

# FOOTNOTES



Issue No. 65  
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## Rambler of the Year and other awards

### Report by David Sutton

**L**ibby Hunt, our group chairman recently instigated annual awards in recognition of the work done by Birmingham Ramblers' members, and these were announced at our AGM last November.

Members were asked to nominate non committee volunteers to receive the new annual "Rambler of the Year" award. The winner has worked quietly in the background over many years and really deserved to be recognised. The nominations cited some of this person's contributions: exceptional foot-path knowledge made readily available to the Group; designing walks for both the main Programme and the Public Walks; regularly back marking; for assisting with the organisation of the team who put *Footnotes*, *Walker* and Programmes into envelopes addressed to you on posting nights and for keeping and administering the Group's Map Library. Libby announced that the "Rambler of the Year 2010" was **Bernard Horton** and he was presented with an engraved cup at the AGM.

Another award was suggested by

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## FOOTNOTES

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Joachim Auerbach, to congratulate the person who had led the most walks for the Group during the year. Three people stood out as prolific leaders and they deserve special thanks. Presented with a specially designed badge at the AGM on the 12th November was our top leader **Steve Brittain**, with 14 led walks to his credit. Both Andy Bates and Sandra Sutton, who each led 12 walks, were also noted.

The AGM also provided us with the opportunity to recognise two members who have recently left the committee after many years service to the group and to the Ramblers. The recipients of the Long Service Award were **Pat Holmes** and **Fred Willits**.

The "Rambler of the Year Award" will be presented again at the 2011 AGM. Please see the notice elsewhere in *Footnotes* and send in your nominations! ■

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## Social Scene 2011

From our Social Secretary, Derek Garfield



**F**riday 28th January saw the more sporting of our number descending on The Selly Park Tavern for a highlight of the country's sporting calendar, namely the Birmingham Ramblers' **Skittles Evening**. If you weren't able to get tickets, you may well have seen it broadcast live on television. There was some fine skittling. Geoff (The Power) Dowling trotting out the Individual Winner for the men and Jennifer (What a technique) Menzies for the ladies. The team prize went to Ron, Libby, Dixie and Mike who will now go on to represent England in the 2012 Olympics.

At the time of writing, we are looking forward to The **Group Annual Dinner** being held at The Eaton Hotel on 4th March. More about this in your next *Footnotes*.

Our first **Walk Day Out** of the year on Saturday 7th May sees us heading off in our executive coach to Leamington Spa from where we will enjoy a canal and riverside walk to Warwick. After lunch, there will be an

optional visit to Warwick Castle. We all went there years ago but will now get the opportunity to see how the place has been made even more realistic than we perhaps remember. Booking Forms are now available on the coach or directly from me.

And finally, a date for your diary. Our **Annual Day Out** is on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July to an interesting but as yet undecided destination. ■

Socially yours  
Derek Garfield

## New Mid-Week Walks

### From Birmingham Group?

The group committee have seen the possible need to increase our walking activities by having a mid-week (possibly Tuesday or Thursday) half-day short walk, probably once a month, accessible by public transport from Birmingham.

In order for us to include such walks in our regular programme we need an administrator to organise these walks. This would involve arranging the dates, walk leaders, public transport arrangements etc and attendance on the walks. The prospective volunteer will be given all necessary assistance to start up this initiative.

If you are interested in volunteering for this role, please email:

david.sutton986@btinternet.com

or phone 0121 444 6188

## Warwickshire Area AGM passes motions on Footpaths and HS2

**O**n Saturday 5th February 2011 the Warwickshire Area of the Ramblers held their AGM at The Central Methodist Hall in Coventry. Two resolutions were passed, one that the Ramblers' Association deplores the proposal by Warwickshire County Council to reduce the budget of its Countryside Access Team, resulting in its inability to fulfil its statutory footpath duties. The other motion passed was that in view of the high degree of damage to rights of way on foot, and the beauty of the countryside caused by the proposed High Speed Train, the AGM urges the Ramblers' Association to campaign against HS2. This motion will now go to National Council. For further details and about these motions and petitions, see our recent e-newsletter. (To sign up to Birmingham Group's e-newsletter, see our advert on the back of this newsletter). ■

## A word from our new Treasurer

James Greig



(Photo: Gary Sewell)

**H**ello, I'm James and I am probably familiar to many of the active COBRA members I have been walking with over the last few years. I am taking over from Sandra Sutton who has been treasurer for the last four years and had everything very much at her fingertips, so she leaves a hard act to follow.

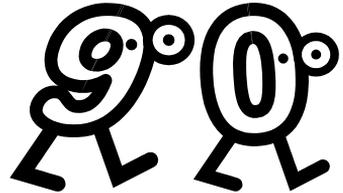
However, there are jobs like this that do need to be done in order for the range of COBRA activities to take place, so I volunteered to become part of the team and to try and do my bit for the group, having already learnt about leading walks from them. The post of treasurer is a necessary but unglamorous one that involves making sure that all the book keeping is done and the money is in order and adds up, and bills are paid. With much help from Sandra and from Roger Gibbs over the past month, I am now up and running in this role. I should say that I'm not an accountant or anything like that, but my background is as a scientist, which is nearly as boring and which has taught me a bit about using spreadsheets which comes in useful now. Most members should notice little change except my signature on the cheques.

A change most members will notice will be the necessary increase in the coach fares which Sandra recommended, and the Committee agreed with her. We run the Sunday coaches as closely as possible to the real cost of hiring the coach, so the need to increase the cost by a pound comes up inevitably every 3-4 years as costs go up annually with inflation of 3-4%, and now there is also increased VAT. We hope to delay the increase to £10 for as long as possible, but it will probably come in the spring. For your tenner, we will continue to offer not only travel to and from the destination, but also a choice of several very expertly planned and led walks at various grades to some lovely stretches of countryside that are otherwise hard to reach. The committee is also discussing about offering some kind of award to the person or people who have supported the most coaches during the year. ■

# Our Nonagenarians (two more coach passes!)

By Roger Gibbs

**A**s you may know, Bill Hughes reached the milestone of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2007, and was presented with a pass giving him free coach travel with the group. Bill attended our 2010 Christmas lunch celebration in Ombersley, and was the first to book for Christmas 2011.



This year, it gives us great pleasure that we have another two coach passes to report. Caro Carter and our President Arthur Foden also reach 90 in April. At the time of writing it is planned that presentations will be made at the Annual Dinner in March.

Caro is still very active and makes full use of Warley Woods for her daily constitutional. Many of us remember David and Caro over many years of happy rambling. They were prolific leaders, much admired, particularly as David, Caro's husband, suffered from blindness in his final years, but always keen to get his boots on. Caro used to be his main guide on the rambles, and once he knew where we were, could face the view before us and describe the main features from memory.

Arthur was one of the mainstays of the Group in its early days, and was responsible for leading more walks than most. If awards had been the theme in those days, he would have won the lot, several times over. Woe betide any rambler who got in front of Arthur when he was leading. He had the knack of making a sharp unexpected turn from the obvious route (still on a ROW.), leaving some rather red faced walkers adrift. In addition to leading rambles, Arthur was a Committee member from 1988 until 1999, prepared and organised all the YHA weekend walks, was responsible for the taskforce which spent much of its time building stiles on the North Worcestershire path, and was the leaders' "mentor". In recent years, Arthur has helped with the programme posting nights and follows the activities of the Group with interest.

Arthur reminded me recently that David Carter's death occurred on a recce. He had just finished "prelimming" the walk with Caro in 1996

when he suddenly and sadly collapsed and died. The walk he was helping prepare was Cleobury Mortimer, with Arthur doing the "A" walk and Caro and David the "B". David had sorted the pub!

Our best wishes go out to Arthur and Caro on their 90<sup>th</sup> birthday year, and hope that their well being continues for years to come. If you know of any more nonagenarians in the Group, let us know. ■

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## Third Pub Lucky!

By Steve Brittain

**S**ome people think I've got an easy job on the committee because all I do is organise the Christmas lunch! Well last year we decided to move from the Cookely Arms as we felt a change in the walking area and pub was necessary. So Sandra Sutton and I found a nice pub at Martley. We met the landlady and the chef, discussed the menu and booked the room.

Soon after, the pub went bust, but the owner managed another pub, The King's Arms at Ombersley, and agreed to honour our original booking. That's lucky I thought...

Well I began distributing menus to members and over a few weeks I had some 47 ramblers booked and information all stored on my laptop. I was so pleased it was going so well, until one night Sandra rang me to inform me that *this* pub has also gone bust - just my luck.

Sandra, and a quick thinking Carol Warren, who was on a recce in the area and had discovered The King's Arms closed up and with a solicitor's letter posted on the front door, found yet another pub, The Crown & Sandys, thankfully in the same village, so all the planned walks would not be affected.

So in a matter of days, along with help from Sandra and Dave Sutton, I managed to rewrite all the new Christmas menus and distribute



them on to the members who had already booked. Everyone cooperated brilliantly and I managed re-book everything in record time. Now this third pub wanted a table plan, and, well I have never had to produce one before but I had a go and think it worked out all right on the day (I hope). I sat back on the Friday night before the event, thinking what else can possibly go wrong now? Yes, you guessed it, it only snowed heavily all day and night, so by Saturday my phone didn't stop ringing all day, the first call at about 9.45 am and the last was at 10.15 pm, enquiring whether our Christmas Ramble and Lunch was being cancelled due to the weather. Anyway I was very impressed by all the members who enquired and to the committee who had to make a very difficult decision about whether the day was on or off...

I would like to finish by thanking everyone who helped in any way to make 2010's Sunday Christmas ramble a good, and very memorable day! ■

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## Goodbye to Tessa

By Carola Klein

**S**adly, Tessa Sidey, who walked with Ramblers during the later 80's and 90's, and more recently with Ridges and Tops, died on January 1st of ovarian cancer. I knew Tessa both professionally and as a friend, and was privileged to attend her funeral, where I heard warm and evocative appreciations of her life and work.

Vivacious and gregarious, she loved the culture and language of Italy, and talked me through her own tour of Southern India before I myself went; she keenly followed sport, especially cricket and tennis. In her last year she travelled widely abroad visiting friends. Yet she could be very private. I remember her years ago, on the RA coach, determinedly opening up the huge pages of The Sunday Times.

Tessa was deeply committed to her work at the BM&AG as a Fine Art curator. Held in world esteem as curator and art historian, she had an impact at all levels; with exhibitions such as Surrealism in Birmingham, Millais, Hidden Burne-Jones, and the showing of neglected women artists, she instigated partnerships and involved regional artists and photographers; with her specialism in Prints and Drawings, she expanded the collection, in particular its 20th century work, and opened it to the

public; she published a range of well-researched books, and set up a Pre-Raphaelite online resource. On a personal visit to the Print room I remember the pride with which she showed me storage drawers of treasured works on paper. I enjoyed her attention to detail and her aesthetic acumen. She was in the right job. ■

## ☺ RAMBLER OF THE YEAR 2011 ☺

### Saying “Thank you” - a little job for you!

As previously mentioned, we would like to recognise the important role that our volunteers play in making our Group so special. Our 2nd annual award for the “**Rambler of the Year**” will be presented at the AGM in November 2011. This is your chance to reward a fellow member for their efforts. Please could you play your part by nominating the volunteer who you think deserves the award this year? Give your nominations in writing, to a Committee member before October, so that the winner can be announced in November.

### *Sign up for the e-newsletter...*

The Birmingham Group now have an occasional email Newsletter. News and reminders about forthcoming social events, walk changes and information, and other items of interest to group members direct to your inbox. To sign-up, simply email the editor:  
david.sutton986@btinternet.com

Please Note: Any discounts shown in this publication are wholly at the discretion of the retailer and are not an entitlement to Ramblers members.



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