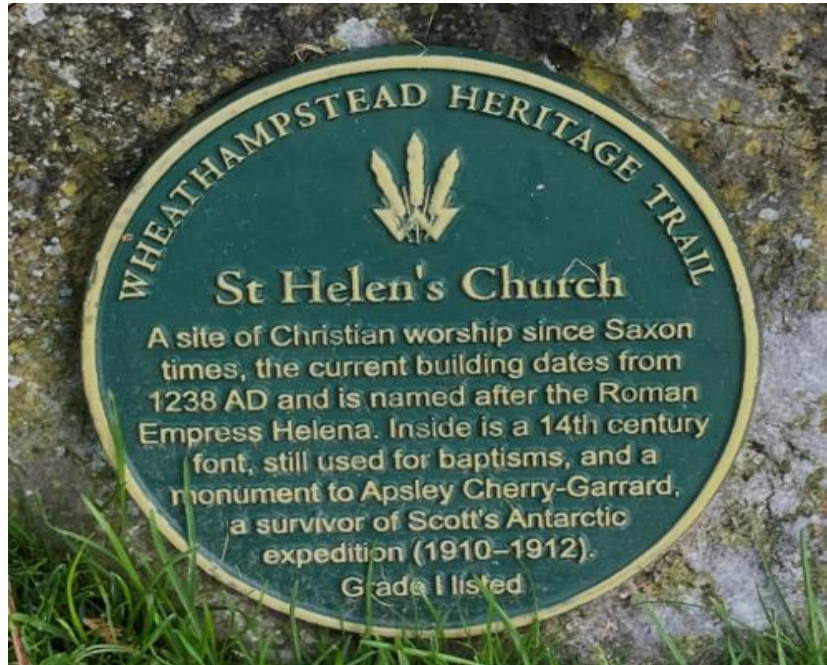


The end of the walk brought us back into Wheathampstead via the Crinkle Crankle Community Garden, where there is a rare example of Victorian crinkle-crankle walls – the only publicly accessible ones in Hertfordshire.



A Crinkle-Crankle wall can be made just one brick thin to economize on bricks, the alternate convex and concave curves in the wall providing stability and helping to ensure that it won't topple over. The term Crinkle-Crankle is thought to come from Old English meaning zigzag.

The path next to the wall lead us to St Helen's Church.



The churchyard has a monument to Antarctic explorer Apsley Cherry-Garrard. At birth his surname was Cherry, this was changed to Cherry-Garrard by the terms of his great-aunt's will, through which his father inherited the Lamer Park Estate, which we had walked through earlier. Apsley inherited the estate on his father's death in 1907. After the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War ill health and taxes forced him to sell his family estate and move to a flat in London, where he died in May 1959. He was then brought back to St Helen's for burial.

We then made our way a few yards up the hill to The Swan where we found our Welfare Officer Sandy waiting for us, although he was unable to join us for the walk, he felt duty bound to ensure that we had all made it back safely.

We then all enjoyed a convivial lunch with good pub grub.



*Report by Walk Leaders - Bryan King and Tim Potter*

14 November

### David Stevenson's Induction

New member David Stevenson was warmly welcomed to the Club by Chairman Colin Robinson with presentation of our induction pack including Club Tie and Pin.



14 November

### Photographic Competition



At our November lunch Brian Grant announced Richard Upton as the winner of the latest photographic competition which had "The Natural World" as its theme. Brian and his fellow judging panelists (David Keith and Alan Falconer) awarded joint first prize to Richard's two stunning photographs of a common darter and a pair of damselflies mating. Well done Richard!

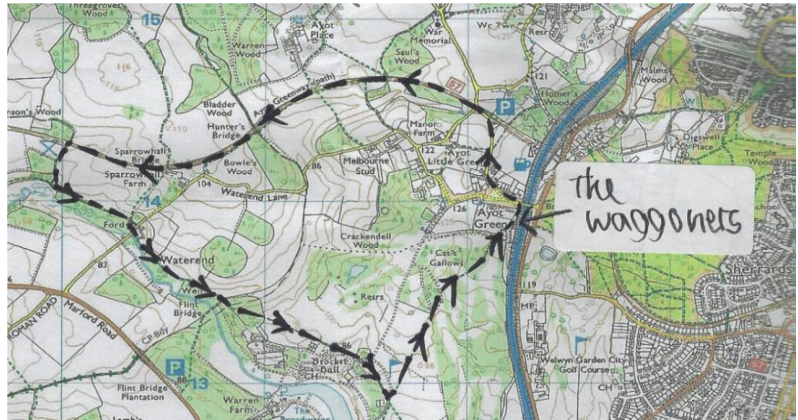
26 November

## November Walk

Having checked the planned walk in Chipperfield and found it rather wet and slippery I threw myself at the mercy of Richard Upton for an alternative walk and, not too unsurprisingly, Richard found one of his many walks that would be on drier ground. Thank you for saving my bacon!!!

After the very wet days leading up to the 26<sup>th</sup> we were welcomed by a crisp and dry morning, if a little chilly.

Basing ourselves at the Waggoners at Ayot Green our band of 9 merry walkers set off, through Little Green and onto the Ayot Greenway path heading west. As we walked the sun came out and raised not only the air temperature but also ours and garments were opened to cool ourselves. What a very pleasant morning this was turning out to be.



Having reached our most westly point we began our return towards Brocket Hall and Golf Club. We were proceeding well and doing just right for time until we found a problem! Some of the footpath markers crossing the golf course were either tired and laying down in odd places, or missing altogether. Was this a plot to confuse us? If so, it worked! Not to be defeated, we eventually got ourselves sorted (with a little help from a friendly golfer) and made our way over the golf course and back to the Waggoners where we were joined by Bryan King.



We had been granted a prefect morning weather wise, and a very pleasant walk and were ready for the excellent food and friendly atmosphere we received at the Waggoners. Thank you, Richard, for this suggested walk (and Sandy for the pictures which is why he is missing!!!)



*Report by Walk Leader - John Powell*

10 December

## Christmas Lunch



Members and guests, 75 in total - rather more than in recent years - gathered on 10<sup>th</sup> December for the Club Christmas lunch at Harpenden Golf Club.

The opportunity to socialise over a welcome drink was followed by an excellent meal in convivial surroundings, before answers to the now traditional quiz were revealed.

We were then treated to a poignant extract from Dylan Thomas's "A Child's Christmas in Wales", read as eloquently as ever by Paul Manuel.

In thanking the lunch committee of Brian Grant, Jim Davies & Guy Kenyon, our Chairman Colin Robinson remarked that larger Club gatherings with guests were proving so successful that perhaps more might be considered ...!

*Report by Christmas Lunch Team Leader - Brian Grant*

***With very best wishes for 2025!***