

CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH – AGM – 11 MAY 2011

For me personally this has been a year of firsts. I've served on a jury during April, became Chair of our very active Ward Club and have been fortunate to receive an invitation to the Queen's Garden Party in July, all occasions that I'm unlikely to experience again.

My year began as a theme, to celebrate our Armed Services. It started with a bang – a trip to the Gunpowder Mills at Waltham Abbey – representing the army. Great weather and great guides.

Our next visit was to HMS Belfast, a good turn-out of members enjoyed the run of the ship with lunch at a local hostelry.

Finally, for the Services, a look at the aviation art followed by lunch at the RAF Club, Piccadilly to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain. It was pleasing to note that one of the guests on the day enjoyed themselves that they became a Member.

In October Members were invited to come on a Sherlock Holmes Tour. With a very knowledgeable guide leading, we visited many buildings and small alleyways which feature in Conan Doyle's books.

We celebrated Christmas with carols at St James' Garlickhythe with two very accomplished choirs and followed by lunch at Guildhall with a speech by Major Sally of the Salvation Army.

In February members visited the Royal College of Arms to learn about heraldry. An absorbing trip hosted by a very witty and knowledgeable Mr Hunt, Windsor Herald. Apparently we missed a certain Miss Middleton by 24 hours.

Finally in April we visited the Olympic Site. A recycling wonder. Members were told how the old buildings and land have been recycled and how it will continue after the Games. The visit concluded with a buffet lunch and a visit to Holden Point to view the site from a different perspective. I can probably say that my year ended on a high!

May I take this opportunity to thank Members of the Committee for their support, also the Ward Alderman and his wife, my Vice Chairman Alan and to the two other members of team beadle, Ro and Sandra, who have helped me with all the arrangements.