

The Jacobean



Introduction

Edward Wilson founded Wilson's School in Camberwell in 1615, with the Royal Charter signed by James I. Our connection to this historic area of what is now inner London is something that The Jacobean seeks to celebrate. London is one of the greatest cities of the world but it is not always easy to appreciate its magic as a resident. Yet, as Samuel Johnson said:

"Why, Sir, you find no man, at all intellectual, who is willing to leave London. No, Sir, when a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford."

This programme of talks and visits offers you the chance to enjoy a memorable, immersive experience of something and somewhere unique to this city. Each of the events below involves a talk, a visit, and the opportunity to discuss and debate what you learn in a small group.

The **Jacobean** talks will take place during autumn term.

Mr T Lissimore

Extraordinary Londoners (Highgate Cemetery)

Highgate Cemetery has been the final resting place for nearly 170,000 Londoners over the last 150 years and since its very first day in 1879 has been the subject of rumour and speculation. Among the imposing Gothic tombs lie the gravestones of an eclectic range of famous Londoners, including philosopher & revolutionary socialist Karl Marx, sci-fi author Douglas Adams, 19th Century novelist George Eliot and famous criminal Adam Worth (the possible inspiration for Sherlock Holmes' nemesis, Professor Moriarty). This session explores the origins of the cemetery and the extraordinary lives of some of its most notable occupants, as well as examining the truth behind the rumours that surround it.

You will learn:

- **How & why some of London's most famous residents came to be buried together in one cemetery.**
- **The major contributions made to public life by some of its most notable occupants.**
- **Why Highgate cemetery was mired in scandal in the 1970s.**

In exploring the East Cemetery you will discover more of the real person behind each of these notable names and experience for yourself the atmosphere of intrigue which surrounds the cemetery to this day.



Sleeping Angel, Highgate Cemetery, London


Brutalism Experience (The Barbican)

Built between 1965-1982 the Barbican Complex is perhaps London's most famous example of brutalist architecture. Exposed concrete, tall towers and elevated walkways are all hallmarks of this style, but while many brutalist housing blocks are reviled (or have already been demolished – like the ones on the Roundshaw Estate), the Barbican is a much-loved London landmark, with 4,000 very proud residents. The estate includes a large arts centre and several schools, all clustered around man-made lakes and fountains.

You will learn:

- **Why many architects during the twentieth century chose to embrace concrete and the brutalist style.**
- **Why some brutalist projects succeeded and others failed.**
- **What might be considered successful about the Barbican (as well as what is widely considered disastrous!).**

In standing at the heart of the City of London, you will also learn a little more about the broader history of this area, including why the area in which the Barbican now stands was virtually unprotected by air raid wardens and left to burn to the ground during World War II.



The Barbican, London

Catholicism in England (Westminster Cathedral)

After two centuries of persecution and discrimination, the Roman Catholic Relief Act 1829 granted Catholics in Britain almost equal rights. In 1850 the pope restored the Catholic hierarchy, giving England its own Catholic bishops again. Around 50,000 so-called 'recusants' (from English families who had remained loyal to the Roman Catholic Church) joined with large numbers of Irish immigrants, to restore formal Catholic congregations across the country. During the twentieth century, there have been some high-profile figures (particularly in Politics and the Arts) who have converted to Catholicism, including former prime minister Tony Blair.

You will learn:

- **How and why discrimination against Catholics continued deep into the nineteenth century.**
- **The theological differences between Catholicism and Protestantism that persist in causing controversy (indulgences, purgatory, saints, etc.) – with special guest, Bishop Paul Hendricks to help explain!**
- **The role that Westminster Cathedral played in restoring the place of Catholicism in England.**

In exploring Westminster Cathedral, you will learn how the architect (John Francis Bentley) used the neo-Byzantine style to create a distinctive centre for British Catholicism.



Westminster Cathedral, London

The Perilous Question: The Evolution of Democracy (Westminster)

British parliamentary democracy evolved over many centuries. During the same time France, Russia and most of Europe experienced multiple revolutions. The consequences of these ranged from war to massive ideological shifts. Why were we spared such potentially dramatic events? We will explore how evolutionary political change in Britain was possible and why it should be celebrated today.

You will learn:

- **About the changes in the ways the British value democracy (a word too radical to utter in 1832).**
- **The key events in our history that helped us avoid a more radical change.**
- **The role played by parliament in our lives today.**

By exploring parts of historic London, you will learn how many of these events are still represented by the buildings of today.



Humours of an Election, Hogarth

Caravaggio: Saint and Sinner (National Gallery)

Dead at just 38, how do we reconcile Caravaggio - a tempestuous murderer and drunkard brawler - with the disturbing beauty of his paintings and his significant influence on artists and film makers in the present day? Whatever else, Caravaggio the man and his work are all about tensions. As a contemporary said of one of his paintings, *"In this painting there are but vulgarity, sacrilege, impiousness and disgust...One would say it is a work made by a painter that can paint well, but of a dark spirit, and who has been for a lot of time far from God, from His adoration, and from any good thought."* Yet Caravaggio's paintings were then and are now considered among the greatest and most beautiful works of religious painting from the early Baroque period.

You will learn:

- **About how Caravaggio achieved seeming photographic realism centuries before the invention of photography.**
- **To understand the work of the artist within the context of his own troubled life.**
- **The extent to which Caravaggio's work marked a revolution in art that still echos to this day.**

Visiting the National Gallery, you will come face-to-face with 3 of Caravaggio's extraordinary paintings. In addition, you will have the opportunity to view iconic and priceless works of art and to consider the development of western painting and some of its key themes and genres.



Supper at Emmaus, National Gallery, London

Constitution in Crisis? (Houses of Parliament)

On 11 December 1936, Edward VIII broadcast to the nation his intention to abdicate as King and Emperor. This momentous event was precipitated by his request to marry Wallis Simpson, an American who had divorced her first husband and the subsequent refusal of the Government and the Empire to grant him permission. Seventy years later, HRH Prince of Wales married the then Camilla Parker-Bowles, with both parties having been both married and divorced with Government assent and without him having to renounce his claim to the throne. This session explores how two comparable situations have been handled very differently, despite the absence of change to our (unwritten) constitution.

You will learn:

- **How and why King Edward VIII's request caused a constitutional crisis, including a range of political and societal objections.**
- **Possible reasons for the changes in attitudes demonstrated by HRH Prince Charles' marriage in 2006 .**

In exploring the House of Commons, where in 1936 debate raged about the future of the monarchy, you will consider the role of a constitution monarchy.



Wallis Simpson and The Duke of Windsor