

1 January 2018

Dear Members,

I hope you all had a good Christmas. We are still in France where it oscillates between sunny and warm 17°C or cold and wet -2°C.

2017 seems to have been a good year for the Society.

We have had four meetings in 2017

1: Thursday 16th March, a guided tour of the Green King Brewery, followed by lunch with plenty of beer. In the afternoon we were taken around the Theatre Royal. There is a great deal to see behind the scenes.

2: Thursday 15th May we met in Ely Cathedral for coffee & then a guided tour. Unfortunately the Dean Mark Bonney (ex Cambridge and Golf Blue) could not be with us. Lunch was in the Almonry of the Cathedral. The afternoon was free to see Oliver Cromwell's home or walk along the heritage trail down to the beautiful riverside area.

3: Saturday 10th June was the Summer Garden at our home, the Old Hall, Worlington. Our speaker was meant to have been Sir Jonathan Miller, our neighbour in London; however he had to pull out on health grounds. Tim Stephens kindly filled in, although 'filled in' are the wrong words as it was the best lecture I have ever heard. Tim was the Bishop of Leicester when Richard III bones were found. If you missed his talk, and have an opportunity to hear it, don't miss it.

4: Wednesday 27th September was our visit to Queens' College Cambridge. The lunch in the Hall was excellent following a lecture by Professor Richard Rex on the dissolution of the monasteries. After lunch we were taken round the college by professional 'blue badge' guides. They were excellent and we should use them again for college meetings.

We have a very interesting programme arranged for you in 2018;

1: **Thursday 19th April** meeting in Thetford. We meet in the Bell Hotel for a lecture by Paul Stancliffe of the British Trust for Ornithology followed by lunch. In the afternoon there is a choice of either a visit to the Nunnery Lakes Bird Reserve or to Thetford Museum.

2: **Saturday 2nd June.** Visit to Ousden House near Newmarket for our Summer Garden Party. Ousden House is a very pretty Georgian building with a magnificent 12 acre garden.

3: **Thursday 5th July** visit to Snape Maltings for lunch and a guided tour of the site including the famous concert hall and Hoffman buildings.

4: **Thursday 11th October.** Talk by Edward Towne on 'The Cambridge Spies'. This will be an afternoon meeting in Bruisyard Village Hall. This will not include lunch but at the time we can

suggest local pubs if you want a meal before the meeting. Scones, cake and drinks will be served in the Village Hall after the talk.

David and I went to the European Alumni meeting in Paris in November. There are over 450 Alumni Groups all over the world of which about 125 are in mainland Europe. If any of our members are in Europe (or elsewhere in the world) for a while do get in touch with the local group, they are delighted to welcome our members to their meetings. The Paris Alumni Group has about 20 meetings a year.

Finally, I would like to extend a very warm welcome to Sarah Gull who has kindly agreed to join our committee.

All the best for 2018,

Michael