



Some people are more aware of having their photograph taken than others! Some of the good turn-out of Wednesday walkers taking a break on a walk from Hampton Lucy on 28th. October, 2009 lead by John Maughan



Southam and District Group News and Views

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Editorial

It is the time of year that most of us are preparing for our Christmas celebrations, which, I suppose, can be both a pleasurable and a somewhat worrying time, depending on circumstances. Fortunately, in our family at least, the work and worrying before the event, has always resulted in a relaxed and enjoyable Christmas. I sincerely hope that it does in your families too.

It is also the time of year when the Southam and District Group holds its AGM to elect the officers for the coming year. This year we have again managed to survive without a chairman or social secretary, largely due to the efforts of Colin Haywood, our Group Secretary, in keeping it all together. He is supported by the Committee, who in turn require the members' support. Please make a determined effort to attend the AGM, which has been arranged as follows:-

SOUTHAM AND DISTRICT GROUP AGM

FRIDAY, 8TH. JANUARY, 2010 at 8.00PM
at CRAVEN LANE HALL.
Craven Lane, SOUTHAM.

Tea and Biscuits will be available

After the meeting, LINDA DOYLE will give us a talk, illustrated with slides, on
OLD SOUTHAM

Last year, Linda gave us a fascinating talk about Southam's Manor House and its restoration.

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It is also the time of year when Area calls for the Group Chairman's report. As we have no chairman, Colin has again submitted his Group Secretary's report, as follows

Group Secretary's Report

Our membership is gradually reducing, not unlike the national situation. However, our stalwarts are still supporting our walks programmes, with averages of 12 on Sundays and 25 – 30 on Wednesdays. Our thanks are once again extended to Isobel Whittaker and Richard Lillystone, respectively. Ironically, Richard says that although he struggles for walk leaders for summer walks, he is very well supported for winter walks. Possibly, the nip in the air is more attractive?

At our AGM in 2007, we welcomed Lisbeth Kirkwood as treasurer to our committee and, with the change from manual book-keeping to internet banking, she has done a wonderful job for the group, for which we are very grateful. However, at the end of September 2009, having completed the balance sheet, she had to resign the position, as she was leaving the area for pastures new. We thank her warmly for her excellent work and wish her every success for the future. We are very fortunate, however, that Anne Hayes has volunteered to take over as treasurer and is currently liaising with Lisbeth.

Di Weaver is organising our Christmas luncheon for Sunday, 9th. November at Stoneleigh Deer Park Golf Club, for which we are very grateful. (By the time this report is received, the good food will have been digested and the occasion enjoyed by all.). Di has informed us that, due to other commitments, she will not be able to carry on as Footpath Secretary after the AGM, but is willing to carry on as Publicity Officer. Our thanks are extended for both offices she has carried out.

Bob Dodd, together with Ted Buckle, John Bushnell and Richard Lillystone (apologies if I have missed anyone) have completed the new way-marking of the "Harry Green Way" and have reported the locations (on maps with grid references) where gates, styles or posts are missing or defective and also the areas where walking is impeded. Action is ongoing.

Bob also reports that the Summer Strollers attendance is slightly down on the previous year and two walks were lost due to bad weather. Fortunately, he is willing to carry on next year.

Our Committee strives to do its best for the group, but again special thanks must be extended to John Bushnell for his special way of producing an interesting news letter. (He is always happy to receive any news or snippets

from members.); also to Isobel and John Whittaker for producing and publishing our walks programme.

At our AGM on Friday 8th. January, 2010, we are looking for a Chairman, Footpath Secretary and Social Secretary. If anyone is interested in any of these positions, then please give me a call.

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and good health and good walking in the year ahead.

Colin Haywood
Group Secretary.

Christmas Lunch

We had our Christmas lunch early this year, because dates nearer Christmas had already been taken. As Di Weaver said, it was more Guy Fawkes than Christmas. Nevertheless, we had a very enjoyable time, with good food, good company, a free raffle and good entertainment. We had a go at the World's Easiest Quiz, which turned out to be anything but and we were treated to some comic anecdotes by Pam Miller. A notable story was one about Petey the Snake, who was much given to hissing in pits. (Not easy to recite after a wee dram, or two)

Our thanks go to Di, Isobel Whittaker and Pam Miller for providing such an enjoyable day out.

(If anyone wants to know the full story of Petey, please let me know; I can send you a copy)

Soups and Puds

27 members set out on 25th. November on what seems to have become our annual walk from Birdingbury to Long Itchington and back. On our return, we were joined by a further 10 members to partake of a range of excellent soups and puddings prepared for us as always by Jackie. "Partake" seems a bit too refined; I think "got stuck in to" is probably more appropriate for some of us. The event is arranged to raise money for charity; the particular charity this year is Help for Heroes.

Our thanks go again to Isobel Whittaker and also to Jackle for another enjoyable event.

Southam Community Christmas Tree Festival

This was the second year that the Festival has been held at the Congregational Church in Wood Street. Local Societies and Organisations decorate trees and display them in the Church. This year was the first time that the Ramblers were represented and our tree was organised by Alison Cragg. Entry to the event was free, but donations and proceeds from refreshments went to a cancer research charity. We extend our thanks to Alison and her group of helpers for representing us.