

OAK LEAVES

Mid-Warwickshire Association of the National Trust



Spring 2018

in support of **National
Trust**

No. 91



©National Trust Images/Nadia Mackenzie

Detailed view of one of the ceramics cabinets and an armchair
in the Long Gallery at Upton House

**THE NATIONAL TRUST
MID-WARWICKSHIRE ASSOCIATION**

*A Voluntary Association of
National Trust Members*

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Sir Edmund Fairfax-Lucy

VICE PRESIDENT
Graham E. Cooper

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THE CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the Spring 2018 edition of Oak Leaves. I hope you are looking forward to actively supporting the Association in the coming months.

The Annual General Meeting in November was very well attended. Our President, Sir Edmund Fairfax Lucy, was in attendance. The existing Committee members were elected en bloc, with the only exception being our Treasurer, Marianne Pitts, who for personal reasons felt she would no longer be able to carry on in the role. This was a massive blow to the Association as Marianne has been an exceptional Treasurer, as well as performing a number of other vital Association duties. Following an appeal, one of our members, Hilary Fittes, volunteered to take on the position and is liaising with Marianne to ensure a successful transfer of duties.

Over the last year there have been several Committee members who have felt they could no longer fill a position on the Committee. Although we have been successful in replacing those leaving, it is vital that the Committee numbers are at a level which prevents all the work being done by only a few willing volunteers. If you would like to join the Committee and contribute towards the running of the Association, please contact me or the Secretary.

Shortly after the AGM the Annual Luncheon was held (which I was unfortunately unable to attend due to trying to evade sunstroke on one of the Greek Islands) which I understand was a great success.

You will see from this edition of Oak Leaves that we intend to visit a number of interesting venues during the summer months.

At the time of writing this article Marianne has organised a trip to the Ballet at Birmingham Hippodrome in February which, like last year, has proved to be extremely popular with all the seats being snapped up quickly.

This year's visits are to Emma Bridgewater Ceramics Factory and The Potteries Museum in April, Audley End in May (rearranged from last year), Shugborough Estate in June, Bletchley Park in July and Boughton House and Gardens in August. Please support as many as you can. Further details can be found in this issue and on the booking forms.

There are still a number of meetings at Kingsley School from now until our last meeting in May. I think you will agree that the Speakers we have had have been first class and no doubt this will continue.

We have settled in at Kingsley School and it is pleasing that our meetings continue to be so well supported.

Remember, further information can be found on our website - www.nationaltrustmidwarks.org.uk

I hope 2018 will be a happy and interesting one for you all and that the Association will be a contributor towards that outcome.

Norman Pratt

OBITUARIES

Graham Clive White

It came as rather a shock to us all when Graham White died in July 2017. He sustained a heart attack from which we thought he would recover, so it was a real jolt when we heard that he had died.

Graham joined the Committee when he became Excursions Secretary in 1999 and his organised trips were favourably anticipated since they were always adventurous and meticulously organised. In addition to many days out, he arranged residential holidays away, including on the Continent. He was unfailingly courteous and obliging and gave attention to details which made the events so successful. With the assistance of his wife, Marian, he undertook all the necessary administrative work. It was a real loss to us when he vacated the post in 2012 and even now, it has not been possible to find someone dedicated enough to replace him as Excursions Secretary.

Graham taught French and was the first male teacher at Kingsley School, where, co-incidentally, we now hold our monthly meetings.

Roy Nabbs

At about the same time, we learned of the death of Roy Nabbs, who had served on the Committee from 2009 to 2013. Although he did not hold an official position, he contributed significantly to the running of the Association with practical suggestions and advice. His various commitments and health problems took him away from the area from time to time but we were always glad to have his contributions to discussions when he returned.

It was thanks to Roy that we recruited Gerry and Nan Rooney who looked after our Programme arrangements until recently.



REPORTS FROM RECENT EXCURSIONS

Grand Union Canal Visit, July 2017



Image: © David Dixon

A group of members met at the Saltisford Arm of the Grand Union Canal on the edge of Warwick, along the Birmingham Road. For many people this was their first visit.

We were greeted by Mr. Alan Lorentzen, a leading trustee of the Saltisford Canal Trust Limited, who related the history of canals, how they reached their zenith and were then 'overtaken' by the railways and fell into disrepair before their restoration in recent times, providing the popular facilities now available. When canals were first constructed, the transport of goods, including fragile items such as pottery, was slow but reliable, when the alternative was by cart or packhorse in small quantities, risking damage to the goods.

A truly welcome English tea was provided, enjoyed outside since the weather was right for it, followed by the second stage of the interesting talk. This time the talk was about the restoration of the Canal Arm, which was originally the Warwick Terminus of the Warwick and Birmingham Canal. The Trust was set up some 30 years ago when the canal was extremely overgrown. Since then the premises have been developed and improved. Now, the grounds are well maintained and are popular with the narrow-boat fraternity, where a shop and chandler provides for their needs.

The party was then free to explore the grounds which contain interesting sculptures and other facilities.

Graham Cooper

Trip to Hughenden, August 2017



Image: National Trust

A party of members travelled by coach to Hughenden Manor in Buckinghamshire, the home of Benjamin Disraeli, who, overcoming many challenges, served twice as Prime Minister. A few days before the visit, news had come though that there was a problem with the property's water supply and this threatened to cast a cloud over the visit, but on the previous evening word came through that the problem had been resolved and arrangements could proceed as planned. Our party was greeted with as much tea or coffee as required, together with large portions of National Trust shortbread. There followed an interesting talk on Disraeli, who became Lord Beaconsfield. It was then left for us to tour the house and to take lunch.

Hughenden is like a shrine to the memory of the great man, but it also had another claim to fame. During the Second World War the property was secretly utilised for the production of maps used by the RAF and allies in the bombing of the Nazis.

Hughenden has extensive grounds set in picturesque countryside with well-kept gardens. It has a narrow trailing drive from the main road, passing the local church where Lord Beaconsfield is buried and which was visited by Queen Victoria shortly afterwards. The narrow drive was adequate for horse-drawn vehicles and private cars, but proved a real challenge for the very capable driver of our ultra-modern 53-seater coach.

Everyone seemed to agree that the visit had been very worthwhile, rewarding and enjoyable and we learned a little more about British history, including that characters from 'Alice in Wonderland' were modelled on Disraeli and Gladstone.

Graham Cooper

REPORTS FROM LOCAL PROPERTIES

Charlecote Park



In September we had the pleasure of welcoming our new General Manager Kellie Scott, who brings with her a wealth of experience and knowledge from working at, and caring for, other National Trust properties including Attingham and Stowe. We are excited to see what the future brings with Kellie helping us to keep Charlecote for ever, for everyone!



Our team of staff and volunteers have been busy over the winter with tree surveys to check the health of some of our ancient trees. Visitors may have noticed that our great cedar trees over by the Orangery are currently roped off. This is to help the soil around the roots which has become compacted through many years of use. The compaction restricts the supply of oxygen and nutrients to the trees, so our team will be carefully monitoring the progress and aiding in the conservation of these ancient giants.

The autumn also saw us releasing a rescued hedgehog, who goes by the name of Stampy, into the spinney, with our gardens team fashioning a new home for him from spare parts of the cleft oak panel fencing that lines the park's perimeter.

The parkland will be open at 9am from the beginning of January, which will give visitors the chance to enjoy the parkland for longer throughout the year. The house itself was closed in January for its annual deep clean, which also allowed the team to monitor the condition of items in the collection. The team inspect for insect and light damage and assess mould levels which can be a real problem at Charlecote due to our riverside location.

Visitors with four legged friends can blow away the cobwebs with our dog walking loyalty scheme this winter, which runs until 28th February. Fill up the paw print stamps on the card and receive a free hot drink!

After the purchase of an eight-acre parcel of land opposite the property, planning and preparation work has been taking place to move the Charlecote Park Visitor Infrastructure Project forward. This aims to restore the original tree lined avenue by the car park which was originally enjoyed for 400 years but has been missing for nearly half a century. The project will also allow us to safeguard the parklands and outbuildings and improve facilities for visitors over the next 5 years. We will keep you posted on its progress as it unfolds or pop over to the website for updates www.nationaltrust.org.uk/charlecote-park

Coughton Court

Coughton has been home to the Throckmorton family for 600 years. Facing persecution for their Catholic faith, they were willing to risk everything - involving themselves in political intrigue and the infamous Gunpowder Plot. Now, the wealth of stories and characters still fill this home, where clues to its turbulent history can be found amongst the fresh flowers and family portraits. Explore these stories through a range of interpretation and welcome talks.



In 2012 Coughton began a conservation project which would ensure the safety of the building for years to come. This has included the re-wiring of every room, the installation of a

new fire alarm and some bits of plumbing to ensure that the house meets industry standards. The work we started in 2012 is nearly complete and when it's finished, we will have spent over £1 million protecting the house, collections and the people that live, work, volunteer and visit here.

The final phase of the project, that will be completed in March 2018, is taking place in the North Wing of the house, which is where the resident historic family, the Throckmortons, live. It is not open to the public and so when you've visited Coughton over the past year you may not have seen many signs that our contractors are on site, working hard – but they are!

2018 at Coughton sees us exploring women's work, duty and political agency during the First World War. A hundred years since the end of the war and since partial women's suffrage was granted by the 1918 Reform Act, here at Coughton we are sharing the stories of local women, both here at the Court and in the wider Coughton and Sambourne area.



The Coughton community was a hive of activity throughout the war years, as women led the local effort to support soldiers on the Western Front in a variety of ways, whilst raising their families and taking on work traditionally carried out by men. We're following the stories of a group of local women from different social classes, asking questions about what women were able to do, the relationship between women's war work and suffrage and to what extent the 1918 Act affected women's power.

We have teamed up with Cadbury again this year for a fun filled event with chocolate treats, take home activities and a trail around the grounds for everyone to enjoy. Our Cadbury Easter Hunts will be taking place from Saturday 31st March – Monday 2nd April, 11am - 4pm and it's a great opportunity to get all the family together for an egg hunt around the grounds.

Our increasingly popular Jigsaw Festival will be returning between Wednesday 25th April and Sunday 29th April, 11am - 5pm. Set against the beautiful backdrop of Coughton, hundreds of jigsaws, in a variety of themes and sizes, will be available for visitors to buy in a constantly changing display. If you have any jigsaws taking up precious space in your cupboards and you'd like to play a vital part in conserving this beautiful house and its contents for future generations, we'd love to take them off your hands!

Baddesley Clinton

Baddesley's story is one of gentle evolution, from medieval farmstead to modest Georgian status symbol and Victorian retreat. Much of the house you see today was built by Henry Ferrers in the late 1500s. Since then the relatively impoverished state of the family ensured much of the house and garden remained untouched by development and its surrounding parkland kept the modern world at bay.

Yet this quiet house is full of stories and over the course of its 500-year history has provided refuge for those seeking to escape the outside world. This year find out about some of Baddesley's strong female characters and their intriguing stories.



The magic of the moat, the stories of priest hunters and the freedom of the surrounding

countryside means there's something for everyone to enjoy at Baddesley. Out on the estate, children have the freedom to roam, be adventurous, and get messy and creative on our new natural play trail inspired by the animals that live in the Warwickshire countryside. Follow the animal sculptures, made by local carver Graham Jones, over to the woodland for an animal adventure.

Don't forget to join us for seasonal activities, with outdoor trails and traditional games every school holiday, or you can explore and find your own fun. Our Cadbury Easter Hunts will be taking place from Friday 30th March – Monday 2nd April and it's a great opportunity to get all the family together for an egg hunt around the grounds. This Easter weekend you will only be able to visit us if you have pre-booked a ticket. This will enable us to regulate numbers, ensure everyone has an enjoyable visit.

Packwood

This year, come and explore the history of Packwood and find out how successive owners and custodians have sought to enhance its unique spirit. Find out about the man who transformed Packwood into what you see today and how he restored the original Tudor farmhouse, saving furniture, panelling, floors and fireplaces from other country houses at risk of demolition.



Graham Baron Ash created his own private world at Packwood, enveloping himself in the warmth of nostalgia and creating a sepia tinted world all of his own. In this dream-like world he threw great parties for the county and Packwood House became a stage where he could live out his primly perfect version of country house hospitality.

Packwood's contemporary mingled style garden, with herbaceous borders, wildflower meadows and beautiful orchard is the perfect place to watch the seasons change. Search for snowdrops, daffodils and bluebells in spring and enjoy an array of heady scented roses and towering alliums in summer.

Grab those wellies or trusty anorak, binoculars and cameras and head out into the great outdoors to discover what wildlife can be found chirping in the hedgerows, soaring overhead or lurking under logs on one of our walks. There is a huge amount of wildlife waiting to be discovered from tree creepers to nuthatches, red wings to jack daws and we've even spotted (and heard) a greater spotted woodpecker.

Walk out into the landscape this year and discover the Prospect Room, a space between inside and outside that explores the dynamic between house and garden. Filtering light and sound the installation plays with our senses, presenting new ways of looking at Packwood's ever-changing scenery. Taking design and material cues from details found in the house and gardens, the Prospect Room will remind us of the haven that Graham Baron Ash was seeking to create at Packwood.



Our Cadbury Easter Hunts will be taking place from Friday 30th March – Monday 2nd April and it's a great opportunity to get all the family together for an egg hunt around the grounds. This Easter weekend you will only be able to visit us if you have pre-booked a ticket. This will enable us to regulate numbers, ensure everyone has an enjoyable visit and help us to look after Packwood.

EXCURSIONS 2018

Bookings for this year's excursions will be dealt with approximately 3 weeks after the distribution of this newsletter and applications will be acknowledged from this date. Please contact the organiser if you do not hear anything soon after to check that they have received your application. 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 any properties which do not belong to the National Trust. **Please ensure you bring your National Trust membership card along for entry to National Trust properties.**

If you need to cancel your booking for any reason, we request that you try to find someone else to take your place first. If there is a waiting list for the excursion, the organisers may be able to assist, although this is not guaranteed. Please note: in instances where tickets have been ordered and paid for well in advance, a refund may not be possible.

The names and contact details of the volunteer organisers can be found on each booking form. **Please take a note of the organiser's contact details for each trip you book should you need to contact them at a later date.**

Excursion to Emma Bridgewater Ceramics Factory and The Potteries Museum

Tuesday 17th April 2018, leaving at 08.30

Cost: £27 per person

Organiser: Marianne Pitts

Please use Booking Form A



Image: Emma Bridgewater

Emma Bridgewater likes to make things that make everyday life a little bit nicer – things that are beautiful to look at but also a pleasure to use, like a lovely mug that cheers you up with your first cup of tea in the morning, or a bowl with a playful message that makes you smile. All their pottery is made from cream-coloured earthenware – a traditional Staffordshire product, made in their factory in Stoke-on-Trent, home of British pottery. Most of the production work is still done by hand and all the pieces are individually hand-decorated, so every one is very slightly different – and their spongeware is signed by the person who painted it. Numbers for the tour are limited to 30, so only 30 can come.

The Potteries Museum is internationally famous for its large collection of Staffordshire and salt-glazed stonewares. The 18th and 19th centuries are represented by collections of the major Staffordshire factories such as Wedgwood, Spode, Minton and masterpieces from Doulton, Bernard Moore, Ruskin, Pilkington and Bullers. In addition, there are significant individual collections: the Elizabeth Marianne Wood Collection of 18th and 19th century figures and the Pugh Collection of Victorian Staffordshire portrait figures. There is also a collection of impressionist paintings and part of the Staffordshire Hoard – plenty to see.

The cost is **£27** per person and includes tea, coffee and biscuits on arrival at Emma Bridgewater, followed by a factory tour. Lunch is available to buy at The Potteries Museum.

The coach will leave Tesco's car park at 08.30 or The Spa Centre at 08.40, arriving at the Emma Bridgewater Ceramics Factory at around 11.00. We will depart from The Potteries Museum at 16.00, arriving home at approximately 18.00.

<http://emmabridgewaterfactory.co.uk/>

<http://www.stokemuseums.org.uk/>

Excursion to Audley End House and Gardens

Thursday 10th May 2018, leaving at 08.30

Cost: £35 per person (£20 per person if English Heritage member)

Organiser: Norman Pratt

Please use Booking Form B



Image: English Heritage

The history of Audley House dates back to the early 17th century when Thomas Howard, the 1st Earl of Suffolk, took an earlier house on the site of Walden Abbey owned by his grandfather and rebuilt it on the scale of a royal palace. Over the next 50 or so years many changes took place to the property and the owners and in 1667 it was bought by Charles II for £50,000 due to its proximity to the Newmarket races.

Then followed more changes to both the house and its owners until 1762, when it was inherited by Sir John Griffin. Griffin, again added to the House and at the same time Lancelot 'Capability' Brown began to remodel the grounds. The last major works to the house took place in 1820 when the third Lord Braybrooke's aim was to restore its Jacobean character.

In more recent times the House was requisitioned in 1941 to be the Polish Section of the Strategic Operations Executive. It was bought for the Nation in 1948 and English Heritage are now responsible for its conservation.

This should be an extremely rewarding trip, not only to visit such an historic property, but the gardens should be at their best at this time of year.

The cost is **£35** per person, to include the entrance fee, or **£20** for English Heritage members. There are two cafes on site for tea, coffee and lunch.

The coach will leave Tesco's car park at 08.30 or The Spa Centre at 08.40, arriving at Audley House around 11.30. We will depart at 16.00, arriving home at approximately 18.30. There will be a comfort stop during both journeys and the coach has toilet facilities.

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/audley-end-house-and-gardens/>

Excursion to Shugborough Estate
Tuesday 12th June 2018, leaving at 09.30
Cost: £16 per person for National Trust Members
Organiser: Norman Pratt
Please use Booking Form C



Image: National Trust

The Litchfield Apartments of Patrick Litchfield, 5th Earl and fashion photographer, are available to visit. Tours are available based on 10 tickets per half hour starting at 11.00. **If you wish to visit the Apartments please indicate on the booking form.**

The Mansion Tea Rooms provide lunches and other refreshments and the Park Farm Cafe will provide sandwiches etc. for those wishing to take refreshments on their walk.

The cost to National Trust members is **£16** per person. **Non-members of the National Trust and members who have left their card at home will have to pay for admission on arrival** (currently £12). There is a free shuttle service to the Visitors Centre, Park Farm and the Walled Gardens and mobility scooters are available on a first come, first served basis. Anyone with special requirements should let the Organiser know in advance.

The coach will leave Tesco's car park at 09.30 or The Spa Centre at 09.40, arriving at Shugborough around 11.15. We will depart at 16.00, arriving home at approximately 17.30.

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/shugborough-estate>

Excursion to Bletchley Park
Saturday 7th July 2018, leaving at 09.30
Cost: £33 per person
Organiser: Marianne Pitts
Please use Booking Form D

Bletchley Park is a place of exceptional historical importance and remains highly relevant to our lives as the home of British codebreaking and a birthplace of modern information technology. It played a major role in World War Two, producing secret intelligence which had a direct and profound influence on the outcome of the conflict and was kept secret for decades.

Bletchley Park has featured regularly in film and television: the BBC's Antiques Roadshow to Operation Mincemeat; the Timewatch Special 'Codebreakers:



Image: © shaunarmstrong/mubsta.com

Bletchley Park's 'Lost Heroes' and the blockbuster film 'The Imitation Game', all filmed on location. The National Radio Museum is there and free, but the National Computing Museum charges an extra £7.50 (£5 conc.).

The cost is **£33** per person. This includes the admission charge of £14.50 which gives you entry to all the premises and a free guided tour of the site should you wish to take it. Food is available in the Visitors' Centre and Hut 4 (not included in the excursion price).

The coach will leave Tesco's car park at 09.30 or The Spa Centre at 09.40, arriving at Bletchley Park around 11.30. There will not be any breaks on the way. We will depart at 16.00, arriving home at approximately 17.30.

<https://bletchleypark.org.uk/>

Excursion to Boughton House and Gardens

Saturday 18th August 2018, leaving at 08.40

Cost: £42.50 per person

Organisers: Beryl Broadbent and Carol Andrews

Please use Booking Form E



Image: Boughton House

Boughton House is situated three miles north of Kettering in the County of Northamptonshire. The house is the home of the Duke of Buccleuch and was inspired by drawings of the Palace of Versailles. In fact, it has earned the title of the English Versailles and Universal film studios used Boughton in their adaptation of *Les Misérables*.

The grounds are extensive with many different areas to view, so there is plenty for us all to enjoy. There are lakes, waterways and also 300-year-old woodlands.

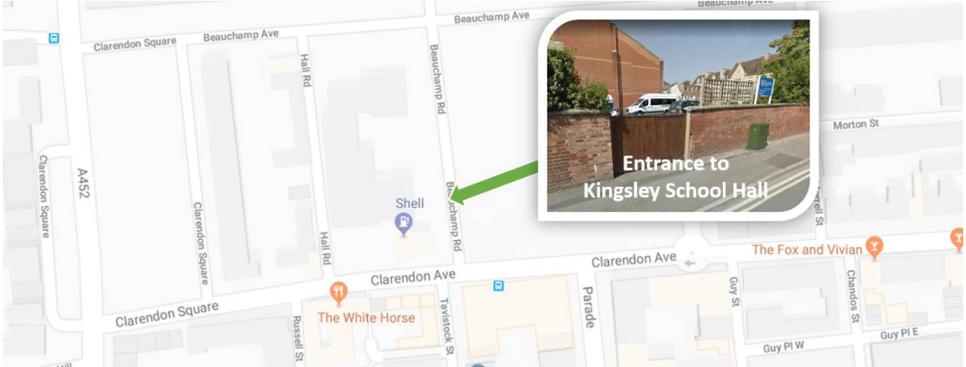
The cost is **£42.50** per person and includes coffee, tea and homemade biscuits on arrival, a one hour tour of the house, followed by a sandwich buffet with various fillings, plus one serving of homemade soup, cake or homemade desserts. The price also includes tips. This trip will be popular, so early booking is advised.

The coach will leave Tesco's car park at 08.40 or The Spa Centre at 08.50, arriving at Boughton around 10.30. We will depart at 16.30, arriving home at approximately 18.00.

<http://www.boughtonhouse.co.uk/>

EVENING MEETINGS 2018

Our meetings are held on Monday evenings, normally the first Monday of the month, at the Kingsley School Hall on Beauchamp Road, starting at 7.30pm.



Guests are welcome. The admission price for non-members of the Association is £3.

5th March 2018

Mike Leach

Wildlife – In the Blink of an Eye

Michael's photographs capture high-speed action in a way that is beyond the capabilities of human perception. All of the images in this talk encompass a time-span of less than 1/500th of a second and they reveal aspects of animals' lives that are invisible without the use of this highly specialised technology

9th April 2018

Heidi Meyer

Lord Leycester Hospital

Heidi Meyer, 33rd Master of the Lord Leycester Hospital, will give a colourful and chronological account of the 700 year history of this icon of Warwick. From medieval Guilds and the centre of civic and philanthropic life, to its life as a refuge for wounded soldiers of the Elizabethan Age, these extraordinary medieval buildings are an unbroken legacy from the middle ages.

(Please note, this replaces the advertised talk by Alan Rogers on Warwickshire Policing)

14th May 2018

David Harrison

Isambard Kingdom Brunel

Isambard Kingdom Brunel was an engineer of genius, a fountain of original ideas and nervous energy. He was a born actor and a courageous leader, but also a man who was obstinate, unjust, dictatorial and in the end, paranoid. David Harrison's well illustrated talk tells us of his greatest achievements.





The National Trust Mid-Warwickshire Association website

The current Programme of Events, latest and past newsletters, our Constitution and useful links to other local places of historical interest can all be found out the Mid-Warwickshire Association website - <http://www.nationaltrustmidwarks.org.uk>. Please do go and have a look. If there is anything you would like to see on the website that you think might be useful, please let us know by emailing ntmidwarks@gmail.com



The National Trust Mid-Warwickshire Association Facebook page

We now have a Facebook page which will be used to list all our upcoming events. The page can be found at the following address: <https://www.facebook.com/ntmidwarks/>. Please give us a Like when you visit!



Digital Newsletter Option

A digital version of the newsletter is now available in full colour. If you would prefer to receive your newsletter by email in future, please email us at ntmidwarks@gmail.com and we will get this set up for you.



Image: National Trust

Detail of some of the plasterwork due to undergo restoration following our recent donation to Farnborough Hall.