

# The Rugby National Trust Association

  
in support of **National  
Trust**

## Spring Newsletter 2022

**AGM**

**Summer Outings**

[www.rugbynationaltrust.org](http://www.rugbynationaltrust.org)

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Christmas lunch at Ansty Hall on 7 December 2021

## Letter from the Committee

We hope this latest edition of our Newsletter finds you and yours all safe and well. As we all gradually try to emerge from the difficult times of recent months, so Rugby National Trust is determined to restart as full a programme of activities as possible for all its members. As published in the Autumn edition, talks have begun again in Dunchurch Village Hall, and have been running safely and smoothly. There is a booked programme running through to March as in pre-Covid years.

Audiences at the talks have been, perhaps not surprisingly, a little down in numbers compared to pre-pandemic days, and we totally respect any members' concerns about returning to public events after the recent lockdowns. Whenever you do decide to come to a talk, please be assured that we provide sensible safety measures, including provision of hand sanitiser, encouragement of mask-wearing, adequate ventilation and socially distanced seating. Following a suggestion from members, we also encourage people to bring their own cups or mugs for hot drinks at the interval.

Since the Association has of necessity been in a state of suspension for all this time, our finances have remained in a very healthy state as before, so that we can endeavour to ride out the present continuing period of uncertainty while hopefully audience numbers recover. Also, we are carefully putting together a programme of Summer outings, details of which can be found in this Newsletter. By the time you are reading this, we shall also have had a Christmas lunch at Ansty Hall near Coventry.

On a more troubling note, during 2021 we had resignations from our Committee of David Knapp, our Treasurer, and Anne Turner, our Secretary. Michael Turner, who was our website compiler and editor, also ceased to be a full Committee member, but has kindly continued to manage it for the time being. We wish to offer our grateful thanks for the sterling work they all did in helping to make RNTA the success that it became, and still is. Needless to say their work has now had to be shared out among the remaining 6-strong Committee, with the inevitable increase in pressure this brings. Fortunately, we are hopeful of having a new Treasurer in 2022, volunteering from our membership, but still urge others of you to consider stepping up to help; the positions of Secretary, Publicity and Website Managers are still vacant.

Cont ...

As you will have gathered from all this, we are determined to return our Association from hibernation to full strength as quickly as circumstances permit, and restart our primary purpose to substantially support local National Trust properties. Please feel encouraged to return to our meetings as soon as you feel ready and, as always, spread the good word to friends and acquaintances about us; remember that you no longer have to be a member of the main National Trust to be able to join RNTA.

We hope to see you soon!

Keep safe, and all best wishes from the Committee!

*Compiled by George Brunavs (Talks and Meetings Secretary/  
Vice-Chairman) in consultation with other Committee members*

### **Thank you messages**

Please pass on my thanks for the lovely card and garden voucher. Also for the kind words.

I very much enjoyed my time on the committee but times change and whilst our immediate plans may have been curtailed somewhat, we are hopeful of resuming our travels in the new year.

With very best wishes to you all

*David Knapp*

Michael and I would like to thank you most sincerely for the kind gift and card which you sent us recently. We shall enjoy purchasing some plants for our garden.

We were sorry to be unable to attend the first meeting but hope that it went well and that you will soon have some new committee members.

Thank you again.

*Anne and Michael Turner*

### **The RNTA Database**

Full details of our membership are kept on personal computers for the purpose of membership subscriptions, circulation of Newsletters and the management of coach trips and other activities of the Rugby National Trust Association. Such details will not be disclosed to any third party.

## **Trips and Visits**

We would like to remind all members that our outings can be quite demanding . We often visit places with old and uneven floors, stairs that can be difficult with no lift options and gardens and tours that may involve quite a lot of walking. Always check with the organiser if you have mobility problems. Members who need assistance should bring a companion.

### **Departure Point**

The Committee has made arrangements with St Mark's Church, Bilton for the use of their car park so, *unless stated*, we depart from there. We try to use as little space as possible, so please park on the side away from the church and as close together as possible.

### **Travelling by coach**

At the time of writing, November 2021, the Government does not have any regulations for covid on coaches.

The coach company has asked that we leave the seat behind the driver free. The wearing of masks is optional and we can ask the driver to wear one if we wish.

If you wish to sit alone on the coach please indicate that on the booking form as that will affect the number of people we can take.

Association Committee

*NEW ORGANISERS WANTED*

### **2023 Visits Planning Meeting**

Wednesday, 13 April 2022 at 7.30 pm

Our Planning Meeting for 2023 visits will be held in the Committee Room at the Dunchurch Village Hall

We are looking for new people with ideas for outings who are willing to organise or help with a visit

There will be plenty of help and advice to get you started if you need it

THE RUGBY NATIONAL TRUST ASSOCIATION  
34<sup>th</sup> **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022

at 2.30 pm in the Dunchurch Village Hall

**Agenda**

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Minutes of the last AGM**
3. **Matters Arising**
4. **Treasurer's Report**
5. **Chairman's Report**
6. **Election of Committee** – The members of Rugby National Trust Association that are put forward for election in the year 2022 are:

Vacant	Chair
To be confirmed	Treasurer
Pam Southern	Bookings Secretary/Acting Treasurer
Vacant	Secretary
Adrian Futter	Membership Secretary
Vacant	Publicity Officer
George Brunavs	Meetings Secretary/Vice chair
Pauline Springett	Visits Co-ordinator
Malcolm Tennant	Sales Table
Isobel Palmer	Newsletter Editor
Vacant	Web Editor
7. **Appointment of Independent Examiner**
8. **Subscription**
9. **Any Other Business**
10. **Next Annual General Meeting will be Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - 2020/21

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
Membership Fees	2,555.00	2,346.00
Admission to Meetings	1,391.00	-
Sales Table	280.00	-
Raffles	302.00	-
Donations	329.00	233.00
Trips and Visits	2,552.00	-
Bank Interest	4.10	0.29
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£7,413.10</b>	<b>£2,579.00</b>

### **EXPENDITURE**

Speakers	444.90	-
Hall Hire	635.00	-
Printing	690.40	178.00
Postage/Admin Expenses	338.13	301.18
Refreshments	90.00	-
Sales Table Stock	62.00	-
Raffle Prizes	143.75	-
Trips and Visits	2,696.16	-
Donations to NT Projects	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£5,100.34</b>	<b>£479.18</b>
Surplus for the Year	2,312.76	2,099.99
Balance Brought Forward	8,514.75	10,827.51
<b>RESERVES at YEAR END</b>	<b>£10,827.51</b>	<b>£12,927.62</b>

I have examined the accounts and bank records of the Rugby National Trust Association for 2020/21 and consider that, in my opinion, the Income and Expenditure Account, as presented above, gives a true and accurate report of the Association's finances as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**Ian Stimson – Independent Examiner**

## **Report from the Acting Treasurer for 2020/21**

David Knapp retired as Treasurer on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 and we thank him for all the work he did to keep the accounts in good order.

We are delighted that we have a new person willing to take over but he cannot start until later this year. I agreed to act as Treasurer for this year and we hope he will take over on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022.

Again we record our thanks to Ian Stimson who continues to be the Independent Examiner of the accounts.

Until the relaunch of the programme of talks there has been little activity in the accounts but we thank all our members who have been so loyal and maintained their membership over these challenging two years.

We shall keep the annual membership fees at £10 for single members and £15 for joint membership for the next twelve months.

Pam Southern  
Acting Treasurer

### **Membership Update**

The RNTA membership numbers have fallen slightly over the last two years which is unsurprising given the long period of inactivity due to Covid-19 and then the resulting caution of some people to engage in social activities. At this time last year we reported a total membership of 283 which has now fallen to 271.

On a brighter note, this number includes four new members who we would like to welcome to the Association.

Adrian Futter  
Membership Secretary

### **Sales Table**

I will be continuing with sales of second hand books and jigsaw puzzles which are very popular. I have managed to find another recycler for printer cartridges so please bring those along as well.

Malcolm Tennant

# PROGRAMME of OUTINGS for 2022

## Walk from Braunston

Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2022

By car we meet at Boat Inn, Braunston for a 10 am start

Organised by Mark Furber

Supported by Flick Furber

We start from the Boat Inn at Braunston at 10 am. Joining the towpath we cross the beautiful iron bridge at the junction of the Oxford and Grand Union canals, climbing back to the road and immediately crossing a stile, we follow a path across fields to the railway embankment which once carried the Great Central line. Crossing four more fields and passing Willoughby House we reach the road to Sawbridge. In Sawbridge we join a bridleway, and after a mile cross the Grand Union canal and soon afterwards the dismantled Central Railway.



Carrying on along the path, we pass the 13<sup>th</sup> century church of St Peter's at Wolfhamcote, land enclosures resulted in the death of the village, and just past the church is the site of another "lost village" – Braunstonebury.

We carry on along the path and reach the Boat Inn where we can purchase lunch, in total we will have walked five miles.

## Tissington Well Dressings and Tissington Hall

Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022

By coach departing at 9 am

Organised by Pauline Springett

Supporter required

The origins of Well Dressing are lost in antiquity. It is thought they may have their roots in pagan customs. One theory says that the custom began just after the Black Death of 1348-9. Although the population round about was ravaged by plague, in Tissington all escaped and the immunity was ascribed to the purity of the water supply. It became the custom to decorate the wells in thanksgiving. There are 6 wells scattered around the village. In addition to the Wells, in the centre of the village stands Tissington Hall. The Tissington Estate has been home to the Fitzherbert family since the reign of Elizabeth I. Tissington Hall is a house of many extensions, originally built in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, a top floor was added around 1700 and then the well-known Derby architect, Joseph Pickford, remodelled the west aspect around 1780 by adding a projecting central bay and open arcading on the ground floor. Further extensions took place in 1902.

Our day starts by leaving St Mark's car park at 9 am. We will have morning coffee/tea (included) at the Coach & Horses in Fenny Bentley, before proceeding to the village of Tissington to commence our tour of the Hall at 11.30.



Tissington Hall

After the tour of the Hall we return to the Coach & Horses for lunch. (included) After lunch we will go back to the village so that members can view the various wells. Afternoon tea is available at the Old Coach house tea rooms but the cost is not included.

Our coach will leave Tissington at 4.45 arriving in Rugby at approx. 6.15 pm.

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## Tissington Well Dressings and Tissington Hall (cont.)

### Menu

#### *Main*

Roast beef with Yorkshire pudding

Or

Chicken Supreme with a mushroom & Stilton sauce

Or

Mixed vegetables in a cheese sauce with a herb crumble topping

#### *Dessert*

Homemade chocolate & orange sponge with custard

Or

Toffee honeycomb cheesecake with ice cream

Or

Lemon meringue roulade with fresh raspberries

Members booked on the outing will receive a form for making menu choices when the coloured booking form is returned to you.

***NB Tissington Hall is not suitable for people with walking difficulties***

### **Middleton Hall and Gardens, North Warks**

Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2022

By coach departing at 10 am

Organised by Pauline Springett

Supporter required

Middleton Hall and Gardens is a little-known site located on the North Warwickshire border, between Tamworth and Sutton Coldfield. The estate covers 42 acres which encompasses a historic manor house, an 18<sup>th</sup> century Walled Garden and the oldest man-made lake in North Warwickshire. The Hall has a long history spanning over 900 years. It has been home to many interesting characters including a commander of the Battle of Hastings, a Tudor explorer and two extraordinary naturalists. The medieval stone building is the oldest domestic building in Warwickshire.

The Hall is run by an independent charitable trust that was founded in 1980. A lived-in family home up until 1966, the house was bought by Amey Roadstone who used the estate for gravel extraction. The company had no use for the buildings and

cont...

## Middleton Hall and Gardens (cont)

grounds and it was left derelict for ten years. In 1977, a group of ramblers came across the Hall and were dismayed by the sorry state. They approached North Warwickshire Borough Council for funding but the application was rejected as they deemed the Hall past repair. Undeterred they founded Middleton Hall Trust in 1980. Amey Roadstone granted them a sum of £25,000 per year for ten years to be spent purely on materials. Middleton Hall was saved by an intrepid volunteer army and it would not be standing today without them.

We will depart St Mark's car park at 10 am arriving at Middleton Hall by 11 am. We will be served tea/coffee followed by an Introductory talk lasting 20 minutes. We will then be split up into groups of 15 for a guided tour of the Hall. A buffet lunch will then be served consisting of:

- Selection of sandwiches
- Selection of savoury sides
- Salad and tortillas
- Tea and coffee.

Members with special dietary needs please indicate this.

The Jettied building

Photo from Wikipedia



After lunch members will be free to explore the gardens and independent shops in The Courtyard.

We will leave Middleton Hall by 4 pm arriving back at approximately 5—5.15 pm.

Special Note Please indicate on the booking form if you are a HHA member and a refund will be payable on the day of the visit.

## Arbury Hall, Nuneaton, Warks, CV10 7NF

Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2022

By car to arrive at 2.30 pm

Organised by Dr Barrie Bemand

Supported by Lynne Bemand

We shall make our own way by car to Arbury Hall to arrive at 2.30 pm. On arrival we shall be divided into groups of 20-25 for a guided tour of the house.

This will be followed by an afternoon Cream Tea after which there will be an opportunity to explore the beautiful gardens before making our own way back home.

In June rhododendrons, azaleas and giant wisteria provide a lovely setting for the visitor.

Arbury Hall was first built as an Augustinian Priory in the 12<sup>th</sup> C. Following the dissolution of the monasteries it was acquired by the Newdegate family and is the ancestral home of Viscount Daventry.



In the 18<sup>th</sup> C, the Tudor house was Gothicised by Sir Roger Newdegate and is said to be the “Gothic Gem” of the Midlands. The exterior is entirely encased with stone and each aspect of the building presents a separate design of stunning architecture.

The elegant interior rooms feature spectacular displays of soaring fan vaulted ceilings with plunging pendants and filigree tracery - breath-taking and complete example of early Gothic Revival architecture.

Mary Ann Evans, better known as George Eliot, was born in 1819 at South Farm on the Arbury Estate, where her father was for many years the agent. Several of her novels have as their setting, the Warwickshire countryside that she had known in her youth, in particular the Scenes of Clerical Life, which were first published in 1857

Cheverel Manor, which figures so prominently in this series of novels, is Arbury, and Sir Christopher Cheverel, its benevolent and cultivated owner, is Sir Roger Newdegate.

The house is only open to the general public on Bank Holiday Sundays and Mondays on 6 days a year so we have a rare opportunity to visit this stunning example of Gothic Revival architecture.

## Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire

Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022

By coach departing at 8.30 am

Organised by Roger & Catherine Jones

We will leave St Mark's Car park at 8.30 am arriving at Blenheim at approximately 10 am. On arrival we will have coffee in a private room and have a short presentation from an official guide after which individuals can plan their own day, touring the State rooms, visiting the water terrace, the rose garden, the Church memorial garden or exploring the magnificent parkland. Refreshments can be taken in any one of 4 restaurants/cafes, catering for all tastes and a large gift shop is available to those who wish to indulge.

We will leave Blenheim at 4 pm arriving back at 5.30 pm

Blenheim Palace is a country house in Woodstock, Oxfordshire. It is the seat of the Dukes of Marlborough and the only non-royal, non-episcopal country house in England to hold the title of palace. It is one of England's largest houses being built between 1705 and 1722 and designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987.

Named after the 1704 Battle of Blenheim in Bavaria, it was originally intended to be

a reward to John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, for his military triumphs against the French and Bavarians in the War of the Spanish Succession, culminating in the Battle of Blenheim. The land was a gift and construction began in 1705 with some financial support from Queen Anne. The design was awarded to the architect Sir John Vanbrugh. The 2000 acre park was developed by Capability Brown in 1760.

Designed in the rare, and short-lived, English Baroque style, architectural appreciation of the palace is as divided today as it was in the 1720s. It is unique in its combined use as a family home, mausoleum and national monument. The palace is notable as the birthplace and ancestral home of Sir Winston Churchill. Following the palace's completion, it became the home of the Churchill (later Spencer-Churchill) family for the next 300 years and various members of the family have wrought changes to the interiors, park and gardens. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the palace was saved from ruin by funds gained from the 9<sup>th</sup> Duke of Marlborough's marriage to American railroad heiress Consuelo Vanderbilt.



## Canons Ashby Stew Ponds

Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2022

By car to meet there at 11 am

Organised by Isobel Palmer

Following my talk on Canons Ashby, some people showed interest in the stew ponds which are only accessible as a special tour. Therefore, I have arranged a short, morning tour for RNTA members when a colleague and I will explain the history of the Augustinian Priory.

We meet in St Mary's priory church at 11 am for a talk about the early days of Canons Ashby after which we will take a short walk across the field to the ponds. I recommend that sensible shoes are worn as it can be a bit rough and wet, occasionally we find animals grazing in the field!

This will take about an hour. However, there is more to be seen in the parkland and Mediaeval village which would extend the walk, if you are interested.

The house, café and shop will be open for you to make your visit a leisurely day or there are even longer walks for the really energetic.

A view  
across the  
top stew  
pond to  
St Mary's  
church



## **Tetbury and Chavenage House**

Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022

By coach departing 8.30 am

Organised by Aileen Brown

Supporter Isobel Palmer

Chavenage is an Elizabethan manor house which is almost unchanged since its construction in 1576. It is still very much a family house and the Lowsley-Williams family have been there since 1891 being only the second family to live in the house. The family themselves show visitors around the house and organise the catering. The property contains many interesting items from the Elizabethan period and also from the English Civil War when the owner of the house was a Parliamentarian. Because of its unchanged character the house has been used as a location for many film and television programmes. In particular fans of the very popular TV series Poldark may recognise some interiors as the Poldarks' home Trenwith.



We leave from St. Mark's car park and travel to Tetbury which is the quintessential Cotswold town with its honey coloured buildings. There is the Market House (1655) and St Mary's Church (1781) and many small shops, cafes and restaurants. We hope to have about 1 ½ hours there to have a look round and perhaps have a coffee. We then travel on to Chavenage House to have a two course lunch (included).

Details of the menu will be enclosed when booking forms are returned.

After lunch we will be split into groups and taken on a guided tour of the house. There will be time to look around the gardens and perhaps to have a cup of tea (not included) before we leave. We hope to be back in Rugby about 6.30 pm.

## RNTA's contributions to local properties

Over the years, Rugby NTA has provided many volunteers for Canons Ashby House (I can think of over 20) and some have also worked at Upton House, Charlecote Park and Farnborough Hall. These volunteers are very proud of their work and get a lot of satisfaction from it.

One of the Association's remits is to raise money for the NT and, in particular, for properties nearby. Rugby NTA has made regular donations for specific projects to Baddesley Clinton, Charlecote Park, Coughton Court, Farnborough Hall, Stoneywell and Upton House. These include support for a wide range of requests such as the repair of ceramics; tools, pots, benches and picnic tables for the garden ; the development of children's education and activities; tree planting, various signage projects and help with improvements to a tearoom.

Its contributions to Canons Ashby have been ongoing over many years; RNTA helped to furnish the slaughter house in the Paddock as a learning centre for school children but then the bats took over! Eric Dalglish, one of our initial members who had held various offices in the Association, retired and donated the collection made for him to Canons Ashby for the purchase of several picnic tables.

A major donation was made for the purchase of the 4 topiary yews that replaced the Cedar trees by the steps from the top terrace during the renovation of the garden completed in 2013.

Some of the more recent contributions have been towards garden pots, a seat and the play area as well as the mounting of the waistcoats for display in the Tapestry Room.

The most recent donation of £3,500 was made at the end of 2019 enabling the purchase of chairs, benches and tables.

The chairs, particularly, have been in evidence during opening under Covid restrictions when window seats and soft furnishings could not be used. The chairs are easy to clean and move.

A donation of a different form was made over a period of several years for the hire of a coach to take pupils of St Marie's Primary School to the house to take part in a Tudor Experience Day which they enjoyed greatly.



RNTA has also made donations to special appeals to save various properties and landscapes.

## Dates for your Diary in 2022

<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Time</b>
20 Jan	RNTA AGM followed by: A CHANGE TO THE ANNOUNCED TALK NT Aspirations for the Midlands and the East of England Speaker: Paul Forecast	2.30 pm
3 Feb	Talk—Creating a New Future from an Old Garden Speaker: Mick Evans	2.30 pm
16 Feb	Talk—The history of the BTH works in Rugby Speaker: Alain Foote	7.30 pm
3 Mar	Talk—Northampton Guildhall: a study in stone Speaker: Kate Wills	2.30 pm
16 Mar	Queen Victoria—A life in portraits Speaker: Gillian White	7.30 pm
13 April	Visits Planning Meeting—DVH committee room	7.30 pm
<b>Outings</b>		
4 May	Walk from Braunston	meet at 10 am
31 May	Tissington Hall and Well Dressing	9 am
8 June	Middleton Hall & Gardens	10 am
21 June	Arbury Hall by car	to meet at 2.30 pm
6 July	Blenheim Palace	8.30 am
12 July	Canons Ashby Stew ponds	to meet at 11 am
7 Sep	Tetbury and Chavenage House	8.30 am



Compiled and edited by Isobel Palmer

The Rugby National Trust Association 2022

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Cover photo of Stowe Gardens by Isobel Palmer ©