Norfolk Cambridge Society

Summer 2025 Newsletter

From the Chair

Our AGM will be held online on Thursday 2nd October. If you would like to attend please email me as below by Thursday 26th September. The agenda will include an overview of the Society's finances and any items raised by attendees.

From time to time, the Society draws attention to events of particular civic and intellectual importance taking place in Norwich. Please find below details of one such forthcoming discussion, organised by Norwich Friends of the Earth with the support of U3A Norwich and The Norwich Society. You will also find details of upcoming events organised by the Royal Geographic Society (East Anglia) whose Chair, James Firebrace, is an NCS member.

Welcome back to Mu Gurbutt who has agreed to once again take on the role of organising cultural and other activities for Society members

And last but not least I am delighted to report that our newly invigorated Viewpoints discussion group will next meet on Tuesday October 16th at Norwich School. More detailed information follows later in this newsletter. Many thanks to Sevi Marshall for taking this on.

Kind Regards
Simon Brickles
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From the Editor

On what is almost the first day of meteorological Autumn I hope you will enjoy this Summer edition of the newsletter!

Please accept my apologies for its late appearance and the consequent rather short run in to a couple of the events mentioned. I'm afraid your Editor and other key contributors were away during the usual publication time of early August. The next edition will appear as scheduled before Christmas so pleased feel free to email me any items for inclusion.

Please note that the Book Group (which has now been running for over 5 years) has reached capacity with 18 members, so for the moment we won't be accepting anyone new. As we meet online even this number would be very unwieldy if everyone decided to turn up! It is my intention to publish details in the next newsletter of everything we have read thus far. I'm sure many of you are avid readers anyway but it may be of interest to see in one place our eclectic selection since our first meeting in April 2020.

Kathy Moyse
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NCS Public Lectures

Twenty-third Lecture

Our twenty-third public lecture was held on Thursday 5th June at Norwich High School for Girls. It was delivered by Dr Gillian Tett, Provost of King's College, Cambridge, Financial Times columnist and member of the FT editorial board. It was widely regarded as one of the best lectures we have had. Some reactions from the night follow:

- *A quick, off the cuff, reaction to tonight's lecture by Gillian Tett. I thought it was quite outstanding and was up there with the best of the NCS lectures I've attended. Indeed, it was probably the best.*

- *I would make two observations. Firstly, I was a little worried in advance that a provost of a Cambridge college would come across in a very academic way. But, and this was perhaps by virtue of her widespread experience as a reporter and economist and worker in the financial world, she came over as an expert but very clear speaker. Her style of communication was uncluttered and straightforward and not complicated by any academic verbiage. She dealt with a complex subject in a way that us lesser mortals could easily understand. I was absorbed from start to finish.*

- *It was so good to have a lecture which was put in the context of current matters that were worrying all of us in the audience i.e. the current world order and in particular what is happening in America with Donald Trump. She was spot on in doing this.*

- *Well done for putting on this lecture. It was quite brilliant.*

Twenty-fourth Lecture



Our 24th public lecture will be delivered on **Thursday 11th September** at Norwich School by Professor Charles Forsdick, Drapers Professor of French at the University of Cambridge and Lead Fellow for Languages at the British Academy. His topic will be **The Essential Role of Language Skills in Building a Better World**.

Professor Forsdick studied French as an undergraduate at New College, Oxford later completing a PhD at the University of Lancaster. Following his first post as Lecturer in French at the University of Glasgow, he moved to the James Barrow Chair of French at the University of Liverpool in 2001. He has served as President of the Society for French Studies, Co-Director of the Centre for the Study of International Slavery and chair of the Modern Languages and Linguistics sub-panel for the REF, whose role is to monitor standards of research in UK higher education providers. From 2012 until 2021, he was AHRC Theme Leadership Fellow for over 120 'Translating Cultures' project at Liverpool. Elected to the Drapers Professorship of French at Cambridge in 2023, he became a Fellow of Murray Edwards at the same time. He has authored, co-authored and edited many excellent books, including *Journeys between Cultures and Toussaint L'Ouverture: A Black Jacobin in the Age of Revolutions*

Visit **https://www.alumni.cam.ac.uk/magazine/issue-105/translating-cultures** **to read an excellent recent article by Professor Forsdick in the latest issue of Cam Magazine.**

Tickets are priced at £15, discounted to £11 for senior citizens and to £6 for sixth formers and teachers accompanying them. The price includes a glass of wine or a soft drink, which will be served after the lecture when there will be an opportunity to mingle with other attendees and with the speaker.
To buy Tickets go to https://norfolkcambridgesociety.org.uk/

Viewpoints



Viewpoints was revived earlier this year to create a space for focused, open-minded, and lively discussion on topics rooted in both traditional and contemporary philosophy. Conversations often go further still, branching into history, sociology, law, science, and much more. Each meeting centres on a single question which is shared with delegates beforehand. You're welcome to arrive with background reading in hand, or simply join the conversation drawing on your own knowledge, observations, and experience of the world.

I invite you to take part in the upcoming sessions and use this opportunity to unravel compelling topics that we rarely get to examine in everyday life.

Our next meeting will take place at **Norwich School (1 Almary Green) on Thursday 16th October from 6.45 pm until 8.15 pm** when we will consider the timely and challenging question: **If citizens are thriving, can the absence of democracy be defended?**

From the writings of classical philosophers to contemporary political analysis, the relationship between governance, prosperity, and democratic principles has been a subject of debate for centuries. This session will explore how different systems justify their authority, the trade-offs they demand, and the values they seek to uphold.

Delegates will receive a short article in advance to provide context and spark ideas. No prior expertise is required - only a willingness to listen, question, and contribute.

If you are interested in joining and would like to receive full details, please contact me by email at marshallsevi@gmail.com

Incrementum Lunchtime Investment Group



This is huge fun for people who enjoy discussing how to make money from the stock market in these very challenging times. We meet every two months or so at the Norfolk Club for a couple of hours, followed by lunch. No money is put up by anyone. All investments are purely notional. We are a mix of retired professional investors, plus amateurs with some experience of managing their own portfolios. Members are drawn from both the Norfolk Cambridge Society and the Norfolk Club. It is a source of excellent ideas for our members' private investment portfolios. Currently space for two more if you would like to join us. Contact me if you are interested.

Geoffrey Smart
geoffreyjnsmart@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

Anyone Interested in Botanical Art?

If anyone is interested in a trip to Cambridge I am hoping to organize a joint visit to the Botanical Gardens and to the Fitzwilliam Museum. The Botanical Gardens have copies of early herbals and examples of art work for horticultural use. The books on apple varieties are stunning. The library is only open on certain days and visits must be booked.

The Fitzwilliam Museum has the Fairhaven Collection which can be viewed online. There is so much to see and boxes of 'unknowns' by 'Unknown'. Again, this has to be booked in advance but they are willing to get out some of the artwork so we can have a closer look at it. The detail is just amazing. There's a new curator and he is happy to talk about the collection. The library staff are very helpful and welcome the opportunity to get out some of this work - I don't think it has even all been catalogued.

I would suggest going to the Fitzwilliam in the morning, followed by lunch and then to the Botanical Gardens in the afternoon. I would travel by train, but Park and Ride is the best if going by car. There is no charge at the Museum or at the Botanical Gardens, but booking has to be made approximately 3 weeks in advance

Lunch Anyone?

Interested in trying something different? Join us at 12.30pm on **Wednesday 3rd September** for lunch at the Japanese restaurant (Shiki) in Tombland.

If anyone is interested do please contact me at mugurbutt@hotmail.com

Visit to St Agnes Church, Cawston

A group of 27 NCS members met on August 12th in Cawston for a fascinating guided tour of the church by Dr Sarah Cassell, Associate Tutor at UEA. Her PhD was entitled *Structure and Image in Late Medieval East Anglian Angel Roofs* and she has taught and lectured in the field for many years. An excellent lunch at The Bell in Reepham followed.



Mu Gurbutt

East of England Royal Geographical Society

Norwich events are held at **The Blake Studio, Norwich School** with parking just outside. Glass of wine and soft drinks available from 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. We seek to make our events topical within the wide brief that Geography now offers. Free for RGS members otherwise £5.

Tuesday 7th October, 7.30pm-8.45pm. Humanitarian Aid in a Changing World

Former Major General Rob Thomson from The HALO Trust, the world's largest mine clearing NGO, will discuss how a changing geopolitical order marked by great power competition, increased conflict, and the retreat of multilateralism is affecting human development and security.

Thursday 6th November, 7.30pm-8.45pm. Traveller into Unknown Lands

Hilary Bradt will cover her experiences travelling to remote and lesser-known locations, by hitchhiking and bus, before the days of mass travel. She will reflect on the experience of starting the guidebook series introducing travellers to places less visited and her thoughts on sustainable travel in today's very different environment.

Wednesday 10th December, 7.30pm-9.15pm. A life of Cutting-edge Polar Research

Professor Dame Jane Francis, Director of the British Antarctic Survey and RGS President will combine talking about her own life in polar research with insights into cutting-edge research now being done in Cambridge on the threat to the Antarctic ice shelf. The talk will be followed by mulled wine and canapés.

Register at https://www.rgs.org/events/upcoming-events

James Firebrace

Norwich Friends of the Earth. Saturday 22nd November. 2.30pm- 4pm. The Auditorium at The Forum.

Steering Humanity through AI and Climate Risk: a public debate with speakers Professor Rupert Read (Climate) and Professor Jake Newman (AI), both from UEA, addressing two of the most pressing challenges of our century. The event will not only explore the dangers but also the opportunities for building resilience and steering society toward a more sustainable and ethical future. It will be recorded and available on YouTube at a later date.

You can find further details and booking information here: https://norwichfoe.co.uk/ **Book from 1st October or register now** with buttingerwillem@gmail.com

Contacts

For information about the Society, events and meetings please take a look at our **website** ably maintained by Peter Smith who can be contacted at pdgsmith@hotmail.com if you would like to add anything.

https://norfolkcambridgesociety.org.uk/

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