



SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S CLUB



Gladstone Museum

NEWSLETTER No. 55

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Dear Members and Friends,

Welcome to the 2020 January Newsletter where you'll find a look back at the SUWC events of the past few months. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank those members who do such excellent reviews for the Newsletter. And if you would like to do a review of one of the events coming up over the next six months, do get in touch with me. Those events include a talk on how the pioneering work of a Sheffield woman helped to preserve our countryside, and a private tour of the city's world renowned Hawley collection. Auctioneer Michael Dowse joins us for our Spring lunch to talk antiques and our summer outing is to the Potteries and to two museums which provide an insight into the region's industry of china production.

We hope you and your friends are able to join us at these and our other events. As usual please book your places either by email or using the booking forms included with the Newsletter. New members are always welcome.

RECENT EVENTS

23rd September: Coffee Morning

The sun streamed in through the windows of Tapton and the SUWC members streamed in through the doors. If this is the coffee morning it must be around the equinox! This regular event continues to attract over 40 members plus a number of guests and potential new members. There were tales of summer adventures to be exchanged, personal and family events to be communicated, commiserations at the inevitable bits of bad news and word of activities to come. The scribes dealing with membership were kept busy with a constant queue of members renewing, handing in cheques and revising contact details. Conducting this activity is a great convenience, clarifies uncertainties and saves postage but hardly makes a social occasion for the officiating members. Could there be some streamlining of this system? Another feature is the book exchange - a wonderful opportunity to pass on books you have enjoyed, acquire some more, raise some funds and help a charity which benefits from our unsold books. This is a well worthwhile activity. We used the Hunter Room and the Nightingale Room, both facing the front, comfortably furnished with space for serving the coffee and for our activities but still space to sit and to move around.

There was even a table with surplus apples to be distributed! Altogether this is a much appreciated event, combining business with pleasure and we extend our grateful thanks to the members of the Committee who make it work.

23rd October: AGM and talk on “A Long Walk to Freedom”

Chair’s Report

The aim of the Women’s Club is to provide a space for women associated with the University to gather to meet friends and to make new friends, and to enjoy stimulating lectures and events.

I like to think that this year we have managed to achieve these aims.

Our current membership stands at 93 with seven new members joining this year.

This year we decided to change the format of the lectures by having the tea/coffee after the lecture rather than before. We also now have use of the Hunter suite at Tapton Masonic Hall so we can sit down for our refreshments. The aim of these changes was to encourage more of a sense of collegiality within the club and from the feedback we have had I think members generally approve of the changes.

When the committee plan the programme for the year one of our objectives is to ensure plenty of variety so that there is something to please everyone. This year topics have ranged from women's suffrage through forensic science to the power of music in the care of patients with dementia and of course a wonderful talk on the excavation of Sheffield Castle and the ideas for redevelopment of the area.

We have also had some great outings. In December we had our traditional Christmas outing which this year was to Hardwick Hall. For the Spring Lunch in May we went back to Sheffield Girlguiding Centre on Little Common Lane. The lunch was preceded by an excellent talk by lifetime Guider, Ann Evans, about the history of Whitely Wood Hall and how it came to be taken over by the Girl Guides in 1935. Ann then went on to tell us how Girlguiding Sheffield has developed the site since then. Much of the discussion which followed took the form of reminiscences of former girl guides about the many happy hours they had spent there in their youth.

In June Rosemary Boucher kindly invited us, once again, to her amazing garden for the annual garden party. This is an event which never fails come rain or shine. We had a bit of both this year but I think everyone eventually got into the garden.

The highlight of the year for me was the summer outing to Elizabeth Gaskell's House and the Victoria Baths in Manchester and what a wonderful day we had with two such contrasting venues.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the year and feel that it has been a successful one. This has only been possible by having such a hugely supportive committee.

A Walk to Freedom: Following the formal business of the AGM, Janina Derrick, surrounded by SUWC friends and accompanied by her

daughter Bernadette, shared with us a very moving account of her early childhood wartime experiences.

Janina was born to university educated parents in the late 1930s, in Lwow, Poland – now located in the Ukraine - where they lived together with her maternal grandmother. On the day war broke out, her father left home walking to Greece en route to England where he joined the Polish Air Force in Britain. Thus ended family life for the duration of the war with only periodic censored letters arriving from her father.

Under the German regime, they continued to live in their apartment, unlike their Jewish neighbours who were taken by the Nazis to an undisclosed location.

Under Soviet rule, Janina's mother was interrogated – a highly traumatic experience for her. Stalin's henchman General Zhukov and his wife were then moved into the vacated apartment, with Zhukov's wife seeking to develop a relationship with their family, including advice on appropriate dress for formal occasions, and learning how to cook!

Many Poles attempted to move west, with Janina's family seeking to find her paternal grandparents. Aided by a courier paid in luxury goods, they travelled in open cattle and train trucks, with soldiers stabbing bayonets into the straw to find hideaways. They walked great distances through fields and marshland, often crawling on their stomachs to avoid detection, and were frequently challenged at checkpoints.

Eventually at the end of the war, they were reunited with Janina's father who was stationed on an Allied airbase in Germany, and not unsurprisingly, it took time for Janina to establish a relationship with him. Finally her father managed to obtain travel permits for the family to go to Britain, but he went ahead as Janina had contracted scarlet fever. Janina's mother suffered enormous anguish in having to leave her own mother behind. They were never to be re-united.

Janina's father died in the early 1950s. Her mother, after demonstrating such resilience during the immense wartime challenges, to quote Janina "went to pieces". Her mother lived until the year 2000. Janina's memories are recorded in papers at Ruskin College, Oxford.

At the end of her talk, Janina produced from deep in her bag, a tiny teddy bear which has travelled with her all these years.

24th October: Theatre visit - My Beautiful Laundrette at Leeds Playhouse

Hanif Kureishi wrote the screenplay for the film *My Beautiful Laundrette* directed by Stephen Frears in 1985. Now, 34 years on, Kureishi has transposed the screenplay onto the stage with stunning effect. This play is a blistering comment on Thatcherism, drugs gangs, culture clashes, female freedom, sexuality and identity politics particularly highlighted in the role of Genghis, a white fascist skinhead. This is a complex and funny play with a serious message.

The story focuses on Omar, a second generation Pakistani immigrant and his school friend, Johnny, an associate of Genghis. Omar is jobless and aimless as is Johnny. Together, Omar and Jonny eventually make a success of Omar's Uncle Nasser's laundrette. Johnny disengages from Genghis and he and Omar form a moving emotional and sexual attachment. Along the way, Saleem, a family friend, peddles drugs and, like Nasser, becomes a consummate capitalist in true Thatcherite fashion, finally offering to put money into the laundrette. Tania, Omar's cousin, escapes the confines of her traditional Pakistani family while Genghis, the only character not to be changed by events, waves his nationalistic banner and shouts his repulsive vitriol.

The staging of this play is impressive. Harsh lighting, the readily manoeuvrable washing machines and music supplied by The Pet Shop Boys perfectly accompany the mood, the message and the swift movement of the action. The cast is impeccable and the rapid pace is maintained throughout. The title of the piece suggests wider meanings: money laundering and cleaning in a very general sense. Powders, the name of the laundrette, lit up in bright lights across the back of the set, suggest drugs as well as cleaning agents. This is an excellent piece of theatre where everything gels giving a satisfying whole.

This film was lauded by The British Film Institute as the "50th greatest British film of the 20th century". The play is surely another triumph

and, in spite of being set in the '80s, is an ominous warning for us today.

12th November: Talk by Professor Emeritus Peter Fawcett - The Bauhaus Movement

44 members and 12 guests attended this talk and it certainly was enlightening, educational and entertaining in this centenary year of the Bauhaus movement.

Professor Peter Fawcett's talk was an overview and history of the Bauhaus movement. His detailed knowledge, expertise and anecdotes from visits to the buildings gave a wonderful insight into the major influence of the Bauhaus movement on modern design.

The Bauhaus was founded by Walter Gropius in Weimar in 1919. The term Bauhaus literally means "building house or house construction". His vision was one of bridging the gap between art and industry by combining crafts and fine arts. Prior to the Bauhaus movement fine arts such as architecture and design were held in higher esteem than craftsmanship (i.e. painting, woodworking etc.). The Bauhaus movement teaches "truth to materials", which means that material should be used in its most appropriate and "honest" form, and its nature should not be changed. The Bauhaus movement attracted respected artists, designers and architects such as Le Corbusier, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Marcel Breuer, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy and Josef Albers.

The most important influence on Bauhaus was modernism. German architectural modernism known as "Neues Bauen" beginning in 1907, Peter Behren's industrial design work for electrical company AEG integrated art and mass production. The landmark building AEG turbine factory being an example of this.

The Bauhaus roots lay in Arts and Crafts. Gropius's goal was "to create a new guild of craftsman, without the class distinctions which raise an arrogant barrier between craftsman and artist". From 1919 to 1922 the Swiss expressionist painter Johannes Itten had a major influence on the school, he designed the 1st year course. The students learnt the basic elements and principles of design and colour theory.



In 1923 there was increasing pressure on the school. State funding was reduced even after they had put on an exhibition of their work. Gropius sought alternative funding and moved to Dessau. A new campus was commissioned and became the symbol of the New Architecture. It is now UNESCO listed as a World Heritage site. Gropius resigned in 1928 and Hannes Meyer became director. The

school turned its first profit under his leadership in 1929. Meyer was fired by the Dessau mayor in 1930. Ludwig Mies van der Rohe was appointed in 1930. By 1931 the school was closed as the Nazi party became more influential.

In late 1932 Mies rented a derelict factory in Berlin to use as the new Bauhaus with his own money. Mies and other faculty members decided to close the Bauhaus down after interference from the Nazi Party.

The Bauhaus was arguably the single most influential modernist art school of the 20th century. It had a major impact both in Europe and the USA long after its closure with Bauhaus staff moving to university departments and architectural practices across the world. Its influences are seen today in buildings, furniture, graphics, art and fashion.

7th December: Christmas Visit to Renishaw Hall

A chill winter sun chased us through the bare hedgerows on the way to Renishaw Hall. As we gathered into two groups, we were ushered into the welcome warmth of a home, both large and comfortable. Already sparkling for Christmas, the log fire burned brightly in the book-lined drawing room, cosy with comfortable sofas and rugs, the long windows overlooking the beautiful Italianate garden. Two imposing, dark wooden Venetian warriors stood in welcome, one wearing a pair of spectacles and the other a small reticule left and forgotten many years ago. John Piper's original works covered the walls. This room was a

microcosm of a house containing a treasure trove of inestimable value, with Chippendale furniture, magnificent tapestries and 30,000 books. A huge Christmas tree awaited us in the corner of the large and formal dining room, crimson swags and curtains at one side vying with family portraits around the room, along with an alcove with shelves designed for the family's trophies and racing cups. The Sitwells had originally made their fortune in the 1600s mainly by production of ships' nails, but a low point was reached in the 1840s, resulting in the house being mothballed and put up for sale. But then coal was discovered on estate land, and the family's fortunes recovered; George Sitwell, the father of Edith, Sacheverell and Osbert bought and brought back artefacts which had been stripped from the house and restored the family home. Copper pans, kettles and all possible accoutrements lined the huge dressers in the surprisingly light and airy kitchen, with its black range and lead-lined sinks and a view on to the courtyard. After the Smoke Room, with Robin Hood's bow on display, we went on to the comfortable Library with its original 1600s plasterwork and a beautiful Murano glass tiger in the bay window. Our tour finished in the Ballroom, resplendent with Prince of Wales feathers and dolphins, a symbol of hospitality. After a delicious light lunch we walked through the gardens, the topiary standing out clean in the low winter sun, long shadows stretching over the lawns, the statues wrapped in neat tarpaulins, waiting for the spring.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday, 26th February: Talk - "Death, Sex and Statistics by Professor Emeritus Mike Campbell. 2.00pm at Tapton Masonic Hall

Mike Campbell is a Medical Statistician who worked for nearly 20 years in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Sheffield and is now Emeritus Professor. He has been author/co-author of over 250 papers and 7 books. One of his particular interests is trying to make

statistics understandable and interesting to the general public. In the talk he will discuss some examples of the misuse of statistics in the press and by politicians. He will discuss the issues of risk, and how many people misunderstand it. He will show how sensible use of statistics can help us understand our society, and the real risks we run in our everyday lives.

Wednesday 4th March: Theatre Visit - "The Last Temptation of Boris Johnson" at the Lowry Theatre, Salford

The new political comedy from journalist, broadcaster and playwright Jonathan Maitlan. Closing date for ticket applications was in November.

Thursday, 19th March: Spring Lunch followed by Michael Dowse "Talking about Antiques". 12.30 for 1.00pm Hallamshire Golf Club, Redmires Road, S10 4LA

We are returning to the Hallamshire Golf Club for our Spring lunch and we are delighted to welcome the very well-known local auctioneer Michael Dowse. Michael has been involved in auctioneering since he was a small boy when he used to help his father. He was the third generation to run A.E. Dowse and Sons auctioneers which is now



merged with Sheffield Auction Gallery. Michael speaks widely about antiques and has a regular column in the Sheffield Telegraph. Michael will bring several interesting items along for us to discuss over lunch after which he will tell us more about each object. It should be a fascinating event.

Hallamshire Golf Club is situated on Redmires Road, Sandygate and has ample car parking space. The lunch will be two courses and include

a pre-lunch drink. Wine and soft drinks for the meal will be on sale at the bar.

Menu:

Mozzarella Filled Chicken Breast wrapped in Parma Ham with a Mushroom Cream Sauce

OR Baked Fillet of Sea Bass, served with Olives, Red Onion and cherry tomatoes **OR** Vegetable Lasagne of roasted

Mediterranean vegetables, layered with tender pasta and topped with creamy béchamel sauce, accompanied by garlic bread. All served with seasonal vegetables and potatoes



Lemon Cheesecake, with a berry compote **OR** Fresh Fruit Salad

Wednesday, 22nd April: Talk - “Ethel Haythornthwaite - Her Legacy for Sheffield and the Peak District” by Jean Smart, 2.00pm at Tapton Masonic Hall

The Green Belt, the Peak District National Park and planning legislation to protect the countryside are all things we take for granted today but their existence is in large part due to the pioneering work of Sheffield woman Ethel Haythornthwaite and her husband Gerald. At the age of 19 Jean Smart answered an advertisement for a shorthand typist 'to assist with interesting and varied work regarding architecture and the countryside' at the Sheffield and Peak District Branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England(now known as Friends of the Peak / CPRE). She'll be telling the story of how Ethel became a countryside campaigner and of the many conservation successes achieved by the Haythornthwaites in and around the Sheffield area.

Tuesday, 12th May: Visit to the Hawley Collection at Kelham Island Museum, Alma Street, Sheffield, S3 8RY. 11.00am

A private tour of the Museum's Hawley Collection, This world-renowned tool collection was amassed from the mid 1950s by former

tool retailer and champion of Sheffield's industrial heritage, Ken Hawley, and consists of over 100,000 objects, all relating to Sheffield's tool, cutlery manufacturing and silversmithing industry, together with complementary material from Britain and the rest of the world. Hawley Collection volunteer, Jean Thornton, will give an introductory talk and point out items of particular interest and a member of staff will be on hand to answer specialist questions. There will then be an opportunity to handle some mystery objects followed by free time to look around the collection and observe the firing up of the River Don steam engine. Our talk starts at 11.00am but if you want coffee or tea before it starts, the museum café opens at 10.45am. The visit to the Hawley Collection is due to last two hours, and the steam engine firing is at 1.00pm, next to the Hawley Gallery. Lunches are available at the museum café or there are several cafes in the Kelham Island area.

NB If you wish to look round the rest of the museum, you will have to pay the normal admission charge.

Early application is advised for this event as places are limited to a maximum of 25.

Thursday, 18th June: Garden Party at the home of Rosemary Hannon. SUWC Chair Rosemary has kindly invited us to hold our event in her lovely garden. The Garden Party is always one of our most popular events, whatever the weather. It's an opportunity to catch up with old friends and perhaps meet new ones over a cup of tea and delicious home baking. Guests will be also very welcome to join us on this friendly relaxed occasion.

Wednesday, 8th July: Summer Outing to the Gladstone Pottery Museum and the Etruria Museum, Stoke-on-Trent.

Coach leaves from the car park at Tapton Masonic Hall – please arrive by 8.45am for prompt departure at 9.00am. You can leave your car there free for the duration of our trip.

For our Summer Outing we are heading to the Potteries, visiting two museums which feature the history of Stoke-on-Trent and its china industry.

The Gladstone Pottery Museum is the only complete Victorian pottery factory from the days when coal burning ovens made the world's finest bone china. Gladstone Pottery Museum offers a fascinating insight into the history of Stoke-on-Trent, famously known the world over as The Potteries. Gladstone was not a famous pottery, however, it was typical of hundreds of similar factories in the area making everyday ceramic items for the mass market. Gladstone Pottery Museum enables visitors to experience what conditions were like for the men, women and children who worked at the centre of the world's pottery.

Tea and coffee will be available when we arrive and we will then be given a tour of the museum, lasting around an hour and a half, followed by a soup and sandwich lunch. The tour of the museum is entirely on the ground floor but the café where we will eat is on the first floor and there is no lift.

Etruria Industrial Museum: is the home of Jesse Shirley's Bone and Flint Mill (Etruscan Mills) which was an important supplier to the pottery and agricultural industries from the early 1800s to 2011. It is located at the junction of the Trent and Mersey and Caldon Canals which since their opening in the 1770s has provided an ideal location for various industries due to its excellent transport link. Etruria Wharf, located on the site of the present car park, was very important in the conveyance of goods to and from the various factories in Etruria, Shelton and Hanley. A horse drawn wagon tramway ran across what is now Etruria Vale Road, between the houses on the opposite side of the road and up the hill to Hanley. We will have a one and a half hour tour of the Mill including refreshments. We will be seated for part of the

tour. When we go into the Mill itself there are two short flights of steps (about 8 steps each) with a handrail.

The cost of the outing will be £36.50 which includes the coach and driver's tip, admission and tour of the Gladstone and Etruria museums, as well as tea and coffee at both venues, and lunch at Gladstone.

The coach will be able to park adjacent to both venues. At Etruria there is a short walk from the car park across a bridge over the canal with a short flights of steps either side but if anyone can't manage them, they will arrange for a car to take them round to the main entrance which is too narrow for coaches. Both venues have a limited number of chairs for anyone who doesn't want to stand throughout the two tours or you can bring your own portable seats. Also as both Gladstone and Etruria are former industrial buildings, the floors will be uneven and the outside areas cobbled so sensible footwear is advised.

We will be arriving back in Sheffield around 6.30pm I think this will be an excellent day out. Early booking is advised, and at the very latest by 1st June. Guests will be very welcome.

Monday 28th September: 10am to 12 noon. Coffee morning to be held in the Hunter Suite at Tapton Masonic Hall.

Our autumn programmes starts with an informal get together where members can meet up and exchange news after the summer. Guests are very welcome to join us and you undertake to pay £2 for each guest. As on previous occasions, the committee will provide biscuits to go with the coffee and we will have a stall for books in good condition. It's also a good opportunity to renew your membership in person.

OUR SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS:

Gardens Group: We meet to share lifts at the lower end of Snaithing Lane and with seven seasons of successful and varied visits, we'll be planning our 2020 programme early in the New Year. The diary will be e-mailed to you in good time to get the dates in your diary. Ideas for visits from members are very welcome.

Walking Group: The walking group meets on the first Tuesday of every month at the bottom end of Snaithing Lane to share lifts to the start of the walk. Members take it in turns to lead a walk of about 4/5 miles or 2/3 hours (not a fast pace). We usually finish near a pub or cafe for lunch. The group is very friendly and someone can share your first walk with you if you feel uncertain about it. Visitors and new members are always welcome.

Theatre Outings: Twice a year in Spring and Autumn members of the group travel to another city to enjoy a matinee performance of an interesting or amusing play. Guests are (of course) welcome.