

## HGF BRIEFING NOTES

### FRIDAY EVENING PROGRAMME

Our students are currently exploring the speeches of Henry George on alternative weeks along with continuing studies of Plato's famous book *Laws*. George's speeches are especially interesting as we hear him directly addressing popular audiences and appealing to their sense of justice and goodness.

At the moment students are diving into *Book Eleven of Laws*, where Plato returns to the question of property and stealing. Plato's approach to these questions are very different to those of our times.

This is in large part because, for Plato, commerce and making money are of secondary importance. His conception of a healthy society is one that is, in its very essence, self-sufficient - and thus does not need to embark on trade and commerce as an end in itself. We begin to see that our modern society is not so much the product of technological advancement, as one driven chiefly by land monopoly, where the greater part of life is aimed at staving off poverty.

### FRIDAY AFTERNOON SESSIONS

In addition to the popular Friday evening events, the HGF's Friday afternoon sessions have continued as well; and will continue in the future. What has changed, however, is the name. *The Friday Study Group* will replace the previous designation: *The Library Group*.

### SUMMER TERM

The HGF has started the Summer Term with another session on the Magna Carta. This included a diversion in that Tommas Graves described how an original copy of the 1297 version interestingly had been found at his school in Somerset and was now in Canberra - having later been sold to Australia some time in the 1950s.

This was later complimented by another paper from Seymour Rauch, "*Credit and the Rent-interest Index*" from 1953; followed by another visit from Alan Roberts "*Alexander Pope on Self-love and Social Forces*" to add a new scope to the intellectual discussion.



Next, students and teachers were treated to Cicero with readings of "*On the Laws*" and talks about Cicero's fascinating life history.

To bring everything to a meaningful and satisfactory conclusion Michael Learoyd suggested that all students make a serious study of Henry George's "*Social Problems*", and thus everyone have started on chapters downloaded from the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation. This will be the continued focus - except when other speakers are invited.

The Autumn Term set out with an interesting presentation by Haydon Bradshaw called "*Rent Maps*", starting with a 13,000 year old map found in a cave showing the best geographical places to hunt bison, or deer. A more modern example was the maps devised by Ronald Burgess showing how entry in the Common Market consequently would affect the areas with the highest economic potential.

To balance the earlier paper by David Cotton, Gordon Wratten gave a fascinating insight into the *deniers' view* of climate change.

Students now continue with "*Social Problems*", interspersed with Alan Roberts "*Alexander Pope and Society*". Towards Christmas Tommas Graves will be presenting "*What makes Money Work?*" as well as a much more detailed study of "*The Guernsey Experiment*".

As always: All members are more than welcome to share the feast!

