

**THE THIRTEEN SOCIETY
PROGRAMME 2023-2024
At Kingswood Village Hall**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS
2023-2024**

Chairman Paul Maslin (832978)
Hon Treasurer Roger Furmston (553323)
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Membership Secretary Anne Gayford (832932)
Programme Secretary Sue Camblin (833823)

Alison Boote Mary Hudson
James Jackson Frances Rosbotham

Notice of the Annual General Meeting will
Be available at the February meeting and
the accounts available at the AGM.

Annual subscription £20.00.
Guests: £7.50 each per meeting
(Complimentary tea and coffee will
be served at each meeting)

*If in doubt, please check with a committee
member before leaving home when
the weather conditions are bad.*

Tuesday 26th September 2023

8.00pm

Graeme Roy

Flying from Croydon: The Glory Years of Air Travel

During the pioneering and romantic years of air travel, Croydon Airport held a unique and world renowned position as a centre for innovation and has left a legacy which is still recognised in modern aviation today. As Chair of Trustees of the Historic Croydon Airport Trust, Graeme Roy will describe the impact of Croydon Airport and also the many personalities who flew from Croydon during its time as the UK's premier international airport. This period spans all the way from World War 1, through the inter war years, World War 2 and into the late 1950's.

Tuesday 24th October 2023

8.00pm

Dr Caroline Shenton

National Treasurers: Saving London's Museums, Galleries and Archives in World War 2

World War 2 curators were prepared to go to extraordinary lengths to hide (in unlikely sites) the UK's dazzling art collection.

"Hide them in caves and cellars, but not one picture shall leave this island....None must go. We are going to beat them" Winston Churchill May 1940.

Dr Caroline Shenton takes up the tale. She is a writer and historian and was brought up here in Kingswood. She has a degree in medieval history from St Andrews and a doctorate on the court of Edward III from Worcester College, Oxford. Having qualified as an archivist at UCL, she is the former Director of the Parliamentary Archives in London and before that was a senior archivist at the National Archives. She is now Secretary to Council at Girton College, Cambridge.

Tuesday 28th November 2023

James Dubois

The Joys of Close Harmony Barbershop Quartet Singing

Our hosts for the evening are The Royal Males, 2009 National Champions Seniors Barbershop Quartet. Lead singer is Bob Walker, a legend in the English barbershop world; Bass is James Dubois, Frank Marshall is the Baritone and Michael Webster is our Tenor and between them, these three add a further 80 years of Barbershop singing experience. Together they will explain the history of Barbershop, both in the USA where it all started and then in the UK and they will explore with you the world of Close Harmony, Choruses and Quartets. They will demonstrate the art of a cappella singing with songs through the ages from Doo-wap, Gospel, Country, Film music and perhaps a couple of Christmas songs. Each quartet member will share their personal singing highlights and introduce you to the pleasure of listening, while they perform their special harmonies and barbershop chords.

Please note that there will be no December meeting.

Tuesday 23rd January 2024

Chris Green

History of the London Underground

161 years ago, almost to the day, 38,000 Londoners travelled underneath the ground from one part of the city to another for the first time, celebrating the opening of the first public underground railway anywhere in the world. Why was it necessary? Who designed and built it? Where did it go from here? This talk endeavours to answer those questions and more and explains how the London Underground developed from the early beginnings, how it expanded and how it was mapped. Chris Green's interest in the London Underground started when he was a student living in South Kensington. At that time, there was a craze for visiting all the stations on the Underground system in the shortest possible time. Sadly, he could not afford the time away from his studies to pursue this, but he has never lost his passion for the Underground. His career lasting over 30 years has been as a commercial airline pilot with British Airways. After retirement, he found an interest in writing, producing and delivering short talks. He only talks on subjects in which he is interested and never uses a script. This means that, even though he presents the same title to different groups, the talks will never be exactly the same.

8.00pm

Tuesday 27th February

Neil Sadler

A Policeman's Lot...can be quite an interesting one!

The talk covers:

The rise of "Robo-Cop"

Changes in uniform and equipment.

In which European country should you not try and outrun the local police?

A musical theme tune quiz.

An unusual use for a policeman's helmet.

Many more examples detailing the frailties of human nature.

Neil Sadler trained as a school teacher and worked on the Isle of Man before returning to England for a very brief spell as a civil servant working in Bristol. In 1978, he decided that an office-based job was not for him and he joined Sussex Police. Much of his 30 years' service was as an operational officer in various ranks across Sussex. He also worked briefly in Hong Kong, Trinidad and Abu Dhabi...and even survived Bognor Regis, Haywards Heath and Crawley!

8.00pm

Tuesday 26th March 2024

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING followed by:

Jackie Marsh-Hobbs

The Brighton West Pier Story

Britain's first Grade 1 listed pier is described by English Heritage as "The finest pleasure pier ever built". The West Pier opened in 1866 at the height of pier building in this country. It was designed by our most prolific pier builder Eugenius Birch and was the sixth pier out of the 14 pleasure piers that he created. After 100 years of pleasure, delightful entertainment and enjoyment, the West Pier closed to the public in 1975. This lecture looks at the history of the pier, the struggle to save it and how the structure is still loved as part of our heritage and seafront.

Jackie Marsh-Hobbs is a lecturer and tour guide and has worked at the Royal Pavilion and Brighton Museum since 2000. She also runs adult education courses on local architecture and house history and also specialised tours on local prominent buildings.

8.00pm

Monday 15th April 2024

Annual luncheon at Kingswood Golf Club