



RINGWOOD NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Abbots Well Walk

Date: 16th November 2022
Weather: Rain showers.
Walk Leaders: Audrey Walker and Hal Jones
Attendees: 13

Frogham is a small village in the civil parish of Hyde, it is the second largest settlement in the parish after Hyde itself. It is situated on a plateau overlooking the heathland of the New Forest to the east. The village is situated around a crossroads leading to the nearby settlements of Hyde, Blissford and Stuckton. Its nearest town is Fordingbridge, which lies approximately 1.8 miles (2.5 KM) north west of the village. The earliest records which mention Frogham date from the beginning of the 14th century. There are many legends which identify the Frogham area as being a centre for smuggling in the 18th century. There is also an ancient roadside well known as Abbots Well, formerly known as Alleynewell, the plaque dates it as being first recorded in 1215. This perpetual spring was for centuries the main watering place for travelers on the old road to Southampton, the uncovered well was for their horses. It is situated round the corner and down the hill from the car park opposite Well House. It is easily missed, on first sight it looks like nothing more than a badly maintained surface drain and a manhole cover. In fact both items are wooden and the cover lifts to reveal a small pool of clear water. Opposite is Rose Cottage beside the Well House and is a grade II listed building once home to herbalist and author Juliette de Bairacli Levy, who wrote *Wanderers in the New Forest*. The book portrays an interesting picture of the Forest, from the plants and animals to forest gypsies and old farming practices.

Our morning walk started from Abbots Well car park at Frogham. We turned right out of the car park to passing Rose Cottage, Well House, and the famous well to walk along Hampton Ridge which offers views of Godshill Ridge and Pitts Wood Inclosure to the north and Latchmore Bottom and its brook along with Hasley Inclosure to the south. We followed the track to a junction of tracks at Ashley Cross where we saw a huge arrow head cast from concrete just south of the track, its one of the very few completely intact remains of the huge WW2 bombing range at Ashley Walk. Circling round we returned back to the car park, walking further on past across Hyde Common to the Potting Shed cafe where we had lunch.

Birds	Flowering Plants	Others
Robin	Gorse	Fallow Deer
Blackbird	Cross-leaved Heath	
Magpie	Bell Heather	
Blue Tit		
Redwing		
Fieldfare		
Mistle Thrush		
Stonechat		
Sky Lark		
Goldcrest		



Remains of WW2 bombing range at Ashley Walk by Lyn Traves



View from the guidance arrow over Latchmore Bottom by Lyn Traves



Abbots Well by Lyn Traves