

MONKS ELEIGH HISTORY GROUP

BEATING THE BOUNDS 5TH SEPTEMBER 1992

START AT 0845 ON THE VILLAGE GREEN

The Monks Eleigh History Group has organised a walk around the village boundary to follow the approximate path of the preambulations which took place from 1721/1749.

Whilst the boundaries have altered since then we intend to follow within sight of the boundary shown on the 1724 John Miller Map, and as described by the Rector T. Tanner in his notes writtern during that time.

A copy of these notes and the map will be made available to all participants together with a copy of the O.S. map of 1906, which gives the same boundary in more detail.

If you have a copy of the O.S Map 1/25,000 sheet TL 84/94 you may find it will add more detail to the walk, although it is not essential.

THE WALK WHICH IS ABOUT SEVENTEEN MILES WILL BE DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS AND THERE WILL BE A LUNCH BREAK OF APPROXIMATELY TWO HOURS.

STOUT SHOES OR WALKING BOOTS ARE RECOMMENDED AS PART OF THE ROUTE CROSSES HEAVY CLAY FIELDS AND DITCHES, WHICH IF THE WEATHER IS WET WILL REQUIRE CARE AND ATTENTION.

TROUSERS RATHER THAN SKIRTS OR SHORTS ARE ALSO RECOMMENDED

Participants take part at their own risk.

Any one with a reasonable standard of fitness is welcome to join the walk for part or all of it but please join the party for the morning and or the afternoon session on the Green at the times given.

MOST OF THE ROUTE IS OVER PRIVATE LAND AND WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FARMERS AND LAND OWNERS FOR GIVING THEIR PERMISSION FOR US TO WALK OVER THEIR LAND TO ENABLE US TO CARRY OUT THE PROJECT.

Please respect their property by walking in a close group and follow the History Group Members who will supervise the event,

NO DOGS ARE ALLOWED - PLEASE FOLLOW THE COUNTRY SIDE CODE.

2.

2. TIME TABLE - with approximate times only, We will walk at the pace of the slowest walker. This is not a race and we will do our best to make it as enjoyable as possible. We will therefore proceed at a leisurely pace.

0845 - Assemble by the Pump on the Village Green.
The Rector Rex Bird will formally start the walk.

0900 - Start

0920 - Chelsworth Bridge.

1100 - Saddlers Nap, on the Milden/Lindsey Road. PLEASE NOTE A CAR WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR ANYONE WHO MAY WISH TO PULL OUT OR WHOSE HAS OVERESTIMATED THE FIRMNESS OF THEIR FEET.

1300 - Return to The village Green to disburse for lunch
The morning walk is about ten miles.

PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN REFRESHMENTS. WE INTEND TO STOP TWICE FOR SHORT BREAKS IN THE MORNING AND ONCE IN THE AFTERNOON.

A BARBECUE HAS BEEN ARRANGED AT "THE BULL" BUT PLEASE CONFIRM IN ADVANCE IF YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE. Please settle your own account before you leave.

1500. Resume at the Village Green for the afternoon stage, which is approximately seven miles.

1630 - Wagger Farm Ford. The car will be available for those who may wish to withdraw.

1730/1800 Finish on the Village Green.

3. BRIEF HISTORY OF "BEATING THE BOUND"

In most parishes large sections of today's boundaries were laid down many centuries ago. They originated from the ancient ecclesiastical divisions of the country and formed the lower rung of the division of the Bishop's area of responsibility.

They were used as the basis for gathering tithes or taxes. The payments of tithes was made compulsory under the laws of Edmund in AD 939/46

The earliest known list of parishes was drawn up for the Papal Taxation of of 1291 and most of the parish boundaries remained unchanged until the middle of the last century.

The rituals of "Beating the Bounds" is a long establish tradition which was an important way of establishing the village boundaries and making sure that they were not moved unofficially by neighbouring villages.

The "Beating of the Bounds" took place in Rogation Week, which was the time between the fifth Sunday after Easter and Ascension Day.

It was usually lead by the Rector and we are extremely fortunate to have a detailed written account by the Rector T.Tanner who was the Rector here in the 18th. century.

The occasion was often marked by a great deal of eating and drinking and was designed to ensure that people remembered where their boundaries were.

The Boundaries were marked by a variety of means, large trees were marked, piles of stones were erected and sometimes boundary crosses or larger stones were maintained at strategic points.

The custom included making sure that boys of the village remembered the occasion by involving them in various rites, which were usually unpleasant to ensure that the day and the boundaries were not forgotten by later generations of villagers. These practices included bouncing the boys on their heads on prominent tree stumps, pulling their ears and twisting their fingers.

We do not know when the Monks Eleigh boundary was last beaten and we would be grateful if any of the older members of the village recall one.

We have been informed that one has not taken place in the last thirty years!

The above details were largely taken from an excellent booklet called "Discovering Parish Boundaries", by Angus Winchester and is available from Shire Publication price £2.50.

M.P.MCKEON - AUGUST 1992