

***RETIREED MEN'S ASSOCIATION OF GREENWICH, Inc. (RMA)
invites you to attend its meeting, on Wednesday, July 8, 2015
First Presbyterian Church, Lafayette Place, Greenwich, CT.***

ROBERT HENREY

SYRIA: OUR CULTURAL DEBT TO A SADLY TROUBLED LAND



Syria is much in the news. The civil war, begun in 2011, continues unabated. Up to 100,000 people have been killed, including 11,000 children; over 2.1 million Syrian refugees have fled the country. Lost in all of this is the story of Syria as an ancient land at the crossroads of history, ruled by the Persians, Greeks, Romans and Ottomans, and influenced by many other cultures.

Robert Henrey will examine the cultural and religious crosscurrents that form the background to Syria's tragic civil war and have drawn it into an increasingly vicious regional conflict. It is, however, primarily a personal reflection – following a number of recent visits to the Middle East – on the relevance of the area's surprisingly rich history, culture and religious heritage, on our own contemporary identity. The presentation includes maps highlighting the geographical complexity of the Middle East as well as pictures taken during a visit to Syria in April 2011; just days before the country became effectively closed to visitors.

Robert Henrey has enjoyed a rich and varied life experience. Thanks to his financial background he had the opportunity to work in Europe, Asia and Latin America as well as New York City, where for some twenty years he headed up Coopers and Lybrand's (since merged with Price Waterhouse to form PwC) International Tax Consulting Practice. After retiring from PwC he served as an interfaith chaplain at Greenwich Hospital a position he held until recently. Ordained a Catholic deacon in 1984 he is a member of Saint Catherine of Siena parish in Riverside. He recently published a memoir *Through Grown Up Eyes* describing how he was chosen to be the child star of 1948 British film classic movie *The Fallen Idol* and how he coped with the unforeseen consequences of this chance event. Robert and his wife Lisette enjoy travel. He is particularly interested in history, and she shares with him her knowledge of geology and the natural sciences. They are both graduates of Oxford University, where he studied languages; a lifelong interest he continues to pursue in retirement.

RMA Meetings are free and open to the public; no reservations are required. Please plan to arrive around 10:45 for our social break (coffee and cake), followed by our speaker at 11:00. Meetings are held at the First Presbyterian Church in Greenwich. For additional information, call Bernard Schneider, 203-698-2558; bgsesq@gmail.com.