



**GTOA NORTHERN BRANCH
CARLISLE - Familiarisation Visit
Friday 9th March – Sunday 11th March 2012**

Itinerary

Friday 9th March

- Afternoon Check-in at the Crown & Mitre Hotel, Carlisle
- 15.30hrs. Meet the Locals! Afternoon Tea and your chance to meet some of the representatives from the local attractions and Associates.
- 19.00hrs Drinks Reception
- 19.30hrs Dinner

Saturday 10th March

- Breakfast
- Depart Hotel for Familiarisation visit of Carlisle led by Tom Keating (Blue Badge Guide). Including Carlisle Cathedral, Guildhall, The Lanes Complex, Carlisle Castle and Tullie House (where lunch will be taken)
- Arrive back at Hotel 16.00hrs
- 19.00hrs Drinks reception
- 19.30hrs Dinner followed by entertainment

Sunday 11th March

- Breakfast
- 10.00 Branch Meeting
- 11.30 Meeting Close
- Depart or rest of the day at leisure

**Please contact Bob Walker for Booking Form
Tel: 07272634561 e-mail: r.j.walker@btinternet.com**

NORTHERN LIGHTS

**The Newsletter of the Northern Branch of
The Group Travel Organisers Association**



Winter 2012

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I have just returned from another very successful AGM weekend at York. It was good to see our branch well represented—not all were able to stay at the hotel but joined us for the different events of the weekend. I am not reporting on the weekend here as there will again be an AGM Supplement to the national GTOA News shortly.

We also had a very well attended branch meeting on the Sunday morning when we were joined by new associate and intermediate members. A warm welcome was extended to Malcolm Weaving (5711) of the Rendezvous Hotel, Skipton, to Laura Rhodes and Corris Sharratt representing North East England Tour Guides (8041) and Tess Pike representing Cumbria Tourist Guides (8027). Tess has taken the spotlight in this issue.

As a branch we seem to be going from strength to strength with a keen committee and support from the branch members. We now have two opportunities of increasing membership as I have negotiated free stands at the two Trade Shows which are coming up shortly in the north. On 4 February we will be exhibiting at the Tourism & Events Showcase at Harewood House, Leeds and on 25 February at the Great Days Out Fair at Event City, Trafford Centre, Manchester.

All gtos are invited to these trade fairs where you can gather ideas for future trips and holidays. You will find information further on in this newsletter.

Arrangements have now been finalised for our Northern Branch Familiarisation Visit over the weekend of 9-11 March at Carlisle. If

Northern Lights is the quarterly newsletter of the Northern Branch of GTOA
Copy required for the spring edition by Friday 20 April 2012
News, views and information to be sent to Pauline M Hutchinson,
Chairman Northern Branch, 74 Queens Road, Accrington Lancs. BB5 6AW
Tel/Fax: 01254 390806; e-mail: editor@goa.co.uk

you have not already booked, we still have room for more people. We have not yet reached the goal set by our last AGM meeting at Telford.

Due to some technical problems, we have had to change the venue for our 2012 AGM on 19-21 October. We will now be staying at the Cedar Court Hotel, Bradford. Full details and booking forms will appear in the next newsletter.

By now, I expect you have all made arrangements for your trips and holidays for the year. I wish you all every success with your organising and hope all your events go smoothly so that you can enjoy them as well.

Don't forget—this is your newsletter—please let me have reports of good or bad trips so that other members can learn from them.

Best Regards

*Pauline M Hutchinson
Chairman Northern Branch*

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 4 February—Tourism & Events Showcase,
Harewood House, Leeds

Saturday 25 February—Great Days Out Fair, Event City,
Trafford Centre, Manchester

**09-11 March 2012—Northern Branch Fam Weekend
at Carlisle**

Contact: Bob Walker Tel: **07872 634561** or
e-mail: r.j.walker@btinternet.com

**19-21 October 2012—Northern Branch AGM
at the Cedar Court Hotel Bradford**

CARLISLE FAM WEEKEND—9-11 March 2012

See Back Page for more details



Carlisle Cathedral and misericords in the choir stalls



The Lanes. Photo by Jan Fialkowski



Tourist Information Centre in the Old Town Hall. Photo by Jan Fialkowski



Guildhall Museum

Tullie House

CTG members can guide groups along the Eden valley with its historic castles; down the Cumberland coast (attacked by the American Navy in 1778); around the ancient, hugely-influential abbeys and monasteries; or along the fortifications of Hadrian's Wall. They can bring alive Cumbria's role as a tempestuous border, show how its wool once clothed armies, and the part that its mines and rivers played in Britain's early industrial development.

A particular feature of the recent training course was an Eco-Tourism module devised in conjunction with the leading conservation charity, "Nurture Lakeland". All new guides and many existing ones hold the Institute of Tourist Guiding's Eco-Tourism qualification. This makes them well-equipped to deliver visitor experiences which provide an insight into current environmental issues and minimise the impact on the environment.

A specific initiative for 2012 is "Uniquely Coniston", a series of nine scheduled, low-impact, full- or half-day experiences organised in conjunction with the Coniston Attractions. On foot, or using electric bikes, and frequently with a launch/steamer component, these experiences focus on Coniston's stunning landscape, its rich literary associations and its remarkable industrial heritage. Bookings can be made through the Coniston TIC (www.conistontic.org): these excursions can also be booked by groups outside the scheduled programme.

Cumbria is well-known as a centre for short breaks, with a wide range of hotels able to accommodate coach groups. But one-day excursions from centres such as Manchester, Liverpool or Newcastle are also possible, and a CTG guide can escort your party from their city start-point. For groups wanting a day in the Lakes *en route* from say Glasgow to Liverpool, CTG can provide an expert to guide that section of the journey with appropriate stops.

Please contact us if we can help in arranging your trips and holidays.

Tess Pike MITG, Cumbria Blue Badge Tourist Guide

Tel: 015242 72530 Mob: 07778 145 156

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Web: www.cumbriatouristguides.co.uk

TOURISM & EVENTS SHOWCASE

SATURDAY 4TH FEBRUARY 10.30AM-3PM

This **FREE** to enter Group Travel and Event Showcase will be held at [Harewood House](#) near Leeds and will provide organisers of group holidays and days out with an opportunity to find out what's on offer for your group right across the North of England, East Midlands and further afield and discuss your requirements face to face.

MEET MORE THAN 65 EXHIBITORS!!

DESTINATIONS | ATTRACTIONS | ACCOMMODATION PROVIDERS | EVENTS | TOUR OPERATORS

FREE PARKING

Sat Nav use postcode LS17 9LQ

There will be coaches operating from the North West, including Liverpool and Manchester to Harewood House. Included in the day will be a visit to a Yorkshire attraction.

To reserve your place contact Julie

julie.hart@grouptourismorganiser.com or telephone **0845 166 8131**

Leeds is well served by trains and National Express coaches from all parts of the UK.

A shuttle service will operate from Leeds Railway Station to Harewood House.

There is also a regular bus service from Leeds to the main gate of Harewood House.

Competitions and give-aways throughout the day, with some great prizes to be won.

Visitors can enjoy a **FREE** familiarisation visit passport to some of the many attractions in the area.

Visitors to the Showcase will also be able to join an exclusive free behind the scenes tour of a closed season Harewood House to see the extensive conservation work undertaken during the closed season. This will include areas not normally available on public tours.

Book your place on the day to listen to Trevor Nicholson, head gardener at Harewood House presenting a talk on 'The Gardens at Harewood House - Through the Seasons'.

Hotel accommodation is also available at reduced rates - please contact Julie for more details.

julie.hart@grouptourismorganiser.com or telephone **0845 166 8131**

For more information visit: www.tourismshowcase.com



GREAT DAYS OUT

Group Travel | Home & Abroad
Saturday 25 February, EventCity, Manchester

Have you heard about Great Days Out? If you organise group trips and outings, this is the event for you.

Great Days Out is an annual exhibition showcasing the best attractions for great days out across the UK and Ireland. Taking place from 9.30am – 3.30pm on Saturday 25 February at EventCity (by The Trafford Centre) in Manchester. Meet over 200 attractions and destinations face to face, find new ideas, inspiration and information for your next outing.

Meet exhibitors such as Saga, Tourism Ireland, BBC Tours, Isle of Man, Blackpool Pleasure Beach, Cadbury World and many more. Furthermore, it's free to attend.

Great Days Out is not only an exhibition, there's a host of activities taking place throughout the day including:

Farmers Market Area sponsored by Food Connect, where you can sample and purchase a range of fine foods from a host of independent producers.

Entertainment Arena with a fun packed programme including folk singers from The Beatles Story; live cooking demonstrations with Robert Owen Brown; Blue Coats showcase from Pontins and be introduced to some wildlife with Flamingo Land.

Talks Arena sponsored by Saga, where you can hear from industry professionals and pick up handy tips. Exclusive to Great Days Out, you can also hear the UK Coach Awards 2012 shortlist announcement.

Other new additions to the show include the Great Days Out Library sponsored by Modern History and the B2B Lounge sponsored by Visit England.

We would like to invite your trip organisers to come along to the show in February this year. If you are not responsible for organising trips, please forward this on to your leader.

To find out more and register for your free ticket to the show please go to www.greatdaysout.com

Register now and you'll also be entered automatically into a prize draw to win a European cruise on the Saga Ruby. This 8 day cruise for two people will explore the wonderful destinations of Hamburg, the Kiel Canal, Copenhagen, Gothenburg and Kristiansand.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Best wishes,
The Great Days Out Team



Spotlight!

In this issue we shine the spotlight on Tess Pike, representing Cumbria Tourist Guides (8027)

CUMBRIA TOURIST GUIDES

Tourist guiding in Cumbria is entering a new and exciting phase with a substantial increase in both the availability of trained guides and the range of skills on offer.

2012 has seen a doubling of membership at Cumbria Tourist Guides (CTG) -most of them based in the county but some from as far afield as London or Scotland. This increase in numbers follows the conclusion of a highly successful training course run from June 2010 to May 2011. CTG (www.cumbriatouristguides.co.uk) is the professional association of some fifty Blue Badge Guides who have passed the examinations set by the Institute of Tourist Guiding and are qualified to work in Cumbria.

They now offer not only more guides to accompany groups in Cumbria but also an increased range of specialist subjects. Particular areas of expertise include church architecture, houses and gardens of Cumbria, farming, horses and dry-stone walling.

The principal draw in Cumbria remains the Lake District with its stunning scenery of lakes and fells (mountains), its associations with literary figures like Wordsworth, Beatrix Potter and Arthur Ransome, and its picturesque towns and villages. But Cumbria is more than just the Lake District. Created in 1974 from the old counties of Cumberland, Westmorland, Lancashire north-of-the-sands and a sliver of Yorkshire, it stretches from the Irish Sea to the Pennines and the Scottish border to Morecambe Bay and has much to offer.

