



NEWSLETTER

January 2015

- Friends News -



How is Your Newsletter Delivered?

In a letter included with this newsletter, our chairman David Ansell explains how we have managed to contain costs over the past year. One of the actions we took was to start sending the newsletter by email wherever possible and acceptable. Some members have commented that they either could not read the newsletter when attached to an email, and some that they could not print booking slips (which are attached separately to the newsletter email). For this reason we are delivering this edition of the newsletter by post to all of our members: future deliveries will revert to the method previously used for your particular copy. Please read David's letter and if you decide that you need to change the method of delivery (or just confirm which method you would prefer if you are not sure how your copy is currently delivered), contact us by one of the following methods:

Email: **newsletter@tamworthcastlefriends.org**
Telephone: **Sue Evans on 01827 55916**
Post: **Sue Evans**
48 Barbara Street
Tamworth
B79 7EJ

If you want to respond by post, a response form is included with this newsletter for your convenience. Also enclosed are a number of blank booking forms for future trips and events, in case you have difficulty printing the forms attached to emails.

Children's Halloween Event 2014

The Friends' Halloween event, which took place on October 31st last year, was a great success, despite problems with pumpkins (some of which were found to be rotten after delivery, apparently a wide-spread problem with last year's national pumpkin crop).

I would like to say a big "Thank You" to all of the members and their families and friends who dressed up and came along to help us put on such a good show, and to the actors who put on such a brilliant playlet in the Withdrawing Room.

The total net profit from the event was £2,296, half of which goes direct to the Castle and half to the Friends' funds for future allocation to specific Castle items or projects.

Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Tamworth Castle and Museum

This year's AGM will take place in the Great Hall of the Castle on Friday April 24th 2015 at 7:30 pm, directly after the talk "Cavalier Dogs and Roundhead Rogues" (details of which can be found in the "Talks" section).

This is the most important of the Friends events you could attend this year: it is where decisions are made regarding the running and operation of our organisation, and where you can make your opinions known. So please put this date in your diary and resolve to help us, the committee, make those decisions.

It is likely that we will need to elect several new committee members this year: if you feel you would like to contribute in such a role, don't be shy in coming forward—all that is involved in being a committee member is attending a monthly evening meeting, unless you feel you would like to take on a more active role in some of the organisational activities—it is entirely up to you.

- Castle News -

Castle By Candlelight

The return of the "Castle by Candlelight" events in November 2014 was a resounding success. Castle staff were joined by members of the Friends, dressed up in period costume, as can be seen in the photo below of Friends Pauline Walsh and Maureen Sherwood.



- Talks -

Victorian Birmingham

By Brian Beasley in the Great Hall, Tamworth Castle

On Friday 6th February 2015 at 7:30pm

Brian, a long-time member of the Friends, will present an interesting and educational talk about life in inner city Birmingham in the Victorian era.

Brightwater Holidays

By Ellen Walker in the Great Hall, Tamworth Castle

On Friday 6th March 2015 at 7:30pm

Brightwater Holidays is a family-run concern specialising in escorted tours of UK, Irish and overseas gardens. Ellen, Groups Manager at the company, will talk about the history of the company and, with illustrations, about some of the beautiful gardens they visit.

Cavalier Dogs and Roundhead Rogues

By Mary Bodfish in the Great Hall, Tamworth Castle

On Friday 24^h April 2015 at 7:30pm

There was support for both King Charles I and for Parliament in this area during the English Civil War. As people took sides and their forces engaged each other repeatedly, action swirled around the area between Wolverhampton, Birmingham and Lichfield, with places like Tamworth Castle changing hands as the tide of war ebbed and flowed. This talk looks at the causes of the war and how it took hold here, and brought much upheaval and damage to the region. The words of participants and eye-witnesses are used to bring to life this pivotal period of our history.

Mary Bodfish is Chairman of the Smethwick Local History Society and has taught local history research and palaeography for the University of Birmingham's School of Continuing Studies. For anyone interested in our local history, her illustrated talk promises to be one not to miss!

A Photographic History of Tamworth

By John Tracey in the Great Hall, Tamworth Castle

On Friday 15th May 2015 at 7:30pm

In his talk John, one of Tamworth's more senior historians, will recall the Tamworth of his youth in the 1920s/30s, following the progress of the town with the aid of the many photographs he has collected of Tamworth over the ages.

- Trips & Social Events -

Warners Gunton Hall

For those who have booked on this holiday, the coach will pick up at Corporation Street, Tamworth at 09:00 on Monday 9th February.

A Day Out in Melton Mowbray

Saturday 25th April 2015 at

This is a trip to Melton Mowbray, famous for its pork pies and Stilton cheese. This trip includes:

- A tour of a pie-making factory
- A tour of a cheese factory
- Free time to visit the free museum and the street market

The price is £20 per person, and includes coach travel and the above tours. A booking form is enclosed with this newsletter: if you would like to join us on this trip, please complete and return the form as soon as possible with payment by cheque.

- Reviews -

King Henry VIII

By John White on Friday 7th November 2014

I think it would be true to say that for those of us who attended this talk, it was an experience never to be forgotten! John truly *was* King Henry VIII, dressed in the splendid robes of the period and bejewelled as the King would doubtless have been. No microphone was necessary—the King's bellow could surely be heard from the base of the motte! John captivated his audience with this rendition of Henry, alternately howling with anger at those who betrayed him, whining in woe at his misfortunes and answering with authority questions from those who had the temerity to ask.

- Reviews -

A Handful of Straw

By Peter Shelley on Friday 5th September 2014

Members who attended this talk were given an excellent insight into the world of straw art. Peter talked of the world-wide history of his craft and showed how to produce an intricately-woven dolly within minutes. This was followed by a display of much more elaborate designs, including nativity scenes, stars, pictures, and famous caricatures, which were circulated around the audience for a closer close view of the work involved. Certainly this was a night to remember and it was wonderful to see that this ancient tradition is still being continued today with such enthusiasm and skill.

Some of the amazing things that Peter could do with straw are shown in the photograph below





What's On at the Castle?

Dragon Hunt

Monday 16th –Friday 20th February 2015, 11:30 am—4:00 pm

Come and help to find Ruby, the Castle dragon, who has gone missing. Learn how to charm dragons & build a dragon's nest. Tickets must be pre-booked at the Tamworth Tourist Information Centre (details below).

Storytelling

Saturday 21st—Sunday 22nd March 2015, 11:30 am—3:00 pm

A storyteller will enchant your children with tales of knights, dragons & princesses. Meet Ruby, the Castle dragon.

Castle Egg Hunt at Easter

Saturday 4th April—Monday 6th April

Ruby the Castle dragon has mislaid her eggs. Can you help her to find them?

For prices and more information about the above events, visit the Tamworth Tourist Information Centre in the Philip Dix Centre in Corporation Street (01827 709618), or the Castle's website

Contact Details

Where booking slips are included with the newsletter, please complete these and send, with payment, to:

Ken Marston, 3 Crecy Close, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, B76 1DQ

If you do not have a booking slip or would like more details about a trip, you can contact Ken by phone on **0121 378 2120** or by email at **social@tamworthcastlefriends.org**

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding newsletters, please contact Roger Ashford by phone on **0790 0088960** or by email at **newsletter@tamworthcastlefriends.org**