

# Institute of Physics – London & South East Branch – Retired Members Section

## REMS Goes to Covent Garden on Tuesday 26 September 2017

This visit has been organised by Tony Colclough and guide Tina Hodgkinson.

This professionally guided walk explores Covent Garden, one of the most popular parts of London's West End, renowned for being a place of entertainment with its famous theatres and colourful street performers.



By Royal\_Opera\_House-Covent\_Garden-London.jpg: Yair Haklaiderivative work: SilkTork (talk) - Royal\_Opera\_House-Covent\_Garden-London.jpg, CC BY-SA 3.0,

**Description:** The walk starts at its elegant Piazza, which was laid out in the 1630s, and today is home to markets, shops and restaurants. We will see the original part of the complex that still survives. Today the area is well known as being London's Theatre Land. This dates back to the 1660s when Charles II reopened the theatres after the Civil War and granted licences to the Theatre Royal Drury Lane and the Covent Garden Theatre, which was the forerunner to the Royal Opera House (shown). We will see both of these on the tour. The Theatre Royal Drury Lane is one of the largest theatres in London. It specialises in staging musical performances and is reputedly London's most haunted theatre.

We will view the Royal Opera House, the adjacent Royal Ballet School and the Bridge of Aspiration which connects the two buildings. Along the way we will hear tales of actors, authors and royalty which have a connection with the area.

We escape the crowds to visit its less well known quarters as we explore its back streets and alleyways, some of which have a real Dickensian feel to them. We will also visit a small park, which was a former graveyard, and which has retained its mortuary building. We will pass the famous Garrick Club, a private gentlemen's club, which has many famous actors among its members, London's oldest restaurant and the shop where Sherlock Holmes went to buy his map in *The Hounds of The Baskervilles*. We shall discover why a former police station changed its lights from blue to white at Queen Victoria's request.



By Henry Kellner - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=35232306>

The tour will end at the Salisbury pub, a typical Victorian gin palace, with a magnificent interior of etched glass and mahogany. There is an opportunity to visit much else in the area after lunch including the Transport Museum: see Costs below.



**Where and when to meet:** Assemble at 10:30 for an 11:00 start at the Upper Deck Café, London Transport Museum, Covent Garden Piazza, London WC2E 7BB (first floor above the shop). We finish at Café in the Crypt, St Martin in the Fields, Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 4JJ or The Salisbury, 90 St Martin's Lane, WC2N 4AP

**Getting there:** go to Covent Garden or Leicester Square underground station on the Piccadilly line.

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**Lunch:** in the Crypt of St Martin's in the Fields

**Timetable (times approx)**

10:30 – 11:00 Assemble at the Upper Deck Café, London Transport Museum

11:00 – 13:00 Guided tour of Covent Garden

13:30 – 15:00 Lunch in the Crypt of St Martin's

15:00 Free exploration of Covent Garden, Leicester Sq, Trafalgar Sq and environs.

**Size of party:** 25 max

**Cost** £15.00 Members pay for their own food and travel.

Entry to the Transport Museum for those who wish to visit is extra: £15.00 concessionary ticket or £13.50 if purchased ahead on line (check on <http://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/visit/plan-your-visit/opening-times-and-tickets> )

**Contacts** Before the day: contact Tony Colclough at [tonycolclough@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:tonycolclough@tiscali.co.uk) or on 020 8398 0766. On the day: call 07930 171 307.

**Late arrivals:** Call Tony on 07930 171 307 who will advise you to catch up with the programme.