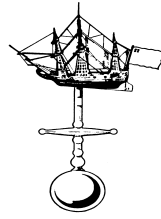


# QUEENHITHE WARD CLUB



## Queenhithe Ward Club Newsletter Issue 5 – Winter 2014

### National Theatre 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2014

We had a great turn out for this event, with 30 people visiting the National Theatre. We were divided into 2 groups of 15 and the tours delivered by guides employed by the National having had a background training in “Drama”, hence had excellent communication skills.



The Theatre is of absolute world renown and was formed in 1963 with Laurence Olivier as its artistic director and until his retirement in 1973 appeared in many productions.

The centre is divided into 3 theatres, each of which we visited. The largest theatre is the **Olivier** which can seat up to 1160 people – it has an ‘open stage’ and a fan shaped auditorium, giving a very ‘concentrated intimacy’ with stalls and a circle. It was explained

that 8m below stage it had a rotating drum operated by one person & allowing ‘fluid scenery’. We then come down to a smaller one, the **Lyttelton** Theatre with a capacity of 890 seats and is of a proscenium-arch design. It also has the benefit of being able to create an orchestra-pit for up to 20 musicians and the seating. It is named after Oliver Lyttelton whose parents were the most effective campaigners for the Theatre. The smallest, but most adaptable is the **Dorfman** Theatre which until its refurbishment and re-opening this autumn was known as the Cottislow. It is a dark walled room and only has a capacity of 350 seats. We also had the privilege of going back stage to see the area where all the ‘props’ were housed and brought out for appropriate productions – I was absolutely amazed at the total area of the centre.

### Opening of the Queenhithe Mosaic 18<sup>th</sup> November 2014

This mosaic is absolutely amazing and took 1 year to plan and another 9 months to put together by The Southbank Mosaics under the directorship of David Tootill



The new Lord Mayor, Alan Yardley honoured us with his presence, despite traffic prevented him being able to drive to his planned point, hence he had to run over the foot bridge crossing Upper Thames Street to reach us.

The mosaic is 100 feet long and summarises the history of the most historic dock still surviving, dating back to Roman times in AD 886. It is

called Queenhithe after Queen Matilda, wife of Henry I. Southbank Mosaics organized 2 groups for our members to visit its construction and actually input pieces of the mosaic ourselves.

Following the opening, our committee, together with many other City officers, and of course David Tootill, were then fortunate enough to go to Painters’ Hall for a most enjoyable reception.



I would like to thank Paul Renner for putting together the collages, which for the purposes of this newsletter are small, but if anyone would like the photos emailed separately please let me know ([RoF417@gmail.com](mailto:RoF417@gmail.com)) or Paul: [Paul@paulrenner.com](mailto:Paul@paulrenner.com).

## **BBC Tour and lunch**

**19<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

This proved to be an incredibly popular visit with 45 people joining us. I'm not surprised it was popular as it was an absolutely fascinating visit. We split into 2 groups, each with 2 informative and entertaining guides, and I believe the quality of all 4 guides was exceptional.



They brought to life the work of the new state of the art, multimedia broadcasting centre in the heart of London. We were given a camera's eye view via their big screen into some of the studios broadcasting to the nation, including both television and radio news studios. The amount of teamwork required must be unbelievable with the



hundreds of people involved in so many areas, extracting totally up to date news from all corners of the world and then ensuring it is broadcast at the correct time on the correct channel. You will see from Paul's collages that we were given the opportunity to be news and weather broadcasters and also were able to have a go at being part of a radio drama – all great fun. We were also lucky enough to sit in the room which is 'home to The One Show' while we got an explanation of how the nightly program is put together.

Following the tour we all went off to The Heights Restaurant in St Georges' Hotel round the corner and all enjoyed an excellent lunch.

## **Christmas Carol Service & Lunch at TAS**

**14<sup>th</sup> December 2014**

As is traditional, the Club joined the parishioners of St James Garlickhythe for the annual Carol Service led by Guy Treweek, the vicar. It was lovely to see a full church with everyone enjoying it. As usual Andrew Parmley, the organist with his choir produced beautiful music and carols, some of which the congregation joined the singing.



It was also lovely to see very young children reading some of the lessons and being part of the service. Following the tradition at St James', donations of children's Christmas presents were made, being placed under the Christmas tree for later distribution by Major Sally from the Salvation Army and our Alderman, Gordon Haines. These have been enormously appreciated by children in the past in very under-privileged neighbourhoods, who may otherwise have received no presents.

After the service we enjoyed socializing with the regular church parishioners partaking of a glass of wine or a cup of coffee, mince pies and many other delicious nibbles.

Following this, the Ward Club members accompanied by Major Sally and her friend Jane, went to view the Queenhithe mosaic, where Gordon gave a short talk on it's construction by Southbank Mosaics and it's erection on the dock wall in an incredibly efficient manner. Lunch was again at TAS Pide, a Turkish restaurant beside the Globe Theatre, where we spent a very sociable few hours enjoying a very large and delicious meal – the 'starters' were sufficient for a main course!