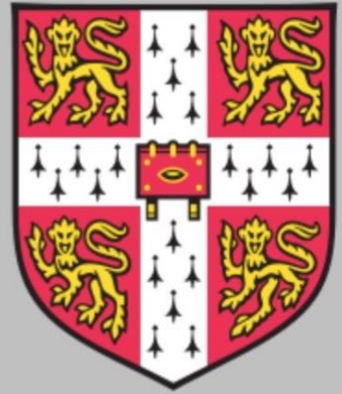


# Norfolk Cambridge Society

Spring 2023 Newsletter



## From the Chair

'The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled'. Often attributed to Yeats, the aphorism appeared first (in slightly longer form) in Plutarch's *De Auditu*. The central purpose of education, Plutarch argued, is to light a burning, lifelong desire for knowledge and truth. Today, anyone with unfettered access to the internet can read the works and thoughts of Aristotle, Plutarch, Shakespeare, Descartes, Newton, Kant, Einstein, Heisenberg and countless other great minds. They can also readily obtain myriad analyses of their works by educated others. It might therefore be imagined that, in such an age, the world would be changing rapidly to one in which much social interaction and political thought is driven by science, philosophy, rationality, sensitivity to the needs of others, wisdom and compassion. Why are we still so far from this? I would argue that too few people have acquired a thirst for knowledge and understanding. Water may be in abundant supply but too few horses are drinking.

If we wish to make the world a better place therefore, those of us who are fortunate enough to have received an excellent education should do what we can to help kindle the fire in others. This is what the Norfolk Cambridge Society Lectures are all about. I hope alumni will continue to attend in large numbers and encourage others to come along too.

At the time of writing we have three more celebrated leaders in their fields who have kindly agreed to speak: General Douglas Chalmers, Master of Emmanuel College; Roger Mosey, Master of Selwyn College and a Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge and Tom Little KC. More about our September lecture appears later in this newsletter. Please feel free to send me recommendations for future excellent speakers, if you know of any.

On another note I should mention that this will be my last newsletter as Chair of the Society. A few health issues have cropped up and I am under family pressure to row back a little. I am delighted to be able to report that our previous Chair, Simon Brickles, has volunteered to once again take up the reins and this has been unanimously supported by the committee. I shall therefore be handing over to Simon before our next AGM which will be held on 14th September at 5pm at the Norfolk Club in Norwich.

I have greatly enjoyed the privilege of being Chair of the Society for the past three years. Thank you for all your support. I am not disappearing however. I plan to continue to organise and chair the NCS lectures for years to come!

With very best wishes  
Geoffrey

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## From the Editor

I hope you are all profiting from this glorious spring weather which has greatly added to the enjoyment of recent Society activities including a tour of the war huts at Hawsted and afternoon tea with music from Chanter's Jigge.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Geoffrey Smart on your behalf for his exceptional work as Chair over the last three years. His enthusiasm and indefatigability were key to keeping the show on the road during Lockdowns and the Lectures have become a real and important feature of Norfolk and Norwich Life. He, and Simon Brickles before him, have really revived the Society and, as Simon takes on the role of Chair once again, we look forward with confidence to the future.

I joined the Society when I moved here from Surrey in early 2019 with a view to meeting new people with whom I would have at least one thing in common! Geoffrey is very good at inveigling and thanks to him I have both become involved with the committee and have made some firm friends. As we leave the pandemic restrictions behind us we hope even more of you will choose to join in with both our occasional activities and our regular meetings whether that be the Lectures, Incrementum, The Book Group or Epicureans. We are always looking for new ideas for visits so please contact Mu Gurbutt if you have a suggestion. [mugurbutt@hotmail.com](mailto:mugurbutt@hotmail.com)

The next newsletter will be published at the end of August so in the interim I wish you all a sunny and enjoyable summer.

Kathy Moyse [ajskcm@btinternet.com](mailto:ajskcm@btinternet.com)

## 2022/23 Norfolk Cambridge Society Student Awards

The subcommittee have been busy reading submissions for this year's award which once again covered a wide range of subjects from Veterinary Medicine to Classics. We will be interviewing our finalists on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> June via Zoom and details of the winner or winners will be published in the August newsletter.

Annie Grant [annie.grant@uea.ac.uk](mailto:annie.grant@uea.ac.uk)

## NCS Book Group

Our April meeting provoked a very lively discussion of *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. It seems to be the novel of choice for book groups at the moment and largely went down well. It was certainly a very enjoyable read although a number of us felt the ending was rather unsatisfactory.

We are next meeting on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June, in person for lunch and learned discussion(!) to consider *A Theatre for Dreamers* by Polly Sansom who is also, inter alia, a songwriter and married to Dave Gilmour of Pink Floyd. If you would like to join us please get in touch with me directly. We will be starting at 12.30pm and will finish by about 3pm.

We are taking a break over the summer so keep an eye on the website for details of the next book and meeting (which will take place via Zoom) <https://norfolkcambridgesociety.org.uk/>

Kathy Moyse  
[ajskcm@btinternet.com](mailto:ajskcm@btinternet.com)

## NCS Public Lectures

Our sixteenth lecture on **'Defeating Pandemic Viruses'**, delivered on 27<sup>th</sup> April by Professor Ravindra Gupta and attended by over 260 people, was a great success. The general tenor of the welter of feedback received (many thanks to all those who responded to my request) can probably best be summed up by the following comment from one of the attendees.

*'Prof Gupta's talk was of course challengingly erudite and scientific, but spot on. Even as an Arts graduate I took the central messages on board and have even, I think, retained one or two.'*

Because of the large numbers attending, it was necessary to move the lecture to Norwich School Refectory and this unfortunately led to problems for some in reading Professor Gupta's slides. I apologise for this. Copies of his slides were subsequently circulated to all who came, so hopefully nothing was missed. Nevertheless, if we need to hold lectures in the Refectory in future because numbers wishing to come substantially exceed the capacity of the Blake Studio, I shall try to ensure that the lecturer produces simpler slides. In the meantime, I understand that Norwich School is looking into the possibility of installing a larger screen in the Refectory.

Our next lecture on **'The Military Instrument – Theory & Practice'**, is to be delivered on **Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> June** by General Douglas Chalmers, Master of Emmanuel College. The talk will be held in the Blake Studio and I am greatly looking forward to hearing it. Having said this, I am due to have a (hopefully minor) coronary procedure three days before the lecture, so Simon Brickles has kindly agreed to be back-up Chair if I cannot attend.

For our eighteenth lecture on **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September**, our distinguished speaker will be Roger Mosey, Master of Selwyn College Cambridge and former Editorial Director at the BBC. His topic will be **'Delivering Truth in a Tribal World'**. Throughout its history the BBC has been one of the most trusted news organisations in the world. In recent years, however, modern technology, sometimes fuelled by artificial intelligence, has greatly facilitated the creation and dissemination of disinformation, fuelling discord. Even the BBC has sometimes struggled to represent the whole of the United Kingdom in a time of fragmentation and uncertainty. Roger Mosey will examine these and many other influences challenging professional journalism today and discuss how the BBC and other reputable news organisations across the world seek to ensure their survival in a rapidly-changing world.

Arguably, no-one is better qualified to speak on this most important subject. Roger spent most of his career at the BBC, holding positions at various times as Head of BBC Television News, Editor of the Today programme, Controller of BBC Radio 5 Live, Director of Sport and the BBC Director of the London 2012 Olympics.

Geoffrey

### **Purchasing Your Tickets Online: A Reminder.**

With increased interest in our lectures we have moved to automated ticketing with Ticket Tailor, an online system that allows card payment. Tickets are issued to your email with a QR code to be scanned on entry either from a paper ticket or on your phone.

You can access Ticket Tailor via both the Cambridge Alumni website and the Cambridge Norfolk Society's own website <https://norfolkcambridgesociety.org.uk/>. You can also create an online account directly with Ticket Tailor.

## Epicureans



Eleven of us met in April for lunch at **Benedict's** in Norwich and a very convivial time was had by all.

Since opening in 2015 the restaurant has been named amongst The Times top 100 restaurants in the UK, Square Meal 100 and EDP Norfolk's Best Restaurant. Benedict's was awarded 3 AA Rosettes in January 2018.

We are aiming to meet again, either for lunch or supper, in September and are currently scoping potential venues. If you have somewhere you would like to recommend that would be able to take the numbers (generally about a dozen, although not limited to this, venue permitting) please let one of us know. Venues with private dining areas are particularly attractive.

Kathy Moyse [ajskcm@btinternet.com](mailto:ajskcm@btinternet.com) and Mu Gurbutt [mugurbutt@hotmail.com](mailto:mugurbutt@hotmail.com)

## Incrementum Lunchtime Investment Group



Our notional stock picking group is run jointly with members of the Norfolk Club. It meets every two months or so under a rotating chair, produces much bonhomie and is a source of many interesting investment ideas. No-one is required to put up any money.

We are always on the lookout for new members so if you wish to try us out please contact me directly.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> June starting at 11.30am followed by lunch. The venue is the Norfolk Club.

Geoffrey  
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**Viewpoints is currently suspended.**



Our discussion group on matters philosophical, political and whimsical remains in suspension and seeking someone to lead it. It used to be a source of great food for thought. I no longer have the time to organise these meetings but would be delighted if someone stepped forward to revive them. I would certainly like to come along to future meetings and enjoy participating again. So, if anyone is interested in running such a group, please do let me know.

Geoffrey [geoffreyjnsmart@gmail.com](mailto:geoffreyjnsmart@gmail.com)

### **Tour of Great War Huts, Brook Farm Camp, Hawsted near Bury St Edmunds. April 18<sup>th</sup>.**

Despite a cold wind and a near disaster when lunch was delayed by an accident on the A12, the day was very enjoyable and hugely instructive.

Taff, our knowledgeable and extremely engaging host, took us through both the history of the huts and his own ongoing project at this most unusual of museums. The huts were 'invented' at the outbreak of World War 1, initially as accommodation for the huge numbers of men who joined up, and it was salutary to learn that they went from concept to production in two weeks. If only things were so efficient these days...

In addition to the huts, the museum houses all kinds of memorabilia and a good selection of history books which are available to buy.

After lunch we visited 'the trenches' originally constructed for use in filming for both documentaries and commercial projects. They have also become a magnet for school parties who are finding it increasingly difficult to visit the real thing in France since Brexit and the pandemic. One urban myth that Taff was able to disabuse us of was the idea that soldiers spent months at a time in the trenches. He described how they rotated between the trenches, the fall-back position and the supply lines, rarely spending more than a week to 10 days at a time on the frontline. A typical soldier might only be required to go 'over the top' once or occasionally twice, contrary perhaps to what Blackadder would have us believe.



## Afternoon Tea and Chanter's Jigge. May 24<sup>th</sup>.

The gods were kind and the sun shone on a group of about 20 of us for a very English afternoon in the South Norfolk countryside.

Chanter's Jigge took us on a tour of English music: from the Mystery Plays, the visit of Elizabeth 1 to Norwich in 1578, the broadsheet music of the 1700s, songs written to accompany a public hanging at Norwich Castle in the 1830s and the more 'recent' popular songs of the Victorian music hall. They brought with them an array of instruments some of which a few brave souls tried out. The venue being a Norfolk Longhouse, which until the late 1980s was a working farmhouse, it was inevitable that the still working farmer chose that afternoon to clean out his storage silos but fortunately most of his banging was in excellent time to the music!

We were delighted to see so many new faces and hope to make this an annual event.



## Contacts

For information about the Society, events and meetings please take a look at our **new website**, ably maintained by Bryan Guttridge who can be contacted at [bgguttridge@gmail.com](mailto:bgguttridge@gmail.com)

<https://norfolkcambridgesociety.org.uk/>

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