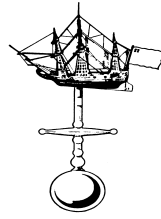


QUEENHITHE WARD CLUB



Queenhithe Ward Club Newsletter Issue 9 – Winter 2015

Visit to Dulwich College

25th September 2015

This was another popular event where our numbers had to be restricted to 25, leading to a few disappointed members. We started the day with lunch at a local pub, The Alleyn's Head, where we were joined near the end by Mr Robert Weaver who then walked us across to the College ready to inspire us with an amazing tour and information on the history & archives.



Dulwich College is an independent school founded by Edward Alleyn in 1619, originally to educate 12 poor scholars. There are now around 1500 students. We started in the school with a viewing of "The James Caird" the 22 foot long lifeboat which Shackleton and his 5 man crew sailed from Elephant Island (500 miles south of Cape Horn) to South Georgia – some 800 miles in the most stormy stretch of ocean.

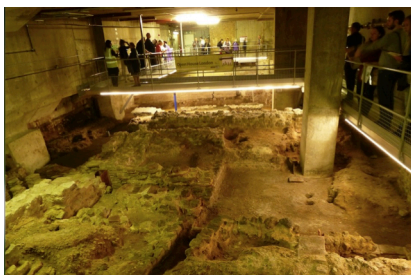
In 1805 an Act was granted to allow the development of 130 acres within the grounds and hence in the mid 19th century the charity was reconstituted, and in 1870 it was opened as a "new college" having established it's identity as one of the great public schools leading to a very competitive entrance.

We were led to the library and shown some of the amazing artifacts in the school's archive. These included diaries kept by Edward Alleyn & his partner Philip Henshawe, several 1st editions of poetry & unpublished music – surprisingly we were allowed to handle these. We were then treated to a glass of wine and some nibbles by Robert Weaver before walking over to view the chapel.

Visit to the Billingsgate Bath House

30th October 2015

The visit started with lunch at "The Loose Cannon", a pub built into the beautifully restored 19th c railway arches under Cannon Street Station. Following lunch, Dr Jane Siddell, Inspector of Monuments, London 'Historic England' gave us an excellent introductory talk prior to us walking along to the Roman Bath House, generally only open to the public at week-ends.



Following the departure of the Romans from Britain in the early 5th century, Londinium, the country's capital, with Palace, Forum & Amphitheatre, fell into disuse & disrepair. The Anglo-Saxons subsequently arrived in England, but settled throughout the country, utilizing the London suburbs & establishing a trading centre at Aldwych, Lundenvic, to later become Covent Garden. This then led to a wealth of archeological finds. In 886AD, King Alfred

arrived at Queenhithe to establish the Anglo-Saxon presence in the city, Garlic Hill, Milk St. & Bread St. amongst others took their names from these times. There were a couple of significant finds in the area, one being a woman's skull with a hole the size of a tennis ball, &

also a Saxon brooch in the Billingsgate Bath House.

The Billingsgate Roman House was built north of Lower Thames Street, in the late 2nd c. on the banks of the River Thames & then the wall to surround Londinium. We were then shown by Jane & her colleague the foundations & remains of the Bath House with the 'sophisticated under-floor heating system'. This was all discovered under building debris in 1848 together with a hoard of Roman coins post 395 AD. All absolutely amazing!

Visit to St Paul's Cathedral 'Unseen Areas' 24th November 2015

30 Of our members were privileged to be taken to some of the unseen areas in St Paul's with Teresa Heady and Sarah Radford. Teresa gave us an introductory talk in the reception area before splitting into our 2 groups.



Christopher Wren's 'Great Model', made out of oak and plaster, which he submitted in 1673 at a cost of £500 (equivalent to £32k in today's money) is amazing. It stands 13 ft. tall & 21 ft. long and is located in the triforium – a special treat to visit and is seldom seen by the public. We then moved on to the library with a historic collection of religious books, to say nothing of items associated with the life, work and history of the cathedral.

From there we visited the 'Embroiders' area – there are a small team of incredibly dedicated people spending many hours to produce an amazing piece of finery, both conserving current fabulous vestments and producing new ones – a magnifying glass being necessary to get the precision much of the time. Finally we visited the Conservation department where all the ancient treasures in the Cathedral's archives are preserved with loving care and again with infinite precision.

Following the amazing visit we all went off to Café Rouge for an excellent 3 course lunch, needless to say, with wine and coffee, and all at a very moderate cost.

St James' Church Carol Service 13th December 2015

The final event of 2015 was the Carol Service, as is customary, where our members joined the congregation of St. James', Garlickhythe for the annual Carol Service with childrens' gifts being donated and placed beneath the beautiful tree for distribution by The Salvation Army. It was good to see that some of our members unable to attend the lunch were still able to go to the service.



Since Guy Treewick left St. James', a new permanent vicar has not yet been appointed, and we were very fortunate that the service was taken by the "Rev. Roger Royle" who many will know as a radio and TV presenter over many decades. It was a really lovely service. Following the service, the Church very kindly provided drinks and nibbles to give everyone a chance to socialize. We had a fairly small group this year, but it is a particularly busy time of year for the majority of our club members, unlike a good many 'poor souls' who have no one and nothing.

Those who were able, went on to have lunch at a historic pub very close to St. Paul's – The Centre Page. The manager was very helpful to Patrick and allowed us to dine in the basement to keep everyone in our group together. A delicious 2 course meal plus coffee & mints was enjoyed by all who attended accompanied, of course, by a glass or so of wine.