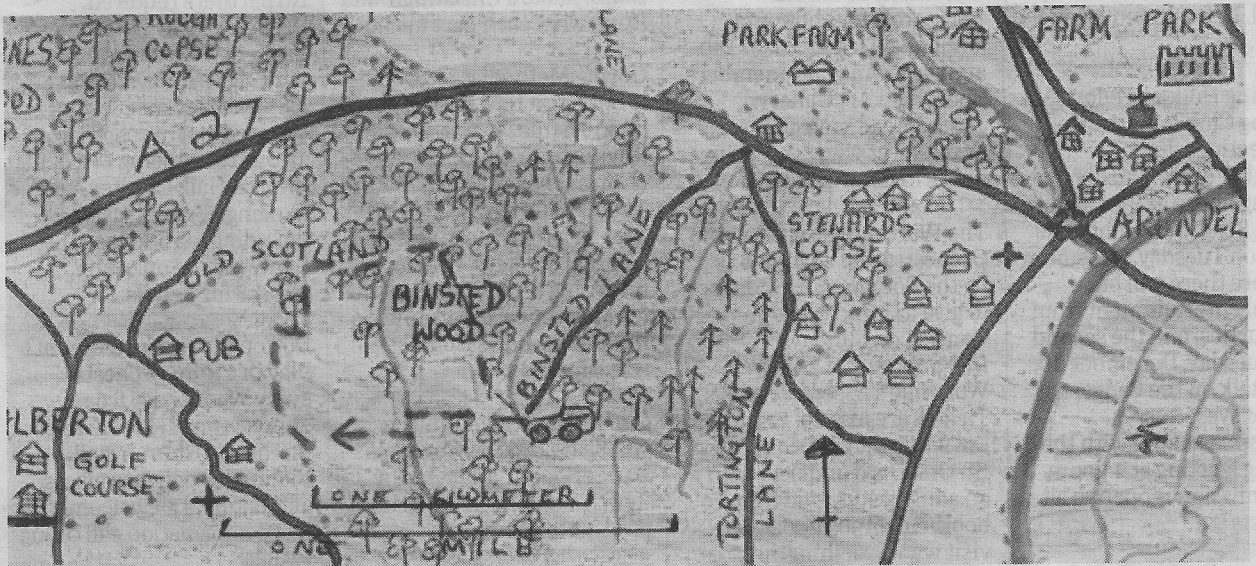
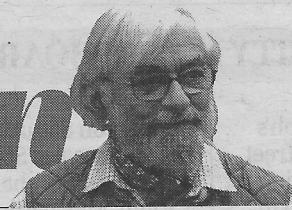


Williamson



Walk: Binsted and Tortington Woods

I have been on another ramble through these woods just west of Arundel to remind myself of what will be carved up if the proposed new Arundel bypass is given the go-ahead.

I parked in a limited roadside muddy bay at the very end of the minor road leading southwest off the A27. As you turn at the Tortington road sign turn again right, almost immediately, past the terminus sign.

An alternative parking is at a public house on Binsted Lane or St. Mary's church a little south, as shown on my map. I walked west into the wood along an obvious path, though the finger post has vanished.

Keep ahead westward at the footpath finger-post a hundred and fifty yards farther on after crossing a brook with a broken brick bridge. This is all now high forest of oak, ash, willow, sweet chestnut and with an understory of birch, holly and hazel.

The path comes out into a clover field with old and dying ash trees in the hedge on your right, then a 300 year old oak. Woodpeckers use the ash for a rich source of food from beetle larvae. The path wanders left and then crosses another brook in a dell with elm suckers growing in the woodland strip.

Coming out to another field, I

spotted on the left a small elm which is used as a boundary marker by a roebuck, which has left antler scars thereon. I followed the next hedgerow, now planted with oak and bird cherries; turned right along the next hedge, and came back to Binsted Wood, turning right, then left, to enter.

This is ancient woodland with indicator species of butcher's broom, and yellow archangel flowers in spring. It also has a rich ground flora of ferns.

This footpath reaches Old Scotland Lane at a cross path, where I turned right on a blue arrow along a causeway, flanked by ribbons of pendulous sedges.

After 600 yards I came to another

cross path, and turned right on a finger post. This led through a holly thicket, and more or less the route of the proposed motorway.

You may say, as you walk through the sublime tranquillity of this ancient woodland: what on earth is the human race doing to itself destroying such places of rest and peace in what is becoming a more and more polluted, noisy, troublesome, dangerous world where there is little escape from development? It would be sacrilege to smash this rich ecosystem.

Just enjoy it for yourself while you can. This path leads you back to the outgoing path as you ponder the choice.

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Reed buntings breakfast and lapwings on display by Paul Stevens, Arundel Wetland Centre

BLUE SKIES on Monday morning made a lovely backdrop for my walk around the reserve to record the daily bird count. On the

At the Ramsar hide the sun on the water dazzles my eyes. Squinting I make out a grey heron where the sun hits the water

hide. They take flight across the water, coming down deeper in the reedbed. I have better luck at the Reedbed hide. Halfway down the

