Greetings from the Chairman

Our 2017 AGM was held in Newark this year and thanks are due to Mark Williamson at the Newark Visitor Centre for all his help and support in making the day such a success. Thanks also to Mike Smith for his informative article on the day within this magazine.

Familiarization plans for 2018 are now finalized for the first half of the year and we hope that they will be well supported, especially as we have again listened to the membership and put on feeder coaches for the Bristol 3 day trip which has been heavily sponsored both by Destination Bristol, the Bristol Venues and Harry Shaw Group Travel.

Central Branch committee has 3 GTO members and 3 Associate Members. This has meant that Julia has had to combine being Secretary with Treasurer and myself the Chairmanship with Magazine Editor. Sally our newest committee member is not on email and does not have a computer, which makes it almost impossible for her to take on any of the officer roles.

Due to personal circumstances I would have liked to resign from the committee at this year’s AGM but it is not possible for the existing GTO committee to continue if I did so. I am therefore giving 12 months notice of my retirement from the AGTO Central Branch. It is imperative that we get a minimum of 2 new GTO committee members and ideally 3 within the next few months. Please think hard about this as the future of central Branch lies in your hands.

Pauline Johnson, Chairman Central Branch

Sponsored by

InterChoice
CAN YOU HELP?

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF A COMMITTEE MEMBER:

Help and support in planning Familiarizations and help on the day. As a member of the committee you can have a say on what we do for all Central Branch members and make sure that as a branch we also get our views known to AGTO National committee.

Whilst all our committee meetings are at present at Carr's Lane, Birmingham - near Moor Hall Station and across the road to the back door of M&S, we are open to moving this IF Birmingham was no longer the most convenient meeting place for the majority. The main criteria is that it must be convenient to get to by train or bus as some members of the present committee don't drive.

Getting to the

NATIONAL AGM at EXCURSIONS, ALEXANDRA PALACE, LONDON

SATURDAY 27TH JANUARY 2018.

Did you know that when you register you can select a FREE coach on the Saturday from various points within the Central Branch area. E.g. Fosse Park Leicester opposite the Asda Petrol Station at 8am (with free parking at Fosse Park).

For more information go to www.excursionsshow.com. Click on VISITORS, then click on the menu for ‘book a free coach transfer’. Then click on MORE COACH DETAILS and you will get full information on departure and return times, duration of coach journey and coach operator.

I hope to see as many of you there. Let YOUR VOICE be heard and help to make AGTO an association to be proud of and a force to be reckoned with in the Travel Industry. (Pauline)

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

Tina Hooper 2649 Williamsons of Shrewsbury
Cynthia Jenkins 2651 WEM Senior Club
Derek Oakley 2653 Derek’s Tours
Kath Oakley 2656 Derek’s Tours
Ian Rees 2546 Friendships Around Mansfield/Travel on a Budget (transfer from Northern Branch)

TO BOOK FOR ALL AGTO CENTRAL BRANCH FAMILIARISATION VISITS CONTACT:

Mrs Julia Passmore
AGTO Central Branch Secretary
32 Chetwynd Road
Toton
Nottingham NG9 6FT

Tel: 0115 9730454 or email: julia1cpassmore@aol.com

BOOKING FORMS AND FULL DETAILS CAN BE EMAILED OR SENT BY POST

BRISTOL: Cost £125 members £135 Guests.
Deposits £50pp
Full payment no later than 9th February

Limited Single rooms at no supplement
SO BOOK SOON
coach for the journey back into Bristol and the SS Great Britain, where the Central Branch Meeting will be hosted, and is compulsory for members to attend. After the meeting, there will be free time to explore the ship, along with the new Being Brunel Exhibition, which, at the time of going to print, is scheduled to open in February 2018. You will have time for lunch (not included) prior to the coach departing at approx. 14.00 hrs for the return journey.

Publication Date: August 2017

Price Includes:
- Return coach travel
- 2 night’s accommodation at the Holiday Inn, Bristol Filton on a dinner, bed & breakfast basis
- Group entrance to Bristol Aerospace
- Guided tour of Bristol
- Harbour Tour
- Lunch and group entrance to John Wesley’s Chapel: The New Room
- Guided tour of the Clifton Suspension Bridge
- Group entrance to the SS Great Britain & the Being Brunel Exhibition
- Full ABTA financial protection

Not Included:
- Personal expenditure, gratuities etc.
- Optional Travel Insurance - £15.00
- Single room supplement - NIL (limited availability)
AGTO BOARD TALK
Report from your Central Board Director

Hi,

The last Board meeting took place at Warrington on 15th September but everything that was brought up at that meeting was reported at the AGM and reported in the National newsletter.

The Board was as surprised as everyone else when Mike Bugsgang gave his resignation, as at 31st December 2017, but feelers have gone out to see if anyone would be interested in the post and the position has been advertised in prominent brochures and we hope to find a suitable replacement as quickly as possible.

Mike has done such a sterling job since he took office, setting us on the right road to achieving prominent notice in the press and increasing membership and public awareness of our existence - he will be a very hard act to follow.

Details of the National AGM, due to take place at Excursions, Alexandria Palace, on Saturday 27th January 2018, have been circulated in all the national travel magazines and we do hope you will make the effort to attend. Coaches are being provided from most areas, free of charge, to get as many members as possible to the venue. Details can be found when you register to attend. **We need your voice at the AGM** and it will be lovely to meet you and spend time with you.

The next Board meeting is on Saturday, 10th December 2017. If anyone has anything they would like me to take to the meeting please let me know as soon as possible so I can get it on the Agenda.

**Julia Passmore,**
Central Board Director
8th November 2017

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Please come and enjoy a fun-filled and informative weekend with fellow AGTO members, to see the many attractions that the city of Bristol could offer you and your group. The following itinerary has been carefully planned with the help of the Central Branch Committee along with Destination Bristol and Harry Shaw Group Travel to showcase some of the major attractions Bristol has to offer, some you may have heard of and others you may not! **This really is a great opportunity for a social and informative weekend away, where approximately £**’s worth of attractions are included for your benefit!

**Itinerary:**

**Day 1** - Depart during the morning (approx. 11.00 hrs from the last pick-up at Birminghnam E57 Club) and travel south, making an appropriate comfort stop en-route to Bristol Aerospace, where group entrance has been arranged to the recently opened museum to include a guided tour and access to the world-famous Concorde.

Following the visit, the coach will continue to our hotel – the Holiday Inn Bristol Filton, where accommodation is reserved for two nights. Dinner is included this evening.

**Day 2** - After breakfast, a guided tour of Bristol is included, a great way to start the day, followed by a Harbour tour. We then visit John Wesley’s Chapel – The New Room, where lunch is provided followed by a guided tour. We’re then off for a guided tour of the Clifton Suspension Bridge, before returning to the hotel. Dinner is included this evening.

**Day 3** - After breakfast, it’s time to check out of the hotel and board the...
Central Branch

Bristol Familiarisation Weekend

Staying at the Holiday Inn, Bristol Filton

Departing Friday 23rd March 2018
3 Days • 2 Nights

from just

£125 Member/Associate
£135 per guest

Organised by
HARRY SHAW

Group Travel

The largest Christmas Show in the Country!

Set in the magical surroundings of mechanical organs and fairground carousels, with a cast of 130 professional singers, dancers and musicians – many of whom are West End performers. The 3 hour performance delivers an extravaganza of non-stop singing, dancing, music, humour and variety. It’s a fast moving celebration of the festive season featuring an eclectic mix of both seasonal and year-round favourites, with famous and much-loved chart toppers being sung alongside traditional carols.

Including 1 night H/B accommodation at...

HEACHAM MANOR HOTEL
Hunstanton Road, Hunstanton

A Grade II listed Country House set in picturesque gardens and an award-winning restaurant, just 1.5 miles from Hunstanton. Each bedroom features an en-suite with a bathtub and shower, a flat screen TV and tea & coffee making facilities. Most rooms have picturesque views across the grounds.

Tour Dates

7TH November 2018
14TH November 2018
21ST November 2018
28TH November 2018
5TH December 2018

• 1 Night H/B at Heacham Manor Hotel
• Thursford Christmas Spectacular Ticket
• Return Coach Travel
• Free time in Norwich before returning

From only £169 pp

Single Supplement £15 for duration

For more details and to book
Please call InterChoice on:
0845 1303 321
WELCOME TO NEWARK
Reported by Julia Passmore

The Branch members who attended the AGM in Newark, would certainly echo these sentiments. I arrived at the Museum on time, despite road work problems in leaving our village to find that many members were already settled in and were enjoying coffee and biscuits. Subsequently I found that many had stopped over night in Newark. Mark Williamson, the Operations Manager of the Visitor Centre, opened the meeting by welcoming the members with a few comments about Newark and the Civil War Museum. He explained that the centre had been purchased for £1 from the County Council and then £5.4 million was spent for the building of the National Civil War Centre with grants from the Heritage Lottery, Newark and Sherwood District Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and various other organisations and individuals. Both the Museum and Palace Theatre are now run by Newark and Sherwood District Council.

The members then departed for a tour of Newark.

During the tour we were told that the National Civil War Centre incorporates the Old Magnus Buildings that were part of a free school built by Thomas Magnus in 1529. The complex comprises buildings from Tudor, Georgian, and Victorian periods. All these are used as part of the building and used as Gallery space in the Civil War Centre. The Palace Theatre joined up with the museum in 2016.

The Palace Theatre was built in 1920 by a local businesswoman Emily Blagg who on arriving in Newark selling silks and textiles, progressed and started her own brick company, built houses and ultimately the theatre. It has subsequently had an interesting history with famous thespians performing.

It was given listed building status in 1993.

Moving to the Market Square (where the market was in full swing) significant historic buildings were highlighted. With a change of guide for the remainder of the tour, which included the Castle, but only from the garden. Surprisingly the current dilapidated state of the castle was not because of the Civil War but subsequently stones being used for other buildings in the town. The Civil War from 1642 to 1646 split families, supporters of Charles I or Oliver Cromwell. It wiped out one in 20 of the country’s population.

With a good start in the conflict, the Royalists’ 1644 defeat at Marston Moor lost Charles I control of the north. Subsequently he surrendered Newark to the English troops outside Newark Castle, was imprisoned, charged with treason and executed in 1649.

The National Civil War Centre was opened in Newark, a Royalist stronghold, which came under siege three times by 16,000 English and Scottish soldiers. Part of the reason Newark was picked as the home of the Civil War centre was because the town’s history is remarkably intact. Helped that plague was endemic (a third of the 6,000 inhabitants had died) and Parliamentarian and Scottish soldiers steered clear of the town rather than plunder or burn it to the ground.

Returning to the Museum we had a presentation, with an excellent promotional video of Newark, by a member of the Newark Business Group. This was followed by 2 presentations highlighting the interesting features of Southwell and the facilities available at the Grantham Ramada Hotel. Most members were surprised to hear that this hotel was privately owned, as were others within the Ramada Group.

This was followed by a fantastic buffet lunch prior to the AGM, followed by Members having the opportunity to remain in the Museum or in Newark. In summary one of the best single day fam trips that I have attended and the vote of thanks by Pauline was certainly very much justified.