

Institute of **Physics**

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH REMS SECTION

WATERMEN'S HALL and St JOHN'S GATE

MONDAY 5 November 2007

This visit has been organised by George Freeman

The Company of Watermen and Lightermen was established by Act of Parliament in 1555 to control the Watermen on the River Thames responsible for the movement of goods and passengers. Indeed it remains the only ancient City Guild to be formed and controlled by Act of Parliament.

Until January 2007 the Company licensed the Watermen and Lightermen working on the River Thames, the former being concerned with passenger transport and the latter with the carriage of goods. The young Freeman and apprentices of the Company are eligible to participate in the Doggett's Coat and Badge Race, run by the Fishmongers Company, which has been held annually since 1715. This gruelling boat race is held each July and goes along the river from London Bridge to Chelsea. The winner has the honour of wearing the scarlet coat, breeches and silver arm badge that are based on the original costume of an eighteenth century Watermen.

The present Hall dates back to 1780 and remains the only Georgian Hall in the City of London. It was designed by William Blackburn and is a perfect example of eighteenth century domestic architecture.

The Hall was extended in 1983 to include a more substantial dining and meeting facility, the Freeman's Room, which blends in perfectly with the intimate atmosphere of the Court Room, the Silver Room and Parlour to form a suite of rooms that are both elegant and adaptable to modern day requirements.

www.watermenshall.org

The **Order of St John** was a Holy Order fighting for the faith in the near East and tending the wounded and exhausted pilgrims in Jerusalem.

After a brief stay in Cyprus and 200 years of sovereignty on Rhodes, the Order settled on Malta in 1530. The Priory of the Knights Hospitallers in England was founded at the beginning of the 12th Century in Clerkenwell, London. The Norman Crypt, an impressive Tudor Gatehouse and some remains of the 16th century Priory Church remind today's visitors of the importance and wealth of the order.

Following its ancient tradition of charity and hospitality, the modern Order of St John runs two charities: The Eye Hospital in Jerusalem and St John Ambulance.

We will be shown around the medieval buildings and be told of the history and the development into what it is today.

The museum will be open for us to visit before or after the tour.

www.sja.org.uk/museum

MEET outside Watermen's Hall at the corner of Lower Thames Street and St Mary at Hill. Cloakrooms and toilets are available. Those wanting coffee before the start will find several coffee bars along East Cheap or near the Tower of London.

The nearest underground station is the Monument but Tower Hill and London Bridge are not very far away.

Late joiners go straight to Watermen's Hall, 16 St Mary at Hill.

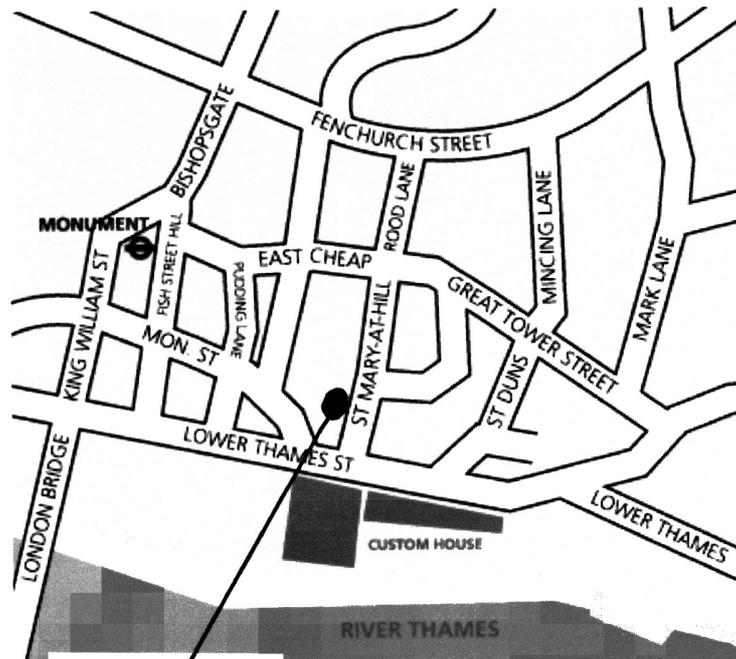
Coffee will be served at the end of the tour at about 12.00

After the tour we will take the underground to the Barbican station. Those who wish to can walk there (bring an AtoZ with you).

LUNCH will be taken in one of the many cafes and pubs in West Smithfield, eg Carluccio's, Blue's Café (sandwich bar), Butchers' Hook and Cleaver Ale and Pie House, or picnic.

Re-assemble outside the Butchers' Hook and Cleaver Ale and Pie House.

10.15 – 10.30	Meet outside Watermen's Hall, toilets
10.30 – 12.00	Introduction and tour of hall
12.00 – 12.30	Coffee
12.45 – 13.15	Train to West Smithfield (Monument to Barbican)
13.15 – 14.15	Lunch; Re-assemble outside the Butchers' Hook and Cleaver
14.20 – 14.30	Walk to St John's Gate
14.30 – 16.00	Tour of St John's Gate and museum/shop



Watermen's Hall

COSTS

£14 per person Maximum 30 people.

Lunch and tea at cost.

CONTACTS

Prior to visit – Reinalt Vaughan-Williams - reinalt@physics.org

On morning of visit only – George Freeman 07941 916 944

CONTACTS

(Not for publication)

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www.sja.org.uk/museum

COSTS

Watermen's Hall
£9 per person; cheque on day
Phone with numbers

Order of St John
£5 per person; cheque on day.
Phone two weeks ahead with numbers
If more than 20 then we will be split into two parties.