

The 2010 Summer Party

for members and their guests was held in June at Lawford Hall,
by kind invitation of Francis and Maureen Nichols.



Despite the promise of good weather made at the beginning of the week by the met.-office forecaster who normally delights in predicting floods and pestilence Wednesday 17th June began cold and overcast with a north-easterly wind keeping the temperature well below average for June. As our Summer Parties have been plagued by variable weather in recent times, one in particular at Lamarsh being very wet indeed we were all highly relieved as the clouds gradually cleared and by evening the sun was shining from a deep blue sky.

This year we assembled at Lawford Hall a substantial house built in about 1580 with an oak frame on an H-shaped plan but refaced in the eighteenth century on the south and west elevations in red brick to give the perfectly proportioned appearance customary at the time. The immediate area still retained some wealth in the Georgian period as can be seen in Dedham, for example, where many house-holders decided to re-front their dwellings at that time unlike the residents of Lavenham and Kersey who could no longer afford to do so as the wool trade had, by then, deserted them.



The Chairman addresses the members

Two hundred members and their guests gathered on the terrace and in the knot-garden for a convivial evening of conversation accompanied by drinks and canapés served very professionally by a team of young people who worked tirelessly throughout the evening, including washing-up afterwards!

The gardens are a delight, set out on an escarpment which surprises in its undulating steepness. Indeed J. Yelloly Watson in his book, “Tending Hundred in the Olden Time”, published in 1877, writes, “The gardens of Lawford Hall, which are situated on a slope commanding the valley of the Stour, are amongst the most beautiful in the county”. In recent years the kitchen garden has been restored to much of its former glory, providing vegetables and flowers for the house, with a resident and very visible hedgehog controlling the slug population!



The President in conversation with Catherine Whitworth-Jones

Our Chairman, Charles Clover, addressed the assembled members and their guests giving a spirited account of the reasons for the Society's existence and why those who were not yet members should make certain they signed up immediately.

It was a most enjoyable evening and our thanks are due to Maureen and Francis Nichols who so generously allowed us to spend an evening at their elegant house in such delightful surroundings and also to Sarah Carr, Nella Probert and their team who managed things so seamlessly.

