

Long Walk on Cannock Chase 2nd August

Four ladies and eight club members gathered at the Cannock Chase Visitor Car Park, all kitted out in suitable clothing, in deference to the weather forecast heard the previous night. The paths were not bad by walking standards, with the occasional patch of mud, but nothing of any great significance.



However a brief squall showed us that we could get a lot wetter if we didn't put our heavy duty clothing on. This we did.

The rain lifted and, after we had walked some 3 miles, we stopped by a small pool and had our lunch. This walk was one of those where we did not have a pub lunch (reserved for walks during the Winter months) the food being our own sandwiches and a flask of hot drink. This spot is well-known to walkers, and the discolouration of the water is a strong reminder of stewed tea.

We walked back to the car park in conditions that threatened rain but without actually doing so. The route was about 6 miles long and had no stiles or steep hills. Some sunshine, some rain.

Many thanks to Rod for reconnoitring and leading his route... **Alfred Wallwork**

Publicity Documents

Members are advised that two new documents are now available to promote and facilitate the recruitment of new members. The first is in the form of an introductory/promotional card, which can be given to anybody interested in finding out more about the Club. The second is an updated version of the Club leaflet to provide more detail and will typically be given to prospective members on their first visit to a Club meeting or function. Both documents have been welcomed and approved by the Club Committee and are available from the Vice President as required.

Sutton Park Probus Club Newsletter

(Founded 1998)

President: Brian Spencer

No.166

August 2012

Summer BBQ at the Fellows



This collage sums up the day very well, thanks to Rita.

Brian's write up is overleaf.

Many more photos on our website.

BBQ - 5 August 2012

Oh what a beautiful morning. We drove along narrow country lanes noting golfers in play at The Belfry to reach the idyllic country retreat of John and Marlene Fellows, the location of the Club's BBQ for 2012. Once through the gate John, ably supported by Marlene, was present to offer a warm personal welcome and guests were soon selecting aperitifs from the lady volunteers. A walk out to the lawn gave sight of Chef Carl and his team from Sutton Coldfield Golf Club keeping a watchful eye on the hog being slowly turned and roasted over the charcoal. This had been lit at 5.00am so no lie-in for the hosts that morning. A little further on was a pre-requisite of any BBQ, a self-service wine bar with tea and coffee making facilities. Next a tent for the Jazz Band offering protection to the musicians from the torrential downpours forecast for later. Nearby stood something to set the pulse of most red-blooded males racing, no not Kate Middleton but an



ex-works 1938 SS100 Jaguar 3.5Ltr beautifully restored to mint condition. The ladies seemed equally attracted to the gleaming Bentley Continental Coupe on display further on. Thanks to Neil Crabb and Harry Medcalf for these motoring exhibits.

As the sun continued to shine the band took up position and music filled the air. The 'Richard Leach Clubhouse 4' are well known in the world of jazz and play overseas as well as in the UK, in fact our MC, John Buckland, met them in Malta. Social chit-chat continued apace without the need for Facebook or Twitter and the ladies' outfits brought colour and

style to the occasion. As the hog reached the end of its stay over the charcoal, lunch was served. What a treat this provided, succulent pork slowly cooked with a choice of crackling, bap and salad. For those with large appetites second and third helpings were freely available. Dessert followed with a choice of cheese-cake or chocolate and raspberry sponge.

Under darkening cloud there was just time for the traditional 'Brolly Parade' before the rains came. MC John Buckland, with commendable speed, re-organised the seating in the marquee to make space for the Jazz Quartet to play. The Group provided very pleasant listening with opportunities for audience participation albeit accompanied by the pitter-patter of heavy rain on the roof. As the music died away signalling the end of the function the rain stopped and guests were able to return to our vehicles without getting soaked. How lucky can you get?

In summary this was a most successful function for which our tributes and heartfelt thanks are due to all of those who gave so much time and effort to achieve such a notable result. Special mention seems appropriate for John and Marlene Fellows who provided such beautifully decorated facilities in spite of losing substantial floral displays to thieves a few days earlier. John Buckland with wife Pat worked tirelessly in overseeing the management of such a complex function coupled with operating as the Master of Ceremonies on the day (he even generated a small financial surplus). Finally the small work group of volunteers who laboured on site from Friday to Monday should rightly be proud of their achievements. Well done all. **Brian Harbourne**

Diversion and Diversity. A visit to the Gardens of Highgrove

The opportunity to visit the gardens at Highgrove, the country home of HRH the Prince of Wales, proved to be so popular that a second visit was made earlier this month for those who were unable to take part in the original trip.

Leaving Streetly in good weather, excellent progress was made until just outside Tetbury, where an unexpected diversion entailing a thirty five mile excursion through picturesque Cotswold countryside was made, before entering the town from an alternative direction..



Arriving a little later than expected, a short break was taken in Tetbury, where prearranged coffee and pastries were enjoyed at the delightful Café 53, before rejoining the coach for the short journey to Highgrove. After being held at the gate until our allocated time of arrival, a uniformed PC carried out security checks for undesirables and suspicious packages, before entry to the estate was permitted.

In the large modern visitor centre, surrounded by examples of the Prince's artworks, our helpful guide Louise, stressed that cameras, binoculars, mobile phones and recording equipment were not allowed in the grounds. Subsequently my pen and notebook were also added to the list! There followed a short DVD presentation by HRH Prince Charles, in which he welcomed visitors and outlined his environmental philosophies and ethos "that it is better to work with nature than against it".

To the untrained eye the gardens appear to be natural and informal, giving the impression of parkland with diverse inter-linked areas of wild flower meadows and woodland glades, each incorporating different themes and artworks. Everywhere the use of reclaimed and organic materials is evident, even in the formality of the walled garden, where bio-diversity and the sustainability of rare species also feature in the flowerbeds, and vegetable plots.

After two hours the two mile tour of the gardens was over, leaving plenty of time before departure to enjoy the fine Orchard Tearooms and shop selling a range of Highgrove branded gifts and produce,

In the space available it has not been possible to do justice to the transformation created since Highgrove was acquired by the Duchy of Cornwall in 1980. However it is fair to say that the gardens provide a poignant insight into the imagination of HRH the Prince of Wales and the skills and dedication of the craftsmen and artists who have created it.

Our thanks to David and Rita for making this most enjoyable visit possible.

Bryan Nicholas

Theatre Visit - 18th October 2012

Sutton Town Hall is the venue for a musical comedy called 'This Time Next Year.'

Sutton Coldfield Musical Theatre Company are presenting this show which was first performed 12 years ago. It is set in a fictional holiday camp in the 1960's and follows the fortunes of three families. The music will be well known to everyone as it will be from the late 1950's and 1960's. We are always guaranteed a high standard of singing and dancing with SCMT so it should be an enjoyable night out.

The cost is £13.50 per person as a group booking (Normal price £15) **Brian Mallett**

Autumn Break In York



(The Shambles - York)

The Autumn break 9 - 11 September is fast approaching !! A brochure has been formulated, as a suggestion, for your enjoyment. This includes, a journey map, hotel brochure, open top bus tour, ghost walk, visit to the Railway Museum, visit to Nunnington Hall, backed by detailed brochure of York etc.

One will be given to each participating member going to York (thirty seven). If you do not ultimately receive your pack, please advise John Cheal. Thank you.

Bowls - friendly match.

Nine intrepid bowlers took on the might of Aldridge Probus Bowls Club on Tuesday August 14th, on the annual friendly match. We failed to win by four points on a very fast green, which was an improvement on our defeat of last year, it was played in the usual Probus / Olympic spirit and was enjoyed by all. Thanks to all who participated. **Barry Parsonage**

Attention all walkers and Amblers



*A reminder to all who go on our ambles and longer walks:
The leaders will endeavour to give honest information
about the route, in advance
When taking part it is your responsibility to:
Know that you are medically fit to do so.
Wear appropriate footwear and clothing*

The War of the Worlds

H G Wells, a prolific 19th and 20th century writer, was a true Socialist and one time member of the Fabian Society writing many factual as well as Science Romance books. War of the World, The Time Machine and the Invisible Man were amongst many books serialised. The publisher always demanding to know the outcome before distribution!



And so, Andrew Lounds dramatised talk about War of the Worlds unfolded. The book is written anonymously in the first person. Music from the film and Space Odyssey accompanied the opening of his slide show. We heard the dulcid tones of Morgan Freeman and Richard Burton depicting the scene of what could be expected from an alien invasion from Mars. Peaceful first contact was far from the minds of these malevolent visitors. On the surface, a relatively simple plot with the prime ambition of the Martians to conquer

and colonise our world with no thought for the inhabitants. These visitors from space were a powerful and pitiless race, building tripods and using death rays to subjugate the human race only to fall victims of earth-bound bacteria.

The book explores the wide-spread thoughts and beliefs of over a century ago which are still present in today's society.

Andrew expounded on many historical parallels, drawing on the innocence and brutality in two world wars, colonisation of countries and civil wars. He said it was a well know fact that we are only seven meals away from anarchy.

Can we translate, or associate the fiction to what happens in real life? Have we learnt anything from the writings of Wells and other far-thinking people? They say much of fiction is based on fact.

Orson Welles, a powerful actor, in a 1938 radio show with the Mercury Players, 'spoofed' an invasion by aliens capitalising on the fear and paranoia of people creating a certain amount of panic in America. Many years later BBC WM produced a similar show but it had to be with-drawn after 12 minutes of air time! In Ecuador a radio station also undertook a similar experiment. But, in this case, it incensed the local population so much they eventually burnt down the radio station!

We live in a time in which the ability to create deceptive simulations, especially for television, has become essential to the exercise of power. And the inability to see through these deceptions has become a form of powerlessness. If we let ourselves be taken in by the multiple deceptions of politics, news, advertising, and the media we maybe doomed, like the more gullible members of the radio audience in 1938, to play a role in other people's dramas, while mistakenly believing that we are reacting to something genuine.

David Roy gave a well-presented and spirited vote of thanks for the presentation that was a thought-provoking depiction of human attitudes..

Read more about HG Wells on the Internet (Wikipedia). **Tony Ferneyhough**



Events and Activities for June to October 2012

Thursday 23rd August

The Black Country -

Tourist Destination

Keith Cheetham

Vote of Thanks: Brian Senior

Newsletter Report: Ian Scholes

Kitchen Rota: Neil Crabb

Roy Galloway, Brian Harbourne

Tim Daly, Ivor Wesley

Thursday 6th September

Long Walk led by Mike Lock

Direct or meet at Roy's to car share

Sun 9th-Wed 12th September

Autumn Break at York

See Page 6 for details

Coordinator - John Cheal

Thursday 20th September

Short Walk and Pub Lunch

Walk Leader: Roy Willson

Tuesday 25th September

Ladies Bowls Day (£16)

Conservative Club

Organiser - Geoff Silvester

Thursday 27th September

Magnet Therapy

Alan Cooke

Vote of Thanks: Derek Smith

Newsletter Report: Mike Terry

Kitchen Rota: Jim Bailey

Keith Keeley, Roger Phillips

Bill Arnott, Roy Willson

Thursday 4th October

Long Walk led by Barry Gill

Direct or meet at Roy's to car share

Thursday 11th October

Short Walk - TBA

Thursday 18th October

Theatre visit - Sutton Town Hall

See page 6 for details (£13.50)

Coordinator: Brian Mallett

Thursday 25th October

Remembering Not To Forget

David Howe

Vote of Thanks : Ivor Wesley

Newsletter Report: Ernest Williams

Kitchen Rota: Selby Betts

John Buckland, Harry Medcalf

John Longmore

Monday 5th November

Long walk led by Brian Spencer

Direct or meet at Roy's to car share

Saturday 10th November

Fine Dining

Sutton Coldfield Golf Club

Organiser: Brian Mallett

Thursday 15th November

Short Walk - TBA

Thursday 22nd November

The Forensic Science of Handwriting

David Bexendale

Vote of Thanks: Selby Betts

Newsletter Report: John Booth

Kitchen Rota: TBA

Thursday 6th December

Long walk led by Rod Crowley

Direct or meet at Roy's to car share

Future Events: See the Club Website for greater detail.

Friday 7th December

Christmas Lunch

Moor Hall

Coordinator: John Purnell

There is NO General Meeting

in December

Thursday 5th January 2013

Long Walk led by Rod Crowley

Direct or car share from Roy's

Thursday 17th January

Lunch - Birmingham College of Food

Cost £26 pp

Coordinator Brian Mallett

Thursday 24th January

Pompeii - the nice and the naughty

from 2000 Years Ago

John Reedy

Vote of Thanks: John Buckland

Please inform **Ron Ryman** if you are unable to attend a General Meeting by the **Sunday** before that General Meeting.

If you are unable to carry out the Vote of Thanks or the Newsletter Report please get in touch with **Tony Ferneyhough**, well before that General Meeting.

Graham Jones should be notified - in plenty of time - if you are unable to carry out any of the Kitchen Rota duties

Short Walk - Thursday 20th September

Time: 10.00 for 10.30 start

Venue: Middleton Lakes RSPB Nature Reserve B78 2AE

Directions: From the A4091 between Tamworth and the M42 take the access road towards Middleton Hall, then follow RSPB signs to the car park.

The Walk: an easy walk, 3.5 miles around the lakes with lots of birds to be seen. There are no hills or stiles but some parts may be muddy.

Lunch: The Green Man Pub is about one mile from the Lakes. Hoping to sit at 12.30pm.

Organiser: Roy Willson.

Please Note: The walk does **NOT** start from the pub car park.

For all walks please ensure you wear suitable footwear for the terrain.

Long walk Thursday 6th September

Kinver Edge from Kingsford Forest Car Park

The Walk: about 6 miles, with one steep climb at the start and several stiles.

Lunch: Sandwiches.

Meet to car share at Roy's, 32 Le More to leave at 9.30 a.m.

Journey Time: about 60 mins from Roy's. Meet at car park about 10.30 a.m..

Toilets: At the car park

Directions: Full route directions from Mike Lock at the General Meeting