



**Sutton
Coldfield**

September/October Newsletter



SCR walk at Clent on a sunny autumnal day

Fall, Leaves, Fall
Fall, leaves, fall; die, flowers, away;
Lengthen night and shorten day;
Every leaf speaks bliss to me
Fluttering from the Autumn tree.
I shall smile when wreaths of snow
Blossom where the rose should grow;
I shall sing when night's decay
Ushers in a drearier day.

Emily Bronte

Chairperson's Report

Ilminster

Our autumn break in Ilminster was a great success. Many thanks to Anita for an excellent choice of hotel in a picturesque area and for the overall organisation of the weekend. Mike assisted with the coordination of walks, our walk leaders and 'entertainers' ensured there was something for everyone to enjoy.

Walks Programme

Although the start of autumn brought unsettled weather, we have had an interesting programme of walks. Rosie and Tony's Alstonefield walk start was delayed by a torrential downpour, but we finished in sunshine with drinks in the garden of The George pub. Barbara N and Anita's Three Churches walk provided the opportunity for us to explore beautiful churches in attractive villages in the Solihull area. Sue and Dave weren't deterred by heavy, persistent rain when they led a shorter than planned walk in Sutton Park for a hardy group. They have kindly offered to lead us on some of the lesser-known paths in the park for our Mince Pie walk on the Sunday before Christmas.

Congratulations to Pat C for completing the Ramblers' new Walk Leader Training and the award of her certificate. She celebrated by leading an enjoyable walk from Harvington Hall. We're delighted to welcome back former walk leader, Stephen. He led two urban Thursday walks along canals to Edgbaston Reservoir and the Jewellery Quarter Conservation Area and cemeteries. He has a wealth of fascinating historical information and an excellent choice of cafes for coffee stops!

Barbara and John's Tanworth-in-Arden walk gave us the unusual opportunity for lunch inside a church – the Old Chapel at Ullenhall, no longer in use. Pat and Karen kindly swept up afterwards with a handily placed witch's broomstick. Rosie and Tony's postponed Whiston walk has been rearranged for 15th December. For our final walk of October we enjoyed splendid sunshine and views on the Clent Hills led by Mike Mcs.

SCR website

Most of you will be familiar by now with our new website. Rob and Tom have sorted out a very few 'snagging' issues and I'm extremely grateful for their time and expertise in developing and maintaining the website which keeps us well-informed about all our activities.

AGM 13th November Four Oaks Saints' Cricket Club 7.30pm

You will have received the documents for our forthcoming AGM. The meeting will be followed by a free buffet supper and I hope as many as possible will be able to attend. It's a good opportunity for those who aren't able to walk very often to meet and catch up with friends.

Christmas Walks and Meal

Menus have been circulated for our Christmas meal on Sunday 1st December at Cleobury Mortimer golf club. If you would like to come, please email Barbara with your menu choices and pay by 15th November. Cleobury Mortimer, in Shropshire, is a 'Walkers are Welcome' town with well-maintained footpaths and wonderful views over the Clee hills. We're planning to hold our usual Sutton Park & Mince Pie walk at 10am on Sunday 22nd December. There will be a choice of two walks, with both groups meeting around 11am at the Jamboree Stone for complimentary mince pies and BYO liquid refreshment. Non-walking members are welcome to meet us at the Jamboree Stone.

Publicity

Some of you may have received a free copy of the Sutton Charity News (from the trust formerly known as Sutton Municipal Charities). We were asked several months ago for a contribution about the Ramblers, so take a look!

I hope you enjoy walking in the colourful autumn season and I look forward to you joining in some of our forthcoming activities.

With best wishes to all,

Barbara

The SCR New Website

Our new Ramblers Website has been live for just over two months; we hope that you are finding the new format helpful and easy to use. The main difference between the new and old websites is the amount of information available about future walks, and which is also consistent with the format used on the Ramblers' national website and the Ramblers' App. There is also information on past walks that may assist in planning future activities.

We have continued to make improvements so that the format works on laptops and mobile devices. If you have not yet used the new website do have a look. The website name is unchanged suttoncoldfieldramblers.org.uk

On the Home page of the website there are a series of self-explanatory Tabs. On a mobile device the opening Home page may look different but contains the same information - the Tabs can be found by clicking the orange lines in the top lefthand corner.

The second tab, **Walks and Walking** has several sub menus including our **Walks Programme**, clicking on an individual walk brings up more details including the option to view/print a map for the location of the start of the walk.



The screenshot shows the Sutton Coldfield Ramblers website. The header includes the logo and the name 'Sutton Coldfield Ramblers'. The navigation bar has links for Home, Walks and Walking (selected), Documents, FAQs, Contacts, Social Activities, and Search. Below the navigation bar, there is a breadcrumb trail: 'Walks and Walking / Walks Programme'. The main heading is 'Our Walks Programme'. Underneath, there is a section for 'Meeting and Car Sharing' with tabs for Grades, Table, List, Calendar, and Map. A 'Filter' button is also present. Below the tabs, there are buttons for 'Print' and 'Add to Calendar'. A message says 'Click on item to display full details of walk'. A list of walks is displayed, each with an icon and details:

	Sunday, 3rd November, Whittington, 8.5mi / 13.7km, Contact Sharon F
	Thursday, 7th November, The Tardebigge near Bromsgrove, 6mi / 9.7km, Contact John Harden
	Sunday, 10th November, Upper Arley, 8mi / 12.9km, Contact Dave R & Barbara T
	Thursday, 14th November, Shugborough, 6mi / 9.7km, Contact Jeanie S
	Thursday, 5th December, Lichfield, 5mi / 8km, Contact Jeanie S
	Sunday, 15th December, Whiston, Staffs, 8.5mi / 13.7km, Contact Rosie P

In addition to the Walks that have been published we have a section for **Proposed Walks**. This is where a date for a walk has been reserved but the details are not yet available. Under the same menu there is information for **Walkers** and **Walk Leaders** including the sign-in sheet and basic information about risk assessment.

The **Documents Tab** contains the SCR Newsletters and a link to the archived old website. The **Contacts Tab** provides the facility to contact the SCR Committee members. There is also a **Search** facility which may help in finding something which is not otherwise obvious.

Although the new website is in operation it is in its early stages and there will be changes to how and where information is displayed. If you find that something on the website is unclear or not working, please let Rob know.

Rob Halley

Ilminster Autumn 11th - 14th October

This year's Autumn break was successfully organised by Anita Wilkes with thirty-seven SC Ramblers enjoying a pleasant three-night break in the quaint town of Ilminster, a Historic Country Town in South Somerset, twenty miles north of Lyme Regis on the south coast.

The area with its beautiful countryside was a pleasant location for walking, with Mike Fowler organising a good selection of walks. On the Saturday three walks were on offer; Mike led a B walk of 9.5 miles around the Hamstone Villages of South Somerset; John Harden led a circular C walk from the nearby village of Barrington with an option to walk a maximum of eight miles. Chris Mitton led a shorter circular D walk of 5.4 miles starting from the hotel.

On the Sunday, two walks were on offer. Rosie and Tony led a circular B walk of about 8 miles, starting from the hotel going south from Ilminster. Whilst Tom Halstead headed east from the hotel for a circular C walk of 6.5 miles.

The weekend was blessed with beautiful weather, which some Ramblers made the most of to visit Lyme Regis and test the Devon ice creams.

Besides the walking we entertained ourselves with Pat Collins organising the after-dinner fun and games on Friday. After dinner on Saturday John Twort entertained us with folderols using a variety of multimedia. Sunday's entertainment was led by John Collins who got us all to play bingo followed by his version of the monologue made famous by Stanley Holloway: The Lion and Albert. The evening concluded with poetry recitals by Pat Collins, Tom Halstead, June Bell, Jill Bell and finally Mike Fowler.

It was a good to meet up with group members, some of whom no longer walk with us, and to welcome some recent members on their first weekend away with SCR.

A big thank you to Anita for organising a great weekend.

Photos and details of the walks are on the website; suttoncoldfieldramblers.org.uk/index.php/walks/records-photos-routes-maps/holiday-rambles/68-ilminster-2024

Thank you to **Rosie Power** and **Mike Fowler** for their reports of the weekend.

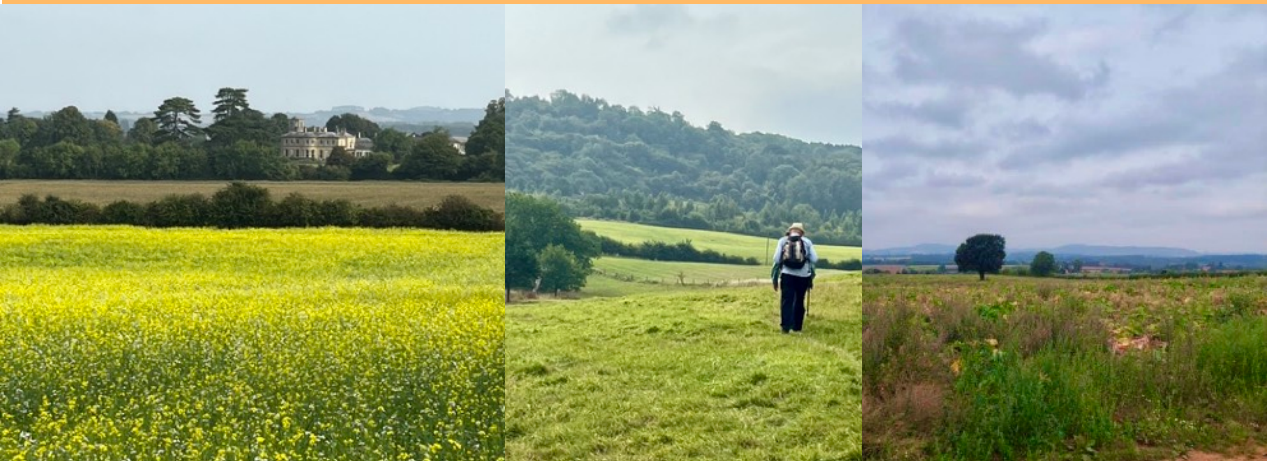


Walk Programme 2024

Check out more pictures and walk details on suttoncoldfieldramblers.org.uk and on facebook.com/suttoncoldfieldramblers



A large turn out of Ramblers for the August bank holiday walk at Alrewas.



Elmley Castle with Breedon Hill; and Ombersley near Droitwich.



Pipe Hall Lichfield; and Sutton Park.



Alstonefield in Derbyshire; and Tanworth in Arden.



Three Churches Walk Eastern Green.



Two urban walks from Birmingham city centre.

Below; Harvington Hall and the final walk of October at the Clent Hills.



Future Walks

Details of future walks can be found at suttoncoldfieldramblers.org.uk/index.php/walks/walks-programme Please check both the website and emails for walk updates in case it has been necessary to amend/cancel walks at short notice.

Walk details on our new website are now presented in a consistent format with the Ramblers national website and App. A few points to note;

- The start time listed is the time the **walk** starts, not the meeting time at Wyndley.
- The finishing time is an estimate only.
- Travel directions are intended to be as concise as possible - individual walk details include a map of the starting point.
- The request for guests to contact the walk leader applies to Ramblers from other groups or guests and not to our members.
- The new website allows a record to be kept of individual walks including photos and route details - check out the record from our recent Clent walk.
- suttoncoldfieldramblers.org.uk/index.php/walks/records-photos-routes-maps/sunday-rambles/sunday-2024/70-clent-hills

Walk Programme for 2025

Whilst our Walk Programme for this year is almost complete (currently we do not have a walk for December 8th) there will be plenty of opportunities to lead walks in 2025. It would be good if we are able to start populating the Walk Programme for January and February.

If you are interested in offering a walk or would just like to discuss what is involved please get in contact with the relevant Walk Co-ordinator;

Sunday Walks - Andy Addison andyaddison11@hotmail.com 07565153649

Thursday Walks - Julie Hamblen hamblen74@gmail.com 07817151165

Heritage Walks

Following on from the item on Birmingham Heritage Week in the last Newsletter, a couple of members share their recent “heritage theme walks”.

March of the Elephants - Karen Swingler

From July 1st to September 8th Lichfield, Tamworth and Sutton Coldfield saw the March of the Elephants; a herd of 74 elephants - 30 large ones and 44 small ones, all individually designed and with their own uniqueness.

Using the Trail Map I had great fun finding the elephants, but the one that was the most difficult to locate was the one named Elvis! I ‘marched’ up and down in Tamworth Castle grounds trying to find him, he seemed as elusive as Elvis himself. Finally, I stumbled across him; sadly as you can see, he did not resemble the real Elvis, but happily I was able to confirm that Elvis had not left the Park!

Over the weekend of 20-22 September the herd all met again in Lichfield for the auction in Beacon Park where £125,000 was raised in aid of St Giles Hospice.

Also popular for walking was the Birmingham Bear Hunt in support of Birmingham’s Children Hospital and the Great Waddle of Worcester for St Richard’s Hospice.



Heritage Walks - Jeanie Shackleford

My next walk for SCR will go through the Shugborough Estate once described as a 'perfect paradise'. Shugborough with its Georgian Mansion had been the home of the Anson family since 1624. Lord Lichfield (whose full name was Thomas Patrick John Anson) had an apartment there. Since his death this has been open to the public, www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/shropshire-staffordshire/shugborough-estate.

My December walk will be around Lichfield and the wonderful Cathedral, which has been there in a number of forms for over 1300 years.

I recommend the Christmas Light shows lichfield-cathedral.org



However, the walk to Wall, that I did about 18 months ago for SCR took us back further in History. I volunteer at Wall Roman Site so it was nice to do a walk that included the site. Wall was once an important staging post on Watling Street, the Roman military road to North Wales. Recently I had an exciting opportunity to help lead tours and go on an archaeological dig at Wroxeter Roman Site literally down the (Roman) Road ie Watling Street. The dig made the news when they discovered a hidden mosaic floor.

I am by no means an expert on Roman history but am happy to lead tours even though often the people on the tour at Wroxeter knew a lot more about Roman history or had had more experience of archaeology than I did. By going on the tour they were able to see the archaeological dig in process and if volunteers hadn't come forward then they wouldn't have had that opportunity. The same goes for leading walks. I would encourage people to have a go leading walks.

If anyone is interested in finding out more about the dig, Dr Roger White will be giving a talk at Wall Village Hall, Watling Street, Wall WS14 0AW on November 18th at 7.30pm, cost of £3 with refreshments.

The Louis Barrow Trail - Sue Wood

In early September, Birmingham like other cities, opened their doors for members of the public to experience a wide range of Heritage Treasures. I joined a fascinating walk from Bournville Station, organised by members of the Black Country Geological Society, entitled the Louis Barrow Trail.

I admit that I did not know much about Louis, although I had visited the wonderful Lapworth Museum of Geology at Birmingham University several times. I discovered that Louis, who was born in Kings Norton in 1865, came to study geology at Mason College- a forerunner of Birmingham University, under the guidance of Professor Lapworth. He then became Chief Engineer at Cadburys during the development of the factory site. As excavation work began at Bournville, many erratic boulders were exposed and Louis recognised their significance. In consultation with Professor Lapworth, it was understood that these erratics were borne from the Arenig Hills in Wales during the Glacial Period.

Subsequently, many of the boulders have been 'placed' in the area, and eight trails have been designed to follow, funded by National Lottery Heritage. Our heritage walk followed Trail 2, aptly named The Louis Barrow Trail. We initially viewed a set of erratics situated just outside of the station. Following the trail we continued to Cotteridge Park, where there is an interesting plaque embedded in the pathway noting the significance of the erratics. The Trail continues into Cadbury Park and onwards to the grounds of Selly Manor where there is an arrangement of smaller erratic boulders. The trail was easy to follow and would lend itself to an urban winter walk using public transport. Further details can be found at erraticsproject.org

SCR members also enjoyed an “Erratics Walk” last year led by Tom and Di.



Roundhouse Birmingham and the Canals - Sharon Freedman



The Roundhouse had a busy Birmingham Heritage Week with activities held in the Roundhouse plus a number of tours - walking, by canal boat and kayaking - for people to experience the city from its network of canals. The Roundhouse, a former public works depot and stables is a Victorian listed building restored by a partnership of the National Trust and the Canal & River Trust who also set up Roundhouse Birmingham as an independent charity roundhousebirmingham.org.uk

Earlier this year I started as a Roundhouse volunteer tour guide and have enjoyed leading walks and telling stories of the city. Whilst I have also helped on the Canal Heritage Boats, I left the kayaks to better swimmers than me!

SCR Heritage Walks

Of course many SCR rambles have heritage elements. Recently Stephen C led two interesting and informative urban walks; one from the city centre along the canal out to Perrott's Folly and the Waterworks Towers; and another through the Jewellery Quarter. Other urban walks this year took us through Edgbaston and Harborne led by Mike F, and with Barbara and John the parks of South Birmingham - both were welcomed mud-free walks!

Many of this year's walks have used the grounds of historical houses such as Harvington Hall, Shugborough and Packwood House. Barbara and John's walk from Astley included Astley Castle, the childhood home of Lady Jane Grey. The Astley area is also the setting of some of the novels by the Victorian writer George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans).

Again lots of our walks include an interesting church - or in the case of Anita W and Barbara N's walk at Eastern Green, three beautiful churches - St John the Baptist Berkswell, St Laurence Church Meriden and St Andrew's Church Eastern Green.

From the Archives

This time last year many SCR members were enjoying the Autumn break at Brecon HF Nythfa House. The Sunday night saw Walkers transform into scary Halloween outfits - John Harden won the 'Best Outfit' award in his guise as a Mad Monk.



Members News

A warm welcome to new members; Bridget Byrne, Deborah Colder, Guy Harrington, Joel Kulendran, Ynyr Owen, Diane Pitters, Julie Spencer and Jo Walker.

Dates for the Diary

AGM 2024 - will be held on November 13th. Full details and papers are on the website.

Christmas Meal Coach Walk 2024 - will be held at the Cleobury Golf Club, Cleobury Mortimer on December 1st. Bookings are now being taken by Barbara.

Sutton Park & Mince Pie Walks December 22nd - our final walk before Christmas.

Spring Break 2025 - booking has been made by Rosie for April 11th to 14th at HF Bourton-on-the-Water.

Autumn Holiday 2025 - booking has been made by John H for September 28th to October 1st at the Norton House Hotel, Mumbles Swansea.

Thank you to all who contributed to the newsletter. Contributions for the next Newsletter should be sent to sharonfreedman04@gmail.com by December 20th.

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