



Cambridge Friends of the National Trust for Scotland

Supporting the National Trust for Scotland
Autumn 2024 programme and newsletter

3 PAGES OF
NEWS+REVIEWS

October 2024

Dear Friends,

Having assessed my personal commitments, I announced last month my decision to relinquish my role as your chairman.

Identifying a successor was discussed at our meeting on 11th September – having not received any submissions from members, the committee elected **Donald Douglas** as your new chairman and **Judy Potter** as his deputy.

Both Donald and Judy will continue in their roles of membership secretary (Donald)

and secretary (Judy) – and I will continue as treasurer of CFNTS.

We are looking for more people to join the committee – **Jim Forrest** (our invaluable 'doorman') and **Alan Freeman** have retired, while **Holly Tilbrook** wishes to spend more time looking after her young family; we are truly indebted for their many years of contributions, help and support: thank you.

Would you like to join the committee? We meet, usually via Zoom, four times a year; the only 'expertise' is being a 'doer' – helping to make meetings

happen and finding speakers. Please let Donald know – his contact details are on page two.

Our talk on **Wednesday, 23rd October** at Newnham College, 7.30 for 8.00 pm, is about James Gibbs – see below.

There's more on our autumn programme on page two (plus dates for spring 2025) – with mini-reviews of our spring 2024 talks on page three.

Tickets remain at £10.00 each (£12.00 on the door), including a glass of wine on arrival.

Jim Stewart, Treasurer

Wednesday, 23rd October / 7.30 for 8.00 pm / Newnham College
James Gibbs: The Making of an Eighteenth-century Architect
with **Dr William Aslet**, Scott Opler Fellow in Art and Architectural History, Worcester College, Oxford

James Gibbs (1682-1754) was an Aberdeen merchant's son who became one of the most influential architects of the eighteenth century working in Britain.

From the Church of St Martin's-in-the-Fields in London to the Radcliffe Camera in Oxford, he was responsible for among the best-loved buildings in some of Britain's most famous urban spaces.

Gibbs's work is well known to Cambridge residents through the Fellows' Building at King's College and the Senate House,

both of which are fragments of larger, more ambitious schemes.

Through his books, particularly the 1728 *A Book of Architecture*, Gibbs's influence spread widely, in England and beyond, with St Martin's-in-the-Fields having claim to being the single most influential Anglican church design of the eighteenth century.

This talk will focus on Gibbs' formative years to show what laid behind his remarkable success as an architect, not least his training in Rome – at that time without parallel in the Britain of his day.



Detail from Gibbs' Senate House

Autumn 2024 meeting dates**Wednesday, 23rd October**

William Aslet on James Gibbs (1682-1754), architect, born in Aberdeen. Among his many projects are the Senate House and King's College's Gibbs Building in Cambridge and St Martin-in-the-Fields, London.

Wednesday, 13th November

Lance Forman, the owner of **Forman & Sons**, the producers of high quality Scottish smoked salmon, on 120 years of smoking – and how the business his great grandfather founded has succeeded in catering for lifestyle choices, via [online selling](#).

Wednesday, 11th December

Euan Dunn MBE on puffins. Euan, retired Head of Marine Policy at the RSPB, has worked not just on puffins but also other seabirds in numerous islands around the world including the Shiant and St Kilda where he helped census the declining puffin population. In 2014 he wrote *Puffins* which distilled the knowledge of this enduringly popular seabird for a non-scientific audience.

Spring 2025 meeting dates

Wednesday, 19th February – a special event devoted to tasting Scottish cheeses; tickets will be £15.00 each.

Wednesday, 19th March

Wednesday, 16th April

Wednesday, 21st May

Where we meet...

Our regular evening meetings are at **Newnham College**, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge, CB3 9DF, at **7.30 for 8.00 pm**.

Tickets are £10.00 in advance (see below) or £12.00 cash / cheque on the door – they include a glass of wine on arrival. Raffle tickets are £5.00 / strip – first prize is, sometimes, a bottle of whisky.

Ticket application

- Buy your tickets in advance via your bank – please let Donald know (see point two):
 - **£10.00** per person via BACS.
 - To Cambridge Friends of the NTS.
 - **Sort code** 30-91-56.
 - **Account number** 03771503.
 - **Reference** Your name!
 - Let Donald Douglas know: [donaldouglas710@btinternet.com](mailto:donalddouglas710@btinternet.com).
 - Or send a cheque (£10.00 per person) to **CFNTS, Mar House, Long Lane, Fowlmere, SG8 7TG**, made payable to **Cambridge Friends of the NTS**.
 - Tickets on the door** will be **£12.00** per person.
- NB** We will not pass your details on to any other organisation.

See page three for reviews of the spring 2024 meetings: February, April and May; the March event was cancelled – we're hoping Mark

MacLeod, the speaker, who was to give a talk on the philanthropist and steel tycoon Sir Andrew Carnegie, will do so next year.

Committee members

Donald Douglas, Chairman and Membership Secretary
Judy Potter, Deputy Chairman and Secretary
Jim Stewart, Treasurer
Peter Mann, newsletter editor
Patsy Glazebrook
Julian Landy
Jill Tuffnell

In aid of



**NATIONAL
TRUST for
SCOTLAND**

Our talks this Spring...



In February...

The wildlife cinematographer **Doug Allan** (left) told us about his adventures in the Antarctic filming a variety of wildlife programmes.

His talk, *In the wake of the Scotia*, outlined the 1902-1904 Scottish National Antarctic Expedition, how it was first funded by Scottish sources and the rebuilding of a whaler as an Antarctic research vessel, with two laboratories, a darkroom and extensive specialist equipment.

Its achievements included the discovery of new land to the east of the Weddell Sea.

And while the *Scotia* team had to move north for winter, modern clothing and equipment allowed **Doug** to work all year round, filming above and below the ice, capturing remarkable footage of fish, mammals and birds from birth to death – and the effects of climate change, now measured with great accuracy, as higher temperatures in the [Antarctic Peninsula](#) have helped to cause the collapse of ice shelves.



In May...

The 'big thing' for this meeting, at Newnham College on 15th May, was our 20th birthday celebration. There were slices of delicious

Dundee cake and a glass of good bubbly, with many visitors, new and regular, wearing tartan – no kilts, but ties, scarfs, trews, waistcoats and Harris Tweed emphasising a Scottish event.

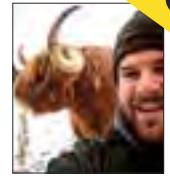
Our guest speaker was **Philip Long** (above), the National Trust for Scotland's Chief Executive: "I'm pleased to say the NTS has a good sense of direction and a long term ambition based on conservation, engagement and sustainability," he said. "We also have a new strategy: *Nature, Beauty and Heritage for Everyone* (explained on its website: nts.org.uk/our-work/our-strategy).

"But as an independent conservation charity receiving no regular government funding, we have to concentrate our limited resources on what we have. And as the 'biggest museum in Scotland' we have the responsibility of protecting our buildings and their contents and the landscapes in our care – work we neglect at our peril."

He was frank about the present challenges faced by the Trust and the sometimes disastrous effect storms and rainfall over the last few years have had on its properties, such as the

In April...

Ed Wombwell (right), Estate Manager at Wandlebury, spoke about the Highland and Belted Galloway cattle and Norfolk Horn sheep which live on the estate.



"Why are there cows?... don't you know cows are destroying the planet!!!," he said.

"You may be surprised how many times I've been told this – I therefore talk through the wonderful process of cattle (and sheep) being the primary tools to create the beautiful wildflower rich landscapes we find around us.

"[Wandlebury Country Park](#) is a 110 acre site with chalk meadows and mature woodland – the cattle play an important part in its conservation, helping to keep the grasses down, to the benefit of the flowers.

"Grazing these animals is also a way of increasing the diversity of nature in the park – as we don't have any barns they are outside all year, which is fine for these hardy breeds."

[storm damage to the Racquets Court](#) building at Fyvie Castle – the bill is approaching £3m.

And while the Trust has shied away from acquiring new properties, because of uncertain long term costs, the Treshnish Isles are an exception, as highlighted in this [excellent video](#) about 'ambassador' Cal Major.

"We are, though, building audiences for the future by encouraging young people to find out more about their history, heritage and community and to become involved with us, whether through visiting our properties and landscapes or volunteering" he said.

"The NTS is not a cheap organisation to run: even with 800 paid employees during the summer, we cannot do without our volunteer army – there are 2,500 on our register helping to look after three million visitors annually and the benefits they bring to local economies."

One of the many conservation projects the NTS has undertaken is at [Glen Geldie](#) on the Mar Lodge Estate – 100,000 trees are being planted along the banks of the Geldie to help restore local peatland and cool the river, a key spawning tributary for the Dee's wild salmon.

What else? Well, Philip has the NTS' centenary in 2031 in his sights, with many events being planned for us to enjoy and to help see it well into its next 100 years.