

The North Staffs National Trust Association

Newsletter 90 and September to December 2011 Programme



Memories of the Blithfield Hall visit.

MEMBERS AWAITING THE
ORGAN RECITAL; HORNS
FROM A FAMOUS BAGOT
GOAT; AND THE AMAZING
ARRAY OF SERVANTS' BELLS

PLEASE NOTE

SOME VISITS REQUIRE PROMPT BOOKING

ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRIPS

Coaches depart promptly from BRUNSWICK STREET, Newcastle, near the Jubilee Swimming Baths. Nearby long-stay parking. Should a member cancel their booking it is regretted that reimbursement is only possible if there is a waiting list. There will be a £2 per cheque handling charge. Members are requested not to find their own replacement. Non-members taking part in coach outings pay an additional £2. The committee has agreed that it is only fair that members should have priority when booking trips and holidays.

Members are asked to note that it is not possible for the coach to stop at places other than Brunswick Street to pick people up or drop them off on the outward or return journeys. The coach will not wait for members who are late, either at Brunswick Street or at other pick up points. Members are advised to take careful note of when or where they will be picked up. Anyone missing a coach will have no claim on the Association.

Cheques to be made payable to the “**The North Staffs National Trust Association**”. Due to current banking procedure, please note that cheques are not cleared until after an event. Members are asked to write a separate cheque for each event they book. **Note:** The committee does not consider it proper that an event should incur a loss and therefore reserves the right to cancel should there be insufficient support.

For Your Safety and Enjoyment

Please look carefully at what is involved in an outing or a holiday before booking. Consider the starting time, the length of the day, the amount of walking and stair-climbing involved, the number of times of getting on and off a coach, etc. so that you can enjoy the day to the full by being able to participate in all aspects of the outing. **If you have a problem with mobility or hearing, for example, please let the organiser know as soon as possible and we will try to arrange some help but we cannot guarantee to do so.**

If you have not received acknowledgement of a booking within two weeks, please enquire as we believe that some bookings have recently gone astray in the post.

SAFETY ON COACH TRIPS

Please note that for the time being School Street is not available for our coaches and we will be picked up in Brunswick Street. Members are asked to pay due care on what is a fairly narrow pavement on a busy road.

The North Staffs National Trust Association

NEWSLETTER No. 90 and September to December 2011 PROGRAMME

A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR:

When I was first asked to consider standing for election as Chairman, last winter, the AGM seemed a long time away. I attended a few committee meetings as an observer, learning a little of the routines of the Association and getting to know members better and considering that life as a Chairman might be rather comfortable.

Now that I have been elected – and I thank all who supported me at the AGM – and taken on the responsibilities of the Chair, life seems substantially more hectic.

I now have the considerable challenge of at least maintaining the Association to the very high standard that Anne Anderton has established over the years of her leadership. As Peter Moxon says in his tribute to her, printed elsewhere in this Newsletter: “Anne has provided a tremendous solidarity and stability within the Association ...” and I can only endorse that and, additionally, thank Anne for all her help in bringing me ‘up to speed’.

As I said at the AGM, I don’t plan any major changes – it would be an error to alter what is working so well. However, I do have a few ‘tweaks’ in mind and with the agreement of my fellow committee members, these will become apparent over the coming months.

If it is not already obvious, this Association of ours benefits considerably from a talented and enthusiastic committee team and I am delighted to be working with them. Please note, however, that we still need more people and, in particular, want to recruit a Minutes Secretary and also a Talks Organiser – these are quite straight-forward but essential activities and

you would be given full support. Please contact me if you think you might be able to help.

I am looking forward to the splendid social programme, announced in this issue, that Rose and others have created and anticipate getting to know more and more members, particularly during the talks evenings.

I wish you all a splendid summer.

David Dumbelton

THANK YOU ANNE

As Anne Anderton stands down as Chairman of the Association Peter Moxon has penned a few words of thanks that will be echoed by all who appreciate what Anne has done for us. Anne has agreed to continue as a member of the committee.

“The memory of most of the members will not go back to a time before Anne was Chairman of the Association.

Chairmen are often taken for granted. They turn up at events and meetings, they do and say the right things with well chosen words. They direct and encourage debate and at the end they thank everyone for their attendance and for the part that they have played. They rarely get any praise themselves.

Anne as Chairman has done all these things and more. She plans and prepares the agendas for meetings, and she hosts the meetings, and sometimes she takes and drafts the minutes. She follows up any matters arising from committee meetings. She receives and deals with any correspondence and reads, digests and acts upon any demands and requirements of the Trust and she seeks out members to take on roles within the Association. Her contribution has been unlimited.

As well as being Chairman Anne has forever been a member of the Programme and Planning Sub-Committee, often finding and arranging speakers for the winter meetings welcoming them and

giving them a vote of thanks. She researches suitable places for visits by members and each season she often plans and leads outings for members.

Anne has provided a tremendous solidarity and stability within the Association and however large a hurdle may appear Anne approaches any problem or adversity with tact, determination and confidence.

It is a very great pleasure to record the deep and sincere appreciation of the Association and its members for all that Anne has done during her time as Chairman and also to thank her husband Paul for his loyal and unobtrusive support of Anne and of the Association.

Thank you both very much.

Peter Moxon

OUR NEW CHAIRMAN

Many members will have met David Dumbelton on a trip or at a meeting. For those who haven't



“David and his wife Cynthia moved to North Staffordshire in 1978 so are close to qualifying as Stokies. They lived, met and married in Central London where David qualified for and had a hectic career in the world of advertising, while Cynthia worked at the Bank of England. Early in their marriage they moved to South Buckinghamshire, David’s family territory, where they produced a family of three sons. Advertising having lost its appeal to

David the family moved to Trentham where they acquired a local canal boat business and started another in Stone, subsequently adding a pottery retail and merchandising business.

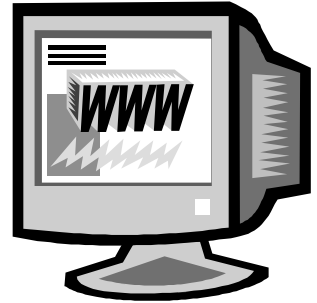
David relished being self-employed and independent and has been and remains involved in many aspects of local commercial, social and cultural life. He was the founding Chairman of the North Staffs Tourism Association, Chairman of BBC Radio Stoke Listener Advisory Panel and is currently Project Officer for the Burslem Port Trust, a canal restoration

scheme in Middleport that he founded some years ago. In addition he is also a volunteer at the Stoke Film Theatre and is a front-of-house volunteer, with Cynthia, at the New Vic Theatre in Hartshill. Cynthia also has a hectic life in volunteering and, even though retired, both see themselves as “professional” volunteers.

Both are long-time members of the National Trust but relatively new to membership of the North Staffs Association, since which they have become known as organisers of outings and, most particularly, of holidays.”

New Web Address.

You will doubtless have noticed that in addition to a new name for our organisation we also have a new web address: <http://www.northstaffsnt.org.uk/> . The new site is kindly hosted and sponsored by Indy Ware and Worldhq.co.uk, though it is our responsibility to keep it correct and up to date.



The opportunity has been taken to renovate the site and add some new features. Not only will you find details of the programme and the organising committee but also an archive of our past newsletters, kindly provided by John Beaumont, and a list of past outings, lectures and events provided by Peter Thompson.

The web site is intended to provide up to date information but it does NOT provide for on-line booking – this is an expensive option for a small organisation – so you will still have to book events, using the appropriate form, when you receive the Newsletter.

Our thanks are due to Keith Walker who constructed and maintained the previous site. Please let me know of any practical suggestions to improve the new web site.

Peter Borrell.

Luncheon Club

As the numbers attending lunches since Christmas have been low the committee has decided to suspend these events for the time being. Many thanks to Georgina Pritchard for her efforts over the last twelve months.

WELCOME

Recent new members of the Association are:

Mrs M.Dale of Basford	Mr and Mrs C.Wain of Bignall End
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Mr D.Wood of Basford	Mrs L.Owen of the Westlands
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Mrs H.Walker of Trentham	Mrs J.Godfrey of Seabridge
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Mrs B. Emery of Trentham	Lady Marcia Bailey of Oulton
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Mrs M.Boggis of Barlaston	Mrs J.Cameron of Madeley
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We warmly welcome them and hope that they will find our events to be a rewarding enhancement of their National Trust membership.

REPORTS ON RECENT TALKS AND VISITS

Thursday 24th February. Coach Outing The Hallé at the Bridgewater Hall

What a special evening in Manchester. The Hallé Orchestra, with their great conductor and Elgar champion, Mark Elder, produced some wonderful music. In the overture to Verdi's *Luisa Miller*, the prelude to a tale of true love thwarted by prejudice and treachery, we could hear in the beautiful clarinet playing the tragic Luisa. The programme continued with Mozart's *Piano concerto no. 17*, sparkingly played by Martin Helmchen, who also ably communicated the piece's deeper emotions, in dialogue with the superb orchestra. The concert ended with Elder's masterly interpretation of Elgar's *Symphony no. 1*, producing an orchestral sound of warmth and surging energy, with the motto theme transforming the mood throughout. As Elgar himself wrote, this truly Manchester work 'is written out of a full life experience and is meant to include the innumerable phases of joy and sorrow, struggle and conquest' and the performance we heard beautifully communicated this. The added bonus of the evening came with the presentation of the Elgar Society Medal to the biographer and music critic, Michael Kennedy, the first Briton to receive this accolade for work promoting Elgar and his music. Thank you, Penny, for arranging this highly enjoyable evening.

Kay Williams

Tuesday 8th March - Coach Outing to Coventry

The weather on the 8th March was brilliantly sunny and perfect for our visit to Coventry. As has become the custom Roger Cartlidge, our organiser, briefed us thoroughly on what to expect well before we arrived in Coventry. We were joined by our Blue Badge Guide, Roger Bailey, at the Coventry coach station. Roger has been a guide for 15 years, written several books on the city and proved to be an incredibly helpful, exuberant and knowledgeable guide, an ambassador for Coventry and a purveyor of corny jokes and awful puns.

Roger Bailey conducted us on a coach tour of the city and its suburbs pointing out the well tended green belt, wooded areas and the affluent housing areas of the city. Following this we took a walking tour of two of Coventry's three Cathedrals. The most recent cathedral is unusual in that its nave runs north/south and the main points of interest were: the statue of St Michael and the Devil by Jacob Epstein, the West Screen by John Hutton, the Baptistry Window by John Piper, the Tablets of the Word, the Nave Windows which the sunlight dutifully poured through, the High Altar Cross incorporating the Cross of Nails and the Tapestry of Christ in Glory designed by Graham Sutherland.

Through the west (south) door we walked straight into the second cathedral, which was badly damaged in WW2, and were shown the Statue "Reconciliation" by Josefina de Vasconcello, the Bronze Effigy, the Charred Cross and Altar of Reconciliation, Ecce Homo by Jacob Epstein, the Tower and Spire which escaped destruction in 1940 and the Home Front Memorial designed by sculptor John Poole and dedicated by the Queen in 2000. We then visited the beautiful 14th century St. Mary's Guildhall for a conducted tour and lunch. The guild hall was the centre of King Henry VI's court during the War of the Roses, a prison for Mary Queen of Scots and was visited by William Shakespeare with his troupe of players.

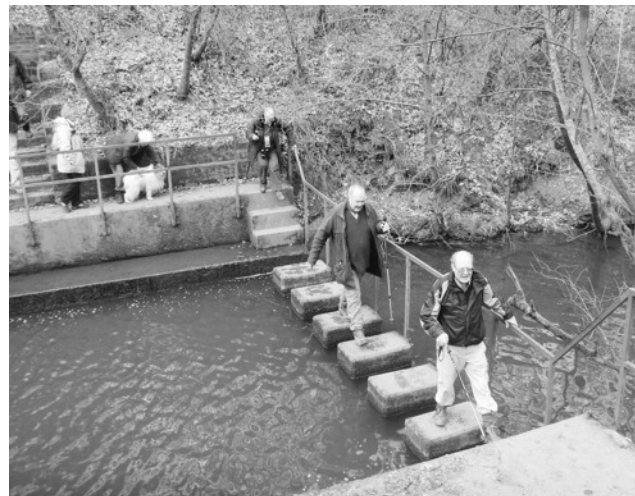
After lunch we split into two groups. One group continued on a guided tour with Roger Bailey to view the Priory Undercroft where the remains of the first cathedral could be seen. The second group was free to explore other attractions such as the Transport Museum, the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum or Lady Herbert's Garden. Both groups then met up for refreshments at the Transport Museum prior to our coach journey home.

Many thanks go to the two Rogers for an excellently organised trip and a memorable day out.

Peter Thompson

Sunday 20th March. Walk: Deep Hayes Country Park

Twenty seven walkers and 2 well behaved collie dogs departed from the Holly Bush at Denford heading West along the Caldon canal. We left the canal after about a third of a mile, at its junction with the Leek Branch and started to ascend across fields. A few areas had been churned up by cattle, but there wasn't much mud as it had been such a dry March. We successfully negotiated stiles (we had been warned!). Some of us had difficulty making our knees bend sufficiently! I couldn't make up my mind whether the walking stick was more of a hindrance than a help. It was overcast - a perfect day for walking! The sun even managed to break through for a moment when we were at the top. The pace was leisurely and many of the walkers were in deep conversation. We descended and walked along the wooded ridge above Deep Hayes pools crossing via very adequate stepping stones below the waterfall from Hayes pool. No one took an early bath! There was a slight delay while one of the collies, who had an aversion to water, plucked up courage to cross. We stopped for a short while at the information centre. Deep Hayes Country Park was very impressive with



Iain using his stick (see text)

several well maintained walks, one suitable for wheel chairs. It is a great place for bird watching, a hide is provided. We returned to the Holly Bush along a short stretch of the Caldon Canal. We had walked approximately 5 miles.

The Holly Bush was very busy but we had a room to ourselves. We were joined by 3 people who

could not come on the walk. There was a great choice of excellent food and we had charming and efficient service.

We had a very enjoyable day. Grateful thanks to Richard for his impeccable organisation and to his son Ollie and his son's girlfriend Raynor for rounding up the stragglers.

Iain Forrest Hay.

Wednesday 23rd March - Talk by Marcus Chilton-Jones - The Work of a Garden Manager

We all have experience of tending our own gardens, and we all enjoy visiting good public gardens. Marcus, in his talk, expanded our understanding of what makes a good public garden. Using his various past and present experiences he spoke of the challenges of identifying what makes a particular garden special, and the challenges faced by the Garden Manager to protect the garden from the thousands of feet that want to walk around it. He spoke of demography and the age range of visitors to Dorothy Clive Garden where he now works. They were mainly retired and he is actively trying to make it more of a family friendly place.

When he moved on to take questions there were a few about his garden and many on how to recover from the frost damage of the past winter. In the answers he showed that, although he is primarily a garden manager, he is also a gardener at heart. His talk was warmly received and encouraged me at least to go and visit and to take out a season ticket for the first time.

Thursday 24th March Car outing to the Avro Heritage Centre, Woodford.

When it was suggested that I should consider organising a trip to the Avro Heritage Centre I reluctantly agreed to do so although I thought that it would be of limited interest to our members. This was not the case, however, and there was sufficient interest for me to organise three visits.

The visit on 24th March was the third of these visits. As a very detailed report of the first 2 visits, written by Ken Amos, was published on page 4 of Newsletter 88, only variations to his write up will be reported here.

This time two guides conducted the tour. They split our party into two resulting in far less congestion in the small rooms of the Centre than was the case on the previous trips. Whilst the visit to the Heritage Centre was enjoyed by its visitors and was unaffected, it was obvious that Woodford as an aircraft manufacturing base had been fatally wounded by the Strategic Defence Review. The site was deserted and the enormous hangar which contained nine Nimrod MR4A surveillance aircraft on the previous visits was practically empty. These aircraft have now been broken up for scrap.

All the visitors found the trip to the Heritage Centre very interesting and wish to thank their guides, Alan Rigby and Keith Wright, for competently conducting the tour. I have received an email from the curator of the Centre to thank those who made a donation towards the upkeep of the Centre. With the closure of aircraft manufacturing the Avro Heritage Centre will be re-housed on the site and will continue to welcome visitors in the future.

Due to number restrictions I was unable to oversee the visit but wish to thank Penny Moore for doing the job for me.

Peter Thompson

Thursday 7th April - Car Outing to Biddulph Old Hall

What an unexpected delight our visit to Biddulph Old Hall proved to be. Our incredibly enthusiastic hosts, Nigel Daly especially, and co-owner Brian Vowels, kept us enthralled. We learnt about the history of the Biddulph/Stonor/Camoys families and most interestingly, the story of tenant artist Robert Bateman, a son of the Batemans of Biddulph Grange. We are all looking forward to reading the forthcoming book on him by Nigel Daly. We were shown the outside of the house first, revealing the different building periods and damage inflicted by Cromwell's cannon, 'Roaring Meg'. We saw the restored tower and heard of future plans for this. Inside the house, we admired the living-room with its roaring fire, the handsome new staircase and were all struck how well-chosen all the ornaments, paintings, furniture and lighting were, clearly the choice of true artists. We learnt about the various cunningly-concealed priest-holes, necessary for this Catholic, though Royalist family. The story of the

acquisition of the wonderful hatchment, found in and acquired from (with some hitches) a London antique shop, and proving to have a family connection, amazed us all. In the galleried room, where renovation is in progress, we could imagine the huge portrait of Robert Bateman's beloved and beautiful wife Caroline, especially when we saw a reproduction of it in Nigel's attic work-room. After a splendid tea, we went home, full of admiration for the work and dedication of the charming owners. Thanks to Shirley Timmis for organising the trip.

Kay Williams

(Note: Due to the demand for places on the visit, the owners, Nigel and Brian, kindly agreed to a second visit which took place on 15th April thereby allowing a further 30 members to visit this historic Hall. Our further thanks to Shirley for arranging this.)

Tuesday 19th April Car Outing to Tissington Hall, Ashbourne

Blue skies and warm sunshine greeted the 60 members who visited Tissington Hall. The Hall was built in 1609 replacing a moated manor house but the FitzHerbert family had arrived in England with



Members arriving at Oakley Hall - Photo thanks to John Huson

William the Conqueror and settled in Derbyshire when William FitzHerbert was granted the Manor of Norbury in 1125. It is worth noting that the Catholic side of the family (the Fitzherberts with a small 'h') settled in Swynnerton, Staffs. The present incumbent of Tissington, Sir Richard FitzHerbert, is the 9th Baronet.

The Tissington estate comprises the Hall and coach house, the church, 13 farms and more than 40 tenanted cottages. For the tour we were split into three groups led by our respective guides Margaret, Fran and Keith. Our group commenced the tour in the gardens which are mainly to the rear of the Hall and are tiered to three levels on an upward slope to the west.

There is a fishpond, numerous yew hedges and clipped yews, lawns, several specimen rose-beds and a variety of shrubs. Turning to look back at the Hall, one can see the various extensions which have been made over the centuries, the last major one in 1902 by Arnold Mitchell to give a total of 61 rooms. We were told there are 61 chimneys and not only has Sir Richard counted them he claims to have made a fire in every grate! We then entered the Main Hall which has a stone-clad floor contemporary with the 1609 original building.

A Jacobean oak staircase c1619 is one of only two in existence and leads to the East Drawing Room (once the Ballroom) and overlooks the Church and parkland and is now used for private parties. The panelling here is much lighter and accommodates shoulder-length portraits including those of Lady Hamilton, Lord St.Helens and his sister Selina FitzHerbert. This room is said to be haunted by a lady who died of severe burns caused by a spark from the fire which ignited her dress. Occasionally the only door to the room is unexplainedly locked from the inside - Ghostbusters are investigating!

Finally we entered the Library which holds 3016 books in various languages and Sir Richard, the present incumbent, claims to have read every one of them! This room is again a 20th century addition by Mitchell with an inspiring woodland plaster frieze by Bankart. Thus ended an interesting tour of this historic Hall and there was still time to explore the village of Tissington and to take refreshment at the converted coach house. Many thanks to Peter Moxon for arranging a sunny and memorable afternoon in the pleasant Derbyshire countryside.

Roger Cartlidge.

Saturday 14th May, Car Outing to Oakley Hall, near Market Drayton, Shropshire,

Oakley Hall was built in the reign of Queen Anne between 1706 and 1710. It is an elegant Classically fronted building, small in comparison with some of its contemporaries, and one could say all the better for that. It has splendid views across the lake, while the frontage looks towards the battlefield at Blore Heath, the preservation of which has been a successful concern of the owners of the Hall.

We were welcomed by Mr and Mrs Fisher, genial hosts who clearly enjoy the house and their active part in the life of the district.

The house is not one of those stuffed with furniture and bric-a-brac. The hall is a large open space which together with the ball room offers ample space for weddings, which, as Mr Fisher explained are an integral part of the business of maintaining a house which has just celebrated its 300th birthday.

Mr Fisher collects the paintings of George Sheffield, which adorn the Hall, and in the Ballroom and Dining Room are works by K Rolfe, a local artist, highlighted with gold pigments and especially featuring peacocks.

We were shown the work being done to make productive use of the outbuildings. A considerable rarity was a well preserved ice house in the grounds near the kitchen wing.

An ample tea concluded our visit, which had been thoroughly enjoyed by 50 members of the Association.

An unexpected addition to our homeward journey was a visit to St Mary's Church, Mucklestone where Mrs Pamela Jones, a member of the Kempe Society, introduced the really beautiful stained glass windows in the church designed in the 19th century by Charles Kempe.

Alun Davies

AGM Report Tuesday 17th May 2011

The meeting opened at 7pm, with Anne Anderton in the chair. She welcomed the 63 members present, and had apologies from 10 more who could not be there. The minutes of last years AGM were approved, and the Secretary and Treasurer gave their reports. Paul Buttery was thanked for examining the accounts. A motion to allow a 50p increase in the annual subscriptions, if it should be needed, was passed.

Anne outlined three proposed donations of £3,000 each, to the Peak District for a new path along the Staffordshire side of the Dove through Dovedale, to Attingham Park for woodland machinery, and to Wightwick Manor for restoration of the William Morris wall coverings. The meeting approved all these

NEWSLETTER CONTINUES ON PAGE 21

**BACK OF
BOOKING
FORM**

Tuesday 20th September. Car Outing and History Walk around Rudyard Lake. (10.30am – 12.30pm)

Name	Association No.	£
.....
.....
	TOTAL	£.....

NAME AND ADDRESS:

.....

.....**TEL. NO.**

Please apply to Sue Pitt, 196 Dimsdale Parade West, Newcastle, Staffs. ST5 8EA
 Telephone 01782 566871 enclosing a cheque and a stamped addressed envelope.
 Closing Date for applications: Tuesday 13th September. **EARLY BOOKING ESSENTIAL**

Wednesday 28th September- Coach Outing to Upton House.

Name	Association No.	£
.....
.....
Total		£.....

Name and address:

.....

.....Tel. No.

Please apply to: Mrs Rose Wheat, 12, West Avenue, Newcastle, Staffs, ST5 ONB,
 Tel: 01782 616113 enclosing a cheque and stamped addressed envelope.

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 21st September.

BACK OF BOOKING FORM

**Tuesday 18th October - Coach Outing to Royal Crown Derby
and The National Brewery Centre at Burton.**

**PLEASE COMPLETE *BOTH* SIDES OF THIS
BOOKING FORM**

Name	Association No.	£
.....
.....
	TOTAL	£.....

PLEASE GIVE THE NUMBER OF MEALS REQUIRED.

**THESE NEED TO BE BOOKED IN ADVANCE TO HELP
THE CATERERS; AND PAID FOR ON THE DAY.**



Tuesday 4th October Car Outing "The Hidden Treasures of Tatton Mansion" Tatton Park, Knutsford.

Name	Association No.	£
.....
.....

NAME AND ADDRESS:

.....

.....**TEL. NO.**

Please apply to Roger Cartlidge, 3 The Mount, Scholar Green, Stoke on Trent, ST7 3HY. telephone number 01782 777513, enclosing a cheque and stamped addressed envelope. The envelope should be foolscap or C5 size as the acknowledgement will include various enclosures.

Closing date for receipt of applications is Saturday 24th September.

Tuesday 18th October - Coach Outing to Royal Crown Derby and The National Brewery Centre at Burton.

PLEASE COMPLETE *BOTH* SIDES OF THIS BOOKING FORM

Name and address:

.....

.....**TEL. NO.**

Please apply to: Susan Till, Weston Barn, Bowers Court, Standon, Staffs, ST21 6RW Telephone 01782 791120 enclosing a cheque and a stamped addressed envelope.

Closing date for receipt of applications: Wednesday 14th September 2011

Sunday 6th November 2011 Walk: "Audlem and Coxbank"

Name

Association No.

..... Pay on the day.....

.....

NAME AND ADDRESS:

.....

.....**TEL. NO.**

Book your place by email to Richard Adams – rjadams@doctors.org.uk or by post to Gables End, Holly Bank, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8FT, enclosing a stamped self-addressed envelope. Telephone 01782 646054

Friday 2nd December Coach outing to Attingham Frost Fair and Shrewsbury

Name

Association No.

£

.....

.....

Total £.....

Name and address:

.....

.....Tel. No.

Please apply to Mrs. A. Anderton. 14 Berne Avenue, Newcastle. ST5 2QJ Tel: 01782 613024 enclosing cheque and stamped addressed envelope. Closing date: Sunday 20th November.

**BACK OF
BOOKING
FORM**

Wednesday 14th December – Christmas Social 6.30 – 8.30pm at Ford Green Hall

Name	Association No.	£
.....
.....
		TOTAL
		£.....

NAME AND ADDRESS:

.....

.....**TEL. NO.**

Please apply to: David Dumbelton 32, The Lea, Trentham, Stoke on Trent ST4 8DY Tel 01782 641765 enclosing cheque and stamped addressed envelope.

Closing date Dec 1st.

PLEASE GIVE THE NUMBER OF MULLED WINE REQUIRED.

THESE NEED TO BE BOOKED IN ADVANCE TO HELP THE CATERERS.



**BACK OF
BOOKING
FORM**

donations. She thanked Peter Borrell for his great work in developing our Internet web site.

Anne then formally stood down as Chairman of the Association. She received many warm expressions of sadness at her decision, and thanks for the superb way in which she has chaired us over the years.

The meeting moved on to elections of the new officers and committee for 2011-12.

Three committee members – Audrey Aubrey, Penny Moore and Bernice Mulliner – were not seeking re-election, and were thanked for all their good services. David Dumbelton, proposed by Peter Moxon and seconded by Sue Pitt, was unanimously elected as our new Chairman. Peter Thompson was elected to the post of vice-chairman, and Roger Cartlidge was elected as a new committee member. Those members standing for re-election to the committee – Anne Anderton, John Beaumont, Keith Walker, Madeleine Hopley, Peter Moxon, Richard Adams, Rose Wheat and Sue Pitt - were all approved.

David Dumbelton then took the chair, paying a glowing tribute to Anne and expressing his wish to lead the association forward, with no major changes imminent but with some fine-tuning. Peter Moxon presented Anne with a splendid flower arrangement, and a certificate giving her and her husband Paul joint life membership of the association. Members of the out-going committee also showed their thanks to Anne, and Madeleine Hopley, on their behalf, presented her with a book of Gertrude Jekyll's garden designs. David thanked Peter Borrell.

Finally, a formal motion to change the name of the association to the North Staffordshire National Trust Association, to recognise that volunteer workers for the National Trust are welcome as members, was approved.

There was no other business.

Talk after the AGM Sue Gregory : A Walk round Trentham Gardens in 1858

Sue explained that she had chosen this particular year because the gardens, designed by Barry, were then considered “finished”, having been

started in 1834! The designs were inspired by Duchess Harriet's European tours and incorporated Italian features such as balustrades, terraces, statues and fountains; French ideas for the borders, and English plants – and all the work was carried out by the Head Gardener George Fleming and his team of about 50 under gardeners, apprentices and 'boys'. Sadly, within about three years the gardens began to go downhill as the next Duke had no interest in gardens.

Sue has spent years researching in the Staffordshire archives into the history of the gardens at Trentham, and with slides showing photos from Country Life over several years, maps, paintings and modern photos, she was able to take us on a virtual tour of the upper and lower gardens in 1858 and since. She described Barry's difficulties in trying to create different levels for visual effect and explained how the borders were filled with plants of the most vivid colours available. The highly coloured geraniums, petunias, and verbenas would seem almost vulgar and garish to modern tastes but were all set off with the sparkling white gravel of Derbyshire Spar, to look like diamonds.

The great difficulty for Fleming was that the family were in residence only from mid July till the end of August so all plants had to be perfect by then and last for the duration of the stay! There were techniques for retarding and advancing plants so that all could flower at the right time.

We all enjoyed our glimpse into the privileged life of the Sutherlands as they and their personal guests strolled round these wonderful gardens, because – unlike Chatsworth where anyone could visit – the common people were never allowed into Trentham gardens, only into the park on certain days, until more recently, by which time all the borders had been grassed over. Now, however, thanks to the recent restoration work, we can all enjoy a 'walk round Trentham Gardens' if we pay the entrance fee.

Thursday 26th May Car Outing to the Lyceum Theatre, Crewe, and Woodhey Chapel, Faddiley, Nr Nantwich

A day of contrasts.

In the morning members gathered in the foyer of the Lyceum Theatre with its modern decor and were ushered into the plush comfortable stalls for an

introductory talk by the manager Ray Bownes and his assistant Andrew. Members saw the beautiful plasterwork adorning the grand circle and the balcony, the steepest raked stage of any theatre in the country and the almost unique gas fired hot air extractor in the dome of the ceiling.

Members were taken backstage and under the stage to see the huge well still full of water which has been there since the theatre was built in the 19th century on the site of an old church. Members visited the very basic unglamorous dressing rooms, the working areas complete with spiders and cobwebs, and the gods. They saw the steel safety curtain lowered which separates the splendour of the auditorium from the primitive back stage. The safety curtain is operated on a system of counter balances. Members were enthralled by the stories of ghosts that haunt the theatre.

The ownership and fortunes of the theatre have varied over the years but it is currently owned and managed by the East Cheshire Council formerly the Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council

In the afternoon members drove out to Woodhey Chapel near Faddiley.

Woodhey Chapel is a Grade 1 listed private chapel. There is a possible reference to a chapel at Woodhey in a Will dated 1537 but the present chapel dates from about 1700 and was restored in 1926.

The chapel stands in a field with no vehicular or even pedestrian access except through the meadow. The north elevation has a door which gave tenants access to the ground floor whilst the loggia on the west side gave access to the gallery for the Wilbraham family complete with two fireplaces.

Services are held three times a year but there are no furnishings or ornaments save for the pews.

The chapel has a great air of tranquillity as it stands proudly in the beautiful Cheshire countryside and offers a very peaceful haven.

The chapel is managed on a shoe string by four trustees but it appears to be in very good structural condition.

Wednesday 8th June Evening Car Outing to Blithfield Hall

On a fine evening we were warmly welcomed by Cosy Bagot-Jewitt who first outlined the history of the house and family from the time of the Norman Conquest to the present day. We learned how the house had been sold to the Staffordshire Water Board after the war but was bought back by Nancy, Lady Bagot's husband, then in later years she made valiant efforts to save it from decay and water damage, and she still lives in a private apartment in the house and is writing her autobiography at the age of 92!

We saw the Great Hall, whose oak beams are now concealed by an elaborate plaster ceiling, then climbed the magnificent staircase to see some of the rooms on the middle floor, including the library with panelled cupboard doors to conceal some of the books. There were many individual items of interest, including a copy of an embroidered cap sent by King Charles II in gratitude for the part Jane Lane, daughter of Anne Bagot, played in his escape after his defeat at the battle of Worcester in 1651. There were also portraits of family members, and paintings and ceramic figures of the famous Bagot goats, though these animals are no longer at Blithfield but the remaining few are in various rare breeds collections.

After touring the house, we walked through the remains of the Orangery to see the church, where Charlie Bagot-Jewitt treated us to a brief history of the building then a short recital on the organ, which he clearly enjoys playing. The evening ended with a splendid supper and coffee taken in the Great Hall and we walked back to the car park as the moon was appearing in the sky. Once again our thanks to Anne Anderton for organising this lovely evening. JB

Sunday 19th June Walk and Picnic at Froghall Wharf

Fourteen of us plus Richard's dog Stella met at Froghall Wharf Visitor's Centre, the terminus of the Caldon Canal. It was a mild but dull day with frequent threats of rain.

The walk took us along the canal for about a mile, which was easy walking along the tow path, before we started to climb rather a steep hill & through some fields. The walk signs were mainly on the ground made of aluminium

"FP and an arrow" Most unusual. The views were spectacular and the valleys were lovely & green.

We nearly lost some of the men in the party when we passed through a farmyard where there was rather a vintage tractor requiring attention. Although some bits were by the side, it still obviously works.

We crossed through the village of Ipstones, through some very narrow lanes to a lovely valley and onto the village of Foxt where we stopped for our very welcome drink at the Fox & Goose.

After tearing ourselves away from the pub we walked over some stepping stones in the grass before ascending another steep hill. At the top, the fields the other side of the valley looked square as though they had been placed there.

We descended into another valley and then up a very steep and slippery path. Fortunately everyone made it without any mishaps. The walk down the old tramway was the highlight of the day. It was through a narrow cutting with the natural soft wood trees and natural vegetation looking lovely and green and spectacular. Typically English scenery.

We reached the car park for a very welcome picnic on the public benches and tables, having had a lovely mornings walk, enjoyed by all plus Richard's dog and enquiring about our next walk.

Rodney Collard



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AUTUMN PROGRAMME 2011

Tuesday 20th September. Car Outing and History Walk around Rudyard Lake. (10.30am – 12.30pm)

This year commemorates the 250th anniversary of the birth of civil engineer John Rennie who designed the dam and reservoir at Rudyard.

Last year Ray Perry, Chairman of the Rudyard Lake Trust, gave us a well illustrated history talk 'Rudyard Lake Past and Present' which attracted a lot of interest from members. As a follow up to this talk, Ray will give us a guided tour around the lake, enabling us to see for ourselves some of the features he described to us; an easy walk of 5 miles, with only one incline.

Stout footwear and outdoor clothing are strongly advised, according to the weather conditions of the day.

Please meet at the Visitor Centre car park where the tour will commence. (Directions and further information will be given on application.)

Refreshments are available at the Centre or the nearby Lake Hotel.

Cost: £5 to include a donation to the Rudyard Lake Trust.

Please apply to Sue Pitt, 196 Dimsdale Parade West, Newcastle, Staffs. ST5 8EA Telephone 01782 566871 enclosing a cheque and a stamped addressed envelope. Closing Date for applications: Tuesday 13th September. **EARLY BOOKING ESSENTIAL**

Wednesday 28th September- Coach Outing to Upton House.

At Upton House we shall get a glimpse of the lifestyle of a 1930's millionaire as we explore the former country home of Lord and Lady Bearsted who transformed it into a haven for their magnificent collection of paintings and porcelain. Walter Samuel, 2nd Viscount Bearsted and one-time chairman of Shell, was a prominent art collector and philanthropist who donated the house and his collection to the National Trust on his death so that both could be enjoyed by the British public. Famous works of art include paintings by Canaletto, El Greco, Stubbs, Hogarth and Bosch and porcelain

that was only returned to the property in 2010 after it was stolen over 40 years ago.

Lovers of luxury will appreciate the red and silver Art Deco bathroom and the 1930's swimming pool and gardeners will take pleasure in the sweeping lawn, herbaceous borders and tranquil water garden. Upton House is home to the National Collection of Asters and our visit has been timed so that we shall see the flowers at their best.

Lunch will be at own cost - the self-service and licensed Pavilion Restaurant provides a full selection of lunches and afternoon teas or members can bring their own picnic. There is a well-stocked gift shop, including a plant centre in the court yard outside.

PLEASE BRING NATIONAL TRUST AND VOLUNTEER CARDS.

PROMPT BOOKING ESSENTIAL.

Coach departs Brunswick Street 9.30am and return approx. 6.00pm.

Cost £14.00 (non-members £16.00) to include coach and driver's tip.

Please apply to: Mrs Rose Wheat, 12, West Avenue, Newcastle, Staffs, ST5 0NB, Tel: 01782 616113 enclosing a cheque and stamped addressed envelope.

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 21st September.

Tuesday 4th October Car Outing "The Hidden Treasures of Tatton Mansion" Tatton Park, Knutsford.

Some members will be familiar with the various attractions of Tatton Park which is run jointly by the National Trust and East Cheshire Council. The neo-classical Mansion was home to the Egerton family from the early 18th century until 1958 when Maurice Egerton bequeathed it to the National Trust. Over the years the Egertons collected many treasures from their tours of Europe and the wider world including China. The collections are too numerous for all to be displayed at the same time, however, we have arranged a special interest "Hidden Treasures Tour" exclusively for our group which will be led by an experienced collections guide. Items of jewellery, cut glass and other artefacts not normally on view to the casual

visitor/public tour groups will be displayed.

We shall meet at 10.00 am and the morning tour will last approximately 75 minutes and will be at a leisurely pace to enable questions to be asked of our guide. It will be timed to end prior to the normal opening time of 12noon so that we will have the Mansion to ourselves during the tour. At the conclusion of the tour members may wish to have lunch at the Stableyard restaurant/cafeteria or

you may choose to bring a picnic. During the afternoon you will be free to explore the various attractions at Tatton which, in addition to the Mansion, include the Gardens, designated walks, the Working Farm and the various shops in the Stableyard. Please have your National Trust Membership Card with you.



The cost is £5 per person but please note that there is a parking fee of £5 PER CAR levied by East Cheshire Council payable upon arrival. Further details as to specific times and directions will be forwarded upon application. Places will be limited so early application is advised.

Please apply to Roger Cartlidge, 3 The Mount, Scholar Green, Stoke on Trent, ST7 3HY. telephone number 01782 777513, enclosing a cheque and stamped addressed envelope. The envelope should be foolscap or C5 size as the acknowledgement will include various enclosures.

Closing date for receipt of applications is Saturday 24th September.

**Wednesday 5th October- Talk at the NS Conference Centre:
Mavis Smith - The Tollets of Betley.**

Mavis is a member of this Association and as such it is especially pleasing to welcome her as one of our speakers. Her extensive research into the Tollets

of Betley Hall has resulted in two fascinating books about this gentry family, their social connections and their lifestyle. Travel back in time nearly two hundred years for a glimpse of life as it was lived by the wealthy and privileged when Queen Victoria was still a young woman. Non-members welcome as guests.

Tuesday 18th October - Coach Outing to Royal Crown Derby and The National Brewery Centre at Burton.

In the morning we will visit the iconic, Royal Crown Derby, the epitome of ceramic extravagance. We start with coffee and biscuits at around 10.30 am. followed by a guided tour of the factory and the opportunity to visit the company museum.

Royal Crown Derby, which reverted back to private ownership some 10 years ago, after many years as a member of the Royal Doulton group, is famous for its richly decorated bone china tableware and giftware. The factory maintains the emphasis on traditional production methods with the retention of hand skills, to produce ware aimed at the top end of the market. It has recently re-introduced the tableware range originally produced for exclusive use in the first class restaurant on the Titanic. The factory tour is scheduled to take approximately 60 minutes allowing time to visit the museum and shop.

A short journey brings us to Burton on Trent to visit the National Brewery Centre (formerly the Bass Museum), aiming to arrive at 1.30, allowing an hour to enjoy lunch.

This attractively laid out museum celebrates and depicts the history of all aspects of the brewery trade in the UK. The tour of the site takes some 2 hours and includes sampling the beers! Anyone not wishing to undertake the full tour can wend their way back to the coffee shop at any time.

While sensible shoes are recommended, both venues are laid out for visitors with a minimum of steps apart from access to the Royal Crown Derby museum.

Cost: £23.50 (non members £25.50) to include coach fare, driver's gratuity, guided tours at both venues and coffee/tea and biscuits at Crown Derby.

Coach departs Brunswick Street, Newcastle at 8.45am prompt and should arrive back at approximately 6pm. An optional two-course lunch is available at the discounted price of £8, **payable on the day**, in the very pleasant restaurant at the Brewery Museum. In order to book tables and avoid excessive delays members are requested to indicate on the booking form if they want to book this lunch. Alternatively, light bites are available in the bar or you may partake of your own gourmet delights on the coach.

Please apply to: Susan Till, Weston Barn, Bowers Court, Standon, Staffs, ST21 6RW Telephone 01782 791120 enclosing a cheque and a stamped addressed envelope.

Closing date for receipt of applications: Wednesday 14th September 2011
PROMPT BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL.

Sunday 6th November Walk: “Audlem and Coxbank”

An easy Sunday morning walk for us this time – less than four miles which we will take at a leisurely pace, to fully enjoy the varied scenery, architecture and canal side activity. There are no hills to trouble us, though there are around 12 well-maintained stiles to cross.

We will meet at 10.00 in the morning at the Shroppie Fly pub, on the canal at Audlem. We set off through the centre of the village, and soon find ourselves out in the peaceful Cheshire countryside. Our route takes us through the tiny “hidden” village of Coxbank, where we will pause briefly at the village well (not what you imagine!). Then it’s on to the Shropshire Union canal and a stroll down the Audlem flight of locks, bringing us back to our starting point.

Tables are reserved for us at the Shroppie Fly for lunch at 12.00 (Sunday roast or full pub menu available).

Cost £2 for members, £2.50 for guests (pay on the day). Children and dogs are welcome to join us with no charge.

Book your place by email to Richard Adams – rjadams@doctors.org.uk or by post to Gables End, Holly Bank, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8FT, enclosing a stamped self-addressed envelope. Telephone 01782 646054

Monday 14th November - Talk at the NS Conference Centre 7.30pm : David Becket - What a Load of Rubbish!

Newcastle-u-Lyme has sometimes been ridiculed in the national press for having the largest number of containers in which to put rubbish for recycling. However, the council has progressed from being near the bottom of league tables for recycling a few years ago to being short-listed for a national award for excellence in recycling performance – quite an achievement! Much of this is due to the enthusiasm and efforts of Councillor David Becket, who has overall responsibility for ensuring a ‘Cleaner, Greener and Safer Community’.

Whether you are pleased or infuriated over the number of containers and the work required to fill them and put them out on the right days, come and hear what happens to all that is collected, how the council benefits from recycling and what advantages there are in recycling. You may be able to put your questions and comments to our speaker.



Friday 2nd December Coach outing to Attingham Frost Fair and Shrewsbury

The River Thames froze over several times in the 17th century and frost fairs were held; skaters enjoyed sports and refreshments on the thick ice and even hog roasts took place. Hopefully the Severn will not be frozen in December but there will be a ‘Frost Fair’ at Attingham Park, with many stalls selling crafts, gifts and food and this will be an opportunity to buy some unusual Christmas presents. The stalls will be in several large marquees and the NT shop will be open as usual. Lunch can be bought at Attingham, then we shall proceed by coach into the centre of Shrewsbury where members can shop, visit the Abbey or the Castle, take a guided walk, visit St. Mary’s church (where there may be some organ music) or do the Darwin trail. We shall be picked up in the town centre at the end of the afternoon.

Depart School Street 9.30am; return approx. 5.30pm

Cost: £12 (non-members £14) for the coach and driver's tip. PLEASE BRING NT CARDS FOR FREE ENTRY Non- NT members will have to pay entrance fee.

Please apply to Mrs. A. Anderton. 14 Berne Avenue, Newcastle. ST5 2QJ
Tel: 01782 613024 enclosing cheque and stamped addressed envelope.
Closing date: Sunday 20th November.

Wednesday 14th December – Christmas Social 6.30 – 8.30PM

We are fortunate to have been offered a private evening at FORD GREEN HALL to enjoy a Tudor Christmas experience. This interesting house will be decorated in period style, there will be costumed guides to help us enjoy our look around the rooms, period music and a demonstration of pomander making – maybe even some to purchase. Refreshments consisting of choice of drinks (mulled wine, soft drinks, tea, coffee) and mince pies will be served and this will be an opportunity to enjoy a social gathering of Association members in attractive surroundings. Guests welcome.

Please indicate on booking form if you wish to have mulled wine.

There is plenty of car parking and directions will be sent with acknowledgement of booking.

Tickets £6.00 (£8.00 for non-members)

Please apply to: David Dumbelton 32, The Lea, Trentham, Stoke on Trent ST4 8DY Tel 01782 641765 enclosing cheque and stamped addressed envelope.

Closing date Dec 1st.



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COMMITTEE 2011 - 2012

David Dumbelton (Chairman) david.dumbelton@virgin.net	32 The Lea Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8DY Tel 01782 641765
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Madeleine Hopley (Hon Treasurer)	5 Sedbergh Close Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 3JQ Tel 01782 618821
Peter Moxon	Millstone House, Butterson Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 4EB Tel 01782 616337
Peter Thompson (Vice Chairman)	Westerly, 220 Seabridge Lane Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 3LS Tel 01782 613397
Richard Adams (Hon Secretary) rjadams@doctors.org.uk	Gables End, Holly Bank Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8FT Tel 01782 646054
Roger Cartlidge	3 The Mount, Scholar Green Stoke-on-Trent ST7 3HY Tel 01782777513
Rose Wheat (Programme Organiser)	12 West Avenue Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 0NB Tel 01782 616113
Sue Pitt	196 Dimsdale Parade West Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 8EA Tel 01782 566871

Summary of 2011 Autumn Programme	
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Wednesday 14th December	Christmas Social 6.30 – 8.30pm at Ford Green Hall
Some Future Dates for Your Diary	
Tuesday 13th March 2012.	Talk by June Pickerill '1/8d in My Pocket'
Sunday 22 April 2012	Halle concert at the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester

THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER IS DUE AT THE END OF DECEMBER 2011. CONTRIBUTORS ARE ASKED TO GET COPY IN TO THE EDITOR BY THE 5TH NOVEMBER. THANK YOU.