

QUIZ-WALKING THROUGH THE YEARS - SOME OF MY WALKS REMEMBERED

To be on the threshold of organising my fiftieth walk at the age of fifty gives me the best excuse I'll ever get for picking up my pen!

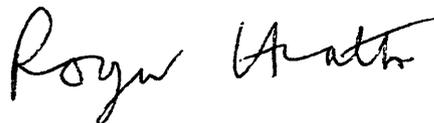
I hope, therefore, that Joyce, Joan and Ken (co-organisers of the celebration event to be held on Saturday, 26th June) will excuse my indulgence while I take you for a walk down memory lane.

Starting with my first steps as an organiser I've followed up with a medley of things connected with some of my walks - past clues, events topical at the time, anecdotes and so on.

To spice things up I've thrown in 25 questions. Some of the answers you can guess, some you may remember and some (if you're diligent) you may care to research.

Anyway, do have a go and bring your answers along on the 26th June. (Handwritten please, so I can check them while you're doing the walks). As an incentive, there are some prizes to be won for the three top scores.

Happy reading and good luck! Look forward to seeing you on the 26th.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roger Heath". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned in the lower-left quadrant of the page.

Roger Heath (25/5/93)



A weekend early in the summer of 1959. I'm 16 and I've started out from Dorking North Station to map out my first treasure hunt (we didn't call them quiz-walks in those days). No one at the club knows what I'm doing. I plan to announce proudly next week that I am to become the youngest ever organiser of a walk.

I turn south off the Ranmore Common road and begin descending through the woods towards Westcott. A couple are coming up the path towards me. As we get closer the man shouts out: "What are you doing here, mate?" Then I recognise them. It's Les Bradbury out organising a walk with his wife, Reta!

So, first time out and my big surprise is blown! And by a chance meeting which, as far as I know, has never happened to organisers before or since.

### Dorking North Station (28/6/59)

I hold that first walk. Although I don't know it at the time (we don't meet until the late 70s) it's Ken White's seventeenth birthday. One of my clues that day is:

- (1) Can you sea-your-way past this place?

(Hint: it was opened two days previously by the Queen and President Eisenhower)

### Horley Station (11/10/59)

I organised my second walk in the autumn of that year. In those days some of the clues were souvenirs, left by the organiser for the competitors to find and bring back. Just to make it more difficult the souvenirs (usually stuffed into an old tobacco tin) often presented a multiple choice: you had to solve the clue in order to work out what to take from the tin to hand in to the organiser.

That day one of my souvenir clues asked the competitors to bring back a prime number. The tin contained a lot of numbers, most of which weren't primes.

At the halfway point on the walk (in those days we used to have a break because the walks were six to eight miles long!) one of the competitors, Derek Wilmot, told me he'd given up on that one because he didn't know what a prime number was. Naive 16 year old that I was, I told him a prime number was only divisible by itself and one. You've guessed it! Derek had taken a sample of every number in the tin and told me he'd be handing in a prime number at the end of the walk!

I could tell you a lot about Derek, but suffice to say he was the most ruthlessly efficient competitor I've ever met, both inside and outside the rules!

- (2) What took place in the UK three days before this walk?

### Caterham Station (1960)

Two clues from this one. First:

- (3) Where can you get, I'm asking you,  
What Cliff asks his girl not to do?

(Hint: It's a musical one - and we often went in for non-alcoholic refreshments then)

And now for the second. How contrived my clues were in those days (I know - they still are!).

Take one of these, tack on half of four,  
And a conference-wrecker is your score.

The answer to this was a house called "The Yews". Now tell me:

- (4) What wrecked the conference?  
(5) Who was blamed for it? (He was only carrying out orders).  
(6) Who refused to take part in the conference?

### Earlswood Station (1961)

Another musical one. What did I see that gave rise to this clue?

- (7) Eddie Cochran's route to paradise?

And on the same walk:

What a pshock the result provided.  
A town I want - the one beside it.

The answer was London, which was alongside the word Derby (on a post-box, actually).

- (8) Can the racing buffs tell me why I used the word 'pshock'?

### Knockholt Station (1962)

The first time this one was ever used, I think. It was set originally as an "Eleven Plus" question:

- (9) HIJKLMNO

And now politics again:

- (10) From Krushchev and Kennedy no decision  
On this complex question of division.

(Hint: In the following year Kennedy went there and said: "Ich bin ein .....")

### 1963 - 1965 (In Exile)

For these three years I dropped out of the scene and lost touch with everyone involved in the walks. That might have been the end of the story. Then one day in 1966 I ran into Andy Wilson in Mitcham. Told the walks were still going, I joined in again and re-commenced my career as an organiser with a walk from Whyteleafe Station in the Autumn of 1966.

### Redhill Station (1968)

Don't ask me why (it's not my favourite clue), but whenever someone unfamiliar with quiz-walks asks me to give an example of a clue, I always come up with this:

- (11) The advocate's calling is not confined  
To any particular class or kind.

(Hint: Few pubs have them these days)

From the same walk:

- (12) Though her petticoat may still be there  
This model wants a shirt to wear.

(Hint: Find the name of a lane (Petticoat, got it?) in Redhill that begins with a 'W', then put something in front of it. She's still going strong to this day).

### Outwood (10/8/69)

- (13) What walk took place 20 days before this one?

### Shamley Green (7/10/73)

This walk contained what I consider to be the best visual clue I've ever set:

Not all there.

Nothing to do with being mad! There was a house called "Reel Hall", each letter being made up of red reflectors. Each of the last three letters, "All", had some reflectors missing.

There was also this one:

- (14) Perhaps the audience didn't care  
And left the actor dying there.

(Hint: The name of a Surrey village, which begins with a term used to describe a bad actor)

Coldharbour (25/8/74)

This was topical at the time:

- (15) Perhaps a measure of just how low  
This falling index has to go.

(Hint: It was near the bottom of a "GPO" post - and, believe me, Black Monday had nothing on the events of 1974)

Walliswood (24/8/75)

Roger and Jenny made their debut as quiz-walkers on this walk. Did they solve this one? I can't remember:

- (16) Maybe the bricklayer was a jerk  
And let the carpenter do the work!

Parkgate (12/9/76)

My favourite use of this conventional clue type:

- (17) Got it in for us, perhaps.

South Holmwood (23/10/77)

One that I had forgotten about, until Roger Abbott told me a few years ago that he thought it was one of my best clues (he's right, of course!).

- (18) Man left alone  
At the end of a phone.

(Hint: It was on a telegraph pole - and I've seen it many times since)

Rusper (17/6/79)

A walk that will never be forgotten by those who attended it - and least of all by the organiser! I'm out in front of the field, chalking up the route. Nearing the end of Stage 3 I make for the trough in the corner of the field. The grass looks nice and green. Then, squelch! I'm up to my knees (yes, knees!) in mud. Instinctively I try and retract my leading foot. I wrench it free. Relief - except for the fact that my shoe has been swallowed up in the swamp!

I dig into the mud with my bare hands, feverishly searching for the shoe. But it's sunk without trace - all I get for my trouble is a lot of grit, painfully wedged under my finger nails!

The field is bearing down on me. I wave frantically to warn them off. Some of them think its a come-on signal! Eventually they get the message (all except Ken White, that is!).

Then a farmhand comes over. Tells me the underground feedpipe to the trough has been leaking for days. "But you can't tell from looking at the surface," he says, grinning. Then he takes pity on me and goes and fetches an old pair of wellies for me to use.

Then Andy and Joan Wilson come along and snap me trying to put the wellies on (I hope to show you this picture on 26th June).

What about Ken? He can't see what all the fuss is about, strides manfully on and ends up with his camera lens mired in the mud!

Mitcham (4/4/82)

The idea of setting identical, successive clues had always fascinated me and I managed two in a row here (Ken and Joan later outdid me with three, based on "Fire Eater", at the start of their walk from Abinger Common). The clue on this occasion was:

About face.

The first answer was: "No club swinging towards the club house."

(19) What was the second answer?

(Hint: place for refreshments)

Later on came:

(20) Prudent drivers won't be so barmy  
As to use something built by such an army.

(Hint: the name of a road in Mitcham, near the cricket green)

I'll always remember clue (20), because I forgot it!  
How? Because a couple of years back I suggested to Les Bradbury that he select ten of his favourite clues from all the walks held in the 80s. Les duly obliged, I remembered and solved most of his selections, but this one was a complete blank - all I could say was that I thought it was one of his! When Les revealed to me who'd set it and what the answer was, the penny dropped and I was dumbfounded.

#### Pitch Hill (10/10/82)

One of my real favourites - so much so that I used it again at Walton-on-the-Hill last year:

(21) Cave-man's best friend!

(Hint: Remember your schooldays Latin - if you studied it, that is)

#### Betchworth (7/10/84)

This one showed up my ignorance of shrubs:

(22) Adopt the sentiments of Ivor's refrain  
And come back in the Spring again.

When the field got back they told me I didn't know my Buddleia from my .....

#### Godstone to Bletchingley (5/10/86)

This was the last time we did two walks on one day. Roger Abbott did the morning walk, then I took us back to Bletchingley in the afternoon. This clue occurred in the middle of nowhere, along a narrow path bounded by a field on the left and dense woodland on the right:

A top performer who beats them all,  
Yet the gap in performance is very small.

I'm told that Nigel Ley had a brainwave and informed the members of his team that the answer must be a sparking plug! How it got there I don't know, but there was a wreck of a car in those woods - and, yes, the correct answer was "Champion" on a sparking plug. So Nigel was right - and I bet the disbelievers in his team were suitably abashed. Joyce and I did well when we teamed up with Nigel over the years: we perfected the technique of picking the brainwaves that were right from all those that weren't!

Abinger Hammer (21/10/90)

To prove the point that my walks have been getting easier over the years, Peter, Cheryl and Roger put up a best ever score (for one of my walks, that is) of 24 out of 25. One of the clues they solved was this:

Caesar would no doubt understand  
When to put his head in the sand.

The answer was: MAXIMA PARS HUMANAЕ SAPIENTIAE EST QUAEDAM NESCIRE VELLE.

(23) What is the literal translation?

Coldharbour (28/4/91)

Over the years I've frequently attempted "jokey" clues. Here's one I particularly like:

(24) Those horror stories, so full of dread,  
Have driven him to hiding under the bed!

(Hint: He was a writer)

~~Walton-on-the-Hill~~ (26/4/92)

As the Bard said: "Brevity is the soul of wit". So to finish, my shortest ever clue:

(25) 3'

(Hint: A French accent helps you to get the measure of it)

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Don't forget to bring your answers with you on 26th June. Please make sure that you write your answers down.