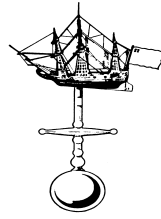


QUEENHITHE WARD CLUB



Queenhithe Ward Club Newsletter Issue 8 – Summer 2015

Again I would like to thank Paul Renner for putting the collages together for me.

AGM in Painter-Stainers' Hall

5th May 2015

Once again we managed to book Painter-Stainers Hall for our AGM followed by dinner. We managed to get through the AGM relatively quickly indicating that those present (over 50 members) were pretty happy with the club.



Our immediate past president, thought it would be nice for her to mention her year here, so herewith from Janet:

I was thrilled to see the A.G.M in May so well attended. It demonstrates what a thriving Ward Club we have and I thank you all for making my year so enjoyable. I'm sure I forgot many things I intended to say in my closing 'report' particularly to thank Fiona, our member and sheriff for

inviting me to many 'extra' events. However, I am sure you were relieved to have more time to enjoy seeing old friends and soaking up the atmosphere (and alcohol) in the magnificent Painter Stainers' Hall. I shall now be able to put more names to faces and look forward to seeing you at this year's events.

Tour of The Old Bailey

11th June 2015

Our first event in Patrick's year was an unbelievable tour of the Old Bailey by our very own Sheriff, Fiona and her husband, David. Members clearly realized this was going to be a special event as we had 42 members attending.



Our members started the evening in very sociable form with Fiona, David and a glass or so of "bubbly" in the Judges Dining Room (the bottom right photo in the collage). Prior to us being taken on the tours Fiona gave us some background history of The Old Bailey, noting our Chairman's "history"!! We then split into 2 groups and started sitting in Court Room 3 where we were shown where the defendant would be located, the judge, the jury and all the others plus the public gallery. We then moved on

to Court Room 1 noting the differences before being taken down to the cells and the corridor with narrowing 'doorways' along it the prisoners of early days had to walk to the gallows – absolutely fascinating. The cells where the prisoners were left during the day while waiting to be taken to the court room – very sparse. We then returned to the Judges Dining Room for "Bowl Food". I think we were all surprised and happy with "Bowl Food" as we could have 4 different meals all ready & served in individual bowls – highly praised by all. Thank you Fiona.

Visit to Freemasons' Hall 15th July 2015

This event saw 39 members gathering at Freemason's Hall mid morning for an excellent tour of the Library and Museum. From the traditional thoughts of the society demonstrating secrecy and mysterious rituals, light has now been shed on it's history.



Freemasons' Hall is a fabulous Grade II listed building serving as the headquarters for the United Grand Lodge of England. & is home to the world's greatest collection of masonic material. Of course, there are still many closely guarded secrets of the society, but our excellent tour guide was able to demonstrate a few of the bewilderingly complex systems & charitable functions of the society. Amongst the exhibits are an enormous throne commissioned in 1790 & weird "jewel" badges (including bone & hair) made by Napoleonic French prisoners in English prisons!

We were then lucky enough to enter the Grand Temple, entering through the most stunning doors. The present Grand Temple dates back to 1932 & can seat a huge 1700 people, therefore the vast area required two organs, one on either side at the far end of the Temple in order to produce adequate sound, these were designed in 1933 & in 2014 / 2015 it was decided that a third was required which was installed centrally. The sounds were demonstrated to us & were absolutely incredible.

We then had a little time to spend in the museum to gaze at the wealth of objects the museum houses in their collection, including many treasures belonging to other fraternal societies.

We followed the visit with lunch at the Prince of Wales Pub around the corner, giving everyone the chance to relax and socialize.

Dinner at The National Liberal Club 21st August 2015

We had a very good gathering of Members & their Friends for this special dinner starting with champagne on the Terrace at 6.30 pm. It was a great opportunity for everyone to catch up with all the news. Following this we made our way to the Grill Room for dinner where we were seated on round tables, leading to enjoyable conversation.



Patrick welcomed Michael Pickersgill, Chairman of the National Liberal Club, Members and Guests.

Michael spoke between the fish & venison courses about the history of the National Liberal Club. It was designed and built by Alfred Waterhouse in 1882. There were many 'Firsts' including it being the first building to have electric lighting, & a lift. Amazingly the main staircase, built on a cantilever

design, is the largest in Europe. Following the dessert, Michael then spoke again, this time on the architecture and the magnificent marble floors & detailed ceilings, also mentioning the Smoking Room which has been used for many TV & film sets and is adorned with many paintings, mainly of Liberal/Whig leaders.

I think the meal and wines were very much appreciated by all, which led Ann Ball to then thank Patrick for organising a very successful evening.

The final part of the evening was a tour, starting in the Library and leading into the Long Room, Bar and Dining area beyond, where members of the Liberal Club were still dining.