

Institute of Physics

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH REMS SECTION

Visits to Windsor Castle and Eton College Thursday 1st May 2003

This visit has been organised by Robert Thorne

Windsor Castle is the largest inhabited castle in the world and is the oldest royal residence to have remained in continuous use by the monarchs of Britain. The Castle's dramatic site encapsulates 900 years of British history and is in many ways an architectural summary of the history of the nation. Its magnificent State Rooms and works of art reflect the tastes of successive kings and queens following those of William I, who started the development of the site in 1070 by constructing an artificial mound surrounded by a stockade. This mound now supports the Round Tower built by Henry II and separates two quadrant shaped building complexes or "courts". The court to the west of the Tower is known as the Lower wand and contains the magnificent St. George's Chapel. In the upper wand to the east of the Tower are the State Apartments, the heart of the working palace, which are used for ceremonial and official occasions. Other areas open to the public include the Precincts, Castle Exhibition, The Gallery and Queen Mary's Dolls' House. The Guard change, currently the Grenadiers, takes place at 11.00

Photography is allowed in the grounds but not in the buildings.

Eton College is one of the oldest schools in the country. It is Britain's largest public and most exclusive boarding school. Founded in 1440 by Henry VII for 70 boys of high ability; it was financed by a fund endowed by the King. Simultaneously Henry founded King's College Cambridge to which scholars from Eton were to proceed. This connection has survived over the centuries and currently 24 scholarships are reserved for Etonians.

Today as throughout the school's history there are 70 King's scholars or "Collegers" who are boarded in special quarters. Entry is based on competitive examination open to 13-year-old boys. In addition there are about 1200 other pupils known as "Oppidans" and distributed in a number of boarding houses.

The guided tour includes School Yard, Upper School, College Chapel, College Hall, Cloister Court, the museum of Eton Life and the Brewhouse Gallery. The accompanying commentary covers not only a description of the surroundings but also an insight into the history of the college and the activities of the school since its foundation to the present day. In recognition that is a residential academic establishment and that the visit is during term time it is important to respect the privacy of staff and students. With the exception of the College Chapel and Museum of Eton Life photography is allowed.

We would aim to meet in the entrance hall of the Windsor Riverside Station by 10.30. There are near by long-term car parks. A map will be provided.

The programme is:

- 10.15 – 10.30 Assemble at the Windsor Riverside Station
- 10.40 – 12.40 Visit to Windsor Castle
- 12.50 – 13.45 Pub lunch at the Crown and Cushion Eton High Street
- 14.00- 16.00 Visit to Eton College starts at the School Office.

The total cost per person is £12.00 and the number is limited to 20