

Real Ale Ramble: Thelsford Brook Walk

Thanks to the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) - Heart of Warwickshire branch, for permission to use this ramble, which was written by Steve Bolton. Use Ordnance Survey Landranger Map 151.

We start this ramble in the village of Ashorne, which is 2½ miles north west of Wellesbourne. You can park in the main street, as long as you avoid blocking any driveways.

Starting outside the Cottage Tavern (304577) (to which we will return later!) turn left and head up the main street towards the village green. Just before the green, by the house on the left hand side called "Birchfield" turn right down a wide drive and follow this around the right hand side of the village hall to a gate. Go through this gate and then follow the yellow footpath arrows straight across the grounds of Ashorne House. Keep the large mound/bank on your right and head down the grass path to the bottom left hand corner and over the stile. Continue straight on with hedge on the left and at the wooden fence turn right and over the metal railed bridge. This crosses the Thelsford Brook - hence the title of the walk.

Head diagonally left to the far left corner of the field and climb over the stile. Keep the hedge on your right hand side and cross over two stiles by the water trough. Head diagonally left across the field towards the white fronted house. Note in the middle of this field is a small stream to cross, so follow it down to the track and cross over to the wooden fence and gate. At the road turn right, then after about 80 yards at a sharp right hand corner in the road turn left through a gate. Keep the hedge and fence on your right, follow the power lines to a stile in the corner, cross this and keep on for around 170 yards with the hedge on your right. Just past the electric pole on the edge of the field turn right over another stile to head through a small copse. Out of this, over yet another stile then head slightly diagonally left across the field to the houses. Over the stile by the houses you emerge onto a road, head up this towards the white boarded house and turn left at the T junction. You are now in the village of Moreton Morrell, 250 yards further on you arrive at the Black Horse (312558). Brian Quinney the landlord will make you feel very welcome, with excellent pints of Hook Norton Best Bitter or a guest beer, together with some very good filled rolls to satisfy your hunger.

On leaving the pub turn left and go down the road past Brook Lane, Middletown and downhill to the sharp right hand bend and junction in the road. Turn left along the lane signed "Newbold Pacey & Wellesbourne" and follow this for about a mile. Go past Newbold Pacey gas sub-station, up a slight incline, then 60 yards after passing the second of two gate openings on the right cross over a stile into the field on your right. After passing the first electric pole on your left, head for the stile just beyond, over this stile to the lane then turn right to the church.

Go through the churchyard, leaving the church on the right to a small gate in the left hand corner. Cross the corner of the parkland field to a wicket gate and head straight on with the hedge on your left. In the left hand corner of the field turn left to cricket pavilion - cross the Thelsford Brook again, this time a brick built bridge. Head straight up the cricket field with fence and hedge on right, past two chestnut trees on left and wooden fence on right to the brick arch and a wrought iron gate to the road. Turn right and you are soon back at the Cottage Tavern. Adnams Best Bitter, John Smiths Bitter and a guest beer are on the menu, together with some excellent food - Wednesday to Sunday lunchtimes 12noon to 2pm (2.30 on Sunday), Thursday to Saturday evenings 6.30pm to 8.30pm.

Total walk length is 3½ miles, easy walking (but wear boots in the wet weather).

Two points to note are:

- (1) respect the country side - observe the Country Code
- (2) both pubs feature in the 2003 edition of the Good Beer Guide.