

# **THE NORTH STAFFS NATIONAL TRUST ASSOCIATION**

**Newsletter No. 99**  
**AUTUMN 2014 PROGRAMME**  
Our Web Site – [northstaffsnt.org.uk](http://northstaffsnt.org.uk)



ARLEY HALL



## ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRIPS



**Coaches** depart promptly from **SCHOOL STREET**, Newcastle, behind the Jubilee 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 replacements. Non-members taking part in our trips 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 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 over 80, or for children under 10.

# THE NORTH STAFFS NATIONAL TRUST ASSOCIATION

## Newsletter No. 99

### AUTUMN PROGRAMME



#### A Note From The Chair

I am writing this in a state of confusion. I am thinking of Autumn when we are still in The Monsoon Season, or Wimbledon, as the natives call it. Weather and geography have conspired with practical jokes. Ireland was like Greece, the Irish Sea like the Aegean. On an earlier outing to Keele, the talk was of cherry trees and every second word in Japanese. Similarly, I could see why Stephen Spielberg used Legh Road in Knutsford to stand in for Colonial Shanghai. Mentioning China, I shall kowtow to the organiser to be allowed to go round Burleigh in November rather than to Burghley, where we went

before.( I did warn the theme was confusion).

I hope you will grasp the opportunities in this programme with one hand rather than two because you will need a hand free to choose your purchases at the Christmas Fayre stands at the meetings in October and November. In December, the Christmas Social Evening looks like being even more fizz-filled than usual.

Raise a glass. I wish you ‘vendange superbe’. The toast in Beaujolais, Halfpenny Green or grape juice is; ‘Health and Happiness to All in The North Staffs N.T.A.’

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#### EDITOR WANTED!

Just a note to tell you that John Huson has decided to relinquish the editorship of the Newsletter and we’d all like to thank him for his contribution. We are looking for someone with design and computer skills and some experience in setting out to help us carry on his work. If you think you could be part of a team, please get in touch with me.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

**September 30<sup>TH</sup> Talk: Sue Beasley - From Computers to Compost  
N. Staffs Conference Centre 7.30pm.**

In 2006 Sue made the bold decision to abandon her work as an IT Consultant and devote her time to becoming a professional gardener. After gaining experience and qualifications at Reaseheath and Dunham Massey, she applied to take part in the BBC Gardener of the Year – and she won first prize! She subsequently invested money, time and effort into acquiring and developing a thriving nursery at Bluebell Cottage near Warrington and she has won prizes at the RHS Tatton Show.

Sue is a lively and inspiring speaker who will tell us of the trials, hardships, rewards and occasional humorous moments of her life among the plants; she will also show some of the ‘behind the scenes’ activities when the BBC are filming. This talk will be enjoyed by gardeners and non-gardeners alike – green fingers are not obligatory!

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October: Car Outing to Chillington Hall, Codsall Wood,  
Staffs WV8 1RE. Maximum 40.**

The Hall was built in 1724, probably by Smith of Warwick, and was extended and remodelled by Sir John Soane between 1786 and 1789. This is the third building to have occupied the site following a stone-built castle and a sixteenth century Tudor mansion house.

The Hall is set in ‘Capability’ Brown parkland having one of the largest lakes created by Brown. The Giffard family have an unbroken line of occupation since 1178. The house is currently the home of Mr John Giffard CBE DPM DL, a former chief Constable of Staffordshire, and his wife.

Members will be given a conducted tour of the Hall and afterwards offered tea/coffee and biscuits. After refreshments members may walk around the garden and parkland at their own pace.

Members may wish to take this opportunity to explore the nearby village of Brewood, find some lunch at own cost or visit the Church of St Mary the Virgin and St Chad. The church houses the beautiful alabaster tombs belonging to the Giffard family and the oldest dates from 1556. Although there is no guided tour, the church is open from 9.00am to 5.00pm daily

(subject to funerals or other services) and there is literature about the church available. A modest donation would be appreciated.

Members should arrive at the Hall no later than 2.00pm. Directions upon application.

Cost: £12 per head to include guided tour and tea /coffee and biscuits.

Bookings close Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September.

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

### **Monday 13th October Talk: Gerald Mee – An Evening With Mee. N.Staffs. Conference Centre 7.30pm**

Gerald Mee from Leek has an enviable reputation as a photographer and film-maker who has spent a lifetime recording events, people and locations in North Staffordshire and beyond, moving from still photography to cine-film, video and eventually to digital recording. He will entertain us with a selection of his pieces which are of local interest, some of them particularly of the Potteries area. Many members will know Gerald's work but if anyone wishes to bring friends who would like an introduction to his films, they will be welcome.

### **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> October: Coach Trip to Farfield Mill Arts and Heritage Centre and Sedbergh Town.**

Farfield Mill, on the outskirts of the attractive town of Sedbergh, was built in 1837 by Joseph Dover. It is now a working museum seeking to celebrate its past and to promote the achievements of its resident artists and craftspeople. Joseph died two years after completion of the factory but his two sons carried on the business, which remained in the family for one hundred years. Wool from the surrounding district was spun and woven here and the tradition continues, albeit in a rather different way.

We will be met on arrival with coffee and cakes and then proceed with a guided tour of the mill by one of the volunteer enthusiasts. Built over four floors, we will see the wonderful machines and looms, some of which are still used today for demonstration purposes and glimpse some of the artists at work in their studios.

A lunch of homemade soup and freshly prepared sandwiches will give us some free time to view the exhibitions by two very different artists and to admire and maybe purchase more of the beautiful handmade objects.

At 2.30p.m. we leave for Sedbergh, famed as a book town and for its Public School, founded in 1525. Here we will have the option of either a guided tour of the town, or a walk taking us a little off the beaten track for which we will need suitable footwear. Both tours will take approximately one hour.

The coach will leave School Street at 8.30 am. Departing from Sedbergh at 4.15-4.30p.m. we should arrive back in Newcastle by 7.00pm.

Cost £29.00 (non members £31.00) to include coach travel, mill entrance, morning coffee and lunch, plus a donation to the guides.

Please apply to Susan Till, 14 Whitmore Road, Trentham, ST4 8AP, enclosing the usual stamped addressed envelope.

### **Sunday 2nd November: Walk – Wrenbury and Aston**

This walk explores a pretty corner of Cheshire, just beyond Nantwich. It's almost a gateway to Wales, as we will see both the Welsh Marches railway line and the Llangollen canal. Come along for gentle exercise, good company and a pub lunch to follow.

We will meet at 11.00am at the Bhurtpore Inn at Aston (CW5 8DQ). Our circular walk takes in farmland, some quiet roads, and a section along the canal towpath. If time allows, we might stop for a swift half at the Dusty Miller in Wrenbury, where the River Weaver passes under the canal, and where a lift bridge stops road traffic to allow boats to pass. We skirt the pretty village green, then it's back across the fields to Aston.

The walk is essentially flat throughout and is around 5 miles in total. There are about 12 stiles to cross, and it could be muddy in parts.

Tables are reserved for us for lunch at the Bhurtpore Inn at 2pm. If you like real ales and/or curries, you will love this pub, which specialises in both - other beverages and meal choices are of course available!

Cost £2.00 for members, £2.50 for guests (pay on the day).

Book your place with Richard Adams: by email to [rjadams@doctors.org.uk](mailto: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, 4<sup>th</sup> November: Car Outing to Burleigh Pottery, Middleport**

This successful pottery manufacturer offers us a factory tour and a view of their museum, newly opened by His Royal Highness Prince Charles on June 24th. We will meet in the café where you can purchase tea/coffee etc. Tours begin at 11am.

Care! The factory has uneven floors and steps.

Cost £8 (non-members £9)

Please apply to Cynthia Dumbelton, 32 The Lea, Trentham, ST4 8DY enclosing a cheque and sae.

Closing date 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

### **Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November- Talk: Howard Bagshaw, 'Lest We Forget'. N.Staffs Conference Centre 7.30pm.**

In this year when we commemorate the anniversary of the outbreak of World War I and on the date in 1918 when the conflict finally ended, it seems appropriate that our speaker tonight will remind us how those who died serving our country are remembered, not only in Britain but around the world. This will be an illustrated talk including some audio visual presentations relating to the theme such as 'Menin', about the nightly tribute to the fallen and 'Ride to the Wall', concerning an event at the National Memorial Arboretum, visited by members in April 2013.

### **Wednesday December 10<sup>th</sup>: Christmas Social Evening**

#### **Madeley Centre 7.30pm**

This year we have decided to arrange an evening meal and drinks, giving people more opportunity to socialise. The venue is the splendid Madeley Centre (which some members will know from a lunch after a walk) with

superb facilities for a 'welcome' drink in the foyer and a hot meal, served buffet-style in the large hall. We are hoping that by December we will have put together a record of some of the year's activities to display.

The food will be provided by the popular caterers 'Just Jane'; there will be wine or fruit juice on arrival, then a choice of a hot dish, followed by coffee and mince pies. There will also be a bar all evening for the purchase of additional drinks. Please make a choice of hot dish on the booking form, choosing from Peppercot Beef; with caramelised onion mash, carrots and peas; Chicken in tarragon with braised rice and French bread; Vegetable Lasagne and salad.

Cost: £15 pp (non-members £17) to include first drink, main course, mince pie, coffee.

Please arrive at 7.30pm for the meal at 8pm at the Madeley Centre where there is ample parking. Full directions will be sent on application.

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

Closing date November 15<sup>th</sup>.

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**New Members since the last edition**  
**We would like to extend a warm welcome to**

Diane and Brian Hall, Joan Harvey, Sue Steele, Carole Wheeldon, and Barbara and David Williams.



## **REPORTS FROM RECENT VISITS**

### **Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> April: Coach Outing to Burghley House, Lincolnshire**

The day dawned bright and cheerful, as did the party who boarded the Happy Days coach all bound for Burghley House built by William Cecil in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. However, there was a traffic problem on the A50, so we arrived an hour behind schedule.

Most people headed for the restaurant in search of welcome refreshments and the day turned out fine and warm, enabling us to enjoy a walk beside the splendid lake and absorb the grandeur of the Tudor architecture, especially the towering chimneys. The Surprise Garden was as named and needed care for those who were careless walkers, although all the water features were thoroughly enjoyed by the very damp children.

The jewel in the crown was the visit to the house itself, with our guide, Jackie, taking us expertly through each room, extolling knowledge and information effortlessly as we gazed spellbound by the magnificence of this Tudor house, all enthralled as bedroom after bedroom revealed its treasures, each one more magnificent than its predecessor. The art treasures were too numerous to count, but the works of famous artists are immortalised forever and the whole experience of this visit was enjoyed by all.

Many thanks are due to Rose Wheat and the coach driver, David, who negotiated Stamford with consummate skill through its winding streets.

Richard Clamp

### **Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March A Walk Around Barlaston**

Saw some forty members, two dogs and a baby experiencing the ups and downs of life on Barlaston Downs. We traversed an interesting and varied terrain across hillsides and fields. At one point we stepping stoned across a raging torrent (Oh, all right then, three inches of limpid water, but you can dream, can't you?) No one fell in.

There were no other hazards, and although the route was interspersed with a plentiful number of 'kissing gates' I heard no shrieks of distress from assaulted ladies, which just confirms the acknowledged chivalry of male N.T. members.

There was little wildlife to be seen, unless you count sundry other walkers and their dogs. It was, however, encouraging to see many trees and bushes bursting into bud, a sure sign that Primavera is hastening upon us.

After working up a good appetite in the fresh air we were glad at last to reach The Upper House and sit down to table. Unfortunately, the kitchens were apparently in Nantwich and the horse carting the meals back to Barlaston went lame. Never mind, they were fine when they eventually arrived, we were not in a hurry; the long wait gave an excellent opportunity to chat with our neighbours. Fellowship is, after all, an important part of rambling.

Thanks must be expressed to Richard for organising such an enjoyable expedition, even to arranging ideal walking weather, and to his son in the equally important if less glamorous role of tail-end-Charlie, whipping in the stragglers and ensuring no one got lost on the way.

John Sutton

### **Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> April: Talk by Donald Lodge, 'At Your Service'.**

Donald entertained a large audience with stories of his early training in the catering and hospitality industry at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, and elsewhere in the UK. After emigrating to Canada he was unable to find work in this sector and transferred his skills to domestic service in the homes of the wealthy. His fondness for Canada and his first employer there was very evident though he perhaps 'enjoyed' a more prickly relationship with the Marquess of Tavistock at Woburn whose butler he became after his return to England.

Donald regrets that few schoolchildren now consider a career in domestic service which is well-paid with excellent working conditions and where English staff are much in demand abroad. In his retirement, he gives talks not only to organizations like the National Trust but also in schools where he encourages pupils to consider employment in this field which he has clearly enjoyed and found rewarding and fulfilling.

## Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April – Car outing to Keele Hall



Our day at Keele began with coffee in the great hall followed by a fascinating talk given by Harry Frost, the curator of the Raven Mason collection. I was impressed by the diverse range of ware that Miles Mason created, ensuring that he cornered all markets from high to low society. A very astute businessman. The tour of the hall gave us an insight into the Sneyd family and their see-sawing fortunes whilst at Keele. My

favourite extravagance was the sliding mirror in the drawing room. This is housed in a specially built turret when retracted to reveal the window. There *may* also be a ghost roaming the hall – dressed as a Victorian maid.

After lunch we walked round the cherry tree collection with experts on all aspects of horticulture who explained the importance of preserving these many and varied trees. I was sorry the Japanese ambassador wasn't present to delight in them and to witness the unveiling of the plaque to officially open the collection on such a warm, sunny day.

Our visit concluded with a reviving cup of tea and a slice of cake in what is now the Senior Common Room. Taking advantage of the clement weather my husband and I strolled down to the lake and saw 6 tiny goslings basking in the sun with their proud parents. A lovely postscript to a most successful outing. Thank you, Cynthia, for planning this day.

Maggie Caton

## Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May: Coach Outing to the Morgan Car Company and Hanbury Hall.

Nestling beneath the picturesque Malvern Hills the Morgan car factory is a throwback to the days of bespoke car manufacturing.

Located in a series of single-storey brick buildings, this iconic company has been producing classic sports cars for over 100 years. Today its order-book is in a very healthy state with 80% of its cars being exported, almost a third of these going to the USA, and an increasing number going to China. Our tour began with a brief history of the company, originally beginning at a site in Worcester Road where the three-wheel car powered by a V-twin JAP engine was built. The first four-wheel Morgan was launched in 1936 and the company presently manufactures eight different models.

It was wonderful to see the combination of wood and aluminium skilfully housing the most modern engine technology, assembled by a team of dedicated craftsmen at this superb example of authentic and unique automobile design.

Long may Morgan continue to be successful!

Hanbury Hall was built in 1701 for the Vernon family who originated from Newcastle-under-Lyme and made their money as lawyers. Their wealth built this gorgeous William and Mary style house and made possible the stunning wall and ceiling paintings which the National Trust recently restored.

The weather was glorious and enabled many members to enjoy their picnic lunches in the lovely gardens. The Trust has brilliantly recreated the original garden which had been replaced in the late eighteenth century by the more fashionable natural landscaping made popular by 'Capability' Brown.

In all we had a most varied and enjoyable day and many thanks must go to John Pedrazzini and Janet Taylor.

Michael and Rose Wheat

## **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> May: Talk by David Mitchell, 'For Crying Out Loud'.**

No one could miss David's entrance to the hall as his bell was heard before he appeared dressed in the costume of an eighteenth century town-crier and uttering the traditional cry, 'Oyez, Oyez', which he explained was Norman French for 'listen'. And listen and laugh we did for the next hour as the Chester town-crier or bellman took us through the history of his trade from Ancient Egypt to the present day.

The sole Welshman in the audience was warned that if he remained in Chester after dark he faced death by decapitation under a law proclaimed in 1403 and never repealed. Before newspapers, this archaic law would have been ‘published’ by David’s predecessors and was just one of the many tasks they were charged with. Lost your horse? Has your apprentice absconded? Is your wife getting you into debt? Contact the bellman and he’ll inform the town’s inhabitants- he’ll even sell your wife for you! He could also act as your fire alarm as we learnt when David explained the full significance of the cry, ‘Two o’clock and all is well’.

David’s duties require that during the summer he makes the midday proclamation five days a week in the centre of Chester. The second part of his talk covered his own experiences over the last 21 years including some of the naive questions asked by tourists. The usual questions **from** the audience were preceded by a short quiz which illustrated how knowledgeable some of our members are on such topics as the pillory and Humpty Dumpty. David finished to sustained applause from an appreciative and highly amused audience.

Rose Wheat

### **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May Car Outing - A Walk Around Knutsford**

Knutsford Heritage Centre made an ideal starting point for our ‘People and Places’ tour, as we could admire the amazing Millennium Tapestry while we enjoyed coffee. Our guides then took us around the town, with its steep, narrow streets, where the Royal May Day Parade takes place every year. On route we saw plaques to Sir Henry Holland, who became physician to Queen Victoria, and Henry Royce, co-founder of Rolls- Royce, as well as the imposing tower honouring the novelist, Elizabeth Gaskell. This was designed by Richard Harding-Watt who was also responsible for a number of Italianate buildings in the town.

We admired the handsome classical building on the main street, which we learned – with surprise – had been a prison housing over 100 inmates. The American Commander General Patten lived nearby during the war but there were also less celebrated residents, including one notorious highwayman.

The town avoided war, fire, famine and industry to remain the rather quaint and quiet place it is today, still surrounded by grand estates for which it provided the workers and servants.

The outing, organised by Anne Anderton, introduced many of the members to a new place, which they promised to visit again.

## **PARISH NOTICES**

### ADVICE ON BOOKING APPLICATIONS

We have experienced problems with the post recently. Some members have not received an acknowledgement of their booking for trips. You should always receive an acknowledgement whether your application has been successful or not. If you have not received a reply from the trip organiser three weeks before the outing, please contact them for clarification.

### PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS FOR THE CHRISTMAS SOCIAL EVENING

Paul Anderton is disappointed with the response to his request for material. This could be a very enjoyable recollection of the year's events but only if you look out your photos now. Please send any offerings to Paul at [panda.berneav@btinternet.com](mailto:panda.berneav@btinternet.com).

### GARDENING TIP FROM IRELAND

How to be rid of 'Blackspot'.

Take one whole garlic bulb, boil in 500ml of water, squeeze bulb, strain through sieve and bottle the resultant liquid.

To use: dilute by adding 2 tablespoons of the liquid to one gallon of water.

For aphids and other pests, add 4 tablespoons of baking soda to the gallon of garlic water and a squirt of washing-up liquid.

This was gleaned by Sue Till from the gardener at Mount Stewart.



Iris in the rain at Wombourne Wodehouse

### **Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> June - Visit to Wombourne Wodehouse**

On a rain sodden day, we arrived at The Wodehouse to be greeted by the owners, the indomitable Mr. and Mrs. Phillips, who even in their advancing years, care and maintain the house and estate with a few committed workers. The manor house, set in beautifully tended gardens, is claimed to have been in the same family since the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

After tea and biscuits in the Coach House, we were guided round the house by Mr and Mrs. Phillips who provided some wonderful anecdotes as we walked from one room to the next. It was though we were travelling through the centuries, as the house has been added to and extended by the various generations. We were amazed by the house contents; an eclectic mix of furniture, glassware, ceramics, pictures and a collection of rare musical instruments currently on display in Scotland, (pending the Yes/No vote!). Unfortunately, the scourge of the house is bats, which flit around the house at night, as was evident by the droppings on much of the furniture.

Following a picnic lunch, we were escorted by our very own lollipop men, Ralph and Jim, across the main road to the estate's walled gardens, where we were met by a magnificent display of iris in a glorious array of colours.

Continued on page 22.

## **BOOKING DETAILS**

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October: Car Outing to Chillington Hall, Codsall Wood, Staffs WV8 1RE. Maximum 40.**

Cost: £12 per head to include guided tour and tea /coffee and biscuits.  
Bookings close Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September.

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

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## **BOOKING DETAILS**

**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> October: Coach Trip to Farfield Mill Arts and Heritage Centre and Sedbergh Town.**

The coach will leave School Street at 8.30am. Returning from Sedbergh at 4.15-4.30pm, we should arrive back in Newcastle by 7.00pm

Cost £29.00 (non- members £31.00) to include coach travel, mill entrance, morning coffee and lunch ,plus a donation to the guides.

Please apply to Susan Till, 14 Whitmore Road, Trentham,ST4 8AP, enclosing the usual stamped addressed envelope. Tel: 01782 657468

Closing date 15<sup>th</sup> September

For Booking Either of these Trips please duplicate Booking Form on Page 17



Name(s)	Association number	£
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<b>Address</b>		
	<b>Total</b>	-----
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Tel. number ----- Email address -----

For booking details see reverse of this form

Name(s)	Association number	£
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<b>Address</b>		
	<b>Total</b>	-----
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Tel. number ----- Email address -----

For booking details see reverse of this form

## **BOOKING DETAILS**

### **Sunday 2nd November: Walk – Wrenbury and Aston**

Cost £2.00 for members, £2.50 for guests (pay on the day).

Book your place with Richard Adams: by email to [rjadams@doctors.org.uk](mailto: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

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## **BOOKING DETAILS**

### **Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> November: Car Outing to Burleigh Pottery, Middleport**

Cost £8 (non-members £9)

Please apply to Cynthia Dumbelton, 32 The Lea, Trentham, ST4 8DY enclosing a cheque and sae. Tel: 01782 641765.

Closing Date 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

Name(s)	Association number	£
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Tel. number ----- Email address -----

For booking details see reverse of this form

Name(s)	Association number	£
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	<b>Total</b>	-----
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Tel. number ----- Email address -----

For booking details see reverse of this form

**BOOKING FORM**

**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Social Evening  
Madeley Centre 7.30pm**

Cost: £15 pp (non-members £17) to include first drink, main course, mince pie, coffee.

Please arrive at 7.30pm for a meal at 8pm at the Madeley Centre where there is ample parking. Full directions will be sent on application.

Please apply to Mrs. A. Anderton, 14, Berne Avenue, Newcastle, ST5 2QJ

Tel: 01782 613024, enclosing cheque and stamped addressed envelope.

**Meal Order**

- Pepperpot Beef
- Chicken
- Vegetable Lasagne


Closing Date November 12<sup>th</sup>.

**North Staffordshire National Trust Association**

We are delighted to welcome new members.

**Please note:** you must first be a member of the National Trust or a National Trust Volunteer.

To join the Association, please complete the Application Form on the reverse, and send it, with your cheque, to the Membership Secretary:

Richard Adams, Gables End, Holly Bank, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8FT

Email: [rjadams@doctors.org.uk](mailto:rjadams@doctors.org.uk)

Tel: 01782 646054



in support of **National Trust**

Thank you very much

**See Over**

Name(s)	Association number	£
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<b>Address</b>	<b>Total</b>	-----
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Tel. number ----- Email address -----

For booking details see reverse of this form

**North Staffordshire National Trust Association  
Membership Application**

I/We wish to apply for membership of the North Staffordshire National Trust Association

Name(s)

NT membership number(s)

Address

Post Code

Telephone

Email

Annual subscription, for the first member £ 8.50

For additional member(s), at the same address (£5.50 each) £ .....

Total enclosed £ .....

Cheque payable to "North Staffs NT Association" please

Continued from page 15

When asked if they held the national collection, Mrs. Phillips replied "No, because we chuck away the ones we don't like"!

Mrs. Phillips then walked us around the beautiful formal gardens and grounds and we finally retreated to dry out in the Coach House for coffee and cake, made by Mrs Phillips.

Time to leave and having loaded up our various plants purchased from the intrepid couple, our driver, to much applause and muddied up to the elbows, manoeuvred through narrow gates designed for coach and horses. An unforgettable day for him and for us!

Our thanks to Ralph and Jim for organising this wonderful day out.

Ann Winter



## Our Holiday in Northern Ireland

### Monday morning 16<sup>th</sup> June – Castle Ward



Vicky, our driver

The great door slowly closed behind us and we were left in a dimly lit hall. The sound of clanking metal heralded the arrival of a costumed retainer, who then acted as our guide around the darkened rooms. Three ladies in various rooms told of the more intimate side of the family's life, finishing with one accusing us of either stealing the family silver, or drowning them in the

North Atlantic. We were all very impressed, but glad to get back out into the sunshine. After a cup of strong coffee, we enjoyed the sunken garden with its unusual cordyline trees.

Margaret Thomas and Anne Webb-Bowen

### Monday afternoon – Mount Stewart



Hugging the shore of Strangford Lough, sparkling in the perfect weather, we drove to Mount Stewart, home of the Marquises of Londonderry, and where unusually in NT properties, members of the family still reside. We were welcomed by Winsome, who told us the house was in the second year of its £7m restoration, and would be back

to its former 1820's glory by spring 2015. Inside the house, major disruption was apparent. We were even offered hard hats – declined as not being really necessary! The thousands of objects formerly furnishing the house had been meticulously catalogued, cleaned, stacked and stored in various rooms – there

was even a “room within a room” built inside the chapel for this purpose. A yellow ribbon was attached to the most valuable items, to ensure they would be the first to be salvaged in the event of a calamity.

All the guides seemed genuinely upset about the state of the house, and urged us to come again next year, when “it will be wonderful again”.

We then turned to the inspirational gardens, placed 8<sup>th</sup> in a list of the 10 most important gardens in the world. Blessed with a sub-tropical climate, between the Irish Sea and the Lough, and benefitting from the effect of the Gulf Stream, plants from sunnier climes flourished. The colour of the flower beds, the topiary and statuary were a delight. With gardens both formal and informal, with lakeside walks and wooded areas where one might see a red squirrel, who could not be charmed?

Warren and Elaine Pacey

## **Tuesday morning 17<sup>th</sup> June – Giant’s Causeway**



An early start, passing the now familiar distinctive bungalows and loyalist flags we headed to the Giant’s Causeway. Asked if it was worth going to see, Samuel Johnson replied it was, “worth seeing, but not worth going to see”; half a million visitors annually (and 51 North Staffs NT members), find it well worth it. The sun burned off the early mist inland but the sea fret at the coast persisted, no views of Scotland today. Nevertheless we enjoyed this UNESCO World Heritage site, an amazing spectacle with a long history. Mythological, archaeological and historical facts are entertainingly presented in the impressive visitor centre. A fairly strenuous walk for most to the causeway itself, and despite the tides, weather and the efforts of the locals to carry it away, it is still as striking as it was in Finn McCool’s day. An uphill trek or bus ride took us back to the top for soup and sandwiches in The Causeway Hotel, ready for our next adventure.

Anne Plant



## **Tuesday Afternoon - Carrick-a-Rede**

After a nice lunch at the Causeway Hotel, we travelled a short distance to Carrick-a-Rede. In groups we each had a guide to tell us the history of the area and then to take us to the rope bridge.

The area now belonging to the National Trust had quarries one a limestone quarry produced limestone for quicklime and lime mortar used to make toothpaste and to put on the fields. The kilns were nearby; they closed in 1914 when the boats were required for war transportation.

At the rope bridge our guide explained the method used by the fishermen to catch the salmon. They constructed the bridge so they could bring the salmon from the small island off the boats to the mainland. The bridge only had one handrope as the sack of fish weighing 60lb was carried over the shoulder, they made 31 trips a day, resting on a Sunday to repair the nets.

The experience of crossing the bridge, much safer now with a solid wooden floor and two handrails, was exciting. We all crossed over and climbed to the top of the island or down to the fishermen's bothy. The sea mist which we had on the visit stayed all the time never fully clearing, On the way back to our Hotel we took the scenic coastal route and were rewarded by a beautiful sunny drive in the Irish countryside.

Lesley Huson

## **Wednesday morning 18<sup>th</sup> June – Belfast and the Titanic**



We left our hotel at 9.00am on a warm sunny morning to pick up our guide, Maureen Maginnis, for a tour of Belfast. We visited the Falls Road, a Nationalist area, population being 100% Nationalist. Republican flags were very evident. The local industries were linen manufacture, rope making and tobacco. In Shanklin

Road, a protestant area, Union flags were evident and a large mural painted on the end of a house depicted a visit by the Queen. Around the city, in prominent positions, were memorial murals illustrating significant scenes from the period of the Troubles, stark and moving.

On our journey we passed imposing Victorian buildings and leafy gardens set against the cranes of the Harland and Wolff shipyards.

We moved on to Stormont, Parliament since 1932, an imposing building set in very attractive parkland surrounded by many trees and beautifully manicured lawns.

Our next stop was in the Titanic Quarter. The building Titanic Belfast looks very modern and represents ships' prows. The building is covered with anodised aluminium shards. (It is suggested it looks like "The Iceberg".) Inside, visitors experienced the building of the Titanic and the many different people involved in designing this luxurious, unsinkable liner. Pride in their achievement was evident. We saw illustrations of the ship before launching, fitting out, the maiden voyage, the tragic sinking and the aftermath. A very interesting experience but rather overwhelming.

Jean and Bert Foden

### **Wednesday Afternoon, Belfast City Hall and the Crown Liquor Saloon**

We continued our Titanic theme after lunch when we moved to Belfast City Hall for a private tour.

Harland & Wolf shipbuilding magnate and Lord Mayor, William Pirrie called it "The Stone Titanic". Many of the men who worked on City Hall between 1898 and 1906 later worked on the ship itself.

The Grand Entrance and double Grand Stair are well named. They and the 173 foot high dome and lantern above you are there to help you appreciate the solidity, wealth and power of the city whilst feeling like a gnat which has landed in a bathroom.

Belfast City Council financed the original building from its profits from its gas industry. We would like to think British Gas is building a similar palace somewhere. However, we doubt it will be adopting Belfast City motto, "In return for so much, what shall we give back?"

Perhaps after being intimidated by the open spaces it was not surprising that a certain school frivolity broke out in the enormous Council and Public reception rooms carpeted in acres of toe-tingling expensive Galway carpet.

A City Councillor's gown was modelled by Kay Williams, sprawling on the Lord Mayor's chair encouraged and capering in the Ballroom ignored.

We had a wonderful tour. We almost broke out singing "I dream't I dwelt in

marble halls”, until we remembered that the composer was from Dublin not Belfast, and the tune is supposed to bring bad luck, the singing certainly would have. We were going to lead into “Stairway to Heaven”, but this was premiered just down the road at The Ulster Hall not the City Hall. Evidently the City Hall had not slaked everyone’s thirst for culture. A remarkable piece of Victorian interior and exterior design had survived at the Crown Liquor Saloon. As a National Trust property, it was our duty to support it. Sir John Betjeman encouraged the NT to buy it in 1978. However, the idea has not caught on and tea rooms still outnumber this originally Regency gin joint.

The rest of the afternoon passed in a haze. We remember the door of our private box being wrenched open while we were papped and flashed. We should have caught the early bus.

Ralph White and James Hartley

### **Thursday morning 19<sup>th</sup> June – Rowallane Gardens**

On a beautiful sunny morning we set off for a relatively short drive to the most iconic garden in Northern Ireland, Rowallane. There we were met by members of the Belfast National Trust Association who were to show us round this beautiful area of the County Down landscape, the beginnings of which in the 1860s was the brain child of Reverend John Moore and his nephew Hugh Armytage Moore.

We were split into two groups. Lucy was our guide around as much as possible of the 52 acre garden. With her lovely, lilting voice she invited us to view and experience the beauties of an enormous range of plants, shrubs and many exotic species from all over the world, mainly Asia and the Far East. There was a dogwood with pale green/yellow petals, wild buttercups and a rather intriguing Handkerchief Tree, a lovely specimen with a very interesting pale petal shape. One of our party picked one up and maybe intended to use it later! Perhaps the most fascinating species was the *Carrierea calycina* ‘Great Horn Tree’, a rare tree from Western Szechuan in China, planted 90 years ago and only recently flowered for the first time!



There was so much to see walking from one pathway to another, through glades of enormously tall conifer trees with the most beautiful barks, the rock garden, the wonderfully shaped stone cairn, the hospital for sick animals and plants, and the compost heap! A wonderful morning.

Ann Chetwin

### **Thursday afternoon, 19<sup>th</sup> June - Springhill House**

After a slightly different lunch from that expected, our group went down to the very attractive, symmetrical ‘plantation’ house. The present house was built by ‘Good Will’ Conyngham – a ‘convenient house of lime and stone, two stories high...with necessary office houses’ for his wife Ann Upton. The outer wings were added in 1765 by ‘Fashionable’ William, as was the vestibule. I was intrigued by the jewellery box, where the cheaper jewellery was in a shallow drawer, to fool highwaymen. The wallpaper in the Gun Room was a unique 18<sup>th</sup> century example. The library of 5000 books included a 16<sup>th</sup> century Latin psalter. Olivia, nee Irvine, saw her husband George commit suicide and also lost a child and is reputed to haunt the house. Amazingly, a visitor, seeing Olivia, wringing her hands in grief above her in bed in the Blue Bedroom, found this experience soothing and went back to sleep! I noticed with interest the score of ‘Moneymore Fair’ by Mina Lenox-Conyngham on the piano. It was interesting to know that saddle-back chairs were designed to help the comfort of corseted ladies and that red wallpaper aids digestion!

We also enjoyed the costume collection, with some exquisite embroidery, the walled garden with its pretty roses and the ancient yew tree.

Kay Williams

We all enjoyed a wonderful holiday in Northern Ireland thanks to the hard work put in by Richard Adams, ably assisted by his wife, Nicky. We will remember fondly all our experiences and also the evenings racking our brains trying to win at his quizzes!

## **22nd June: Coach Visit to Arley Hall**

The third best garden in Europe, so an eager reader of Arley Hall publicity reported, and she may well be right. At least in the Mediterranean weather in which we toured the gardens there was pleasure to be had for the avid plant hunter, the sun worshipper, and, quite unplanned, retail therapy in abundance. This was the 20th anniversary of the Arley Hall Garden Festival and a full range of specialist nursery stalls, garden furniture makers, charity exhibitions, jazz band and brass band noises off, in additions to the attractions of the most magnificent double herbaceous borders were all available. And that's before you get into the house (which I didn't).

The park land and gardens at Arley Hall have taken centuries to reach their present state, but the current owner was heard extolling the contribution his mother made to certain sections even if she didn't approve of tea roses! The cognoscenti drool over the long herbaceous borders leading to a white arbour or garden house, and the vast variety of carefully arranged plants, all warmed to perfection in bright sunshine. Some architectural plants fail to attract, others shock and amuse. The kitchen garden was just what one expects – mostly eatable. Of all the sights the most impressive to my eyes were the holly drums forming a long avenue of neatly cut, statuesque cylinders the height of a house. Others might have preferred the scent garden or the walled garden, or the shrub rose garden. I arrived at ten and left at four, and I still hadn't seen the full range of garden delights or the interior of this nineteenth century house, but the day had been hugely enjoyable, full of interest, satisfying to the eye and the appetite. Rose Wheat arranged the perfect English day.

Paul Anderton



## **Report on Donations made 2013/2014**

These summaries were omitted due to pressure of time at the A.G.M. I prepared a report to Committee following meetings with County Property Managers and others where we discussed the projects short of funding and the costs. This report gives details of the Donations made as mentioned in the Treasurer's Report to the AGM.

The Committee agreed to make the following donations subject to conditions and reserving the right to reclaim the money if the purpose was not achieved in a reasonable time.

Little Moreton Hall - £2059.00 for the treatment and repair to deathwatch beetle infested timbers on the left hand side of the Porch which are resting on foundations in the moat. The damage was thought to be causing subsidence. The £59 was our contribution to an oak box to contain Local Association

leaflets in a room set aside for recruitment.

Biddulph Grange - £1800.00. The Children's Play Area needed restoration and repair, The Bramah Bull was looking distressed and there had never been enough money to regild in metal leaf the Temple Bells which we had replaced earlier.

Moseley Old Hall - £3500.00. Close by where people gather for the tours there was an area of wild grass enclosed by a hedge. We agreed to fund the restoration and replanting with period plants in what was the original vegetable garden. In the house, a corridor and landing in modern brown carpet was replaced with more suitable and harder wearing hoglar matting.

Downs Bank - £1500.00. The team needed help with having the spreading bracken removed. New fencing was required so the area grazed by cattle could be extended. The money we gave was much appreciated and has benefited wildlife and visitors.

Wightwick Manor - £700.00. For new Arts & Crafts style curtains in the Indian Bird Bedroom.

Attingham - £1,000.00. This was in response to Sara Kay's talk to members last October on the huge restoration scheme underway there. An opportunity had arisen to buy an original 1830 Colzar lamp chandelier for a starring role on the main curved stairs. We agreed to fund one twelfth of its cost. At the moment you can examine it at close quarters in a white box. It will be two years before it looks spectacular in its new home.

Do let me know if you have any suggestions for donations to National Trust causes. It would be good to hear if you are inspired by NT causes further afield. The brief we are working to at the moment is to support local properties and landscape where you can see the difference you have made. Also, if we can persuade recipients to acknowledge North Staffs Association donations at the property, and link them to media coverage, this could be mutually beneficial.

Ralph White



**Ready for Sowing ,The Vegetable Garden at Moseley Old Hall  
Ready for Anything ,Down's Bank Barlaston**





**Fountains in the Garden of Surprises At Burghley  
One of the surprises is that they bar the exit !**



**This photograph was taken by Cynthia Dumbelton .  
I am grateful to her not only for the photo ,but also all the help she  
has given in preparing this issue of The Newsletter.**

**Ralph White**



We helped to fund the purchase of this Chandelier for Attingham

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<b>Summary of Programme September to December 2014</b>	
September Fri/Sat. 26/27 <sup>th</sup>	Two day holiday to Lancashire
September Tuesday 30 <sup>th</sup>	Talk at NS Conference Centre: Sue Beasley, 'From Computers to Compost'.
October Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Car Outing: Chillington Hall, near Brewood.
October Monday 13 <sup>th</sup>	Talk at NS Conference Centre: Gerald Mee - Selection of films on N Staffordshire.
October Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup>	Coach Outing to Sedbergh.
November Sunday 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Walk: Wrenbury.
November Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup>	Car Outing to Burleigh Pottery.
November Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Talk at NS Conference Centre: Howard Bagshaw, 'Lest We Forget'.
December Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Social Evening at the Madeley Centre.

### **Dates for your diary 2015**

April – coach trip to Waddesdon Manor

May 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> May – another London coach holiday

May 13<sup>th</sup> – coach trip to the Halle Orchestra, Bridgewater Hall

October – a possible visit by TGV to explore Art Nouveau in France!

**Contributors to the next Newsletter are asked to send their copy to the editor by 1<sup>st</sup> November. Photographs welcome.**

**Please send to Ralph White, Thyme Cottage, 20 Upper Green, Wolverhampton, WV6 8QH.**

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