

# STOW & DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY

## PROGRAMME

2019 – 2020

Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2019

*“The Great Fire of Warwick” – Dr. Gillian White*

We have all heard about the Great Fire of London – but last month saw the 325<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Warwick’s own calamitous event when much of the city centre was devastated by a great fire. Dr. Gillian White, part-time lecturer at Oxford and Leicester Universities, tells the story of the 1694 fire and of the relief effort that followed and will also explore the architecture of the rebuilt Warwick, designed to be the most modern, desirable and fashionable town in the whole of the Midlands. This is a story of crisis, efficiency and elegance, told largely in the words of the people who were actually there

November 2019 - date to be confirmed - “Autumn Lunch”- Wyck Hill House Hotel, nr Stow

Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> November 2019

*“Last Supper in Pompeii” – Dr. Paul Roberts*

We’re really thrilled to welcome Dr. Paul Roberts, Keeper of Antiquities and Curator of the current “Last Supper in Pompeii” exhibition at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. Dr. Roberts’ exhibition celebrates the Roman love affair with food and drink – a journey from fields and vineyards to markets and shops, from tables and toilets to the tomb. Dr. Roberts is a very entertaining speaker not to be missed and it will be fascinating to learn how he managed to persuade museums from Naples and Pompeii to let him have on loan many of their objects for his exhibition, many of which have never before left the country.

Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020

*“Sezincote House and Gardens” – Jacqueline Martin*

Sezincote is unique! At the heart of a traditional, family-run estate covering 4,500 acres of local Cotswold countryside stands a 200-year old Mogul Indian palace set in a romantic landscape of temples, grottoes, waterfalls and canals reminiscent of the Taj Mahal. Our speaker knows the property extremely well and will explain how Sezincote developed and was credited with influencing the design by the Prince Regent of the Brighton Pavilion. We have also organised a private guided tour of this remarkable House and Gardens later in the summer

Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

*“When Life was Nasty, Brutish and Short” – Derek Taylor*

We’re delighted to welcome our Vice-President, respected author and local historian Derek Taylor who will transport us back to the late Middle Ages when life for the common people was hard. In the countryside, it was all ‘obeying, praying and paying.’ In towns, the narrow streets were fraught with danger – from fire, disease, savage dogs and a crime rate that would outdo present-day Chicago! However, as Derek will reveal ..... folk still had some fun!

Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020 – Spring Quiz – St. Edward’s Hall

May 2020 – Visit to Birmingham Back to Backs

Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – A.G.M. – please note this starts at 7.30 p.m. immediately followed by our talk:-

*“William Gill – Victorian Explorer and Spy” – Tony Hadland*

After unexpectedly inheriting a huge fortune Gill became a self-financed explorer and intelligence officer travelling to Tibet and China and helped negotiate the border between Turkey and Russia after the Crimean War. Later in Egypt Gill went undercover again being sent, disguised as an Arab, to cut the telegraph lines from Constantinople to Alexandria – when his cover was blown. Our local speaker is Gill’s great-great-nephew and tells the fascinating story of this courageous and very Victorian character.

July 2020 – Visit to Sezincote House and Gardens and Gordon Russell Design Museum, Broadway

**\*\*\* Regular theatre & opera trips throughout the year – dates to be advised \*\*\***

*All Meetings in St. Edward’s Hall, Stow: start from 7.00 p.m.*

[www.stowcivicsociety.co.uk](http://www.stowcivicsociety.co.uk)