



Long Walk in the Peak District - Thursday 4th July Report by Dennis Rose

Our walk started from the duck-pond in the centre of Hartington, a very attractive, popular village in The Derbyshire Dales. There were twelve members and wives and we were joined by prospective member Dale Lyons, a welcome addition to our party. Yours truly was attired in brand new walking shoes and socks and much was made of the likely prospect of removing their showroom shine during the occasionally muddy progress.

The weather was fine and warm and we were treated to the best the Peak District has to offer, a lovely stroll through picturesque dales along the River Dove followed by a slightly strenuous climb up the side of one of the many "Peaks". A lunch stop near the top allowed superb views of hill and dale as well a welcome rest for weary legs.

Towards the end of our journey (which included the aforementioned muddy bits and the desecration of my footwear) we encountered a wonderful sculpture of a bull, or bison, created out of a single very large boulder, which was considerably less frightening than the real thing!

On our return to the village we all partook of refreshments at the local (tiny) post office which also boasted a tearoom serving delicious cakes and pastries. We are indebted to President Rod for devising and leading an unforgettable ramble in "The Dales".

- Dennis Rose

MAKING YOUR APOLOGIES

If you are unable to attend a General Meeting please advise **Mike Terry** by the **Sunday** before that General Meeting.

If you are unable to carry out your duties on the Kitchen Rota then please try and 'swap' with someone from the following month, advising **Graham Jones** of the change.

If you are unable to carry out the Vote of Thanks or write the Newsletter Report please get in touch with me, **Peter Weston**, **well before** that General Meeting. My absolute deadline for reports & news is the **Saturday before** the next monthly meeting.

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Sutton Park Probud Club

(Founded 1998)

President: Rod Crowley

Newsletter

No.177

July 2013



PRESIDENT'S MIDSUMMER SUPPER, 28th JUNE

Report by Peter Weston

What a difference a year makes!

At President Brian's event twelve months ago Eileen and I were strangers, hardly knowing anyone. This year we were among friends, joining in with the good humoured chatter and jollity of the night.

And what a crowd! Ninety, I think someone said. At one time there was a long line waiting to get in, down the steps and right to the front door (and I never did get that free drink!). However the staff at the Terrace Restaurant coped superbly, with us and with two other large dinner parties in other rooms, offering us choice of 14 starters and 16 mains.

"Guess how many people are in the kitchen," said David Rooke. "Just four." Fred Nightingale and I were duly amazed at this – how organised is that!

Cont/d....

But I'm getting ahead; first we took our seats and things were launched smoothly and capably by M.C. Harry Medcalf. We were on his table and I detected not a trace of nerves!

President Rod then welcomed us warmly and introduced our guests for the evening. He concluded by inviting us to spend a few minutes testing our knowledge of five common abbreviations used when sending text messages. All was not as it seemed, however!

Mike Taylor said Grace and musician Robin Horton provided gentle accompaniment as the food arrived, followed afterwards by the Loyal Toast ably delivered by Bob Badham.



Above; Nice to see Pat Sitch (with Carol, Philip & Sue Troman) and Tim Daly with Derek (far right).
Right; The Hero of Dublin celebrates with Roy & Mike.

Afterwards Robin stepped up the volume and played a series of musical themes from films, inviting us to see how many we could identify. Annette correctly identified the most difficult as 'Blue Hawaii' (from 1961) and we thought we'd done pretty well on our table by getting fourteen titles. Unfortunately it turned out that Robin hadn't really been keeping track so we never did find out exactly what tunes he did play, nor how many! Someone said 'Austin Powers' was in there and if it was, well, we must have missed it! Great fun, anyway.

Mike Gospel then took to the floor to deliver an eloquent toast to the club. "We have quality people and that's what makes it work," he declared, as we raised our glasses.

Finally Rod made his closing remarks, and we saw he'd put a special 'spin' on those acronyms in his little quiz to render them more suitable for Probus members; 'IMHO became 'Is my hearing aid on?', and 'TTML' was 'Talk to me loudly'. Very appropriate!

And then, all too soon, the evening was over. I looked at my watch and found it was nearly 10.30pm – over three hours gone, just like that. A superb night. -pw

Mugged in Manila: No, I'm not in the Philippines!

A week or two ago some members were amused to receive an e-mail message from "me", with a frantic cry of help after being mugged in Manila. No, it wasn't real—somehow the BT website had been hacked into, my contact list taken and my e-mails diverted for a couple of days until I worked out what was happening. It's the first time anything like this has happened to me and I don't mind saying that it was all a bit worrying!

- pw

'MY OTHER HOUSE IS IN SUTTON COLDFIELD'

Visit to Catton Park, 8th July—Report by David Rooke

Catton Hall is used to hosting Royalty but it stepped up a gear to entertain fifty of our members and wives on a glorious sunny afternoon. It is a hidden jewel, previously unknown to most of us.

We all gathered in the great dining room, where the delightful Katie Neilson gave a detailed summary of the estate's thousand-year history and complicated family ownership over hundreds of years. Succession drew in people from Derby to Fiji, from Australia to Croxall, where descendants are buried. She was clearly proud of how the generations had managed the estate except, perhaps, the late Victorian owner who sold two Gainsborough paintings to build himself a Billiard Room!

Split into two parties, we visited the large lounge and then the withdrawing room before climbing the majestic staircase to sneak an upstairs view. Numerous paintings and furniture were described, including a beautiful "rent" table of exquisite style. The overriding message was that this was a house that felt and looked comfortable, and Katie was never happier than when describing how her grandchildren raced around or put silly hats on the bronze figures!

The family church, built in 1892, was of simple but elegant design but sadly is now used only six times per year. Small plaques recorded each owner of the estate and the only embellishment was the citation and medals, including a MC, for a son killed in WW1.

The afternoon tea was warmly welcomed, comprising a selection of delicious scones and cakes. The few crumbs remaining were a testament to our appreciation.

My final image is one of a member sat in a big bay window looking down at the manicured lawns, over the polo pitch to the fields and forest beyond and quietly musing – "you know, my other house is in Sutton Coldfield."

- David Rooke



PROFESSOR LOCK'S PROGRESS
at the Gentleshaw Bowls Day, 20th June
Report by Mike Taylor



Top: Professor Lock considers his position.

Centre: Rod congratulates Norma, with the Old Windmill in background.

Left: Don & Ken give instructions to their balls!

Photographs by Tony Ferneyhough

It was a cold cloudy day as we gathered at The Windmill in Gentleshaw for the annual Bowls Day, with a total of 29 Ladies and Gentlemen of whom 24 were players.

After morning coffee 'Professor Lock', who had devised a fiendish mathematical formula to ensure that no one played with the same player twice, very clever, then explained the format of the day including the use of dummies, don't ask! Numbers were drawn, and play commenced.

We were very lucky to have David Rook and Peter Gray to collate the scores, I don't think they got warm all day, except for lunch, but their organisation was much appreciated. The Green at The Windmill is notorious and proved to be so, especially for those who had not played there before. In fact in one Men's game, of the eight bowls used, five ended up in the ditch, is this a record?

The day was split into two sessions with an excellent large lunch, so large no one ordered a sweet! There was much laughter, with some people talking to their bowls as if they understood every word!

The overall Winner was Norma Cooper (a non-bowler!) with a score of 160, with Hilary Crowley as second-place Lady with a score of 152. Keeping it in the family, Men's Winner was Rod Crowley with a score of 159, and second-place Man was Barry Parsonage with a score of 155.

President Rod very graciously presented the prizes and spoke with his usual sense of humour, to complete a most enjoyable day. Our thanks to Mike Lock for his organisation and to the scorers for their help.

- Mike Taylor



Emma and the Giant gob-stopper; 'Lick it until it's smaller,' she said, " or put it in a sock and smash it against a wall—in which case it 's considered to be a lethal weapon!"

'A Sweet Story' told by Emma Scott - Report by Ray Clark

Emma is a young lady who works at 'Mr Chills Traditional Sweet Emporium', a shop adjacent to the NT Back-to-Back properties by the Hippodrome, and with a great deal of enthusiasm she told us about the history and manufacture of sweets.

Sweets were originally based on honey, and 200 years ago in Yorkshire monks grew liquorice to make a product known today as Pontefract cakes. Then in the nineteenth century the price of imported sugar was significantly reduced, bringing down the price of boiled sweets, chocolate, and sweet drinks so they became very popular. Many products were flavoured with herbs and extracts and were sold as having 'medicinal' properties, sometimes being very localised, such as 'troach' which is a Midlands speciality.

Emma said that each company had their secret recipes which usually the 'Sugar Boiler' kept in his head rather than writing down, so it was always necessary to 'keep him sweet' so to speak!

She also told some horror stories of the nasty things put in sweets in Victorian times, such as ground glass in glacier mints, brick dust in chocolate, and real acid in acid drops! But in 1824 John Cadbury commenced making high-quality chocolate, importing cocoa from South America. During the next hundred years he was joined by many other well-known manufacturers such as Mars, Terry's, Frys & Rowntrees.

In the early twentieth century chewing gum appeared in the UK, and during the 1914-18 war it became of such great comfort to the soldiers that a special 'sugar allowance' was given to Wrigleys for its manufacture. Sugar rationing was enforced again from 1943, restricting people to two ounces of sweets per week, and remained until 1953.

Emma maintained the total interest of her audience of somewhat older males, and thoughtfully provided a selection of boiled sweets for us to sample. Our President, a retired dentist, said he he'd always had a love-hate relationship with confectionery; while hating the damage it caused he'd loved the business it created! Finally, John Buckland gave a vote of thanks and said that he hadn't been able to eat sweets for thirty years!

- Ray Clark

Events and Activities to November 2013

Thursday 25th July

'Land Army Tales'

- Mrs Margaret Madeley

Vote of Thanks: Phillip Troman

Newsletter Report: Bob Badham

Kitchen Rota: Peter Prime,
Barry Parsonage, David Roy,
John Cheal, Derek Smith

Wednesday 31st July.

Lobster Lunch at Opus Restaurant,

Cornwall Street, Birmingham.

12.30 for 12.45pm.

Harry Medcalf, organiser

Thursday 1st August

Long Walk led by Don Cooper

Meet at Roy's at 9.30 a.m. to car-share

Sunday 4th August

BBQ at the Fellows

Theme: 'New Orleans'

John Buckland, coordinator

Thursday 15th August

Short walk led by Derek Smith

Thursday 22 August

'My visit to Afghanistan'

- Mrs E. Perkins

Vote of Thanks: Richard Humphrey

Newsletter Report; Barry Parsonage

Kitchen Rota: Brian Mallett,
Tim Daly, Mike Gospel,
Dennis Rose, Ian Scholes

Thursday 5th September

Long Walk (to be advised)

Meet at Roy's 9.30 a.m. to car share

Saturday 7—Monday 9th September

Autumn Break—'Downton Abbey'

(Highclere Castle)

Jim Bailey, coordinator

Thursday 26th September

'Born to Rule' - Diane Mannerling

Vote of Thanks: Mike Gospel

Newsletter Report: Bryan Nicholas

Kitchen Rota: Fred Nightingale
Barry Gill, Denis Perkins, Neil Crabb,
David Rooke,

Thursday 3rd October

Long Walk (to be advised)

Thursday 10th October

Short Walk & pub lunch

(details to be advised)

Thursday 24th October

'Mountain Rescue in the UK'

- Mr Vince Williams

Vote of Thanks: Geoff Silvester

Newsletter Report: David Wallis

Kitchen Rota: Tony Ferneyhough,
Ray Clark, Alf Dineen,
Brian Spencer, Ernest Williams

Thursday 24th October

80 years of musical theatre

Brian Mallett, co-ordinator

Friday 1st November

Dining Evening

Harry Medcalf, co-ordinator

Thursday 7th November

Long Walk led by David Rooke

Thursday 14th November

Chatsworth & Christmas market

Mike Gospel, co-ordinator

Thursday 21st November

Short Walk (to be advised)

Thursday 28th November

'Fairground Tales'

- Mr Ned Williams

JOHN PURNELL - An appreciation by Derek Smith



John was a quiet man, well, most of the time! He very much enjoyed Probus; he joined in June 2005, and very soon was helping to organise some of our pub Ambles. His qualities as an organiser were soon recognised and he was inveigled into becoming Social Secretary, a task he much enjoyed except for one aspect of the job.

It was not in the nature of his character to stand up and speak to a roomful of people. Yet he overcame his natural shyness and did a first class job. He was outstanding in organising the memorable Autumn Breaks to York and Cambridge

Even after he relinquished the job, he still enjoyed helping to organise our Christmas Lunch at Moor Hall. The seating plan, in particular, took some time to be settled. As John would say, "Tell me about it," with a suitable gesture of frustration!

His contributions to the pleasure and enjoyment of the Club were very considerable and long lasting. John was a member who will be much missed. Above all he was a real gentleman, in every sense of the word. ADIEU!
- Derek Smith

1st August—Long Walk organised by Don Cooper

This will be a circular walk of eight miles round Carsington Water, a reservoir in Derbyshire. It is a delightful walk, no styles or gates, passing through areas of woodland and lake views with a hard surface all the way round and just four gentle short gradients. Bring packed lunch but the Leisure Centre has a restaurant, café and an excellent ice cream shop to top-up at end. Meet at Roy's to car share, 9:15 for 9:30 departure.

Getting there: The shortest way is the A515 Lichfield/Ashbourne road. In Ashbourne take the B5035 towards Carsington and Wirksworth, the water park is about 6 miles along this road and is well signposted.. Meet at the Leisure Centre which is over to the left of the huge car park. Journey time, just over 1 hour. Parking charge of £4.70 for all day. The Leisure Centre post code is DE6 1ST. Grid Ref SK241516

16th August—Pub amble organised by Derek Smith

This month's pub amble will be close to home, starting from the TOBY CARVERY in Sutton Park, entrance through the Town Gate for a walk of a about 3 miles in lovely parkland - no stiles. Roy Wilson is organising the weather!

Start from the pub at 10.30am. Carvery lunch at 12.30pm, cost £5.99.

24th October 2013— A visit to the Theatre

Sutton Coldfield Musical Theatre Company is celebrating 80 years of musical theatre this year and are presenting a feast of song and dance from some of the best shows of all time, from 'Buddy' to 'Barnum', from 'Fiddler on the Roof' to 'Full Monty', from 'West Side Story' to 'Wizard of Oz', and many more.

Titled 'ENCORE', this is the very best of eight decades of performing and we have reserved seats at Sutton Town Hall at 7.30 on Thursday 24th October (same day as Club Meeting). The price is £13 and the board will be out at the July and August meetings only, as the tickets have to be purchased by end of August.
- Brian Mallett