

Oxford Jubilee Walk

POINTS OF INTEREST

1. Folly Bridge and Grandpont. The medieval 'Great Bridge'; once a 42-arched causeway running from the bottom of Hinksey Hill over the flood meadows of the river. It was rebuilt in 1825. There was a ford here before the Norman conquest: the original Oxen-ford.

2. The first railway line from London (1844) ended at Western Road nearby where there was a station. A track continued 400 yards to a loading jetty and crane.

The Iron Bridge nearby was converted in 1972 to a footbridge from its former use as the Gasworks Pipe Bridge. Oxford Gasworks (1818) was built on both sides of the River.

3. Railway Bridge. Now carrying the main line: the "second" line to London, opened 1863.

There is a monument on the towpath near the bridge to Edgar George Wilson who died aged 21 after rescuing boys from drowning (1889).

4. Osney Island past Osney Lock. Further on, past the marina and the lock, there is a riverside pub, the Punter. Note too, the 'Archimedes Screw' community owned Osney Hydro generator on the way to the Punter.

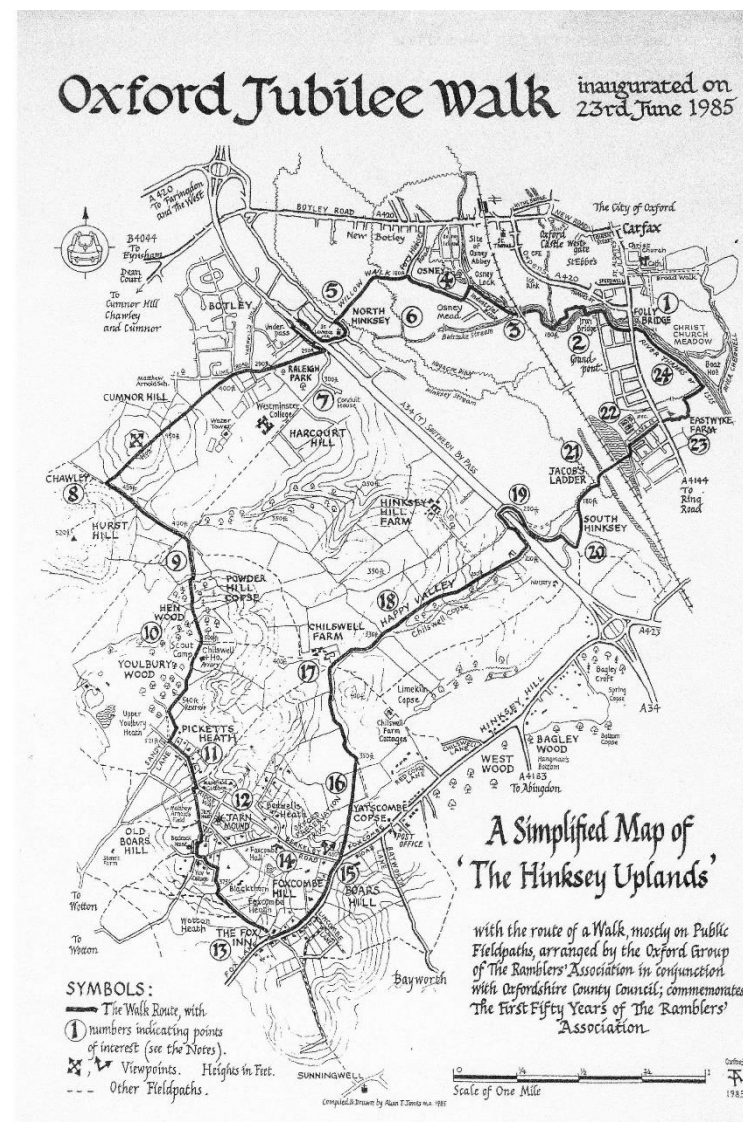
5. Willow Walk. At the North Hinksey end the scene of Ruskin's famous social experiment, that undergraduates should also do hard manual labour, with mixed result.

6. North Hinksey (Ferry Hinksey) a Saxon village (Hengists or Stallion Island). Early ferry across Hinksey Stream. St Lawrence Church, Norman and later.

7. Raleigh Park. Created for the post WW2 estates at Botley. The early C17 Conduit House nearby was built on the hill above North Hinksey with leaden pipes laid to carry spring water from the well-house to the Carfax Conduit in the centre of Oxford.

8. Cumnor Hill and Chawley. Extensive views across Oxfordshire on reaching the beacon.

9. Powderhill Copse



10. Hen Wood and Youlbury Wood: once the home of Sir Author Evans, the archaeologist: now a scout camp. Nearby, the Carmelite Priory.

11. Picketts Heath. Matthew Arnold's Field nearby. Purchased in 1928 by Oxford Preservation Trust (OPT).

12. Jarn Mound: Sir Arthur Evans's viewpoint mound: but the trees that he planted have grown.

13. Old Boars Hill; and The Fox Inn, at the apex of the walk, open and welcoming.

14. Foxcombe Hall. Home of Lord Berkeley (8th Earl). Originally built for the President of Trinity College.

15. Berkeley Corner: here, a stone seat for the enjoyment of the views.

16. Old Golf Course 1891-1905, built by Lord Berkeley, upwards from Chilswell farm. Oxford Preservation Trust (OPT) bought these fields to preserve the view.

17. Chilswell Farm, now multiple residences. A reeded pond replaced the farmyard slurry pit.

18. Happy Valley: There are some friendly seats located along its length.

19. Footbridge over bypass to South Hinksey.

20. South Hinksey: C13 Church of St Lawrence. The General Eliot pub is closed.

21. The 'Devil's Backbone' causeway followed by the 'Jacob's Ladder' flight of steps leading to a footbridge spanning railway marshalling yards; finally to a footbridge over the lake.

22. The Lakes. Gravel extraction for the 1844 railway created the large Hinksey lake which, filled from natural springs, became a reservoir. Inverted to recreational use after 1934.

23. Eastwyke Farm: The Farmhouse is early C17. This was the site of a fort with trenches, part of the fortifications of this Royalist City during the Civil War.

24. Towpath. Eights (and Torpids) Bumping Races. Boat Houses

Please remember the Country Code

- ▲ Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work
- ▲ Guard against all risk of fire
- ▲ Shut all gates
- ▲ Keep your dogs under close control
- ▲ Keep to public paths across farmland
- ▲ Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and walls
- ▲ Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone
- ▲ Take your litter home
- ▲ Help to keep wall water clean
- ▲ Protect wildlife plants and trees
- ▲ Take special care on country roads
- ▲ Make no unnecessary noise
- ▲ Wear stout footwear and practical clothing; the countryside can be wet and muddy even in summer
- ▲ Please walk in single file through standing crops



The full Oxford Jubilee walk

Length of full walk: 10.3 miles /16.5km.

Difficulty: Moderate. Steadily uphill once out of Oxford and over the ring road. Some muddy stretches of path will be encountered in winter. Sturdy walking boots are recommended.

Shorter version: 7.7miles/12.3 km. To walk the shorter version, continue from Cumnor Hill/Chawley (8) to Chilswell farm (17) along the track between the two, ignoring the path half way along which leads to Powderhill Copse (9).

Introduction:

The full Jubilee Walk starts and finishes on the River the climbs gradually to Boars Hill, from where one can enjoy the vision of the city of 'dreaming spires' made famous by Matthew Arnold.

To safeguard these views the Oxford Preservation Trust purchased Matthew Arnold's Field and other land. Sir Arthur Evans, Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum erected a great mound to enable people to see the view over the tree tops, the name of which, Jarn Mound, was taken from the old name of nearby Jarns Heath.

In spite of modern dwellings and highways, obtrusive pylons and the noise of today's mechanical life, there remains great variety of natural beauty, scenic value, and historic interest in this special Oxford countryside.

The walk became beloved by generations of City and University walkers. It was formally inaugurated in June 1985 by the Oxford Ramblers in conjunction with Oxfordshire County Council, marking the 50th anniversary of the Ramblers Association.

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