

ALGARVE HISTORY ASSOCIATION
NOT THE NEWSLETTER FOR APRIL 1ST 2020

TUESDAY 31 at 18h00 Lagoa
*should have been, and may yet be
on another date*

The Visigothic State in Iberia
with Peter Kingdon Booker

Our programme for April

FRIDAY 17 at 11h00 Tavira

TUESDAY 28 at 18h00 Lagoa

The Carnation Revolution

with Peter Kingdon Booker

is what you will have missed

FRIDAY 20 at 11h00 Tavira

would have been

D Maria II

with Isabel Stilwell

PREVIEW FOR MAY

or perhaps **MAY NOT**

TUESDAY 19 at 18h00 Lagoa

FRIDAY 29 at 11h00 Tavira

*Was D Sebastião Portugal's worst
king?*

with Peter Kingdon Booker

TUESDAY 26 at 18h00 Lagoa

perhaps may still be

D Maria II

with Isabel Stilwell



The Visigothic State in Iberia

Does the existence of the Roman Empire in Hispania and its collapse in the face of barbarian pressure hold any interest for us in the twenty-first century? The rise and fall of civilisations is of great interest to all of us, since our own civilisation seems at present to be under existential pressure. How do dominant and seemingly powerful nations suddenly fall away, to be replaced by something quite different, but which itself seems also to have a limited life span? The Visigothic state took over from the Roman Empire, not without a struggle; it lasted for just over two centuries, and seemed well established, but collapsed completely and suddenly. How did it succeed against the Romans, and yet collapse and disappear 250 years later?

The Carnation Revolution

The Carnation Revolution began life as a misnomer, but was eventually correct. Why did Portuguese wait so long before they threw off the dictatorship? Were there any precedents in Portugal? And just why did the revolt happen on 25 April 1974? Could the regime have forestalled it? As in many instances in history, when an idea reaches a certain maturity, there seems to be no force which can prevent it taking root. In retrospect, the military revolt which led to the revolution was in gestation for some time, but there were certain triggers which set it in motion. Peter demonstrates some of the history of resistance, and shows how it was that the Captains of April made their move in 1974.

Was Dom Sebastião (1554 - 1557 - 1578) Portugal's worst king?

There are some monarchs in history who made such a poor showing that we wonder how the idea of hereditary kingship survived as long as it did. D Sebastião was one such king. He may have been the worst king in Portuguese history, and he is up against some pretty stiff competition for that title. Coming to the throne at the age of three, he assumed monarchical power at age fourteen. He was a prisoner of his own feeble constitution; of his education in Christian dogma; and of the weight of his family's crusading past. Disregarding the advice of his elders, D Sebastião embarked on one of the maddest adventures in history. Unsurprisingly, he came completely unstuck, and his legacy to his country was a loss of independence, the loss of a generation of aristocrats and grinding poverty for his people.

D Maria II

D Maria II was Queen of Portugal during the Civil Wars of the nineteenth century. Her opponent was her uncle, D Miguel, who had also been her prospective bridegroom. After the tragedy of the Napoleonic Wars, and the following British Occupation of Portugal, the intermittent Civil Wars (1828 - 1850) sapped the strength of an already impoverished country. D Maria came to the throne at the age of seven and died in 1853 at age 34, exhausted after a last and inadvisable pregnancy. D Maria herself did not completely understand the need for the monarch to stand remote from politics, but for all that, at the end of her reign, Portugal had established a constitutional monarchy on the British model, and enjoyed until 1890 a certain stability. Isabel Stilwell has published novels about other women in history, and her latest novel is based on the events of the life of this contemporary of Queen Victoria. We would have been lucky if Isabel had come a second time to the Algarve. Perhaps we shall be able to rearrange her visit to discuss the reign of D Maria II for Algarve History Association.