



February 2018 Newsletter

On the Right Track



On Tuesday February 20 at 7 for 7.30pm at The Manor House, Church Enstone there will be a talk about the most famous train in the world: the Orient Express. The speaker will be Anthony Lambert the author of a wide range of books on railways and travel who has recently written one about the Orient Express. Anthony will be



discussing how the train was built and the people behind it, both those responsible for its creation and operation and the well heeled passengers. A number of members have already signed up for this, but as space is limited, please contact Anne Francis (who is now back from her travels) to be added to the list.

Keeping House the Medieval Way



Serving 16,500 meals a year was just part of the lifestyle of a rich young widow in fifteenth century East Anglia. The life of a household in the year 1412/3 was brought vividly to life in great and fascinating detail in the talk given to the society on January 23 by member ffiona Perigrinor. ffiona had



researched the household records of Alice de Bryene when she wrote her book *The Medieval Gentlewoman*. ffiona said, as a widow, Alice's life was more prominent and visible than it would have been when overshadowed by a husband. Household members, guests and their horses were all catered for; often there were 8 for breakfast, 18 for the late morning major meal of the day and 18 for supper which might on occasions be held in her bedchamber rather than the great hall. She brewed her own ale, ordered an extensive variety of fish for the three fish days a week, rabbits were bred in specially dug burrows in the garden for meat and fur, and beef, pork and lamb roasted on spits in the

kitchen. Her guests brought gossip, stories, a description of the coronation of Henry V, music and amusement at New Year, details of her extensive scattered properties and the churches of which she was patron. Alice was married at 15 in 1375 and had two daughters. Her husband died when she was about 24 in Spain on a military expedition. Even in those days, according to the French chronicler Froissart, the English behaved ill in Spain indulging in a surfeit of wine and flavoured food and going naked on the beaches. With many men dying of the Black Death, the period was known as the golden age of women and Alice seemed to have led a gilded life dying at the age of 75 years.

Hanging Garden

Those who attended Stephanie Dalby (check) talk on the Hanging Garden of Babylon might be interested in hearing her talk on More4 in early January by following this link: [tp://www.channel4.com/programmes/finding-babylons-hanging-garden/on-demand/57895-001](http://www.channel4.com/programmes/finding-babylons-hanging-garden/on-demand/57895-001).

Oxfordshire Remembers

The second of two displays commemorating the 100th anniversary of the First World War for Oxfordshire continues at Woodstock's Soldiers of Oxfordshire museum until 2 December. The exhibition features stories of Oxfordshire's VC winners, women and children at war. Not only covering these stories from 1917 to Armistice Day, sections will explore how life continued to be affected for so many long after the war ended. The exhibition documents the lives of people at war through their photographs and personal possessions. Many of these stories are being told, and the items being seen publicly, for the first time. Emphasis is placed on The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, the Oxfordshire Yeomanry and significant events in which they were involved. Men from outside the county fought with these regiments, while many Oxfordshire men served in other units of the British Forces and their stories are also included.

Subscriptions

Membership secretary Tim Henry reminds members who have not yet paid that subscriptions for 2018 are now due. Send £15 per person to Tim at The Cottage, Oxford Road, Enstone OX7 4LG.

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Anne Francis, Hon. Secretary 01608 678820 / annefrancis1@gmail.com

Diary Dates:

Tuesday February 20, 7 for 7.30pm at the Manor House, Church Enstone, Anthony Lambert will be talking about the Orient Express.

Tuesday March 20, 7 for 7.30pm at the Old Vicarage, Church Enstone Harry Sidebottom author of fictional books on ancient warfare and tutor in ancient history at Oxford will talk about ancient warfare as the background to his books.