

Welford and Weston Local History Society

www.welfordandweston.org.uk

Newsletter 76 – January 11th, 2022

'Corsets and Codpieces – Tudor Underwear'

A talk by Nic Fulcher

28 January 2022, at 7:30 pm

We have probably all seen portraits of Elizabethan men and women and marvelled at the elaborate outfits they are wearing. But what is actually going on under all of that silk, satin and velvet? How many layers are there? How long did ladies take to dress? How did the codpiece come into use? Was it used with breeches, doublets and hose? What was worn in the summer months? Could one wear anything without causing offence? Were undergarments an essential element in achieving the desired overall effect? Was fashion driving Elizabethan dress?

Join Nic Fulcher on Friday the 28th January 2022 for a light-hearted journey exploring the wee-hidden world of Tudor underwear.



Nic Fulcher developed an interest in historical costume while studying Renaissance theatre and is fascinated by the ways in which particular fashions alter the natural shape of the human body. During his career as a curator working in museums and historic houses, who until recently worked for the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, he has continued to undertake research into the form and construction of historical garments. Nic was with the Trust from 2013 and had been responsible for the delivery of a number of projects. This included the ambitious re-imagining of the site of New Place; Shakespeare's adult family home in the centre of Stratford-upon-Avon. Prior to joining the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, he was the curator of Leeds Castle, Kent, where he was responsible for the preservation and conservation of the buildings and significant collections of furniture, textiles and documents as well as decorative and fine art.

Your committee has a clear and consistent policy on how our meetings should be held. This policy is that our meetings should preferably be held in the Memorial Hall when practically safe to do so. An additional online Zoom, hybrid, option will be offered whilst there is a reasonable demand from members who, for whatever reasons, prefer to join the meeting from home. If it is judged unsafe to hold a meeting in the Memorial Hall, it will be offered online only via Zoom.

Your Committee has decided, after much discussion, that the January meeting should be available by remote viewing only, using Zoom. This was not an easy decision to make, especially after the successful launch of the hybrid approach at our last meeting in November. So what's changed since November, which has forced this decision.

Well for one, the highly transmissible Omicron variant of the virus, which was not around then, is currently widespread in the country, and although it seems to be past the peak in London, appears to be still accelerating in the rest of the country. Whilst the impact of this variant, in terms of severity of illness, likelihood of hospitalisation and even death is not as great as it was with the Delta variant we experienced this time last year, your committee felt we should take into consideration the age demographic of our Society, in making this decision. This variant is still able to infect a 70 year old who has been triply jabbed, and we didn't want to risk that happening on our watch in the Memorial Hall, especially when a Zoom alternative was readily available.

The other thing that's changed since our November meeting, are the guidelines for gatherings in community centres, including Village Halls. The latest guidance, updated 10th December, states that the wearing of a face covering is now a statutory requirement for meetings such as ours, in the Memorial Hall. In addition to wearing a mask, the Covid-19 briefing of 16th December states that the need for adequate ventilation is paramount in such settings. This means that the windows of the Hall would need to be left open for the duration of the meeting, which on a cold winter's night in January would be a bleak prospect indeed. I have soft copies of both these documents should you want to see them.

We have therefore taken the decision, in order to mitigate these risks, and avoid these inconveniences, to make the January meeting Zoom only. I'm really sorry if that is a disappointment to you. It is to me too. But I think it is the correct decision. Those of you who know me, will know that I'm generally an optimist (though some football and cricket results recently have shaken that feeling), and I am looking forward to the situation changing sufficiently, so that we will be able to offer the dual hybrid approach for our next meeting in March.

Some admin for the talk.....

You will receive an email from Karen Dickinson, inviting you to join this meeting about a week before the meeting itself. This email is being sent to all members. Please check in your junk folder if you don't receive it. At the time of writing this newsletter, we have a membership of 117. Thank you for joining the Society.

***On the evening** of the talk you will be able to join the meeting from 19:00. The talk itself will start at 19:30. If you are fairly new to Zoom I would encourage you to join the meeting early, so that if you experience a problem, you'll have time to call Howard Francioni (on 07454 815345), and get it sorted out before the talk starts at 19:30.*

If this is your first Zoom meeting, and you would like the opportunity of going over the basic functions of Zoom ahead of the meeting, you should contact Karen Dickinson (on 07970 179821) or Howard Francioni (on 07454 815345).

We look forward to welcoming you to what promises to be another great talk.

Kind regards,

Brad Plimmer 11th January