

OAK LEAVES

*The Magazine of the
Mid-Warwickshire Association*

Spring 2012



No. 79

in support of **National
Trust**



Kedleston Hall
(See page 7)

**THE NATIONAL TRUST
MID-WARWICKSHIRE ASSOCIATION**

*A Voluntary Association of
National Trust Members*

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VICE PRESIDENT

Graham E. Cooper

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

This year, 2012, seems to be full of notable events – the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the Olympic Games, the 200th anniversary of the birth of both Augustus Wellby Northmore Pugin and Charles Dickens, and the centenary of the death of Octavia Hill, one of the founders of the National Trust. These last two are both being marked by our speakers in October and November. Nearer to home, one of our own favourite National Trust properties, Baddesley Clinton, celebrates its 30th year of opening for the National Trust (see their news on page 12).

It is also, of course, our own Association's 40th anniversary. Our inaugural meeting was held in October 1972, and so we have planned a supper event in the Orangery at Charlecote Park for 4th October. The evening will start fairly early, at 6 for 6.30, as we know that the days will be getting shorter, and members may like to roam around the gardens. Details are on page 11 of this magazine, and we hope to welcome you there to celebrate 40 years of our support for the National Trust.

We are pleased to have welcomed another new member, Margaret Tomlinson, to our Committee, and as she has already helped with organising outings, we know that she will be a great asset to us. Our committee has worked hard this year, and have all volunteered to assist in organising outings, suggesting suitable speakers for our evening meetings and generally being helpful in running the Association.

Membership is holding up well, thanks to the efforts of our Membership Secretary, Valerie Grimmer, and David Gilmore, who makes contact with new National Trust members and ensures that they know about their local Association.

The evening meetings are being enjoyed at the refurbished Royal Spa Centre, where the seating is greatly improved, and although there were one or two hiccups at the start, we are assured that the entrance doors, which at the moment admit a lot of cold air as well as our valued members, are being replaced with a system which will make it more comfortable for all, particularly for those who check the tickets.

We look forward to your continuing support.

Patricia M. Dent

A Plea from Packwood...

At rather short notice, we received the following information from Packwood where they are working to transform the visitor experience by building a new cafe serving fresh, seasonal food using the fruit and vegetables from the Kitchen Garden; Opening up the Park with new walks and easier access across the road; Converting the existing barns to develop a Garden Shop and Plant Sales Area; Improving the car Park and Picnic Area and increasing opening at Packwood all year round.

Application goes to the Planning Committee at the end of February, but this may of course be held over to a later date. Supportive comments would be welcome on the WDC website or your signature on the petition in Visitor reception at Packwood.

EVENING MEETINGS 2012

*Our meetings are held on Wednesday evenings, normally the first Wednesday of the month in the Avon Hall of the Royal Spa Centre, and start at 7.30pm **Guests are welcome, the admission price for non-members of the Association is £2.50***

WEDNESDAY 7th MARCH

Peter Preece gives another of his natural history talks. **EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY** looks at the lifestyles of herons and kingfishers, rare mitten crabs and other wildlife in Britain and Europe.

WEDNESDAY 4th APRIL

Elizabeth Horton tells us about **THE AGE OF ADORNMENT**, which covers the history of jewellery in all its many forms, materials, styles and uses, from precious gems to the humble beechnut, via all the products of the Birmingham Jewellery Quarter: pique, silver, pinchbeck and much more. The Horton Collection of 19th century jewellery, the most comprehensive in private hands, was relocated to the Rochester Museum, Kent, in 1996, and the most popular items are now shown in this illustrated talk.

WEDNESDAY 2nd MAY

To celebrate our Queen's Diamond Jubilee next month, we are pleased to welcome Dr Barry Twigg. The overwhelming majority of people in the United Kingdom not only believe that the current Monarch has carried out her duties in a most outstanding way over an extraordinary sixty-year reign, but also believe that the monarchy remains relevant to the nation and to the other countries of which the Queen is Head of State, and to the Commonwealth now and in the future.

The Monarchy as an institution has been changing and modernising throughout the Queen's reign. **SIXTY YEARS OF MARVELLOUS MODERN MONARCHY** – not only refers to the magnificent model of a constitutional monarch which we have, but also to the ways in which the Monarchy has been developing over the years. It also looks towards the future. It also makes reference to the very small but vociferous republican movement in this country and counters the arguments which they put forward.

We have no evening meetings in June, July, August or September, but we are looking forward to the start of our next season in October when we shall have -

WEDNESDAY 3rd OCTOBER

Jane Tapley makes a return visit to us to ask "WHAT THE DICKENS?" to celebrate the 200th anniversary of his birth.

WEDNESDAY 7th NOVEMBER

Our AGM will be followed by a talk by Gillian Darley, "OCTAVIA HILL and the NATIONAL TRUST.

.WEDNESDAY 28th NOVEMBER

Dorothy Nicolle tells us "ALL ABOUT CHRISTMAS"

MID-WARWICKSHIRE ASSOCIATION

Invite you to an

ASPARAGUS SUPPER

At the Fleece Inn,

Bretforton, Near Evesham, WR11 7JE

(using own transport)

On THURSDAY 17th MAY 2012

7pm for 7.30

Tickets £15

The Fleece Inn is a half-timbered medieval farmhouse, which originally sheltered a farmer and his stock. The inn was first licensed in 1848. Following a fire several years ago, it has now been restored to its former glory, with witches circles, and precious pewter collection, it has developed a reputation for traditional folk music, morris dancing and asparagus. We shall be eating in the medieval thatched barn.

The menu will consist of home-cooked ham and asparagus, with vegetables, followed by a sweet and tea or coffee.

PLEASE NOTE : This evening is using own transport.

Numbers are limited, please apply before the beginning of May.

See booking form on separate sheet.

EXCURSIONS 2012

Bookings for trips will be dealt with commencing three weeks after the distribution of this Oak Leaves Magazine, and applications will be acknowledged from this date. If you do not hear from the organizers soon after this, please contact the telephone number on each booking form to check that your application has arrived.

The price of the excursion includes the cost of coach travel, the driver's gratuity, the cost of any talk or guided tour and admission to properties which do not belong to the National Trust.

Please remember to bring your National Trust Membership Card for entry to NT properties

As before, all excursions will depart from the Leisure Centre at Newbold Comyn, with a further pick-up five minutes later at Newbold Terrace, opposite the Royal Spa Centre.

If, having paid for your excursion, you need to cancel, we suggest that it will be your responsibility to find someone else to take your place. The organizers may be able to assist with names and telephone numbers if there is a waiting list, but this cannot be guaranteed, nor can a refund, particularly if certain tickets have to be ordered and paid for well in advance.

The names of the volunteer organisers are on each booking form, so please make sure you address them correctly, but cheques still must be made out to "MID WARWICKSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF THE NATIONAL TRUST" and enclosed with your booking form, together with a stamped, addressed envelope.

TUESDAY 13th and 20th MARCH

THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM OF ART, BATH

These two trips are almost fully booked, but it is always worth enquiring if you would like to join one of them, as there are sometimes late cancellations.

Organiser: Graham White, 21 Regency House, Newbold Terrace, Leamington Spa CV32 4HD

Depart: Newbold Comyn 8.30am

Leave Bath 4.45pm, back about 7.15pm

Cost £18

THURSDAY 19th APRIL

THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL ARBORETUM And LICHFIELD

This excursion is full, but we are including it as a reminder for those who have booked, and also for those whose names are on the waiting list and who may want to enquire as to the possibility of cancellations.

Organisers: Margaret Mears and Margaret Tomlinson, 7 Wootton Court, Leamington Spa CV32 5UU.

Depart: Newbold Comyn 9am

Arrive back: 7pm approx.

Cost £19

TUESDAY 26th JUNE

**THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION POPPY FACTORY
and RICHMOND (Surrey)**

We travel to Richmond where we shall spend an hour or so. This will give an opportunity for a leisurely stroll or coffee in this pleasant town. At about 12.45 we make our way to the Royal British Legion Poppy Factory where we shall have a light lunch (home-made soup served with crusty baguette and sweet of the day) Lunch is included in the cost of the excursion.

For nearly 90 years the Poppy Factory has been making crosses, wreaths and poppies for the annual Remembrance Day Appeal. One of the aims of the factory is to help wounded and sick veterans back into employment by placing them in jobs throughout the UK. During our guided tour we shall see the poppies, wreaths and crosses being made and learn of the history of the factory. The tour will last approximately two hours. The cost includes the price of lunch and a donation to the factory.

Organiser: Graham White, 21 Regency House, Newbold Terrace, Leamington Spa CV32 4HD.

Depart: 8.30am Newbold Comyn

Arrive back 7pm approx

Cost £29 (including lunch)

TUESDAY 3rd JULY

SUNNYCROFT and ATTINGHAM PARK

We travel first to Wellington (Shropshire) to one of the few remaining examples of a redbrick villa which was purpose-built for the middle classes in the late Victorian period. The house, described as a time-capsule from the recent past is being specially opened for us and we will have a guided tour in groups. Coffee or tea and biscuits which are included in the price will be provided on arrival.

We travel on to Attingham Park, arriving about 12.30 where lunch may be obtained in either the Mansion House Tea Room, or the Carriage House Café. Attingham was built by the 1st Lord Berwick in 1785 and has undergone considerable restoration by the Trust. It has received a large amount of press coverage in the last 3 years, extolling its many attractions, not least being the magnificent dining room. The grounds including the newly restored walled garden and deer park which run alongside the river Tern are designed to impress and are easily walkable. We will have a short introductory talk and the visit will be free flow.

Organiser: Roy Nabbs, 3 Bamburgh Grove, Leamington Spa CV32 6RL

Depart: Newbold Comyn 8.30am

Arrive back: Leamington 6.15pm approx.

Cost £17(including coffee)

TUESDAY 21st AUGUST

**ROYAL CROWN DERBY FACTORY TOUR
and KEDLESTON HALL**

Royal Crown Derby china is known and collected throughout the world. The fine traditional skills have gained an international reputation for quality and creativity. With the help of our guides we shall see how the beautiful pieces are made. We shall have lunch in the factory restaurant and the cost of the excursion includes lunch which will consist of jacket potato with filling and salad.

Cont.....

ROYAL CROWN DERBY and KEDLESTON cont

After lunch we travel to Kedleston Hall which is a neo-classical mansion situated in parkland. The house was designed for lavish living and entertaining and is a stunning example of the work of the architect Robert Adam. The house contains a fine selection of paintings, sculptures and original furnishings. The Curzon family has lived on this site since the 12th century.

Organiser: Graham White, 21 Regency House, Newbold Terrace, Leamington Spa CV32 4HD

Depart: Newbold Comyn 8.30am

Arrive back: Approx 6.45pm

Cost £26 (including lunch)

WEDNESDAY 19th SEPTEMBER

ST PANCRAS STATION and DICKENS WALK

In the morning we will take a tour of the recently-restored St Pancras Station and its immediate surrounds. The noted transport writer, Christian Wolmar, described St Pancras as “the most significant urban structure built by the railways. Both its engine shed (ie the station itself) and the adjoining Gilbert Scott hotel would be notable individually but together they create a world class terminus. The sheer scale is breathtaking ...and the gothic design, with its exaggerated features, spires and statues, make it one of London’s greatest landmarks”

We’ll take a walk through the newly opened undercroft area, which was formerly the dark and musty home of thousands of beer barrels from the Burton Brewing Company, but now houses the Eurostar check-in area and many select shops and cafes. We’ll progress back along the upper floor, between the hotel and the Eurostar trains themselves (and the longest champagne bar in Europe!) passing the new statues that have drawn so much comment and view the new extension to the train shed, doubling its length. This is also the home of the new Javelin Train, which will whisk visitors to the Olympic site at Stratford in less than 7 minutes. Along the way our guide will cover the history, architecture, facilities and features of the awe-inspiring station area and of the former Midland Grand Hotel.

We will break for lunch after the tour. You might wish to dine in the former Booking Office – now a bar/diner within the restored hotel, but with the original features intact. There are myriad other dining options within the station area or in the nearby British Library.

In the afternoon we will take a Dickens-themed walk in the Strand/Fleet Street area. 2012 is the bicentenary of Charles Dickens’ birth. His literary works have the largest circulation of any English writer and are now published in many languages throughout the world. London was usually his canvas, and in this part of London there is plenty that would be recognizable to him today – albeit less smelly and with fewer horses! We’ll walk some of the streets, lanes, alleys and buildings that would have been known to Dickens and hear about their connections with his life and his works.

Our guide will again be Andrew Dick who took us to the Olympic sites. There will be a considerable amount of walking.

Organisers: John and Carolyn Labrum, 23 Bridge End, Warwick, CV34 6PB

Depart: 8.30am Newbold Comyn

Return: Approx 6.30pm

Cost £30

NATIONAL TRUST Bits and Pieces.....

CROOME COURT UPDATE

Members who took part in our trips to Croome several years ago will be interested to know how the projects are progressing. A recent project was to restore and repair two more of the flues and chimneys, and they are now able to use the Butlers Pantry and Dining Room fireplaces in time for the winter, recent visitors have been able to enjoy the warmth and glow of three real fireplaces.

Investigatory work on the wooden beams above the Long Gallery revealed a myriad of rotten, disintegrating and some intact beams lying quietly just under the surface of the floor. This space of the building has been closed until funds are raised to carry out repair works. Breaking news is the possible purchase and leasehold of one of the most significant missing pieces of the jigsaw – The Red Wing. The two buildings are seen as one, redesigned and built together in the 18th century by Capability Brown and are still joined together to this day.

Visitors to Croome are arriving in droves, with 100,000 visitors in 2011.

THE PLANNING CAMPAIGN

The Government's changes to the Planning system have attracted a great deal of media interest, and the National Trust is at the forefront of the objectors, being convinced that they will be nothing short of disastrous for the countryside and everyday green spaces.

For information on the campaign and the impact it will have on our countryside see the NT website: http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-ch/w-countryside_environment/w-planning-landing.htm

NOT THE NATIONAL TRUST

As we are not organising a holiday this year, we thought you might like to consider the following –

WELSH CAKES AND LAVERBREAD – September 21st to 28th 2012

Travelling with Johnsons luxury coach and staying in the Swansea Marriott (4 star) hotel, situated on the quay at Swansea surrounded by the beautiful South Wales Coast. This will be our home for seven nights. A full and varied itinerary includes exploring as far west as Tenby, Brecon and its Beacons to the north, and Cardiff, capital of Wales to the east. Lots of interest!

The holiday includes half board and all the facilities expected of a 4 star hotel. Cost from £699pp sharing. Single supplement applies. Small group only. Full itinerary and booking forms from Margaret Mears 01926-424205.

FORTY GLORIOUS YEARS

Many years ago I was very interested in the National Trust, and very much liked the idea of becoming a life member, but in those days I could not afford the few guineas which would have been necessary. The opportunity to join the Trust presented itself when a neighbour told me that a local “centre” was to be set up and that a public meeting would be held at Leamington College. I attended the meeting early in 1972, was asked to join the steering committee and was made Honorary Secretary, under the Chairmanship of Mr John Short, who had been a member of Coventry Centre.

Lady Fairfax-Lucy of Charlecote (mother of Sir Edmund Fairfax-Lucy, our President today) agreed to be our President, and our Inaugural Meeting was held in the Royal Spa Centre on Monday 2nd October 1972. The first talk was given on 6th November by Mr Lyndon Cave entitled “Leamington and its Regency Buildings”. In due course it was found more economical to meet at Leamington College, in venerable surroundings where the floorboards creaked every time someone moved, and the refreshments were served in the dining room under the hall. Within six months over 500 members had been enrolled and it was found necessary to move to the smaller hall in the Royal Spa Centre, and then to the Avon Hall.

In the beginning, just about all the administrative work, apart from finance and membership, was undertaken by the Secretary, but later various duties were shared by appointing other officers. Committee Meetings have always been held at homes of the Committee members, and it is a great tribute to them that the Association has thrived for the past forty years. Various titles were considered for the organisation – one of which was Heart of England Centre, but eventually it was decided to call it the less-romantic Mid-Warwickshire Centre. Some few years ago it was decided to re-title it as “Mid-Warwickshire Association”

From the beginning the main objective was to raise funds to support the National Trust, and appropriately, the first was to raise £200 for the replacement of floral urns along the river terrace at Charlecote. The urns are still there. Since then we have raised thousands of pounds for our local properties, and some further afield, even as far as the preservation of the coastline.

In the first year, excursions were organised to various interesting locations – Lacock, Berrington Hall, Waddesdon, Stourhead and Claydon – in a somewhat rickety coach which would be regarded as Spartan today. Perhaps the golden age of the excursion was under the guidance of Graham White in comfortable coaches with the best of organisation. Today the organisation of outings is shared between a number of willing volunteers.

When John Short ceased to be Chairman, Mr Kevin Meredith took over, and then I took the post, handing the secretaryship to Julia Johnstone. Our first newsletter was published in Spring 1973, and produced in foolscap using stencils. In those days the thought of our “Oak Leaves” being produced to its present high standard would have been unimaginable unless done by a professional publisher. Our current Editor is Patricia Dent, who is now Chairman and also Programme Secretary.

In many ways the Association would still be recognisable to its founders, and it is salutary to remember all who have contributed to its success, some of who are no longer with us. Let us celebrate the last forty years and hope for similar success in the years to come with capable and interested people willing to take us forward to many more successes.

GRAHAM COOPER
Vice-President

MID-WARWICKSHIRE ASSOCIATION

Invite you to join us to celebrate
**The Fortieth Anniversary of the Founding
of the Association**

On Thursday 4th October 2012 at 6pm for 6.30

in the Orangery, Charlecote Park

You will be greeted with a welcome drink -
Red or white wine, Bucks Fizz or a soft drink

A Hot Fork Buffet will be served at 6.30pm
With a choice of Steak and Red Wine Casserole;
Charlecote Hogget Sausage and Bean Cassoulet;
Lightly Spiced vegetable Hot Pot (V)
Or Salmon Fishcake with a Dill Cream Sauce
All served with rice or potatoes and a selection of Seasonal
Vegetables

Dessert

Chocolate Torte with Cream
Seasonal Crumble with Custard
or Cheese and Biscuits

Coffee and Tea

Tickets £18.50

Guests will be able to roam around the gardens during the function, and if possible one of the garden staff will be on hand to talk to guests.

There will be transport available to take guests to and from the Car Park, there is also an accessible Car Park for guests with mobility issues.

Numbers are limited, so early booking is advisable. Booking form on separate sheet.

NEWS from our local NATIONAL TRUST PROPERTIES

Details are correct as we go to print, but it is advisable to check before making a special journey.

BADDESLEY CLINTON – 01564-783294 - www.nationaltrust.org.uk/baddesleyclinton

Staff and volunteers are getting ready for a year of celebrations, as the 3rd April marks 30 years of being open to visitors with the National Trust.

It was Thomas Weaving Ferrers Walker's determination that had secured Baddesley's future. Caring for the house after his father's death in 1970, he had opened it to visitors himself while raising the necessary endowment to be able to hand the house and gardens to the National Trust. Two generous local donors offered £300,000 and many of the National Trust Centres and Associations as well as local charities and individuals gave donations.

Through the National Land Fund, the house contents and over 120 acres of land were given into our care, allowing Baddesley to be opened to visitors in April 1982 and the property still has a very loyal local following today.

The first Administrators, Roy and Pam McLeod had started in 1980 and spent two years overseeing renovations to the house, as it was re-roofed and setting up the tearoom and shop. Roy recorded in his diary for that first day "The crowds were let in at 2pm, but by that time a considerable queue had built up in Rising Lane (may have to open before time a little)..... And we put 306 people through – this seems to be the maximum for the time. The volunteers did a marvellous job and Mr Ferrers Walker was thrilled."

To celebrate, Baddesley will be doing 30 special things in 2012, including an exhibition of photographs and memories of the first open day, recreating Mr Ferrers Walker's study and even a commemorative jute bag in the shop!

While the beauty and tranquil atmosphere of Baddesley remain the same, some things have changed and the house, gardens and estate are now open all year round. From welcoming 306 visitors on the first day in 1982, the property expects 170,000 visitors this year, although it's still possible to find a quiet corner to enjoy this peaceful constant in a busy world.

For details of events and opening times please visit the website or telephone the number above

CHARLECOTE PARK – 01789-470277- www.charlecotepark@nationaltrust.org.uk

March 31st – April 15 (Easter Holidays) (Not Wednesday) – Cuddly Critters 11am -4.30pm
Find the soft toys hidden in the house – Free with house tickets.

April 6-9 (Easter Weekend) Easter Trails – 11am to 4pm - £2 per trail. Enjoy the trail around the grounds supported by Cadbury.

April 21-22 – Bonus Time Weekend – all day. Free entry to non-members if they download a voucher prior to their visit.

May 18 – Food and Flora – 7pm £25 – *Meal and garden tour, part of "Museums at Night"

June 2-10 (Half Term) – (Not Wednesday) Cuddly Critters – 11am – 4.30pm – Free with house tickets. Find the soft toys hidden in the house.

June 3 – Jubilee Picnic – 12 noon onwards – free. Bring your picnic and enjoy music in the grounds. Part of the "Big Lunch"

June 16 – NGS Open Day 11am to 4pm – Normal admission applies. Join us for tours, events and exhibitions in the grounds. Charlecote was one of the first gardens to open for the NGS 85 years ago.

June 23 – Much Ado About Nothing – 7.30pm – * Adults £12, child £6. Outdoor theatre with Heartbreak Productions.

July 21-Sept 2 (not Wednesday) – Cuddly Critters – 11am to 4.30pm – Free with house tickets. Find the soft toys hidden in the house.

July 22 – The Railway Children - 6pm * Adults £12, child £6. Outdoor theatre with Heartbreak Productions.

August – Every Thursday –Children’s Club – 12 noon to 4pm. £1 (some activities) Nature based summer holiday family activities.

August 11 – Private Lives – 7.30pm *Adults £12, child £6. Outdoor theatre with Heartbreak Productions.

August 18th – Bat Walk – 8pm. *£5. Come and find out about the bats living in the Park.

September 8 – Heritage Open Day – Free entry to non-members.

NOTE – Booking required for events marked *

COUGHTON COURT – 01789-400777: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/coughtoncourt

Coughton Court may have been closed over the winter, but behind the scenes we’ve been busier than ever preparing the house for the new 2012 season. Our volunteers have been working tirelessly, carrying out research into some of Coughton’s lesser-known stories and characters.

Their discoveries mean that, this year at Coughton, you can experience the Throckmorton’s journey from danger to triumph through the eyes of the remarkable women of the family, the wives, mothers and daughters whose stories are too often overshadowed by those of their husbands and fathers.

One of these fascinating stories is that of Catherine Collingwood. Catherine was the second wife of Sir Robert, the fourth Throckmorton Baronet, who had an horrific start in life when her father was hanged, drawn and quartered for treason before her second birthday.

In 2012 we introduce Coughton Arts, a varied programme of events including theatre, poetry, concerts and art. In our first year honorary director Helena Cavan, Cotswold composer and poet, celebrates local talent.

For more details of events and opening times please visit

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/coughtoncourt or call 01789 400777 Option 2.

HIDCOTE MANOR GARDENS – 01386-438333: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hidcote

Monday 26th March – Plant Doctor – 2-3pm. Get advice about your problem plants from our team of experts. Normal admission applies.

April – Sunday 8th and Monday 9th – Easter Eggs-stravaganza 10am to 4pm. Hop along to Hidcote and join the Easter fun, hunt the clues, solve the puzzle and win an egg-static prize. Normal admission applies.

April 12th – Digital Garden Photography Workshop – 10 – 4pm. Guest professional photographer Terry Hewlett will be on hand throughout the day, guiding you on your way to taking that perfect shot. Adult £45. *

Cont.....

HIDCOTE MANOR GARDENS Cont.

April 19th – Herbal Creams and Ointments Workshop – 10 – 2pm. Get hands-on and make luxurious creams and ointments for the face and body with professional herbalist Sara Southgate. Adult £30. *

April 26th – Paint the Garden – 10 – 4pm Bring your own painting materials and create your masterpiece. Morning coffee and a tasty lunch will be served in our restaurant. Adult £25. *

May 10th - Potted Summer Colour – 10 – 2pm. Fed up with having to replant your containers once the colour has faded? Our experts will show you how to create a pot that will look good – no matter what the season. Adult £27.50. *

May 17th – Head Gardener’s Privale Evening Tour with Supper – 6.30pm. Join Head Gardener Glyn Jones as he reveals its hidden secrets. Then enjoy a delicious homemade supper in our Cedar Tree Restaurant. Adult £35 *

June 3rd – Tree Climbing - 10-4pm. For all the family, with expert instructors on hand to help you. Normal admission applies.

June 16th – The Hidcote Play – Pride and Prejudice – Gates open 6.30pm Bring along a picnic and enjoy a memorable open air performance. Adult £15 child £7.50. Family £40*

June 29th 30th and 1st July (Friday, Saturday and Sunday) – Picnic Weekend. Last admission 8pm. Make the most of warm summer evenings with a picnic for family and friends. Normal admission applies.

July 5th and 12th – Meditation for Beginners – 7pm – 8.30. Adult £25 for both classes*

July 7th – NGS Open Day – 10 – 5pm. Normal admission applies. (donated to NGS)

August 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th – Hidcote Holiday Club – 11am to 1pm. Become a true wild child by learning some basic outdoor skill and crafts. Normal admission applies.

August 18th – Overnight Wildlife Watch – 7pm. Find out which animals are at Hidcote after the sun sets. Pack a tent and bring a picnic, to stay overnight and explore the garden with our experts. Includes a hearty breakfast. Adult £20, child £10, Family £50.*

September 6th – Flower Arranging Workshop -10-2pm. Spend the morning discovering how you can make the most of seasonal flowers, creating your own spectacular arrangement. Afterwards enjoy a delicious lunch in our restaurant. Adult £30*

September 8th to 30th – Sculpture Trail -10-5pm. Normal admission applies.

NOTE: Booking essential for events marked *

PACKWOOD HOUSE – 01564-782024: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/packwood

The team at Packwood were delighted to find out that a private donor was giving £30,000 for the conservation of one of the tapestries, and the one considered to be in most urgent need of work was the ‘Verdure’, usually displayed in the Long Gallery. (Also called Garden tapestry, Verdure tapestries are decorated with a design based on plant forms)

The Verdure dates from the late 17th century, and was given to the National Trust in 1941 by Graham Baron Ash along with the house. At some time in its life the tapestry has been cut down the centre, and the two pieces sewn back together to make it smaller.

While the Verdure is away, visitors will be able to enjoy a ‘Year of Tapestries’ and can find out more about the tapestries in the Packwood collection, the stories they show, their construction and how the National Trust cares for them. There will also be workshops and demonstrations throughout the year including spinning, weaving, knitting and rag rug making. For details of events and opening times, please visit the website or telephone the number above.

MID-WARWICKSHIRE ASSOCIATION DIARY

| | |
|---|---|
| Wednesday 7 th March | Meeting – “Every Picture Tells a Story” |
| Tuesday 13 th March | Excursion I– The Holburne Museum, Bath |
| Tuesday 20 th March | Excursion II – The Holburne Museum, Bath |
| Wednesday 4 th April | Meeting – “The Age of Adornment” |
| Thursday 19 th April | Excursion – The National Arboretum and Lichfield |
| Wednesday 2 nd May | Meeting – “Sixty Years of Marvellous Modern Monarchy” |
| Thursday 17 th May | Asparagus Supper at the Fleece Inn, Bretforton, near Evesham. |
| Tuesday 26 th June | Excursion to The British Legion Poppy Factory and Richmond, Surrey |
| Tuesday 3 rd July | Excursion to Attingham Park and Sunnycroft, Shropshire |
| Tuesday 21 st August | Excursion to the Royal Crown Derby Factory and Kedleston Hall |
| 1st September - Renewal date for Annual Subscription to Mid-Warwickshire Association. | |
| Wednesday 19 th September | Excursion to London, St Pancras and Dickens Walk |
| Wednesday 3 rd October | First Meeting of our Winter Programme “What the Dickens?” Celebrating his 200 th Anniversary |
| Thursday 4 th October | 40 th Anniversary of Mid-Warwickshire Association- Celebratory Supper at the Orangery, Charlecote |
| Wednesday 7 th November | AGM followed by talk – “Octavia Hill and the National Trust” |
| Wednesday 28 th November | “All About Christmas” |

VISITS WE MADE IN 2011

SHIPTON HALL

Shipton Hall is a delightful house, still occupied by only the third family to have lived there since it was built around 1587, it was built to replace a much older black and white timbered house which was destroyed by fire earlier in the 16th century. The plasterwork on the ceilings is particularly interesting and the house displays the transition from black and white to stone and brick Georgian additions.



There are some medieval timbers and windows still to be seen.

STOKESAY CASTLE

Most of what we see today was built in the 1280s and 90s, and the gatehouse, which forms such a feature was built in 1640/41. The Great Hall of the Castle had large windows on both sides and were not glazed but were open to the elements as they were on the chilly, windy day in August when we went – impressive and very atmospheric – it gave us an insight into how hardy were the people living there in those far-off days!



We took another trip to the delightful ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM in Oxford, no guides, just the opportunity for people to browse and enjoy at their leisure. This was popular, there is a huge variety of beautifully set-out displays to cater for all interests.