

Dover Society Outing

Runnymede Thames Cruise & The Savill Garden

5th September 2023

Rodney Stone

The Society was prevented from undertaking trips in the past two years by first Covid and then lack of numbers. It was a relief and a pleasure to make this one, and our organiser, Iain Robertson, laid on something special. Forty-four participants had to be up with the sun-rise for an early start round the M20 and M25 to Runnymede for a cruise on the Thames. The area has strong Magna Carta connections (corny joke: Where was Magna Carta signed? Answer. At the bottom! Wrong. It was sealed, not signed, and no-one knows exactly where it took place.) The event is marked by a sculpture on the plain next to the river. It has twelve chairs denoting the advent of the jury system that we have today.

With the boat to ourselves and a prompt Ploughman's Lunch eaten before some of it melted in the heat, we sailed past well-appointed residences (think of a value, double it and add a zero or two. It's all about location, as they say,) and we viewed royal land, with Windsor Castle itself on

the skyline. Cameras were much in use during a calm and blissful experience.

A brief return to the coach took us to The Savill Garden. Every T-shirt proclaimed The Royal Estate, so majestic it was. An architectural masterpiece houses the obligatory restaurant, café and gift shop, all a cut above those found elsewhere. The grounds are a bringing-together of woods, gardens and walks, each with a theme, even one for winter, and all exquisitely designed and maintained. The garden is a haven for the enthusiast and the casual visitor needing to relax. We finished with a cream tea that fitted the lavish surroundings.

Our thanks go as ever to Iain for organising, at a price that could not be bettered, and seeing us round and in and out, and to Janet, our caring, patient and imperturbable driver in face of whatever the motorways present. Particularly Iain, who came down the day before to plan a route for the coach as the road between two pick-up points was closed.



Windsor Boat



Windsor trip Savill Gardens

14:19