

The Furniture History Society

Newsletter 233

February 2024

An Apprentice absent from his Master's service.

THE subscriber finds himself under the disagreeable necessity of giving this public notice, that his apprentice lad Humphrey Hopper, having in the time of the fever gone to visit his mother, Sarah Fritze, living at New York, hath exceeded the time allowed him for that visit; and notwithstanding the repeated demands of his master for his return, he continues still absent, and therefore the subscriber hereby cautions and forbids all persons whatsoever from harbouring or entertaining the said apprentice Humphrey Hopper, who is now about 17 years of age, of fair hair and complexion, and by trade a cabinet maker.

Whoever apprehends and secures said apprentice, so that his said master can get him again, shall receive TWO DOLLARS reward, but no charges whatever, from

Daniel Hay,
No. 53, south Third Street.

Dec. 23

at 1310

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In this issue: Rediscovered: British and Irish Furniture Makers in Early America, 1700-1840 | FHS Events Calendar | FHS Events | FHS News | BIFMO Update | Tribute | Other News | Book Reviews | Reports on FHS Events | Grants | ECD News | Publications

Rediscovered: British and Irish Furniture Makers in Early America, 1700-1840

The Migration and Craftmanship project is recording information about known and previously undocumented immigrant furniture makers, drawing upon contemporary newspapers, census reports, wills, inventories and various directories. To date our interns have identified 248 furniture makers (the vast majority previously unknown) in New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Annapolis, Fredericksburg, Lynchburg, Richmond and Savannah.

LAURIE LINDEY

Daniel Hay (1751-1798)

Scottish cabinetmaker Daniel Hay was born in about 1751 to James Hay, a merchant from the coastal town of Dundee.¹ Like many young men seeking to establish themselves, Hay emigrated to America sometime around 1784 at the age of about 33. He was likely trained as a cabinetmaker in Scotland before travelling to Philadelphia to establish his own workshop. In doing so, he joined the ranks of accomplished Scottish cabinetmakers bringing their trade, skills, and taste to the developing urban world of eighteenth-century Philadelphia.

This was a tumultuous time to be moving from Great Britain to the new United States, but it offered strategic

tradespeople the chance to find a profitable new life for themselves and their families. Following the official end to hostilities between the US and Great Britain in 1783, trans-Atlantic trade began to resume at even higher levels than before the war. Philadelphia, the young nation's capital between 1790 and 1800, developed a cosmopolitan taste for British and French luxury goods. Cabinetmakers and joiners like Hay, trained in an older style but aware of the circulating fashions of the day, found themselves poised to meet a tremendous demand.

While to date no object known to be made by Daniel Hay has been identified, Hay appears in the receipt book of Benjamin Chew where, in 1785, it is recorded that Hay received four pounds and ten shillings for a bedstead.² The price suggests that this was probably a mahogany, claw-foot, high post bedstead with plain posts and stained poplar rails and headboard.³ This early commission demonstrates that Hay was not only well trained in Scotland, but that he was beginning to establish important connections within the trade and social communities of urban Philadelphia. At the time of the commission Hay was working on Water Street, near Pine Street.⁴ Hay would later move his home and shop to

the fashionable South Third Street not far from Chew's substantial townhouse.⁵ Hay's bedstead was unlikely to find a place in the elegant primary bedroom, but it may have been used elsewhere in the house.⁶

To establish himself socially and financially in Pennsylvania outside his business, Daniel acquired land and property for himself and his young family. Hay had travelled to America with his wife, Catharine Ferrior, whom he had married in 1782 at Paisley, Renfrewshire, Scotland.⁷ The couple had three children: Peter, born in about 1789⁸, Mary, and Catharine. It is currently unclear where the Hay family lived while Daniel was working on Water Street. Hay was taxed for his occupation in the New Market district of Philadelphia in 1786 and 1787, but the tax assessments for that year do not record any dwelling associated with him.⁹ He probably rented until he was established enough to purchase a home and shop for himself.

After 1790, Hay both lived and worked at 53 South Third Street 'on the east side at the cross of Chestnut Street'.¹⁰ The 1792 Pennsylvania Census recorded Hay in the South Ward of Philadelphia, with several hairdressers and a shopkeeper as neighbours.¹¹ In that same year, *Dunlap's Daily Advertiser* reported that Hay's home had been broken into while the family were at church, and twenty dollars taken from his desk.¹² This brief notice offers more evidence that Hay was likely to have been working in a shop on the first floor of his dwelling.¹³ The notice's phrasing also suggests that the Hays' home was near their church, hinting at the melting pot of

civic, religious, and trade communities in Daniel's life. The family was Presbyterian and they possibly attended the Third Presbyterian Church or the Scots Presbyterian Church.

In addition to his urban home and shop, Daniel also owned land in the Northern Liberties district of Philadelphia, where he was taxed for a substantial house and lot.¹⁴ Indeed, Hay published a public notice in *Dunlap's Daily Advertiser* in 1792 defending his ownership of a 'three story brick Tenement & Lot of Ground, breadth 20 feet, length 120 feet, on the west side of New Market Street in the Northern Liberties.' This was probably an investment property to supplement his income since there is little indication that Hay had any regular connection with the property.

Given the length of apprenticeships, up to seven years, Hay would probably have been unable to take on more than two or three young men during his fourteen years in Philadelphia. The 1790 Census lists a household of five, including two 'free white' males under the age of 16.¹⁵ One of these boys was Hay's son Peter, but the other may have been a boy apprenticed in Hay's shop. In 1798, at the time of his death, Hay was still listed as an active cabinetmaker at his longstanding address on South Third Street. Indeed, around the time of his death, he published an advertisement noting the extended absence of his apprentice, Humphrey Hopper. The boy had gone to New York to visit his mother 'at the time of the fever' and had not returned as summoned.¹⁶ (cover image). Hay very likely succumbed to Yellow Fever himself, given the

suddenness of his passing and the lack of clear documentation surrounding his death.

At the time of his death Daniel Hay's inventory was valued at £166.9.3 with William Richards, breeches maker, and Peter Stewart, printer, serving as executors his will was proven in July 1798. Catharine retained her husband's property and appears on the Philadelphia Direct Tax List in 1798. She was taxed \$2250 for two brick dwellings on South Third Street, one 16 feet x 30 feet dwelling, the other a 'kitchen dependency building' measuring 11 feet x 20 feet.¹⁷ She was also appointed executrix of the Daniel Hay estate, suggesting that she also retained control of his Northern Liberties property.

Catharine outlived her husband by nearly five decades and passed away in 1845 at the age of 93.¹⁸ Hay's eldest son Peter served in the War of 1812 and went on to become an alderman in the city of Philadelphia.¹⁹

Daniel Hay's time in America was not extraordinary but remains representative of the lives of the hundreds of craftspeople who moved to America, attempting to create a name for themselves and secure a market for their trade. What was proving to be a profitable career was cut short by his own death – the manner of his passing reflecting the perennial dangers of emigration to America. While he did not live long enough to bring his son Peter into the cabinetmaking trade, he was nevertheless able to establish a foothold for his family in Philadelphia with his descendants continuing to live and work there until the early twentieth century.

GRACE FORD-DIRKS

Research Assistant in American Silver at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and BIFMO Intern

- 1 David Dobson, U.S. *Directory of Scottish Settlers in North America, 1625-1825* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2011), p. 118. www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/11135:62215?tid=&pid=&queryId=ca20b8e391a730577526b2ab124f34c5&_phsrc=KCR476&_phstart=successSource
- 2 Nancy E. Richards, *Benjamin Chew's Receipt Book, 1770-1809*, (Philadelphia, PA: Cliveden of the National Trust, 1993), p. 100. www.cliveden.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/benjamin_chew_receipt_book-1.pdf
- 3 James Humphreys Jr., *Prices of Cabinet and Chair Work* (Philadelphia, PA: James Humphreys, Jr., 1772), p. 27. www.philamuseum.org/collection/object/281925
- 4 Francis White, *The Philadelphia Directory* (1785), p. 30.
- 5 Clement Biddle, *The Philadelphia Directory* (1791), p. 55.
- 6 Nancy E. Richards, *The City Home of Benjamin Chew, Sr., and his Family: A Case Study of the Textures of Life* (Philadelphia, PA: Cliveden of the National Trust, 2021), p. 3. www.cliveden.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/benjamin-chew-townhouse.pdf
- 7 Anon., *Scotland, Select Marriages, 1561-1910* [database on-line] (Lehi, UT: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014). www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/841540:60144
- 8 U.S. Death Certificates Index (1879), Philadelphia, PA, 'Peter Hay'. www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/2123675:2535
- 9 Pennsylvania Tax & Exoneration Records (1786), New Market, 'Daniel Hay'. www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/1425399:2497?tid=&pid=&queryId=ca20b8e391a730577526b2ab124f34c5&_phsrc=KCR476&_phstart=successSource
- 10 James Hardie, *The Philadelphia Directory* (1793), p. 62.; *Prospect of Philadelphia City Directory* (1795), p. 124; James Hardie, *The Philadelphia Directory* (1796), p. 64; Thomas Stephens, *The Philadelphia Directory* (1796), p. 82; Cornelius Stafford, *The Philadelphia Directory* (1797), p. 86.

- 11 Philadelphia Septennial Census (1793), South Ward, 'Daniel Hay'. www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/592524:2702?tid=&pid=&queryId=ca20b8e391a730577526b2ab124f34c5&_phsrc=KCR476&_phstart=successSource
- 12 *Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser*. (Philadelphia, PA), No. 4175, June 13, 1792: [3], 'Daniel Hay'. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. www.infoweb-newsbank-com.udel.idm.oclc.org/apps/readex/doc?p=EANX&docref=image/v2%3A10380B3185E81D90%40EANX-1074B572ED478998%402375739-1074B5736449BBE0%402-1074B574DD946728%40%255BMr.%2BDaniel%2BHay%255D.
- 13 This was fairly common for urban tradespeople. See: Martha Gandy Fales, *Joseph Richardson and Family: Philadelphia Silversmiths*, (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1974) for example.
- 14 Pennsylvania Tax & Exoneration Records (1789), Northern Liberties, 'Daniel Hay'. www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/1534255:2497?tid=&pid=&queryId=ca20b8e391a730577526b2ab124f34c5&_phsrc=KCR476&_phstart=successSource

- 15 United States Federal Census (1790), Water Street, 'Daniel Hay'. www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/342658:5058?tid=&pid=&queryId=ca20b8e391a730577526b2ab124f34c5&_phsrc=KCR502&_phstart=successSource
- 16 Daniel Hay, *Porcupine's Gazette* (Philadelphia, PA) Vol. 2, No. 262, January 5, 1798: [4], Advertisement. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*. www.infoweb-newsbank-com.udel.idm.oclc.org/apps/readex/doc?p=EANX&docref=image/v2%3A10CEB6D02C5C720%40EANX-110CB3CFDAD3FF08%40237771-110CB3D0A9FD67A8%403-110CB3D2B116A298%40Advertisement.
- 17 United State Direct Tax Lists (1798), Philadelphia, PA, 'Catherine Hay'. www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/209897:2060
- 18 Philadelphia County Will Index, (1797), Book X, p. 742, Daniel Hay. www.ancestrylibrary.com/discoveryui-content/view/50615:4695
- 19 J. Thomas Scharf, *History of Philadelphia 1609-1884, Vol. 1*, (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts & Co., 1884), p. 579, footnote 2.

FHS Events Calendar

Here you can find **all currently scheduled** forthcoming FHS and BIFMO Events; please refer to subsequent pages for more information. Additional events may still be added and advertised by email and on the website.

2024

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| 22 FEBRUARY | Visit to Farley's Prop Hire |
| 10 MARCH | Online lecture with Stephen Jackson |
| 23 MARCH | Annual Symposium |
| 19-21 APRIL | Overseas Study Trip to Brussels |
| 17-19 MAY | UK Study Trip to Derbyshire |
| 23 MAY | Visit to Beckford's Tower, Bath |
| 18 JUNE | Visit to Buscot Park |
| 8 JULY | Visit to Spencer House |
| 25-29 OCTOBER | Overseas Study Trip to Dresden |



© 2023 Classical and Contemporary Art Hire Ltd

Visit to Farley Prop Hire

1-21 BRUNEL ROAD, LONDON W3 7XR

THURSDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2024

10.30 AM – 12.00 PM

Be it Tudor bench, Art Nouveau screen or Regency chair, spotted on a film interior, chances are that it has come from a prop hire company.

Chances also are that it has come from Farley, Britain's leading specialist prop hire company for film, TV productions, and events. Farley's own a large collection of original antique furniture, accessories and authentic props. The company's collection started in 1962 and now includes over 50,000 stock items, spanning many centuries of design.

The company is separated into four departments each with their own specialism. Farley is the parent company and is also

the largest division. It is made up of furniture, lighting and objets d'art collected since its inception.

The majority of the collection is composed of original antiques, but Farley also now have some reproduction and contemporary pieces as well as custom-made designs produced in their workshops.

Farley's props have featured in countless films and television shows over the years, from Hollywood blockbusters to cult classics.

This visit is led by Kate Dyson, Events Committee member with a tour by Mark Farley.

COST: £20

LIMIT: 20

Please contact the Events Secretary to see if there are still spaces.

Online lecture

SUNDAY 10 MARCH 2024

6.00 PM GMT, (13:00 EST)

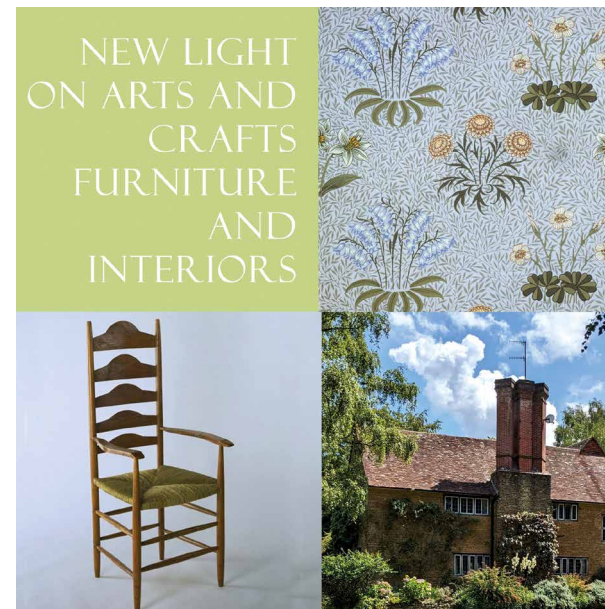
Scottish Furniture, 1500-1914

Stephen Jackson

In March 2024, National Museums Scotland will publish *Scottish Furniture, 1500-1914*, the first comprehensive narrative account of furniture-making in Scotland. The author of this new book, Stephen Jackson, has been Senior Curator, Furniture and Woodwork at NMS for over twenty years. In this lecture he will speak about a range of new discoveries ranging from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, as well as the challenges of writing a broad survey.

Stephen Jackson began working with furniture at the Geffrye Museum, now the Museum of the Home, in London on graduating from Cambridge in 1993. He wrote an MPhil with David Jones at St Andrews before working as a curator at Middlesex University, Brent Council and the Victoria and Albert Museum. He joined National Museums Scotland in 1999. He has published nineteen journal articles on furniture and interior design. He has been working towards this project for a long time and during 2018-19 undertook a programme of fieldwork on pre-1700 Scottish furniture funded by the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

A Zoom link will be sent to all members in advance of the lecture.



Chair designed by Ernest Gimson after 1888, V&A Circ.232-1960; Munstead Wood, designed by Edwin Lutyens for Gertrude Jekyll, 1896; Lily wallpaper designed by William Morris, 1873, V&A E.484-1919.

The 48th Annual Symposium

New light on Arts & Crafts furniture and interiors

ART WORKERS' GUILD, 6 QUEEN SQUARE, LONDON WC1N 3AT

Also live-streamed over Zoom

SATURDAY 23 MARCH 2024

10.30 AM – 5.00 PM

The 2024 annual symposium will focus on Arts and Crafts furniture and interiors between about 1880 and 1920, including new research into the iconic British interiors of Kelmscott Manor and Emery Walker's House, with their rich and complex mix of furnishings; and the National Trust's new acquisition, Gertrude Jekyll's house, Munstead Wood, acquired unfurnished. In the second session, speakers will present fresh information

on individual designers and makers, on the transmission of design traditions and the influence of published photographs. The day will feature papers from an eminent panel of curators, scholars and furniture makers.

- 10.00 - 10.30 A.M. Registration and coffee/tea
- 10.30 - 10.35 A.M. Welcome by Christopher Rowell, FHS Chairman
- 10.35 - 10.40 A.M. Introduction by chair of morning: Tessa Wild – Designers and Interiors
- 10.40 - 11.05 A.M. *Evidential Choreography: Recomposing the interiors at Kelmscott Manor*
Dr Kathy Haslam FSA, Curator, Kelmscott Manor
- 11.05 - 11.30 A.M. *Emery Walker's House: The London Arts & Crafts Home*
Mallory Horrill, Senior Curator at Emery Walker's House,
Curator of Collections & Exhibitions at the William Morris Society
- 11.30 - 11.40 A.M. Short Break
- 11.40 AM - 12.05 P.M. *Gertrude Jekyll and Munstead Wood: the home of the artist-gardener*
Dr Caroline Ikin, Curator, National Trust, Munstead Wood
- 12.05 - 12.30 P.M. *Evolution, not revolution. Interpreting Ernest Gimson's designs through the generations*
The Marchmont Workshop: Richard Platt & Sam Cooper, Furniture Makers
- 12.30 - 12.45 P.M. Q & A
- 12.45 - 2.00 P.M. Lunch
- 2.00 - 2.05 P.M. Introduction by chair of afternoon: Martin Levy – Designers and Makers
- 2.05 - 2.25 P.M. *The Early Years of the Art Workers' Guild*
Peyton Skipwith, Fine art consultant and author
- 2.25 - 2.45 P.M. *BIFMO and the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society Catalogues, 1888-1916*
Clarissa Ward, BIFMO 19th/Early 20th Century Editor & Jo Buckrell,
BIFMO Research Assistant and Researcher, Haslemere Educational
Museum
- 2.45 - 3.10 P.M. *A Question of Attribution: the contemporaneous appropriation of architect designed Arts & Crafts furniture.*
Tony Peart, Senior Lecturer in Illustration at the University of Cumbria
- 3.10 - 3.25 P.M. Short Break
- 3.25 - 3.50 PM *Augustus H. Mason: 'Cabinet Maker, chiefly special designs'*
Annette Carruthers, Honorary Senior Lecturer, University of St
Andrews
- 3.50 - 4.15 P.M. *Garden of Hearts: A Case Study of an American Arts and Crafts Masterpiece*
Daniel S. Sousa, Assistant Curator, Historic Deerfield, Massachusetts,
USA
- 4.15 - 4.45 P.M. Q & A
- 4.45 - 5.00 P.M. Closing remarks/summing up
- 5.00 P.M. End

Tickets for the Symposium and for lunch (optional) are now on sale via the FHS website (www.furniturehistorysociety.org).

IN-PERSON TICKET PRICES:

£65 MEMBERS, £35 MEMBERS UNDER
35 YEARS, £80 NON-MEMBERS.

LIVE-STREAM TICKET PRICES:

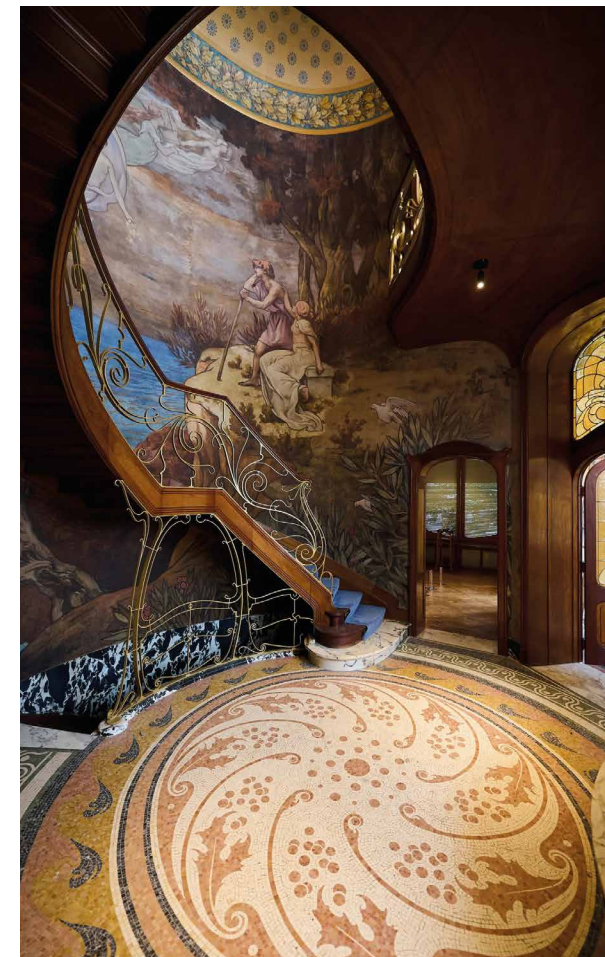
£25 MEMBERS, £15 MEMBERS UNDER
35 YEARS, £40 NON-MEMBERS.

Overseas Study weekend to Brussels

FRIDAY 19 APRIL TO SUNDAY 21 APRIL 2024

This two-night, three-day visit, organised by Maude Willaerts (Events Committee member and Assistant Curator in the Performance, Furniture, Textiles and Fashion Department at the V&A), will focus on Brussels and its world-renowned Art Nouveau architecture, interiors and furniture. In the recent years, much attention has been given to Belgian Art Nouveau heritage: Brussels became the Art Nouveau Capital of 2023, private houses (re)opened to the public and iconic interiors were restored and redisplayed. The trip will provide access to private collections and buildings and include exclusive curator-led tours of museums and houses.

Visits will include a tour of the newly opened, and meticulously preserved, Solvay House by Victor Horta. The architect conceived every detail of the building – listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Monument – and its opulent interiors, including its lavish furniture, carpets, and light fittings. We will then visit the Art and History Museum whose Art Nouveau collections contain the



Hôtel Hannon staircase. ©Grégory De Leuw.

interiors of the 1912 Wolfers Frères jewellery shop by Victor Horta. Its original furniture, recently restored, is beautifully laid out in a gallery of similar dimensions to the ones of the iconic shop, and the cases present some of the best examples of Art Nouveau jewellery and chryselephantine sculpture, including the *Sphinx Mystérieux*.

The Hôtel Hannon will be our next stop. The only Art Nouveau building created by the architect Jules Brunfaut, it presents an interesting example of architecture unifying French and Belgian

interpretations of the style. The house opened to the public, with its newly restored façade, in June 2023 and dedicates its first exhibition to the works of furniture designers and architects Henry van de Velde, Gustave Serrurier-Bovy and Paul Hankar. A guided visit will highlight important objects from the private Belgian Art Nouveau collection of Jonathan Manginckx.

The above itinerary will be supplemented by visits, including that to Cauchie House and 'Lab-An', for 'Art Nouveau Laboratory', selected from the abundance of iconic Art Nouveau venues and collections accessible in the European Capital. This immersive study trip will also include dinners and refreshments in historic Art Nouveau restaurants and cafes.

Please contact the Events Secretary to see if there are still spaces.

Spring Study trip to Derbyshire

FRIDAY 17 TO SUNDAY 19 MAY 2024

Our spring study weekend will visit of some of the great Derbyshire country houses as well as some lesser-known historic properties. The itinerary is subject to confirmation, but we plan to visit Renishaw Hall, home of the Sitwell family for 400 years, and Haddon Hall, owned by Lord and Lady Manners. Unmodernised since the seventeenth century, Haddon retains much of its fifteenth and sixteenth century fabric, including frescoes and panelling and the Medieval banqueting hall with its original dais table.

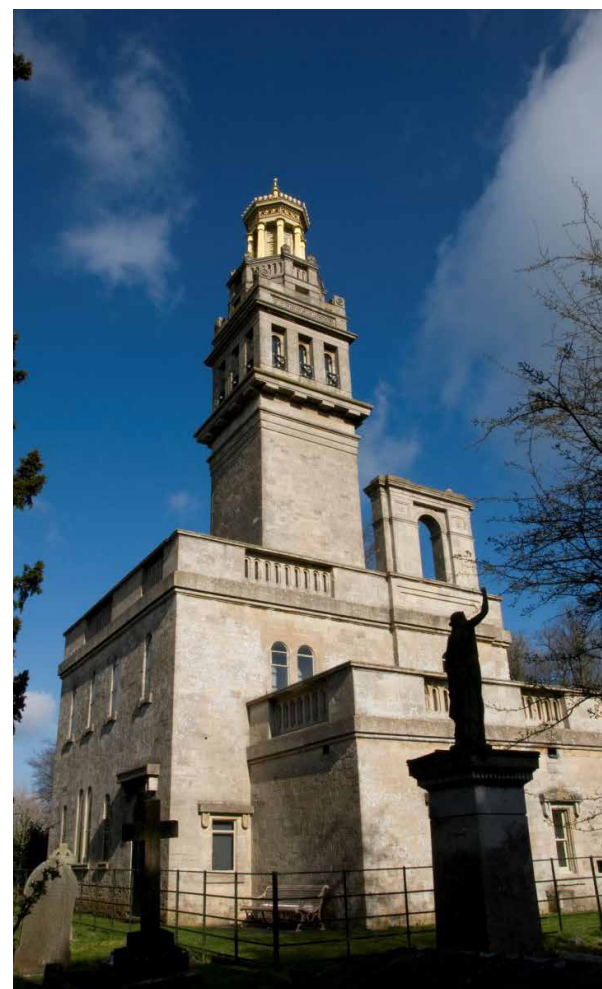
No visit to Derbyshire would be

complete without visiting the two great houses of the Dukes of Devonshire, Hardwick Hall and Chatsworth. At Hardwick, we will see the 'Sea-Dog Table', one of the best examples of Elizabethan furniture in the care of the National Trust, and the newly-conserved Gideon tapestries, purchased by Bess of Hardwick in 1592/3. Chatsworth boasts one of the most magnificent state apartments of any English country house, furnished by the first Duke of Devonshire in the late-seventeenth century with elaborate woodcarving, mural painting, marquetry cabinets, silverware and Delftware pyramids. We will also visit Buxton Pump Room and Assembly Rooms, recently restored and considered to be the best of architect John Carr's great rooms.

Sunday will be dedicated to the extensive collections of Kedleston Hall, an eighteenth-century mansion with Robert Adam interiors and many original furnishings, including furniture designed by Robert Adam and John Linnell, and a rococo state bed by James Gravenor. By contrast, Kedleston's 'Eastern Museum' contains furniture and objects acquired in South Asia and the Middle East by George Nathaniel Curzon, Viceroy of India.

The study weekend is organised and led by Amy Lim, curator at Buscot Park and Events Committee member. We will be staying at the New Bath Hotel & Spa, Matlock, a Georgian spa hotel with an outdoor swimming pool fed by naturally warmed spring water.

Please contact the Events Secretary to see if there are still spaces.



Beckford's Tower, Bath Preservation Trust

Visit to Beckford Tower

LANSDOWN ROAD, BATH BA1 9BH

THURSDAY 23 MAY 2024

Built between 1826 and 1827, Beckford's Tower is an extraordinary building that was once home to one of the greatest collections of books, furniture and art in Georgian England and now stands as the only surviving example of William Beckford's great architectural achievements.

William Beckford's ability to build, and to collect, was made possible by the wealth he inherited and continued to

accumulate as an owner of Jamaican sugar plantations and enslaved people, and through the compensation he received from the government following the abolition of slavery.

Beckford's Tower and Museum will reopen in March 2024 after capital works (made possible by the National Lottery Heritage Fund) to transform the museum, restore the Tower and reconnect the landscape. Our visit will be led by Dr Amy Frost and includes a visit to an apartment at 19 Lansdown Crescent where the fitted library furniture still survives.

COST: £35

LIMIT: 20

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:
FRIDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2024

Visit to Buscot Park

LECHLADE ROAD, FARINGDON, OXFORDSHIRE,
SN7 8BU

TUESDAY 18 JUNE 2024

2.00 PM – 5.00 PM

Buscot Park, an eighteenth-century Palladian mansion in Oxfordshire, is the family home of Lord Faringdon, who looks after the property on behalf of the National Trust. The family collection of pictures, furniture, ceramics and objets d'art – the Faringdon Collection – is displayed throughout the house. It is an eclectic mix of styles and periods that reflects the tastes of three generations, from Alexander Henderson, the first Baron Faringdon, who purchased Buscot Park in 1889, to the present Lord Faringdon, who continues to add to the collection. There are some important examples of English and continental furniture from



Suite of Thomas Hope furniture, c.1802, supplied to Hope for the Egyptian Room at Duchess Street, to Hope's own designs.

the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in particular the Regency 'Egyptomania' couch, armchairs and clock designed by Thomas Hope for his home in Duchess Street, London. Other highlights include a pair of mahogany side-tables designed by Robert Adam for Sir Watkin William-Wynn, an early eighteenth-century state bed bought from Normanton Park in Rutland, and a pair of Ince and Mayhew commodes commissioned by the 5th Duke of Marlborough. Some of the more unusual items are two eighteenth-century Gothick mahogany doors salvaged from Pomfret Castle in London, and a

marquetry cabinet inset with a musical game patented by Ann Young in 1801, one of only five known examples. After touring the house there will be an opportunity to explore the gardens, featuring an Italianate water garden designed by Harold Peto. The visit will be led by Dr Amy Lim, Curator of the Faringdon Collection and FHS Events Committee member.

COST: £35 (TO INCLUDE TEA/COFFEE)
LIMIT: 20
CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:
FRIDAY 8 MARCH 2024



Detail of one of the settees from the Painted Room, c.1760, designed by James 'Athenian' Stuart, on loan from the V&A. ©Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

Visit to Spencer House

27 ST. JAMES'S PLACE, ST. JAMES'S, LONDON, SW1A 1NR

MONDAY 8 JULY 2024

2.15 PM – 5.00 PM

Built for the first Earl Spencer between 1756 and 1766, Spencer House is a rare survival of the eighteenth-century aristocratic city mansion. In 1985 the building was leased by RIT Capital Partners plc and an ambitious ten-year restoration project was carried out under the chairmanship of Lord Rothschild. Today, the spectacular State Rooms are furnished with an impressive collection

of paintings, sculpture and furniture, the latter including both replica and original examples of pieces designed for the house by its architects, John Vardy and James 'Athenian' Stuart (generously loaned by the V&A and Leeds Museums & Galleries). Other important designers and makers represented in the collection include William Chambers, John Yenn, Adam Weisweiler, John Cobb and Mayhew and Ince.

Our visit will be led by Victoria Wilson, Collections Manager and Michael Shrive, Assistant Curator of Decorative Arts at Waddesdon Manor and FHS Events Committee Member.

COST: £35 (TO INCLUDE A GLASS OF WINE)

LIMIT: 18

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:
FRIDAY 8 MARCH 2024

Save the Date

In the planning is an Overseas Study trip to Dresden, 25-29 October 2024, to coincide with the special exhibition "Fait à Paris - Jean-Pierre Latz at the court of Dresden" (18 October 2024 to 2 February 2025). Under the expert guidance of Christiane Ernek van der Goes of the Kunstgewerbemuseum and curator of the exhibition, the group will have exclusive access to the exhibition at the State Apartments and the outstanding collections at the Residenzschloss on a day closed to the public.

This trip will be led by Dr Melanie Doderer-Winkler. More details to follow in the May Newsletter. Please contact events@furniturehistorysociety.org if you wish to be placed on the interest list.

Bookings

For places on visits please apply by email or letter to the Events Secretary, Beatrice Goddard providing separate cheques for each event or indicating that you wish to pay by card or online. The email address is events@furniturehistorysociety.org, or telephone 0777 5907390. For online payments you will be provided with a link to a payment page and an event reference. Where possible, joining instructions will be dispatched by e-mail, so please remember to provide your e-mail address if you have one.

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 provide a telephone number. Please note the closing dates for applications printed in the *Newsletter*. Applications made after the closing date will be accepted only if space is still available. Members are reminded that places are not allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, but that all applications are considered equally following the closing date.

Cancellations

Please note that no refunds will be given for cancellations for events costing £20.00 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 £10.00 deduction for administrative

costs. Separate arrangements are made for study weekends and foreign tours; terms are clearly stated on the printed details in each case.

Online Events

We continue to arrange occasional online events, but we are sometimes unable to advertise them in the Newsletter owing to publication lead-in times. We let members know by email and send links to members about a week in advance. They will also be advertised on the FHS website, on Instagram and Facebook (@furniturehistorysociety).

Most online events are free to members. Non-members can join for a small fee. BIFMO study courses will charge a fee for both members and non-members.

Recordings of many of our past lectures are freely available to members via accessing My Account on the FHS website using the following link:

www.furniturehistorysociety.org/membership/account/login/

Please use your email address and password, set up in My Account, to access. If you have forgotten or not set up a password, please use the link below.

www.furniturehistorysociety.org/accountforgot-your-password/

If you have any enquiries, or suggestions for future speakers or topics, please email the Events Secretary.

Thank you to Kate Dyson

Kate Dyson, a long-standing member of the FHS Events Committee, has recently stepped down. Kate has made a wonderful contribution to events, organising many memorable visits and helping to arrange symposia. Her background in journalism, antiques and design has paid dividends for the Society.

Kate used her expertise and wide range of contacts to inform numerous study trips, including Denmark (2009), Shropshire (2016), Edinburgh (2017) Northern Ireland (2018), Tuscany (2022) and most recently Devon (2023). She has also suggested and led many day visits for instance to Syon Park (2020), Charles Jencks's unique Cosmic House, and Southside House, Wimbledon before it was recently sold (both 2022). Her most recent suggestion is the visit to Farley's Prop Hire on 22 February this year, which will be the FHS's first visit to a film and TV prop hire company. Kate has also been part of the reception team at AGMs, annual lectures and symposia. Our Chairman Christopher Rowell gave a vote of thanks at the November AGM and the committee would also like to add their enormous thanks for her ideas and energy.

We have been lucky to have Kate on the committee and wish her well with future projects.

KATE HAY
Chair, Events Committee

Membership subscriptions

There are still a significant number of members who have yet to renew their 2023-24 membership. If you have received a renewal notice with this Newsletter then, according to our records your subscription remains unpaid.

There are two ways of renewing your subscription:

1. Use your email address and password set up in my Account to renew. If you have forgotten or not set up a password, please use the following link

www.furniturehistorysociety.org/Account/login

Click the link: 'Forgot my password'. Enter your email address. Click 'Send' and you will receive a link to set up a password which will enable you to renew by either direct debit, if you have a UK bank account, or by debit card. This is the Society's preferred method.

2. Use the enclosed renewal form and either scan and email or post to the Membership Officer.

Also, a significant number of members who pay their subscription by direct debit have yet to set up a password to access their account. This is required to access online lectures and make changes to personal details. To set up 'My Account' please use the link given above.

KEITH NICHOLLS
Membership Officer,
37 Railway Road, Teddington TW11 8SD, UK
Email: finance@furniturehistorysociety.org

BIFMO (bifmo.furniturehistorysociety.org) publishes biographies and blogs about British and Irish furniture makers and associated craftspeople, c.1600-1914. Launched in 2016, the project is solely managed by the FHS. It is our globally-free research tool with a wealth of entries and is an authoritative one-stop site for all researchers in the fields of furniture history, interiors, country house furnishings, and associated trades. To spread the word about this important resource, please acknowledge your use of BIFMO resources in any published material.

If you have information you would like to contribute to BIFMO please contact the BIFMO Editors at bifmoeditor@furniturehistorysociety.org

Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society Project

The notion that 'original and artistic instincts are in great danger of being quenched'¹ in the decorative arts, led to the formation in 1887 of the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, under the guidance of its first President, Walter Crane (1845-1915). Public exhibitions were held annually between 1888-1890 and then roughly each three years till 1916 with exhibitions held more sporadically after the First World War. The aim of the Society was to promote the work of individual craftspeople and designers in the decorative arts rather than that of manufacturing firms, whose products had been, and were being, promoted at both national and



'Four Elements' Screen designed by Walter Crane and embroidered at the Royal School of Art Needlework (V&A: T.774 to D-1972). ©V&A Museum, London.

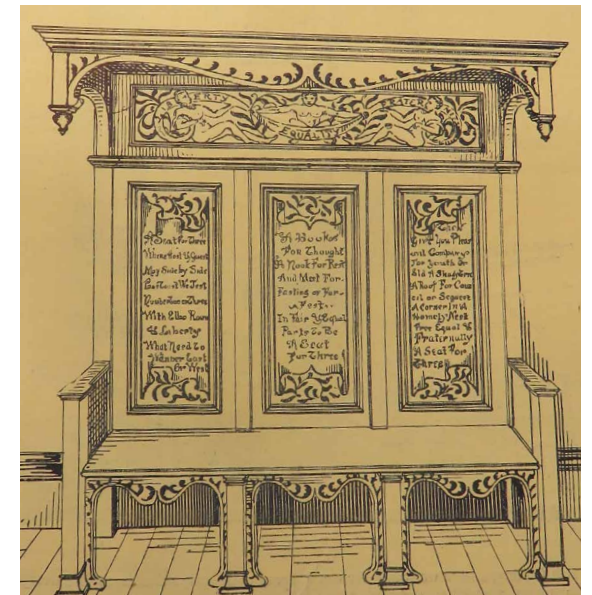
international exhibitions through the second half of the nineteenth century.

This BIFMO project aims to create a new level of public awareness of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society's early years (1888-1916) with the transcription of the first eleven catalogues and compilation of an index. The online resource will allow readers to better appreciate the work of individual cabinet makers, alongside other artisans and craftspeople, and encourage further research into both the design and making developed during the late Victorian and Edwardian periods.

Crane argued that decorative art is no less an art form than painting or sculpture, and believed it impossible to have high art 'where there is no beauty in everyday things, no sources of harmonious thought about us'.² His designs for decorative elements of furniture, and indeed whole pieces, include a screen of c.1876 with embroidered panels of the Four Elements, which was probably exhibited at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition, 1876.

The 1889 Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society show at the New Gallery in Regent Street, included a settle both designed and painted by Crane. The three panels featured poetry from Crane's hand which commenced 'A Seat for Three,/Where Host and Guest/May Side to Side/Pass Toast or Jest./Number Two or Three,/With Elbow Room and Liberty/What Need to Wander East or West'. The exhibition catalogue named the cabinetmaker as Edward Miles. Crane and Miles later collaborated on a settee exhibited in 1903.

Other designs by Crane, variously incorporated into furniture and woodwork, featured at these exhibitions and included a



A white, decorated and enamelled settee by Walter Crane, *The Furniture Gazette*, 13 December 1889, p. 361.

cabinet in ebonized wood, with needlework panels by his wife, Mary Frances Crane, and cabinet work by C. Hunt and C. Lumley in 1888; the signboard for the Society's 1899 exhibition, with joinery by C. Harrod; two screens in 1890; and various gesso, bronzed and lacquered door panels in the following years.

The transcriptions and index of these catalogues will be available this spring. A paper will be delivered at the 2024 FHS Annual Symposium, to present the project and examples of new discoveries relating to furniture making and the Art and Crafts Exhibition Society's relationship with manufacturing firms.

This BIFMO project has been generously funded by the Albert Dawson Educational Trust.

CLARISSA WARD

¹ *The Furniture Gazette*, 13 December 1889.

² Walter Crane, *The Claims of Decorative Art* (Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1892).

Dr Brian Austen (1932-2023)

Dr Brian Austen was perhaps best known to members of FHS for his scholarship of Tunbridge Ware resulting in his carefully researched book *Tunbridge Ware and Related European Decorative Woodwares*, first published in 1989, revised in 1996, and extended in 2001. More recently he was able to bring his research up to date in printed form with his chapter on 'Tunbridge Ware' in *The Story of British Tea Chests and Caddies* (ACC Art Books, 2022). He was, however, a man of considerable achievement in many areas.

After grammar school in Lewes and National Service, which was partly spent in Egypt, he studied for the Certificate of Education, graduating in 1955. He later gained a BSc in Economics in 1965, then an MA in Economics and Social History, and in 1979 a PhD at the London School of Economics. He followed this up with an MPhil at Lancaster. In 2018 was awarded an honorary degree by the University of Winchester.

Not surprisingly, education became Brian's career, and he was for thirteen years Senior Lecturer in History at Shoreditch College (University of London Institute of Education). The College was strongly involved with training teachers in Design Craft Technology. He subsequently taught in the Department of Craft Technology at Brunel University as well as being involved with the teaching programmes of various universities within the American University system and extramural programmes in London and

Surrey. He also published his research into the subjects that interested him. While his book on Tunbridge Ware is perhaps best known, his other publications include *English Provincial Posts* (1978), *Windmills of Sussex* (1978), *British Mail Coach Services* (1987) and a *Handbook of Styles in English Antique Furniture* (1987), as well as numerous articles.

For nearly thirty years, from 1986 to 2015, Brian served with distinction and dedication on the Council of the FHS as Membership and Finance Officer. In recognition of that service, at the 2016 AGM he was presented by our Chairman with an inlaid box from the workshop of Yannick Chastang.

In 2022 Brian Austen celebrated his ninetieth birthday. Until earlier that year he was living in the same modest house he was born in at Haywards Heath, a late Victorian semi-detached property. I suspect few people have had the experience of entering that unassuming home. To do so was to witness not just an abundance of Tunbridge Ware – much of it precariously stacked, but to realise all the other interests that also occupied his time and gave him pleasure. Books on architecture, topography and archaeology, town and city guides, furniture, railways and transport, milestones and turnpikes. Books were everywhere and other spaces not filled by Tunbridge Ware were taken up by stamps and matters relating to postal history. He had a deep love of railways, in particular The Bluebell Line, and being a non-driver his ability to negotiate public transport was formidable.

Brian Austen's attention to detail and his ability to absorb and retain information was his enjoyment in life.

On first meeting he came over as slightly shy and unassuming, lost in the pleasure of collecting, researching, cataloguing and observing, at ease with his own company, but when engaged, affable and full of knowledge which he was keen to share with others.

Brian Austen died on the 29th of August 2023 aged ninety-one. A kind, gentle, inquisitive and dedicated man, his achievements and service will be his lasting legacy.

ROBERT BLEASDALE Dr Brian Austen



Other News

The Frederick Parker Collection have launched a new online catalogue of the Frederick Parker Chair Collection. This unique collection of 191 British chairs dating from the 1670s to 2015 has now been researched, assessed and digitally photographed. The chairs are fully described in a clear and accessible format suitable for students, historians and anyone interested in furniture history.

The collection was formed mainly in the early twentieth century by furniture makers Frederick Parker & Sons, to provide a resource of antique styles suitable for reproduction. As the demand for reproduction furniture declined in the mid-century, the collection became redundant and in 1997 it was saved from disposal by the formation of a trust, the Frederick Parker Foundation, which was able to raise the funds to purchase a significant number of the chairs. The collection is now owned by the Furniture Makers' Company and is on long-term loan to London Metropolitan University (LMU),

with many of the chairs on display and the rest in controlled storage, accessible for study. Further chairs, especially of the late twentieth century, have been added to show a coherent progression of English chairmaking from the seventeenth century.

The Frederick Parker & Sons and Parker Knoll Archive is also on loan to the LMU and provides a comprehensive account of 150 years of furniture production. We encourage visitors, especially students in design, making and upholstery, to make use of this unique learning resource. The online chair catalogue now enables people to study the collection remotely and we hope it will inspire further research and new directions in design and manufacture.

The chair collection catalogue can be accessed here:
www.frederickparkercollection.org.uk

For information about the Frederick Parker collection and archive, and to arrange a visit, please contact specialcollections@londonmet.ac.uk

Book Reviews

Suggestions for reviews should be sent to Wolf Burchard at the Metropolitan Museum, 1000 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10028, U.S.A. (email: wolf.burchard@metmuseum.org; telephone +1 212 650 2208).

CHRISTOPHER PAYNE, *British Furniture 1820 to 1920: The Luxury Market* (Woodbridge, 2023). 576 pp., 1064 col., 184 b. & w. illus. ISBN 978-1-78884-174-0, £125

In 1926 R.W. Symonds noted that furniture made after 1820 had 'very little interest for the student or collector'. He relented, co-authoring *Victorian Furniture* in 1962 which described the transition of cabinetmaking 'from a craft to an industry'. One of the major contentions of Christopher Payne's magisterial new book is that the years between 1820 and 1920 were ones of exceptional creativity when craftsmanship did not cede to but went hand in hand with technical innovation.

Devoting a chapter to each decade, *British Furniture* takes us from the neoclassicism of George Bullock to the satinwood veneers of Ray Hille, fashioned into cocktail cabinets for the Jazz Age. However, as Payne admits, the work of designers, makers and dealers does not fit neatly into ten-year time slots. The constraints this imposes highlight another key theme: the continuity of the historicist impulse across the century as pastiches, reproductions, and close copies reinvented the designs of the past. Often ignored in favour of period originals, it is to the author's credit that he acknowledges the centrality of these revivals for the luxury and semi-luxury markets.



This confluence of stylistic influences makes the dating and authorship of unsigned pieces particularly difficult. To complicate matters further, the distinction between maker and retailer was often blurred. Did Baldock, Blake, Morant or Miles and Edwards make the marquetry tip-top tables popularised in the 1830s? Who made the furniture sold by Maple's? Where archival evidence is lacking, we rely on stylistic analysis. Here, the author's in-depth knowledge enables him to highlight the specifics of revival furniture that distinguish it from its eighteenth-century antecedents.

The title 'British Furniture' is apt. In addition to its coverage of leading makers, from Gillows to Jackson and Graham, the book is strong in its analysis of Irish, Scottish and provincial craftsman such as Robert Christie, the Louth limewood carver Thomas Wilkinson Wallis and James Lamb of Manchester, so often overlooked.

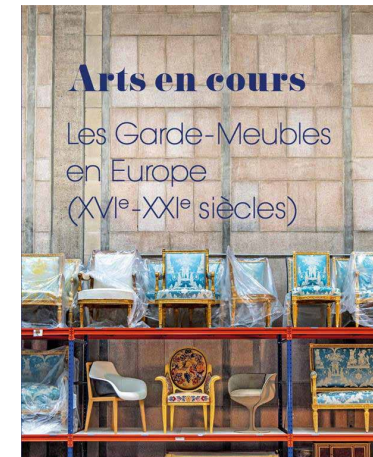
One of the glories of the book lies in its images, expertly assembled by Rainier Schraepen of Butchoff Antiques. These are beautifully reproduced and generously sized. Grouped thematically on the page or across a double page spread, they function as a sub-text (not all are sign posted in the main body of the text), supported by detailed captions that enable comparative analysis across the decades. Much of the furniture is from private collections. Plentiful illustrations from archival sources, including art journals, periodicals and makers' catalogues, highlight the importance of these publications in disseminating taste.

The book is well served by its index, although a closer read through would have improved the accuracy of the text and ironed out some repetition and inconsistencies in dating. Robert Fogg, not Edward Holmes Baldock, sold the Domenico Cucci cabinets to the Duke of Northumberland. Edmond du Sommerard, not his father Alexandre, was associated with the 1867 Paris exposition. This does not detract from the mass of information to be found here, culled from an extensive range of sources on such diverse topics as pricing, timber imports, exhibitions, mechanisation, furniture labels, specialist woods, and carving techniques. More broadly the author situates British furniture-making in its global context, not only at the centre of Empire but also influenced by the United States and with continuing commercial links to France.

British Furniture will be a *vade mecum* for scholars, makers, auctioneers, and dealers for years to come. In rehabilitating

nineteenth- and early twentieth-century furniture to its rightful place in the canon, it provides a springboard for future scholarship. The furniture designs by Edwards and Roberts which end the volume will undoubtedly provide fertile new ground for the author to which we will all look forward.

DIANA DAVIS



MURIEL BARBIER, MARC BAYARD, PAOLO CORNAGLIA AND CHARLOTTA SCHEICH (EDS), *Arts en cours: Les Garde-Meubles en Europe (XVIe-XXIe siècles)*. (Paris: Mobilier national/Éditions Mare & Martin, 2023). 546 pp., 149 col., 40 b. & w. illus. ISBN 978-2-36222-050-0, 48€/£41

This pioneering study of the courtly Garde-Meuble or Wardrobe was initiated by Marc Bayard of the French *Mobilier national*. With 35 chapters by 35 specialists, the main text is in French, English and Italian (with an appendix in Spanish) tracing the history of the 'Garde-Meubles en Europe' from the sixteenth to the twenty-first century.

The Spanish *Oficio de la Furriera*, from the French 'Fourrier' [one who goes ahead to arrange food and lodging] derived from medieval Burgundian practice. It provided for every requirement, including state occasions, accommodation, progresses between palaces round Madrid, and travel, as in other royal or imperial courts. The Furriera was also responsible for the royal collection including pictures, sculpture and tapestries. The *Mayordomo Mayor*, the Grand Marshal, was usually drawn from the aristocracy like other courtiers. However, Diego Velázquez held the senior post of *Aposentador* [Harbinger] at the heart of the *Furriera*. A document (1814; Appendix, pp. 312-3) explains the roles of the 'Jefe de la Furriera' and of the 'Aposentador de Palacio'.

The Florentine *Guardaroba Maggiore* in the Pitti Palace was established by the Medici after 1550, modernised in 1637 by Francesco Coppoli and refined by Diacinto or Giacinto Maria Marmi (c.1625-1702) whose manuscript *Norma per il guardaroba del gran palazzo nella città di Fiorenza or Rule for the Wardrobe of the grand palace in the City of Florence* (1662-3) contains plans and instructions. In a charming drawing, reproduced twice (pp. 229 and 237), he depicts a draped female holding up a portière hung by rings on a metal curtain rod, pointing at a putto, who pulls back a corner of the paned and fringed wall-hangings – usually green or red, sometimes interwoven with gold and silver – to reveal Marmi's new inventory numbers beneath. His numerous drawings often celebrate the symmetrical picture hangs, the frames and the seat and cabinet furniture. The conscientious management

of the Pitti Wardrobe and especially the distinction of the *Botteghe Granducali* (the artists' and craftsmen's workshops in the Uffizi) were emulated by Louis XIV and Jean-Baptiste Colbert at the Gobelins.

Furniture, furnishings and tapestries were frequently on the move. Until the early nineteenth century, Austrian palaces were furnished and re-furnished to accommodate an itinerant court. The Vienna *Hofmobielendepot*, today part of the *Bundesmobielverwaltung*, still preserves foldable travelling thrones which, once unpacked, would have stood beneath state canopies.

Napoleon III encouraged significant loans from the *Garde-Meuble* to the *Musée des Souverains* (1852-72) in the Louvre and revived the historic arrangement of furniture and décor of Josephine's Malmaison. From at least c.1924 the public display of the Viennese *Hofmobielendepot* included period rooms, such as a recreation of Maria Theresa's bedroom at Schloss Hof.

The book includes histories of the Austrian, British, Danish, Dutch, Florentine, French, Neapolitan, Spanish, Swedish, Torinese and Vatican *Garde-Meubles* describing their present and past machinery, including conservation; restoration; exhibitions; scholarly books, catalogues and online databases; commissions to contemporary artists and craftsmen; eighteenth century French court *orfèverie*; silk manufacture in Lyon and its emulation in Prussia by Frederick the Great; Marigny and Soufflot's sale of Gobelins tapestries, previously exclusive to the crown, to private clients during the financial crisis of the 1750s-1770s; the weaving of

tapestries in Turin; and Jean-Henri Riesener's work as a repairer and restorer for the *Garde-Meuble de la Couronne*.

Surprisingly, there is no mention of court officials' right to perquisites or perks in addition to their salaries. The chief beneficiary in seventeenth-century England was Charles Sackville, 6th Earl of Dorset (1638-1706), Lord Chamberlain (1689-97) to William III and Mary II after the 1688 Glorious Revolution. If Dorset decided that royal furniture or furnishings were worn out or unfashionable, he was entitled to remove them for his own use or profit. The Great Wardrobe obeyed his warrants exclusively.

It is stated here (p. 480) that there were no inventory marks on furniture before 1662 in the French *Garde-Meuble* and that in England only royal panel paintings were branded with crowned initials (like Charles I's 'CR'). However, uniquely, Dorset's haul of seventeenth-century upholstered royal furniture includes five chairs and twelve stools stamped in ink on the webbing covers beneath the seats with 'WP' below a crown for Whitehall Palace and two earlier X-frame chairs stamped with 'H:C' and '1661' beneath a crown for Hampton Court. They remain at Dorset's palatial country seat, Knole, Kent (NT), with *inter alia* James II's state bed (1688) taken by Dorset from the Whitehall Palace Wardrobe on 18 February 1694. Presents were given regularly by European monarchs, but the perquisites system seems to have been confined to Britain [See the articles by Olivia Fryman and by the present reviewer in *Furniture History* 2014 and 2023 respectively].

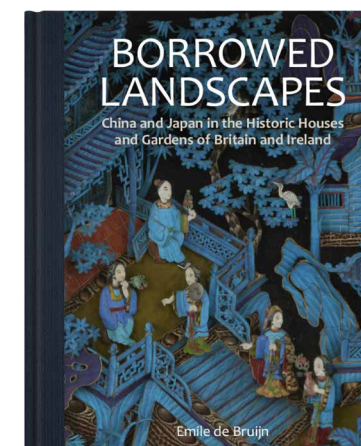
This commendable volume brings the multi-faceted European *Garde-Meubles* out of 'the shades of art history' in Marc Bayard's words. There is much scope for further research (see p. 304 note 86) and the copious footnotes make it easy to follow up references. Although the book is lengthy at 546 pages, the handy size, slightly smaller than *Furniture History*, makes it a *vade mecum*.

CHRISTOPHER ROWELL

Publications Received

EMILE DE BRUIJN, *Borrowed Landscapes: China and Japan in the Historic Houses and Gardens of Britain and Ireland*, Philip Wilson Publishers 2023. ISBN 9781781300985, £24.50

Borrowed Landscapes is a survey of the impact of Chinese and Japanese material culture in the British Isles, seen through the historic collections and gardens of the National Trust. In the area of furniture, it discusses Asian and European lacquer, Chinese export furniture, 'Chinese Chippendale' and the influence of Japonisme.



Reports on FHS Events

Inevitably some reports have had to be edited down for the Newsletter, but longer reports are in many cases available from the Events Secretary on request. They are also circulated to those who attend the visit.

Visit to the Drawing Office at Sir John Soane's Museum

TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2023

On a cold February morning a small group of Soane enthusiasts were given the privilege of a preview of Sir John Soane's Drawing Office – a somewhat hidden space floating under the museum's central dome, previously off-limits to even museum staff - before it opened to the public following its recent conservation. This 200-year-old structure, accessed by narrow spiral staircase off the Picture Room, is considered to be the earliest surviving example of a working architectural office. Our tour was conducted by Peter Holmes, who was tasked with conserving what would have been the beating heart of Soane's home and office.

Despite being easily-missed by today's visitors this small open-sided space was purposefully designed to be connected to the house, and to Soane himself – his own study was in ear-shot of the four to six apprentices he took on, working twelve-hour days, six days a week. Soane's understanding of light in the drawing office is genius, with the two parallel skylights lighting the two workbenches at which the students sat or stood to draw. Interestingly, during the conservation

process Peter noted that these desks were re-used and clearly adapted for the space, or constructed from architectural salvage, demonstrating that it was a practical space, not intended to impress. The walls are crammed with a feast of architectural casts, to both inspire and to teach, all of which been painstakingly cleaned (with saliva!) and re-hung on their original nails. Excitingly, several items were also able to be returned to the space thanks to the consultation of meticulous inventories kept by Soane's last assistant, George Bailey.

The Drawing Office has a unique atmosphere – there is a sense of timelessness and most remarkably the presence of the young students who inhabited the space can still be felt: the desktops still bear cutting lines where paper was cut to size, the smell of tobacco clung to drawer-linings as drawers were removed for inspection. Poignantly, during the conservation three pen quills were found at the back of drawers, discarded by previous students. Peter noted just how much dust there was internally in the drawers and carcasses, having been left untouched for so many years. It was these layers of history and the original finish that Peter was adamant needed to be retained in order to retain 'the layers of people using these pieces of furniture'.

We then visited the Model Room, in Soane's private apartments, which has also been recently restored and having previously been altered for office space. The room is now filled with a three-tier stand displaying at its centre an



The restored Drawing Office at Sir John Soane's Museum. ©Gareth Gardner.

impressive cork model of Pompeii, which Soane had purchased at Christie's. Tragically in the 1890s the stand was reduced by half, and so too the cork model, with the other half being disposed of. Aided by an 1835 engraving of the model stand, paint analysis and the craftsmanship of both Peter Holmes and his team, and one of the only remaining makers of Grand Tour-quality cork models in the world, Dieter Coellen, alongside expertise from Professor Valentin Kockel the majesty of Soane's vision has been restored to its former glory.

With thanks to Deputy Director and Inspectress Helen Dorey and Peter Holmes for guiding our visit.

CHARLOTTE YOUNG

Since the visit the Drawing Office has won the Georgian Group Architectural Award for Best Restoration of a Georgian Interior, 2023.

Visit to Ranger's House, Blackheath, London

TUESDAY 13 JUNE 2023

Ranger's House, a handsome red-brick villa bordering Greenwich Park, was built around 1723 by Vice Admiral Francis Hosier (1673–1727), probably to the designs of John James (c.1673–1746). Well-located for maritime Greenwich, the mask of Neptune above the front door offers a reminder of its naval origins. During the eighteenth century the house was enlarged by successive owners, firstly by Philip Stanhope, 4th Earl of Chesterfield (1694–1773) who, in 1750, added the gallery to the south, and later by Richard Hulse (1727–1805), Deputy Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, who added the balancing north wing.

From 1807, the house began a long



Gallery at Ranger's House

association with the crown, and from 1815 became the grace and favour residence of the Rangers of Greenwich Park, the first occupant being Princess Sophia of Gloucester (1773-1844), George III's niece. The house was finally sold in 1897 by Queen Victoria. The twentieth-century history of the building, when it was bought by London County Council, included use as a sports club and tea rooms, before passing to English Heritage in 1986.

With no indigenous collection, since 2002 Ranger's House has been home to the Wernher Collection, which formed the main focus of our day. Accumulated by the German mining magnate and diamond dealer Sir Julius Wernher (1850-1912) and his wife Alice (1862-1945), nicknamed 'Birdie', the collection was originally displayed at their London home, Bath House, on Piccadilly, and at their country

estate, Luton Hoo in Bedfordshire. Despite sales in 1995 and 2000, the core collection is preserved by a charitable trust, the Wernher Foundation, and is on loan to English Heritage.

A highlight for many was the mechanical table (*à la Bourgogne*) of about 1750, stamped by Jean-François Oeben and his pupil Jean-François Leleu. A Christmas present from Wernher's friend Jules Porgè in 1874, it was shipped to Wernher's corrugated iron house in the diamond fields of Kimberley, along with operating instructions provided by Hatfields, who may have restored it. The gift is said to have inspired Wernher's later collecting. The group wondered at how this fine piece of furniture withstood the South African climate. A comparable example stamped by Oeben, is in the Louvre (OA 10001) (Peter Hughes, 'A mechanical table

attributed to J. F. Oeben in the Wernher Collection', *Apollo*, May 2002, pp. 52-54).

Of great interest was an oak cabinet bought from George Bullock by Queen Charlotte and given to Princess Sophia in August 1814. It was almost certainly one of the pieces selected by the queen during a visit to Bullock's workshops in the same month. It was listed at Ranger's House in Sophia's posthumous sale of 1845. The unusual raised central shelves, surrounded by a gilt-bronze gallery, were designed for the display of porcelain. It was bought by English Heritage in 1995 from H. Blairman & Sons (Martin Levy, 'A Royal Visit to George Bullock's Workshop, 1814', *FHS Newsletter*, August 2018).

The furnishing of Luton Hoo was assisted by French interior decorator and collector Georges Hoentschel (1855-1915), and it was fascinating to see the combination of eighteenth-century pieces with pieces in historic styles. A seeming outlier among the collection was a pair of monumental side tables in the manner of Henry Flitcroft in the Long Gallery.

The second half of the visit involved touring the upstairs rooms and galleries, filled with Renaissance treasures comprising Limoges enamels, Italian bronzes, Majolica, Iznik pottery, ivory carvings, Renaissance jewellery and more. A highpoint among the display was the recreation of the Red Room at Bath House which, crowded with display cases and Renaissance style furnishings, was wonderfully evocative of collecting in the early twentieth century.

Our thanks go to Dr Tessa Kilgariff for leading the visit.

MICHAEL SHRIVE

Devon Study Trip

FRIDAY 15 – SUNDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2023

Exeter station was the meeting point for the start of our Autumn study weekend, with a packed programme of visits to churches, historic houses open to the public and a couple of private houses, spanning the centuries from the eleventh to the twenty-first.

Ugbrooke House

With a history going back to the Domesday book, and a chequered career of grandeur and disrepair over the centuries, Ugbrooke boasts an imposing castellated 'toy fort' facade dating from 1760's remodelling work by Robert Adam, in a Capability Brown landscape. The house has been in the Clifford family for centuries and is the private home of The Hon. Alexander Clifford and his wife, who kindly invited us.

We were welcomed by long-standing visitor guide Bill Watson, who gave us a knowledgeable furniture tour. In the staircase hall, we focused on a large marquetry table, c.1830-40, possibly by John and William Black. We also admired the magnificent silver-gilt platter and ewer gifted by Charles II to his godson, Charles Clifford. Next, in the morning room, our attention was drawn to a large tripartite mahogany bookcase. The top looked very similar to furniture produced by Gillows, but the base was more reminiscent of Vile & Cobb.

In the drawing room, we examined a pair of semi-circular Sheraton-style satinwood card tables, painted white in

the early twentieth century but restored in the 1960s. There was some debate as to their age, but the group favoured their being late eighteenth century.

The dining room featured a rare full garniture of first edition Worcester porcelain, prominently displayed on the chimneypiece. Opposite were two particularly fine early eighteenth-century pier glasses, very similar to those produced by James Moore.

Upstairs, we were shown two contrasting bedrooms. The first, the Cardinal's Bedroom, was named after Cardinal Thomas Weld (1773-1837). The furniture in this room mostly dated to between 1790 and 1830, including a red gilt leather chest specially designed for transporting the Cardinal's vestments and altar plate. Second was the Duchess of Norfolk's Bedroom, named after the unique and magnificent embroidered bed-hangings created by Mary, 9th Duchess of Norfolk and originally displayed in the State Bedroom at Norfolk House, London.

We finished our tour in the library, with its original Adam interior including bookcases, door surrounds and chimneypiece.

EMMA BAILLIE

Fursdon House

Fursdon sits in the most romantic spot, overlooking the Exe Valley and hills beyond on the edge of Dartmoor. We were fortunate to have as our guide Catriona Fursdon, whose knowledge of Fursdon – the place and the family – is unparalleled, having spent forty years reviving both house and estate with her husband David who inherited the property from his uncle

in 1979. Recently they have passed it on to their son Oliver, the twenty-fourth generation of the family to live here uninterruptedly since the thirteenth century.

The small entrance hall holds some intriguing furniture, including an unusual pair of mid eighteenth-century corner chairs with a matching Pembroke table, all with cabriole legs united by cross-stretchers; might these have been made in Exeter? Certainly Exeter-made, a little later, is a fine oak longcase clock by William Upjohn (1754–1812), showing the times of high tide at Topsham Bar (on the Exe) – important for the Fursdons' involvement in the wool trade. A mid-century gilt pier glass, reflecting the designs of Matthias Lock, has the Fursdon crest of five plumes at the top – probably a later addition (most likely associated with the Regency alterations); or might it have been included originally but not fully integrated into the design? A piece of undoubted historicism, which none in our party could fully explain, was some ecclesiastical oak carving that had been turned into a double-shelf wall bracket, with the prominently carved date '1639'.

The dining room beyond was the entrance hall when the ceiling and magnificent carved chimneypiece were created in 1732. Its earlier use as the great hall is revealed by the remains of an oak screened passage, recently discovered and now revealed. The panelled sitting room is dominated by a remarkable antiquarian chimneypiece and overmantel – the Georgian fire surround surmounted by a bolection-moulded frieze incorporating a marquetry panel of strapwork and the date 1601, with terminal figures and other



Group outside Fursdon House

ornament of the same period carved overhead. If this was all put together in the 1730s, it reflects an early antiquarianism that merits more research.

Thence to the latest addition to the house – the library in the west wing created in 1815 to complete the present symmetrical frontage. The exceptionally handsome mahogany furnishings invite comparison with Gillows' furniture at Tatton and elsewhere – including large bookcases recessed into the walls, 'Trafalgar' pattern chairs, and an ebony-inlaid library table that is shown in a nineteenth-century watercolour of the room. Tightly flanking the largest bookcase (facing the windows) is a pair of table-height bookshelves which provoked discussion. Though they closely match

the others, they now lack their tops (presumably stone or marble) leaving their joined construction exposed. Seemingly the tops must have been too big for their present position, in which case these pieces must have been made originally for a different room – but our tight schedule did not allow time to pursue this tantalizing question.

Finally, to the enchanting Museum Room – the former kitchen and game larder beyond. Here Catriona changes the displays every year for the benefit of visitors. We were especially fortunate to see this year a beautiful eighteenth-century patchwork quilt, which was discovered in 1979 in a travelling chest, with other textiles, and is now rarely displayed.

LUCY WOOD

Bickleigh Castle

Bickleigh Castle where we stayed was owned by three families linked by marriage from the Norman period until 1924. It has close connections with the Plantagenets, the Tudors, especially Henry VII and VIII, and with the Stuarts. The seventeenth-century owner, Sir Henry Carew, was visited by the Queen in 1644. Our tour of the castle was with the curator John Vaughan and included the Chapel. This was originally a Saxon meeting house, first built in the sixth century, and was the parish church until the 1400s, after which it was the estate chapel. During the nineteenth century it was used as a cattle shed, before being restored in 1929. It was reconsecrated in 1933 by the Bishop of Exeter.

St Peter's Church, Tiverton

As we arrived at this splendid Norman parish church, we were all amazed by the carved stone detail depicting sailing ships (armed merchantmen and galleasses) which adorned the porch and the exterior of the c.1517 chantry chapel of the Greenway family.

The organ case is of seventeenth-century appearance with crisp gilded putti after the manner of Grinling Gibbons. Apparently the first performance of Mendelssohn's so-called Wedding March was transcribed and performed on this organ by Samuel Reay in 1847. The splendid large three-tier brass chandelier, dated 1707, came originally from the great hall at Holcombe Court.

We thanked our American historian guide William Zarrett who gave us the

benefit of his extensive research on the history of the church.

ALAN READ

Tiverton Castle

We were met by Alison Gordon and were shown around the old part of the medieval castle, which was attacked by General Fairfax during the English Civil War and fell to his allies.

Alison and her husband moved to the castle in the 1970s and over the last fifty years have beautifully restored it and consolidated the ruins in the garden.

The armoury, displayed in the main gallery on the first floor, was collected by the Gordons between 1970 and 2000. The furniture includes a double gateleg table of seventeenth-century origin, a court cupboard opportunistically dated 1611, and several Spanish tables on shaped trestle supports.

Beside the castle was the Gordons' Georgian home. We visited the hall where we admired an eighteenth-century longcase clock with the 'Tides of Exon' (Exeter) advised by the arched top dial. The house contained a good collection of mainly late seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century longcase and bracket clocks, some with fine cases.

In the drawing room we were both interested by and excited to see a New Zealand wood table, given to a member of the Campbell family, c.1905-1908, having a circular marquetry top with kauri and other woods, in a Victorian, almost Edwardian, style.

MARK MEDCALF

Knightshayes

Our visit to Knightshayes was specifically to see the restoration of the Burges bedroom, currently closed to the public. The room had been part of a private flat in the mansion. No specific decoration had been deployed – the family was not keen to use the designs William Burges submitted for the house's interiors, whether due to their cost or over exuberance remains unknown. However, when Burges left the project for the richer commission of the 3rd Lord Bute in Cardiff (Cardiff Castle and Castell Coch), the album of interior designs for Knightshayes remained with the property.

In 2001, the National Trust, as part of its ongoing plans to reinstate much of the decoration which had disappeared from the mansion, decided to reconstruct this room, a project that was only made possible by the existence of Burges's drawings.

The focus of interest was 'The Golden Bed', the 1879 bedstead on loan from the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. Designed as the main feature of Burges's Guest Bedroom in his own home of Tower House the frame was carved by Thomas Nicholls. The painted and gilt mahogany and pine frame has a headboard inset with two large, bevelled mirrors, and ten smaller ones with the central painting by Henry Holiday (1839-1927) depicting the Judgment of Paris.

BEATRICE GODDARD

Holcombe Court, Holcombe Rogus

As we walked up the main street in Holcombe Rogus, Holcombe Court, 'The finest Tudor house in Devon', appeared through an archway and on first sight



The Burges Bedroom at Knightshayes

certainly lived up to this accolade and its Grade I listing.

The south range with an entrance tower is the earliest part of the existing building and came into the possession of the Bluett family in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century. They subsequently held it for four centuries, carrying out improvements from the mid to late sixteenth century, including construction of the Long Gallery. In 1858 the new owner conducted extensive remodelling and modernisation in 'Tudor/Gothic revival' style. Consequently, the overlay of these periods makes it difficult to distinguish the house's architectural history.

It became clear as soon as we were introduced to the present owner, Nigel Wiggins, that the house was in good hands. His enthusiastic welcome and obvious yet restrained pride in his achievements here were infectious. We were introduced to the

two craftsmen who have assisted him throughout his ownership, Tim Rae-Duke and Scott Cunningham, who accompanied us on our tour and keenly discussed their innovative and superb craftsmanship throughout the house.

We admired some of over forty individual items commissioned and particular interest was shown in items created in the manner of William Burges, inspired by the contents of nearby Knightshayes. The quality and design of Cunningham's sideboard of oak, brass, suede and Purbeck marble for the Great Hall exemplifies this. His dining table with a patinated zinc top sits well in the dark panelled dining room (or 'parlour'). Tim Rae-Duke's dedication to his work became clear as he showed us sample patterns taken from a settee to be used to create two new sofas in the style of Gustav Stickley.

Contemporary work such as this was to be found among older pieces, some by Pugin, notably the linfold panelled wardrobe and the desk and cupboard from the Houses of Parliament. Rae-Duke copied the top moulding from the wardrobe for his architectural cornice in the music room. Other modern furniture, such as a day bed and chairs by Mark Brazier Jones, are interspersed with Gothic revival and Arts and Crafts designs together with more recent furnishings and art works.

An interesting Broadwood piano designed by Baillie Scott stands in the Great Hall, where one can also see a large metal chandelier, so well designed and constructed that some of us thought it might be by W.A.S. Benson. This was the work of Scott Cunningham and is a spectacular and sculptural feature in this space.

TIM TURNER

Powderham Castle

Our visit was led by Dr Katie Edwards, Collections Manager. Upstairs we saw Sir William Courtenay's piano nobile 'Cabinet' that was designed in George II's reign. It showed off the family's Anglo-French heritage and followed the 'Roman' style of the architect Isaac Ware (d.1766). The tabernacle compartment of its gilt-enriched mahogany chimneypiece may have once displayed a figure of Venus on the Cupid-borne bracket and was framed by the triumphal flower-garlanded pediment. Here Erminia and shepherds stand before the temple of Venus (derived from Torquato Tasso's, 'Jerusalem Liberated'), and extol the pleasures of the Roman campagna, while the frame's shell-enriched and Grecian wave-scrolled border commemorate the Nature deity's water-birth. Its garlanded and temple-pedimented chimney frieze likewise bears a tablet with the bust of Venus, while its thern busts of her attendants are garlanded from tablets of 'Apollo' sunflowers within Jupiter's oak. It was made by John Channon's father, the joiner Otho of Exeter, who, in 1745, also charged for eight serpentined and bubbled armchairs in 'antique' form (two remain).

The room was furnished with the pair of exotic padouk bookcases, now belonging to the V&A. Their bracketed cornices bear Sir William Courtenay's coat of arms and crest of a dolphin, which according to mythology, was the bearer of Venus's triumphal shell-carriage. Scenes of her land arrival, derived from Jean Berain's early eighteenth-century engraving, decorate their plinths. Such

golden French-fashioned and brass-inlaid furniture was prized in bedroom/dressing room apartments. British lion-heads and French lilies decorate the four doors, with Love's shell at the indented corners with golden wire-filigree. The bookcases, which may have originally displayed the Roman poet Homer and the English translator Alexander Pope are signed by John Channon (established in St. Martin's Lane, London) and bear the date 1740. When moved downstairs in the 1790s, the bookcases had their plinths heightened and carved with embowed dolphins. The 4th Viscount Courtenay, persuaded by William Beckford, employed the architect James Wyatt (d.1813), George III's Surveyor General, to create his great room-of-assembly that celebrated his coming-of-age. Its 'magnificence' is due to Wyatt's discussions in Rome with the architect G.B. Piranesi, author of *'Della Magnifiza Ed Architettura'* (1761). An oblong room, ending in a Grecian bay, has its rose-coffered ceiling centred by a lofty dome. Golden Sienna pilasters alternate with wall niches, whose Egyptian pedestals and alabaster urns provide a 'Columbarium' recalling Courtenay ancestors. Inset roundels and tablets, painted with scenes of mythology, encircle the marbled room, whose walls are lined by a suite of furniture, designed by Wyatt, and embellished with poetic laurel-crowns and embowed dolphins (copies). The vast Carrara marble chimney has a frieze of a lyre-playing Apollo with the Muses of Artistic Inspiration, and caryatid pilasters of a flute-playing youth and a tambourine-beating nymph. Among the many treasures we saw a



The State Bed at Powderham Castle

'lit a la Polonoise', rendered 'modern', with four posts terminating in hothouse pineapples (instead of festive thyrsae), and its coronet-crowned dome flowered with a sun-rayed (Apollo) rose (Venus).

JOHN HARDY

Our last visit of the weekend was intended to be to Killerton, but the weather intervened as flooded roads and traffic jams curtailed our studies. Driving on roads awash with rain, our gallant driver returned us to Exeter station in time for the return home. Thanks are due to our private hosts for delicious lunches and welcome coffee breaks. Our grateful thanks to Kate Dyson for planning and leading this Study Trip.

Calling All Scholars and Museum Professionals

The Furniture History Society welcomes grant applications for independent travel, research or for participation in the Society's study trips both overseas and in the United Kingdom. Scholars and museum professionals working in the fields of furniture history, furniture making, decorative arts, interior design and conservation who are in need of support for travel and research are encouraged to apply.

The Society makes grants to individuals and organisations from two funds which have been established thanks to the generosity of members of the Society. They are administered by the Society's Grants committee (Chair: Adriana Turpin) which meets quarterly to consider applications – either for independent travel for study or research, or for participation in the Society's study trips, both overseas and in the United Kingdom.

Tom Ingram Memorial Fund

Grants are awarded from the Ingram Fund towards travel and associated expenses for the purpose of study or research into the history of furniture. These grants are offered, whether or not the applicant is a member of the Society, where travel could not be undertaken without funding from the Society; and only where the study or

research is likely to further the Society's objectives. Applications towards the cost of the Society's own foreign and domestic trips and study weekends are particularly welcome from scholars and museum professionals. Successful applicants are required to acknowledge the assistance of the Ingram Fund in any resulting publications and will be required to make a short report on completion of the trip.

Oliver Ford Trust

The Oliver Ford Trust supports research by emerging scholars and junior museum professionals in the fields of furniture history, the decorative arts and interior design mainly by sponsoring places on the Society's study weekends or foreign tours. Recent awards have included grants to enable participation in the Society's Symposium at The Frick Collection in New York; a weekend visit to the TEFAF (The European Fine Art Foundation) fair; and international conferences.

Applications from individuals who are not members of the Society will be considered.

For further information or to download a grant application form, please go to the Grants page of the Society's website at www.furniturehistorysociety.org/grants/ enquiries. Enquiries should be addressed to the Grants Secretary, Jill Bace, at grants@furniturehistorysociety.org.

If you are in the early stages of your career and would like to join the ECD, please contact Jill Bace at grants@furniturehistorysociety.org

A new larger team with varying roles and specialism across museums, collections conservation and design has taken on coordinating events for the Furniture History Society Early Career Development Group (ECD). The new members are as follows:
 Adèle Bourbonne – Associate Specialist, Continental Furniture at Sotheby's;
 Aliénor Cros – Sales and Projects Manager at Sterling Studios;
 Isabelle Vaudrey – Gallery Manager at Mackinnon Fine Furniture;
 Simon Spier – Curator, Ceramics and Glass at the V&A Museum and
 Penelope Hines - Arts Development Manager at Guy's & St Thomas' Foundation.

We look forward to arranging events that draw upon our experience and networks which we hope ECD members will find expansive and engaging. To increase access, a variety of event formats, will be held including a series of online sessions with specialist talks aimed at developing research skills and workplace practices, as well as evening and weekend events and planned visits to both conservation workshops and furniture fairs.

In early December we ran a fruitful online research forum where members shared their current research and progress with participants benefitting from peer advice and perspective with challenges workshopped.

Upcoming events will be detailed on a dedicated WhatsApp group and ECD members must ensure they have joined this group to receive invitations and up-to-date information. The WhatsApp group has allowed ECD coordinators to share information more effectively whilst enabling contact between all ECD members. Thus far it has facilitated meetups between members at The Scottish Interior Symposium in Edinburgh; co-ordinated a group of ECD members attending the Young Georgian's Evening Tour at Bonhams and enabled members to share information about relevant conferences. Please contact Penelope Hines at penelopehines92@gmail.com to gain access to the ECD WhatsApp group.

Publications

Several members have continued to inquire about the availability of Volume I of *Furniture History*. The Society is, therefore, considering reprinting this first issue, which is likely to cost about £45. If you would like to register interest in acquiring a re-print, please contact Jill Bace, Publications Secretary, at publications@furniturehistorysociety.org

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The views expressed in this *Newsletter* are those of the respective authors. They are accepted as honest and accurate expressions of opinion, but should not necessarily be considered to reflect that of the Society or its employees.

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Copy Deadline

The deadline for receiving material to be published in the next Newsletter is Thursday 8th March 2024. Copy should be sent by email to katehay86@gmail.com

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