

SOCIETY OUTING

The Dover Society trip to Chartwell

SATURDAY 13th JULY 2013

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Our journey to Chartwell was quite eventful, with an accident on the M20 and a delay of some 40 minutes. I contacted Chartwell to let them know we would be later than expected, they advised us to take an alternative route due to a burst water main. This route turned out to be a very narrow, windy "B" road. Our driver was very patient, as cars squeezed past us in the opposite direction he took all the verbal abuse directed at him by the car drivers. Then as we thought we were getting somewhere we met up with the KCC Highways who were tarmac-ing the road. The coach had to wait whilst the cars were being directed in both directions past us, once again the driver took all the verbal abuse. After another long wait, we were eventually on our way.

Chartwell was the family home of Sir Winston Churchill from 1924 until his death in 1965. The house and its associated 80 acres were purchased for £5,000.

The rooms remain much as they were when he lived here, with pictures, books and personal mementoes taking pride of place. The hillside gardens reflect Churchill's love of the landscape and nature.



Chartwell House Gardens © Alan Sencicle

As it was a beautiful day, people were able to enjoy a wander around the gardens where there is so much to see, the wonderful Lady Churchill's Rose Garden, the Golden Rose Walk and the Butterfly House and Walk for those who wanted a bit of exercise. One is also allowed to picnic by the Lakes, created by Churchill himself. The Kitchen Garden (some of the produce is served in the restaurant) and the Marycot, a playhouse created especially for the youngest Churchill daughter are also worth a visit. Situated in the garden is Churchill's Art Studio where hang many of his own paintings. The brick wall surrounding the kitchen garden was built between the years 1925 and 1932 by Churchill.

For the walkers, there is a beautiful five

mile circular walk through the estate, linking Emmetts and Chartwell, and, the Octavia Hill trail.

The site of Chartwell has changed many times since the Middle Ages. In the late 18th century it was used as a foundling house, a home for deserted children. It provided gardening and farm work for



Chartwell Pond © Alan Sencicle

the occupants. It was known as Well Street and wasn't called Chartwell until the mid 19th century taking its name from the Chart Well, a spring feeding the uppermost of the series of ponds to the north of the house. The word Chart is Old English for a rough common overgrown with gorse, broom and bracken. At the core of the present Chartwell are the remains of a 16th century house with substantial roof timbers and storey heights.

One quote from Churchill 'History will be kind to me, for I intend to write it'. He wrote 43 books, including a six volume account of the Second World War. In addition to his historical and political books he also wrote one novel, *Savrola*, published in 1900.

Chartwell was passed to the National Trust in 1966 after Churchill's death.



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