



CAVENDISH DECORATIVE AND FINE ARTS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 72

APRIL 2010

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

As we near the end of the 2009/10 Lecture Programme, planning for the next series is nearly complete and the list will be published in this issue of our Newsletter. The annual Directory Meeting held in London each March is a useful way of hearing and meeting new speakers, the retired Bishop of St Albans, who will be a speaker in the next series, was invited after last years meeting. Barbara Hudson and Pat Paulett have attended this time and will bring back more ideas for the future. When a 'Cavendish' member suggests a topic for a future lecture the 'yellow book' Directory lists suitable speakers, however both the topic and a speaker are sometimes put forward; both are most welcome and I would encourage members to let the Committee have their requests.

Our next Visit, led by Jean Monks, is to the Glass Museum in Accrington on May 12th and is preceded by the lecture by Diana Lloyd on Tiffany Glass. In the afternoon we travel to Manchester to view the Pre-Raphaelites Gallery. Nicholas Bagshawe who lectured on Joseph Wright last year is returning to tell us more about the Pre-Raphaelites in May.

The January lecture on the Scottish Colourists was the first time that digital projection was used. The College projector mounted above the screen gave good colour rendering and seemed to be reasonably sharp, however the image size was smaller that with the slide projector normally used. More lecturers now ask for a digital system as their first choice and the Committee will consider the purchase of our own projector which should provide a larger image and will also be available for Study Days. James Kellie has kindly agreed to advise on the most suitable equipment.

Though we have had an unusually cold and snowbound winter, attendance at the lectures has been excellent. I would like to thank 'Cavendish' members for their efforts in reaching Cliff College despite the weather and ensuring a good welcome for our lecturers.

KEITH LEVICK

CHAIRMAN'S VALEDICTORY NOTES

After retiring from the Childrens Hospital in 1994 events have left me little time for repose. First came St John Commander and Chairman of Council for Derbyshire, then other Chairmanships. The Railton Owners Club. The Sheffield Defence Studies Dining club and presently, Cavendish DFAS. In each case there has been the pleasure of seeing the organisation succeed, despite my presence, and a few tribulations: at "Cavendish" there has been much pleasure and few if any tribulations. Meeting speakers before and after the lecture and sometimes having them to stay is certainly one of the many pleasures. However after three years in office I shall retire at the AGM in May.

Our DFAS is now 25 years old and, I see from the previous programmes, has a record of good speakers, well organised visits and excellent camaraderie. I have noted previously that the Committee is so capable

that I can sleep soundly except in the meetings. This is an occasion when I can express my thanks to the Committee for all their hard work so well carried out. My thanks also to our members who fill the hall and support the visits: it is always a pleasure to have your comments even if occasionally critical – perhaps the loop will work one day – also we value your suggestions for topics and speakers.

My successor will have to consider the future venue of our meetings but only when the full picture of the altered Paxton Suite is available. We plan to move to digital projection during the next session and we must find new projects for Young Arts. In all these matters I wish my successor well.

I am convinced that the next 25 years for “Cavendish” will be as rewarding and full of achievement as the last.

NOTICES

TWENTY FIFTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – TUESDAY 25TH MAY 2010

The proposed Agenda for the meeting is enclosed. The Officers and Committee are elected annually. Nominations for members to serve on the Committee should be forwarded to the Secretary – **Mrs Mary Marsh, The Garden House, Middleton-by-Youlgrave, Bakewell, DE45 1LS, no later than 25th April 2010**; similarly, any **RESOLUTIONS**, for discussion at the A.G.M.

The meeting will commence at **10.00am, BEFORE THE LECTURE ON 25TH MAY 2010**.

Also enclosed are copies of the Trustee’s Report Statement of Financial Activities, and the Independent Examiner’s Report for the year ended 31st December 2009.

PAXTON SUITE, PAVILION GARDENS, BUXTON

At the end of January 2010, we heard from the Project Manager for the refurbishment of The Paxton Suite that the re-building work, proper, had commenced. The earliest date for completion is scheduled for the autumn 2010. In view of the fact that projects of this sort tend to run out of time, we shall be booking the whole of next season (September 2010 to May 2011) with our existing venue of Cliff College.

Your Committee will continue to monitor the situation and on completion of the project we will find out if the accommodation will be suitable for our purposes, whether it is big enough, and importantly, how much it will cost. We will endeavour to keep the membership informed.

MEMBERSHIP FOR 2010/2011

Application forms are enclosed and must be returned to the **MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY, Mrs Susan Park, Mews Cottage, Holme Lane, Bakewell DE45 1GF by 1st July 2010**. On **2nd JULY 2010** those on the waiting list will be offered the vacancies.

We have been able to keep the membership fees at £32 per person, or £31 for each of two or more people living at the same address.

PLEASE NOTIFY MRS PARK IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO CONTINUE MEMBERSHIP as we have a constantly growing waiting list.

DO NOT LEAVE YOUR APPLICATION UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE – YOU MAY BE DISAPPOINTED AS NO REMINDER TO RENEW WILL BE SENT.

VOLUNTEERS

You will notice that the Renewal of Membership form includes a box to be ticked if you would be willing to volunteer to join the Committee. As you will know the Chairman retires after three years and the Treasurer and Secretary after five years. Other Committee members' jobs are less defined.

We are urgently seeking a few people who would be prepared for their names to be put on a list of volunteers, so when positions become vacant we have an initial source of people we can contact.

Please do not be shy – committee work is your chance to become more involved in your society, to get to know other members, and to contribute some help to enable us to keep going! It is enjoyable and informal and we look forward to a positive response from our members. Please think about it and tick the box!

25TH ANNIVERSARY

In September 2010 Cavendish DFAS will celebrate the anniversary of its first lecture, which was held in The Paxton Suite, Pavilion Gardens, Buxton. It has been suggested that a Luncheon be held to mark this anniversary after our lecture on 25th September 2010. We can confirm that Hassop Hall would be pleased to offer us a two-course lunch with coffee and pre-lunch drinks for £23.75. If any members would be interested in this, please telephone **GLORIA OXLEY on 01298 72863**

LECTURE PROGRAMME FOR 2010/2011

25TH SEPTEMBER 2010

PEOPLE, PICTURES AND POSSESSIONS AT THE COURT OF THE SUN KING – John Travis

Louis XIV saw himself as a mortal god, the sun king at the centre of all things. He presided over the most splendid and sumptuous court Europe has ever seen. His reign was a golden age for the Arts and Sciences in France, with the King perceived as the driving force behind all endeavours. His palace at Versailles became the symbol of an unprecedented opulence, which was copied throughout Europe. This lecture examines aspects of Louis XIV's life, his family, his loves and art collections, to present an informal portrait of the man himself, his times, taste and intrigues which encapsulated the Age of grandeur.

26TH OCTOBER 2010

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE (2010 is the centenary of her death)

Karin Fernald

This illustrated lecture will focus largely on Florence Nightingale's concerns before and after the Crimean war of 1854-6. It will touch on her family background and relationships, her religious beliefs and her travels abroad. Before the war she seeks to find purpose in her life, together with freedom from family obligations. After the war she works for reform of the War Office, nursing reform, improved sanitation and the health of the army in India. On meeting Miss Nightingale in 1853, Elizabeth Gaskell comments

that “she has a great deal of fun, and is carried along by that, I think”. This sense of fun shines through letters to family and friends. Many of her family were amateur artists: the lecture is accompanied by sketches by Nightingale’s Aunt Julia and by her cousin Hilary Bonham Carter among others, together with war artists William Simpson and Jerry Barratt.

30TH NOVEMBER 2010

EMMA, LADY HAMILTON: SCANDAL, CELEBRITY AND ART IN 18TH CENTURY BRITAIN

Dr Kate Williams

This richly illustrated talk tells the remarkable story of how Emma Hamilton ascended through the ranks of British society, beginning as a courtesan and a model to become wealthy and famous – an ambassadress, a fashion icon and mistress of Lord Nelson. Her life was a true rags to riches story, but after Nelson’s death, she lost all her money and died in penury. Dr Williams, author of *England’s Mistress: the Infamous Life of Emma Hamilton*, explores her relations with artists such as Joshua Reynolds and George Romney, shows how she manipulated her image through portraiture – and reveals her impact on the visual culture of the time. Drawing on her five years of research in archives across the world, she tells Emma’s astonishing story and explores how her 18th century world was both glamorous and cruel.

25TH JANUARY 2011

SLEEPING BEAUTIES: THE IRISH COUNTRY HOUSE

Tom Duncan

Ireland has a great wealth of country houses dating from the Mediaeval to the Victorian periods. Their history is bound up with the long historic, and at times tragic, links between Ireland and England. The lecture will recreate these houses and their often eccentrically arranged lifestyles in an entertaining recreation of Ireland’s past. The main part of the lecture will concentrate on the Georgian period when many of the great houses were created and decorated. Built mostly in the Palladian style, ornamented with exceptional plasterwork, and filled with treasures brought back from the Grand Tour, together with fine furniture and decorative arts made in Ireland, the houses played host to a now vanished world. Amongst the principal houses to be discussed will be Malahide Castle, Ballemont Forest, Castletown Conolly and Russborough.

22ND FEBRUARY 2011

TIBET – THE ROOF OF THE WORLD

Zara Fleming

A general introduction to the history, art and culture of this extraordinary land, lying deep in the heart of Central Asia surrounded by some of the highest mountains in the world. Despite its geographical inaccessibility, it developed a rich and vibrant Buddhist culture and artistic tradition. Every aspect of Tibetan life is permeated by their Buddhist faith and their deep respect for the harsh mountainous environment in which they live. This lecture gives an overview of Tibetan history from the time of the great Tibetan Empire (6th-9th century) up to the present day; explores their fascinating culture inspired by Buddhism, introduced from India in the 7th century and gives an insight into the current situation. Zara was the first guest lecturer on the first British tour to Tibet in 1981 and has travelled and led tours to this part of the world ever since.

29TH MARCH 2011

A MEDIEVAL MASTERPIECE; THE HOTEL-DIEU AT BEAUNE

Rt Revd. Dr Christopher Herbert (ex bishop of St Albans Abbey)

Nicholas Rolin was one of the most powerful men in Western Europe in the 15th century and the creator of the Hotel-Dieu. What lay behind the creation of this medieval hospice? What was the purpose of Van Der Weyden painting in the main ward? What can all of this tell us about the medieval mind?

19TH APRIL 2011

FREDERICK, LORD LEIGHTON 1830-1896: A RE-APPRAISAL OF A VICTORIAN PAINTER

Jane Kelsall

In 1996 the Royal Academy presented an exhibition of the paintings and sculpture of Lord Leighton to commemorate the centenary of his death. This eminent Victorian's career began well and then faltered as he sought to establish acceptance from a hostile Royal Academy. When he was eventually made an Associate, and later President of the Royal Academy, he sought to promote the high ideals of the Aesthetic Movement – “Art for Art's Sake” rather than the popular morality of narrative paintings. His fine Greek classical pictures, superb sense of colour and his splendid portraits are re-assessed.

24TH MAY 2011

TCHAIKOVSKY AND CHEKHOV

Rosamund Bartlett

Tchaikovsky was one of the first people to perceive Chekhov's genius, and unusually took the step of becoming personally acquainted with the writer, despite his shy and retiring nature. The admiration was mutual and the much younger Chekhov was proud to dedicate a story collection to the great composer. This lecture explores why Tchaikovsky and Chekhov should have felt such admiration for each other's work, and examines their lives and careers in the context of late 19th century Russian culture, paying particular attention to the landscape paintings of Levitan, whose name is often mentioned in the same breath.

VISITS

The visit to Haworth Gallery, Accrington and Manchester Art Gallery on 12th May is fully subscribed.

There are a few places left for the London Visit – please contact **JEAN MONKS, URGENTLY**, if you are interested.

STUDY DAY

Mark Hargreaves will be arranging a Study Day for October and details will be published in the August/September Newsletter.

HERITAGE PROJECT

Six members have been working on a Heritage Project at Bakewell Museum.

We have made Tudor costumes, including hats to be worn by children visiting the Museum. We were ably led by Val Sidery, an ex textile teacher, who designed the patterns and gave us invaluable help. We were able to choose our fabrics from a large store at the museum. We have made both men's and women's hats and bonnets. Some of us made partlets (jackets) and some trousers and skirts for various ages and sizes of children.

The Museum made us feel very much at home, and although we worked through January and February we were nice and warm and enjoyed hot drinks, biscuits and sometimes scones!

We will be displaying our work at the April meeting at Cliff College. There will be photos of youngsters wearing the costumes and we may also have a "Tudor Lady" modelling our garments for us!

PAT PAULETT

REPORTS

LITTLE MORETON HALL AND BIDDULPH GRANGE GARDENS – 16TH SEPTEMBER 2009

As a Brummie familiar with the black and white architecture of Stratford-upon-Avon and the Welsh Marches, who then moved to East Anglia and the timber buildings of, say, Lavenham, Kersey and Coggeshall, I half expected to be underwhelmed by Little Moreton Hall. How wrong can you be?

Built over the course of some hundred years between the early 16th and early 17th centuries, this moated three-storey building with its flamboyant timber frame and sparkle of leaded windows looks too flimsy and top-heavy to have survived for 500 years. Even the afterthought of the Long Gallery which perches incongruously over the length of the south range of buildings (for the whole encloses three sides of a large cobbled courtyard) has not been enough to confirm James Lee-Milne's image of "the absurd half-timbered structure....topping(like) an ancient pack of cards...to meet...its own reflection". But it caused the National Trust a lot of headaches before the structure was successfully stabilised.

It is a house in which one would not like to have to hang shelves or pictures. There isn't a level surface or right angle in the place, thanks to the movement of the original green oak. One room has an impressive stone fireplace that seems to be falling over but is in fact plumb, and the floor, walls and ceiling swing around it. The three generations of Moretons who built the Hall were wealthy and keen that everyone should know it. So they used the very best materials – hard to beat the 30,000 leaded panes in the windows, nor the immense oak coffered ceiling in the Parlour – and the very latest ideas like the frieze in the Withdrawing Room, painted on paper with a biblical story, and pasted to the wall above the hand-painted "panelling". And then there's the furniture – not much of it, but including three wonderful oak pieces mentioned in an inventory of 1599, among them the unusual "great round table" on an ogee-arched hexagonal base and a huge "cupboards of boxes" with drawers for valuable herbs and spices concealed behind a pair of locked doors. "Money no object" extends to the present day, it seems – we met a conservator cleaning oak panelling with a suede shoe brush, one hour per panel, and outside a gardener clipping the box hedges of the knot garden with hand shears, 80 hours of work a year.

Moving on, we came to Biddulph Grange Gardens where mechanical trimmers were in full swing on the extensive and elaborate yew hedge partitions of the terrace "rooms". This is a high Victorian garden, restored to the original design of James Bateman, and incorporating in its 16 acres a widely-ranging plant collection. We were there at just the right time to be amazed by the dahlia walk, with its rank upon rank of technicolour blooms, but this is a garden to be enjoyed at any time of year. Narrow footpaths twist and turn round rocky outcrops, through tunnels, over bridges and link themed areas – Egypt, with a clipped

yew pyramid; China, with still green water, pagoda and idols; Italy, with formal symmetrical planting – but beyond the busy central area are long walks and vistas that our time there did not allow us to visit.

As usual, thanks go to Jean Monks for her careful organisation, but also to David, not for acting as rounder-up of stragglers this time, but for driving us all in the Bakewell Community Bus, and getting us everywhere, and home again early and in one piece.

JENNIE COFFEY

STUDY DAY ON ANTIQUES

On Friday 19th February 27 of us repaired to our favoured Study Day venue of the Ashford Village Hall, which has all the facilities we need (including car parking and the presence of Pat Paulett to deal with mid-morning coffee) and is not expensive to hire.

The title of our day was “What’s it worth?”. In this we were led by Vivienne Milburn, whose expertise in these matters is regularly demonstrated in the magazine “Reflections”. Vivienne’s illustrations were presented digitally by James Kellie – a “first” for a Study Day.

Vivienne briefed us thoroughly on the three important factors of provenance, authenticity and condition, and then set us a quiz covering the value of a wide range of items. Your Study Day organiser was ashamed when he was told his marks.

After the usual buffet lunch at the Ashford Arms (‘hearty’ rather than ‘nouvelle cuisine’, but appropriate to a chilly day), we returned to the highlight of the proceedings – the appraisal and valuation by Vivienne of items brought by members. These included Lalique dishes, a Georgian silver teapot, a beautiful Ashford marble broach, some Royal Doulton figures, a sketch by David Hockney, and a cavalry bugle from the Franco-Prussian war (hardly decorative art, but it was that war which drove some of the French Impressionist painters briefly over to England).

This was all great fun, and some members were pleasantly surprised at the value of their possessions.

All in all, I am grateful to Vivienne Milburn, who has been in the throes of moving house, for finding the time to give us such an enjoyable day.

MARK HARGREAVES

COPY FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER

The next Newsletter will be sent out at the end of August/beginning of September, **AND WILL INCLUDE YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD FOR THE NEW SEASON.** Please forward items for inclusion to **GLORIA OXLEY** before **15th August 2010.**