

# Cambridge University History Summer School, July 2019

Judy King

## Introduction

Four former History Head Teachers – Joanne Jarvis, Larissa Treskin, Dianne Hennessy and Judy King – enrolled for the Cambridge University History Summer School in July 2019. Judy had been to the same History Summer School before in 2014 with Lynne Goodwin, the former Principal of Arthur Phillip High School who died from cancer in January 2017.

Summer School Courses for one week or two weeks are also available in Literature, International Studies, Science, Mediaeval Studies, Ancient and Classical Worlds, Creative Writing and Shakespeare and the Renaissance.

Prior to attending the Summer School three of us toured Devon and Cornwall and then all four of us visited the island of Guernsey.

## Some finer details about the Summer School

We enrolled for two courses over one week. Both were excellent and we loved the thinking challenges issued throughout the lectures by excellent lecturers. Three of us selected *The Greatness of the American Presidency* and *Falling Empires, the Decline of the Old Empires in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, whilst Dianne selected the Tudor History courses *Henry VIII* and *Elizabeth I*. Each course had 5 x 90-minute lectures over the week, one each morning and one each afternoon.

As well as the designated History courses there were plenary lectures each morning which students from all History courses attended. The evening plenary lecture (usually on a current topic of international interest) was held after dinner each evening and was attended by students from all disciplines. Instead of one of the evening lectures the international students were treated to a wonderful concert in Kings College Chapel by some of the many student choirs in Cambridge.

There are cafes and lunch areas in the buildings where the lectures are held. We paid for our own lunches, but breakfast and the evening meals were provided by Selwyn College (where we stayed) and covered by our enrolment fees.

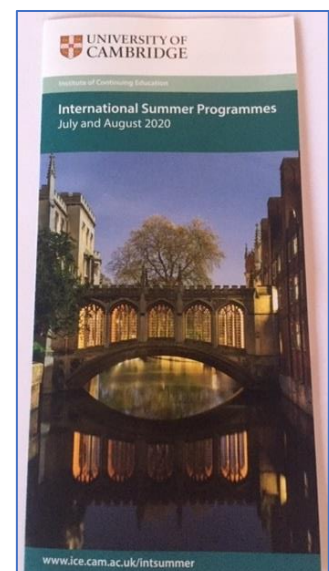
There are lots of students from Sweden, Germany, USA, Denmark and Spain so chatting to them in the lunch break is a great fun. There were a few other Australians but not many. The Americans we met had been to Cambridge 20 years running and mostly stayed for two weeks so they could do four History courses instead of two.

Students are free from 3.30-6.00 pm each afternoon and the Cambridge town, interspersed with all the residential colleges dating back to the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, is in walking distance from the lecture buildings and the colleges where the international students stay. There is so much to explore in the town and walking tours, which can be booked from the Cambridge Visitors Centre, are a great way to get a sense of the wonderful history of everything.

In addition, there are excursions for international students the weekend before or after each week of courses and these are booked and paid for separately. The excursions are listed online after the courses are advertised. Excursions in the past have included a Shakespearean play at the Globe Theatre or a tour of Windsor Castle. Excursions usually cost between £45 and £60.



L-R: Joanne, Larissa, Judy and Dianne at Cambridge



## Accommodation

We stayed in Selwyn College, Cripps Court, Grange Road, Cambridge which is a short walk from the Summer School lectures at the SIDGWICK site. International students can choose from a shortlist of colleges when they enrol. The student rooms are quite spartan. There is no air conditioning in the British summer and the rooms do not have a TV, but Wi-Fi is available. It would be important to select a room which had an ensuite bathroom. Most of the rooms are singles but some double rooms are available. Some old buildings do not have lifts.

We arrived on a Friday and stayed for two extra nights at Gonville and Caius College and paid for those two nights separately from the Summer School enrolment. Several of the colleges offer short-term stays for visitors. That way we could explore Cambridge and its surroundings for two days before the formal welcome to the Summer School on the Sunday evening. Lectures then started on the Monday and finished on the Friday.

## Tuition and Accommodation Fees

One week's tuition in July 2019 cost £800 and the accommodation at Selwyn College cost £540, so the total of £1340 pounds worked out at \$2,370 AUD, plus excursions and \$205 AUD each for the additional two nights at Gonville (single rooms) before the courses started.

Cambridge is 50 miles out of London to the north so four of us booked a hire car to take us there from Gatwick Airport. That cost \$70 AUD each, but it was a lot easier than going by coach which takes four hours and involves changing trains with luggage. Dianne booked the car before she left Australia.

## Contact details for Cambridge University Summer School

Phone + 44(0)1223760850

Don't forget to dial 0011 first if ringing from Australia. Midnight our time is a good time to ring the UK. Staff are very friendly and helpful and try to look after international students.

Email: [inteng@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:inteng@ice.cam.ac.uk)

Website: [www.ice.cam.ac.uk/intsummer](http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/intsummer)

The dates for 2020 Summer School Courses are 5<sup>th</sup> July to 15 August.

The 2020 courses are listed online now and enrolments are restricted to 25 per course. Deposits are taken now and the final amounts are payable in early May. Enrolment information is also available online now.

## Off to Cornwall and Devon before the Summer School

I was lucky enough to stay with friends for three weeks in London before our 2019 Cambridge adventure. Jo and Larissa arrived after me and the three of us travelled to Cornwall and Devon for four nights in a small tour bus with nine other people. Fortunately the Americans on board were not Trump supporters. We signed up with Rabbie's Tours and visited all the wonderful old mediaeval sites at Winchester (the ancient capital in the time of Alfred the Great), Stonehenge, Lands End and Dartmoor. We stood on the same cliff much loved by all the characters in the TV series Poldark. We actually watched the first episode in the last series of Poldark in the Cornwall hotel in July last year.



*Judy and Jo at Cornwall, right near the Poldark cliff on the Cornwall headland*

Larissa recommended Rabbie's because she had previously travelled throughout Ireland and Scotland with the same company. The tour bus departed from the Greenline coach terminal right next to Victoria station in London. Only one 15kg bag per person could fit on the small bus.

The Cornwall tour cost \$654 AUD per person and the four nights' accommodation which was paid separately at each hotel cost \$990 AUD in twin rooms.

The bus driver/guide gave very detailed historical commentaries which were much appreciated.

### **The Bailiwick of Guernsey in the Channel Islands**

After our Cornwall adventure we flew to the Channel Island of Guernsey, which was occupied by the Nazis from 1940 to 1945. Di met us at Gatwick Airport and we flew with AURIGNY airlines. The night before the flight we stayed at the Hilton London Gatwick Airport Hotel, which cost \$99 AUD each for a family room.

The flight to Guernsey takes about 70 minutes. We stayed for two nights but two days is not really long enough to absorb the very rich history of the island. We did book a walking tour which cost \$105 AUD each and it was a great way to appreciate lots of the finer points of the history which dates back to the Norman Conquest in the 11<sup>th</sup> Century. The return flight cost \$387 AUD and two nights' accommodation cost \$243 AUD per person in twin rooms.

Guernsey is not a member of the EU and laughs at the Brexit debacle. The island is a wealthy financial centre and wishes it could be French instead of English. Many Guernsey citizens own private planes and very expensive-looking yachts.

### **Our return to Australia**

We returned to Australia straight after the Summer School. Di organised another hire car from Cambridge to Heathrow (a very long drive) which cost us \$60 AUD each on the Friday evening after lectures on the last day of the courses.

We stayed in the Heathrow Ibis Styles Hotel the night before we flew to Australia, so the hire car dropped us directly at the hotel. We could then walk to the Heathrow terminal the next morning for the flight home. The driver was an Afghani and he had a great deal of trouble appreciating that four wonderful Australian women were out and about holidaying and studying without husbands or male relatives. Jo was very patient and explained our very different universe throughout the journey but I preferred to fume in silence. He missed most of the barbs directed at his view of the world from the rest of us.

### **One final thought**

After participating in the Cambridge Summer School first in 2014 and then again in 2019, I am going to check out what Summer courses Oxford University (known as 'the other place' at Cambridge) offers in 2021. Students from WEA, where I teach History in Bathurst Street in the city, told me about Cambridge Summer Programs and inspired me to sign up in 2014. I am so glad I have had the opportunity to go twice.

*Please contact me if you have any questions or would like further information.*

### **Contributor details**

Judy King (Ph. 9874 7407, Mob. 0408 218 471, E. [rghein@optushome.com.au](mailto:rghein@optushome.com.au)) 22/1/20



Judy was Principal of Beacon Hill High from 1992-1994 and then Principal of Riverside Girls High from 1995 until her retirement in 2010. During her 19 years as a Principal she was Deputy President of the SPC for many years and was the SPC nominee on the Board of Studies from 1998-2004 during the difficult years of the introduction of the 2001 HSC.

Since her retirement Judy has been teaching History and Politics at WEA at Bathurst Street in the city. Judy also does some casual work for the NSW Department of Education's School Leadership Institute. Judy is a Life Member of SPC and tweets regularly about funding justice for public schools and all social justice issues facing our nation and our fragile planet in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Twitter** @Judy RGH