

# The Friends of Osterley Park

## **NEWSLETTER**



Issue 94 AUTUMN 2014 £1 (free to members)



Kidderminster station on the Severn Valley Railway  
*Photo John Stacey*



## from the Chairman **John James**

I was looking back at my report for last year's autumn newsletter and found that I commented on the early days of September showing a touch of autumn approaching. It is an almost identical situation this year, leading to the period of warmer weather during October. We can be pleased that generally we have had a good summer, except for the wet spell caused by ex hurricane Bertha. Osterley Park and House have had a very busy year, especially during the summer. Many visitors come to view the Jersey Collection which is proving a great attraction. The formal gardens have looked magnificent.

The leisure activities introduced this year under the theme National Trust Sport which is supported by Sport England have proved a great success, particularly during the school holidays. Beginner running groups and outdoor fitness classes have been a draw.



The nine free sessions of stand up paddleboarding organised in partnership with London Rowing and Active 360 which took place on Middle Lake during August were hugely successful, attracting over 650 people, with an age range of four to the over seventies. A highlight in the autumn was the first Night Run at the end of October. The event was one of the twelve taking place at National Trust sites around the country and more than 150 runners took part. There were also themed Twilight Tours of the House which were very popular.

Our thanks once again to Patrick and Christine Howard for opening their garden at the Old Farmhouse on the 21<sup>st</sup> June. The garden was at its best and the visit was greatly enjoyed by all who attended.

Our Autumn Reception was held on the 1<sup>st</sup> October when the speaker was Nic Durston, National Trust Assistant Director (Operations) London and South East Region. Nic gave a very good

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update on the London properties.

The Trips Team led by Douglas Craik have organised excellent trips this year, much appreciated by those who took part. They are now planning 2015 trips and, as Douglas mentioned in the summer newsletter, a holiday in Scotland.

London Visits, organised by Wei Hei Kipling, have continued to delight.

Finally, it is sadly inevitable that we lose one or two long-serving members. However, I am pleased that we have been able to welcome a good number of new members during the year. The best recruiting is through current members introducing their friends to the benefits of membership.

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**2015 Friends Holiday**

**Douglas Craik**

**BOOK BY 31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY**



Wikicommons Andy Farrington

Further to my article in the last newsletter and feed-back from a number of Friends we will be doing the August (train) option, from Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 20th August.

We will be staying in Strathclyde University Glasgow city centre Campus Village and there will be a 3 course dinner in the Campus Village.

There are minor changes in the order of visits to allow a Sunday drive through Glasgow and avoid the last day of the school holidays in Ayrshire (each Scottish County has different school term dates).

I have also replaced the visit to the Glasgow Tenement (as it is really too small for a group visit) with one to Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Scotland Street School- a museum of early 20<sup>th</sup> Century schooling. The Burrell collection is closing from 2016 to 2020 so our visit there will be just in time. I have also added a tour

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of the Falkirk Kelpies- really giant horses' heads (it'll make sense on the day).

Each day we will breakfast about 8:00, depart at 9:30, return about 5/5:30pm and eat about 6:30, all meals are waitress service.

Most destinations are about an hour away from the Village.

The outline programme is below.

On receipt of a booking I will send out a detailed programme, more information on the accommodation, information on most of the places being visited, information on alternative places to eat (for those who wish) .

There will also be an option form covering:-

- A buggy service from coach to train.
- Evening meals will be in the University campus. The campus is about half a mile from the centre of Glasgow and there are many restaurants around so you may wish to skip a meal (or two) and try elsewhere. £15 reduction will apply for each night which you choose to eat out.
- Our visit to the Glasgow Burrell Collection will be either self guided or with a volunteer guide. There will be an additional charge of £3 for the latter (I expect most will want to do their own thing)
- Where people want a taxi from home to Osterley Underground I will try to set up sharing for people who live nearby or on route (taxi at passengers' cost).

Other things to do

Our visit to Edinburgh is during the Edinburgh Festival so you may decide not to return on the coach, but to attend an evening event and return by train to Glasgow (45 minutes). It is up to individuals to arrange any event they want to attend.

You may wish to have a quiet evening after a day's visiting but Glasgow has several theatres and an Opera House all within a short Taxi ride. It is up to individuals to arrange any event they want.

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Be aware that the normal difference between summer and winter in Glasgow is the temperature of the rain.

The National Trust insurance for those travelling on Trips only covers Public Liability. You are recommended to consider taking private travel insurance for yourself and your possessions. Your Home Insurance might provide some cover.

I will not be able to confirm train and therefore pick-up times until mid-May but pick-up is likely to be mid-morning and return to London early evening.

**I NEED BOOKING BY 31/1/15** as University needs early confirmation of numbers and booking as it is a bit complex with at least 2 coach companies, a train company, a canal boat company, accommodation and two food companies in Glasgow and 9 properties (all of which I have recently visited).

Please note that the deposit will be refundable until the end of January. The balance will be due by 1<sup>st</sup> May.

In case of cancellation after this, a full refund is not possible unless there is a waiting list but any costs that can be avoided if enough notice is given (e.g. meals) will be refunded.



## Outline programme

15/8/15 Coach from Osterley to Euston, train to Glasgow, coach to Strathclyde Campus Village.

16/8/15 Drive through central Glasgow, visit Pollock House, the Burrell collection and

Scotland Street School in Glasgow

17/8/15 Visit Edinburgh Georgian House and Gladstone's Land, free time on Royal Mile.

18/8/15 Visit the Falkirk Wheel, the Kelpies and Bannockburn

19/8/15 Visit Burns Museum/Birthplace and Culzean Castle

20/8/14 Coach to Central Station, train to Euston, coach to Osterley



## Coffee Mornings **John James**

Coffee mornings continue to be successful:

- 30<sup>th</sup> April Douglas Craik told us the very moving stories behind the Borough Road War

Memorial.

- 11<sup>th</sup> June John Stacey's talk was on "Covers and Spreads" and showed his exceptional photographs from past newsletters.
- 16<sup>th</sup> July Andy Eddy gave a garden update and there was the bonus of a guided tour of the garden.
- Sheena Dickson, Sports Development Officer, came to give us a talk at our coffee morning on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September. She gave a presentation on how sport and leisure has developed in Osterley Park. At the beginning she quoted Octavia Hill, one of the National Trust's founders "I think we want four things, places to sit in, places to play in, places to stroll in, and places to spend the day in". This is still true today.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> October Ellie Jones, newly appointed House and Collections Manager gave an excellent presentation on her background, from the time she joined the National Trust as a volunteer before becoming a staff member at Newton House, Dinefwr.

We look forward to future coffee mornings:

Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> January 2015 – Neil Cole, General Manager

Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2015 – Megan Tanner, Commercial Manager



## from the 100 club **Douglas Craik**

A draw was made at the Autumn Reception on the 1st October. The lucky winners were:-

£25 P Barrett, £50 C Bell and £100 C Diwell.

All members of the Friends can purchase one or more "shares" in the 100 Club. Half of the money pays for the 3 prizes won at each of the four draws per year and the remainder goes to the house.



## **Emailed Newsletter**      **Douglas Craik**

We intend to bring the Newsletter into the 21st (or at least late 20th) century by providing the option of an on-line version of the newsletter.

The on-line version will have exactly the same content as the printed one except that all photos will be in colour and instead of a large black and white photo in the centre spread there will be 2-4 smaller colour photos of the same subject (this initial test issue has a few B&W photos). Providing an electronic version rather than paper saves £6.50 per member/couple per year, increasing our support of Osterley. This is a PDF which can be viewed on any computer, and selected pages (e.g. the Diary) can be printed if you want. Ask a small child if you don't know how (or ring me). The 100 members that we currently have an email address for will get an electronic version in the next week, it will come from [friendsofosterleypark@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofosterleypark@gmail.com) and as it has attachments your virus checker may ask if you trust this address— please say yes.

If you get the email and are happy to get the Newsletter this way in future then please send a reply email to me.

If you would like to see the on-line version and don't receive it (since we don't have your email address) then drop me an email.

For those taking the on-line newsletter then coach/walk booking forms etc will also be provided online.

In future the on-line Newsletter will be emailed out on the same day as the paper ones are posted (arriving 2-3 days earlier)



## **Friends Vacancies**

The Friends are “run” by a small and shrinking team of “willing” volunteers.

We are looking for a Membership Secretary to keep the records of those in the Friends and two or three more who feel they have any useful skills, if we get volunteers the workload on each will be very light.—Contact John James

## 2014 Friends Holiday

## Margaret Friday

Our newsletter this Autumn features pictures taken by John Stacey on the Birmingham trip. We set out from Osterley on Wednesday making straight for Croome Court.

Our trip was slightly delayed when our coach was stopped in the Cotswolds so that the Around Britain Cycle Race could pass us. Many people from the villages were waiting beside the road for the event but we had a first class view from the coach and were able to proceed as soon as the cyclists had raced by at great speed.



Croome Court Photo Tony Hisgett

Croome Court is built around a former house of the 1640's for the 6th Earl of Coventry by "Capability Brown" who also designed and the extensive gardens from 1752-62. The 6th Earl was (like Robert Child) a younger son but his elder brother died unexpectedly so George

William inherited. He was always careful with money but spent a great deal of money creating a beautiful Croome. "Capability Brown" created his "first and favourite child" as he called the gardens at Croome over 30 years. When Brown died in 1783 the Earl had a monument commemorating the "inimitable genius" of his gardener placed in the Croome gardens. George III with a large party visited the gardens in 1788 bringing further fame to the park. Firework displays, boating parties and al fresco dining took place at Croome. Robert Adam designed the complete house interior ordering the first Gobelin tapestry for Croome. The Tapestry Room and the Long Gallery were the most lavish. When Adam died in 1792 the 6th Earl of Coventry was one of his pallbearers. Croome, like Osterley had elaborate stables and fine greenhouses. James Wyatt was then hired to finish the work at Croome.

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Under the next two earls Croome began to decline. The 9th Earl lived at Croome for 88 years as a paternalistic landlord, racehorse owner and huntsman. He died in 1930 having sold off the Tapestry in 1904 to the American Kress millionaires who made their money in the Five and Ten Cent stores. The marvellous red tapestries were finally installed complete with furniture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. The large Tapestry Room is now the Tea Room. The Long Gallery has a cardboard copy of the original mirror. The Long Gallery was severely damaged by a flood which destroyed the original plasterwork.

From the 1950s to the 1970s the house was used as a Catholic Boys School then used by the International Society of Krishna Consciousness as a centre. The Krishna's painted some of the Adam and Wyatt white plasterwork picking out fruits in the dining room in brilliant colour. These colours remain.

The National Trust has looked after the gardens from 1996 spending £8 million re-digging and restoring the lakes, follies and greenhouses in the large park. In 2007 the Trust took on the house with £1.8 million - they have now raised a further £5 million to restore the house and continue to work on the "Croome Re-defined" project.

Following our visit we proceeded to the University of Birmingham Conference Park at the Edgbaston Campus. Very spacious, modern and comfortable in tree-lined grounds. Breakfast and the evening meal were included in the price. Catering was excellent with daily choices of starters, main courses and desserts.

On Thursday we set off for Kidderminster to take the Severn Valley Steam train to Bridgnorth. (Photo on page 1).

Some of us chose to take tea on the train and were served in the luxury carriage with comfortable armchairs and a full tea with

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Attingham Walled Garden





Dudmaston

Kidderminster station on the  
Severn Valley Railway

*Photos John Stacey*



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scones, jam and cream plus a serving of five different homemade cakes. Our GWR train in traditional colours steamed past a private zoo where we saw water buffalo, impala and elephants including a baby relaxing beside a lake in the park. At Bridgnorth, those who had not indulged in tea on the train took lunch. The town is filled with fascinating old black and white buildings from coaching inn to hospital and old grammar school. The small shops were selling local delicacies from cider and black pudding to cheese with walnuts and cinnamon. Many of us made purchases to take home. In the afternoon we visited Dudmaston (photo on page 10) where the family have lived for 875 years. The lady who saved the house was Rachel Labouchere. She inherited from her unmarried uncle who had loved and looked after the beautiful and ancient trees in the grounds. From 1966 when her husband retired from diplomatic service Rachel insisted they live at Dudmaston. She restored it as a family home and now her family still reside in the house today. The house had been open since 1980 when Rachel and George would greet visitors and show them around the house and grounds.



Birmingham Back to Backs  
*Photo John Stacey*

On Friday we went to the centre of Birmingham to explore the old Back to Backs. This only remaining block has been preserved as evidence of how people lived in the city centre with rooms and a workplace together. The houses were lived in until 1966 when they were condemned as dwellings but the workshops continued to be used until 2001. The rooms were small with ground floors looking out onto an internal courtyard where there were

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workshops, a laundry room for all to use on different days of the week by tenants so there was always washing hanging in the courtyard with communal toilets but only 2 for 30 houses! Upstairs rooms contained beds with parents and girls in one room and boys in the other. Often an extra bed would be placed in the boys room and rented out - sometimes to several workers who would sleep at different times of the day. A room on the top floor would often be used for work as it had more light. Tables used for cutting keys, making locks, making clock parts, buttons in metal or pearl or making lace, crochet, knitting or cloth carpets. Any of these small trades could be pursued here.

The last worker in the back to backs was George Saunders who moved here in 1977 as a tailor. He was from St. Kitts and often made clothes for actors performing at the theatre across the road. His tailoring skills were so excellent that orders were placed from London and he became trouser-maker for the Queen's Guards. He retired in 2001 but his daughters continue to design and make fine clothes. The back to backs are now looked after by the National Trust in co-operation with Birmingham City Council. Following this guided tour some visited the new Library with a flower garden on the roof, the City Museum or Soho House - Matthew Boulton's family home or the Botanical Gardens.



Front facade of the Mansion at Attingham Park

*Photo Wheha*

Our Saturday visit first took us to Attingham Park, another National Trust property described as "a story of love and neglect". The first Earl Bewick Noel Hill had the house built for his wife Anne and their six children from 1784-9 by George Steuart a Scottish architect. Noel died in 1789 but

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his wife and 3 daughters went to join their eldest son on the grand tour of Italy. Thomas confessed that he could not "abstain from building and picture buying". On his return he hired John Nash to complete the work on Attingham with Humphrey Repton to design the gardens. When he was 41 he met Sophia Dubouchet aged 17, the sister of the infamous courtesan Harriette Wilson. Thomas told his friend the Earl of Somerset "I have at last found a woman I should like to marry, and you know I have been more than twenty years on the lookout". They married and spent extravagantly on everything resulting in two huge bankruptcy auctions in 1827 and 1829 to pay their debts. Thomas and Sophia then went to live in Italy.



Attingham Walled Garden  
*Photo John Stacey*

When Thomas died in 1832 his brother William the diplomat became the 3rd Earl Bewick. He worked in Italy and collected lavishly just as his brother had. Many of the paintings in Attingham along with the elegant Paul Storr silverware displayed on the beautifully set dining room table are from his collection. During the bankruptcy sales William managed

to purchase back many of the family portraits which were returned to the house. When William died his brother Richard, a parson inherited Attingham. William had never married but his Italian mistress' furniture graces the Drawing Room today. Richard liked hunting, shooting and fishing and fine wine so he was able to appreciate and deplete the excellent cellar that brother William had established. His son, Richard became the 5th Earl and lived at Cronkhill, a John Nash house nearby. He established a model farm and kept local Hereford cattle. A careful man he paid off the debts his father had accumulated. Richard's younger brother,

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William, the soldier inherited aged 60 but required 17 servants to run his house at Springfield near Shrewsbury in 1871. A large number for a single man. He only used Attingham for hunting and entertaining. On his death in 1882 his nephew inherited but left the army in debt and surrounded by gossip. He and his Swedish wife preferred sailing to country living using Attingham for sports of hunting and fishing only.

The 8th Earl Bewick, William became a diplomat in France but met his future wife Teresa when she was working as a Red Cross nurse in the first World War. They married in Venice in 1919 and intended to let Attingham and live at Cronkhill but they could not find anyone to rent the estate so they moved in themselves and became dedicated to lovingly restoring the interiors and furnishings. During the war the house was used as a girl's school but the family continued to live there. In 1947 Thomas died leaving the house to the National Trust but leasing it to Shropshire Council to become an adult education college with Sir George Trevelyan as Warden. During that time the house was changed to make dormitories with false ceilings, subdivided rooms etc.



Attingham Park Gate

achieved. Visits to the roof to view workers can be made on special guided tours.

Teresa 8th Lady Bewick was killed in car crash at gates to the park in 1972.

From 2000 the National Trust have been working on a project to re-open many of the rooms in the house never before opened to visitors.

Since 2006 Re-Discover Attingham has been cleaning walls, repainting plasterwork and most recently restoring the glass roof. The picture gallery is in scaffolding so that this can be

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Attingham Deer Park

The extensive grounds still contain a Deer Park, as shown in John's picture.

Our afternoon visit took us to Wroxeter Roman City, an English Heritage site. John has pictured the remaining great wall in Viroconium, the 4th largest Roman town in Britain. A recent feature is the Roman house re-constructed by modern builders using Roman-style tools to make the rooms and the furniture. This was filmed by Channel 4 and shown on television.



The Old Work Wroxeter Roman City *Photo John Stacey*

On Sunday we returned to London via Northampton to visit a Charles Rennie MacIntosh designed house. 57 Derngate was built by Bassett-Lowke for his bride. The lounge is set out with black and white patterned walls and stairs. Furniture and carpets are still in the house. One room has the MacIntosh rose around the area just below the ceiling and where a traditional dado rail would have been. Mrs. Bassett-Lowke added floral curtains to suit her own taste rather than that of MacIntosh or her husband. The bedroom decorated for George Bernard Shaw's visit has dark navy blue and white stripes on the walls with matching bedcovers. Mrs Bassett-Lowke being a little worried about the decor enquired if Shaw had been able to sleep. He replied yes, I usually sleep with my eyes closed. Their servant Lena liked the easy to use and





78 Derngate  
*Photo Tony Hisgett*

clean tiled kitchen but she lived at the top of the house with no heating. She had originally worked for Mrs Bassett-Lowke's parents. 57 Derngate with many original pieces of furniture gave an interesting view of a 20th century design for living.

We arrived home before dark having spent a fascinating few days seeing some houses built and gardens designed in the 18th Century by noted architects, Robert Adam, John Nash and gardeners Capability Brown and Humphrey Repton but also experienced a

Roman house, city dwellings for the 19th and 20th century urban worker, took a nineteenth century steam train journey and finally visited a designer house of the 20th century.

This was a delightful survey of the many delightful places one can see in Britain.

FOR NEXT YEARS HOLIDAY SEE PAGES 3-5



## Volunteers for the Property

Osterley Park always needs more volunteers, not just in the house but also in the gardens, driving the “buggy”, in the bookshop and helping with the self-drive buggies.

Apart from the pleasure in helping visitors enjoy the property more it is a very satisfying use of time (far better than daytime TV!)

Also once you do 50 hours you get a Volunteer Card, free entry to NT/NTS properties and 20% of the shop and cafe prices.

Contact Stephanie Bigley at the House.

## Some news from the property



Wikicommons Jim CCBY2

### Winter at Osterley From Website

The stable's cafe is open every day (except 25/6 December) from 11:00 to 4:00pm and the

Garden from 12:0-4:00pm

The shop and bookshop are also open 12:00 to 16:00 each weekend until 15th December .

The house will be partly open Saturday/Sunday 12:00-16:00 (last entry 3:30pm) on 29/30th November, 6/7th December and 13/14th December. On these weekends you can help to create some more Christmas spirit by making decorations and garlands, then helping hang them in the house. Father Christmas is flying in for a visit, so pre-book your grotto ticket or enjoy storytelling in a group setting.



Karan Sanghera

### Osterley Park Barn Fire

#### From press, Fire Service and house

As you be aware on Friday 5th Sept at approx. 10.30pm the tenant farmers barn towards the north of the property, near the M4, caught fire and was destroyed. The Barn

itself is approx. 100ft long and unfortunately the contents were also destroyed. No-one was injured and no other part of the estate was damaged.

Eight fire engines and 58 firefighters and officers from Heathrow, Southall, Ealing, Felton and Heston fire stations attended Osterley remained opened as normal the next day, hosting a wedding on Saturday and car rally Sunday, with the majority of our visitors unaware there had been a significant incident, with the exception of smoke drifting across the estate for several days.

### Visitors From Osterley Oracle (Volunteers newsletter)

The number of visitors to the house was well up on target, 53,000 as at end of September. Visitor satisfaction score for the year was 92%- last year 61%, London average 79%, national average 85% so visitors like Osterley as much as we do!



## Coach Trips

Douglas Craik

The 2014 coach trip programme was very well supported with nearly 300 bookings and two trips with waiting lists.

Because of this we raised nearly £1,000 for the house.

We have the 2015 programme well in hand with most destinations being NT properties but with a few others and a train journey.

Following a request from Volunteering Friends that we try to avoid Wed-Sun we have booked 6 out of 7 on Monday or Tuesday.

The trips are listed in the Diary and as usual there will be articles about the first ones in the next Newsletter together with a booking form.

If you have to cancel a trip could you please let me know as there may be a waiting list and it also avoids the coach waiting in case you are only delayed.

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## Diary Friends Events and Excursions

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Tue 27 <sup>th</sup> January | Coffee Morning                                    |
| Tue 10 <sup>th</sup> March   | Coffee Morning                                    |
| Thu 9 <sup>th</sup> April    | Coach trip: Watts Gallery & Polesdon Lacy         |
| Tue 12 <sup>th</sup> May     | Coach trip: Dryham Park                           |
| Wed 13 <sup>th</sup> May     | Annual General Meeting                            |
| Tue 9 Jun                    | Coach trip: Hever Castle                          |
| Tue 6 <sup>th</sup> July     | Coach trip: Avebury Manor                         |
| Tue 28 <sup>th</sup> July    | Coach trip: Kent & Sussex railway & Bodiam Castle |
| Sat15-Thu 20 Aug             | Coach holiday: Central Scotland                   |
| Tue 15 <sup>th</sup> Sep     | Coach trip: Whipsnade Tree Cathedral & Ascott     |
| Mon 5 <sup>th</sup> Oct      | Coach trip: The Vyne                              |

Coach Trips depart Lakeside Car park at 09:30

Coffee Mornings 10:15 for 10:45 £3 for Friends, £4 for guests

## Chairman /Membership Secretary

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## Treasurer / 100 club / Coach trip

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## Next Newsletter

**Next newsletter** to be published 14 January 2015.  
It will have membership renewal information and the  
information and Booking Forms for the first 3 coach

trips and the first London Walks

Any contributions to the Editor by **1st January 2015**.

The Editor may edit contributions if necessary.