

The Furniture History Society

# Newsletter 210

May 2018



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# Chippendale 2018: A Curatorial Memoir

Like most organizations dedicated to the memory of a great person, the Chippendale Society has often used anniversaries to promote its cause. The Society was in its infancy in 1968 at the time of the 250th anniversary of Chippendale senior's birth, but keenly endorsed the exhibition *Thomas Chippendale and his Patrons in the North* with a number of commemorative events. Ten years later, in 1979, its newly formed collection of drawings made an important contribution to the exhibition marking the bicentenary of his death, held at Temple Newsam, like the earlier one. Again, in 2004, the Society marked the quarter millennium of the first edition of the *Director* by publishing a facsimile reprint of its own rare copy.

## *Chippendale300*

With the approach of the tercentenary of Chippendale's birth in 1718, the committee of the Society, led by Adam Bowett, Chairman, and myself, Honorary Curator, looked for new and different ways of marking this significant anniversary. An inspired model was then being established with the Capability Brown tercentenary for 2016, which we followed with interest. This involved the participation of many different historic parks in a coordinated programme of exhibitions, events and learning opportunities across the country,

with substantial funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. We therefore made an informal approach to the Yorkshire HLF to discuss a similar strategy. It soon became clear, however, that the Society lacked the capacity to facilitate anything so ambitious, despite the resources which the HLF might provide. At the same time, it was noted that the HLF has never been an enthusiastic promoter of temporary exhibitions.

Somewhat dejected we reconsidered the options and, undeterred, we began a series of informal conversations with other interested parties, particularly, at this stage, with Nostell Priory. A meeting was convened there in March 2016, with invitations sent to representatives from houses and organizations (including the FHS and the Master Carvers' Association), which we knew might be interested in coming together with a coordinated plan for 2018. Thus was born the group, which became known as Chippendale300. Subsequent meetings at Leeds developed this project further with a message of good will from Prince Charles, the creation of a logo, a website, a PR campaign and the promise of a nationwide postal mark for 5 June 2018.

## *The Venue: Leeds City Museum*

While the Chippendale300 partnership was evolving, our attention was equally

preoccupied with the prospects of an exhibition. Initially, we lobbied a national museum to put on a major show. For various reasons, and despite the enthusiasm of individual curators, this bold idea came to nothing, although a number of smaller and more focused projects were instigated. Again, undeterred, we decided to organize one ourselves in Leeds, not least because the city is just 12 miles from Chippendale's home town of Otley where he has been revered as a local hero for at least the past 100 years. Our conversations with the staff at Leeds Museums and Galleries eventually led to a unique partnership in which it was agreed that the Society would curate the exhibition and raise 90 per cent of the necessary funding through sponsorship, while Leeds would provide the venue and administration. The Exhibition Gallery of the City Museum was chosen (Fig. 1) — Temple Newsam having had its fill of previous Chippendale exhibitions, while the Art Gallery, despite

a recent £2m refit, was considered inappropriate as a venue for historic decorative art.

The location of the City Museum had advantages and disadvantages: on the one hand, it is a prime city-centre site, with free admission (including to all temporary exhibitions) attracting thousands of visitors, including hopefully the potential new audience, which was one of the *raisons d'être* for the show. On the other hand, Cuthbert Brodrick's magnificent building, originally the Leeds Institute, had been adapted ten years previously as the award-winning new City Museum containing an anthology of the city's huge archaeological, natural history, anthropology and social history collections. An L-shaped exhibition gallery of 300 square metres had been created in the roof space, with exposed beams, tracking and highly visible — not to say intrusive — ducting hardware. The maximum usable height is just 9 feet, thereby ruling out tall objects such as pier



Fig. 1 Entrance to the exhibition at Leeds City Museum

glasses or state beds (the generous offer of one of the Stanway Chinese day beds had to be resisted). The design problems caused by these constraints were eventually overcome by a combination of the choice of loans, a uniform black painted backdrop (relieved with panels of appropriate wallpaper loaned by de Gournay) and effective spot and wash lighting. These features focused visitors' attention at eye level and below.

The show would fit into the museum's first exhibition period for 2018, opening in time for a predicted surge in visitors at February half-term. It would run until 9 June, just after the actual anniversary of Chippendale's baptism on 5 June 1718. This worked well with the idea which emerged that the exhibition would be the opening showcase event for the wider Chippendale300 project — particularly as many of the loans came from properties which would open to visitors later in the spring or early summer.

### *Basic Principles*

Having thus established a venue and a date, a core team of four curators from the Society's membership was formed to develop a curatorial plan (in the event, one member dropped out almost at the start, and another two-thirds of the way through the project). It was agreed that the main purpose was to celebrate Thomas Chippendale senior's work both as a designer, craftsman and businessman, and to bring an understanding of his achievement and enjoyment of his work to the widest possible number of people, experts or beginners. Contentious

ideological issues were to be avoided and a mainstream art-historical interpretation adopted. Some real showstoppers were to be sought out, hopefully some 'new discoveries' would emerge and old favourites shown in a different light. We did not intend being dogmatic: not every object in the exhibition had to be proven to be from the master's workshop, but everything had to have a connection with the great man and hold its own in a continuing narrative. The key was to use the neutral space of this 'black box' to set up interesting juxtapositions and provide links and conversations between groups of objects.

There would be five sections: Chippendale senior's Life and Career; Style: his work in the Rococo, Chinese, Gothic, Transitional and 'Antique' tastes; his Relationship with his Clients; the operation of his Workshop; and his Legacy (including the impact of the *Director*, the Chippendale revivals and his enduring 'brand'). In the event, the Workshop section had to be dropped because of lack of space, and the ideas it explored merged with other sections.

### *Funding*

Nothing could be done without the necessary funding. An approximate budget was established: £108,000 to pay for all the direct costs (transport, conservation, installation hardware, interpretation, graphics, public relations). Hidden costs such as staff time and in-house technical work would be subsumed into Leeds' general budgets. The curators were to be paid their modest fees by

Leeds. There was no budget for an outside designer — this was left to the curatorial team, and above all to the Exhibitions Curator for the City Museum, Ruth Martin, whose use of the Sketchup computer program in demonstrating alternative layouts was to prove essential. Ruth was the crucial anchor for the whole show and the link between the curators and the museum. Leeds also took on a once-a-week Project Registrar, Christine Bradley, who was to organize the loan agreements, Government Indemnity and transport arrangements.

Both the Chippendale Society and Leeds Museums and Galleries have a long and fruitful relationship with the Monument Trust. We naturally turned to them as our first port of call, and the trustees generously agreed to fund 50 per cent of the total budget, making them our principal sponsor. With this established we felt confident in approaching other funders: those providing between £5,000 and £10,000 becoming 'sponsors' (including a substantial input from the Society's own resources, the profits of many years' events and activities); and those contributing £5,000 or less being supporters. In the event, there were contributions from twenty-four different sources, mainly from the trade but with a good number of local organizations, who wished to be associated with the project. Remarkably, some contributions came entirely unsolicited.

### *Publications*

At first our sights were set on a modest exhibition publication or booklet, which

we were advised should sell at a maximum of £5 in the museum shop, and which could also have a useful after-life. A first print run, with design and photography, was estimated at £6,000. But as time progressed our sponsors were adamant that they wished to see a full catalogue, lavishly illustrated, with essays and discursive text for each of the ninety-five objects in the exhibition. They were willing to pay for this as a separate venture, and estimates of some £22,000 were quoted. This unexpected development greatly increased the workload of the two remaining curators, who nevertheless embraced it wholeheartedly. The problem of obtaining consistently good photography for loans coming from different parts of the British Isles was overcome by scheduling this after the objects had arrived in Leeds. It meant, of course, that the catalogue could not be ready until at least two months after the exhibition had opened, but this was deemed acceptable if it could coincide with the annual FHS Symposium to be held in Leeds on 14 April. Our preferred designer Derek Brown, formerly of Oblong Press, lived locally and was highly experienced in working with decorative art publications.

### *Curating*

The curators divided the different sections between themselves to make 'long lists' of desiderata. These were discussed and rigorously debated at meetings followed up by visits to potential lenders to inspect and discuss their suitability. Mostly, we were welcomed, and there was only one

instance when our modest list was rejected out of hand and we were informed which objects might perhaps be available. In one or two cases an original refusal was reversed after some persuasion, and with others there was an implied understanding that there would be payback in terms of reciprocal loans from the Society's own collection or in-kind for the lenders' own programmes. The original 'long lists' thus became 'short lists', and an even shorter list emerged of *sine qua non*.

Obtaining formal approval and signatures took much longer, in some cases because of labyrinthine governance structures. One major museum service even announced they had an embargo on all loans for the next seven years because of their lack of resources! Throughout the process we were working against the clock: some lenders required twelve months' notice of loan requests, while the final list of all exhibits to be covered by the Government Indemnity Scheme had to be submitted, complete with high-resolution images, agreed valuations and agreed display conditions, six months before anything could be removed from the lenders. Everything had to be decided and in place by 1 August 2017. Only then could work begin on the design, interpretation and publications.

The exhibition was opened by Dr Tristram Hunt on 8 February, with some 250 invited guests, and within days it appeared that the museum had a success on its hands, with an average of 540 visitors a day. This is despite the fact that publicity for decorative art exhibitions is notoriously difficult ('inanimate objects are

rarely very newsworthy', according to one BBC broadcaster), let alone one held far from London. It is still too early to determine the success or otherwise of our collective efforts. For a more specialist clientele the exhibition has certainly been the focus for new research, conversations and interpretations in a field which many considered to be 'played out'. For the wider Chippendale300 project, the fact that thirteen different organizations have come together to offer over forty special events (so far) is a certain indication that the tercentenary year will not have been a lost opportunity.

### *The Exhibition*

The first major object encountered by visitors is the Seaton tool chest (Fig. 2), the only complete example surviving from the eighteenth century — a reminder of a cabinet-maker's essential equipment. Then follows various documents connected with Chippendale's life and family; two basic architectural manuals by Batty Langley suggest the kind of background the young apprentice and journeyman may have learnt from.

The story of the *Director* is represented with juxtaposed drawings, engravings and copies of all three editions; these are complemented by contrasting examples of the most popular 'Plate 12' 'new pattern chairs', one from a West End workshop (surely 59–61 St Martin's Lane) and another less fine and unprovenanced example.

Moving into the Rococo or 'modern' section, Lord Dumfries appears as an early hero, represented by one of his sublimely beautiful French armchairs, and

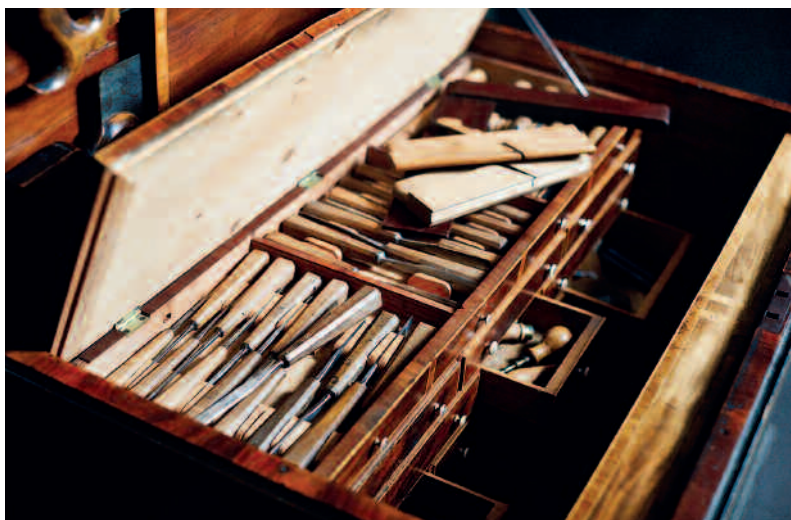


Fig. 2 The Seaton tool chest

corresponding card/pier tables, juxtaposed with a newly discovered pier glass (Fig. 3) last offered at the Bernal sale of 1855 and a twin to the one in the V&A.

The Arniston dressing table introduces an essential feature of Chippendale's undogmatic 'mix and match' approach to style: its serpentine yet symmetrical forms capped with a Chinese pagoda and legs inset with gothic ogee terminals. It merges with the Chinese section: charming fretwork bookshelves from Paxton, Garrick's bedside bookcase, one of the grand green jappaned commodes from Nostell, a framed 'India Picture' of Chinese wallpaper and the black lacquer secretaire from the state bedroom at Harewood (Fig. 4), the twin to the example at Osterley.



Fig. 3 Armchair and card/pier table from Dumfries House; pier glass (private collection)



Fig. 4 Lacquer secretaire made for the State Bedroom, Harewood House

Gothic is less comprehensively represented, but a fine writing/dressing table from the Terry Collection is here attributed to the master's workshop, and a large piece of 'Cathedral Gothic' wallpaper imitating blank arcading in two colours is put forward as possibly supplied by Chippendale.

The transitional 'Antique' style of the mid-1760s is demonstrated by three significant pieces made for Sir Lawrence Dundas: one of the never-before-exhibited gilt chairs from the gallery at Arlington Street juxtaposed with one of the Adam-designed armchairs from the adjoining great room. They flank a little-known serpentine commode with floral

marquetry sprays within geometric panels on a fustic ground, and gilt-brass corner mounts with striking neo-Classical ornament. It is one of a family of at least five, all of which are associated with Chippendale clients (Fig. 5).

This array of splendour is interrupted by the section devoted to Chippendale's relationship with his clients. This is intended to show the range of Chippendale's endeavour as a supplier of furniture of every kind, 'de luxe', 'genteel' or 'neat and substantially good' (alternatively 'superfine', 'very fine' or just plain 'fine'). We find examples of 'off the peg' pattern models: notably a hexagon tea or work table, a butler's tray from Dumfries House, a night table from Paxton. One of the famous series of letters to Sir Rowland Winn, invoices to Sir Lawrence Dundas and Lord Irwin give an idea of costs, credit arrangements and customer satisfaction. A repeat drop of brilliant kingfisher blue flock wallpaper from Doddington is shown corresponding to the same pattern found in a skip outside 26 Soho Square (shown here on the reverse with the drawn design for draping a Venetian window). An 'at large' drawing for a tea table sent to Harewood for a local craftsman to make up is shown with a faithful realization made especially for the exhibition by the master carvers at Houghton's of York, demonstrating the high levels of skill required from jobbing provincial craftsmen.

The neo-Classical theme continues with an array of four gilt oval-backed chairs in the French manner, with the example from Newby displayed against a panel of Gobelins tapestry for which Chippendale

Fig. 5 Three transitional  
'Antique' style pieces made for  
Sir Lawrence Dundas



supplied the fillet. They demonstrate yet again how every client of Chippendale's received bespoke furniture, even though the patterns come from a generic source or model. This theme is taken up again with a group of four lyre-back chairs, developed from the prototype at Nostell, with examples from Bocket and Scampston — the former being reunited with a magnificent chimney glass from the library (Fig. 6).

In this section one of the Panshanger cabinets (Fig. 7), exhibited for the first time, stands out as a real showstopper. Clad in exquisite marquetry on a veneered ground of silvery-white holly wood, now turned golden, it was almost certainly made specifically to display Lord Melbourne's new Sèvres dessert service, also loaned from Firle. The superb quality of Chippendale's marquetry is further demonstrated with the famous

Fig. 6 The Bocket Hall  
chimney glass and four  
lyre-back chairs





Fig. 7 One of the Panshanger cabinets (now at Firle) and four oval-back chairs

Emblematic Heads table made for the silver and gold yellow drawing room at Harewood, and the circular table made for Lady Fleming's dressing room. The latter is accompanied by interpretative panels showing how brilliantly it would have fitted Adam's decorative scheme and how the original colours might have appeared against the holly ground (like the Panshanger cabinets).

The final section deals with Chippendale's legacy: the influence of the *Director* on country chair-makers in Britain as well as more ambitious cabinet-makers in Philadelphia and Charleston. The periodic nineteenth- and twentieth-century Chippendale revivals permeated even to the greatest in the land, demonstrated by Richard Jack's painting

of Queen Mary's Chinese Chippendale drawing room at Buckingham Palace. Brett's of Norwich lent a faultless contemporary reproduction of a *Director*-style bookcase, while the V&A lent its jokey plywood and plastic 'Chippendale, grandmother pattern' chair designed by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown (1983), not surprisingly never a big commercial success. We were dissuaded from concluding the show with a calendar from an eponymous popular dance troupe for copyright reasons (!), so that honour fell to an unfranked sheet of 4 cent postage stamps featuring a classic Philadelphia Chippendale-style splat-back chair issued by the US mail service in 2004.

JAMES LOMAX

# Future Society Events

## Bookings

For places on visits, please apply to the Events Secretary, Beatrice Goddard, tel. 07775 907390, with a separate cheque for each event, using the enclosed booking form. Where possible, joining instructions will be dispatched by email, **so please remember to provide your email address if you have one. There is no need to send an SAE if you provide a clearly written email address.**

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 visits is 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 equally considered following the closing date.

Please note the Events email address: [events@furniturehistorysociety.org](mailto:events@furniturehistorysociety.org)

## Cancellations

Please note that no refunds will be given for cancellations for events costing £10 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 deduction for administrative costs.

Please note that in the rare instances where members cannot pay until the day of a visit, they will still be charged the full amount for the day if cancelling less than seven days before the visit, or if they fail to attend. This is necessary as the Society has usually paid in advance for a certain number of members to participate in, for example, a tour/lunch. Separate arrangements are made for study weekends and foreign tours, and terms are clearly stated on the printed details in each case.

## Brighton Pavilion

SEPTEMBER 2018 — DATE TO BE CONFIRMED

5.00 PM–7.30 PM

This visit will be led by David Beevers, Keeper of the Royal Pavilion, and Annabel Westman, Executive Director of the Attingham Trust and independent textile historian. David will give an outline history of the Pavilion, followed by Annabel, who will be taking a detailed look at the specific Saloon restoration projects, with special focus on the silk panels and carpet. After this, there will be a tour around the ground-floor state rooms, and then Pavilion object conservator Andy Thackray will talk about

the restoration of a pair of Bailey and Saunders cabinets, made to a design by Robert Jones, of c. 1822.

COST: £40

LIMIT: 20

Please contact the Events Secretary to express interest.

## Autumn Study Weekend Northern Ireland

FRIDAY 12 OCTOBER–SUNDAY 14  
OCTOBER 2018

## SAVE THE DATE FHS Annual General Meeting

SATURDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2018

To be held in the Brunswick Room at the Guildhall, Bath BA1 5AW.

## FHS Annual Lecture

TUESDAY 30 OCTOBER 2018

To be held at the Society of Antiquaries of London, Burlington House, London W1J 0BE.

More details to follow in the August *Newsletter*.

# Occasional and Overseas Visits

## City & Guilds of London Art School, 124 Kennington Park Rd, London SE11 4DJ

TUESDAY 15 MAY 2018  
2.00 PM FOR 2.15 PM START–  
4.30 PM

A visit to the Historic Carving Department will be led by Robert Randall, Senior Woodcarving Tutor. Sculpture, wood and stone carving have been taught at City & Guilds of London Art School since it was founded in 1854 as the Lambeth School of Art, one of the oldest art schools in the UK. In 1860, it moved into purpose-built premises on part of the site of the old Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens and was taken over by the City & Guilds of London institute in 1879, when its present site was acquired.

At its foundation, the school focused on the art education of local artist-craftsmen working for the nearby art-industrial enterprises such as Doulton Pottery on Black Prince Road and the architectural masons and sculptors Farmer and Brindley on Westminster Bridge Road, favoured by

George Gilbert Scott. Following the Second World War, the woodcarver William Wheeler set up specific restoration and carving courses to train craftsmen for the repairing of damaged monuments and buildings, and this is now known as the Historic Carving Department. This offers the only full-time study of wood and stonecarving in the UK, and carvers trained at City & Guilds play a crucial role in the majority of carving projects undertaken in Britain today. The school's *alumni* have carried out significant amounts of work on buildings including



Takako Jin at work at the City & Guilds (© Tim Crawley)

the Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle.

COST: £30 INCLUDES TEA

LIMIT: 20 MEMBERS

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:  
MONDAY 7 MAY 2018

## Studio of Yannick Chastang, Faversham, Kent — Looking at Boulle Marquetry

THURSDAY 21 JUNE 2018  
1.30 PM–4.00 PM



Yannick Chastang is a former FHS Council member and leading specialist in French furniture and marquetry. His workshop restores and conserves furniture, marquetry, gilding and lacquer from public and private collections across the globe. This will be a special opportunity to look, together with curators from the National Trust, specifically at Boulle pieces currently undergoing conservation — in particular comparing the Knole clock and pedestal with the two Boulle coffers and stands from Boughton House in Northamptonshire.

COST: £30

LIMIT: 20 MEMBERS

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:  
FRIDAY 1 JUNE 2018

## Spring Study Trip — Dumfries House, Ayrshire and Paxton House, Berwickshire

FRIDAY 8 JUNE–SATURDAY 9 JUNE  
2018

This is now fully subscribed. Please contact the Events Secretary if you would like to go on the waiting list.

## Study Trip to Amsterdam

FRIDAY 6 JULY–SATURDAY 7 JULY 2018

The prompt for this study trip is the forthcoming exhibition, 'KWAB. Dutch Design in the Age of Rembrandt', to be held from 29 June until 16 September 2018 at the Rijksmuseum. Our expert guide will be Dr Reinier Baarsen, Senior Curator of Furniture. Our trip will be enhanced by a visit to the Nieuwe Kerk to see the brass choir screen designed by Johannes Lutma. Steve Coene, Keeper of the Royal Furniture, will lead a private visit to the Koninklijk Paleis, transformed in 1808 into a palace for King Louis Napoleon, in full Empire style, and still used as the reception palace of the Dutch Royal House.

At the time of going to press, a few places are still available. Please contact the Events Secretary before 21 May.

# Other Notices

Please note that these events/notices are not organized/issued by the Furniture History Society. Information/booking instructions will be found under individual items.

## Research

Two beautifully constructed 'commodes', attributed to Christopher Fuhrloh, each containing a pianoforte signed by Frederick Beck, survive, one in the Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight and the other in the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. In the former, the pianoforte is inscribed, 'Fredericus Beck Londini fecit 1775'; the name board of the latter is similarly inscribed and dated 1777. Earlier researchers have suggested that Beck commissioned Fuhrloh to make the cases to house these instruments; however, their shape renders them impractical for the player. Why, one must ask, would a musical instrument maker adopt such a seemingly illogical approach? A more plausible explanation is that the reverse situation applies, and that Fuhrloh obtained these instruments from Beck for insertion into his cabinets, these being designed primarily as decorative pieces, suitable to grace the homes of wealthy patrons. This hypothesis is supported by newspaper advertisements placed by Fuhrloh in 1776 and 1784.

Other newly identified biographical materials include clear evidence of Beck's

presence in London as early as 1762; an extant example of an early pianoforte bearing his name, dated 1769; and the wills of both men, which firmly establish the dates of their respective deaths and provide new insights into their circumstances.

For more information, M. Debenham and M. Cole, [www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03058034.2018.1425518?journalCode=yldn20](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03058034.2018.1425518?journalCode=yldn20)

Since publication of the above-referenced paper in *The London Journal*, a previously unreported piece of evidence relating to Fuhrloh's activities in London has come to light, this being a receipted invoice relating to items he supplied to naturalist [Sir] Joseph Banks in April 1772 — possibly the earliest invoice so far identified for Fuhrloh working on his own account in London. The original document is held in the archives of the State Library, New South Wales and a digital image appears on their website<sup>1</sup>, transcribed below:

Apr'l 18 1772	
Mr Banks Esqr	
A travelling kist <sup>2</sup> with drawers and petitions <sup>3</sup>	4. 4. 0
tow plated Silver bukels and a nittet <sup>4</sup>	
Silk Strap	15. -
	£4. 19. -
Reciev'd [sic] the contents in full of all Demand [signed] Christopher Fuhrloh (On back)	
Furlohg	Furlough
	Jews Box [?]

In 1768, Banks and his team of naturalists had sailed with James Cook in the *Endeavour* on his voyage to explore the New World, calling at Rio de Janeiro, Tierra del Fuego, Tahiti, Eastern Australia and New Zealand, collecting many interesting specimens along the way and arriving back in England in July 1771. Banks had planned to accompany Cook on his second voyage to Australia (leaving in May 1772), and, since Fuhrlöhg's invoice is dated 18 April 1772, one may deduce that the items had been intended for use during that expedition. However, Banks demanded far more space to accommodate his equipment and team than was practically possible on board Cook's new ship, *Resolution*, his demands being so extravagant that he effectually excluded himself from the voyage. Instead, he led an expedition of his own to the Isle of Wight, the western isles of Scotland and Iceland later in the same year.

- 1 The Second Pacific Voyage of James Cook, Series 06: 'Volunteers, Instructions, Provisions for 2<sup>nd</sup> Voyage'. Sir Joseph Banks Papers, State Library, New South Wales, Australia: Document 06.030, Invoice Christopher Fuhrlöhg.
- 2 An old term for a chest. Fuhrlöhg's misspelling of a number of words in this invoice suggests that he had not yet achieved fluency in written English, this being only a few years after his arrival in London.
- 3 *Recta*: partitions.
- 4 *Recta*: 'two plated Silver buckles and a knitted'.

DR MARGARET DEBENHAM

## Exhibition: Matching Patron and Maker

FRIDAY 8 JUNE–WEDNESDAY 13 JUNE 2018 AT LUKE HUGHES, 7 SAVOY COURT, LONDON WC2R OEX

FRIDAY 22 JUNE–FRIDAY 29 JUNE 2018 AT OSSOWSKI, 83 PIMLICO ROAD, LONDON SW1W 8PH

The Master Carvers' Association presents an exciting season of exhibitions celebrating the tercentenary of Britain's foremost furniture designer and maker,



Thomas Chippendale. As the inheritors of Britain's carving heritage, the Master Carvers' Association — professional carvers elected to membership by peer review — are paying their own tribute by exhibiting a suite of music stands, which have been individually designed, carved and made by members for exhibition and recital performances. Like Chippendale's furniture, these music stands are both functional and sculptural objects. The music stands will travel to Burton Constable (another Chippendale300 partner) where they will be exhibited with historic manuscript music, and then on to Leeds for use in the Leeds International Piano Competition, Chamber Music category.

For more details: [www.mastercarvers.co.uk/chippendale-300.htm](http://www.mastercarvers.co.uk/chippendale-300.htm)

## Conference: Celebrating Female Agency in the Arts

TUESDAY 26 JUNE–WEDNESDAY 27 JUNE 2018

CHRISTIE'S EDUCATION AT CHRISTIE'S, 20 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, NEW YORK

This conference celebrates the significant roles women have played and continue to play in the arts and their markets. Sixteen sessions over two days explore women's diverse contributions to the arts from a trans-national and trans-historical perspective, reflecting global and historical diversity. Not advocating for a separate nor alternative history of art and its markets, the conference looks at the central role played by women in the creation, development, support and preservation of

the arts and how their contribution has changed over time. Sessions focus on women as artists, patrons and collectors of art and architecture, dealers and brokers, art historians and art critics, as well as curators and preservers of culture. Including the presence of women in emerging and established art centres, historical aristocratic patronage and the medieval period, the sessions will investigate a diverse range of topics.

For further details, [www.christies.com/exhibitions/christies-education-conference-celebrating-female-agency-arts](http://www.christies.com/exhibitions/christies-education-conference-celebrating-female-agency-arts)

## Exhibition: Innovation & Collaboration. The Early Development of the Pendulum Clock in London

MONDAY 3 SEPTEMBER–FRIDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2018

BONHAMS, 101 NEW BOND STREET, LONDON W1S 1SR

The exhibition is being organized and sponsored by two pre-eminent British private clock collectors. The aims of the exhibition are threefold:

- 1) to tell the story of the development of the early pendulum clock;
- 2) to explore evidence of collaboration between early makers;
- 3) to attempt to set the clock-makers' endeavours in the context of their day, in relation to the social, cultural, scientific and business climate of the time.



Ahasuerus Fromanteel wall clock, 1660

It is almost fifty years since the last major, independent exhibition of early English pendulum clocks was held in London (*The First Twelve Years of the Pendulum Clock*, February 1969), and so an exhibition presenting a carefully curated selection of some of the finest examples of early English clock-making is, arguably, long overdue. An exhibition placing London clock-making within the socio-economic context of the time has not been attempted before. Previously clocks have mainly been considered within their own context. London-made clocks and watches surged to world pre-eminence in the thirty years after the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, in parallel to the way London, in the same period, became the world's foremost commercial centre and mercantile entrepôt. The exhibition aims to illustrate that it was not merely happenstance that these two developments went hand-in-hand together, while also proceeding to have a profound influence on the occurrence, in England, of the Industrial Revolution at the moment it did, in advance of elsewhere.

More details:

[www.clockexhibition.org.uk/](http://www.clockexhibition.org.uk/)

## Symposium: KWAB: New Discoveries

THURSDAY 13 SEPTEMBER–FRIDAY  
14 SEPTEMBER 2018

The Rijksmuseum will be organizing an international two-day symposium in conjunction with 'Kwab: Dutch Design in the Age of Rembrandt', to be held at the Rijksmuseum (the latter exhibition forms part of the forthcoming FHS visit to Amsterdam in July). The symposium gathers specialists on auricular ornament, including Tessa Murdoch (V&A), Matthew Winterbottom (Ashmolean Museum), Jet Pijzel-Dommisse (Gemeentemuseum Den Haag) and Johan ter Molen, who will share new discoveries and ongoing research on objects displayed within or related to the exhibition. The first day of the symposium will focus on the findings of technical research undertaken in preparation of the exhibition. On the second day, speakers will address (art) historical aspects of the design, production and reception of diverse objects in the auricular style. This day is followed by a private viewing of the exhibition. It will be possible to attend either or both days.

More details: [www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/whats-on/symposiums/symposium-kwab-new-discoveries](http://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/whats-on/symposiums/symposium-kwab-new-discoveries)

## Chippendale300

For a significant number of lectures, exhibitions and events in celebration of the Chippendale tercentenary, see

[www.chippendale300.co.uk/events/](http://www.chippendale300.co.uk/events/). This website is being updated on a regular basis as new events are added to the programme. Some highlights include:

## Lecture

Through Tempestuous Seas: Exotic Woods in Chippendale Furniture and Thomas Chippendale: Hero of Wharfedale

FRIDAY 22 JUNE 2018

7:30 PM–9:30 PM

OTLEY COURTHOUSE, COURTHOUSE STREET, OTLEY LS21 3AN

A pair of lectures by Dr Adam Bowett and Mr James Lomax of the Chippendale Society will advance the appreciation of Chippendale. Part of a weekend of talks at Otley Courthouse discussing Chippendale's outstanding skills — and those who tried to copy him.

To book tickets: 01943 467466

## One-day Masterclass

Chippendale at Paxton

TUESDAY 26 JUNE 2018

10.00 AM

PAXTON HOUSE, BERWICK-UPON-TWEED TD15 1SZ

Led by expert furniture historian Professor David Jones, co-curator of The Paxton Style exhibition, this study day will examine one of the world's largest collections of furniture by Thomas Chippendale the Elder and Younger as

supplied to Paxton House between 1774 and 1791. Areas such as furniture type, technical construction, ornament and timber finishes will be covered in detail with hands-on analysis and examination of transcribed invoices and archives.

To book tickets: [www.paxtonhouse.co.uk/chippendale-300/](http://www.paxtonhouse.co.uk/chippendale-300/)

## Lecture

Marquetry expert Jack Metcalf discusses Chippendale's marquetry brilliance ahead of the publication of his new book

TUESDAY 3 JULY 2018

10.30 AM–3.30 PM

WESTON PARK, WESTON-UNDER-LIZARD, SHIFNAL TF11 8LE

Jack Metcalf has created replica marquetry copies of a number of Chippendale's works which are displayed in their original dyed colours. These include a panel of the Harewood Library Writing Table, the marquetry on the complete Diana & Minerva Commode and a pier table made originally for Harewood owned by the Chippendale Society.

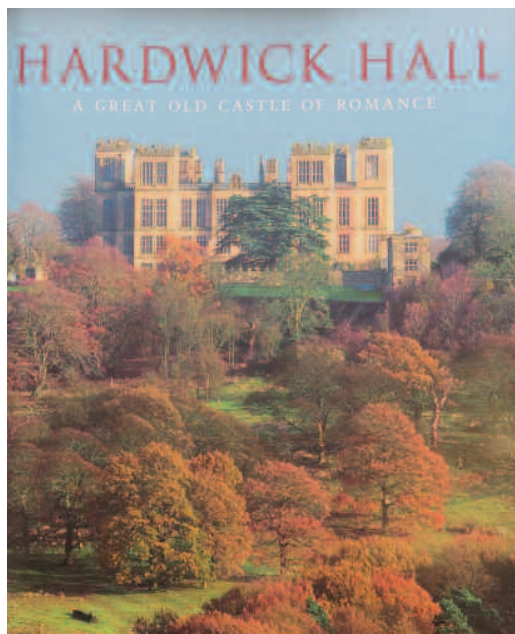
To book tickets: 01952 852130, or email: [julianne@weston-park.com](mailto:julianne@weston-park.com)

# Book Reviews

Suggestions for future reviews and publishers' review copies should be sent to Simon Swynfen Jervis, 45 Bedford Gardens, London W8 7EF (tel. 020 7727 8739, email: ss.jervis@btopenworld.com).

DAVID ADSHEAD AND DAVID TAYLOR (eds), *Hardwick Hall: A Great Old Castle of Romance* (Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art and the National Trust). xxi + 378 pp., 342 illus. ISBN 9780300218909. £75

The association between the Furniture History Society and Hardwick Hall is long. In 1971, the Society published in its *Journal* the 1601 Inventory of Hardwick Hall, with an introduction by Lindsay Boynton, and a scholarly commentary by Peter Thornton.



To this day, that inventory remains essential reference for investigation of the great sixteenth-century power-house in Derbyshire. Appropriately this latest, magisterial publication includes contributions from distinguished members of today's Furniture History Society, including one of the editors (David Adshead), former Chairman (Simon Swynfen Jervis), current Chairman (Christopher Rowell) and other members whose research has been published in the *Journal* in recent years: Emma Slocombe, Annabel Westman and Matthew Hirst. In addition, many members of the Society have enjoyed privileged access to Hardwick Hall to study its collections, through the generosity of the National Trust. To say that the Society has become 'part of the furniture' of Hardwick studies may not be an overstatement.

This magnificent volume, lavishly illustrated, comprising twenty chapters by twenty authors, seven appendices, plans and sectional elevations, a family tree and extensive bibliography, provides today's reader with a comprehensive survey of current knowledge and understanding of Hardwick Hall, built for 'Bess of Hardwick', Countess of Shrewsbury (1521/2–1608) and owned by her Cavendish descendants until 1957. Its complex architectural realization is elucidated by David Adshead in his introduction, and in detail by Nicholas Cooper (to whom we owe the inspiration

for this great book). Anthony Wells-Cole's masterful analysis of the iconographic sources for the building's embellishment serves as the background for further essays on Hardwick's famous, and some less well-known, contents: its tapestries, embroideries and needlework, books, pictures, metalwork and — of particular interest to members of the Furniture History Society — its furniture, discussed in three substantial chapters.

Simon Swynfen Jervis's study of the major pieces of sixteenth-century furniture brought from Elizabethan Chatsworth to newly finished Hardwick in the 1590s provides scholarly, crisp analysis of the design, manufacture and literary history of Hardwick's most famous pieces: the 'Sea-Dog' table (Paris, c. 1570), the 'Du Cerceau Cabinet' (probably Paris, c. 1570), the 'Eglantine Table' (probably London, c. 1568) and the 'GT' chest (probably South German, c. 1575). Set firmly in their European context, their existence at Hardwick before 1600 reinforces, along with tapestries and needlework hangings, the international significance of Bess's masterpiece. Not to be missed is Nicholas Cooper's study of joinery in both 'Old' and 'New' Halls — much of it by William Bramley and his team — work which provides a continuous if modest accompaniment to other, richer fittings in plasterwork, stone and alabaster, and reminds us of the importance of stencilled rather than inlaid decoration — now often difficult to see.

Christopher Rowell sheds light on other furniture which has often received less attention and is therefore to be valued. This includes the numerous, splendid

chests and trunks dating from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries which were intrinsic to the travelling life of great families, and the single surviving X-frame of the c. 1585 chair of state which is compared to the more complete and plentiful examples at Knole, Kent.

While Hardwick Hall is often perceived as the sole creation of its famous founder, this volume emphasizes the contributions of later generations of Cavendishes, not least in furniture — from Christian Bruce's canopy and couch of estate of c. 1635 for the High Great Chamber, to the 6th Duke of Devonshire's significant introduction in the nineteenth century of superb late seventeenth and eighteenth-century state beds from Chatsworth, Londesborough and possibly Devonshire House, London, listed and analysed by Annabel Westman. Later chapters which focus on the vicissitudes endured by Hardwick during the twentieth century, and the inevitable changes demanded by public access since 1957, must also interest the furniture historian, particularly in relation to the conservation of ancient and often now very delicate objects — from the pioneering work of Duchess Evelyn (1870–1960) to current, monumental work on the Gideon tapestries by the National Trust.

As the second in what is hoped will become a major series of volumes on the National Trust's 'treasure houses', this volume is to be praised for its vision, scholarship and comprehensiveness. And if members of the Furniture History Society are daunted by tackling all twenty chapters, they must not on any account miss Mark Girouard's moving 'Afterword'

of his youthful memories of what was to him, undoubtedly, 'A Great Old Castle of Romance'.

LISA WHITE

CHRISTOPHER WILK, *PLYWOOD — A Material Story* (London: Thames and Hudson/V&A Publishing, 2017). 240 pp., 325 b&w and colour illus. ISBN 978-0500519400. £29.95

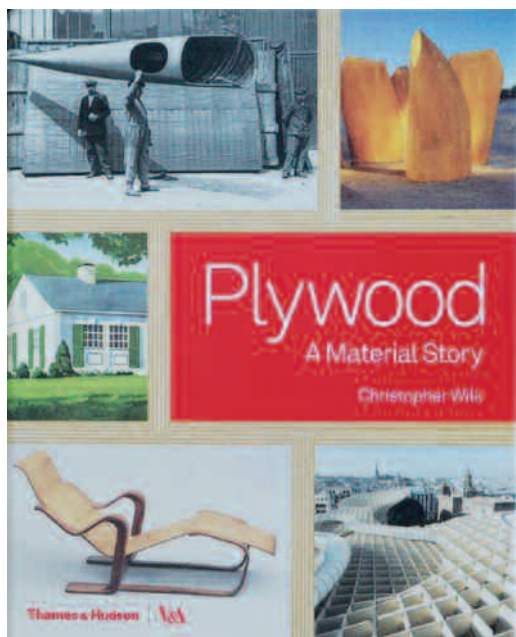
Many FHS members will have seen Christopher Wilk's compact, ground-breaking plywood exhibition at the V&A. This book is not a catalogue of the exhibition — it stands in its own right as a history of plywood's development and use in the USA, Britain and Europe, and the first to be written by an art historian. Although the plywood furniture of Alto, Eames, Summers and others has long been considered museum-worthy, the material itself has not hitherto been awarded similar treatment, so the book and the

exhibition mark an important stage in plywood's art-historical journey.

Like plywood itself, the book is straightforward and without pretension. The prose is clear and direct, the illustrations are numerous and well chosen, and almost all from period images or literature. The treatment is episodic and roughly chronological, focusing on key stages in plywood's technical and cultural progress from early nineteenth-century experimentation to twentieth-century ubiquity. It is a story of materials and processes rather than of furniture per se, although the central chapters, 'Building the Modern World' and 'Plywood Shows its Face', deal directly with plywood's use in interiors and furniture, and are copiously illustrated.

The primary driver of plywood use was industry rather than craft, with both world wars being periods of particularly rapid innovation and development in aircraft and boat manufacturing. Nevertheless, the impact of plywood on twentieth-century furniture design was and still is profound, beginning with the experimental work of Breuer, Rietveld and Bruno Paul, to Alvar Aalto's 'authoritative design vocabulary' of the 1930s and the now ubiquitous Eames models of the 1940s, from which so many modern chair designs derive.

One of the biggest difficulties faced by both manufacturers and users of plywood was to overcome a widespread consumer aversion to anything made from veneers, and in the chapter 'The Veneer Problem' the origins of this prejudice are explored in depth, from Dickens's odious Veneering family to early twentieth-century legal cases concerning the definition of 'solid'



wood. Ultimately, the widespread acceptance of plywood in the twentieth century, both for affordable furniture and housing and for luxury mansions, was due to the efforts of innovative architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Alvar Alto, Richard Neutra and Bertrand Goldberg. Readers unfamiliar with their work will find much here that is interesting and surprising.

Wilk's plywood story concludes on a forward-looking note. After a difficult few decades in the late twentieth century, plagued by an increasingly poor public image and competition from newer materials, plywood is now stronger, more versatile and more environmentally friendly. It is a material ideally suited to the demands and possibilities of both buildings and furniture in the age of computer-controlled design and manufacture.

ADAM BOWETT

CHRISTINE CASEY, *Making Magnificence: Architects, Stuccatori and the Eighteenth-Century Interior* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, published in association with the Fondazione Ticino Nostro, 2017). 316 pp., 252 figs, 9 b&w pls and 1 colour pl. ISBN 978-0-300-225778. \$75

This is a book for which there has long been a crying need, and Christine Casey has risen to the challenge magnificently. The *stuccadors* who worked in England and Ireland, and their interconnections, needed more precise identification; and the connections between them and their work, the region from which they came and what they did in the Holy Roman Empire required clarifying. The late



Geoffrey Beard did sterling work, particularly in the archives, in finding scattered pieces of information about their activity in Britain, which he published in *Decorative Plasterwork in Great Britain* (1975; 2nd edn, 2011) and in *Craftsmen and Interior Decoration in England 1660–1820* (1981; curiously, omitted from the bibliography); but he, like almost anybody then, knew very little about the work of *stuccadors* in Ireland. He then went on to write *Stucco and Decorative Plasterwork in Europe* (1983), but he was unfamiliar with a lot of the research in this field, often contained in very local publications. He also neither understood, nor had a very good eye for, the varied ornamental vocabularies of the practitioners of stucco. He was, however, a pioneer in devoting separate study to this art, which is mostly treated as a stepbrother of architecture; and Christine Casey has built splendidly onto and extended his achievement.

The great merit of her book is that it is based on the crucial role played by the Comasques, the Swiss-Italian *maestri Ticinesi*, and has identified precisely where each of them came from, and when and how they were interconnected (though some of the family relationships are speculative, or have eluded even her). She has then gone on to identify the careers in Germany — particularly in the churches and palaces of such places as Fulda, Aachen and Rastatt — of those who later (and sometimes simultaneously, as in the case of Giuseppe Artari) worked in Britain. Throughout she has addressed questions of design and patronage, of when the responsibility for the choice of a *stuccador* — or, more usually, a team — was due to the client of a building or to its architect; and of when the design and drawings for stucco can be ascribed to the latter, and when to the *stuccador*. She has discovered, or has introduced to an English-speaking readership, a wealth of drawings; and has plausibly identified the draughtsmen of several in that confused mass, the Gibbs Collection in the Ashmolean. She has also leaped the Irish Sea to establish which of the Lafranchini brothers was responsible for what there, what is the work of their native subordinates and how their work there relates to their work in England, notably in Northumberland and Durham; but even she cannot explain how they came to cross the sea.

Her work is rich in quotations from a variety of archival sources, including letters from the *stuccadors* to one another and back home (though disappointingly little relates to their work in Britain). Amongst the frustrations of working on

*stuccadors* is the lack of written material. The only biographies are the seven included in the fourth volume of the *Geschichte der besten Künstler in der Schweiz* (1774) by Johann Caspar Füssli (here, strangely, with an ‘n’ on the end of his name), amongst whom only Artari *padre e figlio* worked in Britain; about Giuseppe Artari’s associate Giovanni Battista Bagutti, we lack almost any biographical details. The only theoretical approach is a manuscript titled ‘L’Arte dello Stuccatore’, written in the late eighteenth century by a *stuccador* with an English connection, discovered by Casey (but ornament is always something that has been done, rather than written about; so that, for instance, Rococo was defined, mockingly, by its opponents); and the only published set of designs is Carlo Maria Pozzi’s *Artis sculptoriae vulgo stuccatoriae paradigmata* (Augsburg, 1708). In Britain, even the profession of *stuccador* is barely recognized by an indigenized name: Geoffrey Beard used ‘plasterwork’ for the title of his first book on the subject, despite the fact that it and stucco are not identical, and coined the ugly ‘stuccoists’ for his publication on *stuccadors* in Yorkshire in 1986; whilst Casey (like Margaret Jourdain before her) sticks to the Italian ‘*stuccatori*’ throughout, despite the fact that ‘*stuccator*’ or ‘*stuccador*’ (the more German form) is occasionally used in Britain in the eighteenth century.

But, rather than end on this quibbling note, I should like to conclude with a quotation, from a rather unexpected date, to be added to the wealth of those cited by Catherine Casey, one whose celebration of the delights of eighteenth-century stucco

chimes with the immense visual pleasures of this book:

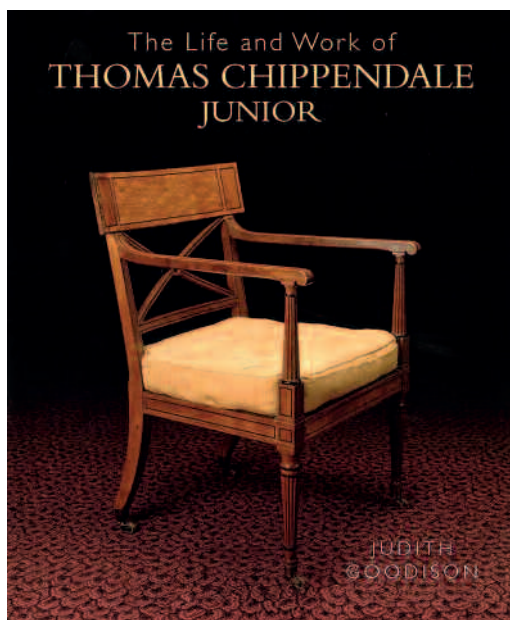
In the reign of Louis XIV, a peculiar and fantastic style of ornament came into general use for the decoration of the interiors of buildings. It consists of a great profusion of foliage twisting round mouldings, and emanating from heads, animals, shields, trophies, &c.; the line of foliage throughout being invariably maintained with an exquisite degree of freedom and spirit. ([Peter Nicholson], *Practical Masonry, Bricklaying, and Plastering, both Plain and Ornamental, &c.* (London, 1830), p. 177)

ALASTAIR LAING

JUDITH GOODISON, *The Life and Work of Thomas Chippendale Junior* (Philip Wilson Publishers, 2017). Hardback, 464 pp., 306 illus., mainly colour. ISBN 9781781300565. £65

Thomas Chippendale junior (1749–1823) had a hard act to follow on his father's retirement in 1777 — and a hard task, too, to sustain a business he inherited on a shaky financial footing. That he largely succeeded makes it particularly unjust that his posthumous reputation has been overshadowed by the elder Chippendale's, owing chiefly to the escalating fame of *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director* in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Chippendale junior never published his own designs for furniture, yet his most distinctive work, from after 1800, arguably surpassed even his father's for inventiveness.

Judith Goodison's splendid monograph is an explicit 'sequel' to Christopher Gilbert's biography of Chippendale senior, following broadly the same format in three principal parts: an introductory appraisal of the hero's life and work; a review of his



recorded commissions; and a compendium of illustrations ordered by object type, speaking louder than words to give a vivid impression of his stylistic development over nearly half a century.

The words are eye-opening, too. Chippendale junior carried on the practice in St Martin's Lane for nearly twice as long as his father, but under very different conditions. The elder Chippendale operated at a time of strong prosperity and growth, and had little difficulty in attracting a wealthy clientele, eager to decorate their houses in the height of fashion. His son's career, by contrast, coincided with a period of national austerity and rising inflation, especially during the wars with France, and most of his clients tightened their belts. He suffered bankruptcy twice, with the sale of all his stock and stock-in-trade — in 1804, following the death of his moneyed former partner Thomas Haig, and again in 1808; and in 1813 he was unable to extend the

lease on the premises in St Martin's Lane. Both sales were conducted by James Denew, a hitherto obscure upholsterer and auctioneer, who also attempted to assist Chippendale over the lease. After decamping to Haymarket and later Jermyn Street, Chippendale possibly worked in his final months for France & Banting in Pall Mall. He had worked alongside William France (or his father Edward France) in 1805, preparing the funeral of the Duke of Gloucester, so they may have had a long-standing relationship.

The survey of Chippendale's patrons forms the main substance of the book. Over a dozen clients are newly identified since the publication of the *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers* in 1986 (but, surprisingly, a few recorded there are overlooked, notably Sir John Soane). For each commission Goodison usefully summarizes the client's life, interests, politics and social circumstances, before analysing the documentary evidence and collating this with surviving furniture or comparable pieces. Full transcriptions of the records follow (bills, correspondence, inventories and sales): a rich minefield for many specialist areas of scholarship.

Goodison argues persuasively that, notwithstanding his misfortunes, Chippendale was actually more businesslike than his father. He retained the loyalty of several pre-existing clients (or their heirs), and some evidently recommended him to their relations. Certain clients undoubtedly tried his patience, however, for instance by failing to take delivery of bulky furniture made to order — let alone to pay for it. Some customers charged him primarily with

mending, refreshing and adapting old furniture, thinly interspersed with more profitable new work. Chippendale partly overcame these difficulties by diversifying into other fields, such as property management and undertaking. Much of this activity and experience would have been paralleled in the lives of his close competitors, so this book presents a valuable case study for the period.

However, Chippendale's entitlement to this monographic treatment lies in the arresting originality of his designs, accomplished over decades of experimentation. Through his twenties he already exercised increasing influence on the firm's house style, shown here by a telling comparison between two lyre-back armchairs of 1768 and c. 1773. His *Sketches of Ornament* (1779) presents his mature response to the Adam style in the year of his father's death. Inspiration from other designers is traced through detailed comparison with motifs from the works of George Richardson (who appears to have influenced Chippendale more directly than did Robert Adam), Giambattista Piranesi and Josiah Wedgwood (both particularly important for the great library table at Stourhead), and latterly Charles Heathcote Tatham. It would have been interesting to discuss here Chippendale's purchase of numerous prints and drawings by Cipriani, Bartolozzi and others, at Christie's in 1794 (noted in the *Dictionary of English Furniture Makers*): might he have drawn on these for inspiration, too, even at this late date? Or did he have a further side-line, dealing in ornamental prints?

The outstanding illustrations beautifully convey how Chippendale's ideas evolved:

from the elegant but still quite generic pieces of the 1780s, to more singular, tautly refined forms in the following decade (as for Harewood House and Stourhead), culminating in his boldest, highly sculptural models of the new century (again for Stourhead and for Luscombe Park), unmistakable for the work of any other maker. Chippendale clearly profited by his ability to take inspiration from his patrons. For example, a very particular brief from Mary, Lady Grantham, in *c.* 1791, bore fruit in the remarkable marquetry sideboard suite now at Newby Hall (a momentous discovery first published by Goodison in 2009). At Stourhead he unquestionably collaborated with his most important patron, Sir Richard Colt Hoare, not least over the astonishing armchairs for the music room (almost certainly the chairs with 'Goloss [guilloche] ... that supports the Elbows', of which he wrote in 1813 to an unnamed client, interpreting the latter's sketches). Charles Hoare borrowed this idiom from his half-brother in furnishing Luscombe, but some distinctive details suggest that he, too, took a personal interest.

A few relevant objects of uncertain date or origin are excluded from this survey,

including two marquetry commodes with Hoare family provenance, undoubtedly by the Chippendale practice but possibly predating the death of Chippendale senior (first recorded at Christie's, 8 June 1986); and a smart set of ebonized and porphyryzed torchères of the 1790s with provenance from Harewood, for which Chippendale's authorship has been proposed elsewhere (two now in the V&A, W.27&A-1951). Conversely, a group of chairs from Luscombe of the 1820s, which fall far short of Chippendale's usual standard of design, are accepted as part of the canon (figs 131–35).

Some valuable appendices include transcriptions of miscellaneous correspondence, press notices and the wills of Thomas Haig and Chippendale (but surely the property 'I dispossessed of' was what he 'die[d] possessed of'), a discussion of the principal woods used by Chippendale, a brief glossary (though with minor inaccuracies) and a very helpful chronology.

This book is essential reading for all furniture scholars, and its handsome presentation and lively writing style assure it a much wider appeal.

LUCY WOOD

# Reports on the Society's Events

Members will have noticed that the new *Newsletter* includes many more photographs than before. The Editor would be grateful if members could send **high-quality digital photographs, 1MB minimum**, taken during Society visits and events that can be used to illustrate the reports. Where indicated, a longer version of a report is available from the Events Secretary, email: [events@furniturehistorysociety.org](mailto:events@furniturehistorysociety.org)

*National Museum of Scotland*

Next came a tour of the National Museum of Scotland and its off-site store, led by Stephen Jackson, Senior Curator of Furniture and Woodwork. The impressively diverse holdings of the museum reflect the merger in 1985 of the National Museum of the Antiquities of Scotland and the Royal Scottish Museum. Stephen introduced the newly refurbished galleries of the national collections of art

The recently restored sofa, c. 1758, from the Palm Room, Spencer House, London, was designed by John Vardy (1718–65), and almost certainly made by John Gordon, a Scottish furniture-maker, who settled in London. It is an example of the emerging neo-Classical style, having ornamental motifs taken from ancient Roman sources, although its form is in the Rococo style. This piece was of considerable interest to the group. Its carved lime on beechwood frame now has nineteenth-century gilding, but originally the carved gesso was painted white (or possibly green) with gilded details. Its recent re-upholstery using modern rather than traditional techniques gives it a very smooth profile.

After lunch, we visited the museum's Granton store. Among the arrayed bays of furniture on three levels, we saw more pieces by William Trotter, a lobby table and



The Granton store, National Museum of Scotland

a large showcase, one of four, supplied to the Natural History Museum at Edinburgh University in 1820.









### *Newhailes*

On the Sunday morning, Newhailes, bathed in golden October light, was an unexpected pleasure and a fine illustration of exemplary curatorial work by the



The chimneypiece in the library, Newhailes

National Trust of Scotland. In 1686, the architect James Smith built Newhailes for himself as a seven-bay villa. The Dalrymple family acquired the house in 1709, and for three generations added to the building and interiors, giving the house its importance as a rare document of the Scottish Enlightenment.

The most striking addition was the 1718 double-height library lined with floor-to-ceiling bookshelves. Unrivalled in Scotland, at the time it was described by Dr Johnson as the 'most learned room in Europe'. According to Ian Gow, former chief curator of the NTS and mastermind behind the curation of Newhailes, this outstanding room may have been designed by the English architect James Gibbs.

Construction of the state apartment wing followed between 1723 and 1728 under Sir James Dalrymple. His wife, Lady Christian, was credited with creating the 'finest rococo interiors' in Scotland. The house, with sympathetic nineteenth-century alterations, remained in the family until 1997, when the NTS acquired it from the widowed Lady Antonia Dalrymple when she moved from the mansion to a cottage in the estate grounds.

Ian Gow described his conservation policy as 'doing as much as necessary, but as little as possible'. This gives Newhailes its particular appeal.

From the hall plasterwork by Thomas Clayton in 1752, to a documented 1743 mahogany partner's desk by Samuel Smith, London, through a parade of rooms, largely unchanged, to upper bedrooms and an 1870s bed by Heal's, and a dressing room which retains its original silk wallcoverings,

there was much to discuss. It was a remarkable visit, made so enjoyable by the insights, eloquence and humour of the wonderful Ian Gow. Newhailes, a property whose particular conservation treatment, now twenty years old, is set to generate renewed debate and interest in the context of constantly evolving approaches that can be observed elsewhere.

ANDREW JENKINS, TONY PRATT,  
GERRY ALABONE, PETER MIALL,  
GERRY BERWYN-JONES, MINDY PAPP,  
MICHAEL SHRIVE, CHARLOTTE ROSTEK,  
DR FIONA SALVESON MURRELL,  
PROF. ED HOLLIS, KATE DYSON

Full reports for individual Edinburgh  
visits are available upon request to the  
Events Secretary.

# Publications

As a leading publisher in the field of furniture history, the Society offers for sale a wide variety of publications to both members and non-members. Among the publications that are currently available are the following:

*Index to the Dictionary of English Furniture Makers*, £20 (members £18)

*The London Furniture Trade 1700–1870*, Pat Kirkham, £20

*Dictionary of Edinburgh Furniture Makers 1600–1840*, Francis Bamford, £20

*Furniture History Forty Years On*, Nicholas Goodison, £7.95 (members £5)

*Thomas Johnson's The Life of the Author*, Jacob Simon, £7.75

*Thomas Chippendale the Younger at Stourhead*, Judith Goodison, £6.95

*Makers, Dealers and Collectors: Studies in Honour of Geoffrey de Bellaigue*, £24.95

*John Stafford of Bath and his Interior Decorations*, Simon Swynfen Jervis, £6.95

*British and Irish Inventories*, Simon Swynfen Jervis, £12 (members £10)

## Furniture History

The Society's journal, *Furniture History*, is published annually and distributed free to members. Some back numbers are available to purchase (Volumes XI (1975)–XIX (1983), XXII (1986) and XXV (1989)–LIII (2017)] at £20 each plus post and packing (£6.65 for UK addresses, £7.35 for mainland Europe and £8.95 for rest of the world). A complete list of the titles of articles published in *Furniture History* may be found on

the website at [www.furniturehistorysociety.org/journals/search/?year=2010\\_2018](http://www.furniturehistorysociety.org/journals/search/?year=2010_2018). In addition, printed indices are available as follows: Volumes I–X, XI–XV, XVI–XXV and XXVI–XXXV, all at £5 each plus post & packing.

## New Publications on Offer

The Society is delighted to offer to members two new publications celebrating the tercentenary of Thomas Chippendale:

The May 2018 issue of the academically respected *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* is dedicated to Thomas Chippendale and features an impressive study by Morrison Heckscher of Chippendale's work, mainly drawings, in the MMA's collection. The forty-eight-page booklet is a handsome publication and complements the many books and booklets about the celebrated furniture craftsman being produced this year. It is available from the Society at £15, plus postage and packing.

Additional copies of another booklet, *Thomas Chippendale 1718–1779: A Celebration of British Craftsmanship and Design*, published by our sister organization, the Chippendale Society, is also available at £5 plus post & packing.

To order these or any other FHS publication, contact the Society's Publications officer, Jill Bace, at [publications@furniturehistorysociety.org](mailto:publications@furniturehistorysociety.org) or 21 Keats Grove, Hampstead, London NW3 2RS. On receipt of your order, she will send you an invoice. Upon receipt of payment (which may be made by cheque, debit or credit card), orders will be despatched by the Society's printers.

# Grants

The Society makes grants to individuals and organizations 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/](http://www.furniturehistorysociety.org/grants/) enquiries. Enquiries should be addressed to the Grants Secretary, Jill Bace, at [grants@furniturehistorysociety.org](mailto:grants@furniturehistorysociety.org) or at 21 Keats Grove, Hampstead, London NW3 2RS.

## Grants News

Thanks to a generous donation from the Worshipful Company of Makers of Playing Cards (facilitated by member, Edward Copisarow), the Society has been able to make available three-year memberships of the Society to eight emerging professionals. Applications were invited from students and young professionals under the age of twenty-five who are currently studying or working in the fields of furniture history and the decorative arts.

As a consequence, we are delighted to welcome the following new members, several of whom attended the Society's Annual Symposium on Thomas Chippendale: Michelle Atherton, Hannah Couling, Marianne Fossaluzza, Elizabeth Murray, Emma Olver, Elena Porter, Florence Sandford-Richardson and Isabelle Vaudrey.

## Officers and Council Members

PRESIDENT: Sir Nicholas Goodison

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& WEBSITE EDITOR: Megan Wheeler

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EVENTS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN: To be appointed

GRANTS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN: Adriana Turpin

FINANCE AND MEMBERSHIP OFFICER: Keith Nicholls, 37 Railway Road, Teddington TW11 8SD.  
Tel. 0208 287 2098; email: [finance@furniturehistorysociety.org](mailto:finance@furniturehistorysociety.org)

EVENTS SECRETARY: Beatrice Goddard. Tel. 07775 907390; email: [events@furniturehistorysociety.org](mailto:events@furniturehistorysociety.org)

OVERSEAS EVENTS SECRETARY: Melanie Doderer-Winkler; email: [mdodererwinkler@btopenworld.com](mailto:mdodererwinkler@btopenworld.com)

TOM INGRAM MEMORIAL FUND/FHS GRANTS SECRETARY: Jill Bace, 21 Keats Grove, Hampstead, London NW3 2RS. Email: [grants@furniturehistorysociety.org](mailto:grants@furniturehistorysociety.org)

PUBLICATIONS SECRETARY: Jill Bace, 21 Keats Grove, Hampstead, London NW3 2RS.  
Email: [publications@furniturehistorysociety.org](mailto:publications@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 is Sharon Goodman, 26 Burntwood Lane, London SW17 0JZ. Tel. 07855 176779; email: [sctgoodman@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sctgoodman@yahoo.co.uk)

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 15 June 2018.

Copy should be sent, preferably by email to Sharon Goodman, email: [sctgoodman@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sctgoodman@yahoo.co.uk), or by post to 26 Burntwood Lane, London SW17 0JZ. Tel. 07855 176779.

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COVER PICTURE A black and gold-lacquer and gilt-japanned clothes press by Thomas Chippendale, 1759, from Dumfries House (© Courtesy of Dumfries House; Christie's Images, 2007)