



SHEFFIELD UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S CLUB

**NEWSLETTER No. 64
September 2024**



BONAIRE

By Rose and Alex Krysz

www.sheffield.ac.uk/suwc

email: womensclub@sheff@gmail.com

Dear Members and Friends

Welcome to the start of a new SUWC year and the September Newsletter. It includes reviews of events which we hope you have enjoyed during the year as well as previews of what you can expect in the coming months. My thanks to everyone who has contributed to the newsletter, especially for the excellent reviews. A provisional programme of future events is attached, so please put the dates in your diaries. Booking forms will only be used for events which have a limit on numbers or where payment is required. We hope you enjoy the programme we have planned. Please let us know if you have ideas for future events.

The newsletter will be sent by email to all members and in print form to those who need a hard copy. Members needing hard copies are asked to collect them at meetings, wherever possible, to save on postage.

We are always looking for new committee members to bring fresh ideas and skills, so if you think you might be interested in joining the committee, please make yourself known to a committee member. We can tell you what is involved and you would be very welcome to sit in at a committee meeting before committing yourself.

A reminder that if you haven't already renewed your subscription, please do so as soon as possible.

RECENT EVENTS IN 2024

18 January: Talk by Rose and Alex Krzyz – ‘Our Travels in Pictures’



On a bright, but freezing, afternoon we were taken on a magical, virtual adventure in photographs by Rose and Alex Krzyz. On their retirement, they embarked on travels worldwide visiting six continents and 31 countries. Alex’s beautifully composed pictures capture the details and essence of the places visited. 'We take photos as a return ticket to a moment otherwise gone'.

The first photos were taken as slides in Malta. With the advent of digital photography, we visited China; the standout memories being Guilin where they witnessed fishermen using cormorant birds to help them catch fish. The images were so vivid and dynamic, we felt we were on the boat with the fisherman! They took us to the Great Wall of China and to see the Terracotta Army in Xian, again we felt we were genuine tourists. In 2002, Rose and Alex visited the Masai Mara in Kenya and the Serengeti in Tanzania taking wonderful photographs of wildlife.

Rose and Alex dived in many places including Egypt, Indonesia and the Maldives. The most stunning pictures were taken on a visit to Bonaire, off the coast of Venezuela; the underwater photography was amazing! We saw photos of brightly coloured creatures of all shapes and sizes; the most weird and wonderful was probably the frog fish! Recognising the dangers of diving, they changed their attention to bird watching, visiting Estonia, Costa Rica and Ecuador. The bird

pictures were wonderfully colourful, vibrant and dynamic, a great tribute to the patience and skill of Alex. A later trip to The Galapagos Islands produced wonderful photos of the many animal inhabitants. My favourite picture from here was one of Rose sharing a bench with a sealion who had come to join her.

The adventurous two then went to the USA. After exploring the 'brash' city of Las Vegas, they went to the Grand Canyon where Alex took wonderful panoramic photos of this beautiful marvel of nature. They also visited Bryce Canyon, Death Valley, Yosemite, San Francisco and New York. We saw each destination in pictures which managed to capture its essence from beautiful, peaceful natural landscapes to bustling cities.

Rose and Alex then embarked on a round the world tour. In New Zealand they saw the devastating effects of the earthquake and took a frightening trip in a helicopter to see the Fox Glacier and waterfalls; again, the photographs were amazing. A visit to Australia provided a chance to photograph the iconic Sidney Opera House. Then to the Cook Islands where they were encouraged to see the coral reef which had been destroyed by El Nino recovering. Subsequent trips to Vietnam and Cambodia proved fascinating, especially the multitudes of temples in Cambodia. Finally, some stunning photographs of the Northern Lights taken in Norway. As science teachers they regarded this phenomenon as 'Real physics'.

The presentation ended with a 'Pause for thought'. Rose and Alex expressed the view that it was not always appropriate to take photographs and one had to be acutely aware of sensitivities around certain places and people. We all left feeling that we too had been on a Round the World tour and we were very grateful to Rose and Alex for sharing their adventures. We wish them many more exciting travels and look forward to sharing their journeys in photographs with them again.

7 February: Talk by Stephen Marland from the Sheffield Modernist Society - ‘What’s so Special about Concrete?’



Steve Marland took us on a ‘Modern Mooch’ around some notable concrete buildings in Sheffield, starting with Park Hill Flats.

This was inspired by Corbusier and designed in 1953 as a Garden City in the Sky, built to replace the slums. It opened in 1961 and housed people next to their old neighbours using their old street names to help them to settle. In the 1970s decay and crime took over, but now Urban Splash are renovating and re-inventing this Grade 2 listed building and it is looking splendid.

He then spoke about the Gleadless Valley Estate, built in the 1960s and celebrated by architects with low rise buildings and houses set in the slopes and surrounding green spaces. The Holy Cross Church at the centre features stained glass set in concrete. Two other Sheffield churches were mentioned: St Mark’s in Broomhill, designed by George Pace, with stunning stained glass and the United Reform Church on Ecclesall Road, brutalist on the outside, but with stained glass inside.

We moved on to the Sheffield University Arts Tower and Library, Grade 2 listed, which is still looking good, using concrete curtain walls and windows utilising new glass technology. A bridge links the two elements. Some members of the audience later recounted adventures with the Paternoster lift. Steve also mentioned the Moore Street substation, a 1968 brutalist box built to produce electricity for industry. It has since been used for electronic music events and art shows.

He finished his talk with mention of the William Mitchell concrete friezes used to decorate buildings. One is at the entrance to Tapton

Hall and the other, removed from the Co-op building in the city centre as part of the current redevelopment, is to be resited on Pinstone Street.

We are very lucky to have these buildings to admire, and Steve Marland showed us that concrete can be used to produce stylish modern architecture. My own favourite is St. Mark's Church Sheffield for its combination of concrete and stained glass.

5 March: Talk by Rod Auton – ‘Chesterfield Canal History and Industrial Heritage’



We met on a lovely spring afternoon to hear Rod Auton talk about his pet project, The Chesterfield Canal Trust, where he has been a volunteer for 30 years. He is an extremely enthusiastic volunteer and speaker, revealed all through his amazing presentation. The Trust was set up to restore and promote appropriate development of the Chesterfield Canal and the aim is to complete the restoration by 2027, the 250th anniversary of the canal's opening. I had never heard of the Chesterfield Canal, but found myself determined to visit in the very near future.

The Trust, formed in 1976, when the canal was almost a total wreck, has now been transformed into one of the most beautiful canals in the UK canal system. The canal was designed by James Brindley and

completed in 1777, with tunnels and some of the earliest ever locks. It was used to transport heavy goods such as stone, corn, lime, lead and the coal which formed about 50% of the cargo. The most famous cargo was the stone from the North Anston Quarry used to rebuild The Houses of Parliament after they were burnt down in 1834. The 46 mile long canal passes through quiet and unspoilt scenery from Chesterfield to West Stockwith where it enters the River Trent.

With the competition from the railways in the late 19th century, the canal became less prosperous and began to fall into decline with the collapse of tunnels and locks and silting up of the water. In the 1960s there were even threats to close the canal, but it was saved initially by the Retford and Worksop Boat Club in 1968 and from then on, the future of the canal has been a story of hard work, all of which is done by volunteers from The Chesterfield Canal Trust.

Today, the Trust is keen to encourage canal boat trips, walking along the tow path and spending a pleasant day out at visitor centres at Tapton Lock and Hollingwood Hub where one can buy coffee and cake and learn more about the canal and surroundings. Canal Festivals are held and indeed the Trans Pennine Trail passes along the tow path with all sorts of wild life to be seen. For example, an otter has been spotted at Tapton Lock.

Rod and his wife finished this excellent talk by directing us to the back of the room where there was a wealth of informative booklets available to purchase about the Chesterfield Canal and Trust. I can't hope to raise your enthusiasm as much as Rod, but for more information please consult the website:

www.chesterfield-canal-trust.org.uk

16 April: Talk by Deborah Bullivant - 'Grimm and Co.'s Magical Approach to Helping Children to Write Stories'



On a sunny afternoon we were introduced to Grimm and Co., a children's writing centre in the heart of Rotherham. Dr Deborah Bullivant, the force behind Grimm and Co. took us on the charity's journey to the recently opened Emporium of Stories. The ideas behind Grimm and Co. began with Rotherham Council submitting a bid to the Regional Development Agency to develop creative approaches to improve literacy across the borough. It also included work with Sheffield University to evaluate the impact of the approaches used. The bid was successful and Deborah, who was born in Sheffield and had an extensive background in education, was recruited to lead the project. Evidence soon demonstrated the positive impact of the approaches deployed by it. She was committed to continuing the work when the project came to an end. At this time, she became aware of the work of Dave Eggers, who founded a writing centre 826 Valencia in San Francisco. After extensive consultation with young people, the idea of Grimm and Co. was born. Deborah and an army of volunteers secured funding and support to turn Grimm and Co. into a reality in Rotherham. Young people can go to a creative and imaginative space that leads to the joyful discovery of writing for pleasure. The work has been so successful that Grimm and Co. Apothecary has recently moved home to a beautifully restored church in Rotherham. The new venue provides an enchanting space for the charity's programmes,

activities, festivals, cafe and retail outlet. The extended space will allow many more young people to engage with the programmes and benefit from these unique experiences. Deborah and everyone at Grimm and Co. are also working on their next challenge to bring Rotherham Children Capital of Culture 2025 to life. With their energy and determination, it is sure to be a big success.

21 May: Talk by Dr Jenny Stephenson – ‘Physicians and Pharmacists’

The talk started with a scene from a hospital in 700 AD, in Pistoia near Florence. On the left, a man with heart failure is treated with digitalis extracted from foxgloves. Centre is the minor injuries unit with splint and bandage; on the right stands the apothecary with a book of herbal remedies. Taken back to Egypt in 1500 BC we learn of the earliest Herbals written on Papyrus, centuries later copied out by monks who began to treat the sick, setting up hospitals. After the sacking of the monasteries, treating the sick became the province of women apothecaries in their villages and communities, but Henry VIII eventually made amends by building new hospitals. He instituted the Royal College of Physicians in 1518 to train and regulate physicians, who would be able to make diagnoses and treat accordingly, rather than selling herbal remedies in response to symptoms.



Sales of herbal remedies not supported by regulation or formal qualification led to quackery and deception. A new law allowed poisons to be sold only in ridged green bottles labelled POISON, but adulteration of remedies and swindling continued, and there was tension between physicians and apothecaries. Apothecaries began to want a more professional approach. In 1624 the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries was formed, lending status and respectability to its

members, who then became more like the GPs of today, working in their communities, while RCP members – physicians - were usually based in hospital.

With Caxton's printing press invented in 1616 came wider access to books and literacy. New ideas and the development of experimentation led to recognition of the importance of correct quantities and purity of ingredients. Chemistry developed as a science. Jenny also spoke of the interest in searching worldwide for new plants. Many plants with medicinal qualities were discovered. Nicholas Culpepper wrote 'The Complete Herbal' in 1823, which the general public could use, with recourse to the apothecary if necessary. Apothecaries began to keep records of symptoms and treatments and to collaborate with physicians to discover effective treatments for specific diseases, as the scientific approach developed. Research on new drugs requires doctors, nurses, pharmacists and patients. Initial research is carried out by pharmacists working in the pharmaceutical industry, to identify and refine molecules with treatment possibilities. Clinical trials are carried out in University Medical Schools. As well as dispensing, in hospital pharmacists prepare therapeutic injections or infusions. In the community, they monitor patients' drug regimes, advise on the treatment of minor ailments, carry out immunisations and do basic health checks.

This interesting and lively talk was a reminder of the value of cooperation between physicians and pharmacists, and of the need to maintain the diversity of plants, which continue to yield up useful treatments.

19 June: Visit to Newby Hall and Gardens



Fine weather, a quick(ish) getaway, a smooth journey and high expectations of a good day out following the excellent preview in BBC ‘Gardeners’ World’ in May - so Newby Hall, near Ripon, promised much, and it certainly provided an enjoyably varied and stimulating day out. Anyone for ‘luncheon’ ladies?

After a welcome coffee and biscuits on arrival, we were free to roam the extensive gardens, formally laid out, but with delightfully natural planting. The adventure playground was enticing, but required serious fitness, while the African village sculptures, roaming peacocks and Tarantella water feature proved intriguing and led one inexorably and enthusiastically to the Teddy Bear and Dolls’ House exhibitions, the latter needing much more time than we had if we were to make the most of the opportunity to tour the house and gardens.

An introduction to the many different styles of garden was provided by a pleasurable ride on the miniature railway. We saw well planned colour co-ordinated and extensive herbaceous borders, through banks of meadow, woodland and lush rock gardens. These 25 glorious acres were designed over 50 years by Edward Compton in the 20th century. The remarkable spring candelabra primulas and meconopsis were still flowering and the beautiful memorial rose garden was in full bloom. Remarkably, there are only five gardeners to maintain these wonderfully distinct areas, flanked throughout by avenues of yew.

The walks took us ultimately to the glories of Newby Hall for a guided tour. Here the experienced and knowledgeable tour guides provided us with extensive information about the history and architecture of the house, owned within the same extended family, the Weddells, Robinsons, Vyners and Comptons since 1748. The family, wealthy and linked to minor nobility through wise marriages, seem to have led largely uneventful lives with a primogeniture defying inheritance and varying fortunes. Newby Hall clearly remains a much-loved family home, recently thoroughly redecorated and refurbished.

Built from 1689 on the River Ure with Wren inspired architecture, remarkably balanced interiors, (with false doors to retain the desirable elegance and style) designed by Robert Adam whose work is evident in the ornate ceilings and plasterwork, and with beautiful Chippendale furniture, the house has much to admire. Roman statues, purchased honourably by youthful lords during the 18th century Grand Tours reflect the importance of the classical influences of the time and extensive family portraits enable the visitor to appreciate the importance of generations of landowners.

The final *pièce de resistance* for the visitor is the awe-inspiring Tapestry Room with a magnificent unique complete set of Gobelin tapestries purchased in the 1760s and carefully preserved and treasured by the family in its original setting.

The day was perfectly completed by a tour of the gift shop and garden shop, to carry away souvenirs for Christmas presents and plants to welcome the much-delayed summer.

16 July: Garden Party at Whiteley Woods Outdoor Activity Centre

The phrase ‘garden party’ evokes memories of halcyon days gone by, when brightly coloured summer dresses were worn, chairs were set on perfect green lawns, tables covered in snowy linen sported delicate china plates and cake stands with artfully arranged cakes. And the sun shone! However, despite the unpromising weather at the Whiteley Woods Activity Centre, the SUWC’s annual garden party had many of these elements. There was a real impression of summertime, with summer dresses worn despite the coolness, flowers on carefully laid tables with scrumptious cakes, all cheering the spirits despite the grey skies hovering with a hint of rain.

We were greeted at the entrance by buckets of beautiful fresh flowers grown by members of Bloom. Cue Kate Evans, who introduced us to this wonderful gardening charity helping to transform the lives of women who need support at difficult times in their lives. Bloom’s



various gardens and allotments provide a safe space, a chance for new friendships and new skills to be learnt, all supported in turn by volunteers. We heard how Bloom flourishes with help from donations, the sale of flowers from its shop in Woodseats, by running events such as supper clubs, pop-up flower stalls and hen-dos, and by providing

flowers for weddings and other occasions. Helpfully, a trained forest-school teacher is on hand for groups with children. Truly, it is an exciting and innovative charity which we were happy to support on the day by purchasing the flowers in buckets.

There was excellent camaraderie and a friendly buzz. We appreciate the work that the committee does all year round.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS - at 2.15 p.m. at Tapton Masonic Hall unless otherwise stated:

Monday, 23 September 2024: 10.00am - noon Coffee Morning and Book Exchange

Bring along the books you have read over the summer and acquire some new autumn reading. A box for donations will be provided.

Wednesday, 23 October 2024: AGM followed by a Talk by Jill Lauriston on 'Bookmaking through the Ages' Coffee and cakes will be served from 2.00pm

Jill Lauriston, formerly Senior Assistant Registrar at the University of Sheffield, has filled her life since retiring with a number of creative activities, including making and mending books. Jill will take us on a whistle-stop tour through the way books have been made over the last two millennia, beginning with the Egyptians, and this will be illustrated by historic replicas of books from around the world that she has made herself in the last few years and which you will be able to handle. She will also outline how this knowledge informs the repair of damaged and worn books and the design of what are known as 'artist books'.

Tuesday, 19 November 2024 Talk by Professor Gavin Reynolds, Professor of Neuroscience on 'Molecules and Madness'

Many of us have experience of mental illness and other brain diseases - not necessarily personally, but often in friends, neighbours or family. And if not, they frequently feature in the news - both positively with new treatment advances and negatively in relation to reports of suicide or the rare instances of aggressive psychotic behaviour.

Professor Reynolds is a neuroscientist who has spent his career studying schizophrenia and other brain diseases including drug abuse and Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease. This has taken him to work in academic institutions in London, Vienna, Cambridge, Nottingham, Sheffield and Belfast, as well as visits to China, Thailand and Malaysia to support research there. His talk will draw

on his experience in studying schizophrenia and mental disorders. He will discuss causes (nature and nurture), the effects they have on the brain and the opportunities and limitations our current understanding provides in progress towards effective treatments.

Thursday, 12 December 2024: Christmas Event at the Hallamshire Golf Club, Redmires Road S10 4LA -

Talk by Chris Reece on ‘A Night out at the Theatre’ followed by a Christmas lunch, timings, menus and cost for which will be available later. We hope to see as many of our members as possible to enjoy a festive occasion together.

Chris Reece spent over two decades as theatre manager for Sheffield Theatres at the Crucible and Lyceum, having previously worked in stage management, in most forms of theatre, for 15 years. His career ranged from children's touring productions and seaside repertory theatre to large scale variety shows and national tours.

Wednesday, 15 January, 2025: Talk by Professor Richard Cawardine on ‘Reflections on the American Presidency: Past, Present, and Future’

Professor Carwardine, a historian of the United States, spent over 30 years in the Department of History at Sheffield University before taking up the Rhodes Professorship of American History at Oxford in 2002. Elected President of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in 2009, he is a Distinguished Fellow of the Rothermere American Institute at Oxford. A Fellow of the British Academy and a Founding Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales, the Lincoln Academy of Illinois elected him to the Order of Lincoln. He received a CMG in 2019 for services to the study of American History in the UK and the USA.

Richard’s research focuses on American politics in the Civil War era. His ‘Lincoln: A Life of Purpose and Power’ won the Lincoln Prize. ‘Lincoln’s Sense of Humor’ won the book award of the Abraham Lincoln Institute. His next book, ‘Righteous Strife: How Warring Religious Nationalists Forged Lincoln’s Union’ will appear in January 2025.

OUR SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS INCLUDE:

The Longer Walking Group

This group 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). Visitors and new members are always welcome. Details are sent out a few days in advance so just ask to join our emailing list.

The Shorter Walking Group

This group meets at 10.00 a.m. on the first Tuesday in the month opposite 26 Riverdale Road for a short walk through Endcliffe Park to a local coffee shop. New members would be very welcome.

New committee members would be very welcome.

Newsletter No. 65 will be published in January 2025