

Thursday 16th April, Pub Amble around Whittington

Rod and Hilary Crowley organised this walk, based on the Whittington Arms on the A51 just the other side of Lichfield. The day began overcast and dull but pleasant with about fourteen of us walking. I have not experienced this route before and don't know how Rod found it, but well done to him because it was interesting and easy-going most of the way around the 3.5 miles with some early spring blossoms in the hedgerows that really caught the eye as we walked across a lot of the Packington farmland.

Then Mr. Roy Wilson turned up for part of the walk and the SUN came out for the rest of the way *[now there's a surprise!]*. Unfortunately Hilary did not walk because she had injured her foot, but managed to be at the pub for our lunch. We all enjoyed an early spring amble on a very pleasant day, so well done Rod!

- Jim Bailey

Indulge me, just this once!

I can already hear the cries of shock and outrage reverberating from a certain church hall in Foley Road when members see what I've done with our treasured Newsletter. Blame it on Tony. When I first took on the job he confessed that he'd always rather wanted to find a snappy title, but had never been able to think of something suitable.

Well, of course this was a challenge my subconscious couldn't resist, and sure enough a couple of weeks later I woke up one morning with 'Pacemaker' in mind. It's another one of my awful puns, of course, but one that has a genuine meaning; our club *is* a real pacemaker when it comes to organising events and creating good fellowship. I know, because I was in Rotary for twenty-two years (still am, technically), and it never had the scale and scope of activities undertaken by SPPC.

Of course there's the other meaning, a slightly wry comment upon the afflictions that age brings; *not* a mockery by any means, just an allusion to the way so many of us, myself included, are in thrall to medical science, thank goodness!

I put the idea forward two years ago but at the time it didn't meet with favour and quite possibly still won't. However, this is in the nature of my swan-song, last issue before the new broom takes over, so I'll ask members to indulge me, just this once, with absolutely no intention of saddling Dale or Fred with my whimsy. Next time it's up to them.

I've enjoyed doing the magazine, though it's very time-consuming; I reckon eight to ten hours per issue, and more with the bumper 12-pager last time. It costs about £16.00 per issue by the way, or 30p per copy. I hope you feel you've had good value.

Finally, I'm immensely grateful to all those members who have written pieces for me, often at quite short notice, and I apologise for sometimes putting my words into their mouths. I shall still be penning the occasional report, although sadly I shall have to miss the AGM (always a challenge to convey the tense and frenetic atmosphere in the room). And I look forward to seeing how the Newsletter develops under new management. Good luck, Dale, I know you'll get all the support you need from the club members.

- Peter Weston

MAKING YOUR APOLOGIES: If you can't attend a General Meeting advise **Mike Terry**, If you can't do the Kitchen Rota, advise **Graham Jones**; can't provide Newsletter Report or Vote of Thanks as planned then contact **Dale Lyons** before the meeting concerned (dale@5rhg.co.uk).



Pacemaker!

The Newsletter of Sutton Park Proboscis Club
(Founded 1998)

President: John Fellows

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“WHAT A WONDERFUL COUNTRY”
says Paul Sabapathy, Lord Lieutenant of the West Midlands
Report by Rod Crowley

When it took our President so long to read out his CV, we realised our speaker, Paul Sabapathy CBE, The Lord Lieutenant of the West Midlands, was someone special. Space precludes me from sharing it with you again; if you missed any of his positions, they are listed on the internet.

Having been born in Chennai, India, Paul came to the UK in 1964 and was clearly very genuine in his admiration for “our wonderful country” and the opportunities it has afforded him. When appointed in 2007, he was the first non-white person to hold this office in the country. This lends him a great advantage when talking to ethnic communities, emphasising to them that they should become more involved and contribute more, within their community and our society.

The Lord Lieutenant is the monarch's personal representative. Henry VIII first appointed them in the 1540s, so curbing the power of the Sheriffs. They were responsible for raising a local militia, a role abolished in 1851, but they maintain close ties with the armed forces and wear the ceremonial uniform of a Major General.

Cont/d...



The Lord Lieutenant in mufti, so to speak, with Dennis, who is just completing eight years in the difficult job of Speakers' Secretary.

Photo by Mike Haynes

The Lord Lieutenant is still appointed by the monarch, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, and current responsibilities include:

Arranging visits of members of the Royal family and escorting royal visitors.

Presenting medals and awards on behalf of the Sovereign, and advising on Honours nominations.

Participating in civic, voluntary and social activities within the lieutenancy.

Leading the local magistracy as chairman of the Advisory Committee on Justices of the Peace.

Amongst the highlights of his time in office, Paul mentioned greeting the Pope (ahead of the PM) and being able to expedite and present the award of an MBE to Doreen Mooney, a lady from the Philippines who had done outstanding charity work in King standing but whose terminal illness prevented her planned trip to the Palace.

He will retire from the post in 2017, when reaching the age of 75. By then he hopes to have raised the profile of the West Midlands and to have increased the number of local people receiving honours. In conclusion he highlighted the immense sense of duty shown by the Queen and Prince Phillip and again stressed that he was trying to bring forth such a sense of contributing to our society from within our community.

Giving the vote of thanks, Barry Parsonage very reasonably suggested that having held the position of President in our Probus Club ought to stand him in good stead for future consideration when Paul's succession was being planned.

It was interesting to have a glimpse into the role of the Lord Lieutenant but it is fair to say that our expectations for the talk were greater than the outcome.

- Rod Crowley

Dennis Rose writes to remind members that the next issue of the Handbook is soon to be prepared, so would they check if their details are correct, and if not, let him have any amendments ASAP. It could also be useful if they could indicate whether or not they would prefer an 'Electronic' version rather than a printed copy, which would save the Club some money. Fred Ditchfield has of course already circulated a version of the address listing by e-mail during the current year.

A message from Norma Smith

Dear Friends,

I would like to send a big 'thank you' to all who have helped and supported me and my family during Derek's illness. And a specially big 'Thank You' to the "two Johns" as my daughter nicknamed them, 'Buckland & Fellows'.

They came to the house on several Wednesday afternoons which enabled me to go out to play bridge. They, along with several others, visited Derek in the care home, Richmond Hall.

However, the people to whom I owe really special thanks are Brian and Dorothy, who visited Derek, but also who helped me socially, with Christmas, Jazz Club, U3A, and visits to Sutton Arts. Thank you both so much, I hope our friendship lasts for many years to come.

My love and best wishes to you all.

- Norma

GREETINGS FROM YOUR NEW NEWSLETTER EDITOR

As you will know I'll be taking over with the May issue and I'm really looking forward to it. Peter will be a hard act to follow after the past two years and he has made a big effort to help ease my way into the job.

I'll certainly need your help as the relative new member on the block. After all it is *your* newsletter. So, let me have your ideas and suggestions asap as I'm already getting to grips with the technology, the Publisher software and the multitude of information strands.

Did I realise the complexity of the Newsletter's production when I agreed to take over? Definitely not! It will certainly be a steep learning curve.

Regarding printing and distribution. There has been a request by the President for those who can to print their own copies off Tony's website. Many of you do it already, but if you'd now like to give it a try could you let me know, because come May it will certainly help to make my task easier. It will also reduce distribution time and printing costs to the club. Another good reason for self-printing is that you will be able to have your Newsletter earlier and plan your activities before the monthly meetings! Tony has kindly agreed to help anyone with this process.

I'll make every effort to measure up to the high standard Peter has set for the Newsletter but I'm going to need your support and help to do it!

- Dale Lyons



**‘A really good gossip’
at the Boar’s Head Hotel**

**Sudbury weekend, 10-11 April
Report by your editor**

I didn’t know that June could speak Greek, or that Keith was an RAF radar technician in the early years of the technology. I was amazed to hear that Pat Court had visited the Soviet Union by herself, before the Wall came down, harassed and followed around by KGB stooges.

That’s the sort of thing you learn when you sit down with people for a really good gossip during a successful Fellowship weekend. And John Cheal’s venture to the Boar’s Head Hotel at Sudbury certainly was a winner.

It all began at lunchtime in the bar, where I met John’s brother Mike and his lovely wife Ann, a very jolly couple. Then we went along to Sudbury Hall which I’ve driven past a hundred times but never knew it’s rated one of the finest 17th Century houses in England. The plaster-work in the ceilings was magnificent, the place was dripping with history and yet... outside the Sun was shining brightly (Roy & Mary had arrived) so Eileen, Rhona and moi slipped outside to walk by the lake, inevitably ending-up at the tea-room where we were joined by Pat and Brenda, looking absolutely marvellous, not having changed a bit in the fifteen years since we last saw her.

Gosh, it was hot! Ice-creams all round! Then back to the hotel for dinner, which was a very merry affair (though pigeon-breast isn’t as tasty as it might sound). Some time during the evening Fred announced a little sweepstake the following day on the Grand National, with an extra flutter on the Boat Race(s), and sure enough the next morning David Wallis came round with tickets at £1.00 each. There were 40 runners, and I picked the one at odds of 200-1, which I thought would give me a nice little earner if all the others fell over. It was the worst horse in the race and so I begged another attempt which in fact came in second at 33-1.

Norma Cooper was persuasive in taking bets on the boat races, and Oxford won again, of course (Cambridge must be doing something wrong), with winners Ann, and Mike Taylor.

Next day Roy must have overslept and as a result it was literally freezing; extra layers on for a quick trip to Dovedale, where I nearly fell off the stepping stones (not true that Fred gave me a push, though he was right behind). Then on to Carsington Water for cream cakes and a spot of ornithology with Keith, John and Terry in a wonderful, heated ‘hide’ by the side of the lake.

Fred left early and told the ladies that we were gossiping about the club rather than bird-watching, which is a canard since we spotted several grebes and an elderly coot, though I didn’t get his name. Meanwhile David Wallis had visited an old haunt, the Izaak Walton Hotel, which had only recently re-opened after a sticky patch. He took some very nice pictures of sheep which space precludes me from using, and this one, right, of the winners.

Then it was another leisurely dinner when Don gave a short tribute to his friend Derek, a good night’s sleep and back home to move furniture. An excellent break, very much enjoyed thanks to John’s hard work. -pw



**Brenda, Eileen & Pat taking tea outside the
Museum of Childhood (we didn’t go in).**



**Above; Fred presents the winners
of the Boat Race contest.**

‘THE FLIP-FLOP WALK THAT NEVER WAS’

**On the Urban Heritage Trail with John Carrington
Monday 13th April 2015**

When I sent out the invitation to join me on a long walk through the streets of Hockley, Handsworth, Winson Green and Smethwick wearing ‘flip flops’ I did not know how many Probi (the collective name for a number of members of Probus) to expect.

Well, sixteen urban strollers met at the rear of the Symphony Hall, none of whom were wearing flip flops, and we all set off along the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal towards Hockley. After a short while we ascended from the towpath, past the Assay Office and into St Pauls Square (politically correct protocols preclude me from identifying the Square by its popular nickname). *[Go on, John, I don’t know that one! - pw]*

The strollers were quickly into the Jewellery Quarter pausing in Warstone Lane Cemetery to wonder at the 3-storey catacombs. Next came the amazing Victorian architecture of All Saints Mental Asylum, Winson Green Prison and the Birmingham Union Work House.



**Top: Amazing Catacombs;
who has ever seen them
before?**

Left; The All Saints Asylum.

**Below; The Roundhouse in
sadly derelict condition.**

Bottom; Weary walkers rest



We continued along the Birmingham Main Line canal, turning back at Soho Foundry and Black Patch Park, where Charlie Chaplain was probably born to a gypsy family, as we were informed following recent research. The strollers returned to the Birmingham Roundhouse at the bottom of Sheepcote Street, passing some of the sights of the previous urban walk, Buddhist Temple, Perrot’s Folly and in the distance St Augustine’s Church. Originally a coal and minerals wharf, the Roundhouse is now a recently refurbished public house and everyone sat down for a well-earned lunch. I promised no stiles, no mud, no hills, just lots of heritage, and we certainly saw plenty of that!

- John Carrington

Diary of events and activities to August 2015

Thursday 23rd April
Club A.G.M

**Kitchen Rota: Keith Keeley
Roy Willson, Philip Troman,
Terry Booth, Peter Terleski**

Thursday 7th May
Long Walk around Melbourne,
led by Mike Lock

Thursday 14th May
Pub Amble led by John Fellows
& Mike Terry

Thursday 21st May
Visit to Avoncroft Museum
Organised by Mike Gospel

Thursday 28th May
Club General Meeting
'The Restoration of Middleton Hall'
Speaker; Brian Teall
Newsletter Report: Selby Betts
Vote of Thanks: Jim Bailey
**Kitchen Rota; Mike Lock,
Ian Scholes, Roy Galloway,
Dennis Wright, Dennis Perkins**

Thursday 4th June
Long Walk around Banbury,
led by Geoff Silvester

Thursday 4th June
'Buddy' the Musical,
at the Garrick Theatre
Organised by Brian Mallett

Sunday 7th-14th June
Summer Break in Sicily
Organised by Bob Badham

Thursday 18th June
Pub Amble around Stonall,
led by Alfred Wallwork &
Geoff Silvester

Thursday 25th June
Club General Meeting

**'The Staffordshire Regiment;
The Battle of the Somme, 1916'**
Speaker: Mr David Shergold
Newsletter Report: Brian Harbourne
Vote of Thanks: Peter Terleski

**Kitchen Rota; Peter Gray,
Dale Lyons, Paul Beaumont,
Peter Prime, Tim Daly**

Thursday 2nd July
Long Walk around Charlcote Park,
led by Graham Jones

Thursday 9th July
Visit to Bourton & Croome Park
Organised by Brian Mallett

Thursday 16th July
Pub Amble around Rugeley,
Led by Mike Taylor &
Barry Parsonage

Friday 17th July
President's Supper at Swinfen Hall
Organised by Harry Medcalf,
details to be advised.

Thursday 23rd July
Club General Meeting
'A Humorous Look at Retirement'

Speaker: Mr David Berry
Newsletter Report; David Tippin
Vote of Thanks: Barry Gill
Kitchen Rota: To be advised

Friday 24th– Sunday 26th July
Weekend in Liverpool
Organised by Jim Bailey

*Members are reminded that if you want
to join the Amblers for a pub lunch
please don't just 'turn up' on the day
but book in advance with the organiser.*

Thursday 7th May, Election Day Long Walk around Melbourne, led by Mike Lock

This is a 5½ mile, circular walk from Melbourne, close to the border with Leicestershire. It will be over parkland and pastureland and crosses the Breedon Priory Golf Course. With several friendly stiles and one steep hill, the walk should take about 3-3½ hours, including a stop for a sandwich lunch at Breedon-on-the-Hill. Alternatively there is a good café there at the Priory Centre should you wish to buy a snack or lunch. There could be a few muddy patches if it rains beforehand. Start at Melbourne's parish church of St Michael & St Mary. There is space for car parking, toilet facilities and a tea room, etc. close by. Meet at 10.45 for an 11.00 start at OS Map 245 grid ref 389 250 (DE73 8JH).
- Mike Lock

Thursday 14th May, Appleby Pub Amble led by John Fellows & Mike Terry

Three-mile walk, no stiles, with lunch at the Appleby Inn Hotel (two courses, tea/coffee, £11.00). We start from the inn at Appleby Parva, Nr. Swadlincote, DE12 7AP at 10.30am. Take M42 to junction 11, then A444 towards Nuneaton, pub is two miles on right-hand side. Time from Sutton Coldfield about forty minutes. Mike advises there might be some mud around so appropriate footwear is essential.
- John Fellows & Mike Terry

Thursday 21st May, Visit to Avoncroft Museum of Historical Buildings

Tea/coffee and cake are provided on arrival at 10.30a.m., followed by a guided tour and buffet lunch. A visit to Jinny Ring Craft Centre is planned for the afternoon. The cost of the visit is £15.50pp. A shared car arrangement applies. Participants will be advised of the route and of other members attending.
- Mike Gospel

Thursday 4th June, Long Walk near Banbury, led by Geoff Silvester

This will be around Edge Hill near Banbury, and I would describe it as a moderately difficult walk of seven miles. Further details nearer the time.
- Geoff Silvester

Thursday 18th June, Stonall Pub Amble led by Alfred Wallwork & Geoff Silvester

Our June amble begins at the 'Old Swan' at Stonall, and is a pleasant 3½-mile walk through open country around Stonall. Good views, no stiles, and hopefully no mud. Arrive at 10.00am, lunch back at the pub from around 12.00 onwards.
- Alfred Wallwork

Thursday 2nd July, Long Walk around Charlcote Park, led by Graham Jones

Setting out from the National Trust car-park at Charlcote, this is a 6-mile walk through beautiful South Warwickshire countryside (two stiles). Meet at 10.15am to set out at 10.30am. The walk should take approx. 2½ hours. We can eat our own refreshments at picnic tables or obtain something from nearby garden centre or Pheasant Inn.
- Graham Jones

Thursday 9th July, Visit to Bourton & Croome Park, organised by Brian Mallett

Details to be advised nearer the date.

MAY MEETING—'The Restoration of Middleton Hall' by Brian Teall

In the last thirty years the Hall and grounds have been transformed from an unloved ruin to historic gem by a team of volunteers from the Middleton Hall Trust, a charity set up in 1980. The buildings span some 700 years of English domestic architecture and have been painstakingly rebuilt to the form of their original construction. Brian Teall has been deeply involved in the project and will tell us about progress made and work still to be done.