

Walk Leaders

Walk Leaders Training Meeting

As part of the launch of the website, a training session was held for walk leaders in April, in the Graham Adams Centre.

Twelve leaders learned how to navigate the site and how to use the mapping software to develop new walks, print and download them. If there is interest from members a further course could be arranged to give familiarity with what is available from the Website

Walk leaders need to register as volunteers

Also, for all walks, walk leaders need to conduct a risk assessment and fill in the form for this and they need to keep an attendance register
Kath Chapman, the Membership Secretary, has to retain these documents.

Walk Leaders and Group Behaviour

Walk leaders are usually very good at reminding people to walk on the right and in single file, except on a sharp right - hand bend. It's just that we do not always obey!!
See article on P3 about walking on roads.

Ann Forgan

Bill Pease

It is very sad that instead of our usual chirpy Chairman's report from Bill in this slot, we are paying tribute to him, following his death at the end of June. Bill was a kind and gentle man, who over many years, took a very active role in his community.

Born in Essex during the second world war, Bill grew up in Hornchurch, before it was part of Greater London. As a boy, his Scout Troop's camping and walking trips gave him a love of walking, which stayed with him for the rest of his life.

Anyone who walked with Bill knew that he was a family man, and he was married for 54 years, with two daughters and a son. His commitment to, and pride in his family always shone through and recently he showed much joy about the company of his young granddaughter. His career, mainly in the food industry, led him to move to work in Leamington Spa, in 1973. This involved travelling abroad and meant a move to live in Southam, which he never regretted.

In autumn 1985, Bill suffered a heart attack and had to take early retirement, but two years later a triple heart by-pass operation, enabled him to come out of retirement and join a locally based company and to take on more roles in Southam community, something he had started in the 1970s. The repair to his arteries, supposed to last 10 years, lasted 35 years. Across the years he was Chairman of the first school PA, a Parent Governor, Chairman of the middle school PA and he helped with founding what became the John Turner Festival, now run by the Southam Lions

Bill was elected to Southam Town Council, in 1995 and he served for 12 years. He was Mayor in 1999 and again in 2005. He was chair of the Southam Christmas Lights Committee from its beginning in 2,000, for 13 years. He worked with the Southam Carnival Committee, the Civic Forum, the Twinning Association and raised money for many charities, one of which led to an invite to a Royal Garden Party. Somehow, he still had time for word puzzles and writing letters to the editor.

Upon retiring in 2008, he joined the local Rotary Club, with two terms as president. He also joined the Southam Ramblers. He became Chairman of the Southam Ramblers in November 2015, and he also organised the Summer Strollers. At Southam Ramblers, we benefitted much from his earlier committee experiences. He had learned the value of building up a good committee and the ability to delegate. He was well – organised, diplomatic and reasoned in his approach to others.

Many of you attended Bill's funeral at Southam Congregational Church on 28th July and afterwards at the Fox and Hen in Bascote. It is a measure of his commitment to the town and his popularity that the church was full to capacity downstairs and up, in the aisles and even the outside area, with people from all sectors of Southam life. He will be missed in committee, and we are already missing him on our rambles.

Some of your anecdotes about Bill are on P5. Thank you to Bill's daughters for sharing their moving tribute to their dad with me, so that I could use the biographical details.

Webmaster's Report

Towards the end of 2021, the Ramblers announced that their website hosting would be much reduced, and we would only have a single web page on the national site. We were one of the few groups to not have our own site, so the committee agreed that we should develop our own website and

www.Southamramblers.org.uk was born.

With the help of Derbyshire Ramblers, we were able to develop a comprehensive website, which has given us a great opportunity to

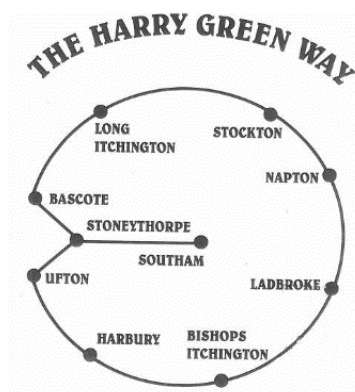
- publicise our walks,
- record previous walks
- develop, record, and download new walks on OS Maps
- develop a picture gallery of our walks and events
- have individual pages for The Harry Green Way and the Strollers
- maintain a library of all past News and Views
- provide information for local groups and walking organisations
- provide a contact page with contact points for members of the committee

Please make use of the Web Site to find many walks and links to walks in our area. The latest link is <https://www.heartcommunityrail.org.uk/railtrails> where you can find walks from local railway stations. Other links take you to Walking in Warwickshire and Millennium Way websites, where there are many local walks.

Encouragingly, web statistics show that the website is regularly visited by walkers from around the country. eric@4gan.com

southamramblers@gmail.com

Friends of the Harry Green Way



Many thanks to the "Friends of the Harry Green Way" for continuing to clear and maintain the walk.

Southam Ramblers were fortunate to receive a donation of a De Walt hedge trimmer and a strimmer, which will be a great asset in keeping the route open for all.

Several problems with stiles and obstructions have been reported to Warwickshire County Council.

HS2 work at Ladbroke Hill Farm has resulted in a further change in the route, but fortunately this is well signed and does not add significantly to the walk.

The friends of the Harry Green Way who have volunteered to "adopt" a walk are:

Southam to Bascote
Bascote to Long Itchington
Long Itchington to Stockton
Stockton to Napton Folly
Napton Folly to Welsh Road
Welsh Road to Ladbroke
Ladbroke to Bishops Itchington
Bishops Itchington to Harbury
Harbury to Ufton
Ufton to Southam

Richard and Vib Clark
Peter and Jay Webster
Jeff Round
Don and Reine-Marie Bates
John Gymer
Bob and Margaret McAulley
Gordon and Dawn Smith
Bob Middlemas
John Maughan
Ann and Eric Forgan



We always need more volunteers to help!

Will anyone who walks any section of the Harry Green Way please advise Eric at southamramblers@gmail.com with any problems relating to the condition of the stiles, signage, or routing of the path.



The elected committee members for 2021 to 2022 are

Chairman
Secretary
Treasurer
Footpath Secretary
Membership Secretary
Wednesday Walks
Committee
Summer Strollers

Non-Committee Roles

Publicity
Newsletter
Webmaster

Margaret McAulley
Ann Hayes
John Maughan
Kath Chapman
Nigel Chapman
Janet Green
Richard Clarke

Di Weaver
Ann Forgan
Eric Forgan



The Wednesday Walks Programme

Our walks have been taking place as usual on alternate Wednesdays, with the vast majority of recent walks being well attended, usually with numbers in the twenties.

Members receive an up-dated programme regularly, which is constantly revised by volunteers. The programme usually consists of five or six walks. Destinations vary from local to further away, for example there were walks to Hornton, Shipston and Cropredy recently.

In late spring and summer, on light evenings, there are also Summer Strollers walks, on alternative weeks to the usual walks. These are all local.

See report on page four.

Thanks must go to the volunteers who lead the walks and who make sure the walks programme is kept up to date.

Nigel Chapman

Membership Report

As of the end of July 2022, we have 76 members - 22% of which are registered volunteers, 55% are female and 37% are in the age range 70-79!

There has been some movement in that there are 4 new members on the list, one member has resigned and up to 4 have lapsed membership.

Kath Chapman, Membership Secretary



Upcoming Walks

2nd Nov	Gordon Smith	Bishop's Itchington and Ladbroke	gordonsmith2311@gmail.com
16th Nov	Peter & Jay Webster		814063 peterandjay@btinternet.com
30th Nov	Don Bates	Napton and Upper Shuckburgh	812584 debates@talktalk.net
14th Dec	Bob & Margaret McAulley	Grandborough – Sherry Walk	01788 817136 cymac50@hotmail.com

Walks Programme Co-Ordinator Nigel Chapman nigel.chapman@hotmail.co.uk



All walks begin in Wood Street Car Park at 9.30 a.m.

Walking on Roads – for those of you following the saga.....

You may remember that I raised some concerns in an earlier newsletter, after looking up in the Highway Code and the national Ramblers website, the rules on this.

It was confusing, because the website and the Highway Code, contrary to expectations, included a rule that large groups on the road should walk close together on the left. There was no definition of 'large groups' on the website, or in the Highway Code, but the website had included this instruction to the Walking for Health group, who generally have smaller groups than us.

At a Warwickshire Area Group Meeting, I raised this as a confusing instruction and the Chairman said that she would raise it with national office. At the next Area Meeting, she fed back what they had said - that 'large groups' does not apply to Ramblers' groups, even if 40 attend, but to organised groups on marches, or demonstrations and includes such as military bands. She said that head office said that this would be clarified in the instructions to organisations like Walking for Health. I pointed out that it had not as yet been changed, so she is chasing this.

So, the rules are now clear, even if the information handed out is not always clear!

Rule 1 Pavements should be used if provided. Where possible, avoid being next to the kerb with your back to the traffic. If you have to step into the road, look both ways.

Rule 2 If there is no pavement, keep to the right-hand side of the road so that you can see oncoming traffic. You should take extra care and be prepared to walk in single file, especially on narrow roads, or in poor light and keep close to the side of the road.
It may be safer to cross the road well before a sharp right-hand bend so that oncoming traffic has a better chance of seeing you. Cross back when safe after the bend.

Rule 3 Help other road users to see you. Wear or carry something light-coloured, bright, or fluorescent in poor daylight conditions. When it is dark, use reflective materials which can be seen by drivers' headlights up to three times as far away as non-reflective materials.

Ann Forgan

The Slow Ways Project -Update

The Slowways project is well underway and routes all over the country are being walked and tested, to make sure that routes mapped during Covid Lockdown, by volunteers working from home, are practical.

Southam has routes to Leamington, Kineton, Byfield, Daventry and Rugby, which all need to be tested.

For information visit <https://beta.slowways.org/Settlement/Southam>

Further Information about the project at: <https://ravenellison.com/portfolio/slow-ways/> or speak to me.

Eric Forgan

Dates for the Diary

Southam Ramblers AGM

Provisional date: 10 November 2022, venue to be arranged.

Warwickshire Area Quarterly Meetings 2023 Dates

4 March 2023

3 June 2023

2 September 2023

Warwickshire Area AGM

11 February 2023 at Castle Bromwich

Please contact Margaret McAulley if you wish to attend any of the area meetings.

Editor's Note

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the newsletter.

Ann Forgan

The Summer Strollers

The Summer Strollers enjoyed seven walks this year between 12 May and 4 August 2022. The first of these, to Southam Holt, had to be significantly diverted because of a tall crop of oilseed rape planted across the bridleway SM32. This has been reported to the Council, along with other obstructions on the same walk, for at least the third time in recent years. Of the remaining routes, the Blue Lias Walk and New Zealand Farm/Stockton needed some encroaching scrub to be cleared, but the paths could easily be followed.

We no longer have access to the footpath to Ladbroke because of HS2 construction, but thanks go to Eric Forgan for devising and leading a new stroll from the Flying Fields estate, returning via Welsh Road East. This walk proved popular and is well worth retaining in future.

The number of walkers for some of the strolls was lower than in previous years. The lowest number for a walk was two, and the highest thirteen. However, the numbers picked up appreciably after we began advertising in Southam News and Views on Facebook, which we should repeat next year. Several new walkers joined us, including one from Stratford-on-Avon and two from Coventry. Encouragingly, most were attracted back for a second or third walk after their first taster.

While the number of Strollers never approached the average attained for the Wednesday walks, the programme continues to attract walkers, not least those of working age who are unavailable on a Wednesday morning and is our main way of reaching out to those people.

Thank you to everyone who joined us, and especially to those who led the walks.



Richard Clarke

The Footpath Secretary's Report

In May there was an HS2 diversion which could give us a link from footpath E2424 to SM96 when finished. A temporary bridge was put over the Oxford Canal, north of Wormleighton, on a haulage road for HS2 and footpath SM 200 was closed for bridgework. In Southam there was an application for a bridge over the stream, leading to the playing field behind the church and for 5 new dwellings.

In July bridleway SM 117 in Wormleighton was near farm alterations, but the path was not closed during the work. Path SM 37 will now go around the field edge near Napton nurseries at Tomlow Road, instead of the current diagonal route, due to the expansion of a warehouse. The local people are not happy, but there is no cause to object.

In August, the Crown Inn at Stockton put in another application for a letting room in the car park, SM 14 cuts through here. There was also a notice from HS2 about the closure and diversion of SM 90 Ladbroke HGW, for 3 years. One of our members walked SM 87, Ladbroke to Bishops and reported several problems to us. The Ladbroke maintenance team is not functioning, so Michael Ray, who runs the Southam maintenance team, has been asked to add these problems to his to do list.

In September, the application for a very large Solar Farm, rejected by Stratford last year, has been resubmitted. Called Feldon Vale, it is south of Bishops Itchington. Ramblers have objected again, on for countryside and landscape protection reasons. This is a large-scale industrial development and ramblers consider it out of place in this area.

John Maughan

Kath Chapman

Bill was a very canny chair in committee. One example is that he encouraged each member to give their report on their area – then by the time it got to the chairperson's turn, everything had been sorted!!

Bob and Margaret McAulley

We have walked many miles with Bill over the last 12 years. Our fond memories are that he was an interesting, kind, gentle man.

Also, from Margaret - I have worked with Bill on committee for the past 3 years and he has led our group tirelessly. He was always the diplomatic voice of reason. He will be sorely missed as an integral part of the Southam Ramblers.

Some of your anecdotes about Bill

Alison Hobbs

On arrival at one of the rambles some time ago Bill came over and said to me "Can I have one of your hugs Alison?" "I wondered what the matter was, Bill then confided in me about something very sad that the family were going through. I would like to think that I helped that day and was some moral support for him. He was a good man with an equally lovely wife.

Editor's note – Alison is famous for her hugs – in fact, long before Covid 19 was a twinkle in a virus genome, when we were discussing roles, we decided that she was chief in charge of hugs!

Ann Forgan

I enjoyed walking with Bill for the good conversations. He was a keen Family Tree researcher, as I am, though I was focussed on getting the branches as far back as I could and he on meeting new family members. He was a sociable being!

We discussed travel and he told me one of his daughters was aiming to visit fifty countries before she was 50. He said that the rules were that you could not bag a country unless you had slept there – I objected because sleeping in an airport hotel would count, but not touring a small state for a long day, but not actually sleeping there. A debate ensued and other examples emerged over more than one walk.

Walking with Bill you soon came to recognise how good he was at delegating, since it was easy to leave agreeing to take on a role for the Southam Ramblers, which you did not know that you wanted!

Richard Clarke

Something that struck me as impressive about Bill was the way he would think ahead, and outside of himself. Some people who have achieved a lot have a correspondingly large ego. Bill was the complete opposite and I think he saw himself as a very active cog in a much bigger machine. One small example is the way in which the Lifeboat quiz has survived both Bill and the chap who set it.

Another example is the way he passed over responsibility for the Summer Strollers to me. After he realised how ill he was, he asked me if I could put up the notices around the town, as he had done previously. I don't think I was picked for any reason apart from being the nearest neighbour who was a ramble. He had done all the printing and provided me with a list of sites, so all I had to do was what he could not. As the year went on it became clear that I needed to take over co-ordinating the strolls as well. This was a natural progression, which Bill had put in motion with as much help as he could give, but with tact, minimal fuss, and absolutely no sign of self-pity.

Editor's note: I think that Bill chose Richard, not just because he was geographically nearest, but because he could rely on him to pick this up and run it well with minimal fuss - and he did! So, we need to add – a good judge of character - to Bill's attributes.

