

Welcome to our latest newsletter which, we hope, enables you to catch up with everything that's happened at J.A.K in the past year, and an idea and some hints of what's going to happen in the future. We hope you've found things to interest you in the new brochure, and look forward to you travelling with us, and as always your ideas for new places to visit are very welcome.

New Year Revelations

New Vehicle.

You may have seen a second smaller white coach with the JAK name on it. This coach was brand new in May 2015, and is a 35 seat replacement for the same capacity coach nicknamed "Felix".

The new coach is a Youtong, manufactured in China by a company that is said to be the largest bus and coach builder in the world, who employ some 35,000 people, and produced 60,000 vehicles last year.

Unlike its predecessor this new coach, being physically bigger, has 35 full sized seats – the aisle seats of which slide out to give you even more elbow room. It is also rear engined, with full climate control, and is already proving popular with passengers both on our own day trips and tours, but private hire groups as well.



Altered Office



During this autumn we have been having a "spring clean" in the office, this has resulted in redundant equipment and furniture being removed, and a general move round to take advantage of the space gained. The most striking thing is however a giant photograph we have received of our new 35 seat coach courtesy of Youtong, who used the photograph on their trade stand at the recent Bus and Coach Show in Birmingham. If you move from one side of the office to the other, the coach changes size !!

The new layout has received favourable comment, so if you call in, we hope you like it too.

Staff Changes.

Sadly this year has seen the retirement of one of our longest serving drivers – Jim. He has been with JAK on a part time basis since the business started, and in fact was co-driver with Alan on the first coach job which was to London on 1st February 1988. A lot of mileage has been covered since then, (plus lots of cups of tea consumed !), and we wish him, and his wife Sandra, a long, healthy and happy retirement. Oddly, coach holidays have not been mentioned in their plans!

New Computer System.



In the New Year it our intention to install a new computer booking system for our day trips and tours. The current system we use is a "hybrid" system which works, but is beginning to cause us problems, and so we have decided to install an "off the shelf proven" system which will improve efficiency , and provide a degree of automatic cross checking of booking information that we do not have at present.

As with all things new, please bear with us whilst we get used to the new system, and if anything is not clear on your paperwork please contact the office.



It Shouldn't Happen to a Coach Operator.

This is the title of Alan's new presentation which he does for group meetings, and is becoming very popular with tales of what coach drivers hotel rooms are like, bizarre questions we get asked, and how Alan managed to find himself shut in a prison with the coach party awaiting his return !

If you think this may be of amusement and interest for a group you are a member of, please contact the office for further details.

The Next Brochure

As soon as one Tour & Day Trips Brochure goes out, the next one is "put on the blocks" and off we go again, with idea gathering, and gazing into our crystal ball to see what we can put out there to delight and entertain.



The plan is for the next brochure to come out in April and will take the touring programme up to Christmas 2016. As a taster we are planning to visit Germany for a genuine German Christmas Market, see the marvellous lights at Longleat (as seen on last years BBC fly on the wall documentary), and have a New Years Tour to Scotland, a completely new idea!



With the day trips there will be more inclusive trips with a blue badge guide to help get more out of the day, plus inclusive meals, which are proving popular. Once the brochures are sent out then bookings will open.

Ticket Dates

Just recently there appears to be confusion with trip dates on our tickets. Under the item code for the trip the date appears as year/month/day. This is so our computer system can differentiate between the different trips. We have always had the item codes this way round, and you will find that in the body of the ticket will be the title of the trip plus the date of the trip in the more conventional form of day/month/year.

Pick Up Run.

There is sometimes confusion how our pick up runs are organised. Our published depart times are always for Bradford, Nelson Street. It then depends whether the times are for an A run, or B run.

A stands for **AFTER** Bradford, **B** for **BEFORE** Bradford.

So if your trip is a **B** run, all times will be before the stated time, Bradford being the last pick up.

If your trip is an **A** run, all times will be after the stated time, with Bradford being the first pick up.

Our pick up to/from Bradford, starts or finishes at Keighley, and takes around 45 minutes and we hope can meet up at convenient points with many bus services, be near train services, plus with free car parking offered at our premises, give good coverage for a reasonable amount of pick up time.

We have been complimented on many occasions that once you are on our coach you are quickly on your way for the trip, and not trailing round for hours loading up. We have been asked over the years why don't we pick up in Skipton, Ilkley, Otley, Cleckheaton, Huddersfield, Halifax, Brighouse – with a geographical spread like that we'd lose the very thing that we get complimented for !



What The Logos Mean?

Bonded Coach Holidays is a tour bonding scheme that works in a very similar way to the 'ABTA' scheme air holidays. It is run by the **CPT - Confederation of Passenger Transport**.



What it means is that in the very unlikely event of financial failure, any money you have paid would be returned & if your were away from home you would be able to get back.

This type of protection is required for ALL package holidays & we feel that this offers you the very best protection.

Weather Disruption.

With an increase in extreme weather conditions there is often a concern about whether a tour or excursion is going to go ahead or not, especially during the winter months. In such cases decisions whether to run are taken last minute after much studying of weather forecasts for here, en route and at the destination. We will make contact with hotels (if required) and local tourist information offices to ascertain what local conditions are actually like, as we have found that television coverage sometimes likes to over dramatise a situation, and we end up doing a trip in sunshine, with clear roads, when television would have you believe Armageddon has arrived !

An out of hours contact number is on our office answer phone, and having a note of phone numbers when you book means we can phone round if we need to. Though if you have a mobile as well, that would be useful we have a note of it when you book.

Day Excursions

We hope you like the mix of day excursions that we have put together, as usual we try to make the earlier ones in the year less weather dependent, picking places where shelter will be available, and then as the year progresses become more adventurous.



North York Moors Train

There are the usual favourites like trips to the BBC at Media City, Chesterfield Easter Market and visits to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

We have repeated some trips like the Newcastle Tyne Cruise – again going down river to the sea, and the Lancaster Canal Cruise from Barton Grange – both of which sold out last year. Returning trips from a number of years ago are the Manchester Ship Canal Cruise, with a 6 hour cruise down the Canal with a commentary to find out about this amazing piece of engineering. On a transport theme we visit the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, and venture through Wensleydale by train.

Something new is a visit to Wollaton Hall - regarded as one of the finest Elizabethan mansions in the country, yet its claim to more recent fame is from the Batman film “the Dark Knight Rises”.



Battle of Britain Museum

Talking of things sinister, we are going on a Ghost Walk of York in April – if you know York well in the daylight, this adds the twilight dimension!



Manchester Ship Canal



Wollaton Hall



Browsholme Hall

Also new is a visit to Browsholme Hall, the oldest surviving family home in Lancashire, it's not that far away at Clitheroe, but its escaped a visit from us – until now.

As for the rest not specifically mentioned, there is a mix of sightseeing, markets, seaside resorts, gardens and stately homes for your delectation and delight.

If you have lost your leaflet, or handed it to fiend (sorry friend) who has not returned it, then either see our website or contact our office, and we'll send you a new one.

Mystery Weekends



Barony Hotel

As nothing is divulged before we go on such weekends, after the event we can now say were we went last year to give you a flavour of the type of thing that happens on the Mystery weekends.

For the Scotch Broth at the beginning of May we stayed at the Barony Hotel near Peebles, whose claim to fame featured on one of TV's popular restoration programmes a month before we travelled – not that anyone would have known of course ! The hotel is home to the largest terrain model in the world, a concrete map of Scotland built in the 1970's, the brainchild of the then hotel manager – Jan Tomaski. Visits were made to Floors Castle, Kelso and Edinburgh during the weekend.



Arley Hall

South of the border, the 2 day Mystery in October had very contrasting weather over the two days, with it being cold, damp, and foggy on the Saturday. Then sunny and unseasonably warm on the Sunday. We could have done with it the other way round as we visited the gardens and house at Arley Hall, and the pleasant market town of Nantwich on the Saturday, and Chester on the Sunday. Our hotel was the oldest railway hotel in the world – The Crewe Arms Hotel.



Nantwich Town



Ickworth House

The longer Mystery weekend in May travelled further south into Suffolk, stopping just outside Ipswich, and making visits to Colchester and Ickworth House – a place where classic Italy has been brought to Suffolk though the Hervey families passion for all things Italian influenced by the days of the European Grand Tour.

Brochure Cover Photograph.

The latest brochure front cover photograph for once has not come from our own library, but from Mr & Mrs Huck of Sutton-in-Craven, who kindly sent us the picture after being on our Switzerland and Bernina Express Tour last August. We thank them for allowing us to use the photo, and for sending it to us in digital format so that image remained nice and sharp for publication.

If you have any pictures that you think may be of use for a brochure front cover please send them to us at office@jaktravel.co.uk we prefer pictures that are scenic, with one of the coaches as part of the picture, but perhaps not the dominant feature



Short Breaks & Tours.

We hope you like the variety of Short Breaks and Tours we have put out so far for 2016, we start with the usual Relax and Pamper to help you get over Christmas and New Year festivities, staying at the splendid Redworth Hall Hotel. We, then, move on to favourite places of Southport, Llandudno and Scarborough – and with a couple of new hotels to visit following feedback from previous tours.



Sudbury Hall

Derbyshire is visited in March to find out about some of its characters like the formidable Bess of Hardwick, and maybe stir childhood memories at Sudbury Hall where the National Trusts Museum of childhood is located.

Our Easter tour is to the Lake District where we hope the splendid visits will be enhanced by a springtime display of daffodils, further short breaks take us to Cheshire, Northumberland, London (including the Shard in August), Cardiff, and

“Wilmington-on-Sea” – that’s our tour to visit the places and see the memorabilia from the TV series “Dads Army”.



DAD'S ARMY



Malvern Spring Show

Specific events we are going to include a first time visit to the Malvern Spring Flower Show in May, and back by popular demand are visits to the Liverpool Festival in June, and Moreton in the Marsh Country Show in September, complete with a visit to Adam Henson’s Rare Breeds Cotswolds Farm Park.

On the longer tours we have a mix of some previously visited and new destinations. New being Babbacombe, Ilfracombe, Weston-S-Mare, and previously visited being Bournemouth, Llandudno, Ballachulish, and Norwich – for Norfolk’s secret delights. Each has a varied itinerary of local sights and

inclusive admissions.

If you like train travel then we have a couple of splendid tours to wet your appetite, we travel on the Highland railways of Scotland in July – with three journeys including the steam hauled Jacobite between Fort William and Mallaig. Also steam hauled is the Torbay Express Tour in September with a main line run from Bristol to Paignton that includes the famous Dawlish sea wall. (Please note that for both trips steam engines are confirmed at present – but the operators do reserve right to substitute other engines if need be.)



Torbay Express

On a transport theme, our Isle of Man Tour in July includes a Go Explore Rover Ticket. This means you have the option of going with our itinerary, or doing your own thing, or a mixture of the two!



Mount Stuart

More specific interest tours include our visit to Dunoon in June, a place we have not visited for a number of years, and includes some wonderful houses and gardens – Mount Stuart, Inveraray Castle and Benmore Botanical Gardens. And if your interest is the intrigue of the Second World War, in July we go to Bedfordshire to hear about the band leader Glen Miller’s mysterious disappearance, and see how the code breakers at Bletchley Park broke the Enigma Codes that

helped shorten the wars duration.

This year of 2016 also sees some significant anniversaries – it will be 950 years since the Battle of Hastings in 1066 which changed the course of British history. It will be 400 years since William Shakespeare’s death, and it will be 300 years since the birth of the great British landscape designer Lancelot “Capability” Brown, one of whose works at Wrest Park can be witnessed on our tour in April.



William Shakespeare

As for the other two anniversaries, they will feature in our next brochure – watch this space!



Floralia

For visits outside the United Kingdom, we have extended this years trip to the Keukenhof Gardens, by adding a visit to Floralia at the Chateau de Grand Bigard. The magnificent Chateau is only open at show time, and specialist gardeners have created a unique exhibition in the grounds. Plus to commemorate the bi-centenary of one of this country’s most famous battles, we visit Waterloo.

Last years trip to Southern Ireland was a first for many years and well received, and so as a follow up this year we are heading to the Counties of Clare and Limerick, where amongst other visits, we will visit the home of the Irish Coffee created for warming flying boat passengers! Also not visited for a long time is the



County Clare



vibrant city of Amsterdam, well, that will be put right in September, where there is a guided tour and canal trip provided to help orientation, the rest of the time will be your own to explore from our centrally located hotel.

Hopefully (as always), we have managed to put in a bit of everything to interest and entertain, but ideas and comments (nice ones preferred!) are always welcome. Again, if you have lent or lost your brochure, please see our website, or ask us to send you a new one.

Christmas Thanks
May we take this opportunity to thank those of you who sent in Christmas cards to the office along with many biscuits and sweets. Your kind words and thoughts are much appreciated by us and our friends at weight watchers!!