



SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY

WOMEN'S CLUB NEWSLETTER No. 58

September 2021



SUWC Garden Party 2021

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Dear Members and Friends

Welcome to the September Newsletter and, fingers crossed, a more normal programme of events for the coming months. Whilst, as you can see from the reviews we've had a number of successful Zoom talks this year, being able to meet up in person at the Garden Party and on the visit to the Eyam gardens was truly memorable.

You will notice that there are no Membership or Booking forms with this Newsletter as the Club is going over to online, instead of paper, bookings. You will already have had an email with details of how to renew your membership using a simple online form, and many of you have already done so. If you haven't, please do by 11th September. If you have any problems with the form, email the Membership Secretary, June Isles: june.isles@gmail.com.

As usual details of our forthcoming activities are included in the Newsletter, so please make a note of the dates, and look out for the relevant online booking forms which will be sent out a month before the event. This has already been done for the first event on the programme - the Coffee Morning and Book Sale on 20th September. We will be asking members to ensure they do book a place in advance as numbers may be limited because of continuing Covid concerns. Events Secretary Jean Needham can provide any help that's needed with the booking forms: jeanmj@hotmail.co.uk

As well as the usual reviews and previews in the newsletter, we have three memories of the SUWC's past which I'm you'll enjoy reading. Times may changed since then but I'm glad to say the club continues to flourish.

Alison Allen-Booth, Editor

RECENT EVENTS

28 January – Why I am a beekeeper by Phil Khorassandjian, Master Beekeeper and Bee Inspector

Phil's talk covered a wide range of bee-related topics to demonstrate the importance and fascination of honey bees. Bees are important to the environment, as well as commercially via pollination and honey production. In the UK there are around 30,000 part-time beekeepers and around 300 commercial beekeepers. Beekeeping helps to preserve the honey bee as now there are very few wild bee colonies. Bees themselves are fascinating creatures, adapted to produce honey by having a honey sac in the gut for storage of gathered nectar without digestion. Honey production is controlled by a series of ganglia, nervous tissue in the gut, regulating the release of collected nectar for honey production. Bees can also maintain their temperature in the hive at 35°C. This they do by arranging themselves into different configurations, in the cold, clustering to keep warm and rotating from outside to inside and in the warm, spacing out with airways to allow cooling.

Bees forage a variety of plants for nectar and pollen and in doing so pollinate plants. Nectar provides them with a source of carbohydrates which can also be processed into honey. Pollen provides them with protein. Flowers encourage bees to visit them by producing nectar. Some have nectary guides on their petals to guide bees to nectary glands and in the process pick up and/or deposit pollen. Flowers can also indicate to bees whether they have been pollinated or not by changing their nectary guides e.g. the coronal ring in forget-me-nots changes from yellow to white on pollination. Honey bees tend to visit the same species of plant until all the forage has been taken hence helping the cross pollination of that particular species.

Modern hives used by beekeepers contain moveable frames. The frames must be optimally spaced to allow the bees to work, building comb or maintaining brood. If the spacing is too big it is filled up with wax comb, if too small it is plugged by propolis, a type of glue

produced from plant resins. In the hives there are brood boxes containing eggs, larvae and pupae and supers, boxes above the brood box, where honey is stored. The queen is confined to the brood box by a queen excluder, preventing her from entering the super and laying eggs there. A full super can contain 11 – 12 kg of honey. Honey is removed from the super by removing the wax cappings of the honeycomb on the frames, spinning out the honey in a special centrifuge and filtering out bits of wax.

Honey bees swarm when the colony has reached a certain size. It enables the setting up of a new colony to keep the species going. The worker bees decide when to swarm and produce a new queen for the purpose by feeding a selected larva royal jelly. Before swarming, scouts will go out to select a new location. On swarming, the old queen leaves the hive taking half of the colony with her. The queen does not rule the hive, it is a workers cooperative that takes decisions, she is more of a ‘brood slave’.

Phil’s talk was engaging and produced discussion and a number of questions. His photographs of bees were particularly well received.

15th February 2021: From Politics to Landscape Architecture by Ann Treneman

Writing a daily Parliamentary sketch for a newspaper requires a particular kind of journalistic skill and we had an insight into what it takes from Ann, who was the sketch writer for The Times for 12 years. She had joined the paper in 1999, having worked previously for the Observer and the Independent. Being a Parliamentary sketch writer had been her ambition for some time, but there was reluctance to appoint her. She's American, and so brought up with a very different political system and The Times had never had a female political sketchwriter. So she was given a six month's trial, succeeding Matthew Parris. She told us it's a high pressured job, very different from being a political reporter. Every day you're expected to produce a witty reflection on some aspect of Parliamentary proceedings and there's a lot of competition among the sketch writers. She had to learn the intricacies of life in Parliament

and rapidly discovered there's a disconnect between what happens there and real life. She told us that the essential skill for sketch writing was to absorb a lot of information - and then immediately forget it. Good judgement is also needed, to navigate a fine line when it comes to caricaturing politicians who don't always appreciate being turned into cartoon characters. A love of politics is vital, you need a very high boredom threshold to listen to hours of discussion. You can't take sides as a sketch writer, it's more about how people behave.

One of the important events she covered during her time as a sketch writer was the MP's expenses scandal. She also saw the start of the problems that Brexit would cause and the growth of the power of the Conservative back benchers and was glad to leave her role at a time when she felt the Parliamentary atmosphere was becoming toxic. She then went on to become the Times theatre critic - which she said had more in common with sketch writing than you might imagine. Two years ago she left full time journalism and embarked on a MA course in Landscape Architecture at Sheffield University. She admitted that becoming a student again had been quite a challenge but something she's greatly enjoyed. She still writes a very entertaining weekly column for The Times in which there are frequent references to Sheffield and to Bakewell where she lives.

Alison Allen-Booth

16th March: Ethiopia, An Antique Land by Dr John Williams

Members enjoyed a fascinating and superbly illustrated talk from John who had visited Ethiopia in February 2019. Ethiopia, on the horn of Africa, is a rugged landlocked country split by the Great Rift Valley. It is the second most populous country of Africa, has the largest economy in East Africa but is one of the continent's poorest countries. It experiences a tropical monsoon climate with rain falling from June to August. The country boasts 80 different ethnic groups and languages, with Orthodox Christians, Muslims and a small Jewish community. Ethiopia follows the Julian Calendar and time

can be confusing! Historically Ethiopia remains the cradle of humanity with a Royal Family dating back to Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. There have, of course, been dramatic events in its history and these are ongoing.

John's journey took us north from the capital Addis Ababa to Bahir Dah, Gonder, the Semian Mountains and Azum, the country's ancient capital, on to Lalibela, returning to Addis Ababa. We were taken to museums, markets and monasteries throughout the country. One of the largest markets employed 1300 people in 7000 different businesses. At no time did John feel that there was a shortage of fresh fruit and vegetables, particularly bananas!

Proudly Ethiopia boasts 3 UNESCO World Heritage Sites at Gondor, the Damian Montains and Lalibela, where the castles and palaces are among spectacular scenery. It's difficult to select a particular highlight of John's visit but the source of the Blue Nile on Lake Take and the Blue Nile Falls at Bahir Dah must rank highly. Tourism was of evident importance to the economy as at many sites locals offered weaving, paintings and even coffee.

Many thanks to John for wetting our appetite and giving us such an interesting insight into a remarkable country. *Margaret Stoddard*



21st April: Ethel Haythornthwaite - Her Legacy for Sheffield and the Peak District by Jean Smart

Jean Smart worked for Ethel and her husband Gerald, from the age of 19, initially, as a shorthand typist at The Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE). Ethel was the daughter of Thomas Ward and Mary Bassett, both Methodists and of notable Sheffield families. She was born in Millhouses where they led a very privileged lifestyle, which included keeping horses and carriages. Ethel enjoyed the countryside in her childhood and even went to university. She married Harry Gallimore in 1916, but sadly she was

widowed in 1916 at only 22 years old when he was killed in the First World War. She was heartbroken and became very ill. Her family encouraged her to visit the countryside where she had been so happy in her childhood. This was a successful form of therapy, because she became aware of how easily the countryside could be desecrated and soon realised that planning was needed to avoid this.

Ethel decided to dedicate her life to the countryside. The Sheffield Association for the Protection of Rural England, the forerunner of CPRE, was formed on 7th May 1924 at Endcliffe Vale House in Sheffield. Ethel was a great campaigner and initially, she used her own money to preserve buildings and places in Edale and Hathersage. Later, in 1927, when the Longshaw Estate was put up for sale, she was instrumental in the campaign to buy it for the CPRE and subsequently the National Trust in 1931.

Ethel met and married Gerald Haythornthwaite in 1937 after he came to work as her assistant and they campaigned together about issues such as housing in Whirlow, Dore Moor, Lodge Moor and also the countryside at Stanage, with the aim of stopping the spread of the suburbs to the Moors. They instigated the development of the Green Belt and then started planning the establishment of the Peak District National Park. Unfortunately, war intervened and these plans did not come into fruition until 1951 when the Peak District National Park became England's first national park. Perhaps the most amazing of her many feats was to oppose the creation of a 200mph race track in Dovedale in 1955! Ethel Haythornthwaite was a true lifelong environmental campaigner. Jean's interesting and informative talk prompted a few personal contributions from SUWC members who had known Ethel Haythornthwaite.

Carol Walsh

5th May Zoom Coffee morning and SUWC Memories

Jacinta introduced the idea of encouraging members to provide their memories of SUWC. To start off the project, Rosie Boucher, Hilary Page and Rosemary Hannon spoke about their experiences and

members were then split into groups to start their own discussions. Margaret Stoddard has been collecting these memories and you can read the first of them in this Newsletter.

24th June: Garden Party at the home of Rosemary and Michael Hannon

This time last year Rosemary Hannon sent a charming video of SUWC members' gardens in lieu of a garden party. This year, undaunted, she opened her garden and invited members to a 'live' event. In fact two events; morning and afternoon to accommodate numbers as the current Covid rules demanded.

Arriving, the garden was looking lovely, the guests were looking very summery. There was a slightly giddy atmosphere as old friends greeted one another after a long separation. Our first meeting not by zoom for many months; it was a joy to see so many friendly faces. We consumed Sue Anderson's delicious cakes, the chat flowed and plants and planting were admired.

Donations amounting to the excellent total of £460 were made to Rosemary's chosen charity – the Northern General Hospital's Secret Garden Project.

Thank you to our committee and Rosemary for making the day such a success, keeping us safe and starting our summer events with a lovely day in a lovely setting.

Eve Fawcett

7th July: Visit to the Sculpture and Wild in the Country Gardens in Eyam

This was another opportunity to meet with friends after the endless lockdown. Two groups were formed, so that we could comfortably and safely tour the gardens. My visit to the Hannah Bennett Sculpture Garden revealed an oasis of calm and beauty in the centre of the village. Hannah began our visit by explaining the route she had taken to become a sculptress. It was quite a remarkable story. As a young person, uncertain about a choice of career, she had worked as a baker in France, before discovering a love of art. A Foundation

course was taken, then a degree in Three Dimensional Design at Manchester Metropolitan University. Looking for a suitable location for her work, Hannah discovered a barn in Eyam - which she converted and extended to make a home for her family, building a "shed" at the top of the garden for her workshop and kiln. Hannah has been working here for 10 years, using her garden to display her sculptures and also provide space for up-and-coming sculptors. It was exciting to wander in the garden and enjoy the sculptures and the many sculptural plants. I'm sure there will be return visits.

Vivien Falshaw

After the visit to the first garden, some members sampled the local cafes while others ate a picnic lunch in the sunshine. The two groups then swopped round and it was our turn to visit the Wild in the Country Garden where Gill Bagshawe has been growing flowers for cutting and selling since 2015. She'd had an interest in gardening for many years but it was only after successful careers in building conservation and higher education that she decided to become a flower grower, aiming to provide blooms that have been grown in this country, not flown in from around the world as are most of the flowers on sale in shops and supermarkets. Her sunny and sheltered

plot - about the size of two allotments - is rented from a neighbour and is full of traditional British flowers grown in raised beds, borders and pots. She sells to florists, floral designers, cafes, restaurants, shops, DIY wedding parties and the general public.

Gillian showed us how she makes up her designs using not just flowers but herbs like rosemary and lemon balm and greenery. We then wandered round her garden,



enjoying the wide variety of plants and their fragrant scents, as well as admiring how healthy they were - something that's only achieved by a great deal of hard work,

.After a lovely afternoon some members took the opportunity to take away a memento in the form of one of her arrangements.

Alison Allen-Booth

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

Monday, 20th September: 10.00am-12 noon Coffee Morning and Book Sale, Tapton Masonic Hall, Shore Lane, S10 3BU

**Wednesday 20th October 2021: AGM - Inox Conference Centre.
University of Sheffield 2.30pm**

Coffee and cakes will be served from 2.00pm and the AGM will be followed by a talk:

Lloyd George Higgins – A Happier Lowry? by June Isles, daughter of the artist

In 1925, age 13, Lloyd George Higgins won a scholarship to Salford Royal Art School to study Textile Design and Fine Art. It was there that LS Lowry, a visiting lecturer at the time, encouraged Lloyd George to continue painting industrial scenes.

In later life Lloyd George did indeed became a well-known and widely respected artist for his depiction of the people living in the Industrial Pennines. June and her two older sisters grew up in Todmorden where Lloyd George spent part of his working life as a Textile Designer. She recalls how from an early age her father always seemed to have his sketchbook with him. If not, he would improvise by drawing tiny figures on the back of envelopes, serviettes etc

At first glance people often say LGH paintings are “Like Lowry’s” but June will be asking you to take a longer look at the Lloyd George



characters. His mainly cheerful characters are very different from the sombre depictions of Lowry. Is this because Lloyd George Higgins and Lowry were very different characters themselves? June will also explain, in her father's own words, why he chose to paint the subjects he did.

In retirement six years ago June moved back to Sheffield, where she had spent her student years. She joined SUWC in 2020 and has recently taken on the role of Membership Secretary.

Tuesday 16th November: 2.15pm Talk – Moving on from Poetry to Non-Fiction - by writer Helen Mort. Tapton Masonic Hall, Shore Lane, S10 3BU

Helen is an award-winning author based in Sheffield and has had two books of poetry, a debut novel (Black Car Burning, 2019), and a short story collection published. She also writes drama and creative non-fiction and was shortlisted for the T.S. Eliot Prize and Costa Prize and won the Fenton Aldeburgh Prize in 2015. She appears regularly on BBC radio, has taught creative writing for over ten years and is a Senior Lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Wednesday 1st December: Christmas Lunch followed by Michael Dowse “Talking about Antiques”. 12.30 for 1.00pm at Hallamshire Golf Club, Redmires Road, S10 4LA

We are hoping that our Christmas Lunch will be third time lucky for our guest, the very well-known local auctioneer Michael Dowse, as two previous events had to be cancelled because of Covid-19. 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. He'll bring several interesting items along for us to discuss over a two course seasonal lunch and afterwards will tell us more about each object. It should be

an excellent way to start the festive season and a form will be emailed nearer the time with details of how to book, the cost and menu choices.

Tuesday 25th January 2022: 2.15pm Talk – A Close Look at Nature by Bob Russon. Tapton Masonic Hall, Shore Lane, S10 3BU

In this illustrated talk we'll see a variety of images of the wildlife found in the countryside around Sheffield and further afield. Birds, butterflies, beasts, landscape and even the weather will appear on screen with tips on where to find and how to photograph our local wildlife. Bob Russon started bird and wildlife watching as a young teenager and has spent 60 years wandering the countryside clutching a pair of binoculars and a camera. After 30 years teaching in Special Education in Lichfield, he moved to Sheffield 5 years ago. He's a committee member of Sheffield RSPB with responsibility for organising their annual programme of speakers.



OUR SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Gardening Group: With the restrictions this year and last we have not been able to visit the usual garden a month during the Summer period. We have however had two visits this year, one to the beautiful rear plot of a keen gardener in Greystones, who opened up one afternoon for us, giving us a history of the garden started by his grandparents when the property was new and talking about the improvements made over the years by his parents and then himself. The second was a very interesting tour of the Botanical Gardens, including a little of its history, and we were introduced to parts of the gardens which were new to many of us, eg the South African Garden and the Marnock Garden. Our guides were very friendly and knowledgeable and we were able to ask questions and pick up tips.

Walking Group: The walking group normally meets on the first Tuesday of every month. Members take it in turns to lead a walk of about 4/5 miles or 2/3 hours (not a fast pace). The group is very friendly and someone can help you organise your first walk if you feel uncertain about it. At present we are meeting at the walk starting point, but we are starting to ask on a monthly basis who would like to share a car or stay on for lunch together. Visitors and new members are always welcome. Details are sent out a few days in advance.

Theatregoers group: At the present time we're not planning any of our usual Spring and Autumn visits to matinee performances in other cities but hope to resume them at some future date.

SUWC Memories

Erika Ebling

When John and I came to Sheffield in 1950, I was 25 years old. When I joined, I think the club was called The Ladies Tea Club. Mrs Iona Whittaker was soon to become the Vice Chancellor's wife. She was very enthusiastic and hard working. Some members found her intimidating but she was kindness herself to me. She gave me lifts here and there, and to meetings and was most hospitable. I still remember her delicious lunches. The yearly Garden Party in the Vice Chancellors Lodge on Fulwood Road was quite an event. Not only was the garden beautifully kept, she was a really great gardener but we all wore hats- pretty smart ones and also gloves, if I remember correctly.

In those days there was no walking group, theatre visits and all the good things you and your predecessors have created.

Pam Simms was a more recent Vice Chancellor's wife and the President of the Women's Club when I became Chair of the Women's Club. In those days, the Chair of SUWC and the President saw a great deal of each other. Pam and I, and the rest of the Committee, for instance, arranged the 40th Anniversary Dinner which was a pretty large affair. I could never have been Chair without the support of Inga Joseph, as Secretary, Aileen Austin as

Treasurer and Helen Burnley and all the others, whose names I cannot recall.

I have loved being a member and I am sad that recently I have not been able to join you. I am not even online. It did not come about until after John died in 1992 and now it is too late. I am very grateful that you stay in touch and look forward to the time when I am in better health.

Mary Wragg

In 1950, newly married, my husband Brian and I left the West Riding County Architect's Department in Wakefield, to live in a house in Nether Edge which we converted into two flats. Brian was recruited by Prof. Stephen Welsh to teach architecture at the University and I joined the City Architect's Department at the Town Hall. After 4 years the children started to arrive and we built the house at Whirlow, now almost doubled in size, where I still live. I joined the SUWC when John Whittaker was Vice Chancellor, living at the Lodge. He used to walk down Fulwood Road to the University every day, ignoring the traffic. He also masterminded the building of the Arts Tower. The top three floors were, and still are occupied by the Department of Architecture, commanding stupendous views of the City and beyond. The SUWC committee continued to flourish even when I was a member for a few years, but never Chairman. I do rather cherish the compliment paid me by Helen Burnley that "she kept the show on the road".

Rosie Boucher

When we moved into the Croft (The University House), SUWC asked if the annual garden party could be held there each year as it had historically. Of course, SUWC were welcome to use that huge, beautiful garden. However, I didn't have that much personal crockery and didn't want to use the university's bone china. I planned to use



the house for loads of groups and staff so set about finding some cheap crockery. I tried Woolworths, BHS, the market. Eventually, I found a mountain of these cheerful items at 50p each at TJ Hughes. Yay! I had been told to expect 60-70 because everyone wanted to see the house, so I purchased 80 cups, saucers and plates and hauled them to the car. I was nervous about hosting the garden party anyway but in the following week I had my sleep destroyed by a recurring dream. I dreamt that as I poured the tea it all just came through like a sieve all over the smart cloths and my guests . On the day, we had wonderful weather, my close friends dressed in black with white, frilly aprons to look like waitresses, members wore hats, long dresses, even gloves and we had a great time. Afterwards, I slept like a log. The crockery is now about 18 years old and used by SUIWC, SUWC, Tapton Dining Club, and the book groups. I have told the children that it should be handed to SUWC eventually