

The North Staffs National Trust Association

Newsletter 91

and

January to April 2012 Programme

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



A view inside St Michael and All Angels Berwick see Page 8

Also View from Eaton Hall Gardens see Page 5



ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRIPS



Coaches depart promptly from BRUNSWICK STREET, Newcastle, or the adjacent School Street (which may soon become available again), 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 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 Brunswick Street/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 Brunswick/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.

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.**

SAFETY ON COACH TRIPS

Please note that while School Street is not available for our coaches 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. 91 and January to April 2012 PROGRAMME



A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

As I settle into my first year in office I am increasingly able to understand the external circumstances which affect this Association and within which we have to operate. Our view of the world is, understandably, somewhat parochial and we recognise and feel frustrated by the impact of adverse world economic and social conditions on our local institutions.

We have long seen the effects of financial restraint on our local libraries and now the biggest threat is the potential closure of several of the museums in North Staffordshire. Therefore, it is encouraging to note that "Friends" organisations are growing rapidly – with many of our own members taking on important roles - and we wish them much success in ensuring the continuity of these fine institutions.

As an organisation we need to be working in mutual support of them, and we hope that Ford Green Hall will have benefitted financially from and been encouraged by the support we have given them in holding our very successful Christmas Social evenings there, which 80 of our members attended and enjoyed.

With this *Newsletter* we are, possibly for the first time, promoting an external event – this being a talk to be given by Andrew Lounds (who gave us such a fascinating talk recently). He will speak on the Titanic at the *Potteries Museum and Art Gallery* on April 21st – see the back page for more details. This has been organised by the Museum and we are delighted to support them directly like this and trust you will want to attend.

We hope that you, too, will give the Friends organisations (including that at the Etruria Industrial Museum) your own individual support, perhaps joining them, helping out and, of course, fund-raising. They really need your help

and we all need the Museums to continue as strong organisations well into the future.

It is very gratifying to see our own Association being healthy and going from strength to strength with new members joining all the time. As you will see in this issue, we have many exciting new events for you to enjoy in 2012 and we hope that you will participate in them as much as you can.

Finally, may I take this opportunity of wishing you, your family and friends a very Happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year?

David Dumbelton



MEET THE COMMITTEE



Over the next few issues we plan to introduce each of the Committee members. Many of us know them by sight but know little behind the smile. We start with our tallest member, Peter Moxon is definitely someone to look up to; and our Programme Secretary, Rose Wheat.

Peter Moxon

Peter's four great grandfathers, a solicitor, a wine and spirit merchant, a potter (and Mayor of Hanley) and a brick and tile manufacturer all lived and worked in or within ten miles of Hanley.

Peter, a fourth generation solicitor, married to Rosemary, with a solicitor son and a nursing daughter, became a partner in the family law firm whilst still undertaking his National Service in Germany as a 2nd Lieutenant with the North Staffordshire Regiment, later a Captain with 887 Locating Battery R.A. (T.A) and Adjutant with 35th South Midlands Royal Signal Regiment (T.A.).

Peter practised as a solicitor initially in partnership with his father, his uncle and two brothers for three years in Hanley and then within an



expanded partnership for 20 years in Leek and a further 20 years in Crewe.

In his spare time he was a member of The Newcastle-under-Lyme Round Table (1964-1974). He was appointed an Assistant County Commissioner for Venture Scouts (1967-1970) starting Venture Scouting in Staffordshire, Deputy County Commissioner of Scouts (1970-1971) and County Commissioner of Scouts for Staffordshire (1971-1989). Upon retiring as County Commissioner he was appointed a Chief Commissioner for England assisting the Chief Scout with responsibility for 14 Scout Counties. He has been an Honorary County Vice President from 1997 to date.

Peter was Vice President of the North Staffordshire Law Society in 1981 and President in 1982.

He has been a Governor of the Newcastle-under-Lyme School (1983-2008) and a Committee Member of the North Staffordshire Association of National Trust Members (2000-date).

He was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant for the County of Stafford in 1980 aged 46 years and was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire in 1997.

His leisure interests include gardening, tapestry, DIY and light reading.

Rose Wheat

Rose was born in Newcastle-under-Lyme and attended school and university locally. She has been married to Mick for over 40 years and they have two sons and three grandchildren. Her final 'career' was as a tutor in the familiarly known Adult Ed department of Keele University where she specialized in the history of the county, especially Penkridge, and the 'lost aristocracy' of Staffordshire. Grandchild care seems to take up an increasing amount of her time- great fun but totally exhausting- and in addition to her involvement with the Association she is also a member of the FoSSA committee (Friends of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive) and a founder member of the North Staffordshire Historians' Guild. Concerts at the Victoria Hall, visits to the Royal Exchange, Manchester, and our own local theatres, the Film Theatre and membership of a book group fill up the remainder of her spare time.

She hopes that all members are enjoying the programme of car and coach outings which, with her trusty band of fellow organizers, she has been able to put together this season. Any offers of help would be gratefully received and assistance with planning and leading trips would be willingly given.

WELCOME

Recent new members of the Association are:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Prof and Ms J Andrew, Hartshill | Mr and Mrs N Boulton, Fenton |
| Miss M Jobling, Stockton Brook | Mr B Wilson, Hartshill |
| Mr J Pedrazzini, Hanford | Mr Peter Mee, of Birches Head |
| Mr and Mrs D Rawlins, Newcastle | Dr Mary Tomlinson, Harpfields |
| Mr & Mrs Beckett, Madeley | Mr and Mrs B Godfrey, Cotes Heath |
| Mr and Mrs R Savage, Eccleshall | Mr and Mrs Valerie and Donald |
| Mrs C Barnish, Burslem | Morris, Trentham |
| Mrs M Toft, Blurton | |

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



- RECENT TALKS AND VISITS -



Tuesday 12th July Evening Visit to Biddulph Grange celebrating the Bateman Anniversary

In the 1840's James Bateman, a mill machinery supplier in Lancashire, inherited his grandfather's money and came to Knypersley. When he married, he and his wife moved to Biddulph to a site where there had been a farm since the 1500s. Over thirty years he built the Hall and garden, and then sold up to Robert Heath whose son, also Robert, rebuilt the house in 1897. Eventually the Heaths gave the house to the Cripples Aid Society and it eventually passed to the Lancashire Health Authority. The garden, which boasts the oldest golden larch in Britain, was sold separately.

The garden design - lots of little gardens to reflect different countries, for example America, China, Egypt - allows for differing microclimates to enable plants from these countries to flourish, so the visitor can experience a mini world tour enhanced by appropriate garden buildings, statuary etc.

About thirty Association members enjoyed their evening tour, which included a visit to the original entrance to the garden - the geological gallery, the only one of its type in the world, which takes a journey through the biblical creation story, but with a scientific backdrop, ordering rocks according to the seven days of creation. Our visit ended with welcome coffee and scones with jam and cream. Many thanks to Rose for organising the visit.

Jenny Wright

Sunday 24th July Coach Outing to Eaton Hall Gardens (near Chester)

The morning was bright & sunny but the traffic was heavy & slow so we arrived at the garden centre ready for a coffee & the loo. The garden centre which has been awarded the Garden Centre of Excellence for the past 10 years provided a wide range of unusual plants and seeds plus an excellent restaurant for lunch, which many took advantage of before boarding the coach again for a short journey.

We entered the gates of the hall to the fabulous sight of the long driveway with the family home of the Duke & Duchess of Westminster set in 88 acres of gardens which have been revitalised by Arabella Lennox-Boyd.

We were then free to wander at will to see falconry displays, see the armoured Rolls Royce, view the carriage museum, listen to the Chester wind band & ride on Katie the steam train. This was in addition to the real purpose of the visit, to see the gardens. No matter what your interest was in the gardens you could



Eaton Hall Gardener Mike Cook stands in front of the climatically controlled grape greenhouse while he gives David, our chairman, hints on growing grapes fit for a Duke. If Mike reads this he will be pleased to know that following his advice, David has had his best crop ever (but not yet up to Eaton Hall standards).

find a wonderful display, ornamental borders, trees, wild flowers, hot borders with bright yellows, oranges and reds. We found fabulous roses, organic kitchen gardens which produce all year round for the house, glass houses with huge tomato plants & grape vines in abundance.

As we wandered on, our path crossed wide herbaceous borders filled with a variety of blue, yellow, ruby & green plants which should continue to flower well into autumn.

As we strolled around the 88 acres our group fortified themselves with the wonderful local ice cream that was available at various outlets round the gardens. Listening to some of comments I think the average consumption was three per person. An excellent end to a great day out.

Chris Taylor

Tuesday 16th August Coach Outing to Compton Verney

While we enjoyed coffee and biscuits, Dave, a gallery assistant, explained how Sir Peter Moores had bought the almost derelict house and with years of work — and a fortune — transformed the elegant building into the art gallery in the country he had always wanted.

The Stanley Spencer exhibition was a revelation, as it focused on his paintings of gardens in and around the village of Cookham, where he regarded the gardens as little heavens, which he painted with exquisite details of the plants. He loved the security provided by fences and railings and felt there was something holy about these enclosed spaces.

The very different exhibition of the work of 'Capability' Brown showed his mastery of the great open spaces and his sweeping designs for the improvements his patrons required. Noting how many great houses and parks he redesigned, we were left in awe of his ability to oversee so many projects up and down the country in an age when travel was on horseback or by carriage.

Many people also enjoyed strolling round the grounds, admiring the lovely views of the house and visiting the various features, such as the camera obscura, the great wooden sculpture of a horse, or the refurbished ice-house, now graced with a thatched roof!

Thanks to Anne for arranging this trip to a venue which many people did not know but promised themselves they would visit again when in the area.



"ARTS AND CRAFTS AND THE SEASIDE" HOLIDAY

We all had a morning off to explore parts of Brighton as we wished - enjoying such delights as the Pier, the Promenade, the Royal Pavilion, The Lanes, Museums, etc. Then, in the afternoon, most of us chose the optional coach outing to visit Nymans Gardens.

Day One - Thursday 1st September

The "Arts and Crafts and the Seaside" holiday was a lovely long-weekend of (mainly) good weather and, of course, excellent company. While Bakers Holidays organised the comfortable accommodation and transport, we have Cynthia and David Dumbelton to thank for the exciting excursions.

The visit to Kelmscott Manor was particularly useful as an introduction for those of us not already well-versed in William Morris's work and the Arts and Crafts movement that he inspired. However, after our morning's journey we needed reviving by lunch at The Plough before walking through Kelmscott to the Manor, passing cottages built for the villagers by Morris and his daughter, May.

In the Manor's exhibition barn an enthusiastic local guide, Jo Cottrell, gave us an entertaining overview of the Manor's history, and the Morris family's time as its tenants from 1871 until after William's death in 1896. Then we were free to explore the house and grounds at our own pace with the help of the volunteer room-guides, all of whom clearly love the place and are proud of it. It was a delight to see printings and paintings, tapestries and embroideries, wallpaper and furniture at close quarters in this authentic setting. Morris referred to the Manor as "this loveliest haunt of ancient peace", and, in a sunny garden among flowers that inspired his work, who could disagree? But even the Morrises found it too rural in the winters and returned to Kelmscott House in Hammersmith until the spring.

Back on the bus, our driver, Ian, and Sally Sat-Nav conveyed us to Brighton just in time for dinner, immediately followed by an illustrated talk on "Arts and Crafts and the Impact of William Morris". Fortunately, weariness was kept at bay as our speaker, Mary Greensted, was extremely dynamic, showing us how Morris's pursuit of excellence in so many fields was underpinned by a radical practicality and social conscience: "Have in your houses only that which is beautiful or you consider to be useful" - (I paraphrase from memory!)

And so to bed, but not necessarily to sleep!

Chris Francis, assisted by Jenny Wright

Day 2 - Friday 2nd September

On a bright sunny day we arrived at Charleston, a charming house which was the former home of Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant and their unconventional household. It also became the country retreat for the Bloomsbury Group. We were split into groups for our tour of the house, all our guides were very knowledgeable and well informed which helped us to enjoy and appreciate this unique and remarkable place. Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant decorated their home in a daring and unrestrained way, they painted directly onto walls and furniture so that each room became a work of art in itself. They also filled their home with interesting paintings, ceramics and textiles, the work of artists that they knew or admired including Picasso, Renoir and Sickert.

After lunch at the Cricketers' Arms in Berwick village we walked the short distance to the ancient church of St. Michael and All Angels. This is a much visited church not only for its history but for the murals painted during the Second World War by the Bloomsbury artists Duncan Grant, Vanessa Bell and Quentin Bell. Of particular note is the chancel arch painted by Duncan Grant in 1941, it shows servicemen in uniform painted in a typical Italian Renaissance manner with Christ at the apex (see front cover). There are echoes of Charleston in many of these paintings which also reflect the troubled times of wartime England.

From Berwick village we made our way to Bexhill on Sea to the De La Warr Pavilion. Constructed in 1935 the Pavilion is a modernist white building that serves as the cultural centre for the area. After exploring the building

(including the beach on the roof!) we enjoyed refreshments and a short and enthusiastic talk by James the director. He highlighted the pioneering features of the building, its decline, disrepair and finally its restoration under the guidance of a charitable trust. This unique modernist building now appears to have a role in the 21st century in keeping with its original cultural purpose.

A busy and full day!

Linda and David Perry

Day 3 - Saturday 3rd September

Stunned by lack of sleep caused by the stag/hen party goers of Brighton, and with a totally jaundiced view on life, my expectations of finding solace in a garden seemed remote. However, my somnambulation from the crowded (Saturday afternoon) car park to the entry of the gardens was interrupted by a lovely wild flower patch which most visitors chose to ignore. Not as good as the wild verge as you approach the Mainwaring Arms at Whitmore which can go from fallow to glorious beauty in the course of days - look out for it next year.

Joy restored, back to Nymans. This 600 acre estate on the Sussex weald was purchased in 1890 by the German industrialist Ludwig Messel. Messel was an innovator and employed a young gardener, James Comber, also eager to experiment with new plants and ideas, to create a garden that would blend with the house and express his feeling for arts and crafts. Successive generations maintained the gardens with a few additions although the house was greatly altered from Regency to mock medieval manor.

By the 1930's the garden had reached its peak and was regularly opened to the public but the Second World War brought this to an end. Then in 1947 a disastrous fire destroyed most of the house. It was partially rebuilt with the west facing ruin left as a garden feature. It became the home of Leonard Messel who, on his death in 1953, handed it to the National Trust. Leaving the house for the walled garden with its arches, central water feature and colourful planting, including many wonderful species of dahlias, it is easy to imagine that this is a garden for all seasons and further visits would be needed to appreciate it to the full. Spring, when the camellias are in bloom, must be sublime.

Turning to the south the croquet lawn comes into view with families bashing balls through hoops while others seem engrossed in understanding the rules and skill needed for the ancient game. South again to the southern view point over the Sussex Weald. Expansive panoramic scenery with, in the distance, the Three Bridges viaduct taking the main line from London to Brighton. Going back in the fading afternoon light, through the expanses of shrubbery, the "ruin" can be seen like a picture from some Gothic novel, especially with the dim lights from the living house glowing in the dead windows of the empty gable. Close your eyes Ludwig. A bamboo jungle! Well, may be he would have approved. It certainly is interesting with such robust growth and powerful appearance. Copious reading is supplied and is well worth the time taken to study it.

A quick turn left into the rose garden - beginning to turn now but still beautiful, arched with every species of English rose.

To the east are the tempting forest walks but time is running out and the three mile trek must wait. If you don't want to amble at random, looking, sniffing, touching, there are guided tours and, if you don't want to walk, there are mobility buggies to all areas.

Nymans. Something for everyone with the good taste of the National Trust. Gardens leave you feeling good.

Paula and James McLellan

Day 4 - Sunday 4th September: Steam Nostalgia on the Bluebell Line

With the evocative smells and sounds of full-steam bringing back memories of over 50 years ago in the Ian Allen Loco Spotters Club, the Fat Controller waved us on our way from Sheffield Park station on the iconic Bluebell Line.

With driver Ian in the cab of tanker class engine 80151 we set off into the Sussex countryside midst clouds of steam.

Old familiar posters for such products as Virol, Park Drive and Fremlins English Ale passed before our eyes as we moved from the platform. We quickly emerged into rolling wooded countryside with trees beginning to take on their autumnal palette. The Bluebell vineyard and a village cricket ground soon came into view but at this time of year, regrettably, no bluebells.

The first station we came to was Horsted Keynes and I swear I saw a little Belgian man with a moustache and funny walk shuffling along the platform. Then, to our right, an orange tent in a field with three children waving gaily at the train as we passed by; were we in an Enid Blyton story? Suddenly, all went dark as we entered Sharpthorpe tunnel, the longest on preserved railway lines. As we emerged, a pheasant skipped along at trackside giving us a cheery nod as we trundled by.

To remind us that we were still in the modern world a brickworks appeared on our right and then, in no time at all, we reached our final destination at Kingscote station, passing an old signal box and several goods wagons, one a steam banana van for transporting Fyffes famous fruit.



Our party alighted the train having thoroughly enjoyed this nostalgic rail journey through the beautiful Sussex countryside.

Mick Wheat

Visit to Standen.

I would love to have been a guest of the Beale family at Standen during its 1920s heyday, as it is now set out for the modern visitors' enjoyment. The entire house is a treasure trove of the Arts and Crafts period, from the architecture of Philip Webb to the wallpaper and soft furnishings of William Morris, the ceramics by William de Morgan and the metalwork of W A

Benson. But the house is not merely a museum dedicated to a particular aesthetic movement, it was a delightful and much-loved home. The leather settee in the billiard room was made for lounging on, the conservatory for enjoying afternoon tea and conversation whilst taking in the breathtaking views over the High Weald and,



as central heating and electricity were installed from the time of its construction in the 1890s, all the latest mod cons, including the new-fangled crystal radio, could be used.

My favourite room, however, is the light-filled and relaxing drawing-room into which you could easily imagine one of the family strolling to resume their knitting, left on an exquisite octagonal satinwood table, or to pick up a newspaper put down minutes before when the telephone rang. Such is the attention to detail paid by the current house manager that the slippers of one Beale son-in-law are placed in the bedroom he shared with his wife, whilst in the adjoining dressing-room his collar box, studs and safety razor are amongst the personal items lying around which add so much to the atmosphere.

Everywhere one was surrounded by precious ceramics, stunning furniture and beautiful textiles. William Morris's often quoted advice to 'Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful', was never better observed than at Standen.

Rose Wheat

Day 5 - Monday 5th September

After a speedy journey to Hammersmith, we visited Kelmscott House, home not only to William and Janey Morris, but also Sir Francis

NEWSLETTER CONTINUES ON PAGE 19

BOOKING DETAILS

Thursday 9th February: Car Outing to Staffordshire Record Office, Eastgate Street, Stafford, Maximum 24.

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 2nd February.

SEE OVER PAGE

BOOKING DETAILS

Tuesday 21st February 2012 – Car outing to JCB Factory

Cost: £14 for members, £15 for guests. Arrival time 9.45 am.

Please apply to: David Dumbelton, 32 The Lea, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8DY. Telephone 01782 641765 or e-mail:

david.dumbelton@virgin.net for queries. Post your cheque and include a stamped self-addressed C5 envelope (9" x 6½") for full instructions.

Note – any larger size envelope requires a "Large" stamp. Closing date January 21st.

SEE OVER PAGE

**Thursday 9th February: Car Outing to Staffordshire Record Office,
Eastgate Street, Stafford, Maximum 24.**

| Name | Association No. | £ |
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NAME AND ADDRESS:

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E-mail address

For Booking Details see reverse of this form

Tuesday 21st February – Car outing to JCB Factory

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| | Total | £..... |

Name and address:

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.....**Tel. No.**

E-mail address

For Booking Details see reverse of this form

BOOKING DETAILS

Tuesday 6th March: Coach outing to the National Media Museum, Bradford.

Cost: £15 (£17 for non members) to include coach, museum admission and driver's tip.

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

Closing date for applications: Tuesday 21st February.

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BOOKING DETAILS

Sunday 11th March Walk: "Trentham and Barlaston"

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 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

SEE OVER PAGE

Tuesday 6th March: Coach outing to the National Media Museum, Bradford.

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E-mail address

For Booking Details see reverse of this form

BOOKING DETAILS

Monday 16th April: Car Outing to St Mary's Church, Nantwich and Dorfold Hall, Nantwich.

Cost : £12 (£13 for guests) to include coffee and cake on arrival, a donation to the church and tour of Dorfold Hall.

Apply to Peter Moxon, Millstone House, Butterton, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 4EB. Tel: 01782 616337 enclosing SAE.

Closing date: 23rd March 2012.

SEE OVER PAGE

BOOKING DETAILS

Sunday 22nd April: Coach Outing The Hallé at the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester.

Cost £30 (£32 for guests) to include centre stalls ticket (face value £25), welcome by a member of the Hallé staff* and concert programme*, coach travel and driver's gratuity.

***subject to availability.**

Apply to Mrs Penny Moore, 26 Parkway, Trentham, ST4 8AG, telephone 01782 657645 enclosing a cheque and a stamped addressed envelope. Closing date Friday 13th April.

SEE OVER PAGE

Monday 16th April: Car Outing to St Mary's Church, Nantwich and Dorfold Hall, Nantwich.

| Name | Association No. | £ |
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E-mail address

For Booking Details see reverse of this form



Ronalds, who constructed the first electric telegraph in the long garden. We learnt that this invention was initially considered ‘totally unnecessary’, as semaphore was in common usage. Morris rented the house from the poet and novelist George Macdonald and renamed it. We were shown examples of original designs for fabrics and wallpapers by William and May Morris and our guide pointed out the alterations which Sanderson made, when they made use of the Morris archive. The coach house, where we sat, had been the lecture room for the Hammersmith branch of the Socialist League.

Our group then briefly saw the garden and went down to see the facsimiles of the Kelmscott *Chaucer* and the printing press next door. We then walked along the river to see Emery Walker’s house, before a welcome lunch in the delightful Blue Anchor pub.

We then travelled to Leighton House in Holland Park. Our enthusiastic guide showed us round Frederic Leighton’s huge studio and described how he always painted his figures, using mainly working-class girls as models, from the nude, then adding clothing and often the head of another person. His bedroom was monastic, compared with the rest of the house. The Silk Room displayed Leighton’s collection of paintings, such as Millais’ *Shelling peas* and had an amazing Mashrabiya, an Egyptian latticework window. The red-papered Dining Room displayed ceramics from the Mediterranean and Middle East. The Drawing Room contained recreated Corot *Times of Day* wall

paintings. The most memorable room was the Arab Hall, with its elaborate tiling and fountain, gloriously colourful and exotic.

Kay Williams

We then made the long journey back home, arriving in Newcastle at around 8 pm, exhausted but with strong memories of a wonderful holiday which was well organised and was blessed by mainly excellent weather.



Tuesday 20th September: History Walk around Rudyard Lake

Undaunted by the rain, about 30 members and friends were guided around Rudyard Lake by Ray Perry of the Rudyard Lake Trust. The walk was a follow-up to the talk given by Ray to members of the Association in October last year, as reported in Newsletter 88.

Although many of us were already familiar with the lake and its surroundings, it was interesting to visit again with the benefit of an informative guide. Having been constructed in the 1790s to supply the local canal network, the lake enjoyed its heyday as a local tourist attraction with the coming of the railway in the 1840s. On one occasion, the North Staffordshire Railway sold 20,000 tickets on a single day to visitors to the lake!

With a station at either end of the lake, a variety of visitor attractions were developed, ranging from a golf course for the elite to the north of the lake, to a funfair and dancing for those on a less expansive budget on and near to the dam at the southern end. The golfers' clubhouse was located in the castle-like Cliff Park House, which provided overnight accommodation (and, allegedly, the opportunity for certain clandestine activities of a distinctly unsporting nature). After the demise of the golf course, the house became for a while a youth hostel, where George Orwell is believed to have once stayed.

By the time the railway line closed, by courtesy of Dr Beeching, in the 1960s many of the lake's facilities had disappeared, and those which remained were looking rather forlorn, even though the lake was still a popular destination for visitors by car, as well as having an active sailing club. The Trust was

established in the 1990s to preserve the natural environment of the lake, and to provide good-quality facilities for visitors.

Rudyard Lake is perhaps most famous as the first meeting-place of the parents of Rudyard Kipling, who were so enchanted by its beauty that they named their first-born after the lake. Perhaps it is just as well they did not meet in Scunthorpe. It is believed that the great writer never visited the place which gave him his name; fortunately for us, Rudyard Lake is easily accessible and well worth a visit at any time.

With thanks to Ray Perry for conducting us so informatively around the lake, and to Sue Pitt for organising the visit, and for carrying Ray's impressive wireless megaphone which enabled all of us to hear his commentary.

Peter Wilson

Wednesday 28th September- Coach Outing to Upton House.

On a beautiful warm sunny day, we were taken back some 75 years to enjoy, as house guests, the delights of a seriously rich family's mansion and grounds.

On arrival, we were met by a National Trust guide, who provided a short introduction to the house and the family who lived there. He explained that Upton House had been transformed in the late 1920s and 30s by Walter Samuel, 2nd Viscount Bearsted, who was the Chairman of Shell Oil, the company founded by his father Marcus Samuel the 1st Viscount Bearsted. Incidentally, he informed us that the Shell name derived from the Samuel family's first enterprise decorating small boxes with sea-shells.

Since the house was not yet open, most of us spent the first hour or so exploring the splendid gardens which were designed by Kitty Lloyd Jones and Lady Bearsted. The large expanse of lawn, immediately to the back of the house, dropped away to reveal steep colourful terraces culminating in a wonderful pool in the bowl of the valley.

After lunch, we got into the atmosphere by watching a short black and white film recreating a 1930's house party for the good and the great. The National Trust is to be congratulated in retaining the feel of the time whilst using the house as an art gallery to display Lord Bearsted's extensive art and porcelain collections together with an excellent display of Shell posters of the period.

What was most unusual was that we were able to wander round the rooms with minimal restrictions even down to potting a few balls in the billiard room; putting the trust back into the National Trust.

Many thanks to Rose Wheat for organising a great day out.

Susan Till

Tuesday 4th October Car Outing "The Hidden Treasures of Tatton Mansion"

On what proved to be the last day of the Indian Summer we assembled in the Stable yard and split into two groups for our Hidden Treasures Tour where we were to see items not usually on view to the general public.

Tatton Mansion was completed in 1716 and occupied by the Egerton family until 1958 when it was bequeathed by Maurice Egerton to the National Trust. We were first shown two distinctive cabinets: an ornate Italian one with tortoiseshell and mother-of-pearl inlay but a relatively plain interior and the other made in Augsburg, Germany was plain on the outside but decorated inside with silver military scenes. These cabinets would have held small collectibles from the Egertons' travels abroad and would have been much admired by their many guests.

In the sumptuous Music Room with walls lined in pink padded silk we saw one of the last harpsichords, built in 1789, an unusual feature of which was a slatted louvre-style top which, by using a foot pedal, lengthened the sound of the notes produced. This was the forerunner of the new "forte-piano" which soon gained prominence as the major keyboard instrument. To our delight, Andrew one of our guides, gave a short recital of pieces by Handel and J S Bach to warm applause.

The many items on display in the Withdrawing/Library Room included a first edition Jane Austen and a scrapbook into which were pasted watercolour sketches of people in mainly Turkish costume. It was fashionable at that time to have one's portrait painted in such costume as did Lord Byron. There were also many rare books and Bibles, an early music score by Purcell, a fine ivory chess set with some pieces dyed red and two Venetian paintings by Canaletto.

In the Dining Room we circulated around the large Gillow dining table, set for twelve with a Minton dinner service and Baccarat glassware all sporting the

Egerton motif. A grand crystal chandelier added to the opulence of the room and it was at this table in 1897 that 36 guests including the then Prince of Wales sat down to dinner to celebrate his mother's Diamond Jubilee. We were then shown the storerooms, scullery and huge kitchens where we thought we heard Carson and the kitchen staff discussing the day's menu!

Following the tour members ate their picnics or dined in the Stable yard restaurant. The afternoon was free to re-visit the Mansion or explore the gardens, especially the Italian and Japanese ones. There was still time to make the odd purchase from the various Stable yard shops before leaving for home.

Thanks to Roger for arranging this enjoyable visit.

Shirley Timmis.

Wednesday 5th October- Talk by Mavis Smith: The Tollets of Betley.

Most of us know something about the Dukes of Sutherland and Trentham Hall or the Sneyd family of Keele Hall but I imagine that before Mavis's talk few people had heard of their near neighbours, the Tollets of Betley Hall. Mavis has spent years researching this gentry family and has published two books based on the journals and letters of Ellen Tollet in the mid-nineteenth century and on the 1812 diary of her sisters' rather strange (if not downright cruel) governess. Her talk, however, was not restricted to that one generation of Tollet's but ranged widely over their family history and we were fortunate to be able to put a face to many of those mentioned as Mavis showed us slides of their portraits, many which she had only recently discovered. It was interesting to learn about the links between the Tollets and other Staffordshire families, such as the Darwins of Maer Hall, the rivalries between the two leading families in Betley and the charitable work that was undertaken by the ladies of these privileged households. One can only guess at the frustration that these intelligent women must have felt at the way in which their opportunities for personal and intellectual satisfaction were circumscribed by their status.

Many thanks must go to Mavis for this fascinating glimpse into the lives of a largely forgotten local family and for giving us the chance to view their home,

Betley Hall, sadly no longer standing. Her enthusiasm for her subject and the depth of her research brought the Tollets alive for one evening at least.

Rose Wheat

Tuesday 18th October: Coach trip to Royal Crown Derby and the National Brewery Centre, Burton-on-Trent.

As we all know, the ceramic industry is a wondrous mixture of art, craft and technology. The process by which a lump of clay becomes a work of art is endlessly fascinating as was demonstrated at the Royal Crown Derby factory last October. I never tire of watching an experienced lithographer or freehand paintress transform a blank piece of pottery into a thing of beauty. Though many of their products are priced beyond the means of most of us this did not stop me coveting a large charger decorated with enormous old-fashioned roses, a mere £1000 apiece. However, after witnessing the tremendous effort and hearing about the number of man hours it takes to produce this piece and other exquisite figures, dinnerware etc, one can only wonder that they don't cost more. Quality of this kind don't come cheap!

Following our guided tour of the factory we enjoyed a delicious lunch at our next port of call- the National Brewery Centre at Burton-on-Trent. Amongst the interesting facts we learnt from our guide were the dangers faced by brewery workers who cleaned out the huge vats after each brew. Apparently, if precautions weren't taken to check out the level of carbon dioxide in the vats, men could be overcome by the fumes and never climb out. Several people enjoyed a game of table skittles in the reconstructed Edwardian bar, although we were requested not to use the spittoon! Of course, a fine thirst was created by all this talk of beer which was slaked in the modern bar with samples of our choice of beers. Fortunately, our driver did not partake of these pleasures as I suspect more than one of his passengers had a nap on the way home.

Many thanks to Sue and John Till for organising this splendid trip, the first of many, we hope.

Rose Wheat

Sunday 6th November Walk: "Audlem and Coxbank"

Around thirty members and guests all suitably booted, met on the car park of the "Shroppie Fly" pub beside the Shropshire Union Canal at Audlem (see picture). Some early arrivals had time to visit the canal shop to maybe get some ideas for unusual Christmas presents. It was a typical autumnal morning with the sun burning off the remains of the earlier mist that still lay over the canal and locks. After ordering our Sunday lunches we left at 10am walking away from the canal and into the centre of the village passing the church and then the ancient butter market and the site of the bear baiting pit. We left the village on a quiet lane before the first stile of the walk led us onto field paths (a little muddy following previous rains but not too bad). We paused briefly to look back at a view of the church and its dominating position above the village. Pressing on over field paths and quiet lanes (counting the 12 stiles as we went) we found ourselves not on a field path but a garden path. This final path took us through someone's garden!



Leaving the garden by a kissing gate onto another lane we approached the little village of Coxbank. As we passed one of the cottages some sharp sighted members spotted the elusive "Dodo" previously seen by Richard. A short walk brought us to a bridge over the canal and a short diversion to see the village well (more a spring than a well) but obviously the villages water supply in days gone by. Returning to the bridge we descended to the towpath for a leisurely 1 mile walk back down the canal towpath to the pub.

All that remained was to find our reserved tables and enjoy an excellent meal. Many thanks to Richard for planning and leading the walk and thanks also to his son Ollie for bringing up the rear.



COMING PROGRAMME



Tuesday 24th January - Talk at the NS Conference Centre: Terry Butler - the Royal Train.

Terry Butler is a retired railwayman from Crewe. He spent all of his working life on the railways. For many years he held a highly responsible position with duties including overseeing timetable preparation, locomotive and rolling stock scheduling, train crew restoring and all that went with the preparation of the royal trains. It is the latter aspect of the organising of the royal trains that Terry will be speaking to us about. His talk is most fascinating and at times highly amusing.

Thursday 9th February: Car Outing to Staffordshire Record Office, Eastgate Street, Stafford, Maximum 24.

We have been fortunate in securing a private, behind the scenes tour of the 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 2nd February.

Tuesday 14th February - Talk at the NS Conference Centre: Ian Dudson - My Life as a Sheriff.

Ian is the Chairman of the eponymous, privately owned family business of Dudson Ltd, a world leading specialist in the making and supply of ceramic tableware to the worldwide hospitality industry, which was established well over 200 years ago.

He was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of Staffordshire in 2001 and was awarded a CBE for services to the ceramic industry in HM The Queen's birthday honours in 2002. Ian had the honour of being appointed to the post of High Sheriff of Staffordshire for the 2010/11 year.

The High Sheriff post is the oldest secular office under the Crown and Ian will be telling us about this honourable post and what Sheriffs do today. Formerly the High Sheriff was the principal law enforcement officer in the county but over the centuries most of the responsibilities have been transferred elsewhere or are defunct, so that its functions are now largely ceremonial. The first High Sheriff of the county is recorded as being Robert de Stafford, in 1086!

So, we welcome "Ian de Burslem and Tunstall" who promises to give us a fascinating talk this evening.

Tuesday 21st February – Car outing to JCB Factory

JCB is a great British company, formed 65 years ago and arguably the best known world-class company in the area; they are in the top three of world construction equipment manufacturers and sell in over 150 countries, employing over 7,000 around the globe.

We now have the opportunity to undertake a tour of their Uttoxeter factory, which is bound to sell out quickly. Our visit will last for about 2½ hours and we will walk some three miles as we are guided through all the production processes and the office facilities. The visit will include a multimedia presentation and hopefully also the brand new exhibition area – *The Story of JCB*.

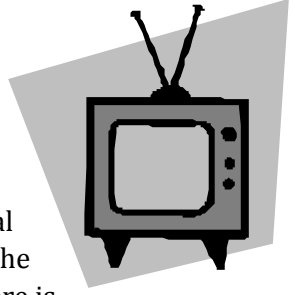
The visit is tour only and you will need to be fit, but there are plentiful eating places in Uttoxeter and in the surrounding area to recover.

Cost: £14 for members, £15 for guests. Arrival time 9.45 am.

Please apply to: David Dumbelton, 32 The Lea, Trentham, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8DY. Telephone 01782 641765 or e-mail: david.dumbelton@virgin.net for queries. Post your cheque and include a stamped self-addressed C5 envelope (9" x 6½") for full instructions. Note – any larger size envelope requires a "Large" stamp. Closing date January 21st.

Tuesday 6th March: Coach outing to the National Media Museum, Bradford.

The National Media Museum is situated in the heart of Bradford, UNESCO City of Film. It is home to over 3.5 million items of historical significance and looks after the national collections of photography, cinematography, television and new media. Traditional and interactive galleries located across eight floors of the museum investigate and celebrate these topics and there is a changing programme of exhibitions.



The museum is also the home of the BBC in Bradford and visitors can watch presenters and researchers collating news stories and broadcasting on-line and on-air in this real, working exhibit. The UK's first Imax theatre opened in Bradford and continues to offer an exciting programme of 3D and blockbuster films for that special viewing experience [please note that there is an additional admission charge to this facility].

The Pictureville Bar and Admission Cafe serves a selection of food and drink throughout the day [at members own cost] and the museum shop stocks a wide range of media-related gifts and souvenirs. Lifts provide access throughout the building.

Coach departs Brunswick Street or School Street at 8.30am and return approx. 6.00 to 6.30pm.

Cost: £15 (£17 for non members) to include coach, museum admission and driver's tip.

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

Closing date for applications: Tuesday 21st February.

Sunday 11th March Walk: "Trentham and Barlaston"

This one can either be a toughie or a stroll, as you are welcome to join us half-way round for the easy bit. It's local for most of us, so a good one if you have a bus pass!



If you relish a challenge, meet at 10.45 on Sunday morning, 11th March, at Trentham Gardens. We will set off past Trentham Church and up into the hills of Trentham Park and Kings Wood, skirting round the back of the Monkey Park. There is one steep valley to cross, with steps both going down and climbing up the other side. Look out for deer on the way. We carry on to Oak Wood and the monument to the 1st Duke of Sutherland, to share his views over his lands, and the urban sprawl beyond. (At the time of going to press, the monument area is closed due to a nasty outbreak of *Phytophthora ramorum* fungus in the woods – a simple bypass route is available). Then it's down the hill into Tittensor village, passing by the Wing House pub, or popping in if we are making good time.

If you prefer an easy walk, meet us at the bus stop opposite the Wing House at Tittensor at 12.20pm (the 101 bus from Hanley at 11.48 via Newcastle at 12.03, and passing Trentham Gardens at 12.15, will bring you right there). Our route now takes us across the fields and over the River Trent to Barlaston, where we pick up the canal, pass by the Wedgwood factory, and cross the golf course to arrive back at Trentham Gardens around 2pm.

I will reserve tables for us in the Italian restaurant in the garden centre, or there is a range of other refueling options on the site.

How far, how hard? Part 1: about 2½ miles, steep with steps up and down in parts, one stile. Part 2: about 3½ miles, mostly level, six stiles.

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 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

**Tuesday 13th March: Talk at the N S Conference Centre: June Pickerill-
 ‘1/8d In My Pocket: A Staffordshire Pioneer in South Australia’.**

While clearing out an elderly aunt’s house, June discovered nine letters in a cocoa tin which were to take her back nearly 150 years and twelve thousand miles. In this fascinating talk we will learn about her Australian family and its uncertain start and many tribulations in that far-off continent long ago.

**Monday 16th April: Car Outing to St Mary’s Church, Nantwich and
 Dorfold Hall, Nantwich.**

The church has been called ‘The Cathedral of South Cheshire’ and was built mostly in the 14th century. Coffee and cake will be served on arrival followed by a guided tour (1½ hours approx.) when members will see the wonderful wood and stone carvings, a 15th century stone pulpit, exquisite choir stalls, old and modern stained glass windows and hand created kneelers. A church shop and visitors’ centre are located in the porch.

Members are requested to bring a picnic or find lunch in the pubs or cafes in the town.

After lunch members should make their own way to Dorfold Hall which lies one mile west of Nantwich on the A534. Further directions upon application. Dorfold was probably built on the site of the manor of Edwin, the last Saxon Earl of Chester, who was a grandson of Lady Godiva. The present house was built by Ralph Wilbraham in 1616. Members will be given a guided tour of the house (45 minutes approx.) and afterwards may explore the garden in their own time.

There is ample parking for cars at the top of the drive in front of the Hall.

Time: Please meet at the parish church of St. Mary's in Nantwich not later than 10.30am and at the Hall not later than 2.30pm.

Cost : £12 (£13 for guests) to include coffee and cake on arrival, a donation to the church and tour of Dorfold Hall.

Apply to Peter Moxon, Millstone House, Butterton, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 4EB. Tel: 01782 616337 enclosing SAE.

Closing date: 23rd March 2012.

Sunday 22nd April: Coach Outing The Hallé at the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester.

Programme: Rossini: Overture, William Tell

Liszt: Piano Concerto No.2

Prokofiev: Romeo and Juliet excerpts.

Heinrich Schiff, Conductor/ Polina Leschenko piano.

By popular request, a return visit to the Bridgewater Hall and the award-winning Hallé orchestra. This year, the programme includes the captivating William Tell Overture ending with the famous, triumphant gallop, Prokofiev's atmospheric evocation of the star-crossed lovers and Liszt's virtuoso Second Piano Concerto played by a Hallé favourite, Polina Leschenko; all of which should provide an exhilarating and enjoyable Sunday evening.



Depart Brunswick Street or School Street 5.00pm (promptly), arrive back 10.45pm approximately.

Cost £30 (£32 for guests) to include centre stalls ticket (face value £25), welcome by a member of the Hallé staff* and concert programme*, coach travel and driver's gratuity.

*subject to availability.

Apply to Mrs Penny Moore, 26 Parkway, Trentham, ST4 8AG, telephone 01782 657645 enclosing a cheque and a stamped addressed envelope. Closing date Friday 13th April.

Monday 23rd April – Talk at the NS Conference Centre : Pamela Sambrook - Bringing back Servants and the Restoration of Country-house Domestic Life

After many years of neglect, the last few decades have seen many country houses attempting to re-discover their servants and their workplaces. How has this come about and are the results always what we would wish for?



Pamela Sambrook has many years' experience in museum and country-house management and worked for ten years as an advisor to the National Trust on the restoration of historic kitchens, laundries and brewhouses. She has taught for the Open University, Birmingham University and Keele and has written several books on domestic service and food history.

This should be a fascinating talk, given by a lady well known to many of us.

TITANIC PRESENTATION by ANDREW LOUNDS at POTTERIES MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

The most famous ocean liner in history must be the Titanic. In this highly acclaimed presentation, the story of the ship from her conception to her rediscovery in 1985 will be told in dramatic fashion. Fully illustrated, with numerous visual and audio effects, props and an emotional performance, this will be a wonderful event in the Titanic Centenary year.

Association members who were thrilled by Andrew's illustrated talk on the subject earlier this year will certainly want to book for this and should recommend it to friends, as this is a Museum, not an Association event, and will take place in the Museum Forum Theatre.

Saturday, April 21st 2012 2.00pm at Potteries Museum and Art Gallery. Tickets £10,00; Concessions £8.00

Apply to the Museum - tel: 01782 232323 Early booking strongly advised.

PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS NOT A NATIONAL TRUST ASSOCIATION EVENT

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|---|--|
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| Peter Thompson (Vice Chairman) | Westerly, 220 Seabridge Lane Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 3LS Tel 01782 613397 |
| Richard Adams (Hon Secretary and Membership 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 2012 Winter/Spring Programme

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|---|---|
| Tuesday 24th January | Talk at the NS Conference Centre by Terry Butler - The Royal Train |
| Thursday 9th February | Car Outing to County Record Office |
| Tuesday 14th February | Talk at the NS Conference Centre by Ian Dudson - |
| Tuesday 21st February | Car Outing to JCB |
| Tuesday 6th March | Coach Outing to National Media Museum at Bradford. |
| Sunday 11th March | Walk: "Trentham and Barlaston" |
| Tuesday 13th March | Talk at the NS Conference Centre by June Pickerill - "1/8d in my pocket" |
| Monday 16th April | Car Outing to St Mary's Church, Nantwich and Dorfold Hall, Nantwich. |
| Sunday 22 April | Coach Outing The Hallé at the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. |
| Monday 23rd April | Talk at the NS Conference Centre : Pamela Sambrook - Bringing back Servants and the Restoration of Country-house Domestic Life |
| Some Future Dates for Your Diary | |
| Tuesday 15th May | AGM |
| Monday 21st May | Car Outing to Capesthorne Hall |
| Tuesday 12th June | Car Outing - Evening visit to Sugnall Hall Walled Garden |
| Saturday 23rd June | Coach Outing to Shobden Church/Food and Wine Festival and Witley Court |
| Thursday 12th July | Coach Outing to Abbey-Cwm-Hir |
| Thursday 2nd August | Car Outing to Tabley House |
| Thursday 16th August | Coach Outing to Bitterley Court and Oakly Park |

SEE NOTE ON PAGE 32 FOR A TALK ARRANGED BY THE POTTERIES MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY THAT MAY INTEREST MEMBERS.

THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER IS DUE EARLY APRIL 2012. CONTRIBUTORS ARE ASKED TO GET COPY IN TO THE EDITOR BY THE 29TH FEBRUARY. THANK YOU.