

Chelmsford & District NT Supporter Group



in support of **National
Trust**

No 90
Spring 2020

Newsletter

Chairman's Message

I need to begin by thanking everyone who worked so hard to make our stall in the Cathedral Market such a success. Olive and Thelma knitted all year to raise £824 and even at the end of the day there were folk arriving to buy the chorister mice, when we'd sold out by coffee time! Laurie's preserves proved as popular as ever and the plants and Bric-a Brac all swelled the end result to a marvellous £1188.60. This is our main money-raising event for the NT, so if you supported it thank you so much. 2020 seems to be galloping along at a pace! Paul has our outings planned, and finds that some properties no longer welcome coaches at the weekends, hence some will now be mid-week which will make parking in Coval Lane difficult and we'll all have to think of ways round that!

"Thank You" letters from the properties we have supported through the year will again be available at the AGM and the amounts will appear in our accounts.

The Committee have been working on new ways to publicize our Supporters Group as we still find folk who say "I've been a NT member for years but didn't know Chelmsford had a group." There are now notices about our events on most of the Boards around the City but if any of you could take one to a venue you know of please ask for one from our President, David.

Most of our meetings have been well attended and we again ask that if you know of a speaker you have enjoyed please let us know; some of next year's speakers have been recommended by our members. I remember when Janet Chaplin said that our group reminded her of a jigsaw puzzle. The corners were the officers, edge bits were the committee and regular helpers, but to get the full picture we need to have the "wiggly bits" and that is all of you! So we really do need your support at meetings, outings and events to make sure our 2020 picture is complete.

Pat Tate is still awaiting your proposal for Chairman to arrive; her phone number and address are on your Membership Card.

It only remains for me to thank the Committee who work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure our group functions seamlessly and not forgetting Keith Otter our webmaster.. They (like all of you) are a great bunch and I am very grateful.

Best wishes
Jackie

Reports on Evening Lectures to date

September

The new season of evening talks got off to a splendid start on 18th September when Jackie Arnot, Chairman, welcomed Lord Petre, head of our local titled family, who would tell us of his family history. Lord Petre concentrated on the eighteenth century, which covered the lives of the seventh, eighth and ninth Lord Petre, who all lived at Thorndon Hall.

The seventh Lord inherited the title at the age of seventeen, the fourth and only surviving son of his father. He married a wealthy heiress from Lancashire, tragically dying only fifteen months later but, happily, leaving an infant son to become the eighth Lord. From an early age the eighth Lord had a passion for botany and transformed the grounds of Thorndon Hall. He set up greenhouses and propagation frames and collected rare plants. Sadly, he died at twenty-nine, leaving a five year old son.

By the time the ninth Lord reached twenty-one Thorndon Hall and its grounds had become very run down and neglected and he decided to pull the old Hall down and replace it with the building we know today. Nothing remains of his father's extensive work in the gardens.

October

On 16th October members welcomed Tamsin Wimhurst, a Social History Curator from Cambridge Museum, for a talk on the David Parr House. This outwardly unremarkably mid-Victorian terrace house in Cambridge hides a treasure-trove of artistic skill.

David Parr worked for a very prestigious firm of interior decorators, F. Leach, in Cambridge, and was familiar with the designs produced by William Morris and other exponents of the Arts and Crafts Movement. An extremely talented and skilled workman, David Parr spent 40 years painstakingly painting the interior of his home with copies of their designs. His granddaughter, the last resident of the house, had no idea of its significance, but kept everything as it was out of deference to her grandparents

November

On 6th November members enjoyed an interesting and informative evening with a talk by Chris Farndell on the two halves of his career in photography.

Chris explained he was a serving police officer for thirty years, for the last ten years of which he worked as a scene of crime photographer. Members were amazed to see pictures of the already very old-fashioned cameras he used, but he explained that the advantage was they produced large prints, hence needing a minimum of enlargement. It was surprising to hear how late the police changed to colour photography, this was because of concerns that questions over colour fidelity could be raised in court.

After retiring from the police, Chris became a tutor at a college, teaching photography as Art. The students would begin with black and white photography, and were stunned when shown how a photo is developed from a negative.

December

At the final meeting of the year, held on 11th December, members enjoyed something a little different; a light-hearted talk, and seasonal refreshments.

The Speaker, Linda Scoles, amusingly described how she broke every one of the six New Year Resolutions she had made at the Millennium. Both Americans, Linda and her husband had settled in England after her husband's retirement from the US Airforce. Some of her anecdotes related to their life in America, others to their later years in the small Suffolk village where Linda, sadly now a widow, still lives. Linda ended her talk by dramatically tearing up the scroll on which she had written her Resolutions and hurling the pieces in the air.

January

The first meeting of 2020 was held on 8th January, when members enjoyed a talk by David Simmonds, the Group's President. David has long been a lover of the works of Thomas Hardy and had come to realise a connection between the aims and objectives of the National Trust, with the passionate concern for the countryside and the rural way of life, that Hardy shows in many of his novels.

Although Hardy was never a member of the National Trust, which was not a large or very well-known organisation in his lifetime, the Trust now owns both his birthplace and the house where he died. In his beautifully illustrated and painstakingly researched presentation, David took members on a virtual tour of Trust properties which are clearly related to scenes in Hardy's novels and poems, or where ancient skills like hedging and ditching, and coppicing, are still practised.

Still to Come

**AGENDA for the 2019/20 AGM
on Wednesday 26th February 2020 at
7:45pm**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last meeting
3. Matters arising
4. Chairman's report
5. Treasurer's report
6. Centre funding of NT projects
7. Amendment of the Constitution*
8. Election of Chairman
9. Election of President
10. Election of Committee
11. Election of Honorary Examiner of Accounts
12. AOB

AGENDA Continued...

All communication concerning the AGM to the Chairman Jackie Arnot please. Tel:01245 699885

Note * From time to time the Committee reviews the Constitution and has discovered the post of President is not clearly identified in the Constitution and therefore proposes an amendment to the Constitution at the forthcoming AGM .

Under the heading:

G THE COMMITTEE add item 9

'A President shall be nominated by the Committee for a period of three years and shall be eligible for re-election.'

**WEDNESDAY 1st APRIL 2020
EVENING MEETING**

**A talk on 'Estbury Manor' by
Barbara Elliot.**

'Tudor Mansion saved by the NT'

Barbara gives a vivid account of this lesser known property in the middle of a housing estate.

**Following the AGM on 26th
February we have Paul
Forecast the Regional
Director giving us an
'Update on the National
Trust'**

Actions Speak Louder Than Words

After checking what the words really mean.

Alison Muirhead frowned uneasily. The woman searching the shelves of the second-hand book shop at Tanfield Manor kept pausing to stare at her in a most disconcerting manner. Suddenly the woman left her browsing and marched over to the counter.

"Don't I know you from somewhere?" she demanded.

"Sorry, I don't know you" replied Alison shortly. The woman suddenly clapped a hand to her head.

"Got it! You're Alison Muirhead, who writes that amusing Diary of a Non-Domestic Goddess column in Modern Woman's Journal".

"Why yes, you're right, but how.....?"

"I recognised you from the photo at the top of your page in the magazine. What an amazing stroke of luck meeting you. I'm on a committee which is helping to organise a week long book festival. We would really like to have a writer give a talk at our mid-week event, do you think you could help?"

"Well, yes, I'd be pleased to."

"That's splendid, I'll let our chairman know I've met you." The woman took her mobile phone from her handbag and hurried out of the shop.

Viv emerged from the stock room, carrying a pile of books, which she put down on a stool in front of a nearby bookcase. She took the topmost volume off the pile and laid it on the counter.

"Look what someone's donated, they're extremely....."

"You see that woman outside the shop, talking on her mobile phone? Well, she's on a committee that's helping to organise a book festival and she's asked me to give a talk at one of their events."

Viv's eyes widened.

"Will you do it?" she asked, looking very impressed.

"Oh yes, I think it will be really interesting."

The woman put away her phone and came back into the shop.

"Our chairman was thrilled to hear I had met you, we do hope you can persuade him."

"Persuade who? To do what?"

"The reverend Gareth Evans. You must know him, as you both write for Modern Women's Journal. It's always his page I turn to first, when I open my copy of the magazine. I find his message so encouraging, he writes with such wisdom and insight, plus just the right

touch of humour. If you could persuade him to give us a talk it would be a real feather in our cap.

“Oh, look what you’ve got on the counter, an Elizabeth David cookery book. I’ve been trying to get one for ages, they’re extremely rare. How much do you want for it?”

Alison picked up the book, dropped it into a carrier bag and thrust the bag into Viv’s hands.

“Sorry, this lady has just bought it.”

By Shirley Deering

Report on the NT outing to Wakehurst Place on Saturday 12th October

by Al Arnot

This was a two-coach outing, depending on the participants' choices - either the single visit to the National Trust venue of Wakehurst Place for the whole day or going on after lunch to Quebec House, former home of General Wolfe.

Either way it was a horrible day and stayed that way until the later part of our return journey. Both coaches drove straight to Wakehurst Place in West Sussex using the M25 and A22 before turning off down the side roads. On arrival, we were checked in and given maps of the grounds.

The property had two restaurants, the first being by the reception, so we fortified ourselves with coffee before setting off to explore. Wakehurst Place is run in conjunction with Kew Gardens and looks after a massive seed bank. It was housed under a series of glass domes with a large display area of explanations, illustrations and photographs. Being a Saturday, there was nobody working in the glass-fronted laboratories but we were able to view the state-of-the-art equipment they used.



Most of the party then walked back up to the second restaurant adjoining the main building for an early lunch. Some of us included a look into the house during the visit but it was sparsely furnished and didn't seem to contain much of interest. By now, Paul's coach had moved on to visit Quebec House, so those that opted to stay on had the place to themselves. There was some sort of public event under way at the bottom of the main lawn, with stalls, play areas and a live band but most chose to leave them to it and wander around the extensive grounds.

On a lovely warm, sunny day, this would have been an exhilarating experience but the awful weather rather took the edge off it (although a few brave souls managed to walk all round the perimeter of the grounds), so much so that Jackie sent a message round to report to the coach half an hour earlier than the set time as most people had had enough by then. This was duly done and we set off home without any delays. A successful visit: pity about the weather!

Quebec House can only take one coach so Paul took a risk and ordered two coaches and set up the outing slips with two options. It paid off – as 50 opted for Quebec House. The party split roughly into three with some visiting the House, some visiting the stable block and



enjoyed tea/coffee in a cosy room, another group upstairs watched a video. There was a small splinter group that visited the town of Westerham. Quebec House is well worth a visit and contains artefacts belonging to Major General Wolfe. His success at the battle near Quebec was mainly due to detailed planning and ended the French rule of Canada. He died at the end of the battle aged 32, knowing he was victorious.

Bust of Major General Wolfe picture taken at Beningbrough Hall in Yorkshire on our NT Holiday.

PRESIDENT'S EVENT

Bat Walk at Hatfield Forest

Some of you will remember that two summers ago, Tina Carter, the Learning Officer at Hatfield Forest led a walk for members of the Group to see and hear bats in the Forest. She demonstrated the bat detectors that had been bought, using a donation from the Group. The evening was such a success that I am arranging a similar event this year, probably on the evening of **Wednesday 12th August**. Please let me know if you are interested in attending. I will be at forthcoming meetings and can also be contacted on tel 01245-250198 or djsimmonds@aol.com. This would be a self-drive outing.

Personalised Visit to the Forest

As many of you will know, I am a volunteer at Hatfield Forest, usually on a Thursday. If you are coming over to the Forest and would like me to show you more of its history, trees, birds and animals then please contact me beforehand, as given above. I would be delighted to see you!

David Simmonds

Summer Outings 2020

Conditions: Please read the following conditions carefully.

Booking Lists will open on a first-come, first-served basis after the posting of this newsletter.

Please send the following to Paul Chaplin, 11 Mace Walk, Chelmsford, CM1 2GE:

- a stamped addressed envelope for **each** outing
- Complete and return the form on the last page
- a cheque payable to 'Chelmsford & District National Trust' to cover the **deposit of £5.00 per person for each outing (One cheque for all outings please)**

At the time of going to press we have not been on all the recce's. Prices may change slightly if we spot an opportunity we think you shouldn't miss! Prices quoted are for a senior citizen rate including hire of coach, drivers' tip, entrance fee(s) and at this stage, the deposit.

To check your place, lists will be available at the AGM and the April meeting, or telephone 01245 260113.

Refunds of deposits will normally be made if we are notified of a cancellation in time to decide whether one or two coaches are required, or if we cannot offer you a place. For later cancellations, deposits will be refunded only if we can fill the place. Refunds of pre-paid tickets can only be made if we are able to fill the place. All refunds will be paid **at the end of the season** in order to minimise the number of transactions needed. **Normally £5.00 or less will not be refunded.** Booking slips will be sent out about three to four weeks before the date of the outing, a viable coach-load at a time. Everyone else will be on the Reserve List and will be contacted in turn, either to be offered a place or be informed that there will not be room.

Remember:

- To put the dates in your diary, especially the time of departure
- To put the details in a safe place
- That the wearing of seat belts is now compulsory in this country
- Some locations have uneven surfaces
- It is better to wear 'sensible' shoes for comfort and to avoid damaging floors
- Don't be afraid to ask about use of lifts and wheelchairs/buggies

We undertake only to make arrangements for the visits – and we cannot take responsibility for any mishap or loss connected with them. If you wish to see the cover provided by the National Trust's insurance policies, the schedule is available at evening meetings. **Please note: Non NT members are not covered by the Trust's insurance policy and are responsible for their own insurance cover.** All trips will be on luxury coaches, usually with a toilet on board.



We hope you enjoy this year's selection.

Saturday 16th May

Snowhill Manor (NT) is a typical Cotswold manor house, made of local stone. The main part of the house dates from the 16th century, and is now a Grade II listed building. It was purchased by Charles Paget Wade in 1919, who was an architect, artist-craftsman, poet, collector and heir to the family fortune. His motto was "let nothing perish", the result being a collection of 22,000 objects, an eclectic mix that reflected his interest in craftsmanship. He lived in The Priest's House in the garden, which is said to be haunted, while the manor house was used to display his collections, each room having a name and a theme. It is a veritable treasure-trove of curiosities, which includes Samurai armour, musical instruments, clocks, toys and bicycles.

The garden was laid out by Wade in collaboration with M.H. Baillie Scott between 1920 and 1923. The elaborate layout resembles a series of outside rooms as an extension of the house. There are terraces and ponds, formal beds and an ancient dovecote, a model village, a kitchen garden and an orchard.

Guide price: £21.00

Thursday 18th June

Boughton House is famed for its beauty and its collections. There is a medieval core, but its exterior evokes an opulent French chateau, causing it to be termed the English Versailles. The magnificent collections can be explained by the ducal family surname Montagu-Douglas-Scott,

which reflects the union of these three great families through their estates and marriages. The contents of the house are a comprehensive collection of furniture, tapestries, porcelain, carpets and many notable paintings. The old servant's hall now houses one of the finest privately held armouries in the country.

The gardens were originally designed to impress the eye, and there were stunning vistas, tree-lined avenues and bold water features. However, for more than 200 years the huge formal gardens were almost lost. Today the avenues of trees have been replanted and a series of waterways, lakes and reflecting pools have been created. There is a walled garden containing herbaceous borders and flower beds, a rose garden and an ancient lily pond.

Guide Price: £35.00

Thursday 16th July

Doddington Hall, designed by Robert Smythson, one of England's foremost Elizabethan architects, was started in 1595 and completed in 1600. It was built for Thomas Tailor, a lawyer, the recorder to the Bishop of Lincoln. It has never been sold, and has passed down through many generations of the family. The result, after 400 years of continuous occupation, is a house full of fascinating collections of furniture, weaponry, paintings, ceramics, textiles, household objects, porcelain, a wealth of amusing stories, and is still a much-loved family home.

The gardens are just as spectacular as the Hall itself. Remaining faithful to the original layout, mellow walls provide the framework for the formal East and West gardens. The East front garden has patterned box hedging and topiary. The West garden is a riot of colour from spring to autumn, the wide borders being filled with botanical surprises, and box-edged parterres. Beyond these there are the lovingly restored Wild gardens, full of scented flowers and shrubs throughout the seasons. The Kitchen garden was restored in 2007 and now provides fruit and vegetables for the restaurant and Farm Shop.

Guide Price: £34.00

Wednesday 19th August

The Many Queens of England. This is a day in London in the company of a Blue Badge (BB) guide, the highlight of the day being a tour of Clarence House. The BB guide will meet us for coffee at 10.30am before we set off on a coach tour, hearing stories, and visiting areas connected with seven Queens, and the many mistresses of England. There will then be a stop for lunch in the numerous restaurants and cafes in the St James's area. After a short walk into St James's Park we visit Clarence House, which was the home of The Queen Mother for fifty years. We will be given a guided tour around the five ground floor rooms where The Prince of Wales undertakes official engagements. The arrangement of the rooms and their contents remain much as they were in Queen Elizabeth's time, with outstanding 20th century paintings, and superb examples of Faberge, as well as English porcelain and silverware. There will be time for a hot drink before setting off home at 5.15pm. (Walking distance 1100 m (1200 yards))

Guide Price: £54.00

Saturday 10th October

Kent and East Sussex Railway was partially reopened as a Heritage Steam Railway in 1974, running between Tenterden and Rolvenden, with a further extension to Bodium completed in 2000. The preserved railway has had a tempestuous history, with two financial crises and a major dispute between the volunteer group and their elected board of directors/trustees. Most of the permanent way has now been built to modern standards, and rides of 11.5 miles through the Rother Valley in vintage and British Railways coaches, are usually hauled by one of several types of steam locomotives, or a diesel multiple unit in off peak times. Older generations will feel nostalgic on entering the Tenterden station buildings, and also – if time permits – looking around the Railway museum.

Bodium Castle NT is a 14th century moated castle, built in 1385, ostensibly to defend the area against a French invasion during the Hundred Years' War. It was built, not only protect its inhabitants, but to be an inviting and comfortable home as well. It is a quadrangular design and features chambers on the outer walls as well as towers on each entrance point and corners. The inner courts allowed space for those living and working within the castle and would have included a chapel, household apartments, pantry, the Lord's Hall, buttery and a prison. The castle is a magnificent sight, standing as it does, surrounded by a large moat, although in those days it would have received the contents of 30 different garderobes!! It is now a Grade I listed building, and has been owned by the NT since 1925 when it was donated by Lord Curzon on his deathbed, with the decision taken to open up the ruins to the public.

Guide Price: £32.00

Supporter Group Holiday – Centred on Llandudno 7th to 11th September 2020

Monday 7 th	We visit Erdigg (NT) before arriving at our Hotel
Tuesday 8 th	We visit Great Orme including the Tramway and Aberconway House (NT) and the Conway suspension bridge (NT)
Wednesday 9 th	We visit Bodnant Gardens (NT) and in the afternoon ride on the Llanberis Railway and if time visit the nearby Slate Mine or Dinorwig Power Station
Thursday 10 th	We visit Penrhyn Castle (NT) and Plas Newydd (NT)
Friday 11 th	Soon after leaving our hotel we visit Chirk Castle (NT) then head for home.

Please see booking form on last page to request an information pack. Each pack will be numbered in order of request and will be issued on a first come basis. We will need a minimum of thirty-five people. **The cost of the holiday is £450.00 per person and single room supplement varies between £27 and £91.** Insurance through Kings Coaches as a guide will be £30 – see details in the information pack.

Large print copies of the Newsletter are available by contacting Paul Chaplin at 11 Mace Walk, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2GE.
Tel: 01245 260113.

Data Protection Act 2018.

Chelmsford & District NT Supporter Group will hold essential details (name, address, telephone number and e-mail) for newsletter distribution, outings and membership. ***No information is transmitted to any third party.*** If you no longer wish to receive the Newsletter and Outings information please let Colin Jay know by letter or email.

Chelmsford & District National Trust Supporter Group - to prosper the work of National Trust, which is a registered charity, number 205846

Visit our web site at WWW.ChelmsfordNTgroup.org.uk for up to date information on evening lectures and outings.

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Booking Form for 2020

First Name _____ Surname: _____

Address _____

E-mail address _____ Tel: _____

My travelling companion(s) is/are: _____

My NT membership number(s) is/are: _____



I/we should like the following places:		No of people	Deposit Sub Total £
SATURDAY 16 th MAY	Snowhill Manor (NT)		
THURSDAY 18 th JUNE	Boughton House		
THURSDAY 16 th JULY	Doddington Hall		
WEDNESDAY 19 th AUGUST	Many Queens and Clarence House (with City & Village Tours)		
SATURDAY 10 th OCTOBER	Kent & East Sussex Railway and Bodiam Castle (NT)		
Total enclosed			£

If you can include your e-mail address (and or phone number) we can keep you informed on numbers, your placing on the list and any alternative arrangements that may be made.

<p>Please send me details and booking form for the NT Holiday centred on Llandudno. (Monday 7th September to Friday 11th September)</p>	
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Please remember to enclose a stamped addressed envelope for EACH day outing and also one cheque to cover the deposits of £5.00 per person, per outing. Please make cheque payable to: 'Chelmsford & District National Trust'

Please return this form to:

Paul Chaplin, 11 Mace Walk, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2GE

Email: paulchaplin@talktalk.net

Tel: 01245 260113

I would like to suggest we have a coach outing for season 2020 to:

I/we would like a C&D NT SG holiday in the following location

Signed _____