

Nether Heyford

The Olde Sun public house in Nether Heyford was the meeting place for our April Shamblers' walk on this third Sunday of the month. The day had dawned bright and cold from the overnight frost, but in the shelter of the pub carpark boots and hats were donned and meals booked for our return later in the morning. There was a good show with a number of new expectant faces ready for the off.



Passing the village green, a slight incline out of the village took us alongside a hedge bursting with the green of spring, the chattering of House Sparrows and pinking of Chaffinches. The Sunday bikers dressed in Lycra zoomed by at speed as we crossed the road to join the towpath of the Grand Union Canal. Only a single Narrow boat chugged by as we made our way under the Weedon Road Bridge.

High House Wharf, previously owned by BWB, was on the opposite side. The only resident here was a boat painter called Spider, hopefully not a reflection of his work.



We eventually left the canal after passing yet again under the Weedon Road and assembled to catch up stragglers, quench our thirst and down a banana or two.

Two fields led us to a footbridge over what was not normally a raging torrent and the approach to the spire-less Church of Flore.

The church yard was covered with wild garlic, currently a mass of white flowers, like manna from heaven.



Passing through a kissing gate and down the back lane we were greeted by three very friendly ponies. Their attention to us was soon diminished when they realised we had no food for them, but still gave us a good frisking as we passed by just in case.

The next field had cows with young calves and what was quite obviously a very large bull.

Those with bravado said it would be OK and strode out, other related horror stories of being chased. After deliberation we agreed to move en masse as one large animal. As you might expect none of the beasts raised a head or broke away from their grass munching.



Crossing a final field of ankle high corn we saw Heyford mill. The tall hedge to our left as we approached was comprised of the dense red stems of *Cornus Sibericus*, very unusual. The mill itself had undergone extensive refurbishment and modernisation but still retained the mill race which ran beneath the building.

The approach to Nether Heyford was narrow, muddy and treacherous. There had to be one poor soul who, maybe through a lapse of concentration, would fall foul to this slippery mire. However, our intrepid traveller made it the last 200 yards to the car park. We hope she is not deterred from joining us next month.

A very nice Sunday dinner was had by all in this charming and traditional 17th century inn, containing an abundance of well-polished brass antiquities.

