October 2016

Dear Member

Three quarters of the year has gone and what strange weather the country has been experiencing over the past weeks. Beryl (Paine) and I went on a Shearings Coach holiday to North-west Scotland. Bearing in mind the wet and cold weather Scotland had been enduring, we went prepared for all eventualities. We could not believe our luck. For the five days that we were there we had continuous sunshine and temperatures in the early 20 degrees. We were in a lovely hotel with our room overlooking the bay. Good company – 47 of us – and an excellent, humorous driver. A lovely week. Do send us accounts of holidays that you have enjoyed.

Belatedly we learned that Marion and Dave Pank celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary in June. However, flowers and belated congratulations were sent from the Association.

As reported in our last newsletter, Professor Peston (Lord Peston of Mile End) died in April in the 50th anniversary year of the Department of Economics which he founded. A Peston Chair of Economics is to be funded in his name.

Welcome to new member, Jim Emerson, who joined the Association recently, previously Physics Department/School of Mathematical Sciences/School of Physics and Astronomy. We look forward to welcoming him to our events.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held this year in the Robert Tong Room on Wednesday 26th October 2016, 10 am for 10.30 am start. Finish by 12 noon. After the meeting we will adjourn for lunch somewhere near to College. An agenda is attached, minutes of the last meeting having been previously distributed.

BERYL PAINE WRITES: I had three shows in mind that I wanted to book: “Funny Girl”, “How the Other Half Loves” and “The Go-Between” but all three will be closed by mid-October. However, the Carole King musical “Beautiful” at the Aldwych Theatre has been recommended by a few people. Carole King is a singer/song writer. One of her songs is “It might as well rain until September”. I do hope the show appeals to you as I have booked seats for the matinee at 2.30 pm on Tuesday 15th November. Cost is £29.50 per person (normal cost £78.50). Please return the attached slip, together with remittance, to reach me no later than 17th October.

Please make a note that our get-together for Christmas lunch will be on Wednesday 7th December. Full details with menu will be sent nearer the date.

Subscriptions were due on 1st October. Many of you pay two, three or more years at a time but if your name is on the attached list, your payment of £5 per year is now due.
BERYL RYAN WRITES: THE LOST PALACE OF WHITEHALL EXPERIENCE, TUESDAY 26th JULY 2016: A group of 15 FSA members and guests met at the Banqueting House in Whitehall to experience a very different and interesting digital age tour covering the site of what was once the Palace of Whitehall.

The Banqueting House is the only surviving building of what was once the largest palace in Europe. We were equipped with earphones and what I can only describe as something looking like a metronome which was hung around our necks. This piece of equipment enabled us to access 3D sound and various other very new technological advances. I can only describe it as having your own personal tour guide. I must say that quite a lot of people around that area looked at us with much curiosity, wondering what on earth we were doing! Nevertheless, it was an extremely unusual walk and because of our accessories we were told and experienced a great deal of the history of what was the largest royal residence for the Tudor and Stuart courts, taking us from the Banqueting House, past the Ministry of Defence and right the way around the back of the Banqueting House and then back into Whitehall almost directly opposite Horseguards Parade.

We then crossed over to the other side of the road and made our way through what was once the Holbein Gate, through Horseguards parade, where some of us stopped to experience a jousting match, courtesy of our equipment, whilst other members opted for a cock fight.

Towards the end of our tour and whilst making our way back to the Banqueting Hall we experienced through our earphones what was meant to be the heartbeat of King Charles I whilst he was taken to the scaffold where he met his untimely death. There is a plaque above the door of Banqueting Hall where he was executed.

We then went up to view the Ruben’s ceiling which is really lovely. I did note that only one of our group ventured to sit down on one of the bean bags provided, allowing a better viewing position. I think that at our age the fear of not being able to get up again may have been a deciding factor!

Altogether a very, very different experience and what proved to be a really good tour, once we became accustomed to the equipment provided.

From the Banqueting House we walked up the Strand to the Strand Palace Hotel to have a carvery lunch which was excellent.

BERYL RYAN

Yours sincerely

Sheila Fenn
Hon Secretary