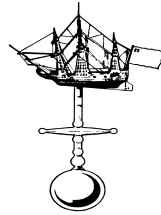


# QUEENHITHE WARD CLUB



## Queenhithe Ward Club Newsletter Issue 4 - July 2014

### Greenwich 10<sup>th</sup> April 2014

As Spring was in the air our Chairman, John, thought Greenwich would be an ideal venue. Indeed we had brilliant weather, and some members made the most of it using the Thames Clipper to start the day.



We had a very well filled day starting mid morning at the world's largest maritime museum, that in Greenwich. All attendees opted to take advantage of the opportunity to view the Turner Exhibition due to close 10 days later. It was a great opportunity to see so much of Turner's fascination with the sea and how his style changed during his career and so pertinent to Greenwich.

We followed this with an excellent lunch in their restaurant in order to gather strength for the climb up the hill to the Royal Observatory.

We were given a choice of food, which, having been ordered in advance gave the restaurant the ability to give us extremely good service with plenty of wine.

After lunch we made our way up the hill to the Royal Observatory. The photo shows us at the Meridian Line with the sun upon us. It was a fairly long climb, but everyone got there safely! We were then given a very interesting tour of the Observatory by Rory McEvoy, being shown the very early scopes and their development. We then finally watched a Planetarium Show of the night sky for ½ hour as we lay back in very comfortable seats watching the "sky" above us with a commentary (I did hear snoring from one or two people the seats were so comfortable the wine took effect!!)

### AGM 6<sup>th</sup> May 2014

The AGM this year was an incredibly popular event with 58 people attending – I'm sure that is more than I've ever known before. The venue was Painters' Hall which is both a lovely venue and also very central for members to access from all corners of London. We even acquired new members to the committee.



Following the meeting we made our way upstairs to the Court Dining Room, a wonderful room, where we were given a glass of "bubbly" or a glass of fruit juice and we 'caught up' and socialized with friends we hadn't seen for some time.

We sat in groups of 8 or 9 on tables, which were an excellent size, allowing communication with whoever was sitting on the opposite side. Dinner was a buffet of deliciously cooked pork or a vegetarian option with vegies and salads, following this were a

great selection of desserts – probably most of them good for those on high calorie diets! Throughout the meal the wine flowed freely and the fact that we did not all clear out until just before 10.0pm demonstrated the enjoyment by all. Many members commented to me of the real success of the event.

## **Hatfield House**

**20<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

A group of 26 of our members visited Hatfield House on a beautiful sunny day, some travelling from London by train, while others found it simpler to drive.



Following a cup of coffee, we moved into the house for a tour of the 17<sup>th</sup> century house completed in 1611 for Robert Cecil, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Salisbury, and is now the home of the 7<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Salisbury. Our guide greeted us on the ground floor to give us a little background history before moving on to see and be given information on the many treasures in the House. We had only started moving to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor when one of our members, Albert Davis, fell on the stairs while trying to hold onto a rope, he very

unfortunately suffered many cuts and a broken wrist which was established when eventually the ambulance took him to hospital. We wish him well.

The Jacobean House is steeped in Elizabethan and Victorian political history, and a vast number of historical mementos collected over centuries are displayed from paintings, carved oak panels, decorated ceilings and marbled floors, to say nothing of gates at the bottom of the stairs to prevent dogs accessing state rooms and bedrooms. We had lunch in the cafeteria then mid afternoon, some members had to leave, while others enjoyed spending more time and visiting the old palace.

## **The London Distillery**

**17<sup>th</sup> July 2014**

Mid July took us to The City Of London Distillery (Gin) - COLD. We had plenty of enthusiasm for the visit and had a waiting list as we were strictly limited to 24 people (2 tours of 12 people in each)



We divided into 2 groups to be given absolutely fascinating information about how the Distillery was opened in November 2012, being the first working distillery in the City for over 200 years, despite over 1700 stills being in use during the 18<sup>th</sup> century!

As one descends the stairs to the basement where the distillery is located, one is immediately aware of the stills on the right hand side, these are encased behind bomb-proof glass. The surrounding bar area having a very intimate feeling. On

arrival we were provided with a wonderful “G & T” while we gathered ready for our tours. Initially Jamie Baxter and Jonathan Clark opened the COLD, Jamie having enormous experience in distilling gin. Jonathan has now gained experience and Jamie moved on to Leicestershire leaving Jonathan to both manage and distil. He is clearly a very talented individual despite having left school without any O-levels! It is a very fine gin made from the purest organic ingredients from malt to botanicals sourced as locally and ethically as possible, but may lead to juniper berries, for example from overseas. They also strive to continuously lower their carbon footprint to the extent of encouraging local bakeries to use their spent grain. It is an extremely pure gin, hence more expensive than the majority, but avoids headaches following a heavy night’s drinking!

Following the excellent tour we wandered up to Côte, St Paul’s where we enjoyed an excellent 3 course dinner with wine before wending our various ways home. A good evening was had by all.