 **The Friends of Osterley Park**
A Supporters Group for the National Trust

NEWSLETTER

Issue 60 March 2006

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The Trafalgar Post

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

For details of "Trust" walks, talks, and events in the Park see the enclosed Trust Newsletter.

3rd May "FRIENDS" ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

See page 6 and Agenda enclosed

DAY EXCURSIONS BY COACH - DETAILS PAGES 13-15

11 th April	Ickworth - Fully Booked!
24 th May	Kenilworth (EIL) & Leamington Spa
15 th June	Corle Castle (NT) and Swanage
14 th July	Charkcote (NT) & Stratford-on-Avon
16 th August	Mosely Old Hall (NT)
10 th October	Tyntonfield (NT)

The September 6-day holiday in Cornwall announced in our last issue is fully booked.

LONDON WALKS WITH DORIS SHERWOOD- SEE PAGE 10

9 th May	Westminster - Jewel Tower and St Margaret's
21 st May	Spencer House, St James - Private Guided Tour
11 th June	Lingard House Garden, Chiswick
29 th June	St James & Royal Academy Private Room

9th July **OSTERLEY DAY**

Art in the Park, Children's Open Air Theatre, and of course the "Friend's" Tombola, Bric-a-Brac & Book Stalls - see page 6.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

IAN CONACHER

2005 was a good year for the "Friends", a year in which substantial donations were made to the National Trust. Chief among these were the purchases of a leaf blower to ease the task of the Estate Gardeners gathering fallen leaves, and new bicycles to provide "Green Transport" for the Wardens. In addition we continued our traditional support for the Volunteer Gardeners growing flowers for the House, and paid for the maintenance costs of the self-drive vehicles for the less mobile visitor.

Our activities were well supported; the Winter Lectures were much enjoyed and produced a significant income, and the Osterley Day stalls raised nearly £600. The "100 Club" produced an income of over £820, with a similar sum being distributed to Members in prizes at the quarterly Draws.

Jim Tickle's "Trips and Tours" were mostly fully booked; these are budgeted to "break even", and prudent planning has always led to a surplus. This year, the surplus was less than last year, but still made a significant contribution to our funds. Doris Sherwood's London Walks were also well supported, brought in a useful income, and were much enjoyed by those who took part.

These results have been achieved with the help of the members of the Committee, and I am very grateful to them for the support given to me during a year in which there have been a number of other calls on my time.

During the year, we have been on a "Learning Curve", with the Trust's new Property Manager, Sian Harrington, taking up her post in October, and many new faces in the Park. I am confident that good working relationships are being forged between the "Friends" and the Trust's staff, and look forward to a year of co-operation and progress.

BETTY DANCOCKS - AN APPRECIATION - OLIVE MARKE

Many members will have known Betty, who died peacefully in her sleep on 10th February, having been unwell for some time. She was among the "Founder Members" of the Friends on their formation in 1990; prior to that, she had been a Committee member of the National Trust Association for some years, organising outings and "John Barretts" walks.

Betty was greatly attached to Osterley - in fact she regarded it as her second home. Whether driving the "Buggy", assisting with the battery cars for the lux-mobile, helping Bill to paint benches and other volunteering, or in her free time just walking in the Park, she was always happy to be at Osterley - so much so that she held her 80th Birthday Party in the Brewhouse!

She will be greatly missed by many people, not least myself. She was my "right hand man" whilst I was at work, keeping me as "Chair" in touch with the FNTA membership. On a personal level, I had only vaguely to mention that I needed something doing and Betty was there, always ready to help. I and so many of you will always remember her kindness, helpfulness and friendship.

God bless, and goodbye, Betty - thank you for being such a good friend.

STAFF CHANGES AT OSTERLEY

GARY ENSTONE, until recently Assistant House Steward at Osterley, has moved to Lyme Park in Cheshire as House Steward. We wish him well in his new post.

We hear that other appointments are imminent - details in our next issue.

HELP WANTED!

IAN CONACHER

Members will have noted from the front cover that this is a special issue, the 60th since our founding in 1991. Our first few issues enjoyed some commercial sponsorship, and were professionally laid out and printed. This did not last, but we were fortunate in finding a member who volunteered to print issues at no cost to us. When he moved away, we had to find reasonably priced alternatives, firstly using the facilities of a school, and later transferring to a commercial printer in Hounslow, with whom we are very satisfied.

The assembly of the material ready for printing was handled for some years by Margaret Frilay, who produced excellent results, using physical "cut and paste" methods - very "labour intensive"! A large part of the text was - and still is - compiled by myself, writing stories based on the bare facts of news and events. The change to the A5 format, the use of John Stacey's photographs for covers and centre spreads, and pictures for Jim's trips and tours, has given a more professional appearance to the Newsletter. However, for recent issues I have drafted much of the text, and then typed it - with two fingers - on my word processor!

With increasing age and pressure on my time, this is a situation up with which I can no longer put! Writing a Newsletter does not normally figure in a Chairman's Job Description! What I now need is a volunteer with typing and desk - top publishing skills. I have had offers of help from some members of the Committee - already putting in many hours on their own particular tasks - and am grateful for these, but feel that we now need to recruit an individual to take on the post of Editor, with a seat on the Committee. Duties would include liaison with members writing up their own notes on different parts of our activities, and reporting on events at the Property and other items of interest. Anyone interested should contact me before the A.G.M. on (020) 8560 8523.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, WEDNESDAY 3RD MAY

This will be held as usual in the Old Brewhouse Restaurant in the stable yard at Osterley. We assemble at 7 pm for a glass of wine before the formal meeting begins at 7.45. This hopefully will last for no longer than 20 minutes, and we hope to arrange for a speaker from the Trust's staff at the end of business.

The Chairman's Report is printed on page 3; the Agenda and Minutes of last year's meeting are enclosed, and the Hon Treasurer's report will be presented at the meeting.

Members may park their cars in the stable yard. Please arrive before 7.30 when the Park Gates will be closed. They will re-open at the end of the meeting!

OSTERLEY DAY, JULY 9TH

The most prominent feature of this day is the display of "Art in the Park", when local artists display their works free space on the Park railings, from the causeway round to the stable block. Other attractions include children's Open Air Theatre and events.

This is also a major fund-raising day for the "Friends". We will be erecting stalls as usual; the Bric-a-Brac stall needs donations of quality items - ornaments, fine china, costume jewellery, etc. Books in good condition are also wanted.

The "Tombola" stall gives a prize every time, so we need a wide range of gifts, from high value items such as cuddly toys and unwanted gifts to smaller things such as cans of soft drinks.

Details of the arrangements for collecting these will be given in our next issue; meanwhile, when spring cleaning, put some of your "clutter" aside for the "Friends"!

"FRIENDS" 100 CLUB

The "100 Club" combines fund-raising with a small "flutter". The Annual Subscription for each share is £12.00 and Members may buy as many shares as they wish. Half of the money raised is donated by the "Friends" to the National Trust at Osterley. The balance forms the "Prize Fund"; subscribers' shares are entered into each of four quarterly draws during each membership year, for a top prize of £100 and several smaller prizes. In past years, the scheme has brought in between £800 and £1,000 for the Trust. Subscriptions to the "100 Club" may be paid annually with the "Friends" Membership renewal, using the form included with this Newsletter.

The 3rd draw of the 2005/6 year was made at the volunteers Christmas Party on 3rd December. Winners were:-

£100	Mrs A Birch
£60	Dr P Head
£30	Miss A Gibbs
£20	Mrs E Smith
£10	Mrs D L Stocker

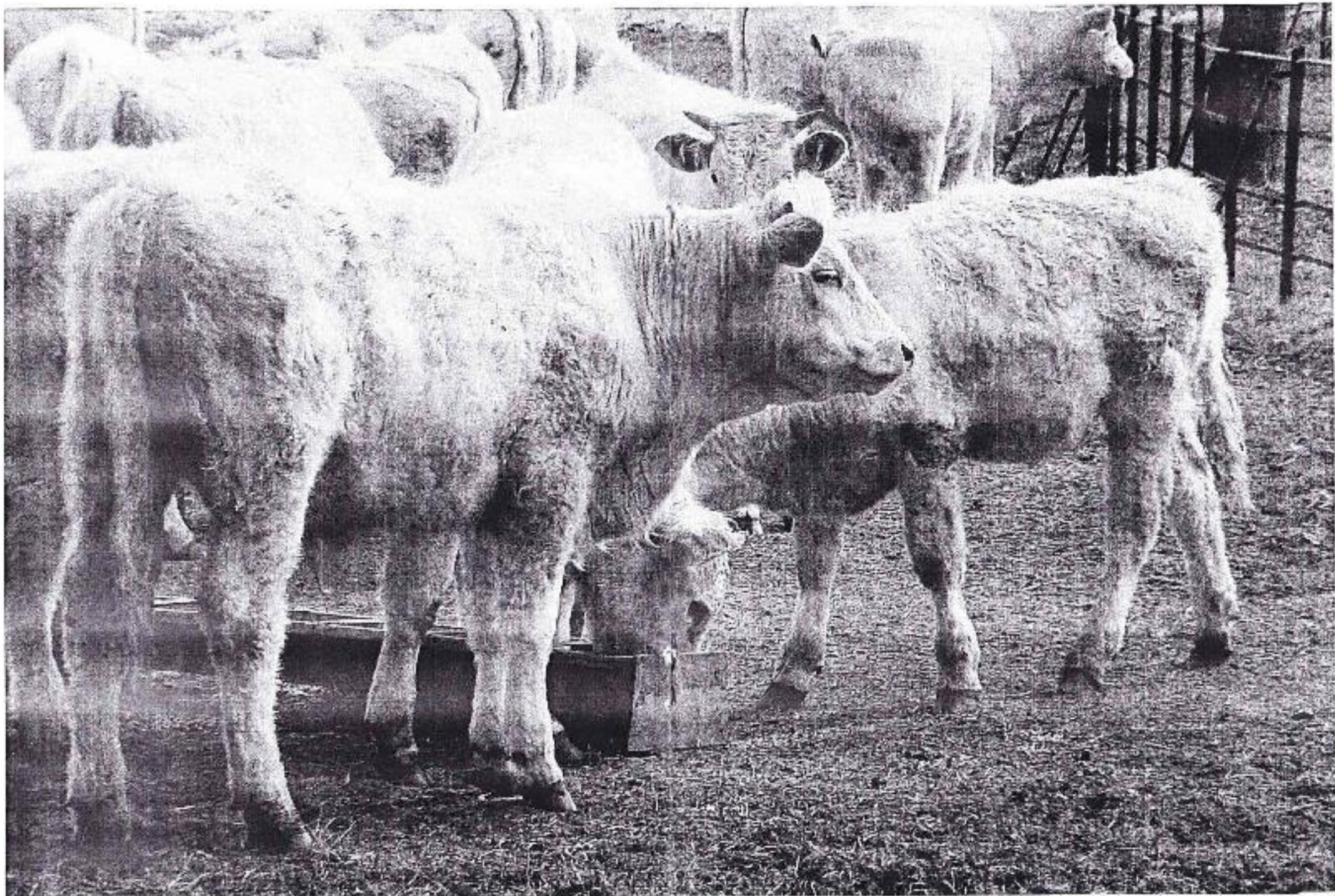
The 4th and final draw of the 2005/6 season will be made at the last of our Winter Lectures on 22nd March.

If you are not yet a member of the "100 Club", why not join now when renewing your subscription to the "Friends", using the form enclosed with this newsletter. Our odds are better than the National Lottery!

OUR PHOTOGRAPHS

John Stacey has once more provided the pictures for this issue. The cover shows in colour the arrival of the Trafalgar Coach at Osterley to mark the 200th anniversary of the battle.

The picture on pages 8 and 9 show some of Farmer Sutton's Charolais calves in the west meadow, being reared for the beef market. It is surely remarkable to see these animals so close to the centre of London. We hope feature his activities on the farm in a future issue.



LONDON WALKS WITH DORIS SHERWOOD

Doris, a Blue Badge Guide to London and the City of London, has again volunteered to conduct guided walks for the "Friends" during the coming months.

On Tuesday, 9th May, she will lead a stroll around Westminster, taking in the Jewel Tower, St Margaret's Church, and the old village. Meet at St James's Park Underground Station, District Line, at 1.30 pm. Fee £3.00 as donation to the "Friends" Pay on the day - no booking required.

On Sunday, 21st May, she has arranged a private visit to Spencer House, the magnificent town residence built by John, 1st Earl Spencer, in 1756. The house was much altered in the 1780's and 90's; the family lived there until the 1920's, when it was let. During World War 2 the house suffered severe bomb damage; after repairs, it was again let out until 1985. It was then acquired by a group led by Lord Rothschild, and restored under his leadership to its late 18th century condition.

Spencer House require advance payment of the entry fee of £7.00 by 21st April. Numbers are limited, so telephone Doris on (020) 8568 0251 ASAP to make a reservation; confirm by letter, with cheque for £7.00 made out to Doris Sherwood, at 8, Augustus Close, Brentford Dock, Brentford, TW8 8QF. Cheques should reach her by 14th April.

Meet in the Booking Hall at Green Park Underground station, Piccadilly & Victoria lines, at 10 am.

On Sunday, June 11th, there is a return visit to Rachel Austin's garden at Lingard House, Chiswick Mall, also visiting Hogarth's House. Meet at Lingard House at 1.30 pm. Fee £5.00 includes refreshments. Book with Doris by telephone as above - but pay on the day.

On Tuesday, 20th June, Doris will lead a guided walk around St James, visiting the Royal Academy private rooms. Meet in the Booking Hall of Green Park Station at 1.30 pm. Fee £3.00, pay on the day - no booking required.

PROPERTIES ON SCREEN.

Osterley House and Park are favourite venues for film and television cameras; way back in the 'fifties the romantic comedy "The Grass is Greener" made much use of the House but took some liberties with the layout, using the grotto door as the main entrance!

In recent years we have seen Judi Dench as Queen Victoria walk into the long gallery and look out of the window; clever cutting allowed her to see John Brown in the garden at Osborne House!

A few weeks ago a Channel 4 series on the real "Dad's Army" gave some time to describing Osterley's role in the training of the embryo Home Guard in the summer of 1940, and the concerns of the Establishment that the volunteer instructors, veterans of the Spanish Civil War, were a bunch of Communists!

This year, the House has already featured in a number of films, including an episode of the BBC 1 spy thriller "Spooks" and a feature film about Beatrix Potter. This last was a major production, with the area in front of the house filled with vehicles and a marquee in the field behind the visitors' car park. Such events produce a useful income for the Trust.

The Royal Palaces - Hampton Court, Kensington, Whitehall, and the Tower of London featured in a recent television series on BBC 2, which took viewers behind the scenes. It was interesting to see that they had similar problems to the Trust in undertaking conservation and restoration work, and the same need to raise funds to cover the cost of this by re-enactments and "Corporate Hospitality". It is evident that the owners of Heritage Properties, including the Trust, need to compete for custom in order to raise funds. This is particularly the case in West London, where there is a concentration of such venues.

Assistance for the Trust's staff is often required for such activities, and may call for help from Volunteers, in addition to the ongoing need for Room Stewards, Gardeners, Buggy Drivers, Battery Car Stewards, etc. If you are interested, don't tact the House on (020) 8232 5050.

200 YEARS OF CHANGE.

This year sees the 200th anniversary of the birth of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, a man who made his mark on England and in particular on our local landscape. As engineer of the Great Western Railway, built in the 1830's, he laid out a near level line running up the Thames valley, not encountering any major obstacles until it reached the hills east of Bath, through which he drove the Box tunnel. It is alleged that each year on his birthday the rays of the rising sun shine through the tunnel!

Locally, his Wharncliffe Viaduct – now a listed structure – spans the Brent valley west of Hanwell and is visible far and wide. To the west of this, his original skew bridge spanning the Uxbridge Road was replaced by a later structure in the late 19th century.

The impact the coming of the railway made on life in the district would have been considerable. The sight of the trains with their steam and smoke, and the sounds of the engines and their whistles, would have been strange and quite terrifying. But it would come to be accepted – even Queen Victoria travelled up from Windsor by train in the 1840's!

Initially, freight for London Docks was transferred to the Grand Union Canal at Bull's Bridge, Southall. In the 1850's, the branch line from Southall to Brentford was built to carry freight to Brentford Docks where it could be transferred to river barges. Brunel took the line under the Grand Union Canal at the point where it crossed Windmill Lane, thus forming what became known as the "Three Bridges" – again a listed structure. With declining traffic, the docks closed in the 1970's and the site was developed for housing.

In 1904 the G.W.R. opened a small station in the Brent valley, close to the "Fox" pub. This was named "Trumpers Crossing Halt – for Osterley Park" after a local farmer who had opposed the coming of the railway. The station was little used, and closed in the 1920's. The line still carries roadstone to the old Brentford Goods yard north of the Great West Road, and household refuse from west London away to a landfill site.

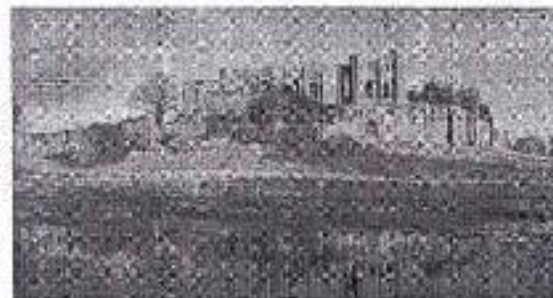
Each month between April and October, with the exception of September when we will be taking our annual regional tour in Cornwall, we are offering our customary coach outings to places of interest based on properties of the National Trust and English Heritage. I'm sure that our regular travellers will be delighted to know that we have again secured the excellent services of our tried and trusted driver, Barrie Pyle of European Heritage Tours. The day excursion programme for this year is:

Tuesday, 11th April Ickworth (NT) & Bury St. Edmunds
Wednesday, 24th May Kenilworth (L1) & Leamington Spa
Thursday, 15th June Corfe Castle (NT) & Swanage
Friday, 14th July Charlecote (NT) & Stratford-on-Avon
Wednesday, 16th August ... Moseley Old Hall (NT)
Tuesday, 10th October... .. Tyntesfield (NT)

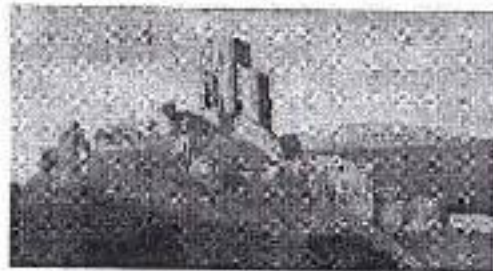
The April visit to Bury St. Edmunds and Ickworth, the magnificent Georgian house in Suffolk, built by the eccentric Earl of Bristol in 1795, was featured in detail in the December '05 edition of the Newsletter. Such was the interest shown in this day-trip, that the outing was fully booked before the start of the New Year. Despite the ever increasing costs of our excursions, due in no small measure to the endless rising prices of motor fuel, it seems that the day-trips still remain very popular and early booking is advisable.

Kenilworth Castle (May 24th)

Kenilworth, the largest castle ruin in England, has a history rich in famous names and events. The Norman keep stands at the centre of King John's expansion in 1210 of the curtain walls and defensive towers of the outer court. In 1253, Henry III granted it to Simon de Montfort, whose uprising led to the civil war and his death at the battle



of Evesham in 1265. In 1327, Edward II was imprisoned here and was forced to renounce the throne, before his transfer to Berkeley Castle and his alleged brutal murder. By 1394, John of Gaunt created a splendid great hall and many private apartments, turning the fortress into a palace and later, as now a royal residence, it became a place of leisure for Henry VIII. Edward VI granted Kenilworth to the Dudley's, and Elizabeth I's favourite, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, added more fine buildings to receive the queen and her court in 1575. For nineteen days the castle was the focus of extravagant hospitality and festivities. The elaborate gatehouse, stables and restored Tudor garden still bear witness to this high point in its history. Sadly, after the Civil War, Kenilworth was partially destroyed by Cromwell's troops and fell into ruin. It was saved for the nation in 1938 and is now maintained by English Heritage.



Corfe Castle (June 15th)

Though it never achieved the heights of luxury and royal favour bestowed on Kenilworth, Corfe is one of Britain's most majestic and dramatic ruins and was an important stronghold from the middle of the eleventh century. Close to the coast of Dorset, and strategically

situated high above the Isle of Purbeck, the castle controlled the gateway through the Purbeck Hills. Though in Saxon times there may have been a royal hunting lodge here, where King Edward is said to have been murdered in 978, the original castle was begun by William the Conqueror. The massive keep was completed by Henry I, who imprisoned his elder brother Robert, Duke of Normandy here in 1106. Like Kenilworth, the outer defences were heavily strengthened by King John early in the thirteenth century when Corfe's position near the coast became of considerable importance in the renewed war with France after the loss of Normandy in 1204. In Tudor times, Elizabeth I sold the castle to Sir Christopher Hatton, who mounted cannon on the walls in anticipation of the Spanish invasion. Some fifty years later, the estate was bought by Sir John Banks, a staunch Royalist, who also owned the neighbouring property of Kingston Lacy, - now a property of the National Trust. Whilst Sir John was away in support of King Charles during the Civil War, the castle was twice besieged by Parliamentary troops and a spirited defence was led by the redoubtable Lacy Banks. In 1648 the castle finally fell through the treachery of one of the defenders, but the victorious Roundhead colonel, impressed by Lady Banks' courage, not only allowed the garrison to depart but permitted her ladyship to take the keys of the castle with her. They are still to be seen hanging in the library at Kingston Lacy. Corfe Castle finally suffered the same fate as Kenilworth at the hands of the Parliamentarians.

Charlecote (July 14th)

The home of the Lucy family for over 700 years, the mellow brick-work and the great chimneys of Charlecote seem to sum up the very essence of Tudor England. Here are strong associations with Queen Elizabeth I and William Shakespeare, - who is alleged to



have been caught poaching the estate deer. However, our greatest playwright has seemingly been exonerated, - there is a bust of Shakespeare in the great hall, and a flower border near the orangery has been planted with species mentioned in his plays: dog violets, columbine, cuckoo flower, etc. As to the house, excluding the porch proudly decorated with the arms of Queen Elizabeth who visited Charlecote in 1572, most of the building is the result of 'Elizabethan' restoration done by George Hammond Lucy in the early nineteenth century. Apart from the family paintings in every room, he was responsible for most of the furnishings, many of which originate

from the 1823 sale of William Beckford's Fonthill in Wiltshire, including a sixteenth-century Italian marble table from the Borghese Palace. Some of the earliest parts of the house are in the extensive outbuildings, where the stable block includes a brew-house, a wash house and a coach house displaying a collection of vehicles used at Charlecote in the nineteenth century.



Moseley Old Hall (August 16th)

An Elizabethan house altered in the nineteenth century, Moseley Old Hall is famous for its association with King Charles II, who hid here after his defeat at the battle of Worcester in 1651. In what is now known as the King's Room, visitors are shown the trap-door and the incredibly small 'priest's hole' in which the King had to crouch when a group of Roundheads raided the house two days after his arrival. The following night, dressed as a serving man, Charles rode away on horseback on the first leg of a long

and hazardous journey to safety on the Continent. Mementoes of those perilous days include a proclamation of 10th September 1651 offering a £1000 reward for the capture of the king, and Charles II's letter of thanks to Jane Lane, who helped him to escape. Although the facades of the old Elizabethan house were faced in brick in the nineteenth century and the mullioned windows have been replaced by casements, much of the original panelling and timber framing inside the house still survives. The heavy oak seventeenth century furniture, including the bed on which Charles slept, and contemporary portraits of the king and those who helped him, all contribute to an authentic atmosphere which, miraculously, isn't destroyed by the noise from the M45 motorway only yards away. The house is now surrounded by a reconstructed seventeenth century garden, based on a design of 1640, which features an elaborate knot garden, a herb garden and an orchard planted with older varieties of fruit trees, such as quinces, mulberries and medlars.

Tyntesfield (October 10th)

Since last year's visit to Tyntesfield was so over-subscribed we hope that a return visit will be equally popular whilst giving priority booking to those who missed out in 2005. Saved by the Trust in 2002, this amazing Gothic Revival mansion, designed in 1846 by John Norton for William Gibbs, who



was a highly successful local merchant. Tyntesfield houses an unique collection of Victorian decorative arts, a sumptuously adorned private chapel and a sharp insight into life below stairs. Visitor facilities to the house and its estate, including formal gardens and a fine walled garden, are still in the development stage and the NT Handbook advises that 'facilities are temporary and basic'. A packed lunch would be advisable!