

WORCESTER – MALVERN CENTRE

An Association of National Trust Members and Volunteers



in support of **National
Trust**



NEWSLETTER

JULY 2012

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2012/2013

2012

- | | |
|--|--|
| 19 th July | Outing - Stonor Park, near Henley
Fully Booked |
| 2 nd August | Outing - Cottesbrooke Hall and Gardens,
Northants |
| 14 th August | Outing - Museum of Welsh Rural Life
St. Fagan's, near Cardiff |
| 25 th August | Social Event - Wine and Cheese Party |
| 4 th September | Outing - Stonor Park, near Henley |
| 11 th September | Outing - Chirk Castle, Wrexham
Fully Booked |
| 24 th to 29 th Sept. | Holiday - Valkenburg, Cologne and
the Belgian Ardennes |
| 10 th October | Social Event - Quiz Evening and Supper |
| 16 th October | Talk - British Waterways Heritage
Working Boats Project |
| 16 th November | Talk - 5/11: Gunpowder, Treason
and Plot |
| 8 th December | Talk - Restoration of Back to Back
Houses in Birmingham |

2013

- | | |
|--|---|
| 18 th January | Talk - The Restoration of Croome |
| 9 th February | AGM |
| 19 th February | Outing - Ballet "Aladdin" |
| 19 th March | Talk - With Doctors on Everest |
| 5 th April | Talk - There <i>is</i> a War on, you know! |
| 17 th to 21 st June | Holiday - The History and Houses of
Lincolnshire |
| 22 nd to 26 th Sept. | Holiday - Lisbon City Break |

NATIONAL TRUST

Worcester-Malvern Centre

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

As I write this, we are now well into this year's programme of outings. In spite of the wet weather intervening on two occasions, I believe those outings have all been a great success. Two of these – to Ashwood Nurseries and to Strawberry Hill – were arranged by Rosemary Wills, but very sadly, as many of you will know, she passed away before they took place. We all miss Rosemary very much. There is a tribute to her and her work for the Centre on page 5 of this newsletter.

Charlotte Hurcomb, Alison Pickford and Roger Ebbatson joined the Committee at the AGM, Jane Morgan and Jo Walker having previously stepped down. I thank Jane and Jo for their contributions to the work of the Centre and take this opportunity to welcome Charlotte, Alison and Roger, whilst recording my thanks for all they are currently doing. As ever, I am most grateful, too, to all the other members of the Committee and our band of other volunteers for their unstinting work on your behalf. If you feel you are able to offer your services to support us in any way, please get in touch with me or one of the other members of the Committee: we should be delighted to welcome you.

Since the AGM, with the new Committee, we have set up two new groups – one to develop a website for the Centre and one to promote social events. The Social Events Sub-Committee, with much enthusiasm, has already organised two events which I hope will be well supported. Details of these are given in the newsletter – the first, in August, being a wine and cheese evening at The Greyfriars to coincide with the exhibition of contemporary art (from the Arts Council Collection) entitled *Everything Old was Once New* currently showing there, and also to give the opportunity to see how funds from the Findlay Legacy have been used to restore the gardens; and then, in October, a quiz night and fish and chip supper. The Website Sub-Committee has also been making great progress, thanks hugely to Dave Wardle, our newly found computer expert and website designer; the website has now been registered and set up on a pilot basis, whilst it is being developed. Please visit it – www.worcestermalvernntcentre.org.uk – and let us have your comments.

Our programme of talks in the early part of this year concluded with three most interesting but very different ones – Roger Smith who brought home to us the incredible endurance of Ernest Shackleton and his men in their ill-fated expedition across Antarctica, Garth Lowe with his wonderful slides and tales of visits to our off-shore islands, and Jan Long who highlighted some of her adventures with the British Council. We now look forward to the Autumn and Winter talks for 2012-13 which Audrey Huntley has arranged for us, details of which are to be found in this newsletter. The programme includes an update on restoration work at Croome Park, and plans for the Red Wing – to be followed by lunch.

I am pleased to report that our outings generally have been very well supported, and you will notice that we are running two additional trips – one to Cottesbrooke Hall and Gardens and one to Stonor Park – to enable everyone who wants to go to

be accommodated. A second coach may also be put on for the St Fagans visit. To whet appetites for next year, details are also given in this newsletter of what outings are being planned for in 2013, and there are also details relating to next year's holidays to Lincolnshire and Lisbon.

I have already referred to the work at The Greyfriars carried out using Findlay Legacy funds. That work has now been completed, and I can also report that a firm price has been received for the work scheduled at Croome Park on restoring the Punchbowl Gates on the Worcester Road entrance – again to be funded from the Findlay Legacy. This work should be undertaken during the Summer and will include adjacent fencing.

At this year's AGM, it was reported that the Centre had a surplus for the year to 30 September 2011 of £7272.75 and that the Treasurer had advised that he considered this would reasonably allow £7500 to be donated for projects at local properties. I informed members present, however, that it had not been possible to obtain an up-to-date list of projects from the National Trust, and so make recommendations as to how this sum might be distributed. It was proposed, therefore, that the money be put into the Supporter Group Account until the list became available. The AGM approved this proposal and gave the Committee authority to allocate funds at its discretion to properties once the list became available, and to report its deliberations in the first available newsletter. I am pleased to note that up-to-date details of projects needing support have now been received and your Committee has been able to allocate funds to those considered most appropriate, in accordance with the decisions taken at the AGM. Details of allocations are given below.

I do hope you enjoy the remainder of this year's programme and have a great Summer.

Clive Hooper.

PROJECTS FUNDED BY WORCESTER-MALVERN CENTRE IN 2012

Back to Backs	Children's projects	£700.00
Berrington Hall	Fruit trees and bushes	£500.00
Brockhampton	Picnic tables	£1000.00
Charlecote Park	New beehive etc.	£650.00
	Bee suits (2)	£180.00
Coughton Court	Walk & trail leaflets	£400.00
Croft Castle	Rhubarb forcing jars (2)	£320.00
Croome Park	Chain saw	£750.00
Dudmaston	Children's nature equipment	£685.00
Greyfriars	Glass & lead-work inspection	£500.00
Hanbury Hall	Replacement wheelchairs (2)	£770.00
Upton House	Garden restoration	£1000.00

Rosemary Wills

As many members will already be aware, Rosemary Wills very sadly passed away in March this year. For so many of us who came to know and love Rosemary for her work locally for our Centre, it is fitting that we record our respects to her memory in this newsletter.

Always a staunch supporter of the National Trust, and the Worcester-Malvern Centre in particular, Rosemary joined the Centre Committee in 1996. She became Vice-Chairman in 2002 and served as Centre Chairman from 2004 to 2006. Although she then stood down from the Committee, she continued to help on a range of Centre activities, and returned to the Committee in 2009. She was re-elected as Vice-Chairman in February this year, shortly before her death.

A tremendous strength to the organisation, she was always cheerful, full of ideas, eager to arrange events, and lend a helping hand whenever asked. With a background in catering, and her engaging personality, she invariably took the lead in orchestrating our social events, such as our Newark Park supper evenings, lunches at Madresfield, and of course the Trafalgar Tea Party. Always positive and forward-looking, she had worked on our current year's programme, and had arranged our ballet trips and visits to Strawberry Hill and Ashwood Nurseries.

Rosemary worked energetically over the years to develop the Centre's stand at the Spring Garden and Autumn Shows at Malvern, selling National Trust goods. She was a long-serving volunteer at The Greyfriars, for which she had a particular affection. As part of her fund-raising work there, she established a very popular and profitable enterprise during Worcester's pre-Christmas Victorian Fair.

For many of us, however, our strongest and most abiding memory of all the social events which Rosemary organised has to be the highly successful anniversary lunch in Malvern in November last year. In spite of having to cope with her chemotherapy treatment – which she did so bravely and without complaint – she looked so radiant and full of life, and at the end of that tiring day she must have been justly proud of what she had achieved, and rightly so.

Rosemary has been a shining example to us all in battling with great dignity and grace with the cancer which has taken her from us. We will miss her as an enthusiastic member for whom nothing was too much trouble. We will miss all her talents, her kindness and generosity, her ready smile and warm personality, and her very positive spirit. Above all we will miss her as a lovely friend. She will always be remembered with the greatest of affection.

MEMBERSHIP

Centre Subscriptions (The Subscription year runs from 1st October).

Membership of the Centre is open to **all members of the National Trust or National Trust for Scotland and qualifying Volunteers** at the following rates:-

Single Membership:	£ 4.00
Family Membership:	£ 4.00 for the first member PLUS £ 3.00 for each additional member of the household at the same address.
Under 18 years of age:	£ 2.00
Life Membership:	£50.00 (open to Life Members of the National Trust)

Subscriptions for next year, 2012/2013, are due on 1st October 2012 and, for those who do not pay by Banker's Order, the usual reminder/renewal form is enclosed. Please pay by post now (not forgetting to enclose a stamped addressed envelope for return of your membership card!!) or pay at the October meeting.

We are pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined since the last Newsletter was published. We trust their association with the Centre will be a long and happy one.

Mr. D. Chapman	Miss. S. Bradley
Prof. R. Ebbatson	Mr. J. Glen
Mr. and Mrs. R. Goddard	Miss. E. McKerrow
Mr. and Mrs. R. Arrowsmith	Mrs. H. Turner
Mr. and Mrs. R. Barber	Mr. G. Cartledge
Mr. and Mrs. K. Webb	Mrs. V. Greenwood
Mr. and Mrs. A. Dudman	Mr. F. Sloane
Mr. and Mrs. B. Davis	Mrs. B. Dymock
Mr. and Mrs. B. Davies	Mr. T. Byrne
Mr. and Mrs. D. Owen	Mrs. A. Peach
Mr. and Mrs. M. Cox	Mrs. J. Corbett
Mrs. M. Goodrich	Mrs. P. Randall
Mr. and Mrs. T. Willis	Mrs. J. Herbert
Mr. and Mrs. S. Hopkins	Mrs. H. Jenkins
Mr. and Mrs. J. Barr	Ms. S. Davies
Mr. and Mrs. N Mills	

We are sorry to report the deaths of:-

Mrs. M. Smith, Mrs. P. Walford, Mrs. J.A. Idiens and Miss. Rosemary Wills.

Erica Kenway.

TALKS 2012

Venues

Croome	1940s Canteen, Croome Park
Powick	Parish Hall
Hanley Swan	Memorial Hall
Holy Trinity Hall	Worcester Road, Link Top, Malvern

An admission fee of £2 (to include coffee/tea and biscuits) will be charged at each of the talks, except the AGM. At morning meetings, which begin at 10.30am, refreshments will be served from 10am onwards. At other meetings, the refreshments will be served at the end of the talk.

Tuesday 16th October 2012 Powick 7.30pm
“British Waterways Heritage Working Boats Project” Vince Williams

Vince is a qualified Skipper with extensive experience of handling all types of narrow boats, including veteran laden working boats, and has travelled the length and breadth of the canal system in Britain. He has been involved in the above project since its inception in 1999 and will tonight update us on its progress.

Friday 16th November 2012 Holy Trinity Hall 7.30pm
“5/11: Gunpowder, Treason and Plot” Chris Gait

Chris has been a Blue Badge Tourist Guide for five years, enjoying taking groups around Worcester, the Cotswolds, Birmingham, in fact anywhere in the Heart of England. He has always been fascinated by the Gunpowder Plot and the local characters involved. He will be telling the ultimate story of religious intolerance, treason, betrayal – and a dramatic shoot-out!

Saturday 8th December 2012 Hanley Swan 2.30pm
“Restoration of the Back to Back Houses in Birmingham” Derek Clarke

Derek Clarke presents the story of the saving and complete restoration of the eleven houses in the Project, complete with their courtyard, wash-houses and privies. These buildings would have collapsed or been demolished without the intervention of Birmingham Conservation Trust and the partnering assistance of National Trust. Derek is a retired Architect and an Accredited Architect in Building Conservation and for 45 years has been involved in the repair and restoration of many historic buildings.

Friday 18th January 2013 **Croome** **10.30am**
**“The Restoration of Croome, update on progress
and vision for the future.”** **Michael Smith**

Michael Smith is the Property Manager of Croome Estate, also having responsibility for the Fleece Inn at Bretforton and Middle Littleton Tithe Barn. He will tell us of the progress made at Croome since he spoke to us at the AGM earlier this year, with particular reference to the Red Wing. Following Michael’s talk, an optional Buffet Lunch will be served in the Canteen at a cost of £10 per person. This must be booked in advance. Please complete the enclosed booking form and return with your cheque and SAE to Mrs. A. Huntley by 30th November 2012.

The two course menu will consist of:-

A selection of cold meats and flans with various salads.

Banoffee Pie, Tarte au Citron or Damson Vacherin (choose on the day).

Tea and coffee will be served at the end of the meal.

It may be possible to visit the Court after lunch with a volunteer guide.

Saturday 9th February 2013 **Powick** **A.G.M.** **2.30pm**

At the end of the main business, there will be a short talk by Ian Rowat, recently retired Director of Malvern Hills Conservators, and our local NT Council member, who will talk about his role and work within the Trust. After the refreshment break, David Bailey, General Manager for Herefordshire, and Ian Carter, Countryside Manager for Herefordshire, will speak briefly about NT initiatives in the county, and this will be followed by a new presentation by Peter Riley.

Tuesday 19th March 2013 **Powick** **7.30pm**
“With Doctors on Everest” **Roger Smith**

Roger Smith, qualified Mountain Instructor, Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and retired Biology teacher, makes a welcome return with another fascinating talk, this time on his experiences in the 2007 Caudwell Xtreme Everest Expedition. Roger led the final trekking party from Kathmandu to Khumba Base Camp through spectacular mountain scenery. Tests were carried out on climbers and trekkers and the results were used to explore correlations between high altitude travel and intensive care in hospital situations.

Friday 5th April 2013 **Hanley Swan** **10.30am**
“There is a War on, you know!” **Lady Atherton**

It is 1942 and Lady Atherton, regional representative for the WVS, has come to address the group and exhort everyone to “make do and mend” in order to help the War Effort. This is a light-hearted trip down memory lane and an opportunity to marvel at the ingenuity of those who lived in war-time Britain.

Lady Atherton (Nadine Carr) has for the last 20 years been involved in teaching and lecturing to people of all ages. She is also an author, storyteller, historian and hedgewitch (but that’s another story!).

SOCIAL EVENTS

This is a new venture for the Worcester-Malvern Centre. A sub-committee has been formed and will be organising social events so that members can meet and get to know each other better. Two events have been organised for this year and it is hoped that they will be well supported.

When sending your booking form and cheque (made payable to Worcester - Malvern NT Centre), please enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

WINE AND CHEESE PARTY AT THE GREYFRIARS

Saturday 25th August from 5.30pm to 7.30pm.

A lot of work has recently been carried out in the garden at The Greyfriars in Friar Street, Worcester, so we invite you to come along, have a stroll round the garden, see the current exhibition in the house, enjoy some wine and cheese and meet some new friends.

Own transport arrangements to be made.

Cost - £5

Cheque, SAE and booking form to Mrs. S. Collis by 21st August.

QUIZ EVENING WITH A FISH AND CHIP SUPPER

Wednesday 10th October, starting at 6.30pm.

This event will be held at Hanley Swan Village Hall. The fish and chip supper will be served promptly at 7pm. Teams will be of four people, but if you haven't got four, teams can be made up on the night. There will be prizes for the winning team and a raffle will be held during the evening.

Own transport arrangements to be made

Cost - £7 per person.

Cheque, SAE and booking form to Mrs. S. Collis by 3rd October.

OUTINGS

Booking an outing

- 1 Make cheques payable to Worcester-Malvern NT Centre.
- 2 One cheque for each outing or function.
- 3 **Enclose a stamped addressed envelope (SAE).**
- 4 **£3 administration charge will be deducted from any refunds made after cancellations.** No refund will be made if cancelling within seven days of an outing (for example, if the outing is due to take place on a Wednesday, notification of the cancellation must be received by the organiser on or before the preceding Wednesday in order to qualify for a refund). NB: If expenditure has already been committed by the organiser and cannot be reclaimed (for example, where non-refundable theatre tickets have been booked), this cost will also be deducted in addition to the administration charge.
- 5 Disabled members and those with mobility difficulties are welcome but must be accompanied by a helper who can look after them. Health and safety regulations and insurance requirements do not allow coach drivers or other members to assist passengers.

Booking forms, SAE and Cheques

Please ensure that the above items are sent to the correct organiser whose name appears at the end of each description. If their address and telephone number do not follow their name, they are committee members. Addresses and telephone numbers of these members appear at the front of the Newsletter.

Personal Accident Insurance

Members aged 80 and over who attend any Worcester-Malvern NT Centre events are reminded that they are NOT covered by our Group Personal Accident Insurance.

This does not apply to our holiday insurance when separate cover is taken out.

We board coaches at:-

MALVERN	Avenue Road, just above Imperial Road.
WORCESTER	Croft Road, lorry park, by café.
PERSHORE	Broad Street.



Coaches will depart punctually from the pick-up points. Event timetables do not allow for coaches to wait for anyone who may be late. A feeder coach or taxi may be used on occasions to transfer Pershore members to join or leave the main coach.

OUTINGS 2012

Cottesbrooke Hall and Gardens, Northamptonshire

Thursday 2nd August

The June outing has proved so popular that we are offering another opportunity to those who failed to get a place.

This magnificent Queen Anne house, in its delightful rural Northamptonshire setting, is reputed to be the model for Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*. Housed there is the Woolavington collection of sporting pictures, which includes works by Stubbs and Ben Marshall, and is among the finest of its kind in Europe. This is complemented by good examples of 18th century English and French furniture, and a fine collection of porcelain.

In the formal gardens, huge 300-year-old cedars set off magnificent double herbaceous borders, pools and lily ponds. There is also a wild garden planted along the course of a stream flowing through the park, with small cascades and arched bridges. A winner of the Historic Houses Association Garden of the Year Award, it has been nominated as one of the best gardens in the world in *1001 Gardens you must see before you die*.

The Old Laundry Tea Room will be open from 2.30pm for the purchase of homemade cakes, tea and coffee.

Cost - £22.50 covers coach, tip and entrance (HHA Friends, on presentation of membership card, £16).

Pick-ups:- Malvern 11.15am Pershore 11.45am Worcester 12.05pm

Return - depart at approximately 5.00pm

Cheque, SAE and booking form to Mr. C. Hooper.

Museum of Welsh Rural Art - St. Fagan's, near Cardiff

Tuesday 14th August

This outing is currently full, but there is a waiting list. It may be possible to take a second coach, so if anyone else wishes to add their name to the waiting list, please telephone Mrs. S. Collis 01684 576377.

Start the day by enjoying the journey down to St. Fagan's through very pretty countryside. We aim to arrive at 10.30am. St. Fagan's is Wales's most popular heritage attraction. Opened in 1948 the museum stands in the grounds of St. Fagan's Castle and Gardens, donated to the people of Wales by the Earl of Plymouth.

During the last 60 years, over 40 original buildings have been re-erected in the parkland, among them houses, a farm, a school, a chapel, a workmen's institute, a toll house, shops etc. The beautiful St. Teilo's church, originally erected in stages

from around 1100 to 1520 and moved stone by stone to St. Fagan's over 20 years, is most impressive. The reconstruction takes the church back beyond living memory when the interior was brightly decorated with murals, paintings and carvings.

Traditional crafts and activities bring St. Fagan's alive in workshops where craftsmen still demonstrate their traditional skills. Native breeds of livestock can be seen in the fields and farmyards. Visitors gain an insight into the rich heritage and culture of Wales and the Welsh language can be heard frequently.

The castle and grounds are also open. There are also galleries with exhibitions of costume, daily life and farming implements. There is a restaurant and three cafés, a shop and picnic area.

Cost - £17 covers coach and tip. Entry to St. Fagan's is free.

Pick-ups:- Malvern 8.15am Worcester 8.45am Pershore 9.15am

Return - depart at approximately 3.30pm

STONOR PARK (repeat visit)

near Henley- on-Thames

Tuesday 4th September

The July outing has proved so popular that we are offering another opportunity to those who failed to get a place. Set in the beautiful Chiltern Hills, Stonor is one of England's oldest manor houses. The home of Lord and Lady Camoys, it has been in the Stonor family for over 800 years. There are commanding views of the deer park from the terraced hillside gardens. The medieval Catholic Chapel, used throughout the years of Catholic repression, is still in regular use today. Stonor gave sanctuary to St. Edmund Campion in 1581 and an exhibition features his life and work.

Cost - £34 covers coach and tips, entry and guided tour, Ploughman's lunch and tea and biscuits before we depart to return between 3.30 and 4.00pm

Pick-ups:- Malvern 8.00am Pershore 8.30am Worcester 9.00am

Cheque, SAE and booking form to Mr. P. Riley, 13, Zetland Court,

Zetland Road, Malvern, Worcs. WR14 2JQ Tel 01684 569759

OUTINGS 2013

Birmingham Royal Ballet – “Aladdin”

Tuesday 19th February

The UK premiere performances of David Bintley’s magical tale of love, trickery and triumph. A whirlwind story of adventure, romance and, of course, a magic lamp and all it contains. Created for the National Ballet of Japan in 2008, with music by Carl Davis, composer of numerous well-known television scores – this is another ballet not to be missed!

Cost:-£37 covers ticket, coach, taxi and tip.

Pick-ups:- Malvern 10.00am Pershore 10.30am Worcester 11.00am

Cheque, SAE and booking form to Mrs. M. Riley, 13, Zetland Court,
Zetland Road, Malvern, Worcs. WR14 2JQ Tel 01684 569759

More Outings Planned for 2013

Full details will be given in the next newsletter in January 2013, when actual dates will be confirmed:

Early March	Wedgwood Visitor Centre
11 th April	Oxford (to include Botanic Gardens & Bodleian Library)
Late April/ early May	Savill Garden
Late May	Hughenden Manor (NT)
Late June	Dyffryn Gardens (NT)
July	Althorp
August	Wrest Park (EH)
Early September	Tredegar House (NT)
October	Corsham Court
November	“Steam” Museum & Tour of Heelis (NT), Swindon
17 th - 21 st June 2013	Holiday. The History and Houses of Lincolnshire
22 nd - 26 th Sept. 2013	Holiday, Lisbon City Break

Some Enjoyable Outings.



On 21st May members visited Strawberry Hill, the recently restored Gothic home of Horace Walpole. Some of the members, above, found an interesting and unusual place to sit and admire the gardens!



An enjoyable day was had at Cheltenham Racecourse on 29th May where the group had a very interesting behind-the-scenes guided tour and an excellent lunch, after which there was a tour of the workshops at Beckford Silk.

HOLIDAYS

Valkenburg, Cologne & the Belgian Ardennes

24th - 29th September 2012

YOUR LAST CHANCE TO BOOK FOR THIS HOLIDAY.

Six days and five nights half-board at the three-star Best Western Hotel Walram. All excursions and guided tours included. Executive coach and professional tour manager throughout. P&O Ferries Channel crossing.

On the first day, the party will cross from Dover to Calais and continue on to Valkenburg. On day 2, there is a visit in the morning to Bastogne, where the 101st Airborne Division fiercely defended the city during the Battle of the Bulge. On day 3, the first stop is Maastricht, one of the oldest towns in the Netherlands then on to the Belgian city of Liège, the capital of the Ardennes, located on the River Meuse. In the afternoon the party continues on to the great Roman spa city of Aachen, home of one of Europe's oldest and most dramatic cathedrals. Day 4 has Cologne as the destination. There will be an included guided tour of the city which will incorporate sites such as the Roman Tower, the old town houses and the twin-spired Gothic cathedral. The next day there will be a full-day visit to Antwerp, beginning with a guided city tour taking in the Great Market Square, the Town Hall, the Butchers' Guild House and the Cathedral of our Lady, with time to explore the city at leisure in the afternoon. En route home on the last day there will be a stop in Ghent where there will be free time to see the beautiful canals and fine cathedral, home to the famous 'Adoration of the Mystic Lamb'. [NB: This is a provisional itinerary].

Cost £429 per person (based on two people sharing a twin/double-bedded room; single room supplement £79).

For further information please apply to Clive Hooper enclosing a stamped addressed envelope (approximately 4.25 x 8.5 ins.) for full details and a booking form.

The History and Houses of Lincolnshire

17th - 21st June 2013

Five days and four nights half-board at the three-star Holiday Inn Hotel in Lincoln, located a five-minute walk from the city centre.

On the first day, Grantham will be visited where there will be time for lunch, before proceeding to Doddington Hall – never sold since it was built in 1595 and whose mellow brick exterior and walled courtyards have barely changed, but which now has a light and elegant style of Georgian interior design. A guided tour of Lincoln, on the second day, will take in visits to the Castle and the Cathedral, including the mediaeval Bishops' Palace, set dramatically in the shadow of the Cathedral and with the superb contemporary Heritage Garden reflecting its historical setting; this is followed later in the day by a visit to Gainsborough Old Hall, one of the best preserved mediaeval manor houses in the country, with its kitchens and enormous fireplace, noble great hall and imposing lodgings tower.

Day 3 has a visit to Tattersall Castle (NT), the red-brick mediaeval castle with commanding views over the Lincolnshire countryside and built by Ralph Cromwell, Lord Treasurer of England in 1434; there will also be the opportunity to visit the neighbouring church, the largest parish church in the country. The afternoon is set aside for a visit to Belton House (NT) near Grantham. A crowning achievement of Restoration country house architecture, Belton contains important collections of paintings, furniture, tapestries and silver. On the next day there will be time at leisure in Newark on Trent, home to one of the finest Georgian market squares in England, followed by a short included cruise on the River Trent, before proceeding, in the afternoon, to the notable Workhouse at Southwell (NT) and the majestic Southwell Minster with its glorious 13th century chapter house. There is a visit on the final day, on the homeward-bound journey, to Grimsthorpe Castle, Park and Gardens, with the dramatic 18th century John Vanburgh north front to the castle (his last major work), state rooms and picture galleries with magnificent contents and artefacts associated with the office of Lord Great Chamberlain.

Cost £369 per person (based on two people sharing a twin/double-bedded room; single room supplement £79).

For further information, please apply to Clive Hooper enclosing a stamped addressed envelope (approximately 4.25 x 8.5 inches) for full details and a booking form.

Lisbon City Break

22nd - 26th September 2013

Five days and four nights on a bed and breakfast basis at the centrally located three-star Hotel Eduardo VII, adjacent to the beautiful tropical park. Flying from Bristol to Lisbon, with a professional guide for all day trips and airport transfers.

The first full day in Lisbon begins with a guided city tour taking in the Belem Tower, Pedro Square, the Mediaeval Quarter of Alfama, the beautiful 16th century Mosterio dos Jeronimo (the most impressive symbol of Portugal's power and wealth during the Age of Discovery). The last visit of the day will be to the Museu de Arte Antiga, housing works by artists such as Hans Memling, Raphael and Tintoretto and whose chapel is a fine example of 18th century Portuguese Baroque art and architecture.

The next day, the morning destination is the Palacio de Queluz with its exuberant baroque and rococo architecture and gardens, now known as the 'Portuguese Versailles'. The next stop, after passing along the picturesque Atlantic coastline and through the village of Estoril, is the fishing village of Cascais; and then on inland to the idyllic mountain town of Sintra, adored by artists and writers from all over the world, where lunch can be taken. The day concludes with a visit to the UNESCO-listed Pena Palace, the summer residence of the Portuguese royal family during the 15th and 16th centuries and the best example of a medieval palace in Portugal.

On Day 4, the first visit is to Sesimbra, a picturesque fishing village once occupied by the Romans and later the Moors, to see the Moorish Castle with wonderful panoramic views from the ramparts --before moving on to the small hill town of Palmela and the Church of São Pedro with its 18th century tiles depicting scenes from the life of St Peter, and then returning to Lisbon via the scenic Parque Natural da Arrábida, established to protect the wild, beautiful landscape.

The final day sees visits to the Palacio de Fronteria (where the Duke of Wellington lived when defending Lisbon from Napoleon's army), and the Museu Gulbenkian (one of Europe's unsung treasures, with masterpieces by France Hals, Rubens, Rembrandt, Fragonard and Gainsborough) --. before transferring to Lisbon airport for the flight back to Bristol.

Cost £564 per person (based on two people sharing a twin/double-bedded room; single room supplement £89).

For further information, please apply to Clive Hooper enclosing a stamped addressed envelope (approximately 4.25 x 8.5 inches) for full details and a booking form.

Please note that the itineraries set out in the two holidays above are provisional and may be subject to change; if so, the additional information will show any revisions which might be made.

Worcester-Malvern Centre Website

As mentioned in the report from the Chairman, we have set up our own website on a pilot basis, and invite members to visit it and give us feedback. It is anticipated that the site will be progressively developed over the coming months as new features are added.

The website address is: www.worcestermalvernntcentre.org.uk