

TRAVEL

December 2023 – January 2024 Newsletter

Bolsover Castle

We knew that it was going to be a wet day as we boarded the bus to visit Bolsover Castle but our spirits were high. We delayed our start for the member who hadn't checked the leaving time!

On arrival we met our friendly and knowledgeable Castle guide. He explained that, although built on the site of a medieval fortress that had been demolished, Bolsover Castle is in fact not a castle at all! The turret type structures were built in the manner of the architectural style of the day. It was built in the 17th century as a family retreat by the Cavendish family who lived a few miles away in Welbeck. The living quarters have the appearance of a mini castle with a lovely garden and raised walkway. The site offers extensive views across the valley. Inside it is clear that in its heyday this was a sumptuous and well equipped home, fit in fact for Royal entertainment. There is an historic world renowned riding house that was used to train horses in the European skill of dressage. In the present day there are still occasional dressage displays here.

Despite the house being relatively small a few of us did manage to wander and lose track of our guide and each other! One member changed direction on seeing the high walkway, even though it was not on the guided route, and was unable to re-find the group for 30 minutes. Another member lost track of his wife! A group of four also found themselves misplaced. Finally however, we were all safely gathered in and rebonded in the warmth of the onsite café before returning to Doncaster.

Bolsover Castle is a fascinating site steeped in history and well worth a visit. We all had a lovely day out and our thanks go to Wendy for organising the day.

Margaret Allott



Castleton and Peak Cavern Trip

On Tuesday the 25th July the Trips group and Travel group participated in a day trip to Castleton in the Peak District. We left the Interchange by bus at 10 a.m. with a lovely journey taking us firstly through Sheffield and then out into the Peak District where the scenery changed dramatically displaying many hills and dales. At one point we arrived at a place named Surprise View and it was indeed a lovely surprise as just round the corner the whole area opened out with huge vistas across the area of hills and dales.

By this time we were nearly into Hope village where several of the members disembarked from the bus so they could truly enjoy the countryside by walking to Castleton. On arrival in Castleton, as it was nearly lunch time, many of the group decided an early lunch was appropriate at one of the many pubs and tea shops in order to be ready for the big excitement of the afternoon as a visit to Peak Cavern was booked for 1 p.m. for those of us wishing to attend.



This was a thoroughly interesting visit where our guide explained to us how the rope makers used to live in the cave and we were shown a 'hovel' where it was said 12 people would sleep but it looked barely big enough for twelve bodies to find space to lay side by side! We were then given an explanation of how rope was made and one person even had the opportunity to make a piece of rope which they were allowed to take home with them.

For others it was a tour of the village which was the attraction with the quaint buildings and the many shops displaying their wares of 'Blue John'. By the end of the afternoon everyone was ready for a sit down, a cup of tea and a return to the bus was the order of the day and just in time as after a lovely day of good weather it then decided to rain so the timing was perfect and a good day was had by all.



Visiting Peak Cavern.

(Also known as the Devil's Arse apparently due to the fact that when it rains the water gushing through makes peculiar noises!)

Life on the Cliff Edge

On Tuesday 6th June the Travel group and the Love of Nature group joined forces on a day excursion to RSPB Bempton Cliffs, near Bridlington, to see the sea bird colonies nesting on the cliffs overlooking the North Sea. Although the weather was chilly, especially on the more exposed sections, we all had a great day.

We were met by an RSPB volunteer, Brian, who gave us an interesting talk and led us on a short guided walk along the cliff path identifying the different species as we went. The guide set up his tripod and high spec monocular lens at various spots along the route so that we could all see close ups of sights many day visitors would probably have missed.



It was wonderful to be so close to the sea birds we don't see at home and there were prolific numbers of gannets, kittiwakes and guillemots, amongst others, as well as my special favourite, the puffin. The puffins were few and far between which made it even more special when we spotted one on the cliff side to take a closer look at. Apparently there is a lone albatross that returns to the reserve every year but we didn't spot him on the day we were there. A good reason for another visit. I'll be back !

With thanks to Wendy Hattrell and Christine Curtis for organising the trip.

Andrew Murray



June – July 2023 Newsletter

Trip to Beverley

On 28 March 2023, two Leger buses left Doncaster heading for Beverley. I think everyone was ready to get moving after a long winter so we ended up with a party big enough for two buses. Unfortunately one bus broke down leaving Doncaster and had to be replaced so arrived about half an hour late.

Beverley is a lovely town with plenty of interesting shops and cafés, but the building which dominates the town is the Minster. We had arranged to meet at the Minster at 2 p.m., where there was a choice of specially arranged tours, one of the ground floor and one of the roof space – up 113 steps!!

The roof tour requires two guides to make sure no one gets left up there. The town came to have such an impressive church because it was a place of pilgrimage. It was founded as a monastery by John when he was Bishop of York in 714 and he retired there. The earliest parts of the current church date from the 12th Century. A group of us climbed the 113 steps of the spiral staircase to experience a magical tour of the roof space. This is the space between the vaulted ceiling you see from the floor of the church and the pitched roof you see if you look at the outside of the building.



The first thing that catches your attention when you get up to the roof is a huge wooden wheel, about twice the height of a man. Before that is explained, you marvel at the amazing timbers that hold up the roof. Most are centuries old, dating back to the time when the building was constructed. Some were, even then, repurposed. They had been used in other buildings or on ships before being used in the Minster.

We were up there for over an hour so there is too much information to put in an article – but what about that wheel? In the centre of what we were told was the crossing was what appeared to be a well. The wheel was a pulley system powered by one or two men, depending on the weight of the load, to haul up tools and materials, to the roof level. You could carry nails and a hammer up the spiral staircase but large pieces of timber, lead for the roof, or stones and mortar were all lifted using the wheel.

The wheel has now been replaced by an electric motor. We were all asked to stand back as the guides used the motor to lift what looked like the lid of the 'well' to discover they were lifting the central boss from the crossing and we were looking straight down into centre of the church. Amazing!!

We descended the 113 steps and re-joined the rest of the party. We gave our thanks to the volunteer guides who had looked after us so well and headed back to Doncaster on our two buses.

Truly a visit to remember.

Wendy Hattrell



December 2022 – January 2023 Newsletter

Wentworth Woodhouse

When the Travel Group visited Wentworth Woodhouse in the spring we were all so impressed by the quality of the guided tour we agreed to come back in the autumn and do a different tour. Consequently the booking for the Black Diamonds tour went ahead on 27th September with 41 members taking part - so I had to book a bigger bus!

The pre-arranged tea and coffee on arrival was very welcome while we waited for our guides - we had to split into two groups. Many of us had read the Black Diamonds book by Catherine Bailey which was published some years ago. We were told that, at the time of writing, Catherine had not been in the house as it was in private hands, so she wrote using written documents of the time for her research for the book. So there are discrepancies which were pointed out to us. It was a long, detailed tour going into parts of the house which are not visited on other tours.

Most of us enjoyed the pre-arranged sandwich lunch before exploring the gardens and the grounds on a lovely sunny day before catching the bus back to the interchange.

If you are not familiar with Wentworth Woodhouse I would recommend a visit. You can use the cafe without paying an entrance fee but the gems are the tours, so interesting and well presented.

Wendy Hattrell





December 2022 -January 2023 Newsletter

Day Trip To Bridlington - Monday 5th September 2022

Well it may not have been Bangor but didn't we have a love(r)ly time the day we went to Bridlington.

Having set off just after 10.00 we arrived in Bridlington just before noon, just in time for lunch.

Having checked on the weather the previous night, I foolishly had a rolled up waterproof in my rucksack which proved totally unnecessary, as indeed was any form of jumper. It was a perfect, beautiful, sunny day, hot but not too much.

On arrival at the harbour some of us alighted there, including me, whilst the rest of the group went on to visit Sewerby Hall and Gardens.

Those of us stopping at the harbour went off in pursuit of their ideal day, some went together and others did their own thing, as did I. Despite having brought sandwiches with me, I chose to have an over indulgent lunch in my favourite café, followed by a home made ice cream over the road, whilst I know others went off for fish and chips.

Having been to Brid many times, I just wanted a casual day out and after lunch wandered down past the harbour and onto the northern beach. I know it's a bit of a cliché but I had a beautiful stroll along the beach in bare feet with the warm sun on my back, my trousers rolled up and my feet splashing through the surf lapping at the shore. Absolutely wonderful!

I reluctantly left the beach when I got to the end steps and decided to walk back along the promenade with the sun on my face and my feet drying and losing their covering of sand. A ten minute sit down on one of the benches with a carton of fresh orange from my pack, quenching my thirst; I knew it would come in useful somewhere. On the way back, I even took time out for another cliché and waved at the land train making its way back from Sewerby Hall. I understand other members of the group had much enjoyed the little train, laughing that it made them feel like children again.

My day finished off with a welcome 'cuppa' back at the top of the harbour, followed by a chat with some other members of the group, while we waited for the 30 seater coach. It arrived promptly at 15.45, to take us back to Doncaster.

As I say, a really lovely sun filled Autumn day out, thanks to Wendy and the good company of my fellow travellers.

David Bryan





Wentworth Garden Centre Trip

Many thanks to Wendy for organising our thoroughly enjoyable U3A trip to Wentworth Woodhouse in April. The rain kept off and at times we even had sunshine.

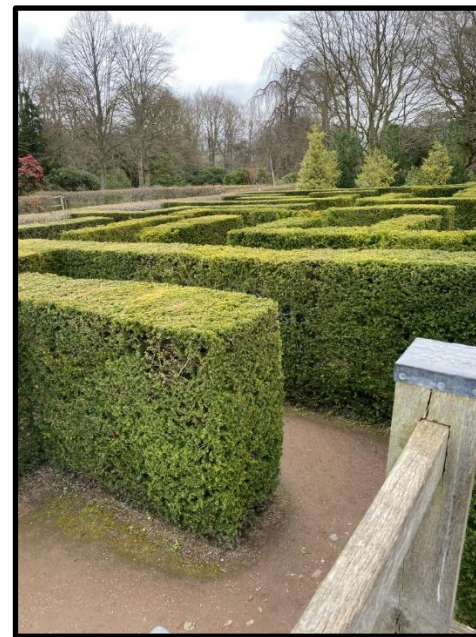
Our day began as we discovered parts of Doncaster Interchange that many of us had not been in before. Our friendly coach driver delivered us directly to the Wentworth Garden Centre where there was a tempting display of bedding plants, shrubs, roses and fruit trees. Not many of us left this area empty handed! There was a lovely large gift shop and a variety of coffee/lunch venues where we renewed friendships and made new ones. Some of us explored the extensive gardens where the camellias were in full bloom, and even dared to explore the maze.

Most of the group had elected to explore the grand old house of Wentworth Woodhouse which, assisted by The National Trust, was undergoing extensive renovations. It has a frontage wider than Buckingham Palace. We were given fascinating insights into the building and the people who had owned it by a very knowledgeable guide. A once glorious ballroom and extensive entertaining rooms, many now used in drama and film productions, once hosted royalty. An amazing building in a quiet corner of Yorkshire.

I'm certainly looking forward to the next Wentworth Woodhouse trip in October when we will see the wings of the house and the rooms where the King and Queen stayed, none of which we saw this time.

The cafe and gift shop within the house allowed for more coffee, cake and chat before our coach journey back to Doncaster Interchange. We left feeling that we'd had a fabulous day out.

Margaret Allott



Harlow Carr

Although I am not a gardener myself I do enjoy visiting the many Houses and Gardens in Yorkshire and surrounding counties. When it was decided we should visit Harlow Carr in September I was delighted. Each season has its own special beauty there from snowdrops and spring bulbs through the magnificent summer beds to the changing autumn colours of the trees.

We left Doncaster interchange at 10.15 a.m. in the pouring rain and it was not the easiest of journeys. Harrogate was preparing for the UCI Road World Cycle Championships. Riders from 90 countries ploughed through the Yorkshire Dales in relentless rain, culminating in Harrogate. Traffic was therefore diverted along lanes which were flooded in places and it was quite scary in places.

All but five of us got off the coach at Harlow Carr and made straight for Betty's tea shop for a cuppa and cake and because it was such a nasty day there was no queue! The shop there is very good and spacious so plenty to browse through and pass an hour or so.

Those who so desired were able to have the loan of a large brolly and take a walk outside. Well worth it since everywhere looked lovely. I did feel sorry for the gardener picking the remaining beans! The glass Alpine House had lots of wonderful specimens and the Streamside, which is one of the longest in the country, certainly had plenty of water gushing along.

Then back to the café for lunch and another visit to the shop where there were plenty of ideas for Christmas stocking fillers and back to the coach for the journey back, picking up the five who had decided to spend their day in Harrogate.

It was an uneventful journey back and it was still raining.

Elisabeth Parker



A Sea-Side Trip

The weather is always an important factor when contemplating a trip to the coast, and in the spring, when I saw a trip to Scarborough was being organised for July, by the Travel group, I immediately put my name down. I then spent the intervening spring months in pleasant contemplation of the fun I would have when revisiting this, as I remembered, a lovely seaside town.

The day of our trip came, and off we went, sun glasses and straw hat on. No raincoat needed, as the weather forecast was excellent.

Then came the journey to get there. It seemed to me to be going on forever, as we hit one hold up after another as traffic streamed towards the coast, all, it seemed were heading for Scarborough.

It was the first day of the school holidays, the weather was glorious. So the rush to the sea side was to be expected. Because of this we did not arrive till 1.15 p.m. The time of the return trip was extended by our driver, giving us a nice long afternoon to wander where we wished.



The bus dropped us off on Foreshore Road, at the South Bay. We were offered the choice of going further on the bus to Peasholm Park on the North shore, but after such a long time on the bus I opted to get off at the first opportunity which was in the South Bay.

I was thirsty and hungry, so the first thing I did was to investigate the many restaurants and cafes on the Foreshore Road, that provided fish and chips. What else would one have at a British sea-side? There were plenty of cafes and restaurants and I could not believe the queues snaking

outside a couple of fish and chip shops, especially when there were so many to choose from. Perhaps they were known by the cognoscenti of the town for the quality, or perhaps the price, or even the quantity of the chips, as being better than those with no queues.

However, I chose a nice cool table indoors away from the heat of the sun to eat my traditional sea-side meal of fish and chips. Was seven pounds fifty expensive? As it is such a long time since I had fish and chips, I had no idea.

After a pleasant hour at lunch and enjoying people watching in the restaurant, I felt refreshed and ready for a slow amble towards the bridge that takes one over to the North Bay. As I had not been in Scarborough since the sixties, nothing was now familiar to me. And, I had no idea how far it was to the North Bay, when I saw a bus going in the right direction I did my old person version of hopping on. One pound fifty and my pass got me over the bridge, and an easy sight seeing way to view the beautiful and extensive coast that makes Scarborough one of the most spectacular sea fronts in Britain.

A refreshing pot of tea and a slice of home made cake in the cafe when I alighted from the bus in the South Bay. A gossip with the lady at the next table, where I got her life story, which was interesting, in that she had been born inland but chance had led her, as a nurse, to live in three East coast cities and towns, Aberdeen, Brighton, and Scarborough. When I asked her why she had retired to Scarborough, she replied that it was simply financial as the south eastern coast towns were too expensive for her means.

Then a short walk into Peasholm park, and the remaining sea-side necessity, an ice cream cornet eaten, and it was time to find a bus to take me back to the South Bay and the appointed place to get the bus back to land locked Doncaster.

A good trip back without hold ups got us back to Doncaster in good time, sans the sea-side rock. Apologies to friends and family.

Betty Alexander



Trip to Hull

The travel group meets once a month on a Tuesday. In the winter we have talks about various destinations, so mainly sit and listen over a cup of tea or coffee and in the summer we book a bus and go to destinations generally within about an hour and 15 minutes of Doncaster. Last year we went to Lincoln, York and Bridlington, this year Vanessa has planned a variety of destinations starting at the end of April with a trip to Hull.

A full bus set off from the Interchange just after 10.00 a.m. heading for Hull. We dropped some passengers off in the centre of the city and the remainder at The Deep. This is a magnet for school trips so was rather noisy at times but they have covered the formation of the oceans and their early occupants moving on to the current times as you descend 3 floors on a spiral circuit.

Fish are endlessly fascinating as they sweep through the tanks in shoals - equally fascinating are the scuba divers cleaning the tanks! A new attraction are the penguins who live in what is meant to be part of South Georgia - a now abandoned island near the Falklands, used in the past for whaling.

The bus then took members from The Deep to the centre of Hull. There are many attractions - the Maritime Museum, Ferens Art Gallery, the Wilberforce Museum of slavery and Street Scene, a transport museum. People chose where they wanted to go and met up again to catch the bus back home. Thank-you Vanessa for organising a really interesting trip.

Wendy Hattrell



Trip to Bridlington: July 3rd 2018

Nora Boyle's Day

The trip to Bridlington involved two options. The first was to stay in Bridlington for the whole of the visit and the second was to spend some time at Sewerby Hall and Gardens and some in Bridlington.

Some decided on the former. Others chose to go straight to Sewerby, have lunch, spend some time in the hall and/or in the gardens then make their way to Bridlington on the North Land Train which takes about 15 minutes and travels between the two destinations every 30 mins. There was one other option which I think I was the only one to choose and that is to start at Sewerby, walk to Bridlington along the coastal footpath and then have some time in Bridlington before picking up the bus for the return journey to Doncaster.

Sewerby Hall and Gardens requires more time than we could spare in order to fully appreciate what it has on offer which, for a £7.50 entry fee, includes the Hall set in 50 acres of 19th century parkland, a Zoo, Walled and Rose Gardens, a Cafe and an Adventure playground.

At the moment the walled garden has a series of plant displays which are a celebration of Women of the last 100 years. One of these is in honour of Jean Bishop known as Hull's Bee Lady who was given the British Empire Medal in 2017 for her work in raising £119,000 for Age UK since 2000, whilst wearing her trademark bee costume (see below).



The Clock Tower cafe at Sewerby serves a variety of lunches, homemade cakes and filter coffee and has a large outdoor seating area with parasols but is only accessible by paying the entrance fee for the Hall etc.

There are two Land trains. The North Side train runs between East Riding Leisure Bridlington and Sewerby Hall and Gardens, stopping once at Limekiln Lane. The South Side train travels between Bridlington Spa and South Cliff at intervals of 20 minutes.



Walking along the coastal path ensures you are closer to the cliff top than on the train and so you can see the shore where at various spots there were flocks of gulls feeding around small pools (see below).



As far as the eye can see there are wooden seats facing the sea, erected in memory of individuals and couples who have loved spending time on this part of the coast (see below).



The walk between Bridlington and Sewerby is signposted as one and three quarters of a mile long but I think that may be just to the outskirts of the town because it took me a good hour to reach the harbour from Sewerby.

The part of Bridlington which I saw held little of interest for me. I found the loud music emanating from the Amusement Park very challenging and so bypassed it as soon as I could and spent the last part of the visit around the rather rundown harbour area. However, to be fair, I wasn't open to looking beyond the harbour. Reviews of Bridlington praise its long clean sandy beaches, and walking by the water's edge which I might have been open to on a cooler day. I also didn't explore the south side which I believe takes you away from the more commercialised areas. No doubt there are attractions I didn't see or appreciate.

Although it was sunny there was a coastal breeze which made the temperature much more acceptable and it was glorious to be able to walk in sandals and without the need to wear more than a shirt or blouse on top.

For me the best part of the day was walking between the two locations with the sea in close proximity, a slight breeze to keep me cool and having spectacular views of the white chalky cliffs every time I turned round and looked back towards Sewerby. Walking in the opposite direction from Bridlington to Sewerby would be even more picturesque. Perhaps next time.



Trip to Lincoln

The Travel Group always used to organise its own trips and a small group met to discuss reviving this and possible destinations. There was a request for the 'seaside' and Lincoln was also suggested.

Lincoln was chosen for the first trip – it's not too far and we could try out the Doncaster Community Transport 26-seater buses before we ventured further afield. So 5th June saw 16 of us meeting at the Interchange for a visit to Lincoln. Well, I suppose as organiser I would say this, but we all enjoyed it enormously. One of the members had prepared a sheet with options and costs listed for places of interest and the bus dropped us near the Cathedral. I spent the day exploring the Castle which I had never visited before, others headed to the cafés and the shops while some visited museums.

Amazingly everyone turned up on time for the return bus at the bottom of the hill and we made our way back to Doncaster, as they say, 'Tired but Happy'. One member had even found her favourite butcher and brought back her purchases to enjoy when she got home!

As I write, we are preparing to go to Bridlington on 3 July and looking forward to fish and chips for lunch if we can avoid the seagulls! There will be no meeting in August for the Travel Group but 4 September will see us on another trip – most likely to York. If you would like to join us please let me know.

Wendy Hattrell



Travel Group off to a flying start!!

The revived Travel group got off to a good start in the new venue of Priory Place Methodist Church Hall with Diane and Chris giving an engaging presentation on their recent trip to the Orkney Isles. Diane spoke about the trip in general and all the Neolithic remains to be found there while Chris spoke about the naval involvement over the two world wars.

Chris and Diane were lucky with the weather and were able to show a selection of photographs they had taken themselves as well as filling in with some from the internet. We were all struck by how much the digs are revealing about life 5,000 years ago, and how relatively sophisticated it was. As Diane pointed out – not just dressed in animal skins with a club in their hands!

During WWII, Italian prisoners of war were engaged in constructing 'causeways' and their own project of an Italian, and therefore Catholic, church using two Nissan huts. They erected an impressive façade but the inside was breath taking. When you realised the elaborate decoration was all achieved using paint on a flat surface you marvelled at the effect.

Group leaders please note – the Methodist Church was a terrific venue and, in addition to the large hall, they also have various meeting rooms. There is a caretaker on hand and kitchen facilities available.

Thanks to Marjorie McGaw and Gillian Jamieson for sterling work with the refreshments and to George Kirk for taking the money and ticking off on the list. We were pleased to see a lot of members new to that group. We debated at the end how we wanted the Travel group to work. The room is booked for the first Tuesday of the month up to Christmas, 1.45 pm for refreshments for 2pm start. We will then look at a programme for 2018. There has been a request for trips once more, but we need to explore the financial and insurance implications, so that is one for the future.

Wendy Hattrell

