

THE NORTH STAFFS National Trust Association

Newsletter No. 94

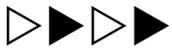
and

January to April 2013 PROGRAMME

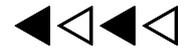
Our Web Site – www.northstaffsnt.org.uk/



Association members visited Kinver Rock Houses in October after a successful tour of the Halfpenny Green Vineyard.



ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRIPS



Coaches depart promptly from **SCHOOL STREET**, Newcastle, behind the Jubilee 2 Swimming Baths. Nearby there is long-stay parking. Should a member cancel a 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 our trips will pay an additional £2 for coach outings and an additional £1 for car outings. 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 School 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 School 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.

It will greatly help organisers if you will make cheques payable to the **“The North Staffs National Trust Association”** and note that normally cheques are not cleared until after an event. Please also send a **separate cheque** and a **separate self-addressed** envelope for each separate event even when these go to one organiser. People who wish to ensure that they **sit together** on a coach should use one booking form.

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.

SPECIAL NOTE

Please note that the insurance carried by this Association through the National Trust does not provide Personal Accident cover for members aged 80 years and above, or for children under 10.

THE NORTH STAFFS National Trust Association

Newsletter No. 94
and
Spring 2013 Programme



A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

Firstly, I have much pleasure in welcoming Anne Beaumont and Bob Winter to our committee. They joined the team recently and are already contributing fully to the continued success of our Association.

Secondly, I hope you will like our new promotion and recruitment leaflet, a copy of which should be in the same envelope as this *Newsletter*. This will be distributed widely in the local area and will, we all hope, increase awareness of our existence and encourage potential new members to join us. Should you require copies to give to your friends or other relevant groups to which you might belong please let any committee member know.

Thirdly, I was pleased to be invited by Head Office to join invited guests at a Westminster Abbey service to dedicate a memorial to Octavia Hill and to give thanks for the work of the National Trust. I was proud to be there as a representative of our Association.

Fourthly, I hope that you will enjoy our selection of talks, walks and outings as announced in these pages – I know that you will fully support them.

Fifthly, as you may know my term of office as Chairman ends at the AGM next May. If you or anyone you know might be interested in taking on that role please consult me, or any other committee member, for further information.

Sixthly, this issue of *Newsletter* has been co-edited by Paul Anderton and John Huson to whom I extend my grateful thanks, those of the committee and, I feel sure, all our members. It's a hard job, well done.

Lastly, may I wish you all a Joyful Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

David Dumbelton

PS: Did you notice that my wife is organising another London Holiday?

MEET THE COMMITTEE...

Anne Anderton



I was born and grew up in Berkeley, Gloucestershire, amid a large family of grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins and spent much of my early life singing in the church choir. After grammar school I studied English at Bristol University, where I met Paul, and we both did our teacher training.

We began married life teaching in Weston-super-Mare but soon moved to North

Staffordshire where Paul became Head of History at Leek High School and I taught part time in local schools. We moved four years later to Newcastle as Paul had joined the staff at Madeley College, and as we then had two children I again took part-time teaching posts in colleges and schools.

I returned to full-time teaching English at Newcastle High School for boys and remained there for nearly 20 years until I retired. While I was there, the school became an independent school, joining with Orme Girls' School and gradually moved towards co-education.

Since then I have enjoyed a varied and busy life, being able to attend theatres and concerts, follow my interest in gardens and garden history, and travel, mostly in France. We also enjoy family visits to South Wales and East Yorkshire where our children live and we now have two grandchildren. I joined the local NT Association before I retired and became Chairman for a number of years, following the lead and example set by Penny Moore. It was a most satisfying position to hold and I am glad that the Association continues in good shape.

Bob Winter



Bob was born and raised in Sheffield. He spent much of his youth hiking in the Peak District and youth hostelling. He was also keen on amateur dramatics and even received acclaim for his performances in the local press; a past time, that has receded into the annals of time!

Like so many of his contemporaries in the city,

he saw his future in metallurgy within the steel industry and attended the National Foundry College in Wolverhampton.

On gaining his degree, he went on to work for the Steel Castings Research Association in Sheffield as a Senior Investigator. Three years later he joined the Wolsingham Steel Company in Co. Durham, as Quality Control Manager. Having realised he had a flair for sales, he then decided to follow a career in technical sales and marketing of high integrity castings.

In 1987, having become Export Sales Manager for the Weir Group in Leeds and then Sales and Marketing Manager for the David Brown Corporation in Penistone, Bob joined the Hanley based engineering company of Goodwin Steel Castings Ltd. as Sales Director. In order to develop and expand the company's involvement in the high integrity casting sector, he travelled extensively throughout Europe, the USA, China and Japan, until his retirement in 2005.

Bob and his wife Ann have been members of the National Trust for over 30 years and, latterly, thanks to an invitation from Cynthia and David, joined the local Association. Their two families are linked not only through the Association but by marriage, as their youngest daughter agreed to become a Dumbelton!

Bob's interests and pastimes include voluntary work for Douglas Macmillan Hospice, Meals on Wheels, tinkering with his old MGB GT sports car, walking, badminton and his allotment!

GUEST PRICE

Please note that there will be a price increase for guests attending our **talks** with effect from January of 2013. The new charge will be £3.00 per person, which will still represent excellent value. No one likes prices to increase but we hope you will agree that this one has been long overdue. This increase does not mean that subscription charges will increase – there are no plans to do so.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**Tuesday, 15 January 2013– Talk at the NS Conference Centre at 7.30pm.
Vince Williams, *K2: A Personal Pilgrimage*.**

Vince Williams is a Search Manager and active member of the Western Beacons Mountain Search and Rescue Team. He tells the fascinating story of his trek in the Karakoram mountains of Northern Pakistan to the base camp of K2, undertaken in memory of a relative who died after accomplishing a feat never before achieved on this notorious peak. His illustrated account means that we can all share his emotional and awe inspiring adventure.

**Thursday, 24 January: Coach outing Manchester:
A Day with the Hallé (application for reserve list)**

This outing is fully booked but there is currently no waiting list. If you would like to register your interest should vacancies occur or would like more details please contact Mrs Penny Moore, 26, The Parkway, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent, Telephone 01782 657645.

**Tuesday, February 12 -- Talk at the NS Conference Centre at 7.30pm.
Andrew Edwards, *The Staffordshire Saxon***

The Staffordshire Saxon statue was unveiled at the Potteries Museum last May to considerable acclaim. This large scale figure dominates the Museum's entrance hall almost touching the ceiling, and links in so appropriately with the globally famous Staffordshire Hoard.

The sculptor is Hanford-based Andrew Edwards and he will be telling us about the making of the statue and of the importance and significance of the Saxon. He says "The Staffordshire Saxon project raises far-reaching questions on the function and nature of history itself. With the discovery of The Staffordshire Hoard, we can no longer refer to the medieval period of Mercia as the Dark Ages. It was really our Golden Age. It gave birth to literacy, while retaining shared understanding by motif, symbol and a more ready familiarity with nature and its symbioses. "

If you are not already familiar with the statue you may find it worth- while visiting the Potteries Museum before Andy's talk to get an appreciation of the majesty of the piece.

Wednesday, 27 February: Car Outing to Staffordshire Record Office, Eastgate Street, Stafford. Maximum 24.

We have been fortunate in securing another private, behind the scenes tour of the County Record Office which holds an astonishing array of records relating to the county and its people. These include parish records, family estate records, including those of great landed families such as the Dukes of Sutherland and the Earls of Lichfield, records of local industries and documents relating to public institutions such as schools and hospitals.

After an introductory talk with examples of documents, there will be a tour of the strong room and a session with the conservators.

Please meet at the Record Office for 2.00pm and the afternoon will conclude at 4.00pm approximately.

Cost £5 (or £6 for guests). Apply to Mrs Penny Moore, 26, Parkway, Trentham, ST4 8AG. Telephone 01782 657645, enclosing a cheque and a stamped addressed envelope. Closing date Friday 18 January. Priority will be given to those who applied for the previous visit for whom there was no place.

**Tuesday, 12 March - Talk at the NS Conference Centre at 7.30 pm.
Steve Birks, *The Acropolis of the Dead - a look at the Victorian cemetery and its reflection of society.***

A fascinating and often light hearted illustrated presentation by Steve, a local historian, into the history and formation of the Potteries Victorian cemeteries. He will also highlight the influence their prejudices had on religion and social class of those buried in these cemeteries.

Steve is a director of a local manufacturing company, a Chartered Engineer and Fellow of the City and Guilds of London Institute. An often quoted local historian, he has a keen interest in the industrial architecture and sociological history of Stoke-on-Trent and runs a large web site "thepotteries.org" dedicated to this. He has contributed to many local history books, articles in the Sentinel newspaper as well as BBC radio programmes.

Sunday, 17 March: Walk - Stafford and Stafford Castle. Meet at 10.00am

William the Conqueror had trouble with the natives hereabouts, so he instructed one of his nobles, Robert de Toeni, later known as Robert de Stafford, to subdue them. Robert chose a prominent hill from which to control the town of Stafford (and the M6), and created an impressive series of earthworks with a motte and bailey fortress. The first Stafford castle was a wooden construction, later painted to look like stone,

and replaced with proper stone by the mid. 14th century. The castle has been through several cycles of neglect followed by reconstruction, and is now safe again in the care of the borough council. There are 26 acres to explore, helped by some excellent interpretative signage, plus a visitor centre with a small museum/exhibition, a gift shop, and toilets.

We will meet in the Market Square in Stafford town centre at 10.00 am. (Car-parking is free on a Sunday in most of the car parks around the town.) Our route takes us past the 800 year old Church of St Mary, and the modern court buildings, to the riverside walk along the River Sow. Then we head off through a residential area to open farmland and the gentle climb towards Stafford Castle. At the castle we will bide a while, to allow independent exploration of the site. You may choose to visit the keep, follow the walls, visit the exhibition, or try to race round all three.

We then head back in to town, an easy walk alongside a golf course, then through Victoria Park, with its boating lake, aviary and the remains of the old town mill, and return to our starting point.

This walk is about 4 or 5 miles in total, with hardly any stiles.

Lunch tables are reserved for us in the Swan Hotel, where a 3 course Sunday lunch is around £18. They have asked for a deposit and pre-ordering of meals, so please indicate in your email or on the booking slip if you would like me to reserve a place for you.

Cost £2.00 for members, £2.50 for guests (pay on the day). Children are welcome at no charge. Dogs would probably prefer to stay at home this time.

Book your place with Richard Adams: email to 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

Wednesday, March 20: Coach outing to Bletchley Park, Bucks. Top Secret Ultra

There is a fascinating history to discover at Bletchley Park, with lots to interest everyone. Bletchley Park was once Britain's best kept secret. Today the Park is open to the public as a heritage site and museum. We shall take a guided tour and explore the wide range of exhibitions and learn how its codebreaking successes helped to save countless lives by shortening WWII by around two years.

More incredible than fiction, the story of Bletchley Park was a desperate race against

time. The mission of codebreakers like Alan Turing, was to crack Germany's coded communications, such as those sent via the German Enigma machine.

Bletchley Park was Churchill's secret passion; he called its codebreakers his "geese that laid the golden eggs and never cackled". Discover how it was done; be amazed by the total secrecy in which 8,500 people worked and marvel at the technology designed to crack the codes.

On arrival a sandwich buffet lunch will be served with tea, coffee or a soft drink. We will then take the afternoon conducted tour. Before leaving Bletchley Park we will have tea/coffee and cake.

The journey to Bletchley will take about three and a half hours. An executive coach, with toilet facilities on board, will be provided by the Leon Coach Company.

Coach departs School Street at 0900 am to return by around 8.30 pm.

Cost: £40.00 (non-members £42.00) to include coach, driver's tip, admission and tour of Bletchley Park, buffet lunch and afternoon tea. Please apply to Peter Thompson, 220 Seabridge Lane, Newcastle, Staffordshire. ST5 3LS. Tel: 01782 613397 enclosing a cheque and stamped addressed envelope. Closing date: 1 March.

Thursday, April 11 – Talk at the NS Conference Centre at 7.30pm.

Derek Higgot, *Shugborough's Gardens through the Seasons*

Derek Higgot, a member of the gardening team at Shugborough, was formerly senior horticultural advisor for Dobbies Garden Centre and for 24 years looked after the greens at Ingestre Golf Course. His own 'Secret Garden' at Little Haywood features in the National Garden Scheme's Yellow Book and was included in a recent edition of 'Gardeners' World'. His talk is about the gardens at Shugborough throughout his working year and he might be persuaded to answer some of our gardening questions.

Wednesday, April 17: Walk along the Canal in Stone. Meet at 10.30 am.

Stone is a Canal Town, some might say it is THE Canal Town. It was the headquarters of the Trent and Mersey Canal Company, it has an original dock complex, still in use, it has a horse tunnel and it has a number of boat yards and boat building companies; alongside which was a major workhouse, and a brewery bottling plant. In addition to which, it is an attractive and popular town.

Our walk will be easy and of no great length and will emphasise the history of the canal and highlight extant features from the old boat horse days. It will be largely based along the canal towpath starting near Fillybrook and ending at Westbridge Park, with a return through the town centre.

The main objective is to show how interesting a canal walk can be and how much can still be seen and adapted for modern use. This 241 years old canal is as busy as ever!

Although the towing path might be muddy in places it is a walk that should appeal to most but, unfortunately, numbers have to be restricted; if there is sufficient demand a second walk can be arranged.

Cost: £5.00 each. Please apply to David Dumbelton, 32 The Lea, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8DY. Tel: 01782 641765 enclosing a cheque and stamped addressed envelope.

Tuesday, 23 April: Car outing to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, near Lichfield.

Meet at 10.30 am in Reception. Pay and display car parking is £3 per day.

The National Memorial Arboretum comprises 150 acres of trees and memorials. Established in 1997 the Arboretum is the primary focal point for remembrance outside London.

On arrival we will be met by our guide who will take us to the Millennium Chapel for the Act of Remembrance service and give us a welcoming talk. He/she will then take us on a guided walk for 45 minutes around the Memorial Arboretum. If the walk is too far for any one there is a land train which will take you around the site with a full commentary. This facility incurs an additional cost which can be paid for, in cash, on the day. If you would like to take the land train tour please advise the organiser, when booking. Also, when booking, if there is a particular memorial that you would like to visit during the tour please inform the organiser.

Our tour will finish at the Visitor Centre where we will have a two course lunch. The menu will be: roast of the day, including traditional accompaniments, followed by fruit crumble & custard or fruit salad & ice cream. Please advise the organiser when booking if you would prefer a vegetarian option or if you have any dietary requirements. In the afternoon you will have free time to explore the arboretum.

Warm and waterproofed clothing and stout footwear is essential.

Cost: £17.50 (non- members £18.50) to include a guided tour of the National Memorial Arboretum and a 2 course lunch. Please apply to Peter Thompson, 220 Seabridge Lane, Newcastle, Staffordshire, ST5 3LS Telephone 01782 613397 enclosing a cheque and a stamped addressed envelope. Closing date: 20th March. On your application form: please advise me if you wish to:

1. Use the land train. 2. Take the vegetarian lunch option. 3. Visit a specific memorial.

ADVANCE NOTICE OF :-

Another London Holiday

..... providing an exuberant array of Architecture, Theatre and Engineering, designed and escorted by the Dumbeltons

Thursday-29 August to Tuesday, 3 September 2013

This varied **six-day** holiday is packed with places to delight. It will include something for everyone with visits to wonderful houses and guided tours of two very different theatres. We will visit the Thames Barrier and the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich and the restored gardens at Wrest Park. One day will be dedicated to Sir John Soane. This is an active holiday, not suitable for the physically challenged, but there will be time to rest for an hour or so before dinner every day, the price of some of which is to be included.

This time we will be staying throughout at the four-star Ramada Hotel right in the heart of Docklands with views over Royal Victoria Dock.

For further information and a more detailed itinerary, please send a stamped addressed envelope (standard letter size) to Cynthia Dumbelton, 32 The Lea, Trentham, ST4 8DY or for answers to any questions, please telephone 01782 641765 or send an email to cynthia_dumbelton@yahoo.co.uk.

NEW MEMBERS SINCE LAST EDITION

We warmly welcome them and hope that they will find our events a rewarding enhancement of their National Trust membership

Members who have recently joined us are:

June Handy
Richard and Anne Clamp
Clive and Chris Bailey
Brenda Croasdale
Janette Metcalfe
Peter Lyell

Angela Pyatt
John and Enid King
Pauline Travis
Susan Davies
Manuela Callinan
S M Taylor

REPORTS OF PREVIOUS EVENTS

Saturday 23 June. Shobdon Church Flower Food and Wine Festival and Witley Court

A green and pleasant journey (no motorways) to Shobdon in Herefordshire. The coach having squeezed into Shobdon with the help of a local runner, we headed for the Wedgwood Church to admire its light, white interior with pale blue decorative motifs. The brilliance of the light was emphasised by the intense blue and red of flower decoration on the pew ends and the glowing colours of the windows.

Outside, pausing to admire a 4 foot diameter pan of bubbling paella, the next objective was the food and wine marquee. Lots to see here, and lots to taste :- breads, croissants, pates, cheeses, meat, sausages, cakes, vegetables, sauces, preserves. Back on the coach we had time to picnic on our purchases on the way to Witley Court.

This is the ruined shell of a huge house; it was badly damaged by fire and subsequently looted. It and its surroundings have been cared for by English Heritage in recent years. The lake is rich in fish again and a home to water birds. In the bare ballroom one can imagine elegantly dressed phantom dancers whisking around, - 'footing it featly, here and there.'

A nice ghost story:- various people, including some 'baddies' engaged in looting, have seen the figure of a man with a short beard at one of the windows. At that point in the house there is no floor, so, not an intruder unless a very ingenious one. The Perseus and Andromeda fountain was 'fired' for about half an hour- many jets and not much wind so there was a lovely display.

Now, en route to tea (yummy scones) another church, entirely different from Shobdon. This one had lavish gilding, richly coloured windows, and a huge and elaborate memorial sculpture. Our arrival interrupted a string quartet, who vanished in the direction of the tea room, not too unwillingly. The church is noted for panels painted by Antonio Belucci

We had a smooth journey home - our thanks to our driver. And many thanks to Ralph and James the organisers for a day of varied enjoyments.

(Note:By coincidence, the book on Radio 4 from the Monday after this trip was *Damn the Blood* by Peter Moore (Staffordshire born) set in Oddingley, (Worcs), about 20 miles from Witley Court, which is mentioned.)

Georgina Pritchard

Thursday 12 July: Coach outing to The Hall at Abbey-cwm-Hir

At last, a day dawning without rain – we boarded the coach in sunshine. A picturesque trip through the Shropshire countryside and in to Wales – many narrow winding lanes navigated well by our driver. We arrived at Abbey-cwm-Hir, and were greeted by Paul Humpherston, the proud owner of this magnificent gothic mansion, where he and his wife Victoria have lived for the past 14 years. They have links with Staffordshire, having worked at Royal Doulton, and lived in Aston-by-Stone.

As required and requested, we had all brought our bedroom slippers, so after leaving our outdoor shoes in the conservatory, we took coffee and biscuits in the garden room, decorated extensively with old metal advertising signs, a red telephone box, a motorcycle hanging from the ceiling, a petrol pump in the corner, etc., etc. Seating was a choice between Doulton's old boardroom table, once dined at by the Queen, or comfy sofas in front of the fire.

The house claims to have 52 rooms, 365 window panes, 12 chimneys and 7 gables, so qualifies as a "calendar house". Each and every room was lavishly furnished and decorated, and we visited all of them. I have never seen so many 3-piece suites in one house! Everything was immaculate, not a speck of dust or grease anywhere. Paul told us that they lived there, but I had a sneaking feeling that they actually stayed in a shed in the garden (how do you keep a kitchen so clean?) This was as far from a minimalist house as you could get. Every wall was adorned by pictures, many by local artists, and all surfaces and cabinets were laden with china, glass and books. Practically every wooden surface including furniture was burnished in gold, fleur-de-lys being the pattern of choice. This was even spotted on light switches and plug sockets. The only bare wood was the beautiful barrelled ceiling in the snooker room, possibly too high to be reached. This room held a collection of local wildlife, stuffed and preserved, including a rare and remarkable white badger.

This was a very unexpected experience, most loved it, some hated it, but well worth the long journey to mid-Wales. If you weren't on Roger's superbly organised visit, and you have the chance to go yourself, then do so. Decide for yourself – is this a lived-in home or not?

Nicky Adams

Tuesday 24 July Visit to St. Giles Church Cheadle

Augustus Pugin changed the face of England in the 19thC with his ideas of Gothic design and here in North Staffs we are fortunate to have fourteen of his buildings.

St Giles' church in Cheadle is widely regarded as "Pugin's gem" so it is fitting that Cheadle should this year be celebrating the bicentenary of Pugin's birth with an exhibition, although we did wonder what he would think of it being in a Georgian building that was once the police station.

It was here that we were welcomed by the manager, Hannah Barter, who is very knowledgeable and passionate about Pugin. She explained that all the pieces had been loaned for this year and we saw early drawings, designs for fonts and altarpieces, metalwork, chairs made for Nottingham monks and even designs for the Minton encaustic floor tiles. Hannah also painted for us a picture of this workaholic who designed everything for his buildings, inside and out. A Catholic convert, entrepreneur, anti-establishment, stubborn and a lover of cheese!

After lunch Hannah took us to see St Giles' for which Pugin was given a blank cheque by the Earl of Shrewsbury once it was agreed the church would have a North/South axis to improve his view from Alton Towers. The result is the epitome of "Puginism", elaborate, dazzling, a theatrical spectacle of superb craftsmanship and multi-coloured design. Talking to those seeing it for the first time we agreed that it is rather over the top but somehow it works and I left the church feeling I had seen a masterpiece. Thanks Rose for organising a splendid day out in glorious sunshine.

Sarah Akhtar

Thursday 2 August Car outing to Tabley House

Some 45 NT members gathered on the car park at Tabley House in anticipation of viewing this red brick grade 1 listed Palladian mansion. After dividing the party into two groups our respective guides, Sheila and Helen, gave us a tour of those parts of the house which are open to the public.

The house was designed by John Carr of York for the Leicesters of Tabley in the 1760s and it remained in the family's ownership until 1975. The Tabley estate was then acquired by Manchester University who still own the property, its historical contents, and the estate. In the late 1980s, the university granted a long lease to Cygnet Health Care plc who provide residential accommodation for the elderly. The ground and top floors of the main structure, together with the wings, have been adapted for this purpose while the half a dozen, or so, rooms on the first floor, and their contents, have been preserved for public viewing. The collection is administered by an independent trust and has been open to the public since 1990.

On entering the 18th century house a glimpse behind reveals the remains of Tabley Old Hall. This was the first house built for the Leicesters which stood picturesquely on an

island in a lake until it became unsafe in the 1920s due to subsidence. The brick shell of the house can still be seen.

The entrance to the first floor on the south front leads to the Portico Room. This was the original entrance to the house but was only restored to that role in 1990 after use as a school and a library. Most of the art collection in the house was acquired by Sir John Leicester the 1st Lord de Tabley. In the Drawing Room, which is to the east of the Portico, there are paintings by Turner and Lely while the Octagon Room contains a set of paintings of Tabley by Anthony Devis. It has Rococo plasterwork by Oliver. This room leads to the Dining Room which has an extensive collection of paintings of the Leicester family. In the centre of the first floor of the house is the Oak Hall. This was given its name because of the oaks formerly growing on the site of the new house. It centres round a mahogany four-flight staircase. In addition to family portraits the Oak Hall contains a hobby horse, a man trap and an 18th century sedan chair. The west side of the first floor is occupied by the gallery. This has most of the best furniture in the house including items attributed to Thomas Chippendale, furniture by Gillow plus a rare 17th century English virginal and an Italian spinet dating from the end of the 16th century.

After our tour of the public reception rooms we visited St Peter's Chapel. This was moved to its present site alongside Tabley House in the 1920s but was originally built on the island site between 1675-78. The building is of dark brick and contains virtually all its original fittings. Only the roof structure is modern. Interesting items in the chapel include the communion plate and the stained glass window on the north side which was designed by Burne-Jones dating from 1895.

Before we headed home an enjoyable tea of cake and biscuits was taken in the Old Hall Room. This is where items rescued from the Old Hall are kept in store. Its most notable feature is a carved chimney piece dating from the early 17th century.

Many thanks to Shirley Timmis for arranging a most enjoyable afternoon out.

Douglas Wood

Thursday 16 August. Coach Outing to Bitterley Court, Oakly Park and Ludlow Food Centre.

Once again, Ralph organized an action-packed day to two contrasting grand homes and to the gastronomic delight known as the Ludlow Food Centre. The journey was enlivened by Ralph's entertaining commentary and terrible puns, for which he is always forgiven due to the laughter they invariably provoke. Our first port of call was at Bitterley Court where we were welcomed by the owner, Mr Wheeler. He showed

half of the group round his family home whilst the rest visited the church where we heard a most informative talk by one of the churchwardens. The church contains an interesting mixture of styles and retains some Norman features though the structure mostly dates from the early 14th Century. To me the most memorable feature was a 20th century addition, a superb carved rood screen which was crafted in 1922 but includes pieces of the original mediaeval one. The Wardens' Chest, which has been dated between 1480 and 1500, was a poignant reminder of the dominance of the parish in local politics pretty much up to the 19th century and the number of separate keys that were required to open it is a clue that our ancestors were not necessarily more honest than today.

A tour of the house illustrated that the contents of the church were even then not safe as various 'squarsons' who had lived there appear to have appropriated carvings of saints and incorporated them into a rather strange fireplace and other features of the house. This was a comfortable, family home, if rather larger than we are accustomed to and it was possible to feel that you could perhaps live there, if only you could raise the money for the upkeep.

In contrast, Oakly Park was a full-blown stately pile designed by C.R. Cockerill for Clive of India. None-the-less, we were again shown around by the heir to the current owner, Viscount Windsor, whose wife escorted us around the garden, the maintenance of which was for her clearly a labour of love. Oakly is altogether on a different scale with its grand rooms, fine furniture, Old Masters and objets d'arts. It is still also the family home as was made clear when one of the Viscount's sons entered the house by the dining room window to accompany the tour!

In 1945 there was a massive sale of the contents of the house, along with family estates elsewhere in order to meet death duties; inflation has not been insignificant since that date but Viscount Windsor can hardly have expected to pay £2,000 to buy back vases sold for just £2 after the War!

Many of us enjoyed a delicious lunch at the Food Centre and we returned there for a scrumptious afternoon tea before dashing around the food hall to purchase the local produce, some of it from the Oakly estate.

Many thanks to Ralph for an excellent day out and to Jim for his able support. I look forward to their next extravaganza.

Rose Wheat.

Saturday September 15 Buckingham Palace coach trip

Thanks to Penny's organisation, we had a day of sparkling sunshine, gleaming gold and dazzling diamonds! The newly gilded figure atop the monument outside the palace seemed to reflect the golden moments of the recent months and to prepare us for the displays inside. In the first group of State rooms we saw some wonderful works of art, including priceless Vermeers and a magnificent Van Dyke portrait of Charles 1st, mounted on a white charger, under a monumental arch. In the darkened room where the diamond collection was displayed, spotlights brought out the many prismatic colours of the beautiful pieces, while the explanations in the audio guides gave us information about the history of the items. We saw the tiny 'mourning crown' made for Queen Victoria, some of the pieces made from the enormous Cullinan diamond, and the famous Coronation diadem worn by the Queen on many state occasions.

Next we entered the Ballroom with its sparkling chandeliers and from there went to the Dining room with the impressive table extended to show how more than 40 guests can be seated; the Queen apparently takes a personal interest in menus, table settings and flower arrangements for formal dinners. In other rooms we saw examples of the finest furniture and beautiful Sevres porcelain, and all the rooms had chandeliers, painted ceilings and decorated cornices which we admired until our necks ached! We were also shown a 'secret' door through which the Queen sometimes enters to greet guests.

Finally we emerged to have tea on the terrace in the warm sunshine of a September afternoon, then strolled through the gardens to assemble at the coach pick-up point for a comfortable journey home. I'm sure we are all grateful to Penny for arranging such an interesting day which took us for a visit to a wonderful venue with no effort on our part!

Anne Anderton

Tuesday 18 September Talk by Barbara Andrew *Grandma was a suffragette*

Barbara Andrew (who was born in Sutton Coldfield in 1955), gave a presentation concerning the infamous Suffragette movement and how women had to fight for electoral equality with men. The talk was about grandma, Thirza Cove, born in 1881, who was a domestic servant in Edwardian London but was treated like a common criminal. Her employment was terminated. Later Thirza went to live and shared a bedroom with Barbara who was then aged 7 years. There were various memorabilia on the table next to Barbara concerning the suffragette movement i.e. scarves, sashes and brooches. Thirza was inspired by the feminist Emmeline Pankhurst.

The word suffrage is derived from the Latin *suffragium* meaning to vote. The term Suffragette was first used in 1906 by the Daily Mail which added 'ette' on to the end denoting, patronisingly, a smaller size. The National Union of Women's Suffrage was founded in 1896 (NUWSS). By 1872 the Stoke-on-Trent Committee of the London National Society for women's suffrage was formed and meetings were held in Burslem, Hanley, Kidsgrove and Longton. In 1908 the movement was further enhanced by Sylvia Pankhurst (who actually stayed in Stoke). Barbara passed round a photograph showing Sylvia Pankhurst standing outside the Theatre Royal in Hanley joined by another local activist, Sarah Bennett (1850-1924), who lived at 196 Waterloo Road, Burslem. She became a prominent campaigner. She fought hard to ban the use of lead glaze in the ceramics industry. Sarah Bennett also went on hunger strike and resisted paying taxes because women had no vote.

In June 1913 Emily Wilding Davison, who marched from Edinburgh to London, threw herself at the King's horse, Anmer, and died a few days afterwards. Inside her coat were pinned two WSPU flags. She was buried at Morpeth in Northumberland. Another campaigner was Ada Nield Chew (1870-1945) one of 13 children who, as a passionate trade unionist, highlighted the appalling conditions endured by textile workers. The colours used for the suffrage varied, but in 1908 purple (denoting Royal blood), white (for purity) and green (denoting hope and the emblem of spring) became the defining colours of the movement. Other sympathetic campaigners were politicians such as James Keir Hardie and George Lansbury. However, Churchill, Disraeli, Asquith and Gladstone were not initially supporters. Emmeline Pankhurst (1858-1928) and her husband Dr Richard Pankhurst, a lawyer, had three daughters, Christobel (later DBE), Sylvia and Adela. Following her husband's early death Mrs Pankhurst became a Registrar of Births and Deaths in Manchester. Emmeline and Christobel Pankhurst founded the militant Women's Social and Political Union in 1903. Sylvia, an artist and designer, became its honorary Secretary. Millicent Garratt Fawcett DBE (1847-1929) was a lifelong peaceful campaigner. Her name was taken by the Fawcett Society which continues to campaign for gender equality.

The campaigners held public meetings, lobbied MPs, gave speeches, held rallies and marches. They interrupted political meetings and in the House of Commons draped their Votes for Women scarves over the balconies. Some chained themselves to the railings in Whitehall and Downing Street. They broke windows in the Houses of Parliament and shops. There were special trains bringing some 300,000 crusaders for the cause. Many women were injured by being crushed or trampled upon. Thirza Cove was kept in solitary confinement in prison and was treated like a common criminal. Holloway became the focus of protest and controversy when suffragette inmates held hunger strikes in July 1909 and were forcibly fed via a nasogastric tube or with a funnel and tube down the throat. The militant suffragettes who formed the Women's Social and Political Union claimed that women who pay rates and taxes should be placed on the parliamentary register.

When the First World War was declared on 4 August 1914 suffragette prisoners were released. Mrs Pankhurst urged women to defend their country. Some women became nurses, they drove trains, ambulances and lorries. In 1918 the contribution of women and their service to society was rewarded by Lloyd George's government who granted almost all men over 21 and almost all women over 30 the right to vote.

We thank Barbara Andrew for a most sincere and interesting presentation.

Sylvia Heatley

Thursday 27 September Car outing to Heath House, Tean.

Some of the smaller scale National Trust Association car visits can be as memorable, if not more so, than whole day coach outings, and so it proved when on Thursday 27th September, 50 members gathered at Heath House in Tean on a day which although the weather was chilly, proved to be one of respite from the very wet conditions which marked out the summer as one of the wettest on record.

We were welcomed by the present owner, Ben Philips, whose family had lived in Tean since the 16th century. He is the 6th generation of his family to live in the present house which his ancestors had built in 1836 to replace a modest Georgian house which stood nearby. In his general introduction Ben spoke of the financial difficulties which owners of estates like Heath House faced, how he was attempting to market the house as a conference centre and wedding venue and his enthusiasm for preserving the estate was very evident. He showed us the marquee used for wedding receptions. Taking advantage of the dry weather -the sun even showed itself- Ben took us around the lovely gardens, and we saw the recently restored orangery of 1831, which predates the present house. We then gathered in the dining room for a welcome cup of tea and cakes, which for me was a poignant moment as my grandmother, who was training to be a cook. was in service there after leaving school at the age of 14 in 1900. After tea Ben gave a humorous and informative overview of the history of the family and house before dividing us into three groups. One, led by Ben himself, went to the upper rooms of the house; the other two groups led by Flavia Swann, a cousin of Ben and an art historian, and Neil Hatfield, a friend and volunteer, were guided around the lower rooms. Eventually we all saw the whole of the house, with its interesting collection of furniture and paintings collected by the family over the centuries. All three leaders were experts in their knowledge of the house and its history and this made for a most rewarding visit. After a vote of thanks we dispersed and guess what? While we had been in the house it had been raining, and we hadn't even noticed! Many thanks to Peter Moxon for organizing a most rewarding visit to a house on our doorstep but which apparently, most members had not visited before.

Reverend Allan Townsend.

Wednesday 3 October Talk on Concorde by Glyn Williams

Captain Glyn Williams' talk on his flying career started with him in the RAF in 1963 where he met Peter Thompson our vice-chairman. He went on to fly with the Canadian Air Force as a Flying Instructor, finally ending his career on Concorde. He went into great detail explaining aerodynamics. The plane had thirteen fuel tanks the contents of which the pilots could transfer forwards, backwards and even left and right so that speed could be reduced or increased as required. This beautifully shaped aircraft was supersonic and flew to New York from London in three and a half hours – at one mile every two and a half seconds – with no turbulence. On the film which Glyn Williams showed, the very tight fit for the pilots in their cockpit was well demonstrated.

Some of the information was a bit too technical for all to grasp, but the presentation was most enjoyable.

Sandra Rushton

Wednesday 10 October Car visit to Halfpenny Green Vineyard and Kinver Rock Houses

We picked a lovely day for our visit. Our guide, Tina, gave a short talk about the history leading to the opening of the vineyard in 1983 after three generations of farming. Firstly we visited the barn where the champagne is made and saw bottles being turned in a wire cage to settle the sediment this was then "popped" off. The bottles were then corked and labelled. Red and white wines were processed through large vats. We learned the facts of how the vines were cultivated, pruning in winter and thinning back leafage regularly in summer to allow the sun to ripen the grapes. We then watched a video and had a wine tasting session of five white wines; there were no reds left. Lunch followed with some time left for another look round and a visit to the craft centre.

Then on to the Rock Houses at Kinver. The first evidence of these was in 1777 when J Healy sheltered there in a storm. The sandstone cliffs had been excavated into quite large rooms eg. living room, kitchen, and bedroom with a garden outside. Many families have lived in the rock houses over the last 200 years. In 1930 an outside tap replaced the dried up well and gas was piped to them. The houses were closed in 1967. Everyone was surprised at the standard of living you could achieve in these houses.

A super day out.

Lesley Huson.

Thursday 18 October Car outing to Highfields House, Audlem

“Highfields” again charmed a second party of members during their visit to the house where they were entertained and given a tour by Mrs Susan Baker assisted by her mother-in-law.

After the tour members enjoyed a chat over a cup of tea and biscuits and were invited to re-visit any parts of the house that had particularly interested them. For those in particular who missed the tour much historical information about the house can be found on the website.

Peter Moxon

Wednesday 24 October Visit to Concorde at Manchester Airport Viewing Park.

A cool windy day greeted members at the Runway Visitors Park. Early arrivals saw the incoming flight of Emirates A380 Airbus, the largest passenger aircraft in the world.

The Concorde tour commenced with a short video which provided us with an appetiser for what was to follow. Concorde G-BOAC was the Flagship of the British Airways Fleet. The aircraft is housed in a spacious custom built display area overlooking the main runway. The guided tour enabled us to spend quality time in the cabin and flight deck. The cabin may appear quite small compared to current airliners However, it did provide luxurious super-sonic travel for 100 passengers in soft leather seats. Each cost £7,000 to manufacture.

Concorde flew the Atlantic routes to Washington and New York, flight time being around 3hrs 30 mins. The speed over the ocean enabled 1 mile to be covered in 2.8 seconds!!



At these speeds air friction on the outer surfaces caused the cabin to heat up during flight and expand by as much as 300mm (almost 1ft). When this occurred the Flight Engineer could place his hat in the gap at the end of his instrument panel.

The design for supersonic transport was commenced in the late 1950s leading to a collaboration between the British and French governments. The first UK Concorde flew in 1969 and entered service with BA in 1976 continuing commercial flights for 27 years. Concorde flew at heights of 60,000ft which meant that passengers received small doses of radiation. An instrument on the flight deck recorded levels of radiation and if they became too high the pilot descended to a lower level.

Because of the sonic boom various Asian and Far Eastern governments refused the aircraft to overfly. This prevented flights over large land masses which reduced its appeal to other airlines. Concorde pioneered several technologies for high speed flight. Some were visible and explained by our guides. These included the variable air intakes and the droop nose (not visible on G-BOAC) this was incorporated to give the pilot greater visibility during on the ground movements, take-off and landings.

The fatal crash of an Air France Concorde in 2000 required many expensive safety improvements to the fuel tanks and specially designed burst resistant tyres.

British Airways continued with commercial flights incorporating the modifications. However, in 2003 Air France announced that they would retire Concorde. Prior to the accident, Concorde had been arguably the safest operational passenger aircraft in the world. Our visit concluded by each member receiving a certificate to commemorate the visit. Three tour guides provided an excellent and informative commentary on a complex technological icon.

Many thanks to Peter Thompson for arranging this eagerly awaited visit.

Ken Amos

Sunday 4 November Walk at Fauld Crater

I must confess that I had never heard of the Fauld Crater when I set off with 20 or so NT walkers (and 2 dogs) on Sunday 4 November but what a tragic and fascinating tale was revealed as we tramped the fields around Hanbury, Staffordshire.

We met on The Cock Inn car park at Hanbury for an 11am start on a cold, raw but dry and still day; good walking weather. Despite a stuttering start - 7 of us somehow 'lost' the rest - we were quickly reunited with the lead group and after about 1 hour's walking we arrived at the crater where Richard told us the horrific story.



The date was Monday, 27 November 1944. The old workings of the nearby gypsum mine were being used to store ammunition for the war. Whilst a workman was removing detonators from the bombs etc. somehow a spark [from a brass chisel, which should have been copper] caused a massive explosion, said to be heard in Birmingham and Stoke and also registering on earthquake monitoring stations in Switzerland and North Africa. 70 people were killed; 26 RAF personnel; 7 farm-workers and 37 workers in the gypsum mine, mainly because the nearby reservoir dam burst and swamped the works below. Some bodies were never found. The crater remains untouched; a dangerous place even now and a fitting memorial to those who lost their lives so suddenly that fateful day.

Despite the 10 stiles and a fallen tree that we had to negotiate this was a lovely walk and introduced some of us to a little known piece of local history.

Many thanks to Richard Adams for this event.

Kate Forrest-Hay

The photographs over leaf show the depth of the crater excavated by the explosion, and the party of walkers gathered around the memorial to the dead.

Goss Works in Stoke

Those Association members who strolled with Cynthia Dumbelton along London Road, Stoke earlier this year will remember inspecting the site of the old Goss pottery Falcon Works in Sturgess Street (just behind the Portmeirion works). They may also recall our fellow member Brian Wilson telling some of us about the works and his attempts to breathe new life into them.

Now, Brian and his colleagues in the Goss Collectors' Club have started a campaign to get these splendid and mainly complete works restored, so are calling for other people to join them in working to achieve that ambition.

If you are interested in helping Brian and his team he can be contacted on 01782 611807 or by e-mail to wilsonbrian@hotmail.co.uk



BOOKING DETAILS

Wednesday, 27 February: Car Outing to Staffordshire Record Office, Eastgate Street, Stafford. Maximum 24.

Please meet at the Record Office for 2.00pm and the afternoon will conclude at 4.00pm approximately.

Cost £5 (or £6 for guests).

Apply to Mrs Penny Moore, 26, Parkway, Trentham, ST48 AG.

Telephone 01782 657645 enclosing a cheque and a stamped addressed envelope.

Closing date Friday 18 January. Priority will be given to those who applied for the previous visit for whom there was no place.

SEE OVER PAGE

BOOKING DETAILS

Sunday, 17 March: Walk - Stafford and Stafford Castle. Meet at 10.00am

Lunch tables are reserved for us in the Swan Hotel, where a 3 course Sunday lunch is around £18. They have asked for a deposit and pre-ordering of meals, so please indicate in your email or on the booking slip if you would like me to reserve a place for you.

Cost £2.00 for members, £2.50 for guests (pay on the day). Children are welcome at no charge. Dogs would probably prefer to stay at home this time.

Book your place with Richard Adams: email to riadams@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

SEE OVER PAGE

CAR OUTING

Wednesday, 27 February: Car Outing to Staffordshire Record Office, Eastgate Street, Stafford. Maximum 24.

Name (s)	Association number	£
.....
.....
		Total £

NAME, ADDRESS

.....

.....

tel number email address

FOR BOOKING DETAILS SEE REVERSE OF THIS FORM

WALK

Sunday, 17 March: Walk - Stafford and Stafford Castle. Meet at 10.00am

Name (s)	Association number	£
.....
.....
		Total £

NAME, ADDRESS Please book lunches

.....

.....

tel. number email address

FOR BOOKING DETAILS SEE REVERSE OF THIS FORM

BOOKING DETAILS.

Wednesday, March 20: Coach outing to Bletchley Park, Bucks. Top Secret Ultra

Coach departs School Street at 0900 am to return by around 8.30 pm.

Cost: £40.00 (non-members £42.00) to include coach, driver's tip, admission and tour of Bletchley Park, buffet lunch and afternoon tea.

Please apply to Peter Thompson, 220 Seabridge Lane, Newcastle, Staffordshire. ST5 3LS. Tel: 01782 613397 enclosing a cheque and stamped addressed envelope.
Closing date: 1 March.

SEE OVER PAGE

BOOKING DETAILS

Wednesday, April 17: Walk along the Canal in Stone. Meet at 10.30 am.

Although the towing path might be muddy in places it is a walk that should appeal to most but, unfortunately, numbers have to be restricted; if there is sufficient demand a second walk can be arranged.

Cost: £5.00 each.

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

SEE OVER PAGE

COACH OUTING

Wednesday, March 20: Coach outing to Bletchley Park, Bucks.

Top Secret Ultra

Name (s)	Association number	£
.....
.....
		Total £

NAME, ADDRESS

.....

.....

tel. number email address

FOR BOOKING DETAILS SEE REVERSE OF THIS FORM

WALK

Wednesday, April 17: Walk along the Canal in Stone. Meet at 10.30 am.

Name (s)	Association number	£
.....
.....
		Total £

NAME, ADDRESS

.....

.....

tel. number email address

FOR BOOKING DETAILS SEE REVERSE OF THIS FORM

BOOKING DETAILS

Tuesday, 23 April: Car outing to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, near Lichfield.

Meet at 10.30 am in Reception. Pay and display car parking is £3 per day.

Cost: £17.50 (non- members £18.50) to include a guided tour of the National Memorial Arboretum and a 2 course lunch..

On your application form: please advise me if you wish to:

1. Use the land train. 2. Take the vegetarian lunch option. 3. Visit a specific memorial

Closing date: 20 March 2013..

Apply to - Peter Thompson. 220 Seabridge Lane Newcastle-under-Lyme Staffordshire, ST53LS. enclosing a cheque and stamped self- addressed envelope
Tel. number 01782 613397

SEE OVER PAGE

CAR OUTING

Tuesday, 23 April: Car outing to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, near Lichfield.

Meet at 10.30 am in Reception. Pay and display car parking is £3 per day.

Name (s)	Association number	£
.....
.....
		Total £

NAME, ADDRESS

.....
.....

Numbers wishing to take the Land Train

Numbers wishing to have the vegetarian lunch

I/we wish to visit the site of Memorial

tel. number email address

FOR BOOKING DETAILS SEE REVERSE OF THIS FORM

Photographs in this issue were kindly supplied by John Huson, Ken Amos and Katie Forrest-Hay.

Date for copy for the next issue is 1 March 2013

Please send your contributions to John Huson, 25 Grindley Lane, Meir Heath, Stoke-on-Trent, ST3 7LN; Email john.huson25@btinternet.com

COMMITTEE 2012– 2013

<p>David Dumbelton (Chairman) david.dumbelton@virgin.net</p>	<p>32 The Lea Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8DY Tel 01782 641765</p>
<p>Peter Thompson (Vice Chairman) pdthompson@tiscali.co.uk</p>	<p>Westerly, 220 Seabridge Lane Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 3LS Tel 01782 613397</p>
<p>Richard Adams (Hon. Secretary and Membership Secretary) rjadams@doctors.org.uk</p>	<p>Gables End, Holly Bank Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8FT Tel 01782 646054</p>
<p>Madeleine Hopley (Hon. Treasurer)</p>	<p>5 Sedbergh Close Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 3JQ Tel 01782 618821</p>
<p>Rose Wheat (Programme Organiser) rose.wheat@sky.com</p>	<p>12 West Avenue Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 0NB Tel 01782 616113</p>
<p>Anne Anderton</p>	<p>14 Berne Avenue Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 2QJ Tel 01782 613024</p>
<p>Anne Beaumont</p>	<p>4 Barnsdale Close Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8TT Tel 01782 642618</p>
<p>Roger Cartlidge</p>	<p>3 The Mount, Scholar Green Stoke-on-Trent ST7 3HY Tel 01782777513</p>
<p>Peter Moxon</p>	<p>Millstone House, Butterson Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 4EB Tel 01782 616337</p>
<p>Sue Pitt</p>	<p>196 Dimsdale Parade West Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 8EA Tel 01782 566871</p>
<p>Bob Winter</p>	<p>15 Robinson Road, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8ED Tel : 01782 642942.</p>

January to April 2013 Programme

Tuesday 15 January	Talk at the NS Conference Centre	Vince Williams	<i>K2: A Personal Pilgrimage</i>
Thursday 24 January	Coach Trip Fully booked: reserve only		Manchester and the Halle Orchestra.
Tuesday 12 February	Talk at NS Conference Centre	Andrew Edwards	<i>The Staffordshire Saxon</i>
Wednesday 27 February	Repeat Car Outing <i>Meet 2.00 pm</i>		Staffordshire County Record Office
Tuesday 12 March	Talk at the NS Conference Centre	Steve Birks	<i>The Acropolis of the Dead - a look at the Victorian cemetery and its reflection of society..</i>
Sunday 17 March	Walk <i>Meet 10.00 am</i>		Stafford Castle
Wednesday 20 March	Coach Trip <i>Depart 9.00 am</i>		Bletchley Park
Thursday 11 April	Talk at the NS Conference Centre	Derek Higgot	<i>Shugborough's Gardens through the Seasons.</i>
Wednesday 17 April	Walk. <i>Meet 10.30 am</i>		Stone Canal History Walk.
Tuesday 23 April	Car Outing <i>Meet 10.30 am</i>		National Arboretum, Alrewas
	Some Future Dates for Your Diary		
Tuesday 14 May	Talk at the NS Conference Centre and AGM	Andrew Lound.	To be announced
Thursday 16 May	Coach trip		Arbury Hall
Wednesday 22 May	Car Outing		Shugborough
Tuesday 18 June	Car Outing		Middleton Hall
Wednesday 3 July	Car Outing		David Austin Roses.
Tuesday 16 July	Car outing		Chetwynd House