

# North Staffordshire National Trust Association

Newsletter No. 113  
Summer 2019

[www.northstaffsnt.org.uk](http://www.northstaffsnt.org.uk)



Conservators working on an Italian capriccio (see AGM)

© David Goacher @NT, Shugborough

## Arrangements for Trips

Coaches now depart promptly from **Brunswick Street** at the front of the Jubilee Baths. **The car park on School Street is now short stay.** The nearest long stay car park is the public car park next to the Borough Arms Hotel. We do not pick up members en route.

Please send a separate cheque, with the event name on the reverse, and a stamped addressed envelope for each event applied for, even if it is with the same organiser. People wishing to sit together should complete one form.

Non-members travelling as members' guests pay an extra £2 for Coach Outings and £1 for car trips. If circumstances dictate they have lower priority booking.

Please make cheques payable to "North Staffs National Trust Association". Cheques are normally not cleared until after an event. We will give notice if we need to do otherwise.

Refunds on cancellation are possible only if there is a waiting list. Please do not find your own substitute travellers: people on the waiting list have priority.

The Committee reserves the right to cancel any event that is not viable.

The personal accident insurance arranged by the Association through the Trust no longer has an age limit. Our public liability insurance also covers members at any age.

Whilst participating in an event please make sure that you carry the organiser's mobile phone number from the booking acceptance form in case you get lost. Please **DO NOT MAKE** alternative arrangements to get home without first telling the trip organiser.

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We are always delighted to welcome new members – see further details on the inserts in the centre of this Newsletter.

The editor welcomes items of direct relevance to Association activities, and thanks all contributors, with apologies for failure to acknowledge any, particularly if sent by post.

Copy and correspondence for the next issue, due for publication in August, should be addressed to [newsletter@northstaffsnt.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@northstaffsnt.org.uk) (01782 791360) by the **15th July** at the absolute latest (but earlier if possible!)

Printed by Colourimage Printers, High Wycombe (01494 52999) [colourimage@aol.com](mailto:colourimage@aol.com)

# North Staffordshire National Trust Association

## Newsletter No. 113 Summer 2019 Programme

### A Note From The Chair



"From May to September, when you haven't got time for the waiting game." We shall all have to book early and be patient.

To while away the time, I suggest a new project. Why not make, in paint, marquetry, or collage, a capriccio featuring some of the beautiful buildings and grounds to be explored this summer? The landscape, both real and imaginary, should also surprise, so don't leave out an iron rhino or the Bells of Peover or Loughborough. I would feature Edith Sitwell's rings and Maria Callas "Tosca" gown which I hope are still at Renishaw.

I am on dangerous ground likening our programme to a capriccio because even non students of Italian know this masterpiece has nothing to do with goats with agile minds or the hair-raising possibilities of a hedgehog (look it up later, are you still with me?). Our diary is the result of hard work by a dedicated team.

Jane has coordinated the programme with great care and due regard to your comfort and safety. We are extremely grateful for four years of wonderful work. If you would like to thank Jane personally for all she has done, and later be inspired for your fantastic artistic creation suggested above, come to the AGM.

Best Wishes

*Ralph*

## **Data Protection Policy**

The North Staffordshire National Trust Association (NSNTA) is a non-profit voluntary organisation which endeavours to comply with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998, and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) of May 2018.

Personal data collected by us on membership forms, renewal forms and event booking forms will be limited to: names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers. It will only be used for: administration of membership, communication of information and organisation of events within and related to the NSNTA.

Personal data will not be shared with the National Trust or any third party, or to other members.

Membership lists are destroyed when 18 months old. Lists relating to specific events are destroyed when the event is complete.

Contact the Membership Secretary if you wish to view/amend/delete any of your personal data.

By providing personal data on our membership forms and event booking forms, you are consenting to this, our Data Protection Policy, and to our stated use of your personal data.

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In order to comply with the terms of GDPR and to improve security and privacy the following policies are being adopted with particular reference to the publishing of details of members organising events. Full leaders' postal addresses will only appear on the booking forms and not in the main text of the magazine, which will just carry email addresses and telephone numbers. The booking forms are included in Newsletters distributed to bona-fide members of NSNTA but will not be contained in copies of the Newsletter posted on the website. Access to back copies of the Newsletter on the website which contain leaders' addresses will be restricted by password, available to members on request.

Attendees of NSNTA events are advised that they may be included in group photographs for publication in the Newsletter or on the website, but they will not be named without their specific permission. If anyone does not want to appear in such photographs, please let the organiser or the editor know.

## *Forthcoming Events*

All talks commence at 7:30 p.m. at the North Staffordshire Conference Centre (the Medical Institute), Hartshill Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 7NY unless otherwise stated.

From time to time it becomes necessary to change details of an event or to announce updates to booking arrangements, availability etc. or to advise members of other matters that have arisen. To cover this, a **STOP PRESS** feature has been added to the website which you might like to monitor to be kept up to date.

A recent incident prompted a review of our **emergency** procedures and it was considered a shortcoming that organisers did not hold emergency contact details for members on trips should a situation arise. You are therefore invited, particularly if travelling without a companion, to provide this information, along with any medical conditions that might be relevant.

### **Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May: Car outing: Water and Wheels Museum, Stone**

Identical twin brothers Roger and Martin Fuller have set up a new museum beside the Trent and Mersey Canal in Stone, devoted to canal and railway memorabilia. It is an eclectic collection of canal and railway items from Great Britain.

Whilst still teenagers, the Fuller twins built a boat in their Barlaston back garden and somehow transported it to the canal. Since then they developed into building full-scale canal narrowboats tailored to individual customers' requirements. Now retired from boatbuilding, they concentrate on presenting their life-time collection. Come and see what they have found over the years and hear how, since childhood, they have been amassing this portfolio of interesting items.

You will also have the opportunity of riding on their own railway!



Cost: £6 to include tea or coffee. Meet at 2pm (directions to follow). **Maximum number 20.** In view of the number of people allowed, this trip is restricted to members only.

Please apply to Cynthia Dumbelton including a cheque and stamped addressed envelope. Enquiries: Tel: 01782 641765; email: dumbeltoncynthia@gmail.com

## Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May: Walk: Great Haywood to Shugborough

An easy, level, 4 mile walk taken at a leisurely pace. The walk starts and ends at the **Canal Side Farm Shop and Café**, Mill Lane, Great Haywood ST18 0QQ. There is a car park but it would be helpful if you could perhaps car share where feasible to reduce the number of spaces we will be occupying.



We will set out from the car park at 10.15 am. The walk takes us along the Trent and Mersey canal towpath and crosses the Essex Bridge. We then cross the parkland of the beautiful Shugborough Estate. We cross the railway bridge and continue through woodlands where hopefully the swathes of bluebells will be fully in bloom. We proceed towards the river Trent and continue on a path besides the river. We emerge onto the main A513 and turn left to go over the cobbled Weetman's bridge. We return to the café along the canal towpath.

Please remember your NT card in case you want to explore the Shugborough Estate after lunch.

For those choosing to eat at the café for lunch places will be reserved and the menus will be distributed when they are available. Booking is essential as spaces are limited.

The suggested donation for the walk is £3.00 for members and £3.50 for non-members, payable on the day.

Please email David Wright ([david@wright353.plus.com](mailto:david@wright353.plus.com)) or use the booking form, indicating whether you would like a place(s) for lunch at the Canalside Café.



## **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May 7:00 p.m.: AGM: Speaker: Gemma Roberts on Conservation**

### THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING NORTH STAFFS CONFERENCE CENTRE, HARTSHILL

#### AGENDA:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Chairman's Opening Remarks
3. Approval of Minutes of the 38th AGM
4. Secretary's Report - Matters Arising
5. Treasurer's Report - Matters Arising
6. Setting of Subscription Level for 2019 – 2020
7. Approvals for re-election to committee \*
8. Nominations for Officers and Committee \*\*
9. Election of Officers and Committee for 2019 – 2020
10. Any Other Business

At 7.30pm (approx.) we will invite our guest, Gemma Roberts, the House and Collections Manager at Shugborough, to give us a specially commissioned, bespoke, talk on the restoration of the four capricci by Pietro Paltronieri (1673-1741) (cover photo). These baroque visions of romantic ruins will remain in public view as they are being worked on for the rest of the year. This adds to the challenge of a mixture of oil and tempera and showing Conservation in Action.

The evening will finish as usual with tea/coffee and biscuits, or wine from the bar – all available to purchase on the night.

\* Under our constitution, committee members should normally stand down after 5 years. Richard Adams, Roger Cartlidge, Sue Corlett, Cynthia Dumbelton, Sue Till, Rose Wheat, Ralph White and Bob Winter have all served 5 years or more, and wish to continue in post. They therefore require the approval of the AGM to stand for re-election this year.

\*\* Members will be invited to submit nominations for the Committee and Officers (Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer). Each nomination should be signed by the proposer, a seconder and the nominee, all of whom must be paid-up members of the Association. If possible, please send nominations in advance of the meeting to Richard Adams, Secretary, 79 Whitmore Road, Newcastle ST5 3LZ.

Minutes of the last AGM were included in Newsletter 111.

## Thursday 23rd May Coach Trip: British Ironwork Centre and Chirk Castle<sup>NT</sup>

The British Ironwork Centre at Oswestry is a mix of Art Sculptures and Experiences. The largest metal safari park with over 100 sculptures on display in the 90-acre grounds. There are two showrooms with an array of crafted items, cookware, furnishings, ironmongery and fine jewellery, as well as artist's displays. Also features Blacksmiths, Silversmiths. Floral Designer, and Potter / Ceramicist.



Tea/coffee & biscuit on arrival at 10 am. Tour of site followed by Lunch (cost included). Then at 1.15pm we leave for Chirk Castle where our tour of the Castle & Gardens is self-guided. At 5.00pm after a tea/coffee (own cost) we return to Newcastle to arrive at 6.30pm.

Cost £25 (non-members £27). Depart Newcastle at 8:30.am.

**Don't forget NT cards for Chirk Castle.** Limited places still available – check with organiser before booking.

Please apply to John Huson, including a cheque and menu choice and stamped addressed envelope. Enquiries: johnhuson@gmail.com Tel: 01782 393671.

## Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June: Coach Trip: DH Lawrence Museum & Newstead Abbey, Notts

Two notorious men of letters: D H Lawrence & Lord Byron.

D H Lawrence was the son of a coal miner and the house in which he was born in Eastwood has been converted into a museum. He wrote the controversial novel Lady Chatterley's Lover (yes, the one that dared talk about sex)! People he knew appeared, thinly disguised, as characters in his novels. As you can guess that didn't always make him popular! He was an artist too but his only public exhibition was raided by the police for obscenity.

We will arrive in Eastwood and will split into two groups. Group 1 will take a 5 minute walk to the museum whilst Group 2 will have coffee (own expense) at a nearby pub which has a Lawrence themed room. The tour will last about 75 minutes. Group 2 will then go to the museum whilst Group 1 will have coffee.

The museum is on three floors with 15 steps up to the first floor. There are photographs of the second floor for those of you who cannot manage the very steep steps up to the attic bedroom where Lawrence was born. After watching a

video our guide will tell us about his intriguing upbringing and the local community who inspired and influenced the young Lawrence. We will also hear about the life of a coal miner's family at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> C.

We will then take a 45 minute drive to Newstead Abbey.

Lady Caroline Lamb's description of Byron as "mad, bad and dangerous to know" is familiar to most people and his numerous affairs add weight to this description. We should arrive at Newstead Abbey at approximately 1.00 pm when we will have lunch. Anyone wishing to bring a picnic will be able to enjoy al fresco dining in the beautiful Abbey grounds. However, there is a light buffet available at an additional cost of £6.50, which will be served in the Abbey and comprises your choice from a selection of sandwiches, cakes and tea, coffee, or water – please see booking form. At 2.00 pm we shall all meet up at the Abbey entrance for a one-hour guided tour to see Byron's rooms and various personal possessions. We shall then have about two hours to explore the extensive grounds featuring lakes, ponds, waterfalls and lovely formal gardens. Of particular note is the monument to Byron's favourite dog, Boatswain. Byron had wanted to be buried with his dog but after his death in April 1824 in Missolonghi, Greece his body was eventually returned to England and buried not far from the Abbey in nearby Hucknall.

Depart Brunswick Street at 8.00 am to return by 6.30 pm.

Cost £31.50 (non-members £33.50) to include coach, driver's tip, guided tours of both properties and NT donation. Also light lunch available as above – see booking form.

Please note:

- 1) the maximum number that can be accommodated on this trip is 50
- 2) the Closing Date is 20th May
- 3) cheques will be banked on or about 24th May
- 4) this trip has been jointly organised by Jane Mayer and Shirley Timmis

Please apply to: Shirley Timmis, ([rogandshirl@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:rogandshirl@hotmail.co.uk), telephone 01782 851436 or 777513) enclosing a cheque and SAE.

## **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June: Car outing: The Gardens of Eccleshall**

In June gardens are at their loveliest and we have been invited to join an exclusive tour to view up to five private gardens in Eccleshall. Some gardens are quite substantial and slope down towards the River Sow with views of the castle. Holy Trinity Church plan to have a flower display and we will be welcomed there too. We will meet at 7pm at the home of NT Association members Pauline and

Roger Savage, 19 High Street. Theirs will be the first of the gardens. Please note that there are a few steps up to the garden and during the evening there may well be trip hazards as we make our way along the High Street and wander through private properties.

This should be a really lovely way to spend a summer's evening.



Cost: £7.50 to include a glass of wine or something non-alcoholic if you prefer. The cost includes a donation to the Eccilian Garden Fund and the church, also £1.50 to our Association.

**Maximum number 30.** In view of the number of people allowed, this trip is being restricted to members only.

Please apply to Cynthia Dumbelton including a cheque and stamped addressed envelope.

Enquiries: Tel: 01782 641765; email: dumbeltoncynthia@gmail.com

### **Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June: Car trip: Weston Park House & Gardens, Shropshire**

Weston Park, Weston-under-Lizard, Shropshire, which includes the house, was given to the nation in 1986 by the current Earl of Bradford. It is now owned by the Weston Park Foundation, an independent charitable trust.

The house has a beautiful collection of furniture and paintings and a unique collection of Gobelin tapestries. The park itself has one of "Capability" Brown's Pleasure Grounds, woodland walks, lakes and follies to see. The third Earl of Bradford made extensive alterations to the house, including a new wing, because with the advent of the railways, many more guests arrived by train. He also built the Orangery.

The Granary Art Gallery, (open at 11 am), is well worth visiting. It was built in 1767 and having been sympathetically restored, it now houses the Art Gallery under a beamed roof. There are monthly exhibitions of paintings by well-known artists. After we have arrived at the Granary car park at 11 am, we will be met by Laura Bewley, Visitor Welcome Co-ordinator in the Deli Courtyard at the Granary Building two minutes' walk away. She will take us to the Stables for tea/coffee

and biscuits. At 11.30 am we will have a guided tour round the house. At 12.30 there will be a break for lunch (own cost). The Deli provides light lunches, salads, cakes and refreshments until 5.30 pm. The Granary Grill is a sit-down restaurant open for lunch until 2.30 pm. The Stables Treat Bar provides pizzas, waffles and ice-creams. There is a dedicated area for picnics and benches around the grounds. At 1.30 pm we will return to the house and have a “Behind the Scenes” tour lasting 45 minutes. We will hear about the lives of the servants and see some of their rooms. After 2.15 pm everyone is free to explore the Park and Gardens (until 6.00 pm) before going home.

Cost £19, (non-members £21), which will include the refreshments on arrival, 2 guided tours and a National Trust donation.

Please apply to Sue Corlett, enclosing a cheque and SAE. For further information ring 01782 71907 or email [sue.corlett@btinternet.com](mailto:sue.corlett@btinternet.com).

### **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> July: Coach Trip: Leominster & Croft Castle<sup>NT</sup>**

Leominster town is situated in the rolling countryside of North Herefordshire and lies in the beautiful and historic borderlands of England and Wales known as the Marches. We will arrive in time to have a quick coffee (own expense) at one of the many coffee shops before having a Hidden History Tour of Leominster town with a guide. This will begin at 10.30 lasting around 1 hour 45 minutes before we move on to Croft Castle and Parkland (NT) which is in Yarpoole about 5 miles north of Leominster. There we will have lunch either in the Café (at own expense) or you can bring a picnic to eat in the gardens or Parkland.

The ancient town of Leominster was established around its great Anglo-Saxon Abbey, founded in 660 AD. The town was named by the Saxons after Leofric, Earl of Hereford and husband of the famous/infamous Lady Godiva. It appears as “Leofminstrein” in the Domesday Book.

Leominster prospered in the medieval period with its wealth primarily coming from the high quality wool of the local Ryeland Sheep whose fleeces became known as “Lemster Ore” meaning Leominster Gold.

Much of the town centre still retains its medieval and Tudor flavour – narrow streets and half-timbered houses, whilst Church Street and Etnam Street boast gracious houses from the Georgian period.

Croft Castle and Parkland became the home of the Croft family before the Domesday book was written nearly 1,000 years ago. It has many interesting stories to tell right up to those from the 20<sup>th</sup> century – including how Croft was

saved from demolition. The interiors, styled by Thomas Farnolls Pritchard, also tell a 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century tale.

In the castle grounds you can explore the historic walled garden including the working vineyard and 1908 J. Weeks and Co. glasshouse. There is also the comprehensive and beautiful Parkland area which includes several walks and points of interest together with the reviving Croft's Fishpool Valley.

Depart Brunswick Street at 7.45am to return by about 6.30pm.

Cost £20 (£22 for non-members) to include coach, driver's tip and guided tour of Leominster.

**PLEASE BRING NT CARDS WITH YOU.**

Please apply to Ivan Smith, enclosing cheque and SAE. Enquiries: Tel: 01538 382998 email [smith.ivanc@gmail.com](mailto:smith.ivanc@gmail.com)

**Wednesday 31st July: Car Trip: Peover Hall, Gardens & Park, and Lower & Upper Peover Churches, Cheshire**

Peover Hall is an Elizabethan house boasting a fascinating history and is still in use as a family home. The hall was built by Sir Randle Mainwaring in 1585 and a new wing was added by the fourth baronet Sir Henry in the 1760's. Since the 1930's it has been owned by the Brooks family who have restored it after neglect due to the occupation by the United States 3<sup>rd</sup> Army in World War II. The house boasts splendid oak panelling, a long gallery and has been furnished using contents with a historic connection to Peover and the Mainwarings. The beautiful gardens include a 500 year-old oak tree and an avenue of pleached lime trees. There are also Grade 1 listed Carolean stables with carved Tuscan columns and arches and an elegant strapwork plaster ceiling. We also plan to visit St. Lawrence's Church & St. Oswald's Church which is conveniently next door to The Bells of Peover where we can have lunch.

Access to the Hall & the ground floor is by 6 Shallow steps. Although there are 2 sets of stairs to climb to visit the 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor it is still worth a visit. There is no seating provide on tour. Shooting sticks with protective caps are permitted. Tour lasts approximately ¾ hr.

Meet at 10.30 am at St. Lawrence's Church, WA16 9PZ. Drive to St. Oswald's Church at 11.30 am. Lunch at the Bells of Peover 12.15 pm until 1.30 pm (own cost) or bring your own packed lunch. Then drive to the Hall for 2.00 pm for the guided tour, with afternoon tea at 4.00 pm in the Hall tea rooms (included).

We need to know numbers for lunch at the Bells of Peover.

This trip is restricted to 30 persons (members priority). Cost. £17.00. (non-members £19 00.) (Reductions for HHA members – please ask) including donations to the Churches, entrance to Hall & afternoon tea. Please apply to Janet Taylor including a cheque & SAE. Enquiries: 01782372727, email [tr15tag@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:tr15tag@hotmail.co.uk).

### **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> August: Walk: Rudyard & Lunch at Rudyard Hotel**

Following Ray Perry's talk on 22<sup>nd</sup> January about Rudyard Lake and the work of the Rudyard Lake Trust, this fairly easy walk of about 5 miles will enable you to see at first hand the various historic features and points of interest around the lake. The walk will include part of the Staffordshire Way, and will follow part of the route of the former Churnet Valley Line of the North Staffordshire Railway.

Lunch will be available, if required, at the end of the walk at the Hotel Rudyard, which offers a choice of carvery and other dishes (Lake Road, Rudyard, ST13 8RN, tel. 01538 306208). The walk will start at 10.00 am on the car park at the rear of the hotel.

Suggested donation for the walk is £3.00 for members, £3.50 for guests, payable on the day. Children, and dogs on leads, are welcome at no charge.

Please book your places for the walk and lunch with me, Peter Wilson, by email to [peterwilsonendon@btinternet.com](mailto:peterwilsonendon@btinternet.com) or by post. I will circulate the lunch menu by email when available, so that you can pre-order (this will not be necessary if you would like a carvery lunch). If you do not have email, please send SAE for the menu.

### **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> August: Coach Trip: Renishaw Hall & Walking Tour of Sheffield**

For almost four hundred years Renishaw Hall has belonged to the Sitwell family and each generation has in some way shaped its splendid architecture and gardens. The celebrated literary trio, Edith, Osbert and Sacheverell Sitwell, drew inspiration from here in the early part of the twentieth century. Refreshments (tea, coffee and biscuits) will be served on our arrival to be followed by a private guided tour of the Hall and Garden Entrance. We will re-join the coach for the short drive to Sheffield city centre where there will be ample opportunity to enjoy a good lunch (at own expense) in the many cafés and hosteleries nearby.

After lunch we shall meet up with Marcus, our guide, at the Winter Garden close-by, where we will be divided into two groups. While one group is walking (approximately 90 minutes with stops) the other will be gainfully employed visiting the John Ruskin collection and John Sykes history of Sheffield metal work exhibition in the adjacent Millennium Art Gallery or the Graves Art Gallery in the City Library both opposite the Winter Garden, or even engage in a spot of 'retail

therapy'. There is a café in the Winter garden and a Sheffield Makers craft shop as well as toilets and a shop in the Gallery. In addition to his tour around the history and architecture of Sheffield, Marcus has arranged a couple of private visits to the 1700 Unitarian Upper Chapel and to the City Hall, (both venues reserve the right to revoke these visits if unforeseen circumstances arise). The walks will be run back to back and we should depart from Sheffield at approximately 5.00pm and traffic permitting, arrive back in Newcastle at around 7.00pm.

Depart Brunswick Street at 8.30am.

Cost: £33, (£35 non-members) (RHS members £6 reduction on production of membership card) to include coach, driver's tip, refreshments on arrival, entrance to the Hall and gardens and guided tour of the Hall, guided walking tour of Sheffield City Centre and visits to Unitarian Chapel and City Hall.

Please apply to Rose Wheat enclosing a cheque and SAE. Enquiries: Tel 01782 616113; email [rose.wheat@virginmedia.com](mailto:rose.wheat@virginmedia.com).

## *Advance Booking*

*Some events in the Autumn programme need to be booked before, or very quickly after, the next Newsletter is published:*

### **Sunday 1st - Thursday 5th September 2019: Holiday in Constable Country and Rural Suffolk.**

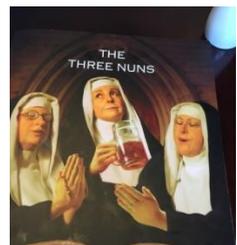
This is now fully booked with a full waiting list.

### **Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September: Coach Trip: Loughborough Bell Foundry and the Great Central Heritage Railway**

The coach will leave Newcastle at 8.00am for the **John Taylor Bell Foundry and Museum** where we will learn about the art of English Bellfounding over the last 600 years. The tour starts at 10.00am and takes approx. 1½ hrs. The tour involves quite a lot of standing and walking over uneven ground, so strong (not fabric) fully enclosed shoes are essential. It can be cold and dusty in the Foundry so warm dark coloured clothing is advised.

PERSONS NOT WEARING APPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR WILL BE REFUSED ENTRY TO THE FOUNDRY. (This is an HSE and Insurance Requirement.)

After the visit we will travel to the **THREE NUNS pub** for lunch (at your own cost). To enable the THREE NUNS to





cope efficiently with 35 people & to give guests' maximum choice we will need to pre-order and menus will be sent out with the booking confirmation.

After lunch it is back on the coach to Loughborough Central Station for a 1¼ hr. round trip on the **Great Central Heritage Railway** before returning to Newcastle for approx. 6.00pm.

Cost £38.00 (members only): numbers restricted to 35.

Booking form, SAE and cheque to Michael Lycett, Millstone House, The Green, Bagnall, Staffs ST9 9JR. Tel: 01782 502919 email: lycettmichael@hotmail.com

### **Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October: Coach Trip: Robinson's Brewery & Staircase House, Stockport**

An opportunity to tour both **Robinson's** working, traditional (yet advanced and sophisticated) tower brewery – sampling the beers with your luncheon – and **Staircase House**, a Grade II\* listed 15<sup>th</sup> century mediaeval townhouse.



**UNICORN BEER**



**JACOBAN STAIRCASE**

Details and booking forms will be in the next Newsletter, but the closing date will be the **1<sup>st</sup> September**, so be warned!

## *Events Coordinator*

### *Introducing Marion Lycett*

*I am offering to take over the position of Programme Co-ordinator after the AGM in May when Jane is retiring.*

*Jane Mayer has ably fulfilled this position for 4 years now and has certainly earned a well-deserved break. She will be a hard act to follow and I have no illusions that I shall be able to maintain her level of efficiency and attention to detail, not to mention her incredible memory, but I am willing to give it a shot.*



*Mike and I have been members of the National Trust for a good number of years, and first joined the North Staffs Local group about 11 years ago. We have enjoyed some lovely trips, talks and holidays over the years. But as we have spent a large part of each year in the States for the last 20 years have felt unable to commit ourselves to becoming more involved. Now we are looking forward to being more UK based & I feel it is time to try to give something back.*

*I see the position as being one that co-ordinates and offers help and advice to all the splendid members who are kind enough to come up with ideas and are willing to run the many varied and interesting events that this organisation, that we are lucky enough to belong to, has to offer. Without its members it would not exist. I hope you will all continue to support me as you have supported Jane and the previous organisers in the past.*

*Looking forward to the challenge.*

*Marion*

Please support Marion with ideas and offers of trips or events so that we can continue with the outstanding programmes we have become accustomed to.

Contact: Marion Lycett, [marionlycett@hotmail.com](mailto:marionlycett@hotmail.com), 01782 502919, or any other member of the committee.

## *Donations*

From time to time individual National Trust properties publish a "Wish List" of projects for which they seek funds. This year, on your behalf, the committee have made the following donations:

**Little Moreton Hall:** £2,000.00 has been sent to replant an orchard of heritage fruit trees and to recreate an area of water meadow to encourage wildlife. There is evidence that these features were here centuries ago so an area of two acres of farmland has been taken back in hand to reinstate them.

**Biddulph Grange:** £3,000.00 for the revelation and conservation of the Drawing Room decoration of 1873 by the famous firm of Crace. This dynasty of decorators worked in all the best properties for over two hundred years. The Drawing Room, the original design for which is shown below, is one of the rooms leading to the garden.

We have also sent to Biddulph Grange £1,500.00 for a Coalbrookdale iron bench so you can sit and admire the view from the end of Wellingtonia Avenue.

Thank you for taking part in so many Association events which provide these funds. We try to send money to special local places where you can see the difference you have made.

*Ralph*

*The original architectural drawings of the ceiling decoration and coving designed for Biddulph Grange by John Dibblee Crace (1838-1919). Part of this has recently been discovered, and funds are required to continue the restoration work.*

©RIBA Collections



## *Photographic Archives*

A reminder that Kay Williams, our archivist, has been managing a collection of photographic prints and other material dating back to the start of the Association. She would be grateful for some photos/leaflets from visits when she is not there herself; prints or digital images are equally acceptable. Kay's email for sending photos is williakay@gmail.com (note the spelling!) and her address for posting is 3 The Spinney, Madeley Heath, Crewe, CW3 9TB. Telephone 01782 751018.

The editor acknowledges and thanks contributors of photographs included in this issue, and also for any photos sent but not used. **We welcome photographs** for the Newsletter, particularly when the editor is not present at an event – please keep sending them in. Just a reminder that photographs taken on private or NT properties should not be used for commercial purposes, and should only be taken with permission of owners or trustees. Any photographs submitted will also be passed on to Kay for possible use in the archives, and may be used on the NSNTA website for record or publicity purposes. Copyright (which must be owned or obtained in writing by the submitter) is acknowledged for all images even if not stated in the magazine. Please contact the editor if more details of any item are required.

*Note: Only a selection of photographs available, and at a reduced size, are included in the magazine. It is hoped that a larger selection can be posted on the website in due course - look out for them, it might happen before the next Newsletter is published!*

## *New Members*

We have pleasure in announcing and welcoming the following new members: Jacqueline Woolfson, Richard Castille, Janice Hawkins, Jean Rosser, Genevieve Lowson, William Chadwick, Jean Gibson, Cynthia England, Patricia and Lionel Sweet, Kirit and Rekha Patel, Dee Frankish, Christine Hopewell, Pauline Bamford, and Merlyne Daker. This takes our membership to 357.

### ***NT Membership Discount***

A reminder that a discount on the general National Trust membership subscription is available to eligible members – see Newsletter 110 or their website for more details.

## *Reviews of Recent Events*

### **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> November: Talk: Danny Wells – ‘The Victorians & the Christmas Season’**

Danny gave a fascinating and well researched insight into how our modern Christmas has evolved. We heard how medieval influences were seized upon by the Victorians to promote Christmas as the cultural anchor for a society which was changing from agricultural to urban, bringing with it all the problems of poor living conditions and social upheaval. The influence of Victoria and Albert of course helped enormously to promote the picture of home as an instrument of peace, duty and religious observation. His knowledgeable presentation showed how the theme of Christmas has been adapted, modified with the addition of carols, cards, Father Christmas, Christmas trees and a time to exhibit a social conscience.

He explained the influence of Dickens, Coca Cola and the Illustrated London News. It was a very interesting and revealing talk very well presented and illustrated.

*David Morgan*

### **Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> November: Christmas Dinner at ‘The Meadows at Potbank’**

Over 70 members enjoyed a splendid Festive (pre-Christmas) Dinner at The Meadows at Potbank based at the Spode site.

What follows is a totally biased record, being written by the Organiser’s husband: the venue was great, the food was great, the service was great, the speaker was great and, in addition, the organising was superb and fun was had by all.

Actually, all of that is true. The Spode site is now being gradually restored and renovated, with this new restaurant, catering and function facility (with a strange name) being one of many other attractions, including a museum, a shop, a café, a boutique hotel and even a pop-up theatre, courtesy of Claybody Theatre, plus several workshops. The part that we occupied has been splendidly restored and is just right for a group occasion.

We started the evening with glasses of mulled wine and fruit juice and then we moved through to the 9 big circular tables all set out beautifully. The service was good, with pleasant staff, and the food much enjoyed, although some complained that the turkey was a bit cold. We pulled the crackers and wore our paper hats and a gradual feeling of bonhomie settled over us as we drank our coffee and polished-off the miniature mince pies that had been placed on the table.

Then our speaker, Derek Poulson, was introduced by Cynthia and he entertained us with a lively presentation on the theme of *Love Actually* – an amusing story of the history of so many of aspects of love and marriage – and describing how women’s increasing power over men in the process developed (or, how men’s power over women was diminished, as I prefer to put it). He talked about how men, instead of seeking the lady’s father’s permission to marry the daughter, with or without her agreement changed to the man kneeling before the lady and seeking *her* approval. He talked about the origin of confetti, the wearing of wedding rings, etc, etc and all with practical demonstrations with some of the reluctant ladies in the front row!

The evening ended with a short speech from Ralph, giving his thanks to Cynthia, the speaker, the venue staff and, most of all to members whose support of their Committee and the events they organise, for the great success of the Association.

The evening was then complete and I had the opportunity of giving Cynthia a big kiss in thanks and congratulations for organising yet another very successful occasion.

*Cynthia has asked me to point out that this Christmas social event is non-profit making and the aim is to break even with no risk of a deficit.*

*David Dumbelton*

## **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January: Talk: Ray Perry – ‘The Life & Work of Rudyard Lake’**

Ray gave us a fascinating talk on Rudyard Lake. It was wide ranging, very well researched and was given with evident enthusiasm and commitment. The importance of the North Staffs Railway was stressed and how it was seen as a great opportunity for mass tourism. We saw videos, excellent footage of events associated with the lake, all of which were interspersed with amusing anecdotes of the characters of the era. We met Rudyard Kipling, Carlos the tight rope walker, Fanny the autocratic land owner, Captain Webb and George Orwell: all had an association with the lake.

It is important that we acknowledge the role that volunteers like Ray make to the area and the preservation of our environment. They have helped to ensure that the lake maintains its attraction and remains unspoilt.

His talk was very well received and thanks go to him and the members who turned up on a very snowy evening. We think it was worth the trouble.

*David Morgan*

## **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> February: Talk: Steve Booth – ‘The Golden Age of Stage-coaching’**

Steve gave a very interesting and thorough insight into the history of the role of not only stage coaching but the Royal Mail itself.

He concentrated first on how the roads were improved, invoking famous names like Telford, MacAdam and not so famous like Metcalfe. We learnt how ditches and cambers came to be constructed, the importance of toll houses and how vital was the link between London and Ireland with the (now) A34, A51 and the A5 taking a lot of the transport. The fascination of the talk was enhanced by our local knowledge of places like the Crown Hotel, Stone the Swan Hotel, Stafford, the George Hotel and the Leopard Hotel in Burslem and the Wolseley Arms at the junction of two toll roads at Wolseley Bridge. All these hotels played an important role as coaching inns where horses were changed and the journey could be continued rapidly.

This was an excellent talk, researched thoroughly, and delivered in an informative and relaxed way, punctuated by fascinating anecdotes.

*David Morgan*

## **Sunday 3rd March: Walk: Keele & lunch at the Sneyd Arms**

A baker's dozen or so hardy, or perhaps foolhardy, members defied the storm warnings and duly met up at 10 in the morning for our walk around Keele. The four dogs also with us were just happy to be out with the group. We set off into the countryside and were soon rewarded with some glimpses of the sun peeking through the clouds. We kept up a good pace, to pass by our starting point as planned at 11 o'clock where we were joined by a further 10 walkers.



We carried on down a lane at the back of the campus, then in the back way up the drive to the old Clock House stable block for Keele Hall, now the vice-chancellor's residence. This drive was the Sneyd family and their guests' route to Keele racecourse, long ago abandoned and then

most traces obliterated when the M6 motorway was built. We carried on past the hall and into the woodland and lakes. Our schedule only allowed us to see two of the eight lakes, and many of us are planning to return to explore further, perhaps when the bluebells are out in a few weeks' time.

We headed back through the centre of the university campus, then a surprise detour: thank you to George and Marilyn, who led us through their garden and out the back gate to their well-trodden short cut to the pub, just in time before the rain started to come down in earnest.

A sociable lunch at the Sneyd Arms completed the day.

*Richard Adams*

### **Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March: Talk: Bob Kermeen – ‘The Life of Gertrude Bell’**

Bob gave a very stimulating, knowledgeable and interesting talk on the life of Gertrude Bell. This remarkable lady was a diplomat, archaeologist and adventurer whose insight into the Middle East paved the way for British success in that region during the time of WW1.

She came from a wealthy influential family and used that influence in order to achieve solutions to Britain's expansion in the Middle East particularly in the formation of Iraq.

Gertrude was a highly intelligent lady and achieved a first class Honours degree from Oxford in 1888. She was a determined rebel in many ways and made frequent journeys to the Middle East learning Persian, Arabic, Turkish and Hebrew. These skills were put into good use in Military Intelligence. She was the first woman major in the Army. She worked with T.E. Lawrence and Winston Churchill to name just two.

There were many aspects of her life about which Bob enlightened us and we really enjoyed his incisive knowledge of his subject. He made a complicated Middle East more understandable and brought History to life. We look forward to his returning to us.

*David Morgan*

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| <b>Summary of Programme May to September 2019</b> |                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>May</b>                                        |                                                               |
| Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup>                           | Car Trip: Water & Wheels Museum, Stone                        |
| Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup>                         | Walk: Great Haywood to Shugborough                            |
| Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup>                          | AGM: Speaker: Gemma Roberts on Conservation in Action         |
| Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup>                         | Coach Trip: British Ironworks Centre, Oswestry & Chirk Castle |
| <b>June</b>                                       |                                                               |
| Thursday 13 <sup>th</sup>                         | Coach Trip: DH Lawrence Museum & Newstead Abbey, Notts        |
| Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup>                          | Car Trip: The Gardens of Eccleshall                           |
| Wednesday 26 <sup>th</sup>                        | Car trip: Weston Park House & Gardens                         |
| <b>July</b>                                       |                                                               |
| Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup>                        | Coach Trip: Leominster & Croft Castle                         |
| Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup>                        | Car Trip: Peover Hall and Churches, Cheshire                  |
| <b>August</b>                                     |                                                               |
| Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup>                          | Walk: Rudyard & Lunch at Rudyard Hotel                        |
| Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup>                         | Coach Trip: Renishaw Hall & Sheffield                         |
| <b>September</b>                                  |                                                               |
| September 1 <sup>st</sup> –5 <sup>th</sup>        | Holiday, Sudbury Suffolk                                      |
| September 11 <sup>th</sup>                        | Coach Trip: Loughborough Bell Foundry & Heritage Railway      |
| <b>Dates for your Diary</b>                       |                                                               |
| September 24 <sup>th</sup>                        | Talk: Rick Marshall on Antarctica                             |
| October 8 <sup>th</sup>                           | Coach Trip: Robinson's Brewery & Staircase House, Stockport   |
| October 22 <sup>nd</sup>                          | Talk: Rachel Thomas on NT properties in Cheshire              |
| November 19 <sup>th</sup>                         | Talk: Penny Wheat, Silversmith                                |
| December 4 <sup>th</sup>                          | Festive Meal                                                  |

*This Newsletter (and previous editions) is available on the website.  
If required additional copies of booking forms can be printed  
using 'Booklet' printing for multiple pages.*