

April to June Quarter 2022 Magazine

Welcome to the April to June 2022 edition of our Magazine. This issue runs from 1st April to 30th June. The Magazine constitutes an archive of reports about HoE u3a activities. On the front page we try to highlight an event in Stratford-upon-Avon during the quarter.

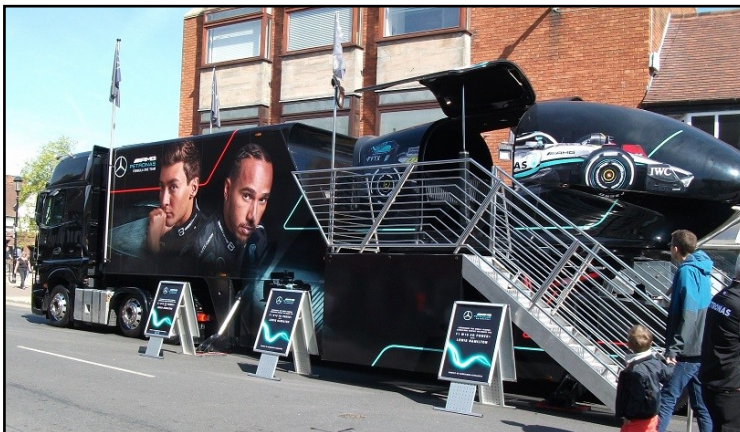
Reports include:

- SNATTs visit to Loughborough Bell Foundry on Wednesday 13th April.
- SNATTs and Garden Appreciation joint meeting on 13th May to visit a Woodland in Binton following a talk about the

woodland by Frances Freeman who owns and manages the woodland.

- May Monthly meeting—The Swans of Stratford-upon-Avon
- Monthly meeting talk about Farmer Barnes Dairy at Somerby, near Melton Mowbray. Thursday 9th June 2022.

Last update: 4th July 2022



Photographs from Stratford Car Festival, 30th April 2022

**Report for SNATTs Group visit to Loughborough
 Bell Foundry — John Taylor & Co, Freehold Street,
 Loughborough, LE11 1AR
 Wednesday 13th April 2022**



Fifteen members of the group visited the factory of John Taylor and Co. in Loughborough on Wednesday 13th April 2022. The factory is the sole remaining bell foundry in UK since the one in Whitechapel closed a couple of years ago. The foundry has been located in Loughborough since 1839 and on the current site since 1859. Apparently it is the largest bell foundry in the world. The company has operated by the family since 1784.

The picture above is a name advertisement painted on the top of the foundry outer wall to indicate the factory.

Bells are cast on the site and tuned using techniques developed and perfected since 1896, using a Five Tone Principle. Whilst virtually all other bell founders now cast their bells using self-setting sand moulds, Taylors continue to use the more labour intensive loam process that they have used for many years as it is acknowledged that the bells so produced have a sweet toned sound quality.

The factory comprises two brick buildings either side of a short street. One building is the foundry where there are sited two modern furnaces, one for bell metal and the other for iron—the castings produced are for the fittings such as head stocks, and other items for the hanging frames and fixtures. Other areas include a small museum about bells and the company.

The picture below shows the moulding shop with 2 furnaces towards the top of the picture.



The second building is a fabrication facility for tuning the bells, producing and building the required hanging frames; there is also a wood fabrication shop for those parts still produced in wood.

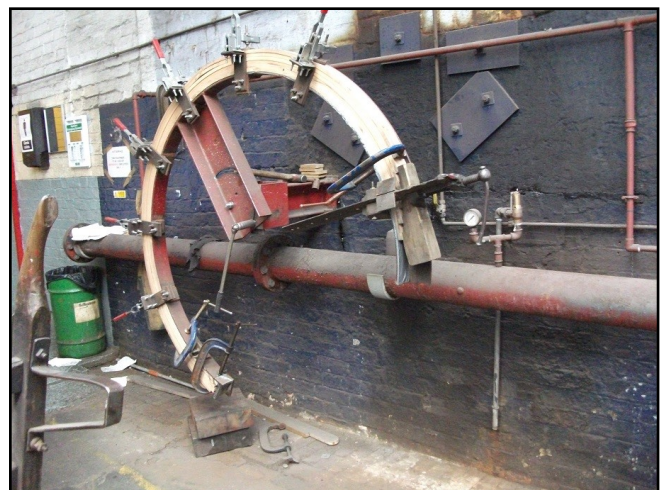


Picture above shows a large bell being assembled in a frame with red painted headstock to enable the bell to swing.

The smaller bell shown below is mounted in a steel cage for fitting into a bell tower. The cages are designed in the foundry and fully drawn up to ensure compliance with safety and strength standards. Computer Aided Design is also being used now keep up to date and ensure costs are kept in line with customers' requirements.



The five bells shown left are very old 17th century bells returned to the foundry for possible recycling or re-use



The picture on the previous page is of the steam heating tube and bending frame used to produce a circular bell wheel from a wood such as ash.

illustrate facets of bell ringing, and also a range of bells made from different materials to illustrate the tone and note of the bells. The favourite metal has been bell metal

(about 60%: 40% copper: tin mix) and that is still preferred. Other metals that have been tried include brass (copper/zinc) cast iron, steel, aluminium.



The image above shows a bell set up in a boring machine for the tuning to be done. The inside surface of the bell is machined to a careful pattern determined by frequent sound tests that ensures the bell sounds correct within a peal

Other areas of the factory not photographed include the wood shop where items produced from wood are made (the steam tube and wheel bending frame pictured above are located just outside the wood shop); frame fabrication and finishing facility; museum including two brick built metal furnaces which are used occasionally when necessary (the 2 furnaces in the casting department are mostly used).

In the museum there are various models to

May Monthly Meeting, Thursday 5th May 2022 The Swans of Stratford-upon-Avon Cyril Bennis

Cyril Bennis has been working with the swans of Stratford-upon-Avon for 40 years. When he started in 1981 there appeared to be only one swan living on the River Avon in the Stratford area. Now there are about 40 and one family is living along the canal and river with 7 cygnets. See the photograph below. I will try to take more photographs over the next week or as the family did not pose nicely for me.

Cyril and his wife, Roxanne, gave a hilarious talk between them about their experiences with the swans and other birds on the canal and river. They work with the Canal and River Trust, the RSPCA, the local Councils to ensure the health and safety of the local

bird population. Just at the moment they are concerned that there is no place for the swan and particularly the cygnets to come out of the water and onto the area surrounding the canal basin in order to preen their plumage. Care of their plumage is vital to their well-being.

Avian Flu is about at the moment so swans are dying and also need care when they do catch it and survive. Whether or not this is connected with Avian Flu, there is a great imbalance in the duck population, particularly the Mallards. There are about 4 drakes to every duck.



Swans in Bancroft Canal Basin

SNATTs & Garden Appreciation Group Meeting, Friday 13th May 2022 Warwickshire Woodland Management—

Frances Freeman lives locally and has owned a woodland in Binton for a number of years and which she and her husband manage to produce wood for various uses.

The woodland has to be managed to ensure the continued health of the various species of tree and to ensure a regular harvest of wood for various uses, the proceeds of which help to pay for the expenses of running the woodland. At the moment the woodland is affected by Ash Die Back for which there is not a cure at the moment. The trees are inspected regularly and affected tree are cut back or cut down to control the spread of the condition. Some of the wood is sold as firewood and the bigger, better condition pieces trimmed and exported to Vietnam where it is used for a variety of end uses.

The woodland regularly produces good displays of wild flowers at the appropriate times during the year - snowdrops, bluebells, daffodils among those in the early part of the year. (see the bluebells in photograph

above, probably towards the end of the Bluebell season.)



The photograph above shows the height of some of the taller trees, and the straight trunks due to the close spacing of the trees in the woodland.

Members Monthly Meeting Thursday 9th June 2022 Farmer Barnes Dairy, Somerby, Melton Mowbray Talk by Jane Barnes. Report by Edwin Lilly

Jane Barnes is a third generation member of the Barnes family who have been running their dairy farm since the 1940s and her son, Harry, is now taking over the running of the farm and will be the 4th generation. In preparation for the new younger generation, in 2018 they completely rebuilt the farm to maximise use of modern practices and equipment, with an emphasis on customer/public education about modern farming.

Jane gave a very interesting and informative talk to our u3a monthly meeting about their farm and their methods. She brought with her a couple of cuddly toy examples of their cows – pure bred Ayrshires and cross bred Friesians. Also with her, came a supply of Long Clawson cheeses—Blue Stilton, Blue Shropshire and some Fruit flavoured Wensleydale; all for sale to the audience.

The farm rears cattle, feeding them on grass and grass products, such as hay and silage. They grow most of their own grass and harvest some for winter feed using local contractors who bring in the machinery to do the harvesting. (I understand this is a usual practice in farming to maximise the use of modern methods and means they do not have expensive machinery lying about the farm premises and used only once a year).

All the milk from the farm is sold as whole milk to the Long Clawson Dairy Products Ltd who make Stilton Cheese and butter. All the milk has to be produced within a few miles of the dairy to ensure the product name can be



applied only to locally produced cheese.

Jane also told us about how we could visit the farm to see for ourselves the modern methods, watch the cows being milked from a special gallery with glass windows overlooking the milking parlour. A visit is planned during October through the SNATTs group.