

ENCORE! - 80 years of musical theatre

Report on our visit to Sutton Town Hall, Thursday 24th October

'Break a Leg' - these words echo around the dressing room as you prepare to go on stage at the opening night. You have been rehearsing for five months, every Tuesday and Friday, building up to three nights a week with the occasional Sunday morning to polish the dance routines. The technical set-up and lighting on Sunday was a long afternoon/evening, arriving at 4.00pm and leaving at 10.30. Dress Rehearsal last night was not good (it rarely is). It is Tuesday, opening night, and as you approach the stage, the moment has arrived to show the audience that the Sutton Coldfield Musical Theatre Company is ready to entertain them.

The show that we saw last month was of the highest standard for dancing, singing and general entertainment. (I may be biased, as Margaret & I performed in over 20 shows with the company, but many members used the word 'professional' to describe the show and I think that is a fitting tribute to 'Encore' - **Brian Mallett** - a former thespian

Visit to Chatsworth Christmas Market, Thursday 14th November

Not only did Mike Gospel arrange a great trip he also worked his magic on the weather and despite the cold wind it remained dry and bright all day. Credit cards at the ready we ventured into the Christmas Market buying everything from monster candles and fur-lined gloves to a matching pullover and cap. Shortly after lunch everyone was ready to continue into Chatsworth House. The decorations were spectacular and awe inspiring, nearly as good as John Lewis, Solihull, someone was heard to say.

During the adventure, in readiness for next year, the Vice President took up his crown and, seated on the Throne, welcomed his subjects to Chatsworth. During this episode the White Witch kept a watchful eye on him from the staircase. The weather remained good so as the day came to an end, fortified by mulled wine, perambulations through the magnificent gardens were undertaken. Regrettably it was then time to be repatriated to urban Sutton Coldfield. - **John Carrington**

Now on the club website....

Tony Ferneyhough has now set up a new section on the club website which will feature photographs and reports on walks and other events. Walk leaders and organisers should contact Tony to ensure their function receives appropriate coverage.

Editorial address; pr.weston@btinternet.com (don't forget that 'dot'!)

Club website: <http://suttonparkprobus.wordpress.com/>

MAKING YOUR APOLOGIES

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

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

If you will be unable to carry out the Vote of Thanks please get in touch with **Dennis Wright** or **David Wallis** well before that General Meeting.



Sutton Park Probus Club

(Founded 1998)

President: Rod Crowley

Newsletter

No.181

November 2013

'MOUNTAIN RESCUE IN THE UK' - A talk by Vince Williams

Report by David Wallis

Last month our speaker, Vince Williams, gave us a remarkable insight into the mountain rescue service; he was clearly a dedicated and truly enthusiastic man with many, many years of hard-won experience.

In his early days Vince spent some time in the RAF, working on helicopters as an air-frame fitter. He became interested in fell walking and mountaineering and eventually joined the South Wales Mountain Search & Rescue service, based at Bridgend. (This was established in 1936 so is now nearly eighty years old).

All members are volunteers, he told us, who get no pay, and many supply their own equipment which can be quite substantial. Vince's own gear weighs-in at 36lbs while some members may carry 50/60lbs when they are on a rescue mission. Their region has a Land Rover and an ambulance fully fitted with stretchers, oxygen bottles and other medical equipment, with all drivers approved by police and local authorities for 'blue light' driving as necessary.

A team of rescuers may involve twelve or more people, and at present they have 42 members in the Western Beacons area. It costs a minimum of £15,000 p.a. to keep them operating, for which they rely on charities and donations, and they are currently trying to raise £32,000 to purchase a new ambulance. It's encouraging to hear that in 2007 Prince William became patron of the MSRS in England & Wales.

Vince Williams was on call for twenty-eight years but is now Search Manager - at nearly 70 years old he no longer goes out on urgent calls! In 2002 he was one of six members nationwide to receive the Queen's Golden Jubilee medal in appreciation of his services in mountain rescue.

- David Wallis



Diary of events and activities to February 2014

Thursday 28th November

'Fairground Tales' - Mr Ned Williams

Vote of Thanks: Ken Shaw

Kitchen Rota:

**Jim Bailey, John Buckland,
Roy Galloway, Brian Senior,
Ivor Wesley**

Monday 2nd December

Long Walk led by Dennis Rose

Friday 6th December

Christmas Lunch at Moor Hall

12.00 for 12.45pm

David Rooke, co-ordinator

**NO GENERAL MEETING IN
DECEMBER**

Thursday 9th January

Lunch at Birmingham College of Food,

Summer Row, City Centre

12.10 for 12.30pm

Brian Mallet, co-ordinator

Thursday 16th January 2014

Long Walk led by Bob Badham

Thursday 23rd January

'How I Became a Vicar' -

The Reverend B. Whitmore

St Bartholomew's Vicarage,

Wolverhampton

Vote of Thanks: Jim Bailey

**Kitchen Rota: Selby Betts,
John Booth, Terry Booth,
Alfred Wallwork, Roy Willson**

Monday 3rd February

Long Walk led by Rod Crowley

Thursday 13th February

Visit to Avery Museum & Titanic

Exhibition, Hockley

David Rooke, co-ordinator

Thursday 20th February

Short Walk

'Bucks Fizz' with Brian Spencer

Thursday 27th February

'Global Warming—Myth or Fact?'

Mr David Muntzer

Vote of Thanks: Mike Terry

Kitchen Rota:

**John Cheal, Keith Keeley,
Barry Parsonage, Roger Phillips,
Philip Troman**

Friday 28th February

Skittles Evening at Lea Marston

Leisure Centre

Organised by Jim Bailey & Mike Gospel

Thursday 6th March

Long Walk (to be advised)

Saturday 15th March

Entertainment Night

Organised by David Rooke

Thursday 20th March

Short Walk (to be advised)

Thursday 27th March

The history of English to 1381

Mrs C. Millin

Vote of Thanks: Mike Lock

**Kitchen Rota: Tim Daly,
Mike Gospel, Peter Prime, David Roy,
Derek Smith**

Thursday 3rd April

Long Walk led by Geoff Silvester

Thursday 10th April

Short Walk (to be advised)

**Visit to Buckingham Palace;
Brian Mallett advises the date has
changed to Thursday 7th August.**



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBER, DALE LYONS

Dale is a re-located Whitley Bay Geordie who became a chef at Mayfair's renowned Connaught Hotel (he cooked for Princess Grace!) and then after National Service in the RAF, emigrated to the USA and into hotel and catering management. After returning to the UK he opted for a lecturing career, eventually with the Open University. Finally he was appointed Head of Catering Management and Director of Marketing at Birmingham's renowned College of Food & Domestic Arts (aka 'College of Grub and Scrub'). Leisure-wise, he plays saxophones, clarinet and banjo in the Mid-land Fretted Orchestra and runs in marathons – now very slowly.

Thursday 2nd December—Long Walk led by Dennis Rose

Our walk is located in the Churnet Valley, Staffordshire and starts and finishes at "The Ramblers Retreat" where there are ample parking and toilet facilities. Start will at 10.15am and arrive back for pre-booked lunches at 12.15pm, approximately.

Directions: Take A515 from Lichfield to Sudbury and the A50 for five miles towards Uttoxeter. Then B5030 to Rocester and B5032 to Alton (signs for Alton Towers). On leaving Alton Village descend a steep hill and just at the bottom, before the bridge, take a SHARP LEFT, signed for Ramblers Retreat, and follow Red Road to the venue. Caution! road is very narrow with passing spaces although likely to quiet. Travelling time is about an hour, traffic permitting! Depart from Roys' at 9.00am.

- Dennis Rose

Thursday 16th January; Long Walk led by Bob Badham

This will be a six-mile gentle circular walk commencing from the entrance to Kenilworth Castle. It will be across flat farmland & open countryside. There are no stiles. There is a free car park by the Castle and also a pay-&-display by the Queen & Castle pub, or the one opposite the entrance to the castle itself. Hopefully lunch will be taken in the Queen & Castle pub but I've yet to check it out.

- Bob Badham

Thursday 13th February, organised by David Rooke

1912: A Titanic Odyssey - Centenary Exhibition at the Avery Historical Museum

This exhibition was arranged to mark the centenary of the Titanic's maiden voyage and will close in a few months' time. It allows visitors to imagine what it was like to be a passenger on the largest liner of the world in 1912, trace the ship's history and listen to audio recordings of survivors giving first-hand accounts of the tragedy.

- David Rooke

Christmas Cards

Some members prefer to make charitable donations at this time of year rather than exchanging cards. Listed below are members making donations, who nevertheless wish to send Christmas greeting to their Probus friends. Apologies if your name has been omitted.

Bob Badham; Terry Booth; Ray Clark, Don Cooper; Tim Daly; Peter Gray, Brian Harbourne; Mike Lock, Dennis Rose, Ian Scholes, Brian Senior; Geoff Silvester; Peter Weston; Roy Willson