

**Lincoln's Inn and Sir John Soane's Museum
on Thursday 16 July 2009**

This visit has been organised by Robert Thorne.

Lincoln's Inn

Lincoln's Inn is one of the four Inns of Court, which are ancient unincorporated bodies of lawyers having for five centuries the power to call to the Bar those of their members who have duly qualified for the rank or degree of Barrister-in-Law. They have the authority to disbar or otherwise punish acts of misconduct; such actions are exercised very infrequently.

In modern times, much of the initial training for candidates for membership of the Bar and for disciplinary matters have been carried out by joint bodies of the four Inns – Lincoln's Inn, Inner Temple, Middle Temple and Grays Inn – all of which remain distinct and friendly rivals, each with its own property, duties and functions.

Lincoln's Inn formal records go back continuously to 1422, nearly 80 years earlier than any of the other Inns. The oldest surviving structures at the Inn are the Gatehouse on Chancery Lane (1518) and the Old Hall (1489-92). The coats of arms of benchers, who served as treasurer from 1680 onwards, are contained in the New Chapel. In 1845, the Great Hall, Council Rooms for the Benchers and the new library were opened.

The tour, conducted by James Dewar, the Assistant Under Treasurer, includes visits to the Great Hall, Old Hall and Library with briefings on the history of the Inn, on each art work in the buildings and on the current operation of the Inn with respect to recruiting, educating and administering barristers.

Tea and coffee will be provided on arrival in the Benchers Room.

Sir John Soane's Museum

Sir John Soane (1753-1817) was one of England's greatest architects. A number of the architectural masterpieces (e.g. the Bank of England, Dulwich Picture Gallery and part of the Royal Hospital Chelsea), which he designed, can still be visited today. In 1792, he bought and rebuilt No 12 Lincoln's Inn Fields as his family home. Twenty years later, he moved into No 13, where he designed a sequence of rooms to demonstrate how an architect could combine light, space and decoration to create the 'poetry of architecture'. Here he displayed his collection of paintings, sculpture, architectural models and diverse artefacts including the Egyptian sarcophagus of Seti 1, which was excavated from the Valley of the Kings of Egypt in 1817.

After his wife's death in 1815, Soane devoted himself to the expansion and improvements to the Museum – a course of action, which has continued to the present day.

In 1833, he had a private Act of Parliament passed bequeathing his house and Museum to the nation on his death on the condition that they were preserved in an unaltered state.

The visit will commence with introductory talks by members of the curatorial staff in the Library – Dining Room. Members will then be able to explore the exhibits, etc. in the many locations in their own time. The geography of the place prohibits a meaningful organised tour.

Timetable

10:30 – 10:45	Meet at the Main Gate to the Inn in Serle Street
10:45 – 12:45	Tour of Lincoln's Inn
13:00 – 14:30	Lunch
14:30 onwards	The Soane Museum at 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields

Late arrivals should contact the Inn's gatekeeper, who should be able to give information on the whereabouts of the party.

Lunch can be taken at several restaurants, etc. in the area. We hope to send a list of some suitable places to those members, who are on the visit.

Costs for the day will be £10. This includes the guides.

Getting there. The nearest underground stations are Chancery Lane and Holborn.

