



Staffordshire Centre



see more, explore more, discover more — together

News Bulletin – February 2024

Hello Centre Members,

Well, we can't say that the New Year hasn't brought varied weather conditions – it's been quite challenging lately and given us much to talk about. Still, hopefully, it can only get better.

I hope those of you who came along to our last talk by Danny Wells on Cooks's Tours enjoyed it and have gone on to book exciting holidays later in the year (not to mention our own Centre holiday to Kendal!) I'm sure you will enjoy February's talk and film show by Ray Johnson from Stafford Film Archives – more details below.

Unfortunately, the Skittles Evening at the Royal Oak in Gnosall on Thursday, 22nd February has had to be cancelled due to problems at the venue. Those who have already booked and paid will receive a refund. It may be possible to hold a similar event at a different venue later in the year. We'll keep you informed.

Hoping to see you soon.

Margaret Winfield

TALKS

All talks start at 2:30 pm at Walton Village Hall



An Illustrated History of Stafford 13th February 2024

A Talk by Ray Johnson MBE



Ray Johnson MBE is Director and Founder of the Staffordshire Film Archives. This presentation is a compilation of films and documentaries from the Archive, bringing some of Stafford's heritage back to life.

We begin and end at Stafford Station. In the 1940s we'll see film of the station and of the old English Electric, leading up to the company developing and producing the first diesel/electric passenger locomotive.

This is a fascinating look at Stafford's history with film of places such as the Brine Baths and the old Post Office, where Stafford's Shoe Industry was born, and footage of industries from the towns past such as the Salt Industry and Lotus Shoes.

The lighter side is covered by a look at Stafford Carnival – remember that?

These and other short films bring the towns past alive on the screen.

The History of the Gatehouse - 12th March 2024

A Talk by Keith Harrison



Hear the stories from behind the scenes at the Gatehouse Theatre, from its tumultuous beginnings as Stafford's Borough Hall to one of Britain's most successful provincial venues.

This is a tale of rotten MPs, death, drama, disaster and . . . Ken Dodd.

Now, with more than 100,000 visitors a year and on the back of a record panto season, Marketing Manager **Keith Harrison** takes us behind the scenes to see what really goes on when the curtain goes down. Join us for this audio-visual backstage tour followed by a Q&A.

PS. Did we mention the nuclear bunker, William Shakespeare performing in Stafford and the ghosts? No?

OK. There will also be a nuclear bunker, Shakespeare in Stafford and ghosts. Lots of ghosts.'

Diary Dates

9th April – 50th Annual General Meeting

14th May – The Violin – Natalie Cumming

VISIT

Skittles at The Royal Oak, Gnosall 12pm on Thursday 22nd February

Come and join us for some fun at our inaugural skittles event.

We'll have teams of 4, which will last around two hours so there's time to ask you ask for?

CANCELLED

We expect the competition to take place as a buffet lunch - what more could

Price: £10 **Organiser:** Margaret Winfield

WALKS

Diary Dates:

21st March – Cannock Chase

11th April – Barton under Needwood



REMINDER

If you haven't done so already, may we remind you that the membership for 2024 is now due.

HOLIDAY 2024

For those of you who missed the opportunity to join us for our 2024 holiday we can now tell you we have an extra 2 twin rooms available.



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