



## THE FURNITURE HISTORY SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

No. 183

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### A QUEST FOR MARQUETRY TRUTHS

Marquetry furniture is often regarded as originating from the Netherlands. But does every piece of furniture with a floral design stem from that part of the world? How did the marquetry technique spread across Europe? How did the Dutch influence the English? It is important to remember that the present-day Netherlands did not exist as such in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It had become the Republic of the Seven United Provinces and there was an enormous influx of people from other countries because of its religion and its growing wealth. Conversely, many Dutch craftsmen went to live elsewhere, taking their skills with them.

#### INTARSIA, INLAY OR MARQUETRY?

The terms intarsia, inlay and marquetry are often confused. Intarsia, from the Latin *interserere* [to insert] and inlay involve setting pieces of wood, stone, mother-of-pearl or metal into solid wood.

It is a generally accepted that marquetry was first practiced in Florence during the fourteenth century. It subsequently spread throughout Europe. Initially only one piece of veneer was cut at a time. The invention of the fretsaw blade in the sixteenth century enabled thinner slices of veneer to be cut. The introduction of the chevalet made it possible to cut several layers of veneer at the same time, the so-called sandwich technique. Layers of different veneers would be put on top of each other onto which the craftsman would glue the design. Copies of drawings were made by perforating the outlines of the design and shaking bituminous powder through the holes onto another piece of paper behind. When heated, the powder would stick to the surface to create a copy. The cut veneers were then assembled into the desired design. If the craftsman dyed or stained the veneers, it was done at this stage. Paper was then glued over the assembled veneers to hold them in place when they were glued onto the carcass. Once attached, the paper was removed and the

marquetry sanded and waxed. Of course, this basic technique varied enormously between workshops.

Brighter colours are often seen inside marquetry cabinets. In general, craftsmen tried to use to the fullest extent the natural colours the different trees and plants could produce. It was part of the craftsman's honour not to use dyes. However, by the later seventeenth century cabinet-makers began to experiment with various recipes to colour and varnish wood. They first used natural dyes. Some of these recipes were derived from the colouring of textiles. The veneer would either absorb the dye completely or only the surface would be dyed. The latter produced a less durable result. Shadowing was achieved using hot sand or acid. The sand was heated in a brass bowl. The longer the piece of veneer stayed in the sand, the darker it became. Through these developments some marquetry panels came to increasingly resemble brightly-coloured paintings.

When marquetry pieces became old-fashioned, they were often incorporated into new, more fashionable pieces. In 1767 Messrs Mayhew & Ince used a marquetry floor to make furniture for the 9th Earl of Exeter:

Aug 27th Entirely new working, some old inlaid work, making good the defficiencies, and making up the same, into 2 commodes, one with sliding shelves, lined, the other with drawers, both with brass mouldings, and other very rich ornaments, finely gilt and laquer'd.

Two corners ditto, to match them complete.

These pieces survive at Burghley, together with a centre table also made up from the marquetry floor panels. All incorporate a distinctive marquetry moth (Fig. 1).

Old-fashioned furniture was often enlivened with marquetry designs. Workshops kept cut-out marquetry designs in store, and patterns often recure. 'Ready-made' flowers [*a kasje met gezaagden bloemen*] were listed in an inventory of the workshop of the Dutch cabinet-maker Johannes van Mekerem (1658–1733), made after his death. This practice was adversely commented on by A. J. Roubo in *L'Art du Menuisier* (1769–75):

Ce n'est cependant pas la méthode du commun des Ebénistes, qui achètent [sic] des fleurs toutes faites à quelques-uns de leurs Confreres [sic] qui ne s'occupent qu'à ce genre d'ouvrages, sans s'embarrasser si elles iront bien les unes avec les autres, & si elles sont ombrées pour la place qu'elles doivent occuper ; ce qui fait que dans la plupart des ouvrages communs, on voit des fleurs qui semblent y être placées comme au hasard, & ombrées les unes d'un sens, & les autres d'un autre, ce qui fait un très-mauvais effet.



Fig 1 Detail showing marquetry moth © Burghley House Preservation Trust Limited

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, many highly skilled cabinet-makers in cities across the Republic produced furniture with inlaid and marquetry panels. Examples include Dirck van Rijswijck and Johannes (Jan) van Me(ec)keren in Amsterdam and Philips van Santwijck in The Hague. Who taught them? Some evidence suggests some cabinet-makers travelled to the province of Zeeland, in the Southwest of the Republic, in order to learn the craft (these sources will be published at a later date, pending further research). Was this perhaps because many French emigrants were living in this part of the country?

Cabinet-makers generally didn't sign their work, although an exception is Dirck van Rijswijck. Most marquetry furniture can therefore only be attributed to a particular country or maker.

A group of five cabinets attributed to Jan van Mekerens (1658–1733) incorporates floral still lifes (some after the same design), against an ebony background. Two cabinets are in Amerongen Castle, Utrecht and the others are in the Rijksmuseum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Charlcote Park. Another group with floral still lifes set into architectural settings are attributed to Philips van Santwijck from The Hague.

Until now, research has indicated that the cabinets-on-stand, for which the cabinet-makers of the Republic are most famous, are similar in construction. All have oak carcasses. Stretchers can be of varying shape. Earlier cabinets incorporate a drawer that runs across their entire width. The bottom of this drawer consists of two boards of which the grain usually runs from left to right. The doors and the side panels of the cabinet have floral marquetry. Some of these panels closely resemble the still life pictures of the period. It is interesting to note that the same marquetry scenes on some of these cabinets are also found on the smaller cabinets on stands which are supposedly English.

The van Mekerens (or van Meeckeren) came originally from Batenburg, Gelderland. Jan van Mekerens was baptised in the 'Nederduits Hervormde Gemeente' in Tiel, Gelderland, on 15 January 1658. He travelled from Amsterdam to London in 1682, where he became a member of the Nederlandse Gereformeerde Church at Austin Friars. By 1687, he had returned to Amsterdam and was recorded in the Book of Guilds as Joannes van Mekerens from Tiel. In 1700 Van Mekerens and five other members of the Guild founded a company specialising in *fijne houtwaren* [fine wooden objects]. Several of them were listed in the *Register of Goede mannen* compiled by the cabinet-maker Arent Busserus on 1 May 1704 where they are described as excellent *kabinet-werckers*.

Although the five cabinets attributed to van Mekerens look very similar, on closer inspection there are many variations. The door panels of the cabinets in the Rijksmuseum and the Metropolitan Museum consist of horizontal boards set into a framework with wooden blocks between. The cabinets in the Metropolitan Museum and Charlecote Park are significantly smaller than the others. Veneers on the two cabinets at Amerongen Castle bear traces of 'artificial' red and blue staining. Although superficially very similar, on closer examination significant differences between the Amerongen cabinets were also noted. The construction of the door panels is dissimilar; the size of the marquetry panels differ; the table on which the vase stands is crooked on one cabinet and the treatment of the flowers differs, for example the crown imperials (*fritillaria imperialis*) that surmount the floral designs are formed differently.

## CONCLUSION

There are many questions to be answered before conclusions can be drawn. Often, furniture has undergone changes throughout its existence. A complete story can be told only if these objects are looked at from every angle. That is why it is necessary to examine

as many objects as possible. If this article has sparked your curiosity and you have marquetry objects that can be examined, please contact me.

I like to thank everyone who has assisted me up to now, but in particular my parents, Prof. Dr Titus Eliëns, Mr Drs Stephen Hartog, Pol Bruijs, Dr Melanie Doderer Winkler, Jon Culverhouse, Anthony Beech, Dr Christopher Rowell, Dr Sam Segal, Drs Lodewijk Gerretsen, Drs Daniëlle Kisluk-Grosheide, Marijn Manuels, and Matthew Winterbottom without whose continued support and assistance this research would not have taken place.

Véronique Fehmers (info@recolart.nl)

## FUTURE SOCIETY EVENTS

### BOOKINGS

For places on all visits please apply to the Events Secretary, Sara Heaton, 18 First Street, London, SW3 2LD. Tel. 07775 907390 enclosing a separate cheque and separate stamped addressed envelope for each event using the enclosed booking form. Some advance event information (including weekends) will be available by email, please email the Events Secretary or send your email address with your application.

Applications should only be made by members who intend to take part in the whole programme. No one can apply for more than one place unless they hold a joint membership, and each applicant should be identified by name. If you wish to be placed on the waiting list please enclose a telephone number where you can be reached. Please note that a closing date for applications for all visits is printed in the *Newsletter*. Applications made after the closing date will be accepted only if space is still available.

### CANCELLATIONS

Please note that no refunds will be given for cancellations for occasional visits costing £10.00 or less. In all other cases, cancellations will be accepted up to seven days before the date of a visit, but refunds will be subject to a £5.00 deduction for administrative costs. Separate arrangements are made for study weekends and foreign tours and terms are clearly stated on the printed details in each case.

N.B. PLEASE REMEMBER TO SEND SUFFICIENT STAMPED, SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPES FOR ALL APPLICATIONS, INCLUDING REQUESTS FOR DETAILS OF FOREIGN TOURS AND STUDY WEEKENDS

### ANNUAL LECTURE

#### *Tapestry In Eighteenth-Century Britain*

The Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1

Wednesday 2nd November, 6.00 pm for 6.30–7.45 pm lecture

Helen Wyld is currently working on a three-year project funded by the Paul Mellon Centre to research and catalogue the most important aspects of the National Trust's tapestry collection.

The lecture will trace the story of the tapestry medium in eighteenth-century Britain, looking at both native producers and the importance of French design and products, the increasing diversification of uses in furniture and other settings, and finally considering the

status of tapestry as a high-cost luxury medium in an age fast moving towards mass production.

Admission to the Lecture is free but attendance is by ticket only, which must be acquired in advance from the Events Secretary. Numbers are limited to 90.

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND WORKS IN PROGRESS TALKS WITH A SPECIAL PAPER ON CHATSWORTH

The East India Club, 16 St. James's Square, London SW1

Saturday 26th November 2011, 11.00 am–1.00 pm

The Annual General Meeting for the year ending 30 June 2011 will be held at the East India Club. The AGM will start at 11.00 am (coffee from 10.30 am).

This will be followed by illustrated Works in Progress talks by Christopher Rowell, the National Trust, Treve Rosoman, English Heritage, Rufus Bird, Deputy Surveyor of the Queen's Works of Art and from the Department of Furniture Textiles & Fashion, V&A. In addition to these talks a paper will be given by Matthew Hirst, Head of Collections at Chatsworth giving details of the recent reinstatement of the Scots and Leicester Apartments, the early nineteenth century bedrooms created by the 6th Duke of Devonshire. The talk will also cover the recently redecorated and redisplayed Sketch Galleries and the Masterplan restoration project and the new documentation project launched in 2011. Afterwards there will be an optional lunch which will provide for opportunity for members to socialise and discuss furniture related matters.

Admission to the AGM is free but all members wishing to attend should notify the FHS Events Secretary at least 7 days in advance for security reasons. Tickets for lunch with a glass of wine at £20 per head should be booked with the Events Secretary at least 7 days in advance.

#### ADVANCE NOTICE — THE 36th ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM OF THE FURNITURE HISTORY SOCIETY 'THE UPHOLSTERED INTERIOR'

Saturday 10th March 2012

Next year's symposium will be arranged by Sarah Medlam and Leela Meinertas of the Furniture, Fashion and Textiles Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum. The symposium will be held at The Wallace Collection.

Full programme and booking arrangements will be in the FHS November *Newsletter*.

#### AUTUMN STUDY WEEKEND: LINCOLNSHIRE

Friday 30th September to Monday 3rd October 2011

This event is now fully subscribed and closed.

#### SPRING STUDY WEEKEND: NORTHUMBERLAND

Thursday 10th May to Sunday 13th May 2012

Lucy Wood and Louisa Collins formerly of the V&A will lead this study weekend to Northumbria and the Borders. The group will be based near Morpeth for this three-day visit, starting on the evening of Thursday 10th May 2012. Houses to be visited include Seaton Delaval, recently acquired by the National Trust (the furniture including tables



possibly original to the building of the house by Vanburgh and some pieces made originally for Melton Constable, Norfolk) and Alnwick Castle (where we will study the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century patronage and collecting of the Dukes of Northumberland, much of the contents originating at Northumberland House). We will visit Chillingham Castle, (Sir Humphry Wakefield) as well as other houses in the area.

Further details will be available in the FHS November *Newsletter*

## OCCASIONAL VISITS

### FISHMONGERS HALL, London Bridge

Monday 19th September 2011 5.00 pm–7.00 pm

Dr James Yorke (formerly V&A Furniture Department) and a member of the Fishmongers Livery Company will lead us on a privileged evening visit around this magnificent riverside building. The Fishmongers Hall was built in the Greek Revival style by the Cubitt family after a design by Henry Roberts. The richly decorated and gilded interiors are complemented by a fine collection of furniture, silver and pictures,

The Fishmongers' Company has an unbroken existence of some 700 years having received its first Royal Charter in 1272. It ranks fourth in the Order of Precedence of Livery Companies making it one of the Great Twelve.

The collection includes a large number of carved shields incorporating the coats of arms of past Prime Wardens and a number of eighteenth-century barge ornaments. There is a fine carved yew statue of Sir William Walworth by Edward Pierce dating from 1684 and nineteenth-century furniture purchased when the Hall was newly built.

£20 per head (to include wine after the visit) Limit: 25 members

Closing date: 1st September 2011

### WELSH HOUSES STUDY DAY

Saturday 22nd October 2011

The Furniture History Society and The Regional Furniture History Society have arranged this joint study day of Welsh Houses in the Cowbridge Area of South Wales. Cowbridge is a small prosperous town in the Vale of Glamorgan, near Cardiff. The visits are all within a 5 mile radius, and will include a shop visit to a small exhibition on Welsh furniture, a church, a farmhouse with pieces illustrated in Richard Bebb's book *Welsh Furniture 1250–1950*. There will be a visit to a Great House, the name given in the Vale to a squire's house, which includes Welsh oak, mahogany and eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century samplers and a visit to a Plas with mainly mahogany and walnut furniture, and an interesting garden.

£25 to include lunch and light tea Limit: 25 members

Closing date 15th September

## OVERSEAS VISITS

### VERSAILLES

REMEUBLER VERSAILLES: DU GARD- MEUBLE DE LA COURONNE AU MOBILIER NATIONAL, 14th November 2011

**FURNITURE OF POWER:** Furniture of the Royal Wardrobe from the Mobilier national

With much of the original furnishing of Versailles and the other Royal Palaces, dispersed or sold during the Revolution, many important pieces were scattered and are now in important museums. However, many have also been discovered in the Mobilier National, in various government buildings and offices and since 2007 there has been a policy of returning important items permanently to Versailles. This exhibition takes advantage of this history of rediscovery to show the results of recent research. The exhibition and catalogue will show these works, in the context of their complex history, revealing the taste of the commissioners, the skills of the decorators and the complex mechanisms of the Garde Meuble itself. It will also show a great variety of works commissioned for the Crown, showing the wider range of techniques used, pieces made for daily life as well as furniture for differing types of rooms.

The exhibition will be displayed in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon as well as the historic rooms of the State Apartments of Versailles, which will be furnished specifically for the exhibition to display the wealth and variety of the collections now in the Mobilier National.

**FURNITURE OF POWER:** Contemporary Works from the Mobilier national at the Chateau of Versailles

Coinciding with the exhibition, 'Remember Versailles', this exhibition looks at the same subject from a contemporary point of view and to show the furnishings created for official residences and offices. Bearing in mind that most of these residences, the Elysée Palace or Hôtel Matignon have classical interiors, the rooms chosen at Versailles for the display are the apartments of the Dauphin and Dauphine and the display will try to link the contemporary furnishing with the original function of the apartments: anterooms, dining room, great cabinet and library.

The works on view were mostly commissioned by the Atelier de Recherche et de Creation (ARC) created by André Malraux in 1964 to introduce design into the interiors of the Republic. Many of these were commissions from the Gobelins tapestry workshops, Beavais and Savonnerie. Furniture includes works by Pierre Paulin, Olivier Vedrin and Serge Manzon. Works from the Sevres manufacture will also be shown.

This new exhibition from 12 September to 11 December 2011 will be curated by Bertrand Rondot Chief Curator, Chateau de Versailles and Jean-Jacques Gauthier from the Mobilier national.

Bertrand Rondot has agreed to lead this private visit to this exhibition on a closed day at Versailles.

The visit will begin late morning to enable members to do a day trip to Paris. Transport (not included) can be shared from Gare du Nord to and from Versailles for this day visit.

Lunch will be provided but no transport although details of these will be supplied with the details of the day allowing members to make their own arrangements.

£50 per head to include entrance to the exhibition and lunch Limit: 25 members

Closing date 15th September

## OVERSEAS TOURS

### ST PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

22nd to 28th April 2012

The FHS in conjunction with the Hermitage Foundation UK and Artours Ltd. are arranging a 6 night, 7 day visit to St Petersburg, led by Emmanuel Ducamp, the noted Russian decorative art specialist and author.

We will be based in a modest centrally located Hotel in St Petersburg, which will be within walking distance of the Hermitage. The visit will begin with an introductory seminar. We will have a privileged visit on Monday spending the whole day at the Hermitage, Rastrelli's Winter Palace whilst closed to the public, and have a chance for close study of the French and Russian furniture, in conjunction with the curators. All members will be made members of the Hermitage Foundation, allowing other privileged visits to that museum and there will be a chance to return for independent study. Later in the week there will be a visit to the Hermitage Stores with a chance for close examination of the furniture, and a visit to the Hermitage Furniture Restoration Workshops.

Other planned visits include Tsarskoye Selo (the Catherine Palace) with work by the English Architect Charles Campbell, Pavlosk, built in 1780s for Tsar Paul I, and Peterhof, the country residence of Peter the Great, based on Versailles.

For further information and price please contact the Events Secretary as normal or email for information [furniturehistorysociety@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:furniturehistorysociety@hotmail.co.uk)

Closing date for Applications 20th September 2011

## OTHER EVENTS

EXHIBITION: NORTHERN CONTEMPORARY FURNITURE MAKERS,  
ANNUAL EXHIBITION, 12th to 24th September 2011

A diverse selection of contemporary furniture design handmade by craftsmen using traditional techniques combined with the latest technology out of the finest quality hardwoods.

NCFM Exhibition, Tennants, the Auction Centre, Harmby Road, Leyburn, North Yorkshire DL8 5SG. [www.northernfurniture.org.uk](http://www.northernfurniture.org.uk)

LECTURE BY JOHN MAKEPEACE: *John Makepeace furniture — the human dimension*

Lotherton Hall, Aberford, Leeds, Wednesday 5 October, 4.00 pm

In conjunction with the touring exhibition 'John Makepeace, enriching the language of furniture'

Admission by ticket to the house. Contact Wendy Shuttleworth: tel. 0113 281 3259; E-mail: [wendy.shuttleworth@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:wendy.shuttleworth@leeds.gov.uk)



## OTHER ITEMS

### CALL FOR PAPERS: INIGO JONES, THE QUEEN'S HOUSE AND THE LANGUAGES OF STUART CULTURE

A two-day conference at the Queen's House, Greenwich, 15th to 16th February 2012

Proposals are welcome from, but not limited to, scholars working in the fields of decorative art and material culture, history, heritage studies, and art and architectural history. Submissions from postgraduate students and early career scholars are encouraged.

Proposals of around 250 words, for papers of no more than 30 minutes, should be sent to the conference conveners.

For further information please contact: Dr Richard Johns (rjohns@nmm.ac.uk) or Amy Miller (amiller@nmm.ac.uk), National Maritime Museum, Greenwich London SE10 8NF

### SPECIAL MEMBER OFFER ON *THE INDEX TO THE DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH FURNITURE MAKERS 1660–1840*

Many members will own a copy of *The Dictionary of English Furniture Makers 1660–1840* which lists makers in alphabetical order. For research by place of manufacture, by patrons and commissions, by trade or other themes the *Index* is a necessity. This is bound in an identical style to the *Dictionary* and was published at £20. For a limited period, the Society is offering, to members only, the *Index* at £10 (£13 overseas) inclusive of post and packing. Payment may be made by cheque, bank transfer or credit/debit card. Orders to Brian Austen, Publications Officer, 1, Mercedes Cottages, St. John's Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 4EH, tel/fax 01444 413845, email: brian.austen@zen.co.uk

### EXHIBITION: *Thinking Outside the Box. European Cabinets, Caskets, and Cases from the Permanent Collection (1500–1900)*

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, closes 30 October 2011.

Another in the splendid series of small-scale installations in the Wrightsman Exhibition Gallery, *Thinking Outside the Box* draws exclusively from the Museum's own vast collection. The exhibition, curated by Daniëlle Kisluk-Grosheide, examines the purpose as well as the aesthetic qualities of a wide selection of 'cabinets, caskets and cases'. These are divided into groups, broadly defined by material: tortoiseshell, carved, veneered and inlaid wood, porcelain, hard stones, embroidery, silver, enamel, pastiglia and straw. The exhibits, well labelled and elegantly shown, include strongboxes, cabinets, travelling cases, containers for tea and tobacco, storage containers for toiletries and snuff boxes. Although there is no catalogue, each object is recorded in an online database: [http://www.metmuseum.org/works\\_of\\_art/collection\\_database/gallerylistview.aspx?dd1=76](http://www.metmuseum.org/works_of_art/collection_database/gallerylistview.aspx?dd1=76).

One benefit of this exhibition has been the opportunity it has afforded curators to reassess, and sometimes to re-date objects, most of which have long languished in store. A well-designed ivory-veneered collector's cabinet by Melchior Baumgartner, c.1655–59, is now described as 'later engraved' (Rogers Fund, 1903). A collector's cabinet by Reinhold Vasters, c.1865–85 (in fact a recent gift from Anthony Blumka, 2010) was until recently was considered to date from the late sixteenth century.

Notable exhibits include a massive late sixteenth/early seventeenth-century strongbox (bequeathed in 1890 by Henry Marquand), an exquisite Du Paquier snuff box c.1730 (Irwin Untermyer gift, 1963) and a Renaissance-revival carved casket by Pietro Giusti, similar to

one shown at the London International Exhibition, 1862. Some of the works are relatively modest, but no less interesting for that; an example is the German (Nuremberg?) leather miniature collector's cabinet, c. 1600 (gift of Susan Bliss, 1948). Other objects of particular note are two further recent acquisitions: an amber casket, c. 1680, and from the nineteenth century, a small-scale coffer by Alphonse Giroux, c. 1860.

Although not perhaps intended as such, the exhibition provides insights into the history of the formation of the Metropolitan's collections.

Martin P. Levy.



## REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Alan Poole is looking for a researcher who would be able find out more about this half tester bed from Burton Closes, near Bakewell. The house was redecorated by Pugin and the bed was believed to have been part of this. However, this has been disputed by the Pugin Society.

Please contact: Alan Poole, 43 & 45 North Hill, Highgate, London N6 4BS; tel: 020 8341 6051 mobile: 07796 694263

## BOOK REVIEWS

Suggestions for future reviews and publishers' review copies should be sent to Dr Reinier Baarsen, Reviews Editor, Rijksmuseum, PO BOX 74888, 1070 DN Amsterdam, The Netherlands, tel. 00-31-20-6747220. E-mail: r.baarsen@rijksmuseum.nl

Marilyn Neuhart with John Neuhart, *The Story of Eames Furniture* (Berlin: Gestalten Verlag, 2010), 2 vols., 798 pp., 2500 col. and b.&w. illus., ISBN 978-3-89955-230-0, £140.

At first glance these two mammoth volumes, with their wealth of textual and visual documentation, appear to be a comprehensive study of all the furniture traditionally credited to one of the most prolific and influential designers of the second half of the twentieth century, Charles Eames. The scale and ambition are appropriate to the importance of the book's subject. However, the text is seriously marred by inaccuracies, there are fundamental problems of approach and the book does not live up to the promise of being a definitive reference work.

The authors, both designers, first met Charles Eames in 1952 and Marilyn Neuhart describes herself and her husband as 'in and out of the office in various capacities' from 1957 until 1988. In that year Charles's wife and collaborator Ray finally closed the office which since Charles's death in 1978 had been serving mainly as a repository for the sorting of the firm's archive. Mrs. Neuhart describes the book's aim as producing a 'biography ... of a group of artifacts', but she is equally keen to tell the stories of those who 'developed the body of work known as Eames furniture' (p. 15).

The first chapter presents a lively, illustrated sketch of the working life of the Eames Office, as the firm started in 1941 by Charles and Ray Eames became known. It is followed by a biographical chapter on both Eameses, their work and their relationship with each other and with their collaborators. This chapter lives up to the authors' stated intention of offering a 'warts and all' portrait and is fairly startling in its emphasis on personalities and private lives. The next 200 pages of the first volume comprise twenty-two chapters on individuals who worked in the Eames Office. All but three of these (Eero Saarinen, Harry Bertoia and Herbert Matter) are unlikely to be known to anyone not versed in the detailed history of Eames furniture. Collaboration has always been an integral part of the practice of design and architecture, yet seldom has a book attempted to document so comprehensively the work of the entire staff of a single design firm. These chapters are potentially a real contribution to furniture history, but the authors' insistence on diminishing the roles of Charles (and Ray) Eames in the designs in favour of the designers, fabricators and engineers who worked for them, undermines rather than strengthens their case.

The remainder of volume I and all of volume II are organized in chronological order by individual furniture project. The copious images are useful, but the text is problematic because of not being systematically footnoted. More worryingly, some interviewees have denied the statements attributed to them in this book and the authors' conclusions contradict what they wrote in their *Eames Design* of 1989. The latter was an attempt to document, albeit more concisely, every project in the Eames Office, including in each case a list everyone who worked on it. All these issues significantly undermine even the uncontentious sections of the text in the present publication.

Volume II is entirely devoted to the immensely successful collaboration between the Eames Office and the Herman Miller Company between 1946 and 1978 (Miller continues to manufacture Eames furniture). It includes chapters on Miller and on individual furniture projects. Eleven additional biographies are woven into the text, rather than appearing as separate chapters, as is further information on others who worked on or manufactured designs. The designs of 1950–1960 are described as 'the mainstay of the Eames furniture business, and the design and technical foundation for nearly all of the pieces that would issue from the office until Charles's death' (p. 593). Rather than an objective observation of the work, this volume is part of an attempt to not only denigrate the later designs but also shift credit for much of the work to the valued office fabricator, Don Albinson. As with the chapter on the Eameses' early plywood furniture in volume I, the Neuharts tell a story of conflict about design responsibility and credit that is often at odds with available documentation, including interviews with or accounts by some of those involved. This attempt to write revisionist history is not underpinned by any critique of the historical record.

Underlying the entire book is the authors' project of settling old scores, above all against Ray Eames but also, one assumes, against Pat Kirkham, author of the 1995 monograph, *Charles and Ray Eames, Designers of the Twentieth Century*. Vitriolic attacks against Ray Eames stem from the Neuharts' experience of working with her, especially on their collaborative *Eames Design*. The Neuharts clearly disapprove of Ray and what they see as her dysfunctional working style. They characterize Ray's contribution as 'restricted to reviewing color

choices and the refinement of form'. Her presence in the office was, in the authors' libellous assertion, limited to 'lunches and ice cream parties' (p. 59). This view stands in stark contrast to the testimony of some former collaborators profiled in the book, as well as that of the Neuharts themselves in their 1989 publication.

Although, inexplicably, there is no reference anywhere to Kirkham's book (the same is true of shorter essays by Joseph Giovanini, Donald Albrecht and Beatriz Colomina, which are of some relevance to the approach critiqued in the book), the authors clearly lay the blame for the attention paid to Ray at her doorstep. They write that they are 'annoyed by what has been written about [Charles and Ray Eames] since their deaths', and decry 'whole books ... based ... on a few hours conversation with Ray Eames near the end of her life when she was determined to further extend her own mythology about Charles and herself, to essentially obscure what did not fit within that mythology'. Ray did not, according to the Neuharts, co-design what we call Eames furniture. This seems to be a direct riposte to Kirkham's much more subtle and probing enquiry into the nature of professional partnership between a married couple.

The design of *The Story of Eames Furniture* is handsome, though the typeface is very small. It is, however, a pity that the notes for volume I appear only at the end of volume II and that the binding is weak. The weaknesses, however, extend well beyond the physical properties of the book. The inclusion of salacious details regarding the personal, rather than professional, relationship of Charles and Ray Eames, while normal in our age of celebrity culture and intimate biography, offers information unrelated to the furniture and (even if true) is utterly out of place in this book. The sneering tone within which this is framed necessarily gives rise to doubts about the accuracy of what is written. No one interested in Eames furniture will be able to ignore this book, but portions of the text leave a sour taste and serious doubts about its veracity. A story it may be, *The Story* it is not.

Christopher Wilk

*Antique Woodworking Tools; Their Craftsmanship from the Earliest Times to the Twentieth Century.* David R. Russell, with Photographs by James Austin. Published by John Adamson, 2010. 528 pp. £90.00

It has always seemed to me that if one is to understand antique furniture one really ought to have some knowledge of how it was made and so one should have at least an awareness of the tools that were used, whether they be braces, ploughs, awls, adzes or planes; of these, most will recognize a plane but what about the others?

A brace is an old word for a hand-powered drill for boring holes, while a plough was a special, complex adjustable plane to cut rebates. An awl, also known as a bradawl, was a small tool used to start a hole before using a brace, and an adze was an axe where the head is set at right angles to the handle and the tradesman stands astride the plank to smooth out the wood prior to planning, Windsor chair-makers also might use an adze to shape the seat or saddle of the chair.

The written history of tools is quite recent, probably the first books were the volumes by W. L. Goodman in the early 1960s on the history of planes and plane makers and then in 1975 came Ralph Salaman's authoritative *Dictionary of Tools used in the Woodworking and allied trades, c. 1700–1970*. Salaman's book is, I believe, the gold standard by which any book concerning the history of wood working tools must be judged. However, it only has line drawings and no photographs whereas David Russells's book has the most splendid photographs, and at the end of the book is a very useful illustrated list of makers' marks.

The book is essentially the catalogue of David R. Russell's 40 year pursuit of old tools and as such there are over 900 colour illustrations on 528 pages showing the 2000 tools in his collection ranging in date from some Stone Age axes through to mid-twentieth century planes. After the pages of Contents, Foreword by David Linley, Preface and Introduction the next twenty pages deal with the very early tools from the Early Palaeolithic to the Roman period. One can see the extraordinary manual dexterity required to make these ancient tools while to hold such a tool is to immediately realise how fit for purpose they were and in the case of some tools from the Roman period just how little change there has been over 2000 years.

After this initial section of very early tools one comes to the heart of this substantial book. Much the greater part concerns the woodworking plane, in all their myriad shapes and forms — all dictated by the use to which they were originally put. Continental planes, and indeed many tools, were much more decorative than their British counterparts; much like the furniture that they were used to make. A joiner or cabinet maker would have had dozens of planes of all sorts, long 'jack planes' for preparatory work, slightly smaller planes for cutting rebates, and many moulding planes such as the matched pairs to cut 'hollows and rounds' so producing the common scotia and bolection mouldings. All the tradesman's tools would have been kept in a large box with a plain rough exterior and so often with a fine interior display of inlay and marquetry work made by the man himself (Fig. 34–5).

Inside the tool-box, besides the many planes, there would have been hammers, saws, bevels and try-squares to achieve the correct angles for cutting and often made from brass and rosewood, stamped or engraved with the maker's name, and sometimes a succession of owner's names. Also illustrated, and also originally stored in the tool-box, are fine cut-steel compasses, the more elaborate ones usually being French or Dutch, but important tools for marking out. Rulers were also vital tools and the book illustrates a number of ivory rulers that folded to go into the toolbox, or pocket. Finally of the smaller items that David Russell has collected, which are wonderfully illustrated, are little plumb-bobs — almost one of the oldest and least altered of tools; the plumb-bob is simply a weight attached to a string to achieve a vertical line. Russell has shown more than two dozen, some made from bronze while others are turned and inlaid ivory or bone, most only about 2–3 inches long (PI 269–95).

When looking at old tools it is often possible to see the sweat marks remaining from the way the tradesman held it and also to see the name stamped into the wood. This is particularly true of planes and the name was needed because they were his sole means of employment. The loss of one's tools, as happened to Thomas Chippendale's workmen after a fire in 1755, reduced them to penury; so Chippendale and his partner Rannie set up a lottery to raise money to buy new tools for them.

The book is large format, over 10 by 13ins and weighing nearly 9lbs; production standards are of a very high order and so the quality and variety of the photographs make the book good value, for anyone interested it will be a very good investment and a superb reference book.

Treve Rosoman.  
June 2011.



## REPORTS ON THE SOCIETY'S ACTIVITIES

LANCASTER HOUSE, 31st January 2011

James Yorke led this wonderful visit around the variously-named York House, Stafford House and finally, in its current incarnation, Lancaster House. A venue for government and Foreign Office entertainment and conferences since 1945, we were extremely privileged to have access and those of us who had not been there before were bowled over by the lavishness of the nineteenth-century interiors, about which we were able to learn so much from their foremost scholar.

This house is remarkable for its debt to so many great nineteenth-century architects. From the early beginnings of the residence, planned on a grand scale for the spendthrift Duke of York, we learnt of the subsequent ousting of the official architect, Sir Robert Smirke in 1825, the involvement of Benjamin and Philip Wyatt and then, in its final stages, the re-involvement of not only Smirke but also the introduction of Sir Charles Barry into the mix. The interiors are a testament to the creativity of architects and craftsmen alike — the scagliola in the vast staircase hall by William Croggon, the ironwork by Joseph Bramah supporting the principal staircase, the plasterwork by Bernasconi & Co, George Jackson's famous 'putty' in many of the state rooms, and the furnishings of Morel and Seddon and George Morant & Son.

Over a period of perhaps twenty years the house was decorated and furnished in the latest 'tutti Louis' style; Pierre Lepautre's influence is evident in the staircase hall, for example, while Régence motifs used by Gilles Marie Oppenord and early rococo motifs heavily influenced by the Hotel de Villars are evident in the Great South Drawing Room. To a large extent the furniture originally commissioned for the house was also in the French style and still remains *in situ* — in the ground-floor Salon the pier tables and the giltwood pelmets are by Morel and Seddon (Nicholas Morel had been sent to France by George IV to assist his work at Windsor); Empire-style chairs now in the Duke's Library and other pieces were ordered in the 1830s from Desiré Dellier of Berner St; and George Morant & Son of New Bond Street supplied much of the furniture from 1837, including white and gold Louis XIV-style furniture, much of it upholstered in amber-coloured silk for the grandest first floor State Apartment, the Great Drawing Room. Still in situ here are the pier tables by Morant, each with two entwined putti forming the pedestal, made to look like marble. In the Lower Dining Room Barry was responsible for the simple rectangular panelling for the walls, and pairs of gilt pier glasses and white and gilt sideboards with massive consoles. Grecian chairs for this room were supplied by Morel and Seddon in 1829, but the large eagle table may have been made during 1893–95 redecorations by Messrs Trollope.

Other artists and craftsmen involved in the creation of this palace included a ceiling by Henry Howard, a chimney piece by Richard Westmacott, terms by Mazzoni, and embossed glass by John Hemming Jnr. Some of the furnishings were sourced directly from Paris; the dealer Antoine Lynen supplied chimney pieces, clocks and gilt bronze work by Crozatier in the late 1830s. The State Dining Room and the Gallery were the last rooms to be finished in 1841, and Charles Barry's more accurate interpretation of le style Louis XIV is evident on the doors and door frames.

The total effect is one of overt grandeur on a scale of lavishness not usually found in London houses, or for that matter in eighteenth-century Parisian hôtels: even François Mitterrand was bowled over by it when he was entertained to dinner here. We are lucky that it has found such an appropriate role in modern life.

Helen Jacobsen



## LACOCK ABBEY, Wiltshire, 5th April 2011

The main reason for this visit was to reacquaint ourselves with objects acquired by the National Trust in their recent purchase from the Talbot family of important furniture and objects in the house. Christopher Rowell and Lisa White led the visit, and we were warmly welcomed by the custodian, David Formby, who put an entire afternoon at our disposal and gave us the benefit of his nearly twenty years experience at the property.

When William Sharington acquired the Abbey after the Dissolution in 1539 he destroyed the church but kept the ground level cloisters intact and focused his attentions on the first floor which he converted into a private dwelling; he also added an octagonal tower containing a strong room, banqueting house and viewing platform. This tower contains two of the jewels of the Lacock collection — stone carved pedestal tables with marble tops from c. 1550 that pay homage to Flemish Renaissance engravings (such as those by Androuet du Cerceau). These are of great quality which led to suggestions that they could have been carved by an itinerant continental mason, some of whom are known to have been in London at this period; the guide book attribution is to John Chapman, a local mason who worked for Sharington regularly (and carved his canopied tomb in the church) and whom Sharington recommended to Sir John Thynne at Longleat. Whoever is responsible for the tables, the carving is rich and sophisticated: Sharington's personal cipher (a highly appropriate scorpion) and initials decorate the better-preserved table in the Strong Room (effectively Sharington's *kunstkammer*), and thoroughly Renaissance banqueting motifs appear on the other, including representations of Bacchus, Apicius and Ceres. Also remarkable is the fact that they have not moved from their original positions, and are complemented by the octagonal pattern on the stone floors, echoing the octagons of the table tops and the tower itself. Several other items date from Sharington's time or before, including a vast bronze cauldron signed and dated by Peter Wagheuens of Malines, 1500, a bronze pestal and mortar marked with Sharington's name and scorpion cipher, and some sixteenth-century Worcester tiles similarly marked.

The next important phase in Lacock's history came during the ownership of John Ivory Talbot who made two major changes to the old Tudor House. In c. 1730 he created a dining room from what had been the Abbess's private apartments, a Palladian style room with classical door surrounds and frieze. The rococo-style pier glass and console table in this room are attributed to Henry Hill, a Marlborough cabinet-maker, and said to date from 1750. There was much discussion in the group over this; it is not even clear that the table and glass are a matched pair and the awful grey and white painting has killed the carving, which makes attribution difficult. Lisa White suggested that they could be the work of one of the craftsmen who came to Bath in the 1740s and 1750s from London following the wealthy clientele. But Hill is known to have carved the fireplace and frieze so he certainly worked at Lacock.

The dining room is in marked stylistic contrast to the Gothick Hall next door. Ivory Talbot was a friend of Sanderson Miller, who suggested in 1753 that it would be appropriate to 'do' Gothick at Lacock; the medieval stained glass was placed in a new rose window over the entrance door and in the large Gothic windows flanking it, a Gothick cornice was supplied, and the barrel ceiling was painted with the coats of arms of Ivory Talbot's friends and relations. We admired the wonderful terracotta sculptures by the otherwise unknown sculptor Victor Alexander Sederbach in niches on the walls. The 1778 inventory listed four 'plumtree' tables in the room; the National Trust's recent purchase includes the four tables currently in the hall, with Gothick decoration, which are believed to be those listed (but thought by the group to be cypress or yew). The same inventory listed 12 walnuttree hall chairs, still *in situ*.

Also in the house in 1778 and now upstairs in the Stone Hall are the other important chairs at Lacock: a set of six shell-backed sgabelli, very similar to those at Petworth, the V&A and Melbury (although the Lacock ones have no arms), dating from the 1630s. They have been repainted several times and are now in light and dark grey with the Talbot crest. The Stone Hall was originally the nuns' dormitory and was turned into a gallery to offer views over the formal garden by William Sharington. The stone fireplace, carved in Renaissance style, still survives from his time. The two tables in the Gothick style are likely to be the mahogany tables noted in the 1778 inventory and at that time in the Gothick Hall.

David Formby showed us into every nook, cranny and roof space and we had a most interesting day at this fascinating house, so much so that Lacock's most famous owner, Henry Fox Talbot, barely received a mention!

Helen Jacobsen

### KNEBWORTH HOUSE, Hertfordshire, 19 April 2011

Knebworth has been the home of the Lytton family since the 1490s. Its most famous resident was perhaps Edward Bulwer Lytton, 1st Baron Lytton, the Victorian novelist.

The Great Hall contains a magnificent plaster ceiling, Jacobean screen and outstanding pine panelling dating from about 1700. It was here that our tour started, expertly and informatively led by Clare Fleck, the Archivist and her helpful colleagues. The group was later welcomed by Martha and Henry Lytton Cobbold. Much thought was given as to the possible origins of the pine panelling: could it be ecclesiastical and, given its grandeur, removed from a Bishop's Palace? The group was also interested in a pair of throne-like *bergères*, Continental in appearance but possibly by Pratt in an antiquarian mode.

We then made our way to the Dining Parlour where the Flemish Baroque cabinet on stand of tortoiseshell and polychrome raised questions as to whether the scenes were painted on ivory or alabaster. A pair of sofas were felt to have been made to fit the hangings removed from Wanstead House, thus accounting for their proportions.

From the Dining Parlour to the Library, a section of painted coving and ceiling dating to around 1650 was exposed under a perspex panel, subtly integrated into the whole. The Library contained a display about the suffragette, Lady Lytton, but whilst showing dutiful interest in the family, the group was much more excited by the table on which these memorabilia were displayed. The objects were removed and the large scagliola top was examined. It was felt to be Italian, c. 1670, and probably to have been a wall panel or piece of flooring which would account for its very well used state. A pair of late eighteenth-century torchères of ebonised and parcel giltwood in the manner of Adam and Wyatt were also admired.

A late eighteenth-century black and gilt japanned cabinet, with rare urn finials, in the Picture Gallery was possibly by Kettle of St Paul's Yard. In Lady Bulwer Lytton's Room, a white painted armchair, described in the inventory as 'English eighteenth/nineteenth century' was felt to be French of seventeenth-century date. A pair of mahogany and marquetry ladder-back chairs in the Queen Elizabeth Room had similarities with seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Portuguese furniture in the National Art and Antiquities Museum in Lisbon.

Looking at the paintings in the Picture Gallery, thought was given to the family portrait of William Robinson Lytton on a fishing expedition shown in unusual detail. Painted by Benjamin Ferrers and Joseph Highmore, it is set in a superb eighteenth century gilded frame, possibly by Whittle and Norman and which may well be the work of Continental craftsmen working in England.

It is perhaps fortunate that Lutyen's 'reign of taste' was put in check by financial exigencies, allowing some of Crace's earlier work to survive unscathed. All in all it was a fascinating and worthwhile visit much enjoyed by all.

Mark Aldbrook

GORHAMBURY, Hertfordshire, 19 April 2011

It is little short of a miracle that Gorhambury has such treasures to behold as it does, and still in the care of the Grimston family who built the house to the design of Sir Robert Taylor between 1777 and 1784. Having survived an attempt at sale in the 1930s the house was requisitioned in the Second World War, resulting in the razing of the stables by fire. Much of the historic furniture was sent for safety to a storage warehouse but was destroyed in an air raid. The very fabric of the building was also in peril by the mid-twentieth century with the Totternhoe clunch stone walls in a state of severe decay. The 5th Earl took the brave and wise decision to replace it entirely with more durable Portland stone. On a hot April day, the house looked coolly sophisticated in its recently restored parkland setting and acted as a calming balm for those who had battled against traffic jams and accidents on their way from Knebworth. Our unflappable and consummately professional NADFAS guides added to what proved to be a thoroughly enjoyable and stimulating visit.

The Grimstons of Gorhambury have the distinction of possessing perhaps the longest run of family portraits in the country, starting with the earliest surviving fully documented painting of an Englishman, that of 1446 by Petrus Christus of Edward Grimston which is now on loan to the National Gallery. Of other early objects still at Gorhambury we paid particular attention to the astonishingly well preserved English pile carpet of 1570, another first known example of its kind. It bears the arms of Elizabeth I flanked by those of the Borough of Ipswich, where it was probably made, and of the Harbottles, ancestors of the Grimstons. Of comparable date and extracted from Old Gorhambury, the house of the Bacons which is now a preserved ruin, are a carved Purbeck marble fireplace and extensive sixteenth-century enamelled glass of the highest quality. All these items are in the Entrance Hall which is flanked by the Dining and Ball Rooms. The former was refitted in the 1820s, with a suite of furniture commissioned from C. Hindley and Sons of Oxford Street. The sideboards remain *in situ*. They are of walnut from the estate and, with their tapering form and plinth bases, are typical of the second generation of Greek revival furniture. Among many other fine objects in the room are a pair of lavishly cast silver tureens of 1740 and 1750, by Peter Archanbo and Peter Taylor respectively, and a chimney garniture of bronzes by the Zoffoli brothers of Rome, reminiscent of the arrangement shown in Zoffany's *Sir Lawrence Dundas with his grandson* (1769). Christopher Rowell pointed out the wealth of furniture details in the Jacobean portraits with the Van Somer of the Countess of Sussex showing the curious balancing of a cushion on the arms of a green velvet chair of state, comparable to that in red velvet surviving at Knole.

The Grand Tour of the 3rd Viscount Grimston in the early 1770s coincided with that of his future wife, Harriot Walter. She travelled with her parents and many of the finest additions to the collection at that time, particularly sculpture, were their purchases. These include a bust of Pope Clement XIV by Christopher Hewetson, dated 1772, and, most significantly of all, a group of works by Piranesi: there are two richly and deeply sculpted fireplaces in the Yellow Drawing Room and Library and that in the latter supports monumental marble urns also by Piranesi. The sixteenth-century terracotta busts of Sir Nicholas and Lady Bacon and one of their sons are of exceptional quality and add to the great range of portraiture of a consistently high quality that marks out the Gorhambury collection. The family even had an accomplished artist amongst their own kin: Sir Nicholas

Bacon (1585–1627) studied under Snyders and could turn his hand equally competently to portraiture and still life, as evidenced by the huge canvases hanging in the Ball Room. That room provided the most energetic debate of the visit, over a suite of mid-eighteenth-century seat furniture consisting of a settee and six armchairs, some upholstered in contemporary floral needlework. Whether this was the original covering was contemplated in the light of the fit of the pattern, which is somewhat awkward, but the conclusion, informed by Sarah Medlam's comments, was that this was not out of the ordinary for the period. The design of the frames was also puzzled over, particularly because of the strange, attenuated proportions which approximated more to the illustrations in Chippendale's *Director* than to the usual interpretation of the cabinet maker.

More mid-eighteenth century seat furniture was to be found in the Yellow Drawing Room along with magnificent Grecian pedimented pier tables by George Bullock whilst in the Library we saw a set of mahogany elbow chairs akin to those recorded in the basement halls at Chiswick House and Houghton but of a later date and possibly contemporary with the 3rd Viscount Grimston's Gorhambury. Our tour ended with an ascent of Taylor's elegant elliptical staircase to look at two oak four-post beds which we analysed in some detail. That inherited from Lady Burrell and formerly at Parham in Sussex certainly passed muster as early seventeenth-century apart from having been heightened. Lady Verulam joined us to hear what we had found particularly interesting and she kindly allowed those who had time to inspect some of the family rooms in the basement before we headed back down the long drive, appreciating the fine view of St Alban's Abbey as we went. We are very grateful to Lord and Lady Verulam for allowing us such privileged access and to our guides both for their knowledge and for their patience and sensitivity in the face of our peculiar ways.

James Rothwell

WADDESDON MANOR, Buckinghamshire, 23rd May 2010

Waddesdon Manor contains one of the finest assemblages of eighteenth-century decorative arts in the world. It was built in the style of a sixteenth-century French château for Ferdinand de Rothschild by the French architect Gabriel-Hippolyte Destailleur.

Our tour was led by Ulrich Leben and Rachel Boak. Until recently, the nineteenth century was a comparatively neglected field and collections formed in this period tended to attract attention primarily on the merit of their component pieces. However, this tour gave us the opportunity to consider the *goût Rothschild* as an informed and often innovative use of eighteenth-century *boiseries* and decorative arts within a house specifically built and furnished to amuse, entertain and delight its late nineteenth century owner and his guests. The marble-clad dining room, for example, is pure nineteenth-century grandeur, furnished with framed Beauvais tapestries that would never have adorned a *salon à manger* a century earlier; the pastoral themes perfectly reflect the rolling views that would have been visible to nineteenth-century house guests through the large, open windows. The gigantic chimney piece, surmounted by *putti* bearing candelabra appears just as much a nineteenth-century confection but, in fact, closely corresponds to a design published in the *Encyclopedie* and executed for the Palais Royal. The console tables, which appear *en suite* with the eighteenth-century mirror frame, are on the other hand, nineteenth century. Waddesdon is filled with such conceits, which, in most cases, succeed in reinvigorating rather than defiling the principles of eighteenth-century design.

The house is synonymous with its remarkable collection of French royal furniture. Among the highlights are Marie-Antoinette's writing table made by Jean-Henri Riesener in

1782 and also the gargantuan roll-top desk made for Pierre-Auguste Caron de Beaumarchais probably by Jean-Francois Leleu. On this occasion we were able to take a closer look at the construction of many of these pieces to appreciate the refinement of their joinery, the ingenuity of their mechanisms and the luxury of their interior fittings.

The day ended with an informal discussion about the research currently being undertaken and what mysteries remain to be solved. We were shown a recently conserved arm chair, discovered to have been made for the comte d'Artois at Bagatelle, which, based on archival research, was stripped of its later nineteenth century printed cotton, reupholstered in 'English Green' Italian velvet and splendidly regilded. We also look forward to learning more about the stupendous lacquer bureau which dominates the Morning Room, and the possible circumstances of its commission.

Kit Maxwell

#### THE OLIVER FORD TRUST AND TOM INGRAM MEMORIAL FUND

In line with one of its roles — the promotion of interest in interior design — the Oliver Ford Trust has generously expressed the desire to sponsor a place on each FHS study weekend or foreign tour. Applicants should either be a student with a particular interest in interiors, or a junior museum professional. Applications from non-members will be considered. Grants will be awarded via the Tom Ingram Fund, to which candidates should apply.

The Tom Ingram Memorial Fund makes grants towards travel and other incidental expenses for the purpose of study or research into the history of furniture (a) whether or not the applicant is a member of the Society; (b) only when the study or research is likely to be of importance in furthering the objectives of the Society; and (c) only when travel could not be undertaken without a grant from the Society. Applications towards the cost of FHS foreign and domestic trips and study weekends are particularly welcome from scholars. Successful applicants are required to acknowledge the assistance of the Fund in any resulting publications and must report back to the Panel on completion of the travel or project. All applications should be addressed to Adriana Turpin, Secretary to the Fund at 39 Talbot Road, London W2 5JH, Turpinadriana@hotmail.com, who will also supply application forms for the Oliver Ford Trust grants on request. Please remember to send an s.a.e. with any request.

The committee requests that applications for study trips be made well in advance of the final deadline for acceptance — preferably at least one month before.

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The deadline for receiving material to be published in the next *Newsletter* is **15 September**. Copy should be sent, preferably by email, Elizabeth Jamieson ea.jamieson@tiscali.co.uk or posted to Elizabeth Jamieson, 10 Tarleton Gardens, Forest Hill, London SE23 3XN

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*FHS e-mail: [furniturehistory@hotmail.com](mailto:furniturehistory@hotmail.com)*

*Web site: [www.furniturehistorysociety.org](http://www.furniturehistorysociety.org)*

*Council members can be contacted through the Events or Membership Secretaries whose details are shown above. Contributors can be contacted through the Newsletter Editor who in the case of this issue is Matthew Winterbottom at The Holburne Museum of Art, Bath, BA2 4DB, tel 01255 820813 or email: [m.winterbottom@bath.ac.uk](mailto:m.winterbottom@bath.ac.uk)*

*This issue edited by Matthew Winterbottom*

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