

Dear Fellow:

Please find the RSA East of England August '08 Newsletter together with booking information for September Events and some 'Dates for your Diary'. Guests are welcome at all events. If you receive this Newsletter by email you will find it easier to read the attachment copy, where you will also find the booking form. For further information please refer to the contact given with each item or contact Gladys Jones, Programme Secretary, on 01638 500404 or email gladys.jones@virgin.net

RSA

EAST OF ENGLAND REGION Newsletter August 2008

Regional Chair's Message

The French say that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Well, the RSA is certainly changing. Fellows will be aware of the increased emphasis on electronic communication, changes to the central programme and the start of new projects. Regional Chairs are now ex-officio members of Council, which is looking at re-defining its role within the RSA structures. To quote from a recent Council paper ('Purpose Vision and Strategy', now also on the RSA website):

"(The RSA will inspire) our growing networks of Fellows to be a force for civic innovation and social change

- Through innovative new forms of Fellowship engagement
- By maintaining a rising trend in membership and a low level of attrition
- By developing a range of powerful Fellow initiatives online, issue based; internationally, nationally and locally"

Not all Fellows like these changes, but I am sure they will continue. However, I doubt that the RSA will remain the same.

It has been a privilege to serve the Region in such interesting times. I thank Fellows for their support over the last two years, and I look forward to supporting Paul Dickson when he takes over as Chair at our AGM on Sept. 20th.

Gordon Bell

AGM at Ely, Presentation 'Re-creating Fenland Landscapes', Buffet Lunch & Guided Tours of Ely Cathedral and the Stained Glass Museum

Saturday 20th September 2008 10.30 for 11.00 a.m. Cost £15

This year we are visiting the north west of the region for our AGM. This meeting is also intended to give you a flavour of the historical and current contribution which 'Fen Land' has made and is making to the East of England Region.

The AGM will be held at the Cathedral Centre, just by the Cathedral. The presentation, which will follow the business of the meeting, will focus on the Great Fen and Wicken Fen Vision. These projects, although primarily concerning environmental conservation, are increasingly being directed to their contribution to the local economy and communities across the region, especially in respect of the proposed development in the Cambridge sub-region.

After lunch there will be two alternating guided tours.

Jane Kennedy and John Maddison will share their considerable knowledge of the external architecture of Ely Cathedral. Jane has been Surveyor of the Fabric since 1994 and has overseen a period of major restoration within the Cathedral and its precincts. She has played a key role securing the future of some of the finest historic buildings in the country. John, an historian and artist, has written a book about the Cathedral, 'Design and Meaning', which explores how and why Ely Cathedral was built and altered over the centuries.

An insight into the long and fascinating story of stained glass will be provided by Rosie Mills Researcher/Assistant to the Curator. Rosie will 'whet our appetite for the secrets of this ancient craft illustrated in this national collection of stained glass, religious and secular, from 1200 to the present day. The Museum is situated in the Cathedral and is accessed by a spiral, stone staircase which has a hand rail.

Cost £15 - **Closing Date** for Booking **Monday 8 September 2008**. Map and directions will be provided, by email or on paper via SAE, when booking using the Booking Form on Page 3 Enquiries to Gladys Jones 01638 500404, gladys.jones@virgin.net

'A strategy to drive development and improvement?'

Chelmsford Town Centre

A presentation given by Derek Stebbing, Chelmsford Council's Planning Policy Manager.

Wednesday 24th September 6.30 for 7.00 p.m. end 8.15 p.m. Free

Horizon Suite at Waterfront Place, Wharf Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 6LU

The Council's vision sees Chelmsford as the 'dynamic capital of Essex, anchored upon Chelmsford's historic identity as a Cathedral City and technological powerhouse, embracing compact urban living, superb shops, leisure and culture, built around neighbourhoods of distinctive character'.

The plan aims to 'meet the principles of sustainable improvement'. Fostering resilient communities is one of the RSA's current projects. How might we contribute to the debate on the future of Chelmsford Town Centre?

Come and join the discussion which this topic is bound to generate.

As numbers are limited booking must be made to 32 Vellacotts, Broomfield, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 7EB or by email to mnoble3211@yahoo.com

The restaurant and brasserie are available for those wishing to enjoy a meal after the session.

Directions - From the Army and Navy roundabout, take the exit for the Town Centre (A1060). At the first roundabout take the third exit (Springfield Road), then right again on to Wharf Road. Waterfront Place is situated 150 metres on your left. There is parking on site.

RSA Norwich Group

The July meeting of the Norwich RSA Group was concerned with the question of public sculpture in the city. Following the group's understanding that this would involve collaboration with other organisations, Robert Short of the Norfolk Contemporary Art Society had been invited to appraise Fellows of the current situation.

He referred to sculptures which had been promised in 2000 as part of the Forum, itself predetermined by the fire which burnt down the library. The sculpture at the library, 'Extrapolation' by Liliane Lijn, had been erected by the NCAS. One, if not two sculptures were promised as part of the new Forum development, though this promise was subsequently denied and the architects of the Forum declared that there was no room for sculpture. For this reason, the sculpture to be was urged downhill to nearby Hay Hill, where it had to tie in with the Thomas Browne statue - hence the new 5 piece installation by Anne and Patrick Poirier. In other words, there is no nearby site for a new sculpture.

Continuing, Robert Short explained that there was no funding so far, and that fundraising had not begun. A target of a quarter of a million pounds had been mentioned elsewhere, though this sounded a large amount to the group. Joan Luckhurst, a guest with her husband, David Luckhurst FRSA, mentioned that NCAS had recently had an exhibition called 'Making Faces' which had a budget of £130,000. Leaving the question of money, it appears that talk of a new sculpture is still very much at the stage of talks and meetings. The question of a site is being discussed and one that has been put forward is the Jarrold Printworks site in Whitefriars. A theme has not been decided, though one which has been greeted enthusiastically is in connection with the Norwich School of Artists. How would one depict Crome or Cotman in three dimensions?

To conclude, it seems that the talk of a new public sculpture is still at an early stage. There is no site, no theme, no artist selected and no funding. At a guess, the whole process of discussing and deciding and commissioning will take four or five years!

NCAS are to have discussions with the Norwich Society and Richard Barnes from the Norwich RSA group is to attend these and find out more.

Now that we know that these discussions are at a very early stage, it is quite possible that the RSA could be involved in the long run. However, this will all take time and other Fellows in the RSA Norwich Group may well feel that this has taken up enough time and that there are other matters to deal with. We look forward to hearing about these. Richard Barnes

The next meeting at which all are welcome, including guests, is on -

Tuesday August 12th at Pulse Café Bar, The Old Fire Station Stables, Labour In Vain Yard, Guildhall Hill, Norwich, Phone/Fax 01603 765562 (Parking at St Giles multi-story or The Forum)

From 5.30 p.m. Discussions. Free Coffee 7.00p.m. Just come along and join the lively exchanges.

Supper, for those who wish to stay. Vegetarian food, wine etc. To book a place for supper, please contact **Robert Ashton** via PA: Anne Smales on **01953 605000** or at anne@robertashton.co.uk

Reporting on Recent Events

June 1st saw us cruising on the River Blackwater from Maldon, courtesy of Stephanie Valentine FRSA Topsail Ltd. A number of Fellows have expressed their appreciation for the experience aboard the barge 'Hydrogen', our thanks to Stephanie for suggesting and organising the event.

July 5th at Sacrewell Lodge Farm, a thoroughly enjoyable as well as informative farm visit. Rob Haward, Operations Director, was a mine of information concerning organic farming and River Nene organic vegetables, vegbox home delivery in particular. A delivery service to East Anglia and the East Midlands. Again, this event was by invitation of Andrew Burgess FRSA whose large organisation encompasses this scheme. Fellows were delighted, not least, by their gift of a vegbox to take away. Thanks Andrew and Rob.

July 6th at the Quay Theatre in Sudbury was the scene of an inspiring Textiles Exhibition direct from Lodz, Poland. The display of art work by Dr Halina Strzechowska-Ratajska illustrated aspects of contemporary culture. Two excellent Polish Films were shown as part of Polish Sunday supported by the Polish Embassy and RSA East of England Region. Our thanks to Jakub Kalinski FRSA for arranging and organising this event. We would have preferred more Fellows to view

the exhibition and would like to know of anyone who may be interested to liaise with Jakub and/or Dr Halina in a future exhibition.

The Committee would be pleased to hear of suggestions from Fellows for future events, discussions etc. In addition we are keen to hear of anyone who would like to serve on the Committee. It does require a commitment of time, six meetings per year and some involvement with events, but can be rewarding in a variety of ways.

RSA Herts. Network at Ware Priory

‘What do we do when petrol rationing arrives?’

Tuesday 15th July 2008 6.30 p.m. Free

Following a successful first meeting in May the group plan to meet on a regular basis, so come along and meet with Fellows in your area.

Reg Harman FRSA, an independent Transport Consultant, will give a short presentation to set the discussion going on transport systems now and in the future and how they affect our lives.

The meeting is free and refreshment will be provided.

Please book with Jo Linney, jo.linney@ntlworld.com or on 01920 460100

Venue Ware Priory, High Street, Ware SG12 9AL

Train – to Ware Station from London Liverpool Street, Broxbourne or Hertford East Station

Regular buses details: <http://www.intalink.org.uk/Maps/Ware.pdf>

Map available: http://www.warepriory.co.uk/ware_priory/ware_priory_contact.aspx

Forthcoming Events, mark these Dates in your Diary

October, expected date 21st, 22nd, 23rd, tbc Bio-fuels discussion & visit to largest straw-burning power station.

Tuesday 18th November 2008, 6.30 p.m. Cambridge University Press Presentation & Networking

**AGM at Ely, Presentation ‘Re-creating Fenland Landscapes’, Buffet Lunch & Guided Tours of Ely Cathedral and the Stained Glass Museum
Saturday 20th September 2008 10.30 for 11.00 a.m. Cost £15**

To: Gladys Jones, Clare Cottage, 16 The Sounds, Dalham, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 8TJ
Telephone; 01638 500404 Email: gladys.jones @virgin.net

Please reserve places for **Saturday 20th September 2008 10.30 for 11.00 a.m. Cost £15**

I enclose a cheque for £ payable to **RSA East of England Region** and **e-mail address** for confirmation of booking and further details **OR** - a **stamped addressed envelope** if you require confirmation of booking and further details by post.

Name/s of Fellows/s:-

Address:-

..... Postcode:-

Telephone:..... e-mail address:

Name/s of Guest/s:-

