

# Beckingham cum Saundby ....

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## Beckingham cum Saundby History Group

### Nostell Priory Trip 2018



Each year the History Group plan at least one visit to a place of historic interest. This year it was a coach trip to National Trust property Nostell Priory in Wakefield. The coach picked us up from the Recreation Room, Beckingham at 9.45am. Our driver, Frank, introduced himself and gave the obligatory safety talk then we were on our way with 23 people on board. The air conditioning was much appreciated with the long heatwave currently being experienced!

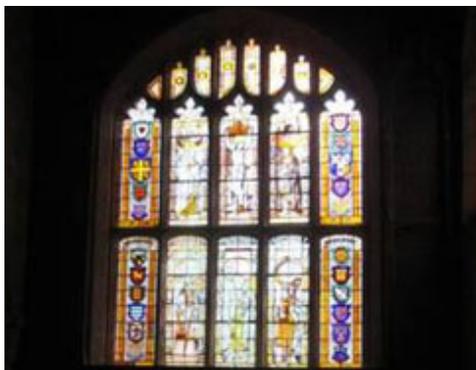
When the trip was originally booked we were advised that there were no guided tours of the house, only a free flow system of first come first in, at 1pm. However on arrival we were informed there were in fact two guided tours that morning at 11.20 and 11.40am which could be booked. Several passengers took advantage of these. Walking from the coach to the Priory was quite a way taking about 10 minutes, however there was a golf buggy available if required.



Our tour was excellent with a friendly, informative and interesting guide, giving a fascinating insight into the history of the place and those who had resided there or been connected in some way. Originally it was the site of an Augustinian Priory, St Oswalds, founded in 12th century which flourished for over 400 years. After the Dissolution of Monasteries during the reign of Henry VIII it was eventually bought by the Winn family who created the building as it is today.



It has one of the largest collections of Thomas Chippendale furniture who furnished all the rooms in the house and masterminded much of the decor. There are some wonderful decorative ceilings, hand painted wallpaper depicting exotic flowers and birds, paintings and artwork, a Dolls House, a huge collection of books and much more to see. Exhibitions, activities and events celebrating 300 years of Chippendale and his work will be taking place throughout the summer.



The time remaining was free for all to wander as they wished around the gardens and grounds where there is much to see including a rose garden, kitchen garden, orangery, and lakes. There is also a Menagerie Garden which once housed exotic species such as monkeys, colourful birds and lions! The Parish Church in the grounds, St Michael and Our Lady, is listed as a building of Special Architectural and Historic Interest Grade 1 and is not part of the National Trust.



Containing many treasures, the most unique of which is its collection of antique Swiss glass in seventeen of the nineteen windows, depicting many different subjects and stories. Refreshments were available from the Courtyard Café and there was also the opportunity to go round the house again when it reopened at 1pm.

Our return journey was something more of an adventure than we had been expecting! We left Nostell Priory at 2.30pm as planned, with much talk about the visit. Fifteen minutes later the coach stopped suddenly on a busy road and all went quiet, including the driver. After a phone call to his depot the driver then got off the coach and made some checks.



In the meantime the coach quickly became oppressively hot with the air conditioning off! A short while later the driver got back on apologising saying the engine had overheated and that he was waiting for it to cool down enough to take us to the nearest refreshment place where we could comfortably wait for the replacement coach which was already on its way. We were relieved to safely reach a McDonalds restaurant – a novel experience for some of us! – in just a few minutes!



We did not have to wait long for the transport to complete our return to Beckingham. The problem had been quickly sorted by our friendly, helpful driver Frank, and Kettlewells, for which we were grateful. It could have been much worse. It was an interesting day, but we were all quite pleased to get back home. Many thanks must go to Freda and Lynn for arranging the trip. Nostell Priory is well worth a visit.

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