

North Staffordshire National Trust Association

Newsletter No. 122

Summer 2022

www.northstaffsnt.org.uk



Hilary McGrady, NT Director General visiting 19th April - see inside. © NT Images / John Millar

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.

This Newsletter is published by North Staffordshire National Trust Association to provide members with information on the forthcoming programme, reports on recent events, and other membership issues. The text and images are copyright and may not be reproduced without the owner's permission. Any views expressed by individual contributors are their own and not necessarily of the NSNTA or the NT. No liability will be accepted for errors or omissions.

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 (01782 791360) by the **15th July** at the absolute latest (but earlier if possible!)

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North Staffordshire National Trust Association

Newsletter No. 122 Summer 2022

A Note From The Chair



Welcome to this Spring and Summer issue. Just as we are about to venture outside more regularly, I would like to thank all the members who, in such numbers, supported the indoor talks season, which begins a recess after the AGM. The past season produced some great entertainment and delightful surprises for audience and speaker alike.

I can only call setting off for the new season a bit of a kangaroo start. Events oversubscribed and others needing more support or being cancelled. However, there is a very tempting

programme ahead, promising some first rate experiences. Last year I visited RHS Bridgewater and was in seventh heaven amongst inspirational planting, a nursery with rarities, not to mention the best café and bookshop I have seen in years.

We have two special anniversaries this year. My synapses have linked them in their habitual way which makes my ramblings at the lectern so hard to follow. (Clue: set brain to Hitchhiker's Guide mode). We are celebrating HM 's Platinum Anniversary with a Summer Party and Exhibition on a grand scale, not at "The Restaurant at End of The Galaxy" but nearer – Barlaston. The number of The Association's special Anniversary will help you solve the ultimate question of life, the universe and everything. The answer is forty-two. This answer was provided, like the rest of this piece, by software called Deep Thought. It was said to have taken the equivalent of seven and a half million years, which is about how long it will take to arrange a(nother) visit from the Director General!

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.*

Some events book up very early, others more slowly. You can check with the organiser or the STOP PRESS on the web site if events are full or are undersubscribed, or if it has been necessary to change details or booking arrangements, availability etc. or there are other matters which may be of interest. Do let the organiser know if you are interested in an event but can't attend so the feasibility of repeating it on another date can be assessed. Remember also the web site has copies of past Newsletters going back to 2002, and also a list of past events. The latter is fairly sketchy for the earlier days so if you can add more information, dates, corrections etc., or have good copies of earlier Newsletters that could be added, please get in touch with the editor.

### **Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 7:00 p.m.: Hilary McGrady Visit and Talk: David Skillen – American Civil War.**

As you may be aware we were looking forward to meeting Hilary McGrady, Director-General of the National Trust, at the AGM that was cancelled due to Covid. Our Chairman has been attempting to rebook the visit ever since and thanks to his persistent efforts has managed to secure a promise to come and address us at our next talk, **starting at the earlier time of 7:00 o'clock**. Don't miss this opportunity for you to hear what she has to say or to ask questions on the future of the National Trust, and for her to hear what you have to say. Hopefully she may address some issues that may have been of concern to some of our members.

At 7:30 we'll have coffee and biscuits (at NSNTA expense!), during which time you may be able to speak to Hilary. At 8:00 our speaker David Skillen will inform and entertain us about the American Civil War- not a period we tended to study at school! David studied military history for many years and has travelled extensively in the USA, so is well-qualified to talk about this traumatic period in American history.

Please let Richard Adams know if you wish to attend for catering purposes.

### **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April: Car Trip: Staffordshire Wildlife Centre with 2 hour tour.**

The Wolseley Centre is the main base of the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, the county's leading nature conservation charity, managing its 30 nature reserves. The Centre has been extended and we shall have a guided walk in the grounds with Mr. Alex Rogers, the Wolseley Centre Warden.

This car trip filled up quickly, so another visit is being arranged for the Autumn.

## **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2022: Coach visit: Coventry Transport Museum and Cathedrals.**

Unfortunately by the time you read this this trip may have been cancelled due to insufficient numbers to make it viable, however it is worth a quick phone call to Bob Winter or Marion Lycett to check – a few more names in time might just save it!

## **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> - Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May: Coach holiday: Scottish Heritage & History.**

There are still spaces available on this Scottish Heritage & History trip to explore some of Scotland's finest buildings and discover their historic heritage. 5 days/4 nights staying at the New Lanark Mill Hotel in the heart of the New Lanark World Heritage Site, a beautifully restored 18<sup>th</sup>-century cotton mill village in the spectacular Clyde Valley in southern Scotland, a stone's throw from the Falls of Clyde and less than an hour from Edinburgh and Glasgow.

More members and friends will be very welcome! It is open to non-NSNTA members, but non-NT members will need to pay for admission to NT properties.

Details were included in a previous Newsletter and are on the website. Contact Regent Travel for more information and to book.

## **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May 7:00 p.m.: AGM and talk: N.T. and the Environment.**

THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE NATIONAL TRUST ASSOCIATION  
FORTY-SECOND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
NORTH STAFFS CONFERENCE CENTRE, HARTSHILL  
TUESDAY 24<sup>th</sup> MAY 2022 at 7.00PM

### AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Chairman's Opening Remarks
3. Approval of Minutes of the 41st AGM
4. Secretary's Report - Matters Arising
5. Treasurer's Report - Matters Arising
6. Setting of Subscription Level for 2022 – 2023
7. Approvals for re-election to committee \*
8. Nominations for Officers and Committee \*\*
9. Election of Officers and Committee for 2022 – 2023
10. Any Other Business

\* Under our constitution, committee members should normally stand down after 5 years. Nearly all of the current committee have served for at least this time, and wish to continue in post. They therefore require the approval of the AGM to stand for re-election this year.

**\*\* Members are 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 to arrive before our AGM.**

Following the AGM will be a talk: "The challenges facing the Trust in its management of the environment, climate change, encouraging wildlife, landscape and estate management, politics and farming marginal land etc. The multi-faceted task of maintaining and enhancing thousands of acres of varied landscape for everyone for ever".

### **Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> June: Summer Party and Jubilee Celebration with Arts & Crafts Exhibition at Upper House.**

As a complete opposite to our Christmas lunch which was unfortunately cancelled due to Covid concerns, a summer lunch has been arranged for 16<sup>th</sup> June, still at the Upper House, Barlaston. We will meet at 12 noon in the



Orangery to view the display of art and craft works previously collected by Anthea Bond and afterwards enjoy a three course special lunch in The Woodland Suite. This is the first time we have been able to arrange a large gathering and it will be a great opportunity to catch up and chat with our friends. We can anticipate a visit from Frank Wedgwood, an original occupant of this house.

It is not too late to submit something to the exhibition. Perhaps you have been busy making things during the past two years and would be willing to show us? Or in fact if you have made anything since the exhibition at Keele Hall in 2015. If so, please contact Anthea by emailing her on [AntheaBond@hotmail.com](mailto:AntheaBond@hotmail.com). We would love to see the results of your endeavours. Anthea will contact you if you were on the original Christmas list for showing your work.

The cost of our three-course lunch is £30 and you are welcome to bring a friend if you wish (preferably a member of the National Trust but not necessarily of the Association). This is an event you will not wish to miss!

For tickets please apply to Cynthia Dumbelton including the booking form with your menu choices, a cheque and a stamped addressed envelope. Closing date for applications: 27<sup>th</sup> May.

Enquiries: tel.01782 641765, email: [dumbeltoncynthia@gmail.com](mailto:dumbeltoncynthia@gmail.com)

## MENU

(Please choose one from each)

**Starters:** Crab and Samphire Salad, lime dressing (*gf*),  
Tomato and Mozzarella Bruschetta, balsamic dressing (*gf*),  
Confit Duck Leg, green leaves, sesame seeds (*gf*)

**Main Course:** Vegetable Balti, steamed rice, naan bread (vegetarian/vegan) (*gf*)  
Roast Chicken Breast, crushed garlic potatoes, green beans, tarragon gravy (*gf*)  
Creamy Fish Pie, wilted greens (*gf*)

**Desserts:** Dark Chocolate & Cranberry Brownie, honeycomb ice cream (*gf*)  
Strawberries & Sorbet (vegan) (*gf*)  
Apple & Cherry Crumble, custard.

**To Follow:** Coffee and Mints

### **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June: Coach Trip: RHS Bridgewater Garden in Salford.**

RHS Bridgewater is located on the site of Worsley New Hall in Salford, former home of the Earls of Ellesmere. Francis Egerton, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Ellesmere began building the Gothic-style mansion in 1840, which in its heyday was visited twice by Queen Victoria. However, after two World Wars, a fire and subsidence, the Hall was sold for scrap and demolished in 1946.

Nature reclaimed the landscape until the RHS took over the site in 2017 and began its ambitious plan to create a world-class garden for the north west and named after the Bridgewater Canal, running along its edge. Finally opening in May 2021, the historic grounds have been transformed by Chelsea Gold Medal-winning designers into a spectacular 154 acres of varied and inspiring gardens. Marcus Chilton-Jones is the curator, commuting each day from his home in Trentham.

RHS Bridgewater has a shop, a plant centre, a large café in the Welcome Building, with a smaller café adjacent to the Garden Cottage.

The cost includes coach travel, driver's gratuity, entry, guided tour and National Trust donation.

RHS members £19.00 pp (£21 non-NSNTA members). (Please remember your RHS card).

Non RHS members £27.00 pp (£29 non-NSNTA members).

Depart Jubilee Baths 8.30am, depart Bridgewater 4.00pm.

Please apply to Mrs. Jane Cameron, 15 Parkside, Madeley, Crewe, Cheshire, CW3 9JR.  
Enclose cheque for relevant amount and SAE.

Closing date: Friday 27 May 2022.

## **Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July: Car Trip: Evening canal cruise with fish and chip supper.**

Located on the beautiful Shropshire Union Canal at the Junction of the now disused canal to Newport, Shropshire and beyond, Norbury Wharf gives access to the famous Four Counties Ring, the Llangollen Canal and its famous Pontcysyllte aqueduct and the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal with its terminus at Stourport. Obviously we won't be travelling this far but our cruise will take us on a three-hour journey through rural attractive farmland.



As we leave Norbury Wharf we will travel past a line of traditionally painted moored boats. There are fantastic views of wide open countryside and deep cuttings. We should glimpse moorhens, kingfishers, herons, ducks and the ubiquitous Canada geese along the way.

Our cruise departs at 6 pm and we are limited to 42 people; those who booked previously for the postponed trip in May 2020 will be given first choice.

Parking is available at the marina but space is limited so please car share if possible.

Cost: £19 (non-members £20) inclusive of the fish and chip supper and NT donation. There is a licensed pay bar open for the length of the trip.

Please apply to Cynthia Dumbelton, 32 The Lea, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8DY with a booking form, including a cheque and stamped addressed envelope. Please address enquiries to [dumbeltoncynthia@gmail.com](mailto:dumbeltoncynthia@gmail.com) tel: 01782 641765.

## **Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July: Coach Trip: Boughton House, Kettering, Northants.**

If you can't get to France this year why not join us on a trip to the 'English Versailles', one of the stately homes of the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensbury. Modelled on the French style by Ralph, 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Montagu, in the late seventeenth century, this magnificent mansion has featured in 'Treasure Houses of Britain' and in the Oscar-winning film 'Les Miserables'. Its stunning art collection includes paintings by Van Dyck and El Greco and amongst its many treasures are the Sevres porcelain and Boulle furniture. We shall be taking the 'King's Tour', which encompasses twenty rooms over two floors, enhanced by knowledgeable and friendly guides.

The 18<sup>th</sup> century landscaped gardens and new 21<sup>st</sup> century garden offer a spell-binding series of waterways and stunning display of flower beds and herbaceous borders, together with a rose garden, walled garden and sensory garden. After lunch you will have time to explore the gardens and to venture further into the Park, if you so wish. There is also a well-stocked gift shop and café.

We shall be served coffee/tea and home-made biscuits on arrival and after the tour we shall sit down to enjoy a delicious cold buffet consisting of a variety of meats, fish, quiche and salad plus tea/coffee. You will then be free to explore the gardens and other facilities.

Our coach will depart from Brunswick Street in Newcastle at 8.30am and we aim to leave Boughton at 4.30pm to arrive back in Newcastle by 7.00pm, traffic permitting.

Cost: £46 (£48 to non-members) to include the coach, driver's tip, refreshments on arrival, admission and the King's Tour, lunch and the usual donation to the National Trust.

Please apply by 30<sup>th</sup> June to Rose Wheat and include a cheque and SAE. Further enquiries can be made by tel.01782 616113, or e-mail: [rose.wheat@virginmedia.com](mailto:rose.wheat@virginmedia.com) or see [www.boughtonhouse.co.uk](http://www.boughtonhouse.co.uk) for images and further details.

Please inform me of any special dietary needs.

There are some stairs to reach the Staterooms on the first floor, some cobbled areas in the Coach House and leading to the Gift Shop and some steep inclines in parts of the garden.

### **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August: Car Trip: Guided walk on "The Shirleys of Etruria" plus a tour of the visitor centre and the mill. (Repeat visit)**

This outing was previously run during January but is now being repeated in August due to popular demand. See the report below of the earlier event for an idea of what to expect!

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Shirley family of Shirley's Bone and Flint Mill were as well known locally as the Wedgwoods. Come and join in a 3-mile history walk around Etruria ably guided by Andy Perkin of the Potteries Heritage Society and Bernard Lovatt from the Etruria Industrial Museum.

The walk will start at 10.00am from the Visitor Centre near to Etruria Junction. (Parking is free of charge and directions to the carpark will be posted out to you.) Along our meandering route we will discover, among other things, where the Shirleys lived, worked, worshipped and are buried. The 2-hour stroll to see the heritage sites associated with the generations of this family will take place mainly along well surfaced paths, towpaths and pavements and avoids main roads where possible. There is a stepped footbridge to be crossed near the beginning of the walk and a few more steps later, both of which can be avoided if necessary.

Upon concluding our walk we will enjoy tea/coffee & biscuits back at the museum, where lavatories are available, and shall have a guided tour of the visitor centre and mill. The morning's Etruscan experience will conclude at approximately 1.00pm.

**Cost:** £10 per person (non-members £11) to include 3-mile/2-hour history walk with the services of two very knowledgeable presenters, plus a guided tour of the Industrial Museum with tea/coffee & biscuits. Number limited to 20; preference given to members.

Please apply to Helen Mansell, 3 Oakdale, Newcastle, Staffs, ST5 4JG (07866 352 927, Email: helenmansell@gmail.com) enclosing the booking form, a cheque made payable to "N Staffs Nat Trust Assoc", and your stamped, Self Addressed Envelope for direction details.

Due to its popularity and limited spaces you are advised to check availability before applying. Priority will be given to those who were on the waiting list for the January trip – please contact Helen immediately to reserve your place.

## *Advance Notice*

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

### **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September: Walk: Barlaston.**

A short walk of around 3½ miles or so starting from the Plume of Feathers, led by Janet Taylor. Full details will be in the August Newsletter.

### **Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September: Coach Trip: Liverpool - Port Sunlight and the Lady Lever Art Gallery.**

Final details and costings for this event are not yet available, so look out for it in the next Newsletter and be ready to send in your applications!

### **Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September: Car Trip: 'Pipes in the Peaks' Organ Concert and Museum.**

This is an opportunity to visit this unique venue where we will enjoy an afternoon of music provided by the wonderful sounds of the Mighty Compton organ played by Robert Wolfe, the resident organist at the Thursford Collection in Norfolk. The organ was purchased by the owner of Thorpe Garage, Dave Thorpe, in 1990 and completely restored over a number of years. The first concert took place in 1999 and they have been entertaining thousands of people with music old and new for over 20 years.

You will also be able to view the impressive collection of historical organs and musical artefacts – visit [www.pipesinthepeaks.co.uk](http://www.pipesinthepeaks.co.uk) for more details, or [www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1sEuUSEhcw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1sEuUSEhcw) to hear Robert Wolfe playing at Pipes in the Peaks.

Location: Dovedale Garage, Thorpe, Ashbourne DE6 2AT.

The venue opens at 2 pm and the concert starts at 2.30 pm. Tickets are £17.00 (£18.00 non-members). Please allow plenty of time to park and take your seats.

There is a very nice public house (The Old Dog) across the road from the venue where you could have lunch prior to the concert if you wish. You would need to book well in advance as it is a very popular venue. Tel: 01335 350990. Also in the area are the Izaak Walton Hotel in Dovedale and the National Trust Tea Room in Ilam.

Please apply to Joan Harvey using the booking form, including cheque and SAE (if you sent us a SAE for the cancelled 2020 concert then we have your SAE in hand). Booking forms must be received by 8<sup>th</sup> July.

Enquires: Tel: 0781 491 8792 / 01782 392737. Email: joanharvey694@gmail.com

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## *Have Your Say!*

The committee are always anxious to know members' views on the activities of the NSNTA. Is there too big a choice of events, or not enough? Do we have the right mix – would you like to see more or fewer coach trips, car trips, walks or talks? Holidays or away breaks? Are the trips and talks diverse enough or would you like to see more directed to specific topics? Or other activities – informal lunches, evening themed get-togethers etc. etc.?

Please let the Programme Co-ordinator, the Editor or any member of the committee know your views, even if it's "no change" so we can get a balanced view, or if there is any other aspect of management of the Associations or even the National Trust as a whole that you would like to bring to their attention.

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## **Booking / Enquiry Forms**

*It is preferable that organisers hold emergency contact details for members on trips should a situation arise. You are therefore invited, particularly if travelling without a companion, to provide the name and number of someone who can be contacted in emergency, along with any critical medical conditions that might be relevant, or whether (and where) you carry ICE (In Case of Emergency) details. We also request that you provide your own mobile number so that you can be contacted should you fail to appear at a rendezvous.*

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> June: Summer Lunch and Arts & Crafts Exhibition at Upper House.**

Cost: £30 per person, Cheques will be cashed on Monday 6th June.

Choice of menu:

Starter .....

Main course .....

Dessert .....

You should apply using this form having added your choice of food.

If you have favourite seating companions, please tell me and I'll try to accommodate your wishes.

Please send this form with a cheque and stamped addressed envelope to Cynthia Dumbelton, 32 The Lea, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8DY.

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The cost includes coach travel, driver's gratuity, entry, guided tour and National Trust donation.

RHS members £19.00 pp (£21 non-NSNTA members). (Please remember your RHS card).

Non RHS members £27.00 pp (£29 non-NSNTA members).

Please apply to Mrs. Jane Cameron, 15 Parkside, Madeley, Crewe, Cheshire, CW3 9JR.

Enclose cheque payable to "N Staffs Nat Trust Assoc" for relevant amount and SAE.

Closing date: Friday 27 May 2022.

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Name(s) ..... Association number ..... Cost: £ .....

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email ..... Total .....

Address .....

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Telephone No. .... Mobile .....

Emergency contact and details etc. ....

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Please apply by 30<sup>th</sup> June to Rose Wheat, 12 West Avenue, Newcastle ST5 0NB, including a cheque payable to “N Staffs Nat Trust Assoc” and SAE. Further enquiries can be made by tel.01782 616113, or e-mail: [rose.wheat@virginmedia.com](mailto:rose.wheat@virginmedia.com)

**Please inform me of any special dietary needs.**

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July: Car Trip: Evening canal cruise with fish and chip supper.**

| Name(s)                                 | Association number | Cost: £ |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------|---------|
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**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August: Car Trip: Guided walk on “The Shirleys of Etruria” plus a tour of the visitor centre and the mill.**

**Cost:** £10 per person (non-members £11) to include 3-mile/2-hour history walk with the services of two very knowledgeable presenters, plus a guided tour of the Industrial Museum with tea/coffee & biscuits. Number limited to 20; preference given to members.

Please apply to Helen Mansell, 3 Oakdale, Newcastle, Staffs, ST5 4JG (07866 352 927, Email: helenmansell@gmail.com) enclosing the booking form, a cheque made payable to “N Staffs Nat Trust Assoc”, and your stamped, Self Addressed Envelope for direction details.

**Sunday 25th September: Car Trip: ‘Pipes in the Peaks’ Organ Concert and Museum.**

Tickets are £17.00 (£18.00 non-members). Please allow plenty of time to park and take your seats.

Please apply to Joan Harvey, 353 Sandon Road, Meir Heath, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 7LJ, using this booking form, including cheque and SAE (if you sent us a SAE for the cancelled 2020 concert then we have your SAE in hand). Booking forms must be received by 8th July.

Enquires: Tel: 0781 491 8792 / 01782 392737. Email: joanharvey694@gmail.com

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Address Total .....

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Address Total .....

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Telephone No. .... email .....

Emergency contact and details etc. ....

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## *Paintings of National Trust properties*

During the pandemic, competitions on television have been popular: baking, woodwork, sewing, pottery and several on painting outside or “*en plein air*”.

The Landscape Artist of the Year on the free Sky Arts channel has been held at various National Trust and other properties in the past few years. Buildings, gardens and fine landscapes have been included but no interiors. The views are chosen by the programme organisers, who receive hundreds of applications for the 8 places in each round. There are 3 highly regarded judges. The artists choose their own medium and style of work, bringing their own materials for 4 hours of painting.

These years of competitions were followed recently by a programme showing viewers’ votes on the NT paintings.

The winning painting, of Scotney Old Castle near Tunbridge Wells, was by a professional artist, Howard Weaver. The castle was originally built in 1378 and belonged to the same family for 400 years. It gradually crumbled, so now it has romantic ruins and a “New” Victorian castle with good views across the estate. This location was also the picture shown by the winner of the third prize.

The Gower Peninsular was one of the locations, showing Rhossili Beach.

Stourhead Gardens opened in Wiltshire 300 years ago. It has a famous lake, classical temples, a grotto, trees and rhododendrons.

In fifth position was Fountains Abbey, the 900 year old ruin near Ripon, North Yorkshire. It was once the largest monastery in Britain but stripped and emptied under Henry VIII’s dissolution of the monasteries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Turner painted it and more recently it has become a World Heritage Site as well as a National Trust property.

Stowe in Buckinghamshire was the site of a charming small charcoal drawing by a young Scottish accountant. The gardens were created by Capability Brown with lakeside walks and temples, they are maintained by the National Trust but not the 18<sup>th</sup> century building, which was shown just small, in the distance. The clouds were drawn brilliantly.

John Constable (born 1776) would have liked those clouds! He made many paintings of Flatford and the winner of the whole competition has been asked to paint Constable’s view of Flatford Mill for the National Trust.

Lyme Park, shown in one of the Pride and Prejudice series as Pemberley, has 1400 acres and several extra buildings.

Trelissick in Cornwall was painted in the rain. Wray Castle in the Lake District was the first place visited by Beatrix Potter and this painting took the 10<sup>th</sup> position in the vote by 6000 viewers.

*Anthea Bond* 10 February 2022

## *Membership*

We have pleasure in announcing and welcoming the following who have joined since we last welcomed new members: Liz Rhodes, Jan Holton and Margaret Martin. Current membership is 296.

**NT Membership Discount** A reminder that a 25% discount on the general National Trust membership subscription is available to eligible members (those aged 60 and over, who have been a member for at least five years in the last ten). You need to email or contact them to ask for it – it doesn't happen automatically!

## *Photographic Archives*

A reminder that Kay Williams, would be grateful for some photos/leaflets from visits when she is not there herself; prints or digital images are equally acceptable. See inside the back cover for Kay's contact details.

The editor acknowledges and thanks contributors of photographs included in this issue, and also for any photos sent but not used. 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.

Photographs in this issue were submitted by Anthea Bond, Cynthia Dumbelton, David Fowler, John Huson, Helen Mansell and Chris Wain.

## *Reviews of Recent Events*

### **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> December: Christmas Lunch & Craft Exhibition at Upper House.**

As you will be aware it was deemed advisable to cancel this event due to a significant surge in Covid cases at the time. It is replaced in June by the Summer Lunch at which the planned Arts and Crafts Exhibition will be held, as detailed above.

### **Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> January: Talk: Bob Kermeen, 'Soraya, Empress of Persia.'**

The Empress Soraya of Iran was beautiful, educated and wealthy yet for all that her life was a sad one. Married at the age of 18, in 1951, to the Shah, he divorced her barely 7 years later for failing to provide him with an heir. The love of her life, an Italian film director, was killed in an air crash in 1972 and for the rest of her life she led the life of an international party girl before her relatively early death at the age of 69 in 2001. Soraya was an intelligent woman who was fluent in several languages and had been a popular empress during her short marriage, especially with Iranian women, whose lot she attempted to improve. For years she involved herself in

charitable work raising funds for the Red Cross and animal charities. Yet, at the end of the day, one felt sympathy for a talented woman who never realized her potential.

Bob Kermeen was clearly enchanted by his subject and is in the process of writing her biography. His research has been phenomenal and I learnt a great deal about the volatile politics of the Middle East which cast an interesting light on the origins of the current situation. Our thanks go to him for a very informative and entertaining presentation.

*Rose Wheat.*

### **Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> January: Car Trip: Guided walk on “The Shirleys of Etruria” plus a tour of the visitor centre and the mill.**

We met within a small oasis in Etruria, complete with geese and a lovely, grassy seating area for the local residents. It was bitterly cold but the sun soon broke through, helping to dispel that hand-numbing feeling.



Crossing the footbridge over the Caldon canal, so important of course in the early days of the pottery industry, we made our way

across the tramway and the old Loop Line railway, evidenced by the very leafy pathway left in its wake. Arriving at the extremely busy and therefore noisy Cobridge

Road, Andy and Bernard, our enthusiastic guides pointed out the site of a very early 13th century corn mill, which later became a flint, then bone mill.



Our next port of call was to Etruria Park where we gathered around a drinking fountain presented by the Shirley family. In a rather sad state, one can imagine how splendid it must have looked with its Wedgwood panels intact.



The History of the canals and the mill is very entwined and as we made our way back to the museum we were regaled with further anecdotes by Andy and Bernard. While standing on the canal bridge, we

Passing the site of the cottage once belonging to John Bourne, one of the founders of Shirley's mill, we stopped by yet another home belonging to said family which still stands proudly on Etruria Old Road. Its very distinctive roofline is echoed by that of the Mill itself.



were entertained very succinctly by a young man practising his clog dancing. Framed by the old mill, two narrow boats and the tall chimney beyond it could have been a snapshot of life at the mill in its early productive days.



*Unfortunately I had to leave at this point, but Helen continues:* After a very welcome cuppa in the Museum café, Bernard guided us through the production line process, relating the hardships of working-life there. Dust from the grinding led to many an early death.



Sourcing the flint and bones, usually from cattle but even from elephants and getting it all to the mill was a feat in itself.

The mill is a far cry from modern day factories but offers a wonderful reminder of its cutting edge facility of the day and of the important part that it played in the heritage of The Potteries.

Thanks must go to Helen Mansell for arranging this fascinating trip. It was so popular and oversubscribed that a repeat trip has been arranged for 3<sup>rd</sup> August.

*Susan Till.*

## Thursday 3rd February: Walk: The Rum Tum Tardy Um Walk, Caverswall.

On a fine sunny morning nineteen intrepid walkers from our local group enjoyed an historical walk at Caverswall taking in local village features including a potted history of the Castle here about which little has been published.

The walk was entitled “The Rum Tum Tardy Um” which goes back to the old days when the Carsa wakes was held between the hamlet of Cookshill and Caverswall and the walk route followed the lanes and paths around the village that the band took in those days.

The peculiar name is derived from the rhyme that was chanted as the procession passed along the route and is listed in detail below in local dialect:

*Rum Tum Tardy Um  
From Cookshill green to Carsa cum  
Mothers gon fetch me Father wom  
Father's drunk and conna cum wom  
Rum Tum Tardy Um*



As we finished the walk a number of us enjoyed a very nice meal at the Red House PH courtesy of Sue and Josh the landlords (sorry to Richard and Nicky who sadly could not join us owing to the dogs in pubs ruling).

*Chris and David Fowler.*

## **Tuesday 15 February: Talk: Henry Birks, 'The Forgotten Artists of North Staffordshire'.**

Henry is the owner and director of Trent Gallery in Newcastle-under-Lyme which specialises in original paintings and works on paper by modern British artists. His talk on 'forgotten' Staffordshire artists was superbly illustrated with tremendous slides showing the paintings of several of those local artists and concentrated on one particular man, Maurice Wade, (1917-91). Wade's Potteries landscapes are quite different to the usual portrayals of Stoke-on-Trent: there is no smoke, no scenes of dereliction but rather a calm, still, geometric depiction of local factories, streets and canals. Such is Henry's admiration of Wade's work that his gallery is mounting an exhibition of some of his paintings which are now very collectible having some high-profile owners. I shall certainly visit this exhibition which runs from 25<sup>th</sup> March to 29th April and I am grateful to Henry for introducing me to this previously unknown artist (at least to me).

Maurice Wade was not unknown, however, to one member of our audience who surprised and delighted Henry by his revelation that he had personally been acquainted with Wade and knew many of his paintings. I suspect that Henry and his business partner, Ruth Palmer, will be rushing to talk to Mr. Brammer for reminiscences about the artist and his work.

*Rose Wheat*

## **Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> March: Talk: Kath Reynolds, 'The Famous Folk of Stoke' (or thereabouts).**

This was a lively and informative talk, well illustrated with a rapid display of well-known faces, some lesser known and one masked, from the city and surrounding area.

Who knew that so many famous people came from Stoke! There were politicians, sports stars, pop stars, actors, potters and even academics. Each person was wittily described and we all went home feeling that bit prouder that having breathed the same air we might have absorbed a little of their talent. The talk also featured sound bites. Those with partners humming "Nellie Dean" or "Sailing" were thought to be luckier than those whose ear worm was attracted to the works of a gentleman going by the name of "Slash". An entertaining speaker with a wide repertoire we look forward to hearing again.

*James Hartley*

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March: Car Trip: Guided tour of Sandon Church, including bell ringing, plus an option to walk.**

It was last September, in the Heritage Open Days, that Helen Mansell and I first visited the Norman church at Sandon. Access is up a steep, narrow lane off the A51. The congregation is a lively group with fund-raising social events throughout the year: tours of their much-loved church, walks on the estate and concerts in Sandon Hall.



In the last newsletter, sent to everyone in December, Helen gave a detailed account of the church. It looked lovely in the sun. The bell ringing was a rare opportunity, a real thrill for some, especially after the visit to the bell foundry in Loughborough.

Afterwards, members walked to see the site of the old Sandon Hall, now just a wall, with a moat. They continued to the folly, Trentham Tower, which was moved from the Trentham estate. There were fine views across the surrounding countryside and members were told about the column of William Pitt, close to the A51 but hidden by the trees. The 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Harrowby was the Foreign Minister to Pitt, who was the youngest Prime Minister of Great Britain in 1783 at the age of 24.



Many thanks to Helen for all her organisation and to the church people for their very interesting talks (and cakes!). This visit was heavily over-subscribed, 48 members were accepted but sadly 6 of these did not come.

The church may be open again during the September Heritage Open Days, 9<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> September 2022. See the HOD website and local publicity for opening times and details.

*Anthea Bond*

## **Trentham**

Several members of the NSNTA live in Trentham and many more have enjoyed the gardens and park during the pandemic. This extract from Arthur Mee's book on Staffordshire was first published in 1937, 85 years ago.

Trentham Hall was pulled down in 1905. The two great apartments left standing are the sole relics of the home which had housed the Leveson Gowers for three centuries; but the grounds, converted in their time from a waste of meadow lands into Italian gardens with no rival out of Italy, remain a joy for ever. Here is a glorious park of a thousand acres, with velvety lawns, hanging woods mirrored in a winding lake, the forest trees beyond, boats on the water and games on the greens, and all that makes life joyous under the open sky. Once the pleasure-ground of royalties and nobles, scene of all that was brightest in English society, it is now a pleasure-ground of the people, a compensation to the many for the loss of one stately home unwanted. One reminder of the old family remains: a stone column with an immense bronze statue of the first Duke of Sutherland still crowns the hill.

*Anthea Bond*

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| <b>Summary of Programme Summer 2022 and Dates for your Diary.</b> |                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>May</b>                                                        |                                                                          |
| Sun 15 <sup>th</sup> -Thu 19 <sup>th</sup>                        | Coach trip: Association Scottish Holiday.                                |
| Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup>                                          | AGM and talk.                                                            |
| <b>June</b>                                                       |                                                                          |
| Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup>                                         | Summer Lunch and Arts & Crafts Exhibition at Upper House.                |
| Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup>                                        | Coach Trip: RHS Bridgewater Garden in Salford.                           |
| <b>July</b>                                                       |                                                                          |
| Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup>                                          | Car Trip: Evening canal cruise with fish and chip supper.                |
| Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup>                                          | Coach Trip: Boughton House, Kettering, Northants.                        |
| <b>August</b>                                                     |                                                                          |
| Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup>                                         | Car Trip & Walk: "The Shirleys of Etruria" with tour of museum and mill. |
| <b>September</b>                                                  |                                                                          |
| Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup>                                          | Walk: Barlaston.                                                         |
| Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup>                                         | Coach Trip: Liverpool - Port Sunlight and the Lady Lever Art Gallery.    |
| Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup>                                          | Talk: Antony Dejak - Blood Banks.                                        |
| Sunday 25 <sup>th</sup>                                           | Car Trip: Pipes in the Peaks Organ Concert and Museum.                   |
| <b>October</b>                                                    |                                                                          |
| Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup>                                           | Coach trip: William Booth Museum and Wollaton Hall, Nottingham.          |
| Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup>                                          | Talk: Steve Booth - The Destruction of Lidice.                           |
| <b>November</b>                                                   |                                                                          |
| Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup>                                          | Talk: Andrew van Duren - My Magic Life.                                  |
| <b>December</b>                                                   |                                                                          |
| Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup>                                        | Christmas Lunch at Crown Wharf, Stone.                                   |

*This Newsletter (and previous editions) is available on the website.*