

Norfolk Cambridge Society

Autumn 2021 Newsletter



From the Chair: A Special Plea for Alumni Email Addresses

We have around 220 Cambridge alumni living in Norfolk listed on our database. Of these, about half are long-term NCS members and the other half are alumni who have attended our lectures or discussion groups over the last three years, having heard about them from this newsletter or from friends. However, The University of Cambridge Development and Alumni Relations Office tells us that on their database are about 1400 Cambridge alumni who live in Norfolk. Unfortunately, for data protection reasons, these details cannot be shared with us. That means that around 1200 alumni receive a link to this quarterly newsletter (the only communication the University of Cambridge will send out on our behalf) but no other communications from us. They are neither reminded of events coming up in the short term nor told about any changes to these. Also, many of them never open this newsletter and so never hear about any of our activities.

So, if you know any alumni living in Norfolk who you think might be interested in joining our society, please do contact them and encourage them to email me, so that they can receive emails about our activities. Of course, some may not wish to hear about them and that is fine. But the more people we have on our database, the more varied and interesting our events are likely to become, especially if they are attended by alumni of all ages. We are particularly keen to increase the number of people of working age who attend our events.

Finally, if you know others who are not alumni but who might wish to attend our lectures or discussion groups, please also encourage them to contact me by email. The Norfolk Cambridge Society should aim to provide opportunities not just for alumni to meet amongst themselves but also to meet interesting others.

Geoffrey Smart geoffreyjsmart@gmail.com

From the Editor

I hope you have been able to make the most of the summer months, despite the rather less than co-operative English weather. With the evenings closing in it is a joy it is to have some 'real live' events to include in the newsletter. As you will see below the discussion groups have morphed collectively into 'Viewpoints' but will still cover the same eclectic and challenging topics as ever. The Book group is staying on line as this seems to work well with the members.

Unfortunately, our putative trip to the David Parr house in Cambridge has had to be postponed until we are properly post-Covid but details of another tour and, in addition, a talk from Mary Fewster about Industrial Norwich are also given below. We are extremely grateful that she could find a space for us.

Kathy Moyse ajskcm@btinternet.com

The Tenth and Eleventh Society Lectures



Dr Nikhil Krishnan answering questions from the audience

The Tenth Norfolk Cambridge Society Lecture, the first held in person since Covid restrictions were relaxed, took place in the Blake Studio, Norwich School on Thursday 23rd September. It was attended by over 150 people, a very good turnout given ongoing Covid concerns. Dr Nikhil Krishnan, a former Rhodes Scholar and Fellow of Robinson College, gave a lecture on The Pursuit of Truth. This was followed by a pleasing flurry of questions from the audience on this highly complex philosophical subject, testament to the engaging personality of the lecturer.

Our eleventh lecture will take place on **Tuesday 25th January 2022**, when our eminent speaker will be the leading economist, Professor Diane Coyle, Bennett Professor of Public Policy at the University of Cambridge. She is a Fellow of Churchill College and has been a member of the Competition Commission, the Migration Advisory Committee and the Natural Capital Committee. Professor Coyle was awarded a CBE for her contribution to the public understanding of economics in the 2018 New Year Honours List. Professor Coyle's topic will be ***Levelling Up: What will it Take? Views from a Leading Economist.***

Given the topicality of the subject matter, we expect tickets to sell quickly. Please contact geoffreyjnsmart@gmail.com if you would like to reserve seats.

Norfolk Cambridge Society Student Award Scheme

Our 2021 winners and runners up were invited to attend the Society Lecture on 23rd September and we were delighted to be able to congratulate several of them in person.

This year's winners were:

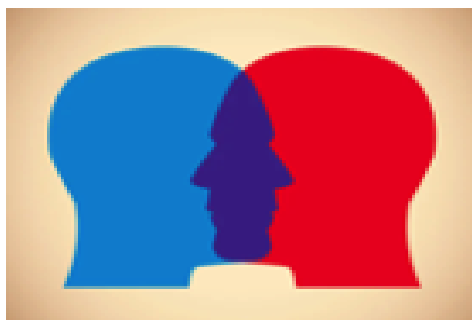
- Jamie Dawes (Norwich School) who wrote about the impact of income inequality and other social divisions within society
- Amelia Platt (Reepham College) who highlighted the lack of a critical engagement with much of the information we receive, especially through social media
- Oliver Righton (East Norfolk Sixth Form College) who addressed the ongoing risk of biological threats typified by the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic.

Our runners up were:

- Maddie Smith
- Amelia Holland
- Gentle Foster

As I write we are preparing for the 2022 round. Many thanks to Annie Grant and Rob Edwards who put in huge amounts of time and energy to make the award process run so smoothly.

NCS Viewpoints



For simplicity we have replaced NCS Socratics, Sceptics and Symposiasts with NCS Viewpoints, now meeting every six weeks either at Norwich School or at Jon Rosser's house at 36 Elm Hill. Our next two meetings will be held on:

1. **Thursday 14th October 6.00 to 7.30pm in the Music Room, Norwich School**, on the topic ***Our moral duty to others - where does it stop?*** The meeting will provide an opportunity to explore precisely what we mean by 'us' and 'them' and to consider the degree to which circumstances affect our attitudes. Whether we are talking about Afghans, asylum seekers or the British homeless, do we have a degree of moral responsibility to others? Always, sometimes, never? If sometimes, how far does that responsibility go and to what extent is it affected by risk and the nationality or ethnicity of 'the other'? Indeed, do we have enough on our plate looking after 'our own' and if so, who are 'our own'?
2. **Thursday 25th November 6.00 to 7.30pm, 36 Elm Hill**, on the topic ***What is a nation and under what circumstances should it be permitted to secede?*** This clearly has immediate relevance in the context of the United Kingdom after Brexit, particularly in relation to Scotland and Northern Ireland. But there are many other countries with active separatist movements. Would people generally be better governed in smaller nations with more homogeneous cultures, so that different value systems do not have to be considered? Or should the direction of travel be towards larger multicultural entities and fewer independent defence forces? Should people in any part of any country always be free to secede if they so wish or should the modern nation state be regarded as cast in stone, never to be changed? What are the guiding principles?

Both topics are designed to explore the tensions between moral principle and political pragmatism. Arguably a nation's values and politics change over time, however, only as a result of such examination. Please let me know as soon as possible if you would like to attend either of the meetings. Up to *twelve people are admitted on a first come, first served basis*. The cost is just £5 per meeting, payable by bank transfer, to cover the costs of a refreshments and, sometimes, room hire.

Contact Geoffrey Smart geoffreyjsmart@gmail.com

Book Group

After a summer break we resumed on September 29th when we discussed *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen and Jo Baker's *Longbourn*, a 'below stairs' take on the events of Austen's novel. A very lively discussion considered how our reading of each was affected by the order in which we read the books, whether listening to rather than reading a text made a difference, gender roles in the early 19th Century, why there is so little reference to the historical context of the Napoleonic War in Austen's novel and whether it is appropriate to ask whether Austen was a proto-feminist writer?

Our next meeting will be via Zoom on **Wednesday 10th November between 6pm and 7.30pm** when we'll be discussing *The Age of Wonder* by Richard Holmes in which he tracks the voyages of discovery – astronomical, chemical, poetical, philosophical - that have come to define the Romantic era.

If you would like to join us please email me at ajskcm@btinternet.com

Kathy Moyse

NCS Epicureans



Epicureans is a Sunday lunch group for alumni, partners and friends meeting once every two months at gastropubs around Norfolk. Our first meeting took place on 22nd August at The Dial House, Reepham. Eleven people attended and both the meal and conversation were excellent.

Our next lunch will be at Stoke Mill, Stoke Holy Cross on **Sunday 14th November**. Maximum of 12 people on a first come, first served basis. Open to Cambridge alumni, partners and friends.

Contact Geoffrey Smart geoffreyjsmart@gmail.com

NCS Incrementum



We have space for three more members of our new investment lunch club, Incrementum, open to both Norfolk Cambridge Society and Norfolk Club members. Incrementum requires no capital contributions and is run just for fun, with a notional portfolio focused on growth. There is a maximum of twelve members, ideally six from the NCS and six from the Norfolk Club, meeting once every six weeks for an hour at the club, followed by lunch. There is an annual prize for the best recommendations, judged by gains made or losses avoided, or both. Humour is the most important ingredient, although of course members might find it a useful source of ideas for their own private portfolios. Currently our portfolio contains 30 interesting holdings and has performed quite well through the recent volatility.

Please email geoffreyinsmart@gmail.com if you would like to join.

Cultural Events

Looking at Industrial Norwich: A Talk with a Walk with Dr Mary Fewster. £10 per head.

Friday October 29th from 2pm at The King's Centre, 63-75 Duke Street, Norwich NR1 1PH followed by a walk along the river

Mary Fewster is a member of the Norfolk Historical Buildings Group and a regular lecturer for WEA. Her talk on Industrial Norfolk is expected to last about an hour and then, after a coffee break, she will lead us along the south side of the river. Expect to discover buildings you have never really noticed before and to hear of their industrial past. Although often described as an agricultural centre, Norwich was, in fact, an important industrial city.

During Mary's very successful walk for the Society in the summer we found the two remaining factory chimneys of those originally clustered in the centre of Norwich which produced, inter alia, shoes, wire netting and chocolate and which were to be found next to iron foundries, weavers' houses and breweries.

The walk, which will include quite a steep incline, will take another hour at least, though, with Mary's knowledge and enthusiasm, it could last longer!

To book a place, please contact Mu Gurbutt (muriel.gurbutt@cantab.net)

AGM

This was held via Zoom on 15th September. Two key points to note from this are:

- The good financial position of the Society largely due to income from the lectures organised by Geoffrey Smart
- Renewed attempts to encourage more alumni to join, hence the plea from the Chair at the top of this newsletter!

The existing Committee are all happy to continue in their roles.

Contacts

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<https://www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/group/norfolk-cambridge-society>

Please scroll down to the next page for a full diary of the events referred to in the newsletter.

Calendar of Events: October 2021-January 2022

Date	Day	Time	Event	Nature of event	Contact
14/10/21	Thursday	6pm to 7.30pm	Viewpoints Music Room Norwich School	Discussion group <i>Our moral duty to others- where does it stop?</i>	Geoffrey Smart
29/10/21	Friday	2.pm To 4pm	Talk and walk Mary Fewster	Industrial Norwich Kings Centre, Duke Street. Norwich. NR1 1PH	Mu Gurbett
04/11/21	Thursday	12.00pm To 2.00pm	Incrementum	Investment lunch club for NCS and Norfolk Club members Norfolk Club	Geoffrey Smart
10/11/21	Thursday	6.00pm To 7.30pm	Book Group	By Zoom <u><i>The Age of Wonder</i></u> Richard Holmes	Kathy Moyse
14/11/21	Sunday	1.00pm	Epicureans	Lunch group Stoke Mill Stoke Holy Cross NR14 8PA	Geoffrey Smart
25/11/21	Thursday	6.00pm to 7.30pm	Viewpoints 36, Elm Hill Norwich NR3 1HG	Discussion group. <i>What is a nation and under what circumstances should it be allowed to sucede?</i>	Geoffrey Smart
14/12/21	Tuesday	12.00pm to 2.00pm	Incrementum	Investment lunch club for NCS and Norfolk Club members Norfolk Club	Geoffrey Smart
13/01/22	Thursday	6.00pm To 7.30pm	Viewpoints	Discussion group. To be decided	Geoffrey Smart
25/01/22	Thursday	6.30pm To 8.30pm	Eleventh NCS Lecture Norwich School	Lecture by Professor Diane Coyle <i>Levelling up: What will it take?</i>	Geoffrey Smart