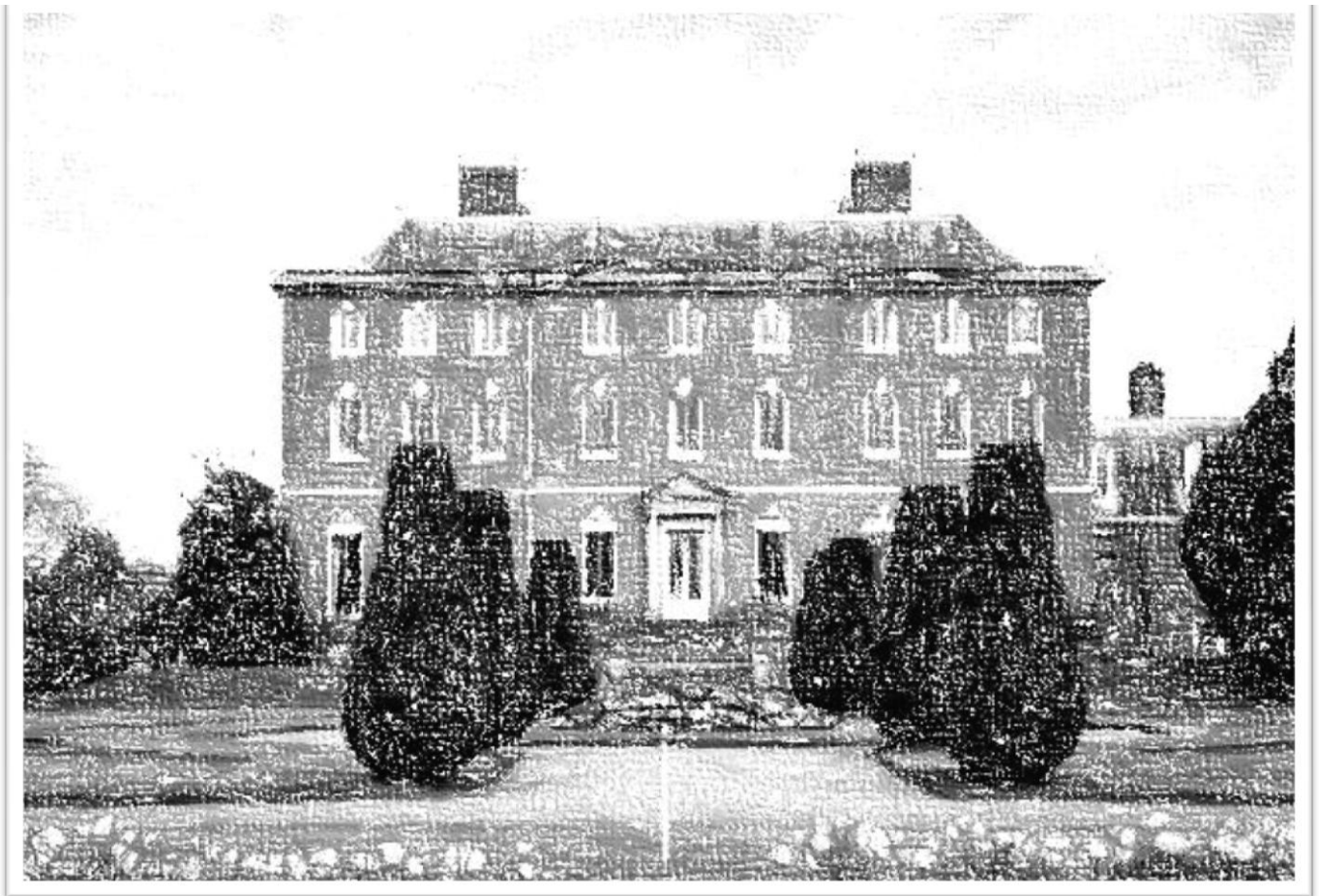


THE NORTH STAFFS NATIONAL TRUST ASSOCIATION

**Newsletter No. 102
Autumn and Winter Programme
2015**

Our Web Site – northstaffsnt.org.uk



Car Outing to Catton Hall 24th September

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. There is an induction loop at the NS Conf. Centre.

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. However, at any age you are covered by our public liability insurance. Please ask a Committee Member for an explanation.



THE NORTH STAFFS NATIONAL TRUST ASSOCIATION Newsletter No. 102 A Note from the Chair

I hope you agree this new programme contains something for everyone, as it roams locally and further afield. Art, Architecture, Sculpture, Science, Engineering and Entertainment are covered. Two characters lauded for discovering treasure trove make appearances, in fact the living one is giving the first talk which opens the season of delights. Nearer Christmas there is a feast in palatial surroundings. I really appreciate the dedication and inspiration of the Programme Organising Group who have put these events together. Did you know that National Trust Volunteers like them have recently been awarded rare breed status? In the last three years their numbers have fallen by 7,000 to 62,000. If you would like to contribute to the revival of the species you might like to help at Little Moreton Hall's Yuletide festivities for a few hours in December. (Details in this issue). I was going to call it the volunteering equivalent of a toe in the water, but I decided not to contrast the warmth of the welcome with the temperature of the moat. Unless the carols can already be heard in the supermarkets, may I be amongst the first to wish you The Compliments of The Season.

Ralph



Forthcoming Events

**Tuesday 15th
September: Talk at NS
Conference Centre
7.30 pm.
'Staffordshire Film
Archive;The Time
Machine:Touching
History.' Ray Johnson
MBE.**

Ray is Director of the SFA which exists to preserve, restore and make available the film heritage of the county. You may have been to one of the screenings at Stoke Film Theatre.

The talk about the archive will focus on a recently completed project, a newly discovered 1947 film of Biddulph Grange Hospital with new authoritative reminiscences. This will be linked to two 1987 films, one is the National Trust's appeal for funds for Biddulph and the second features the restoration of the gardens as informed by Victorian correspondence.

As a special bonus feature, as September 15th is the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain and Ray is a member of Operation Spitfire restoring the City's Spitfire, a brief tribute compilation will conclude the evening.

(With reference to the 'Time Machine' element of the talk, I have gone back a few years for this picture of Ray!) Ed.

Thursday 24th September: Car Outing: Catton Hall and Gardens near Alrewas. DE12 8LN

There has been a settlement at Catton for well over a thousand years, according to the Domesday Book, consisting at one time of a manor house and village. The current Hall, with some nineteenth and early twentieth century additions, was built for Christopher Horton in 1745 to a grand design by Smith of Warwick.

The present chapel dates from 1892 and broke the legendary curse which said no son would inherit from his father until the previous chapel, which had been destroyed, had been rebuilt.

We have arranged a tour of the house, gardens and chapel to be followed by afternoon tea (tea/coffee, sandwiches, scones, cake and biscuits in the house).

There is ample parking and signs will guide you from the main front gates. (Further directions on application.)

There are approximately twelve steps in and out of the house. Outside is quite flat with the usual verges and the occasional uneven surface.

We start the tour at 2.30. pm and depart at approximately 5.00pm.

Cost £14.(non members £15) to include tours, afternoon tea and contribution to National Trust.

Please apply to Rose Wheat, 12 West Avenue, Newcastle, Staffs, ST5 0NB, enclosing a cheque & stamped, addressed, envelope.

Friday to Tuesday October 2nd - 6th : Holiday to Nancy now full.



**Tuesday 13th October: Talk at NS
Conference Centre. 7.30 pm.
“This Tempestuous and
Inhospitable Shore”.
Admiral Anson’s
Circumnavigation and the wreck
of The Wager.
Steve Ragnall.**

Many members will know of the local connection with Shugborough, the Anson family home and their later creation as Earls of Lichfield.

Steve is a maritime author and historian from Clitheroe. A Fellow Old Boy of The Grammar School was James King who served as a lieutenant on Captain Cooke’s final and fatal Pacific voyage.

This connection inspired Steve’s lifetime love of the sea and maritime history. He has lectured extensively around the world specialising in tales of Pacific exploration and adventure.

However, his knowledge is wider even than this as several members will attest, having heard him on their own seafaring adventures and hoped he would accept our invitation. His informative and entertaining talk is highly recommended.

Thursday 15th October: Coach Outing: Nostell Priory and The Hepworth Gallery, Yorkshire.



Nostell Priory

Nostell Priory

This Palladian Mansion set in 300 acres of spectacular gardens and parkland. The early part of our tour will take place before the house is open to the public. Built on the site of a medieval monastery, Nostell has been the home of the Winn family for almost 300 years. Commissioned by Sir Rowland Winn in 1733, James Paine built the house with additions by Robert Adam, who also created the exceptional interiors. Within the house we shall see the largest collection of Chippendale furniture anywhere in the world. There are paintings by Breughel and Hogarth, a John Harrison longitudinal longcase clock and a fine 18th century doll's house.

National Trust Membership Cards will need to be shown at Nostell Priory.

The Hepworth Gallery

Architect David Chipperfield's £35m building is made up from 10 grey trapezoidal boxes, each housing a gallery. Inside you will find an extensive collection of 20th century art. At the heart of this collection sits a large number of pieces by Barbara Hepworth who grew up in this city. Hepworth's many achievements are exhibited alongside those of her contemporaries both here in the UK and abroad. Selected sculptures by Henry Moore, who also grew up in Wakefield, include a reclining figure in elm from 1936. A bonus for us is that the touring exhibition at the time of our visit is by Sir Antony Caro. He was an English abstract sculptor whose work is characterised by assemblies of metals using "found" industrial objects. His work was in the modern school and in the early part of his career, he worked alongside Henry Moore.

Booking Details

The coach will leave School St at 8-00am, departing from Wakefield at 4-30pm and arriving back in Newcastle by 7-00pm.

Cost £ 30 (non- members £32) , to include coach travel, the cost of guides at both Nostell Priory and The Hepworth and driver's gratuity.

Please apply to Bob Winter, 15 Robinson Road, Trentham, Stoke on Trent.ST4 8ED. Tel. 01782 642942 , enclosing SAE.

Closing Date Wednesday 16th September.



Saturday 31 October: Walk: Endon and its surroundings (approximately 4 miles)

This circular walk explores parts of the village of Endon and the surrounding areas not commonly seen. The opportunity will also be provided for walkers to enjoy lunch after the walk (and/or breakfast beforehand) at the Plough (Toby Carvery) which is a prominent local landmark when travelling towards Leek.

Although it's Halloween, the wearing of fancy dress and trick or treating is discouraged, but all walkers should wear suitable walking boots or shoes and have some form of rainwear. The walk includes several steep lanes and footpaths, and some roads without footpaths, so that care will be essential. Dogs kept on leads throughout and children are welcome. There are also about 6 stiles which are fairly easy.

The walk starts at 10.30am . Car park at the rear of the Plough in Church Lane

Church Lane (fairly steep) to St. Luke's Church, then across open country up to the hamlet of Hilltop, for extensive views over three counties. From there along lanes and footpaths, into woodland near to Brown Edge, from where we will descend via steep footpaths to the Caldon Canal at Stockton Brook, taking the recently – surfaced towpath which skirts the eastern side of Endon. Along the towpath we will see examples of industrial archaeology and other points of interest, with the opportunity to take a short break.

We return to Endon via Park Lane, and then explore the old village, including the ford and well, scene of the Well-dressing festival held every year over the Spring Bank Holiday. We will climb up Brook Lane, and then go down Church Lane, back to the Plough at about 1.30pm.

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

When booking, please indicate whether you are likely to require lunch at the Plough so that they can be given an estimate of numbers. Lunch is served throughout the afternoon and evening. At the time of writing the cost of a 2-course carvery meal is about £7.00, and other meals are available.

Book your place with Peter Wilson either by email to peterwilsonendon@btinternet.com, or by post (enclosing s.a.e) to Greenbank, Church Lane, Endon, Stoke-on-Trent ST9 9HF. Tel. 01782 502150.

Closing date Monday 26 October.

Tuesday 10th November: Car Outing: A visit to the Toyota Car Assembly Plant, Burnaston, Derbyshire. DE1 9TA.

As the British car manufacturing sector declined, three notable Japanese Car manufacturers, Honda, Nissan and Toyota, established car manufacturing facilities in the UK, Toyota choosing sites at Burnaston, Derbyshire for vehicle assembly and Deeside, North Wales for engine production.

Toyota UK Ltd was established in 1989, with their first car, a Carina E, rolling off the Burnaston production line on 16th December 1992. Since then production has included Avensis, Corolla and Auris models. At maximum line speed, one car a minute can be produced. As of June 5015, Toyota UK employs 3,800 Staff in total.

Visits commence at 09:00hrs and conclude around mid-day. Visitors should bring warm clothing and ensure that their arms and legs are covered at all times, We will also be provided with a hard hat, safety glasses and ear plugs which we are required to wear during the shop-floor tour.

The visit will begin with a short registration session and refreshments in the Visitor Centre. We will then make our way into the presentation hall for a brief presentation regarding Toyota in the UK. After being fitted out with protective gear, we will then make our way to be seated on an electric tour train where we will undertake tours of the Press, Weld and Assembly shops, with manufacturing processes explained by a comprehensive verbal commentary. The visit will conclude with a short question and answer session.

Numbers are strictly limited to 20, only if there is insufficient demand will non members be considered. For security reasons, Toyota require the name of each attendee in advance of the visit, also, Toyota request that each group member receives prior to the visit a copy of their A4 size "joining instructions", please do not forget to enclose the SAE requested below with your booking form.

Cost Members : £11.50 Guests £12.00

Please apply to John Pedrazzini, 6 Batten Walk, Yarnfield, Stone, ST15 0TA, enclosing cheque and S.A.E. 215mm X 105mm.

Closing date: Thursday 15th October.

**Tuesday 10th November: Talk: NS Conference Centre 7.30pm.
David Brown, "My Favourite Rooms".**

David's work with National Trust at Attingham is well known, less widely appreciated is his influence in helping to set up The North Staffs Association in 1981. He is now The Regional Representative for The Heart of England Friends of Historic Houses Association. This long career in the field of the preservation of valuable buildings has given him unrivalled access to country houses, ancient, restored after disaster and newly created.

He wears his erudition with a light touch and his wit in conversation has helped develop a strong rapport with owners who allowed otherwise private rooms to be photographed.

There is a fascination in glimpsing houses which are never, or hardly ever open. As David reveals his favourite rooms on this armchair tour we hope you will make a note of yours because our ambition is to have you see them for real!



Not everyone's idea of their favourite room is the same. This one is one of my favourites, it has five enormous windows, is the size of a football pitch and needs a fortune spent on it! Ed.

Tuesday 17th November: Coach Outing: BBC Media City. A day out in Manchester.

There are 2 guided tours with a maximum number of 22 on each. The first is at 10.30 am and the second at 3.00pm. You will be able to take a glimpse behind the scenes of some of your favourite programmes and will also have a chance to take part in your own television production in their interactive studio.

The BBC tour guides give a lively insight into the many programmes originating from the BBC in the north and the level of work it takes to get them from script to screen. The tour does NOT include being in the audience for a show.

Each tour lasts an hour and a half and there will be quite a lot of walking. Lifts are available between levels.

If you have a preference for the time of the tour please mention this on the booking form; times will be on a first come first served basis and cannot be guaranteed.

For the rest of your day the Lowry and the Imperial War Museum are both a 5 minute walk from Media City and are free to enter.

For those of you who want to go Christmas shopping there is a tram stop at Media City with trams going to the city centre.

Lunch is at own expense: there are cafes at the Lowry and the Imperial War Museum and a food hall at the nearby Lowry Outlet Shopping Mall.

Depart School Street at 8.15am. Return for 6.30 pm (subject to traffic).

Cost £20.00 (£21.00 for non members) to include BBC Tour fee, coach and driver's gratuity.

Early Booking Essential. Maximum numbers 44. Please note that all cheques will be cashed early October.

Please apply to Jane Mayer, 16 Shaldon Avenue, Stockton Brook, Stoke on Trent.ST9 9PU enclosing a cheque and SAE.**Closing Date: 30th September.**



Tuesday 8th December: Christmas Social Evening at Keele Hall at 7.pm.

A short sleigh ride from Newcastle, in Keele's fire-lit and candle-lit Winter Palace, in a suite of rooms previously seen fit for a Russian Prince. Begin the festive season with time to relax and chat with all the old and new friends that we have made over the past year within the Association.

The Old Library will be open from 7pm in order to purchase a pre meal drink, which you can savour in The Great Hall, decorated for the season.

Imbibe the festive spirit before going through to The Salvin Room, formerly the Drawing Room, for a two course, hot buffet meal.

There will be the option to choose between a vegetarian and two other main courses with appropriate accompaniments. Please select one of the two desserts, which will be followed by tea or coffee.

We are hoping to arrange light musical entertainment during part of the evening. Cost £24.00. per person.

Please arrive at 7.pm. for the meal at 7.45.

There is parking in The Courtyard or at the car park on the left just before The Courtyard.

Please apply to Mrs Susan Till, 14 Whitmore Road, Trentham, Stoke on Trent ST4 8AP, enclosing SAE.

Closing Date: 10th November.



Art & Craft Exhibition at Christmas Social Evening 8th Dec.

Many of our members have hidden talents which we hope they will want to share more widely at our Christmas Event. We are thinking of painting, knitting, tapestry, carving, quilting, cards, etc! We would like to hold a small exhibition with as much variety as possible.

Great care will be taken to ensure your items are looked after and kept secure.

Please let Cynthia know if you are willing to let us see something of your work. Contact her on 01782 641765 or by email at dumbeltoncynthia@gmail.com

Volunteers needed to help Celebrate Christmas Tudor Style at Little Moreton Hall. 5th & 6th, 12th & 13th, 19th and 20th December.

This festive season Little Moreton Hall will feature garlands, wreaths, feasts, jesters and Tudor music groups.

Between 11am-1.30 pm. or 1.30 -4pm. on the dates above National Trust is

looking for volunteers to help visitors celebrate Yuletide. This will include greeting them with a cup of wassail and involving them in craft activities for families.

If you would like to help, please contact Rachel Costigan at Little Moreton.

01260 272 018.

Parish Notice.

In the light of a disconcerting event on an outing, the Committee want to draw your attention to the following booking condition which will be added to Arrangements for Trips, page 2, as soon as we can find a space! Although bookings are accepted on the basis that participants are capable of taking care of themselves and are not reliant on other members to take responsibility for their welfare, this independence of action should be exercised with consideration for the event organiser and fellow members. A member leaving the main party, or being separated, during a visit must advise the organiser. Carry a note of the organiser's mobile number where it can be found in a crisis.

BOOKING DETAILS

Thursday 24th September; Car Outing: Catton Hall and Gardens nr Alrewas. DE 12 8LN. Tour Starts at 2.30 p.m.

Cost £14. (non members £15) to include tours, afternoon tea and contribution to National Trust.

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

Cut

BOOKING DETAILS

Thursday 15th October: Coach Outing: Nostell Priory and The Hepworth Gallery, Yorkshire.

Cost: £30 (non members £32) to include coach travel, guides at both properties, and driver's gratuity.

Please apply to Bob Winter, 15 Robinson Road, Trentham, Stoke on Trent, ST4 8ED. Tel. 01782 642942, enclosing cheque and SAE.

Name(s)	Association number	£
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Address		
	Total	-----

Tel. number ----- Email address -----

For booking details see reverse of this form

Cut

Name(s)	Association number	£
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-----	-----	-----
Address		
	Total	-----

Tel. number ----- Email address -----

For booking details see reverse of this form

BOOKING DETAILS

Saturday 31st October: Circular Walk: Endon.10.30 start from The Plough.

Cost £2.00. (non members £2.50.) Pay on the day.

Please indicate overleaf if you would like to reserve a place for lunch at the Plough so they can be given estimate of numbers.

Please apply to Peter Wilson either by email to
peterwilsonendon@btinternet .com

or by post to 'Greenbank'. Church Lane, Endon, Stoke on Trent
ST9 9HF .Tel.01782 502150. Please enclose SAE.

Closing Date Monday 26th October.

Cut

BOOKING DETAILS

Tuesday 10th November: Car Outing: Toyota Car Assembly Plant
Burnaston. DE1 9TA.Visit begins at 9.am.and lasts approx. 3 hours.

Cost £11.50. (non members £12.00.).

Please apply to John Pedrazzini, 6 Batten Walk, Yarnfield,Stone,
ST15 0TA. Enclosing a cheque and the specified 215mm X 105mm
SAE.

Numbers limited to 20.

Closing Date Thursday 15th October.

Name(s)	Association number	£
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Address		
	Total	-----

I /WE would like to reserve place(s) for lunch at The Plough

Tel. number ----- Email address -----

For booking details see reverse of this form

Cut

Name(s)	Association number	£
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-----	-----	-----
Address		
	Total	-----

Tel. number ----- Email address -----

For booking details see reverse of this form

BOOKING DETAILS

Tuesday 17th November: Coach Outing : BBC Media City, Manchester.

Cost £20.00. (non members £21.00.). To include BBC tour fee, coach and driver's gratuity.

Please apply to Jane Mayer, 16 Shaldon Avenue, Stockton Brook, Stoke on Trent. ST9 9PU enclosing a cheque and SAE.

Early Booking Essential, only 44 Places available.
All cheques will be cashed in early October.

Closing Date : 30th September.

Cut

BOOKING DETAILS

Tuesday 8th December: Christmas Social Evening at Keele Hall.
7.00.pm.

Cost £24.00. per person. Two course hot buffet meal, tea or coffee. Selection between courses on offer, inc. vegetarian ,to be made at the event. Drinks available from bar.

Please apply to Mrs Susan Till, 14 Whitmore Road, Trentham, Stoke on Trent. ST4 8AP. Enclosing SAE.

Closing Date 10th November.

Name(s)	Association number	£
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Address		
	Total	-----

I / We would prefer the 10.30am Tour / I / We prefer the 3.00pm.BBC Tour.

Tel. number ----- Email address -----

For booking details see reverse of this form

Cut

Name(s)	Association number	£
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Address		
	Total	-----

Tel. number ----- Email address -----

For booking details see reverse of this form.

Reports of Recent Activities

Tuesday 10th March: Coach Trip to the Lancastrian Organ Trust, the Plaza Cinema and the Hat Museum, Stockport.

Tucked away down an unassuming street of terrace houses, The Theatre Organ Heritage Centre, originally a Methodist Sunday School, took us by surprise when we entered into an authentic 1920's cinema auditorium, complete with its own Wurlitzer organ.

After learning about the history of these amazing and intricate instruments, we were invited to view the Museum's wonderful organ collection and see the workings of a wonderful old organ. After coffee, seated in the cinema auditorium, we were treated to a Laurel and Hardy silent movie to the accompaniment of the theatre organ which appeared through the floor with a great flourish. The film was then followed on by a good old fashioned sing-along with much flag waving by our members and the finale provided by a splendid performance on the organ by Roger Savage.

With organ music ringing in our ears we headed off for lunch at Stockport's 1932 Art Deco Plaza Cinema and Variety Theatre. The Plaza is claimed to be the UK's finest example of its kind and a building of international significance. What a beautiful and glamorous building it is too. Painstakingly restored, it's still in regular use both as a cinema and a theatre. We were fortunate to be invited to a fascinating presentation on the history of The Plaza and its rescue from the threat of demolition and subsequent restoration.

We then proceeded across the road to The Hat Museum. Here we were given a tour of the machinery and presentation on the history and manufacture of hats over the years. What a thoroughly noisy, noxious and dangerous process it was too, with wool particles, toxic fumes and dangerous machinery making it a thoroughly unpleasant working environment. To lighten the mood, we finished our visit by touring the wonderful hat exhibition – a magnificent array of head gear for both men and women over the centuries.

Three very different destinations made for an interesting and fascinating day out!

Ann Winter



Thursday April 23rd: Coach Trip:Waddesdon Manor,Buckinghamshire

Reach for the dictionary to find sufficient words to describe the scale and opulence of everything at Waddesdon Manor! This vast French-style chateau, surrounded by extensive gardens, was built by Ferdinand de Rothschild in the late nineteenth century and houses the multitude of treasures which he and others of the family amassed.

Approaching through formal gardens, we could see the entire fairy-tale building shining white against an azure and cloudless sky. Inside, the rather shaded ground floor rooms were full of furnishings and ornaments from around the world. We saw chairs, carpets, cabinets, curtains, chests and curiosities from many countries and periods. The uses for the rooms also gave an insight into the way that family and guests spent time there. Was the dining room “ostentatiously vulgar” or “absolutely beautiful”? I heard both comments. In the sunnier upper rooms we saw bedrooms, bathrooms and boudoirs as well as mementos of the history of the family.

Trees were breaking into leaf and blossom in the gardens and birdsong was in the air. The parterre and formal gardens were a blaze of spring colours, sheltered by yew hedges trimmed to geometric precision and bordered by cloud-pruned box. The aviary was a confection of lacy and gilded metal-work. The garden installations were interesting, especially the ‘candlesticks’ created from wine bottles. We all had such a perfect day. Thank you, Rose.

Anne Anderton

LONDON HOLIDAY, 1ST - 5TH MAY.

This London holiday, the 5th that Cynthia has organised for the Association, was based around the Hampstead area. Over 40 happy members were offered a very varied programme which, in typically Cynthia style, was energetic, but thoroughly enjoyable, entertaining and informative. The hotel was the 4-star Britannia Hampstead, which, despite its name, is located in the charming if expensive area of Primrose Hill, not far from London Zoo and Regent's Park.

Here are the day-to-day reports from individual holiday-makers:

DAY 1 Friday, 1st May

A friendly welcome and a pack of detailed information provided an excellent introduction to our coach holiday.

The **Bentley Priory** (now a RAF Museum) was our first call port of call. Originally built in 1766, extended in 1788 the priory was the final home of Dowager Queen Adelaide, queen consort of William IV. It then served as a hotel and as a girl's school before being acquired by the Royal Air Force in 1926.

The Priory, located in Stanmore, Middlesex, is now a museum and famous as the headquarters of Fighter Command during the Battle of Britain in 1940. In particular the museum explores the leadership of Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding, Commander in Chief before and during the Battle of Britain. He developed the Dowding System that used information obtained by Radar and the Observer Corp to direct defensive interceptor aircraft and anti-aircraft artillery against the German Air Force with great effect. There is also a display of photographs, medals and artefacts showing the importance and courage of 'The Few', the 3,000 British and Allied aircrew who won the battles in the skies during the Battle of Britain.

Next stop was the **Royal Air Force Museum** located on the former Hendon Aerodrome. The site has five major buildings and hangars dedicated to the history of aviation and the Royal Air Force. The exhibition halls were: Milestones of Flight Hall, The Bomber Hall, Historic Hangars, Battle of Britain Hall and the Graham-White Factory.

On display are over 100 aircraft including one of the two surviving Vickers Wellingtons left in the world, and an Avro Lancaster S-Sugar that flew 137 sorties. There is also a complete Hawker Typhoon, the only Boulton Paul Defiant in the world and a Consolidated B-24 Liberator.

Written by Peter Mountain

DAY 2 Saturday, 2nd May

After boarding the coach at 10.30am, we arrived Whitestone Pond, at the top of Hampstead Heath. Departing from the coach we had great views from that high point. We then walked down leafy, narrow roads, seeing the house where Constable lived for a year, arriving at our destination at 11.0am.

Fenton House is a C.17th merchant's house bequeathed to the National Trust in 1952 by Lady Binning. She had bought the house in 1936 and filled it with treasures of porcelain, blue and white and Meissen, beautiful Georgian furniture and intricate C.17th needlework.

There is a fine collection of paintings including Sickert, Laura Knight and many others. In the Sickert collection, hanging over a harpsichord, there is a particularly beautiful painting which is based on an opera by Mozart. There are excellent portraits, including that of William IV and another of his mistress, Dorothy Jordan.

At various times, concerts are given using the many musical instruments in Fenton House. The Rockingham Room has a large collection of pastille burners, some of which were made in Staffordshire.

Climbing up to the attic, through a small door on to a balcony afforded panoramic views of London. Outside Fenton House is a walled garden with a 300 year old orchard, and about 30 types of apple tree. An Apple Day is held in autumn which gives the public opportunities to try the apples with apple-blossom honey. The garden grows roses and numerous other plants.

Terraces and lawns form other parts of the garden together with a flourishing, working kitchen garden.

Departing from Fenton House we enjoyed some refreshment at Burgh House before we all met together to view a small NT property: **22 Willow Road**. Entry was by guided tour, which for our group began with a short film about Erno Goldfinger.

He was a unique and influential figure in modern architecture. His idea to build this terrace of three houses in 1937 provoked much opposition. He was the designer for this modern avant-garde house which was finished in 1939 and was for himself and his family. Inside the house are interesting and surprising features. We explored the living and bedroom areas which were flooded with natural light. The sleeping areas did not have a great deal of furniture but that which it had could be easily pushed back against the walls. This opened up the area, allowing it for alternative uses. Making use of space in both the living and sleeping areas meant they could entertain. Throughout the house there were interesting personal possessions, which included modern art collections and innovative furniture.

At the back of the house was a garden. Some of this garden is in an Art-Deco style. Altogether it is a great house to visit, if only because it promoted various discussions of its merit.

Written by Jane Beckett

DAY 3 Sunday, 3rd May

It was an appropriate day to be visiting **Spencer House**, St James's, the house built in 1756 for the first Earl Spencer, an ancestor of Diana, Princess of Wales, and grandmother of the new one-day-old Princess Charlotte. The Bank Holiday Sunday was pleasantly free of traffic as we made our way to the St James area of London, enabling Andy, our driver and tour guide supreme, to give us a comprehensive tour of this part of London, with many anecdotes and historical insights.

On arriving at Spencer House we were split into two groups and both guides showed an extensive knowledge and enthusiasm for the house and the Spencer family. Although much is a reproduction of the originals – having been removed to preserve them during the Blitz- to Althorp, the ten-year restoration programme and co-operation of the Spencer family has resulted in restoration of exceptional quality. The beauty of the house and furniture was appreciated by us all.

Walking through Green Park to the rear of the house, we were able to appreciate the splendid location and view Buckingham Palace and hear the band playing for Changing of the Guard. Later, in the coach, heading through the City of Westminster we made our way to the **Museum of London** situated on London Wall near the Barbican. Andy once again went out of his way to drive through the maze of streets, giving us a comprehensive commentary and linking it all together exceptionally well. On our arrival we enjoyed a welcome lunch at the Benugo Café and were then free to wander around the museum sampling the detailed exhibits chronicling the development of London and Londoners from earliest times to the present day.

The sun was shining and, despite the cool breeze, we were able to enjoy the impressive surrounding modern architecture and beautiful reflective glass-fronted buildings. Once more we set off led by our intrepid leaders to the **Church of St Bartholomew the Great** in nearby Smithfield. The narrow entrance was deceptive and we were unprepared for the imposing interior of the oldest church building in London. It was lovely to see how the fabric of the original building has been preserved, whilst the church had embraced modern sculpture and paintings and lent itself to the production of films and current activities.

A long day but packed with interest varied enough for all tastes.

Written by Marion Lycett

DAY 4 Bank Holiday Monday, 4th May

This was possibly the finest and warmest day of the holiday, and began for some of us with our now customary walk up nearby **Primrose Hill** to see a clear panoramic view, over Regent's Park, of the landmarks of central London and beyond. The weather tempted us to walk down the hill for a brief glimpse into Regent's Park, near to London Zoo, returning in time to board the coach for today's official visits.

We drove up through Hampstead village to **Kenwood House**, a cream-coloured c18 mansion which stands, between Hampstead and Highgate, in a commanding position in its own extensive grounds at the head of Hampstead Heath, again with views of the City.

Kenwood was acquired by the 1st Earl of Mansfield, Lord Chief Justice, in 1754, and over the next ten years was extensively enlarged and remodelled, inside and out, by Robert Adam, to create the finest house now in the care of English Heritage. In order to provide his wife with a hobby, Lord Mansfield had built in a prominent position in the grounds, a model dairy, with a tea room where Lady Mansfield could entertain her friends.

In 1922 most of the furniture had been sold and the house was only saved from demolition by The Earl of Iveagh, of the Guinness dynasty, who acquired it, not to live in, but to provide a setting for his extensive and varied collection of paintings.

Only a few years later, Lord Iveagh died, generously leaving the house, grounds and collection to the nation, to be kept freely accessible for the public.

The paintings displayed in the grand rooms on the ground floor include several superb examples of the work of Gainsborough, Reynolds, Romney and Raeburn, as well as several major Dutch and Flemish works by van Dyck, Hals, Rembrandt and Vermeer. The value of the collection was not disclosed. English Heritage has been able to assemble a collection of furniture and musical instruments which suit the age and style of the house, and complement the paintings, including some comfortable seats for visitors to use.

Upstairs there is the extensive Suffolk collection of Tudor and Stuart paintings, and in the grounds, near to the dairy, is a collection of modern sculpture, including works by Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore.

The house and grounds were well-appreciated by the public on this fine Bank Holiday. Some of us were able to walk down through the Heath as far as the famous men's and ladies bathing ponds, and even venture into Highgate, though without enough time to visit the famous Cemetery, something for another time, perhaps.

We left Kenwood to return to Hampstead, to enable those who on Saturday had visited **Keats' House**, to visit the Goldfinger house in Willow Road, and vice versa.

In the evening, by which time it was pouring with rain, we ventured out to dine at a specialist fish restaurant, **Simply Fish** in Camden Town, and returned replete for our final night's stay in Hampstead.

Thanks to Cynthia and David, we had experienced yet another interesting and enjoyable day out.

Written by Peter Wilson

DAY 5 Tuesday, 5th May

The last day of the holiday but still plenty to do and see. We were all up, packed and ready to leave by 9.15 heading for **Runnymede**. Impeccable timing by Andy yet again as we arrived in time to board the boat to Windsor along The Thames.

An excellent and detailed commentary was given as we sailed up river to view the monuments, the ruined Priory where the Magna Carta may have been sealed, the oldest tree, a Yew, on National Trust property, the Kennedy Memorial and the Magna Carta Monument. Then, as we turned to sail up river, the boat's 'Captain' gave a very entertaining talk tinged with much humour. We passed many beautiful properties including Beryl Reid's (she left it to her 42 cats) and a home that had once belonged to George Michael.

Moored in Datchet was a small beautifully kept craft called Wanda which had helped in the evacuation of Dunkirk and we had a number of glimpses of Windsor Castle. It is thought to be the oldest inhabited castle in the world.

Again the coach was ready and waiting as we sailed into Windsor and made a smooth transition to **Nuffield Place**.

A quick lunch and an introductory talk was followed by a tour of the house and gardens, a modest home on a 10-year lease from The Nuffield College.

It was bought by William Morris* (Lord Nuffield) in 1933. A wealthy man with no family, he gave away the equivalent of 600 million pounds which included an iron lung to every hospital here in this country and in the Commonwealth. The National Trust are gradually returning the house and gardens to how it was when Lord and Lady Nuffield owned it.

Brilliant 5-day trip superbly organised in every aspect. Attention to detail was fantastic and information supplied couldn't have been better. Congratulations and a big thank you to Cynthia and David.

*This William Morris was the car maker whose eponymous vehicles dominated the pre-war car market.

Written by Valerie Morgan

Cynthia's comments: We were blessed with mostly sunny weather, albeit breezy at times, and this helped make the spring break enjoyable together with a full programme and a suitably located hotel (with superb views of the London skyline from some of the rooms). Our party was, as always, a friendly and appreciative group who kept good time, appeared to have fun and were most appreciative of the effort put in to make an interesting holiday.

I should like to thank most sincerely all who booked for this trip to London and who were forthcoming in their praise and thanks, which really makes organising such a holiday worthwhile. In addition, we added a useful sum to our funds for donations.

Wednesday 13th May: Coach Outing to Bridgewater Hall.

We met up with our London Coach Driver, Andy, again who delivered us in good time for another splendid guided tour of a segment of the city by Andrew Derbyshire. After lunch we took our seats for an electrifying concert by the Halle with a young conductor and piano soloist already with global reputations. Thank you Penny and Terry Moore for arranging this superb treat.

Ralph



Tuesday 14th April Car Trip: Guided Tour of Nantwich.

Having taken the difficult decision as to which sun glasses to wear and which sun cream to use, a group of us joined the car trip for a walk round Nantwich led by Rose Wheat.

Starting at St Mary's church for an introduction to the history of the town, and distribution of some excellent maps, we went to the Welsh bridge to the original site for the manufacture of the salt corns from brine. Crossing the bridge we walked up Welsh Row passing First and Second Wood Streets which were

the source of the wood for the brine industry before it became extinct in Nantwich following the discovery of mineable salt at Northwich. (The suffix "wich" refers to the salt industry)

Having investigated the pubs, grand residences and almshouses of Welsh Row we returned to the site of the fire of 1583 and then onwards into the centre of the "modern" town.

The rebuilding of the town after 1583 included the Crown Hotel with its Long Gallery and Rose pointed out inscriptions carved into the woodwork above the shops. We headed down Pillory Street towards the stocks and the Museum, through the courtyard and then along Hospital Street to the site of the Civil War headquarters from which the troops swept down the High St to fight the battle of Nantwich. A final stroll down Hospital St to the last house which burnt in the 1583 fire, appropriately next door to the residence later occupied by Priestley, the discoverer of oxygen. Resisting the challenge of tea and cakes a resolute few continued on to the site of the hospital, past "The Boot and Shoe", a reminder of a later industry of the town, and finally finishing the tour at Richard Church's Mansion.

Whilst I am perhaps not ready to participate in the annual re-enactment of the battle, I will certainly appreciate more any further visits to the town. Our thanks to Rose Wheat for all the research and preparation that is required to make such a fascinating afternoon.

Nick Glanville

Wednesday 10th June: Coach Trip to Bourton House Garden and Sezincote , Moreton in Marsh, Gloucestershire.

Our first visit was to Bourton House which has its origins in the 16th century, but over the years has had a succession of owners and became somewhat neglected, until in 1983 the gardens underwent a programme of restoration.

Following tea and biscuits in the magnificent 16th century Tithe Barn, a somewhat bracing breeze accompanied us as we toured the garden and marvelled at the luxuriant planting scheme, the likes of which seems to escape most of us in our own gardens. All around was a blaze of colour with wide herbaceous borders, a knot garden, a topiary walk, a parterre, plus water features galore, including a raised basket pond from the Great Exhibition of 1851. Ralph proved to be a great source of horticultural information and was kept busy answering numerous questions as we tried to identify some of the more exotic and unusual plants. It is small wonder the garden won “Small Visitor Attraction of the Year” in 2013.

After a tasty lunch we drove a short distance to Sezincote, a privately run estate. Charles Cockerell of the East India Company and grandson of Samuel Pepys, commissioned his brother to build the house. The result is a magnificent Hindu and Muslim confection. The house, garden and orangery form an exotic Indian fantasy that so impressed the Prince Regent when he visited, that he ordered the plans for the Brighton Pavilion be restyled in a similar fashion.

Touring the house was a delight and much of the internal decoration has been preserved in spite of having fallen on hard times. In the Second World War, like many a grand house, it was used as a billet for Canadian troops.

The main work of recent years has, however, been in restoring the 2 gardens, laid out over 2 acres of a gently sloping hillside. We wandered through an exotic water garden which emulates a Moghul paradise garden, viewed ornaments which include a temple of a Sun God and two statues of Brahmin bulls, plus a coiled 3 headed snake. It is hard to convey the surprise and sheer delight of what is certainly not your typical English house and garden and is a visit we will all remember with great pleasure.

Ann Winter

Thursday 25th June: Car Trip: Evening Visit to Alton Towers.

The coach park at Alton Towers gave us a clue how far people are prepared to travel - Kirkby Lonsdale, Blackpool even Plymouth – while for us it's a short drive away. Shawn and Anne were our knowledgeable and efficient hosts on the evening tour which began with a Sky Ride over the treetops and the departing visitors. Once the home of the Talbot family, the Earls of Shrewsbury, the house we see the shell of today was built around 200 years ago and added to during the 1840s using Talbot money and the genius of Augustus Pugin.

A walk into the valley showed us the Orangery and Pagoda both awaiting restoration alongside resplendent colours of rhododendron and acer palmatum "Bloodgood", undimmed by the passage of time. Inside the house we saw traces of Pugin's designs on the floor and walls but most were ripped out and sold in the 1950s. What stands today is only there due to some reinforcement done at that time.

The idea of a pleasure park came from the 20th Earl of Shrewsbury as long ago as 1890. Alton was attracting thousands of visitors in the 1920s and then fell into disrepair before a major investment by John Broome in the 1980s. Walking around after all the rides had closed and most of the public departed was especially enjoyable. Tranquillity had settled over the park, the ducks seemed glad of some peace and the staff were busy cleaning up and preparing the park for the next influx of visitors.

Thank you Sue for arranging this visit.

Sarah Akhtar

Sunday 12th July: Walk: Consall Nature Park, Pub and a Picnic.

A smaller than usual group of fifteen walkers included two dogs. The dogs are counted since Richard felt that to count only the people resulted in an unlucky number. This ensured that a good day was enjoyed by everyone who ventured forth for a foray into the countryside in favour of a sedentary afternoon watching the men's Wimbledon tennis final on television.

We assembled on a well surfaced car park adjacent to the visitor centre before setting off into the wood following the "Red" route. There are a number of way marked routes throughout the Consall Nature Park and Richard had planned an interesting walk which combined a selection of way marked and public footpaths. The route was quite steep in places but the Staffordshire County Ranger Service had installed many wooden steps with intricate patterns of staples driven in to create a non-slip surface.

Dropping into the valley bottom we were twice entertained by the passage of a steam locomotive operated by volunteers from the Churnet Valley Railway. There was an added bonus of a beer and cider festival staged at the Black Lion where we sat and sampled some interesting brews.

Finally we returned via Lawn and Heron Pools where local families were busy with their rods and lines before reaching the picnic tables on the lovely grassed area by the visitor centre. We were blessed with some fine sunshine but although the toilets were open, the visitor centre and shop were closed so no drinks or ice cream. Was everyone except us watching the tennis?

Many thanks to Richard and family for another well planned and enjoyable walk which revealed yet more of the splendid countryside so close to home.

Peter & Sally Jones



New Members since the last edition.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to:

Mary and David Bird, Carole and Brian Williams, John and Sheelagh Goulden,
David and Mary Lovatt, J R and C A Ayling and Dave Broome .

COMMITTEE 2015-16	
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Summary of Programme August – December 2015	
September Tuesday 15th	Talk:Staffordshire Film Archive by Ray Johnson MBE.
September Thursday 24th	Car Outing: Catton Hall.
October Fri-Tues 2 nd - 6th	Holiday by Train to Nancy, France. “Complet”.
October Tuesday 13th	Talk: Admiral Anson by Steve Ragnall.
October Thursday 15th	Coach Outing: Nostell Priory and The Hepworth Gallery.
October Saturday 31st	Walk: Endon with optional Pub Lunch.
November Tuesday 10th	Car Outing: Toyota Factory, Derby.
November Tuesday 10th	(Later same day at NSCC).Talk: “My Favourite Rooms” by David Brown.
November Tuesday 17th	Coach Outing: BBC, Media City, Salford.
December Tuesday 8th	Christmas Meal, Keele Hall.

Dates for your diary

January, Tuesday 19th. Talk: Katherine Frank, Biographer.
 February, Tuesday 16th.Talk:” The Art of Ukiyo-e” by Isabelle Killicoat.
 March, Tuesday 15th. Talk: “The Seven Towns of North Staffs “ by Fred Hughes.
 April, Tuesday 12th. Talk:”The Yellow Book, NGS”, by Graham & Judy White.
 April, Thursday 21st. Coach Outing: Leicester. King Richard III Visitor Centre
 Cathedral and New Walk Art Gallery.

Contributors to the next Newsletter are asked to send their copy to Ralph White, acting editor, contact details previous page, by 1st November. Photographs welcome.

Thank you for photographs in this edition to Kay Williams, Margaret J. Glanville, Ralph White and National Trust.

