

At 8.30am on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015 16 Friends of Pendle Heritage Centre met at the Malt Kiln car park Barrowford where they boarded a Hodgson's coach driven by Ian *en route* to Shropshire.

After a comfort stop at a garden centre where some of us enjoyed breakfast we soon arrived at Powis Castle. I had not been before. Some members took advantage of the warm weather and spent time in deck chairs at the bottom of the garden, in fact we all spent more time in the gardens than inside the slightly oppressive building, the earliest part of which dated from the 13<sup>th</sup> century.



After lunch we travelled to Montgomery, formerly the county town. Some of us climbed steeply to the ruined castle high above the town and the remainder found plenty to look at in the town itself including a hardware shop where it seemed impossible to ask for something they didn't stock. The last visit of the day was to Bishops Castle town, (castle demolished about 1700) where there were a few quirky or quirky shops.



About 5.30pm we arrived at Long Mynd Hotel, Church Stretton which we have enjoyed before. By 10.15am on Saturday we were at Blists Hill, part of the Ironbridge World Heritage site and reconstructed Victorian town, complete with period shops a railway and small industrial concerns.

After a picnic lunch packed by the hotel we went to Coalport China museum. They made china in the town until 1926 and have started again recently. There was an opportunity to look at the different processes and admire the finished result in the packed museum.

Then back to the hotel for dinner. Guests are required to book a menu choice the evening before and all that has to be done then is to

tell the waitress your room number and she will deliver your choice. Which is a good system if you can remember your room number or find your key!

On Sunday we went straight to the Ironbridge Toll House which has a small museum of the building of the first iron bridge in 1779 and then to the Coalbrook Museum of Iron which tells the story of Abraham Darby making iron in the town using coke rather than charcoal. The process is well explained using models and there is a gallery of beautifully cast iron artefacts.

After afternoon tea in Much Wenlock we returned to Barrowford arriving about 6pm.

