

The HOT Somerset Weekend



As with last year's visit to Dorset, this weekend was organised (?) on similar lines. What was certainly not organised was the weather – which was hot!

We had agreed to stay at the Premier Inn, Glastonbury (built on the site of the derelict Morland's sheepskin factory). Within easy travelling distance from Cardiff, those attending arrived in Somerset by midday. There was no set plan for the weekend, although during breakfast and at the evening meal on Saturday & Sunday, thoughts/suggestions were made on options for the following days' activities.

So, in alphabetical order, the following is an outline of how the weekend was spent.

Glastonbury

Used by many as the first stop on arrival for a cup of coffee. The town itself has attracted over the years an eclectic mix of residents, noticeable in a number of alternative shops to the normal high street.



Glastonbury Abbey

The Abbey is to be the last resting place of King Arthur and his wife Queen Guinevere. The holy thorn tree found in the abbey's grounds is thought to have sprouted from Joseph of Arimathea's staff. The abbey has been rebuilt and extended several times through its history; however in 1539 it was dissolved and left in ruin.



Glastonbury Tor

Those brave enough to scale its' heights on a hot sunny day would have been rewarded by the surrounding view of the Somerset levels, Dorset, Wiltshire and Wales.

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Ham Wall Nature Reserve (RSPB)

Amazing wildlife (butterflies, dragonflies, marsh harriers etc.) seen from options of four marked trails.



Kilver Court,

Shepton Mallet

Originally home to a lace making mill, the garden consists of a parterre, herbaceous border, rockery, stream and waterfall and what is described as a subtropical island (!) framed by a 15 metre high viaduct. The garden was recently featured on BBC Gardeners' World.



Close by is a designer outlet and opposite from (and I'm sure you all remember?) the Babycham factory - now producing cider.



Shapwick Heath

Formerly peat pits, the area has been transformed into a landscape of open lakes, reedbeds, fens and wet woodland.

Perhaps its claim to fame is, although not in summer, the dramatic scene as millions (??) of starlings twist and turn (known as a murmuration) against the evening sky, before dropping down to settle in the reed beds to roost.

Stuart Marshes (WWT)

Tidal area into Bridgwater Bay. Channels and creeks provide a refuge for wetland wildlife.

Views of the surrounding hills; Poldens, Mendips and Quantocks and for those with good sight or binoculars – Brecon Beacons!



Street

The Quaker family – Clarks, started a business in sheepskin rugs, woolen slippers and later boots and shoes. Its headquarters are still in Street but shoes are no longer manufactured there, instead in 1993 redundant factory buildings were converted to form Clarks Village, the first purpose built factory outlet in the UK.

Watchet & Coleridge Cottage

The cottage (NT) was where Coleridge lived for 3 years and wrote many poems including "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" – a statue of the ancient mariner can be seen on the esplanade of the nearby coastal town of Watchet.

Wells

13th century cathedral city, apart from the cathedral, visits also to moated Bishop's Palace & gardens and Market Day on the Saturday.



Premier Inn

Breakfast and evening meals were taken at the **Brewers Fayre**, after chaotic service on the Friday evening, service was rectified the following evening using a "new" service system, none of which detracted from two enjoyable evening meals and 3 rewarding days in Somerset.



Forthcoming Events



Friday 19th **October** 2018. Whitchurch 09:00, 3-Arches 09:15

Malmesbury and Westonbirt Arboretum £22

Straddling the River Avon, the charming market town of **Malmesbury** has over 1,000 years of history including the original Market Cross, the stunning 12th Century Abbey

with its tomb of King Athelstan, the free Athelstan Museum, and the beautiful Abbey House Gardens.

The nearby **Westonbirt Arboretum** is in Gloucestershire, about 3 miles southwest of the town of Tetbury. Managed by the Forestry Commission, it was planted in the heyday of Victorian plant hunting in the mid-19th century as part of the Westonbirt House estate which is Grade 1 listed among Historic Parks and Gardens of special historic interest.



Westonbirt's Treetop Walkway



Monday 26th **November** 2018

Christmas at Bath Christmas Market £16 **and American Museum** £9.50

Whitchurch 08:45, 3-Arches 09:00

Bath Christmas Market is sure to set anybody in Christmas spirit. The market offers fantastic shopping experience with over 170 chalets full of gorgeous and high-quality artisan Christmas gifts. As you move around the market, you will be thrilled with the aroma of warming mulled wine, chocolates

and freshly baked mince pies which can be enjoyed with cheering sound of carols.

The Bath Christmas Market appeals to thousands of visitors. With surrounding smell, sound, glittering lights, laser and buzzing activities, it sets in magical effects and transforms into a magical Christmas shopper's paradise.

The American Museum in Britain is home to the finest collection of Americana outside of the United States. Visitors learn about the Founding Fathers, the Pioneers West, Native Americans and the Slavery issue which lead to the Civil War, all in the new interactive American Heritage Exhibition. This precedes a series of attractive period rooms dating from colonial times until the eve of the Civil War.

Tuesday 18th **December** 2018 at 13:00

NHSRF Christmas Lunch £19.50

Our annual gathering of large appetites for the Christmas Carvery at the **Marriott Hotel**, by Hayes Bridge Road and Mill Lane in the centre of Cardiff.

Make your own way there and bring your gossip and your cameras for a hearty meal in good company.



Photo: Maureen Salmon

Aberglasney – 22nd August 2018

We arrived about 10:20 on a dull day with occasional drizzly rain. After passing through a rural gatehouse we entered the shop by way of an entrance to receive a map then everyone pleased themselves but most headed for the cafe.

Aberglasney House and Gardens had fallen into disrepair after a period of neglect. The renovation programme was started some years ago and only recently opened to the public.

The grounds were well managed with volunteer gardeners everywhere. As we explored the various areas we were met with lovely settings of perfumed flowers and fruits. Re-designated farm buildings and reclaimed stonework, with balconies, gave structure to views of the lake.



We departed about 16:00 and returned on a quicker route with views of a colourful sunset.

A lovely day out, enjoyed by all.



SPEAKERS LIST

OCTOBER 3rd

Angela Gorman

Life for African Mothers

NOVEMBER 7th

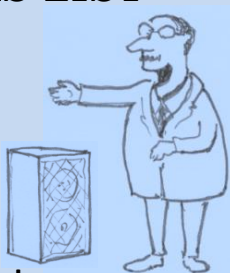
Alun Salisbury

The Durango & Silverton Railroad

DECEMBER 5th

Quiz or Musical Afternoon

To be confirmed



Would you like to start a Special Interest Group (SIG)?

Perhaps your forte is Films, Theatre, Crafts, Art, Darts or even Cycling!

Please let us know your interests

Your Committee & Others

Chair	Norman Bishop 029 2057 2237
Event Day	07538 671531 chairman@nhsrffcardiff.org
Secretary	Bob Holbrook secretary@nhsrffcardiff.org
Treasurer	Pat Bishop treasurer@nhsrffcardiff.org
Welfare	Marion Mardell welfare@nhsrffcardiff.org
Events	Norman Bishop chairman@nhsrffcardiff.org
Speaker Sec.	Hilary Fairney
Refreshments	Sharon Roth
Newsletter	David Manning
Meeting Registration	Christine Lewis
Raffle Organiser	Norman Bishop
Special Interest Groups	
Walking	Bob Holbrook
Ornithology	Don Ribeiro
Theatre	Vacant

Congratulations



Pat & Norman
On your 48th Wedding Anniversary