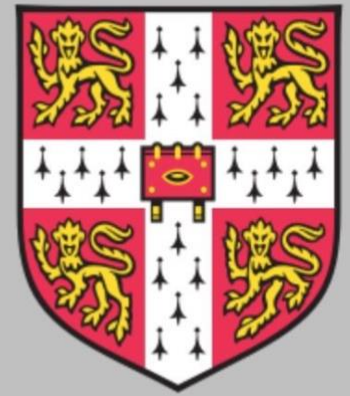


Norfolk Cambridge Society

Spring 2021 Newsletter



From the Chair

Dear Fellow Alumni,

Spring is here and the periwinkle trails its wreaths. At last, the tantalising prospect beckons of NCS members being able to meet up again on summer lawns. Mu Gurbutt, our redoubtable cultural affairs organiser, has prepared some mouth-watering prospects for us, described later in this newsletter. These will go ahead subject to there being no changes to the current Covid Roadmap. Sadly, our lively discussion groups on wide-ranging philosophical topics, current affairs, other whimsical matters and on fascinating books, will have to continue on Zoom for a while yet. But even online they are intellectually stimulating and great fun. Why not give them a try? Our next NCS Symposiasts meeting on April 21st will consider ***Should Britain have a written constitution?***

Slightly sooner, on April 13th, we have the celebrated Norfolk academic, Dr Corinna Russell, old girl of East Norfolk Sixth Form College and Fellow of Emmanuel College, talking to us on ***Why Poetry Matters***. Around 140 people have signed up so far. If you haven't yet, do think about it. I strongly suspect it will be a fascinating lecture. As regards a return to physical lectures in the Blake Studio at Norwich School, we have a provisional date of Thursday September 23rd when we are hopeful that Dr Nikhil Krishnan, Fellow of Robinson College and Director of Studies in Philosophy, will deliver his long-postponed lecture on ***The Pursuit of Truth: A Necessity or a Fool's Errand?*** Never let it be said that our lecture topics are not deep and wide-ranging!

We are also toying with the idea of starting up a dining group, to be called NCS Epicureans, to which members can invite partners and friends. More details later in this newsletter.

Finally, our first Brain of Norfolk competition. Surprisingly, only one person got any of the answers right. That was **John Foy** (Jesus 1976), who correctly deduced that the answer to question 1 was Stephen Fry. I therefore pronounce John to be our Winter 2021 Brain of Norfolk! Even he, however, failed to get the right answers for questions 2 & 3. So, these are carried forward with additional clues for our Spring 2021 Brain of Norfolk competition.

The best of thinking to you all, Geoffrey Smart

From the Editor

As we head towards longer days, I am very much hoping to be able to meet up in 'real life' with some of my fellow NCS members whom I have hitherto got to know only through Zoom discussion groups. I'm not entirely sure what I have achieved over the last year, apart from putting together these newsletters and walking over 1500 miles, but I am certainly anxious for some simple pleasures like going to the glorious North Norfolk coast and wandering through the Sainsbury Centre.

I hope you have all remained well over the past very difficult year and are able to look forward with more confidence to the coming months. As ever I welcome any contributions from you for the next newsletter which will be published in August. Please submit them to me at ajskcm@btinternet.com

Best Wishes, Kathy Moyse

Ninth Norfolk Cambridge Society Lecture

The Ninth Norfolk Cambridge Society Lecture will be delivered by webinar on **Tuesday April 13th from 6.30pm by Dr Corinna Russell**, Fellow of Emmanuel College, Cambridge and a member of the University's Faculty of English. Her topic is *Why Poetry Matters* and she will explore the profound contribution that poetry has made to the world, drawing on the works of Keats, Wheatley and others. We are particularly delighted that Dr Russell has agreed to be our ninth distinguished lecturer as she is from Norfolk (describing herself as a Bloater from Great Yarmouth) and was a student at East Norfolk Sixth Form College, which she says she feels very fortunate to have attended.

Salman Rushdie has described the poet's work as being "...to name the unnameable, to point at frauds, to take sides, start arguments, shape the world, and stop it going to sleep...". Shelley described poets as "...the unacknowledged legislators of the world...". It is for these reasons and many others that we thought 'why poetry matters' an excellent subject for a lecture series that celebrates the rigorous pursuit and dissemination of truth.

Bookings, now the early payment deadline has passed, are just £10.00 per household, however many are watching. Any residual credit balances from previous lectures can be used to pay for bookings. **To reserve seats, please email geoffreyjsmart@gmail.com** If you are unfamiliar with Zoom-based webinars, nothing could be easier. Simply click on the link we will send you a few days before the event and follow the instructions on the screen.

Revenue collected from our lectures is used to meet the Norfolk Cambridge Society's costs and to fund the NCS Student Awards, an annual competition open to Norfolk sixth formers offered places at Cambridge University. Details of this year's competition follow below.

To illustrate the point made in the lecture's title, I leave you with just two verses of W H Auden's poem 'In Memory of W. B. Yeats'

*Intellectual disgrace
Stares from every human face,
And the seas of pity lie
Locked and frozen in each eye.*

*Follow, poet, follow right
To the bottom of the night,
With your unconstraining voice
Still persuade us to rejoice.*

Geoffrey Smart

Norfolk Cambridge Society Student Award Scheme 20/21

The NCS Student Award Scheme was launched in 2019. The hope being that by publicising and promoting the scheme we might help to raise the aspirations of all Norfolk students and encourage them to aim high when considering their university applications. All Year 13 students holding a conditional or unconditional offer of a place at the University of Cambridge for the following academic year (or a deferred place) were eligible to apply for an award by submitting a c.1000-word essay on a topic chosen by the NCS Committee's Student Awards subgroup. The successful pilot year, when three talented Norfolk students were each awarded a £500 prize for their essay submissions, encouraged the NCS to continue with the scheme and the 20/21 competition was launched in late 2020.

Our thanks go to the many schools and sixth form colleges in Norfolk who have promoted the competition to their students on our behalf. We have had a significant increase in the number of applicants this year and the NCS committee subgroup are currently shortlisting the submissions. We hope to interview the shortlisted applicants in April via Zoom. The winners will be announced as soon as possible thereafter, and a full report with the names of those winners who are happy to have their details shared will be published in the next NCS Newsletter.

Annie Grant

NCS Socratics

Stimulating discussions on things that matter - over a glass of wine



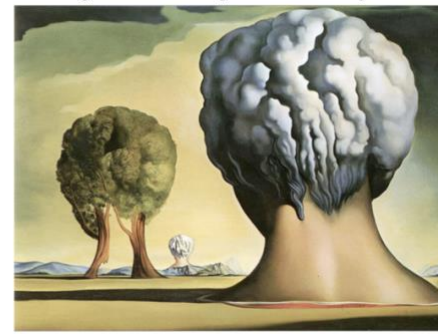
NCS Sceptics

Stimulating discussions on things current - over a glass of wine



NCS Symposiasts

Stimulating discussions on things whimsical - over a glass of wine



NCS Discussion Groups

Our discussion groups have continued on Zoom over the winter and have been extremely lively. They are now held monthly, rotating between Socratics, Sceptics and Symposiasts. Those attending not only say how much they enjoy the meetings but also praise the opportunity it gives them to spend an hour or two each month doing the background reading and clarifying their thoughts on each issue. Topics discussed since the last newsletter have been:

- What is virtue?
- Should criminals be punished? What should be the balance between deterrence and rehabilitation?
- Should Shamima Begum's British citizenship be reinstated immediately?
- How far should we go on 'levelling up'? What should the highest rate of personal taxation be?
- Should one's gender become an entirely private matter? Should all laws referring to a person's gender be repealed?
- What action should the British government take over the Uighurs?
- Who other than yourself would you most like to have been and why?

Dates of future meetings can be found on our website <https://www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/group/norfolk-cambridge-society>. The next is on **April 21st at 6.00pm** when we will be addressing the question ***Should Britain have a written constitution and if so, on those of which other countries (if any) should it most draw?***

NCS Epicureans (Proposed New Group)

With the end of Lockdown hopefully in sight sometime this summer, we thought it might be a good time to launch a dining group for members, their partners and their friends. The suggested formula is:

- meeting monthly or six-weekly at good restaurants and gastropubs, generally within a ten-mile radius of Norwich
- alternating between Sunday lunches and midweek evening meals
- restaurants chosen according to quality of food, their ability to provide a private dining room with seating for up to twelve people (at no extra charge) and their ability to provide a two or three course set menu, with individual choices made in advance
- open to Cambridge alumni, their partners and their friends
- each alumnus/a able to invite a partner or friend who need not be a Cambridge alumnus/a
- seat rotation to encourage mixing
- the cost of the meal paid in advance, but drinks paid for separately on the day, according to consumption

This should be an excellent opportunity to meet other members of the Society in convivial surroundings and to make new friends and acquaintances.

Please email geoffreyjnsmart@gmail.com if you are interested in this or you wish to attend any of our discussion groups

Book Group

The Sympathizer by Viet Thanh Nguyen (discussed at our last meeting) provoked a very mixed response including a wide-ranging consideration of colonial legacy and 1970s attitudes towards women alongside reminiscences of visits to Vietnam by some of the group members. Co-incidentally *Open Book* on Radio 4 the following week (March 18th) featured a lengthy interview with the author which cast some interesting light on several aspects of the novel.

Our next meeting will be on **Thursday April 22nd between 6.00pm and 7.30pm**. We'll be discussing *Mountains of the Mind* by Robert MacFarlane where the writer seeks to unpick our recent but intense relationship with mountains, taking in geology, philosophy and art history along the way.

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

Kathy Moyse

Cultural Visits

186 Gwydir Street, Cambridge: A terraced house with a secret (For information only)

As students, many of us biked down Mill Road. The terraced houses provided student accommodation, but one such house in Gwydir Street has received Grade II* listed status.

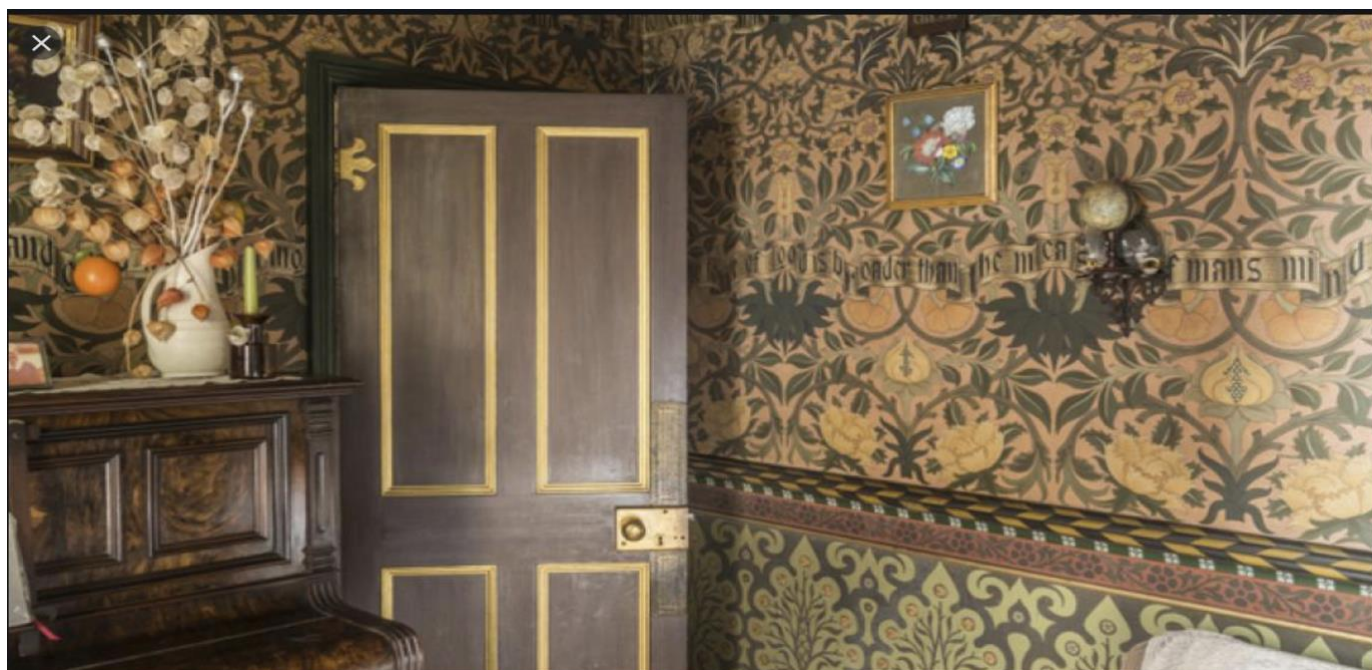
David Parr was a working-class Victorian decorative artist who worked for the Cambridge firm of F. R. Leach & Sons, painting houses and churches with designs created by some of the best architects and designers in the country, including George Frederick Bodley, William Morris and Charles Eamer Kempe.

In the evenings Parr decorated his own two bedroomed terraced house in Gwydir Street. After his death in 1927, his granddaughter, aged 12, came to live in the house to look after her grandmother and she stayed for the next 85 years. She changed little, preserving the artwork, wall tiles, Lino and furniture.

In 2009, the house was discovered by Tamsin Wimhurst, a social historian, who was working on a local museum project and so began the enormous task of purchasing and preserving the property.

Because of its size, only 2000 visitors a year can be accommodated even in non Covid times, but **it is currently possible to book live interactive tours**. This property is a hidden heritage gem and a 20th Century time capsule.

For further details, go to www.davidparrhouse.org



The industrial past of Norwich: A guided walk with Dr Mary Fewster

Alumni and guests are invited to join this Norfolk Cambridge Society walk examining evidence of the city's hidden Industrial past. We will be led by Dr Mary Fewster, who has taught at the School for Continuing Education at UEA and is a member of the Norfolk Historic Buildings Group. She will provide maps in advance to help us to pinpoint the sites of the old factories along the river. So many names spring to mind: Startrite, Caley's and Boulton & Paul to mention but three.

Our morning will start at 10.00am at The King's Centre, King Street (NR11PH) where there will be an opportunity to purchase a cup of coffee before setting out. It is anticipated that the walk will take approximately one and a half hours. There will be a definite uphill section as we leave the river and head towards the market. The group size will be limited to 10. Please contact Mu Gurbutt to reserve a place. muriel.gurbutt@cantab.net

Suggested date late June. Cost £5.00

Visit to a vineyard: Winbirri at Surlingham NR14 7DE or Flint at Earsham NR35 2AH

Both vineyards are offering tours of the vines and the winery alongside the opportunity to taste. The tours, for small groups, are mainly outside.

Winbirri

Established in 2007, Winbirri Vineyard made history by becoming the first English vineyard to win the coveted "Decanter World Wine Awards 2017" for a still wine. Winbirri's owner, grower and winemaker Lee Dyer will explain the history of the vineyard and the methods used to care for the vines. The grape varieties grown include Bacchus, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. In the winery, the differences in the production of white wines, red wines and sparkling wines are explained. To complement the tour, which lasts approximately two hours, a selection of Winbirri wines will be available for tasting

Flint

Ben and Hannah Witchell have been making wines since 2016. Ben studied Oenology and Viticulture before working in vineyards abroad. He now manages the wine production, combining innovation and tradition. The Flint wines have already won international medals and have been voted East Anglian wines of the year. The vineyards sit on the gravel and flint of Norfolk's Waveney Valley, though you could imagine being in France. There is an option to stay for lunch with a selection of local produce all from within a 15mile radius. Local cheese, charcuterie, artisan bread and butter with medlar jelly are served with your chosen glass of Flint wine.

Proposed for early July. Cost £25

If you are interested in either tour please contact Mu Gurbutt at muriel.gurbutt@cantab.net stating your preference.



National Horseracing Museum: Newmarket (CB8 8EP)

The Palace House Estate is a 5-acre site in the heart of Newmarket. The National Horseracing Museum is located in the Trainer's House and King's Yard Galleries and tells the history and wider story of horseracing. It considers the breeding of the thoroughbred and features silverware and silks worn by famous jockeys. The Palace House, which was part of accommodation used by Charles II, houses an art gallery with works by Stubbs, Munnings, Singer Sargent and many others. Finally, in the Rothschild Yard, former racehorses are retrained and there will be the opportunity for a special look behind the scenes to see the horses. A strict one-way system has been introduced during the last year.

We hope to visit during August. The cost is £15 with a 50% reduction for Art Fund members.

If interested and for further information, please contact Mu Gurbutt at muriel.gurbutt@cantab.net

Spring 2021 Brain of Norfolk Competition

It is quite hard nowadays to set questions that are not readily answerable using sophisticated internet searches, yet not so difficult that they defeat even the most adept amongst you. I may have erred on the side of caution with the three that were set for our first Brain of Norfolk competition. As I said in my introduction, only one person managed to get even one of them right. Many congratulations indeed to John Foy!

As explained in our last newsletter, the answers to all three questions had connections with Norfolk, Cambridge or both. The three questions were:

- How does a living person connect the numbers and letters 743, 1448, 51.208889N and 3.224167E?
- This repeated thrice, revealed what object reminiscent of Murdoch?
- Which notable Chancellor, strongly in favour of fellows spreading their knowledge far and wide, had very close connections with two fine buildings exactly 53.63 miles apart, as the crow flies? And which are those buildings?

The question John got right was the first. 743 was the year that Withburh (or Withburga) died. She was an East Anglian saint, princess and abbess who founded a monastery at Dereham in Norfolk. St Withburga's Lane is the address of Dereham Registry office, where Stephen Fry married Elliott Spencer. 1448 is the year that Queens' College, Cambridge was first founded by Margaret of Anjou and Stephen Fry was a scholar at Queens'. 51.208889N and 3.224167E are the latitude and longitude co-ordinates of Bruges, Belgium, where Stephen Fry was spotted after leaving a production of 'Cell Mates' in 1999. The answer, therefore, is the much-loved **Stephen Fry**.

As regards the other two questions, they are carried forward to our Spring 2021 Brain of Norfolk Competition with additional clues in italics. (You don't escape as easily as that!). So below we have two 'old' questions and three new ones, all with answers connected to Norfolk, Cambridge or both.

1. This (*or here*) repeated thrice, revealed what object reminiscent of Murdoch? *Latin scholars may have an advantage, as may students of literature!*
2. Which notable Chancellor, strongly in favour of fellows spreading their knowledge far and wide, had very close connections with two fine buildings exactly 53.63 miles apart, as the crow flies? And which are those buildings? *The manner of death of one of the owners of one of the buildings has connections with Question 1!*
3. What is the connection between Fiji, Florence and the city of Sheffield?
4. He had a son of the same name as himself who was educated at Trinity. Arguably he was forever in debt to to a man who proclaimed, immediately before he died, that he had deserved a thousand deaths.
5. A virologist who probably trousers very little?

Please email your answers to geoffreyjnsmart@gmail.com.

Calendar of Events: Spring/Summer 2021

Date	Day	Time	Event	Nature of event	Topic
13/04/21	Tuesday	6.30pm to 8.00pm	Ninth NCS Lecture	Public lecture by Zoom	Dr Corinna Russell <i>Why Poetry Matters</i>
21/04/21	Wednesday	6.00pm to 7.30pm	Symposiasts	Discussion group by Zoom for alumni and invited guests	Should Britain have a written constitution?
22/04/21	Thursday	6.00pm. to 7.30pm	Book Group	Discussion group by Zoom for alumni	<i>Mountains of the Mind</i> by Robert MacFarlane
10/05/21	Monday	TBD	NCS Committee Meeting	For committee members	Standard Agenda
20/05/21	Thursday	6.00pm to 7.30pm	Socratics	Discussion group by Zoom for alumni and invited guests	What does Free Will really mean?
16/06/21	Wednesday	5.30pm to 7.00pm	Sceptics	Discussion group by Zoom for alumni and invited guests	Current affairs topics TBD nearer the time
Late June	Norwich's Industrial Past. Guided walk with Dr Mary Fewster				Open to alumni and friends
Early July	Visit to either Winbirri or Flint Vineyards (subject to opening) Includes tasting (both) and lunch option (Flint)				Open to alumni and friends
22/07/21	Thursday	6.00pm to 7.30pm.	Symposiasts	Discussion group by Zoom for alumni and invited guests	Topic suggestions welcome
August	Visit to the National Horseracing Museum at Newmarket				Open to alumni and friends

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