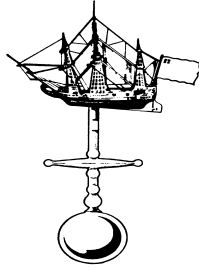


QUEENHITHE WARD CLUB



Queenhithe Ward Club Newsletter August 2013

AGM

7th May 2013

This year started with an extremely well attended AGM, with 48 members attending.



This was preceded by a short outing to the Queenhithe Dock where our Alderman, Gordon Haines, and Anne Thomas gave us a short presentation on the planned mosaic to be put on the dock wall.

Following this we all made our way to Painters' Hall where we held the AGM with the chairmanship changing from Chris Allen at the end of an amazing year of events to John Underhay who has another stunning year planned.

We followed the AGM with the important part of an excellent and sociable meal in Painters' Hall, followed by further short talks from Gordon and Anne.

Cutty Sark 13th June 2013

Our next event was a visit to the Cutty Sark at Greenwich. We had a good turn out of 30 members and guests and started with an excellent lunch at the "Trafalgar Tavern" overlooking the river.

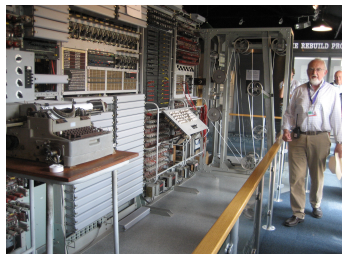


Following this, we moved off at our own pace for a 10 minute walk along the Riverside Walkway to the Cutty Sark. She ranks in Maritime History with Nelson's Victory and Henry VIII's Mary Rose. In fact, probably no clipper can compete on the number of miles sailed, as a journey from China to the UK in the late 1800's and early 1900's, with a cargo of tea was around 15,000 miles. Also if we imagine a sailing ship in her glory, it is the image of this elegant clipper, which is likely to come to mind. In May 2007 there was a catastrophic fire damaging all corners of the ship, but somehow massive funds were raised to allow a huge restoration project to go ahead bringing the ship into its present condition. The ship was eventually re-opened to the public in April 2012. The exhibition and contents were presented in an absolutely fascinating manner. I think we would all recommend those unable to join us should make a visit.

We all viewed this at our own pace and interests, and many of us then enjoyed a pleasant cup of tea together on board before departing.

Bletchley Park 18th July 2013

Mid July a group of 27 of us visited Bletchley Park, the majority simply catching a train from London. Bletchley station was only a few minutes walk from the “Centre”. We started off with coffee and biscuits while we all assembled



Bletchley Park was the “Home of the Codebreakers” during the World War II and heralded the digital era we now cannot live without!. Historians believe that the Codebreakers’ skills shortened the war by up to 2 years saving countless lives.

Left: Colossus and our guide

We had an excellent guide giving us more than our allotted hour and really giving us a tremendous understanding of the complexity of the work undertaken by probably 10,000 people at it’s peak with variable skills including the brightest mathematicians from Oxford and Cambridge from where it was very accessible, and of course translators. They tackled the complex task of intercepting, deciphering, analysing and distributing the intelligence derived from enemy radio signals. The first Colossus started in 1943 and just before the D-Day landings in 1944, 10 of these machines were in use.

The secrecy surrounding the work was paramount and remained so until 1974. Husbands, wives etc of workers had no idea what their ‘loved ones’ were doing.

There were areas which most of us had no time to visit, and one of our members found her Mother’s name on a “Roll of Honour” which was very exciting.

St Paul’s 6th August 2013

A lovely August morning saw 35 of us meet at St Paul’s where we divided into 2 groups to be given a tour of the cathedral.



We are very fortunate in having 2 of our Queenhithe members (Chris Allen and Peter Davis) as brilliant official tour guides in the cathedral, and them both being happy to take the tours. We started with an introductory talk about the architecture of the cathedral and it’s history, as well as many of the tombs and memorials that are in the cathedral, including Sir Christopher Wren, Wellington and Nelson to name but a few. During some

parts of the tour there was seating, which was very welcome to some, although the interest overcame the necessity for sitting down! We moved on to the Triforium, which the public “turn up” tours do not include. This was very special as we climbed well over 100 spiral stairs and had an amazing view down the nave on the way to the Trophy Room where we could see Wren’s great model. We also had the chance to visit the library demonstrating the most amazing collection of theological books.

From the cathedral after 2 stunning hours we made our way to the Cote restaurant where we enjoyed a glass of ‘bubbly’ on arrival followed by an absolutely delicious lunch supplemented by plenty of wine, and we finally dispersed around 4.0 pm.

I hope you will enjoy our 1st newsletter in many years and we hope to produce more in the future.