

### **Mileaters Broadmayne Walk**

23 walkers set off on a late March day which promised good weather but had a chill in the wind. Our fingers were crossed that the farmer had not yet got around to fertilising or ploughing the large field which made up the first leg. Luckily, there had only been a light dressing with slurry but this was dried up by the previous day's wind and did not dirty our clean boots. St Martin's church, Broadmayne, has an unusual style of architecture which is seen on our walk from the reverse. Just along the way, at our first stop, we read about the part played by Broadmayne in the build up to the D-Day landings. There were two large camps housing several thousand American troops preparing to land on Omaha beach.

From here we walked along the valley passed the former brick works towards the Watercress beds which looked like a deserted mill and water works. The beds housed the quietly growing product in the crystal clear chalk stream waters.

Rising up to the heath land on the ridge, we listened to the fabulous birdsong. At this point, we were passing alongside the redundant sand and gravel quarries, now filled with deep water and dangerous water. Down, through a lovely woodland section, just a week or two from being flooded with Bluebells. The trickiest part of the walk was navigating a small stream minus any visible bridging or any decent dry foot placements.

In the New Inn, at West Knighton, I think all agreed that it was a very pleasant walk we and that we all deserved a nice lunch.

Martin & Lesley Usherwood

