



# Marlow National Trust Association

*A voluntary association of National Trust members and volunteers*

NEWSLETTER No. 222

July 2025

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Longer days and brighter evenings mean there's no excuse not to come and enjoy the variety of talks and outings we have prepared for you. Evening meetings are at the usual time and place: Liston Hall, 8pm on Wednesday evenings, doors open at 7.30pm.

Light refreshments will be available in the interval, to socialise and catch up with friends.

**Wed 16 July**      **Wildlife on your Doorstep**      **Tom Way**  
Tom is a professional wildlife photographer; he will talk about the fantastic wildlife on our very own doorsteps.

**Wed 30 July**      **Ightham Mote (NT)**      **John Pearce**

**August**      **No Meeting**

**Thurs 7 Aug**      **Afternoon Tea at Henley Greenlands Hotel**      **Jenny Annett**

**Thurs 19 Aug**      **Rycote Park & Chapel**      **Alison Rae**

**Wed 10 Sept**      **Bath & American Museum**      **Roger Smith**

**Wed 17 Sept**      **Thomas Williams - Industrialist**      **Julian Hunt**  
Thomas Williams (1737-1805), who already had a monopoly of the supply of copper in England, bought the copper mills on the Bisham side of the Thames. He and his family dominated the economic, political and social life of Marlow for the next hundred years.

**Sun 21 Sept**      **Holiday to Bulgaria**      **Angie Magee**

**Wed 7 Oct**      **Hungerford & Rose Canal**      **Penny Clarry**

**Wed 15 Oct**      **London's Tube Stations**      **Mike Grundy**  
Mike will explore the architecture, art and history of London's tube stations.

The Newsletter of the Marlow National Trust Association is edited by:

Jean Frost E-mail:

Alison Pearce E-mail:

Web site:

### **From Our Chairman**

Welcome to the July Newsletter. Everyone seemed to enjoy the Dartmouth holiday: great location, great weather, and great company. Thanks to Penny for looking after us so well during the trip.

We now look forward to the Bulgarian holiday in September (balance due on 7 July), and we are also advertising, in this edition, the holiday next April to Northern France. Plenty of medieval towns, magnificent chateaux and typical French cafes to visit – should be terrific.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel the Motor Museum trip to Gaydon in May. Apologies to those who had signed up for the trip, but only 15 people subscribed, and we do need normally about 35 to make an outing viable. Everybody who registered should have had their money returned by now.

The National Trust have asked all the Supporter Groups like ourselves, to review and update our policies and procedures relating to Data Protection, Equality and Discrimination, and Safeguarding. If there is someone who has experience of these things and would like to help us review our policies and procedures, then please get in touch. We want to make it as simple and as specific to our group as possible.

I am very pleased to say that we were able to hand-out a good number of long service awards (LSAs) which are given for every 5 years of committee service, these being: 5 years award to Tim Dennis, Michael Fines-Allin, Angie Magee, and Myself. 10 years award to Jean Frost, Ross Niven, Kristian Perry. 15 years award to Tricia Smith and 25 years award to Julia Stacy

I am also very pleased to say that we were able to present LSAs to several ex-Chairman who had done so much for the organisation in the past. Awards were given to Geoff and Mary Edwards, Anne Morse, and Chris Elam, also a very special award to Sue Glyn-Woods who had done 40 years before retiring this year.



Normally we have a break in August, but this year we are holding two events – an afternoon tea at the splendid Greenlands Hotel near Henley on 7th August for which a formal booking form is included on page 7 (those already pre-booked will have priority booking), and an outing to Rycote Park and Chapel on 19th August.

We will be displaying our wares once again at the Marlow Carnival on Saturday 13th September. A couple of non-committee members came to help last year and did a great job in selling our services and recruiting new members. Hopefully we can do the same this year.

***John P. Smith, MNTA Chairman***

## Outing to Buscot & Coleshill Estates - 24 April 2025

What an interesting day we had at the Rural & Heritage Skills Centre in Coleshill!

We were given a very warm welcome and introduction from Sarah Hannis and the team. The 3rd Earl of Radnor had originally built a Palladian Mansion in parkland with a model farm sited on the hillside, so that all the water and waste would drain downhill to be collected in the Stable Yard's midden. Later, when Thomas Cook brought the Estate, a devastating fire from a workman's blow torch ended any thought of rebuilding the Mansion and he eventually left it to the National Trust in 1956. The Parkland was neglected and until recently, the farm buildings had become a "storehouse" of unwanted items from all over the NT properties!

What a difference the last 3 years of hard work, innovation and development have made into returning it to a Place of Community.

Looking across the Poultry Yard on our visit we saw a group of apprentices mixing the lime mortar with their tutor, as Sarah, went on to explain how one of the buildings surrounding the yard was now being used by Highworth's "Men in the Shed" Society. They had very kindly built the bookshelves for the secondhand bookshop next to the café. The "storehouse" has been emptied and become an exhibition centre showcasing the rural craftsmen and skills that were part of the everyday life of the village. As we were admiring the "work in progress" of the wood and stone sculpture skills in situ from the NT Saturday Club students in the lower Granary building; we heard the footsteps of 50 school children entering the upper granary above us!



Adding to the 3000+ school children that have already visited. After lunch we went for a guided walk to see how the Parkland and river are being restored with two very knowledgeable NT project officers.

The centre champions practiced the skills of the past and ensures their future by offering a programme of courses for professionals and amateurs alike, as well as rental units for professional craftspeople in the Stable Yard. Some of us returned with purchases from the woodturners unit!

It is becoming a hub for education and knowledge, sharing in traditional skills and rural crafts from across the UK that are in decline. The Estate is in a unique position as it has more than 1,000 historic structures, 9000 acres including forestry, river and landscaping making it a rich and diverse place for rural skill development.

We can also recommend the excellent café's cinnamon buns!

Many thanks go to Julia Stacey for organising this interesting outing

Should you also like to visit. Here are links to Activities at Coleshill:

[Village Open Day | National Trust](#)

[Guided Tours: Secrets of Coleshill | National Trust](#)

[Second World War Walk | National Trust](#)

[Coleshill 1940s Day | National Trust](#)

[Background info on the WW2 story at Coleshill](#)

[Buscot & Coleshill Estates' history | National Trust](#)

**Julia Stacey**

## **Speakers Evening - Ukranian & Russian Painting**

Russian and Ukrainian Painting 1860-1960 - Tradition, Experiment and Repression.

Art-historian Gabriel Chanan made a welcome return to MNTA to talk about the art of the Russian Empire, which then included Ukraine. In 1860 painting was very traditional and any form of experiment was greatly discouraged. Religious icons were everywhere. But the new Tsar, Alexander II, emancipated the serfs and artists, and encouraged by his reforms, began to show the real life of the majority of the population. A movement called



The Wanderers, including Ilya Repin and Valentin Serov, dominated the art scene. Repin's 'Barge Pullers on the Volga' is a prime example of gritty realism. Many of the artists were Ukrainian and several women were prominent.

But Alexander II was assassinated in 1881 and unrest grew until there was the first attempt at revolution in 1905. Following this artists began to experiment with all forms of modern 'isms' - cubism, futurism, constructivism etc. Some produced abstracts in bright colours, but perhaps the most famous picture was Malevich's 'Black Square' of 1915. Ukraine declared independence in 1918 but it was absorbed into the Soviet Union a few years later. When Stalin came to power, he declared all forms of non-representational art 'decadent' and had much of it destroyed.

This was a fascinating talk backed up by excellent slides.

**Geoff Edwards**

## Speakers Evening - Samuel Pepys

On Wednesday 21 May Andrew Davies returned to speak about the life, times and diaries of Samuel Pepys. Andrew is a very talented and popular speaker who has spoken to us several times: last June he came to talk about 'English Fairs, Markets and Shops' – a potted history of shopping. This time he spoke with great enthusiasm about this famous 17th century character who was not merely a diarist, bon viveur and womaniser but a man of many parts: a top civil servant and MP, a musician and composer, but also a survivor of the Plague and the Great Fire of London.

Samuel Pepys was a Londoner born and bred who lived during a very turbulent period. Of quite humble parentage (his mother was a washer-woman) Samuel was a clever boy who won a scholarship to St Paul's school and then Magdalene College Cambridge where he was once reprimanded for being "scandalously overserved with drink".

When he got a good job and salary at the age of 22 he married the 15 year-old Elizabeth St Michel, a poor girl of Huguenot parentage. They never had children and she died of a fever at the age of 28; Pepys never married again and was buried beside her many years later.

Pepys kept his diaries from 1660 to 1669; they were written in code and recorded his innermost thoughts and feelings as well as the great events of the era: the Restoration of the monarchy, the Anglo-Dutch war, the Plague and the Great Fire of London. Curiously he also confided very intimate personal details. He stopped writing the Diaries in 1669 because he feared he was going blind and wanted to conserve his sight for his work: he was writing a 'History of the Royal Navy'.

The late 1670s was a period of widespread anti-Catholic hysteria. The 'Popish Plot' was fabricated by Titus Oates, and many people were condemned. Pepys was accused of "Piracy, Popery and Treachery" and imprisoned in the Tower of London for a while. He was soon released, but this is probably the reason he never received a knighthood. He was very loyal to the Stuarts, when they were replaced by William of Orange and Mary in 1688 (The Glorious Revolution) he was again imprisoned. When he was released, he retired in disgust and moved to Clapham.

The six volumes of his coded diaries were left to a nephew who bequeathed them to Magdalene College where they were neglected for a couple of centuries until rediscovered by the Victorians.

Andrew's talk was very informative and entertaining, well-illustrated by slides. He commented that the diaries are quite hard to read, but he recommended a biography by Claire Tomalin, "Samuel Pepys, The Unequalled Self". Our great thanks go to Andrew, no doubt he will be back.



## Afternoon Tea at Henley Greenlands Hotel Thursday 7 August 2025 at 3pm



Join members of MNTA for an enjoyable afternoon with traditional afternoon tea served beside the River Thames.

You will be served with an assortment of finger sandwiches, together with freshly baked scones served with clotted cream and strawberry preserve, followed by a selection of homemade cakes and a variety of English teas or coffee.

There will be a short talk on the history of Cliveden during the war years, followed by film on our MNTA Dartmouth holiday.

Dress up in your splendid summer outfits and come and delight in the wonderful landscape of Greenlands, and, of course, along with lots of convivial conversation.

The price will be £27.50 pp.

The afternoon tea will be held at Henley Business School, Greenlands, Oxfordshire, RG9 3AU. This is a self-drive outing – about 15-20mins towards Henley on the Henley Road.

If you would like to join us for this very agreeable event, please can you complete the application form within this newsletter. Anyone who indicated that they would like to attend after the recent email will be given priority in the case of over subscription.

Jenny Annett -

## MNTA Holiday to Devon May 2025

### Day 1 - Arrival in Blackawton

At an ungodly hour on Sunday morning, 41 MNTA members were picked up by Tom from Durham in a huge, elegant, white coach. The weather was glorious and we had a lovely drive through the countryside stopping at the medieval city of Wells for lunch.



We first visited the splendid Bishops' Palace, home of the Bishop of Bath and Wells for over 800 years. The first Bishop, Jocelin, built his residence and deer park near the cathedral. Later bishops added a moat, drawbridge, and ramparts with crenellations as the 13th Century was a time of civil war, plague and famine. Subsequent bishops each added to the palace.

Wells is the smallest city in England, dominated by its famous 13th century cathedral. The building was under scaffolding when we arrived and there was a charge of £15 for entry so, as we had very limited time, we merely admired the



exquisite, gothic exterior and walked on to the Vicars' Close. This is believed to be the only complete

medieval street left in England; it is a quiet cul-de-sac with two rows of very pretty, terraced sandstone cottages, once homes for the cathedral choristers.

After a quick lunch in the very attractive historic town centre we set off again to Dartmouth; Tom expertly navigating the narrow Devon lanes. The 'Best Western Golf and Spa Hotel' is some 4 miles outside Dartmouth in Blackawton. It's a modern, spacious hotel set in beautiful rolling golf courses. After an unforgettable dinner we retired, exhausted, to our comfortable rooms and beds.

**Jean Frost**

## Day 2 - Dartmouth

It was a misty morning as we headed from the hotel to Dartmouth but the sun broke through so we could enjoy our free morning exploring this delightful town on the river Dart in the sunshine. We discovered little streets with interesting shops so some of us succumbed and did a bit of shopping. The Royal Avenue Gardens proved to be a pretty, relaxing spot and of course there were boats to watch on the river with the steam train going back and forth on the opposite bank.

As Tim and I explored we discovered the importance of the river and port during the war. There was a stone plaque headed 'Freedom' commemorating the sailing from Dartmouth on 3rd June 1944 of 485 ships of the Royal Navy and the United States to take part in the invasion of Normandy.

We left the town quay promptly at 1pm aboard the Christie Belle ferry to cruise upriver to Agatha Christie's house Greenway. The skipper of the ferry gave us a very interesting



commentary about the various landmarks enroute. We had an excellent view of the Britannia Royal Naval college which has overlooked the town and trained naval officers since 1905. It's also where the Queen first met Prince Philip. We went past a house called Kiln Gate where the Pilgrim fathers stayed to rest and replenish supplies on the Mayflower and Speedwell before heading for the New World. We were told to look out for a seal who had

been seen recently but no luck!

We then arrived at Greenway which was the much-loved holiday home of Agatha Christie. The house has a very relaxed feel to it and is decorated and furnished in the style of the 1950s, which is when Agatha and her family would spend the summers there. Agatha was an avid collector, a hobby shared by five generations. There's an eclectic mix of over 12,000 items from prehistoric archaeology, she accompanied her archaeologist husband on excavations, to modern paperbacks and studio pottery as well as all the first editions of her books. Agatha describes Greenway and the garden as 'The Loveliest Place in the World'. With stunning views of the river Dart and a vast garden winding down to the river offering colourful interest all year round, her description seems very apt.



It was a most enjoyable day, a mix of history and natural beauty plus some insight into the life of an intriguing woman. The cherry on the cake – we saw the seal as we returned to Dartmouth on the ferry!

**Ann Dennis**

## Day 3 - Powderham Castle

We left bright and early, under a cloudy sky, but the sun soon broke out. We got to Powderham Castle, the home of the Earl of Devon, exactly on time after a trouble-free journey.

However, disaster soon struck when we were told that there was no water at the castle, so no toilets or coffee or tea. We were divided into two groups with a guide each who gave us fascinating facts about the history of the castle and the family who built it and who still live there.



Among interesting items were a mirror in the drawing room that slid back to reveal a large window and a fake section of the bookcase which opened to reveal a secret door. The formal entrance to the Castle had always been from the east via the river but with the coming of the railway in Victorian times this was no longer possible so the Castle was 'turned around' with the formal entrance now approached from the road in the west.

The framed portrait of a tortoise in a wig, on the arsenic green coloured wall on the grand staircase was intriguing. This was in memory of Timothy the tortoise, thought to be male but was actually female, who came to the castle in 1892 and lived in the castle's rose garden from 1935 until her death in 2004 at the age of 160.



After a short walk we were able to have coffee etc. at the Farm Shop. We then moved on to Exmouth for a river cruise on the River Exe which included a lovely cream tea.

The sun was still shining for our return to the hotel at the end of an interesting and enjoyable day.

**Rob and Jean Stanger**

## Day 4 – Buckland Abbey

On a sunny morning we travelled to Buckland Abbey, a very interesting NT property near Yelverton. Surrounding the buildings are many different gardens including a large wild garden.

The story of Buckland starts in the thirteenth century when Lady Alicia de Redvers, Countess of Devon, bought around 20,000 acres of land and gave it to seven Cistercian Monks from Quarr Abbey on the Isle of Wight



They farmed the land and built the large Tithe Barn, a small chapel and later the Abbey. They were at Buckland until the Reformation when the Abbey was pulled apart. What remained was bought by Sir Richard Grenville, who hoped to turn it into a home for his son Roger who was Captain of the Mary Rose. After the ship sank work at Buckland ceased until it was inherited by Richard Grenville, the Elizabethan sailor. The work was completed in 1576.



When Francis Drake had circumnavigated the world he needed to be a property owner, in order to be knighted. As he and Grenville were enemies, Drake bought Buckland in secret.

We saw many articles relating to Drake on the first floor. He lived in the house for 15 years and it remained in the family until 1937, and then passed to a distant relative.

It was donated to the National Trust in 1949.

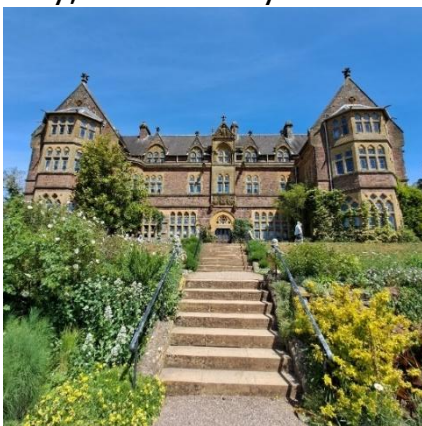
Some of us spent a short time in Dartmouth in the afternoon while others returned to the hotel. We spent a bemusing evening when we were entertained during dinner by Candlelight and a Murder Mystery. Maisie, a young lady with a chequered past, was found dead. The suspects were her brother, Lord Robert, the Duke of Hazzard and a gossiping Baroness with a desire to be a Duchess. Evidence was gathered by Arthur Conan Doyle. There was an unanimous decision. A very enjoyable day.



**Pat Flicker**

## Day 5 – Home time

Sadly, our last day here in Dartmouth. Suitcases all loaded and after a prompt 9 a.m. departure, Tom drove us carefully through the Devonshire lanes to Knightshayes, an extraordinary 19th Century Gothic revival house set in glorious 20th Century gardens. The house was designed by William Burges but later most of his work was covered up by the Amory family. Sir John and Lady Amory left the house to the National Trust in 1972. A female began the process of exposing Burges's work.



The sky was blue, the birds were singing as we set off for Taunton for an amazing roast chicken lunch - very large and very tasty!

By 6.30 we were back in Marlow, tired but happy. Many thanks were given to Tom, our driver, and Penny our leader, thus another MNTA holiday was over.

**Penny Clarry**

## Speaker's Evening – A Grandmother's Legacy

On a roasting, hot and sunny evening on June 18th we had an impressive turn-out to hear Jenny Mallin talk about the extraordinary life of her Great Aunt Constance.

The first part of Jenny's talk was mainly background about colonial life in Burma in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This is a place and period we know little about, then and now, because access was so difficult and reporting was restricted.



From 1824 Burma was under British rule as a province of British India. Indians and British colonialists dominated society. Great-Aunt Constance was born in Madras in 1888 where she had a very privileged lifestyle. When she married Patrick, a member of the Imperial Civil Service, they moved to Rangoon where they lived a very comfortable, sociable life for thirty years, until the Japanese invaded in 1941.

Many residents knew nothing about the ongoing war in Europe. Just before Christmas squadrons of Japanese bombers flew over Rangoon, people rushed to watch, over 2000 died in the bombing. As the Japanese invaded from the south the populace endeavoured to escape north and west into India. The routes were few and very hazardous. Burma is a mountainous country covered

in primary jungle with no roads but plenty of savage wildlife. The monsoon rains made the journey even more difficult.

Constance, Patrick and their three sons trekked all the way into India. They all survived, but thousands of refugees died enroute.

Jenny's very interesting talk was well illustrated with lots of slides; ancient photos, many from her personal family archive. It was a saga of courage and survival. A poignant reminder, also, of our current world affairs.

**Jean Frost**

## Outing to Rycote Park - Tuesday, 19 August 2025

The historical house and grounds have been lovingly and tastefully restored by Bernard and Sarah Taylor over the past 20 years and we have the opportunity to be guided round their beautiful grounds and the ancient 16<sup>th</sup> Century chapel.



On arrival we shall be greeted in the Tudor barn with coffee/tea and biscuits and given an introduction to the varied and fascinating history of Rycote. This will be followed by a guided tour (over mainly flat grounds) of the chapel and the gardens surrounding the house. Included in the tour is a visit to the well-planted 'walled' garden with a three-climate-zone greenhouse as well as a

large area of parkland where traces of the original manor's remains are still to be found. The talk and tour will take up to two hours.

As Rycote is near Thame and only half an hour away from Marlow via the M40 or A40. This is a self-drive outing, with car sharing where possible. Please indicate on the form your means of transport and whether you are prepared to take extra passengers, and I shall arrange lifts for those who need them.



There is a wide range of pubs and cafes in Thame if you wish to extend your visit.

Cost.                    £16.50 pp

Arrive at Rycote Park for coffee at 10.30am.

Further details regarding the gate entry etc. will be given nearer the time.

Contact:              Alison Rae:

## Outing to Lamport Hall, Northamptonshire Tuesday 24 June 2025

Lamport Hall is an elegant stately home in Northamptonshire, originally a Tudor Manor house, it was modified in the eighteenth century with a Palladian front and wings.



The Hall was the ancestral home of the Isham family who lived in the house for over 400 years until Sir Gyles Isham, the twelfth baronet, died in 1976. He never married and had no children so he bequeathed the hall, with its contents and estate, to the Lamport Preservation Trust.

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Sir Gyles attended Rugby School and then became a successful actor with the Royal Shakespeare Company, he then made several films in Hollywood. When the Second World War broke out he returned to London and went into the army.

As well as a family home, the hall has been a country club, a British and Czech army base and an Italian prisoner of war camp. The manager of the Trust now lives in an apartment in the Hall and, as he is an ardent cricket fan, has made a cricket green on one of the lawns which is well used by the local cricket club.



In the 1820s a Sir Charles Isham went on the Grand Tour of Italy. He spent the family fortune on art, and a garden gnome. He then built an enormous rockery outside his bedroom window and added to his gnome collection. Apparently he believed they came to life at night. When he died his daughters lined the gnomes up and shot them with a rifle, only one survived and is now said to be worth over a million pounds.



When Queen Mary visited the fountain was specially refurbished at great expense. Her Lady-in -Waiting went outside to inspect it and got splashed. The Queen saw she was wet and declared that she was not going out in the rain, so she never saw the fountain. The gardens are a delight and there is a 'bog house', which is a very historic outside latrine.

The weather was perfect, and after coffee and biscuits on our arrival, we were divided into groups to have a tour of the house and a leisurely wander in the gardens. A light lunch was included, served in the stable block, which is very smart and has been featured in the Netflix series 'The Crown'.

We all had a splendid day out and our great thanks go to Penny Clarry for organising another successful outing.

**Christine Joerin**

## Outing to the American Museum and Gardens Bath Wednesday 10th September 2025

An outing to Bath seems good at any time. This time, rather than visiting the City, we are going to the American Museum at Claverton Manor, adjacent to Bath University. The Museum is what it says it is but it is not modern-day USA we are visiting but the America of yesteryear – the 18th and 19th centuries. The Museum was founded in 1961 by Dallas Pratt and John Judkyn, friends and American art enthusiasts. They began collecting in 1958 and the manor house is filled with everything American. There are many, many rooms such as, a reconstructed Tavern from c.1780, a New Orleans bedroom and folk and textile galleries. It was all shipped over from the USA when American was being “modernised” and it enabled period rooms to be constructed within the manor house. Even today it remains the only museum outside the USA to be dedicated to the decorative arts of America. There are also substantial formal gardens (two acres) and grounds. These include a representation of the 18th century Mount Vernon Garden of George Washington in Virginia. There are some wonderful views over the Lymply Stoke valley which is just below the manor grounds. The mission of the museum is to help further the understanding of American culture. It is complex and unbelievably varied. As a child I found the history of the native American peoples fascinating.



There is an onsite restaurant - the American Deli - for lunch and coffee break, or you might prefer to take a picnic as there is lots of outside seating. There is also an exhibition centre which will highlight the American Space programme when we visit. We will also have a guided tour of the manor house / museum on our visit. A lot to take in but fascinating all the same. There are a number of sets of steps and staircases in the house, none too onerous, but they do need to be negotiated, but there is also a lift. It will take about 2 hours to get there.

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Cost.                    £45 pp

Depart.                9.15am: Spinfield Lane  
                             9.20am: Liston Road, Carpark  
                             9.25am: The Britannia, Bobmore Lane - bus shelter

Depart Bath        3.30 – 4pm                    Arrive back in Marlow        Approximately 6pm

Contact:        Roger Smith

## Last few places available for outing to NT House Ightham Mote Wednesday 30 July

The outing to Ightham Mote is going ahead - we have a nearly-full coachload. MNTA members who have booked will (by the time this newsletter is with you) have had an email reconfirmation from the organiser, John Pearce.

### **Don't forget your NT membership cards!**

However – at the time of writing – we still have a handful of places available and can on this occasion take more bookings even after the originally-advertised late June closing date. If you might like to join us, please email the organiser, John Pearce (details below) so that he can confirm availability. After that, please complete our normal booking form to be found in the April Newsletter, or John will email you one. Once completed, please return this to John preferably as a scan or a photo attached to an email.

Cost:           £23.50 per person  
 Depart:        9.15 am. Bus stop at bottom of Spinfield Lane  
                   9.20 am. Liston Road Car Park (by LIDL main entrance)  
                   9.25 am. Bus stop outside Britannia, by Bobmore Lane junction

Arrive Back in Marlow: 5:00pm - 5:45pm (subject to M25 traffic!)

Ightham Mote is near Sevenoaks in Kent and is an “outstanding” 14<sup>th</sup> century half-timbered moated manor house. The NT has owned it since 1985.

The coach will drop us off in the NT car park: we can expect to be there soon after 11am. Most of us will want to have a wander around the 14 acres of gardens, which are said to be “at their best in the summer months”. The gardens include an enclosed garden, hidden garden, formal garden and also lakes, water features, orchard and woodland. When staff are available, there may be an introductory tour of the gardens.

The house itself offers brief (free) introductory talks most days, which we hope to be able to join. Some of the highlights are: the medieval Great Hall; the Tudor ceiling in the chapel; a Jacobean fireplace and some hand-coloured Chinese wallpaper. The walk around the house does involve some staircases.

There is a relatively new visitor centre, with the usual shop, etc. There is also a separate second-hand bookshop. The main café is called the Mote café, which has indoor and outdoor seating.

The paths around the property are mostly firm, but surfaced with pea shingle. There are also walking surfaces of irregular flagstones and cobbles, especially within and close to the house itself. There is a steep slope to access the house, but a buggy service is offered.

Trip leader: John Pearce:

## MNTA Holidays 2025 / 2026

After a very successful visit last month to South Devon we are now looking forward to our visit to Bulgaria in September.

Next year we have two holidays to offer members. The first one will be to the Hauts de France, staying in Compiègne and visiting Laon, Beauvais and Chantilly, a lovely area to explore. Dates 23rd to 28th 2026 April. This holiday to France is being publicised as part of this Newsletter - see the separate publicity 'flyer' for the itinerary details and the booking form which needs to be returned to Simply Groups. The Autumn holiday is to Yorkshire, staying near York and with visits to Whitby and several NT properties. Dates 21st to 25th September 2026.

Our holiday are always well received and it is a great way to get to know other members and have fun. Do come and join us in 2026.

Angie Magee

### Outing to Hungerford & Rose Canal Tuesday 7 October 2025

This outing will be a very relaxed affair. We shall spend the morning in the pretty historic market town of Hungerford - with cafes, a huge Antique Arcade (considered to be one of the best in Britain) and the Kennet and Avon Canal. The afternoon will be spent gliding along on the Canal for a couple of hours, getting off halfway to admire the Berkshire countryside, with a cup of tea and piece of cake!

Cost.                    £32 pp

Depart.                9.15am: Spinfield Lane  
                              9.20am: Liston Road, Carpark  
                              9.25am: The Britannia, Bobmore Lane - bus shelter

Arrive back.        Approximately 17.30

Contact:             Penny Clarry:

**BOOKING APPLICATIONS MUST BE IN BY TUESDAY 16 SEPT 2025**