

IU3A Outing to Twickenham on Friday 15th June 2018

Sandycombe Lodge (Turner's house) and Ham House



Members of the Twickenham Outing in the Garden of Turners House

Twenty-three members enjoyed a day out in Twickenham visiting two very different houses. We first visited Turner's home at Sandycombe Lodge and we then crossed the river by ferry to visit Ham house, a majestic stately home.

We first assembled in the Garden of Turner's house and then split into two groups as Turner's country house could only accommodate twelve visitors at one time. One group toured the house whilst the other walked to the Coach House café in Marble Hill Park (then vice versa).

Turner's house is a relatively small compact family home that Turner designed partly for his own use but also as a home for his father. The ghost of his father was found in the kitchen area quietly smoking his pipe as he reclined in a wooden chair. The house was originally situated in countryside and from the upstairs rear bedroom it was possible to imagine the views down to the river that Turner would have enjoyed through his telescope (this vista is faithfully reproduced if one looks through the eyepiece). Each room had its own character and many of us fell in love with the house.



The Ghost of Turner's Dad



Turner's telescope



The view in Turner's day

The walk in Marble Hill Park was extremely pleasant and included a walk around Marble Hill House, a grassy knoll and a short riverside stroll. We then crossed in cohorts to the south shore of the Thames using Hammerton's ferry (£1 per person), a short walk then leading us to Ham House and Garden.



Hammerton's ferry to the South Bank



The architectural tour of Ham House

After lunch we were given an excellent architectural tour of the exterior which revealed how the varying financial fortunes of successive owners had led to periods of neglect and periods of renovation. The interior was a kaleidoscope of paintings and sumptuous decoration. One interesting feature was the large number of hidden corridors and doors used by servants. Members then made their way back to Richmond and thus to Islington, a few braving the tow path at high tide.