

Sympathetic Refurbishment of Bruern Abbey

If you have been wondering what has been going on at Bruern Abbey recently, as you passed by and noticed all the activity and construction equipment, the Wychwoods Local History Society can provide some of the answers.



Baron Glendonbrook joins the group to begin the visit.

Around two dozen members along with Dr Simon Townley and Dr Mark Page of the Victoria County History Project were kindly invited by the new owners, Baron Glendonbrook (still better known perhaps as Sir Michael Bishop the former Head of the British Midland airline) and his partner Martin Ritchie to view the almost finished project.

Since they bought the property two years ago Michael and Martin have completely refurbished the house and grounds to create one of today's finest Cotswold country houses. The exterior probably looks better than at any time since its construction in the late 18th Century and the gardens are magnificent. At one time they had around seventy workers involved with the task which included installing a large and impressive cantilever stone

staircase and twenty five kilometres of data cabling. A large underground car park has been created out of sight beneath a former swimming pool. Sunk in the large, leather chairs of the home cinema, members

were shown a video of the work over the one and a half years. Sir Michael and Martin took separate groups around the house to indicate various features and answer questions. The new owners are undertaking work to explore the history of the building and its former inhabitants in more detail.

To complete the visit, a generous afternoon tea was served in the drawing room. At least two members were heard to say separately, "this is better than the National Trust!"

It is good to know that a long standing building in the Wychwoods is receiving sympathetic treatment which will preserve it for at least the next two hundred years.

Alan Vickers
Chairman WLHS

Talk To Your Councillors

Representatives of Shipton PC, West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council will be holding an open surgery at the Cotswold Wychwood Inn on Saturday 31st October at 11.30am. Come along and put your views on local matters.