

THE CHIPPENDALE SOCIETY

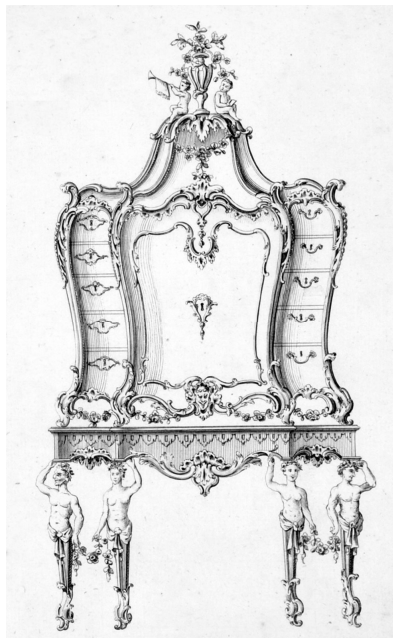


President: the Lord St Oswald

NEWSLETTER No. 139

www.thechippendalesociety.co.uk

October 2017



From *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, 1762 plate CXXII '[One of] two Designs of Cabinets... All the Ornaments which are on the Middle Door, at Top, Bottom and Two Sides, must be fixed fast, and to open with it: The Feet as well as all the ornamental Parts, must be cast in Brass, or Silver, etc'

USE OF EMAIL

Please help us to keep costs to a minimum by requesting that the Newsletter be sent to you by email in future. Please contact dib.chippoc@enterprise.net

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions (£14 single, £21 joint) are due on 1st January. If you do not pay by standing order please send cheque, payable to *The Chippendale Society*, in December or early January to Dr David Bower, at 2 Welburn Avenue, Leeds LS16 5HJ.

CHIPPENDALE 300

THOMAS CHIPPENDALE: A CELEBRATION OF CRAFTSMANSHIP AND DESIGN 1718 – 2018

We reported in previous Newsletters our initiative *Chippendale300*, bringing together a number of historic houses and organisations with an interest in Britain's greatest furniture. Each of the participating members will be holding its own events and programme and these are all featured on our shared website <http://chippendale300.co.uk> which is now up and running. It features a warm welcome from H.R.H. Prince Charles who speaks of his personal admiration for Chippendale's work. Please feel free to use this and become acquainted with all the worthwhile celebrations, exhibitions, study days and conferences taking place around the country.

The Society is working in partnership with Leeds Museums and Galleries to deliver a major exhibition at Leeds Museum February 9th – June 10th 2018, entitled *Thomas*

Chippendale: a Celebration of Craftsmanship and Design 1718-2018. All Chippendale Society members will receive invitations early in the New Year for the opening event. This will be performed by Dr Tristram Hunt, Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum and has been sponsored by Last Cawthra Feather, one of our many generous benefactors, all of whom will be acknowledged in the two publications accompanying the exhibition. There are approximately 100 exhibits including some of Chippendale's most spectacular work which has never been exhibited before. The show will also include a section on Chippendale's artistic legacy, bringing the story up to the present day.

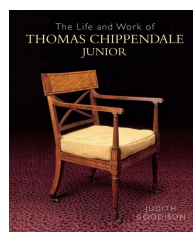
We are looking for a number of volunteer guides who might be available to give informal short tours and interpretation.

COMMEMORATIVE WINE GLASS



Please see the enclosed / attached leaflet about the commemorative wine glass which has been specially commissioned by the Society for Chippendale 300. It is being offered at a generous discount for members and is a splendid way of acquiring a lasting memento of the anniversary.

THE LIFE AND WORK OF THOMAS CHIPPENDALE JUNIOR by Judith Goodison



This scholarly and comprehensive book, lavishly illustrated and beautifully designed, will be published this autumn. A leaflet with details of the Special Offer Price of £45 (reduced from £65) is enclosed / attached. The author will be well known to the members and gave an illuminating lecture on this subject of her lengthy research following the AGM this year.

CHRISTMAS EVENT

Visit to Goldsborough Hall and Church and Festive Lunch December 20th 2017

A visit and festive lunch has been arranged at the fine early 17th century house at Goldsborough near Knaresborough, now beautifully restored by Mr and Mrs Oglesby. The house was acquired by the Lascelles family in the 18th century and was the home of Daniel, brother of Edwin Lascelles of Harewood, who was also a major patron of Thomas Chippendale (although the furniture is now removed). It remained in the family and became the home of the Princess Royal in the 1920s. It contains many good features from the Jacobean period and from Robert Adam's improvements. We will begin our visit at the fine medieval church of St Mary with a brief

talk and tour, followed by the short walk to the house and pre lunch drinks. The Hon Curator will speak briefly about Daniel Lascelles and the furniture he ordered from Chippendale.

The cost is £47.50 pp to include Britannia Travel coach, a visit to the church with a donation, and a three course lunch with coffee. Please send the application form and your cheque, payable to The Chippendale Society, to Anthony Mills, Hon Events Organiser, Lark Hill, Linton Common, Linton, Wetherby LS22 4JD. Please assume you have a place unless you hear to the contrary.

STUDY VISIT TO ABERDEENSHIRE AND PERTSHIRE September 11th-16th

Our route north took us first to **Dalemain**, Cumbria, the ancient house of the Hassell family which was partly Georgianised from about 1750. Its great interest lies in the Chinese Drawing Room (maybe once a ground floor dressing room) with its 16 sheets of Chinese 'garden' wallpaper supplied by Bromwich in 1756 at 13/-d a sheet. It was supplemented the following year by a magnificent carved rococo chimneypiece complete with writhing dragons, and a suite of armchairs and side chairs with exotically fretted arms and legs, supplied by one Nathaniel Hedges. The Chinese theme continued with an export porcelain service in blue and white marked on the back of one of the plates 'Hassell'. In 1774 an impressive group of Gillows furniture arrived at the house, mainly for the dining room (table, fan-back dining chairs, cellarets and a pair of fine Gothick plate carriers). Upstairs there was a Grendey-style clothes press with shaped inset panels, Gillows night tables etc.

The southern contingent of our group met us at Perth and next day we set out for **Kinross House**, the first 'classical' country house in Scotland, built for himself by the royal surveyor and entrepreneur Sir William Bruce. We were given an excellent introduction and tour by Dr John Lowrey of Edinburgh University who discussed the building history, its uses and some of the craftsmen involved. The various apartments have been somewhat altered but the fine staircase with its carved scrolling balustrade and its answering painted dado are intact. The visit culminated in the great Saloon in the centre of the first floor. The

contents of Kinross have been largely dispersed by the Montgomery family but its new owner has been able to retain a number of pieces as well as undertaking the huge job of restoring the building and its gardens extremely successfully.

Our journey north took us next to **Crathes Castle**, the romantic 16th century tower house of the Burnett family, now a property of the NTS. Christopher Hartley introduced us to the house and its owners and led us to some of its most outstanding features notably the painted ceilings with their emblematic figures, mottoes and heraldry, and the Aberdonian furniture: the spectacularly carved full tester bed made for Alexander and Katherine Burnett dated 1594, and the earliest dated chairs also made for them and dated 1597.

Next day we travelled north to **Duff House**, the magnificent Baroque / Palladian house built for the Earl of Fife by William Adam in his richest decorative style and completed by his son. For years the house remained a forlorn empty shell until it was rescued in the early 1990s and opened as a country house art



museum with paintings loaned from the National Gallery of Scotland and furniture from the Erskine Collection formerly at Dunimarle Castle and elsewhere. Among the highlights were Italian and French seat furniture from the Cardinal Fesch collection, given to him by his nephew Napoleon; Gobelins tapestries from the Moor Park suite made for Sir Laurence Dundas; and the pair of ormolu candelabra by Paul Storr made for the 4th Earl of Fife from a design by C.H. Tatham.

The afternoon took us to **Leith Hall**, a much altered and enlarged tower house where we were very pleasantly surprised to find some exceptional furniture: a set of 1760s mahogany splat back chairs with tassels, a set of three beautifully carved side chairs with contemporary gross and petit point embroidery with flowers and animal scenes apparently a gift to the NTS and shared with Culzean Castle. A real surprise was to find a plain Regency writing / dressing table made for Napoleon's exile on St Helena by George Bullock, presumably acquired a 'souvenir' at the Longwood Sale in 1822.

Our first stop the following day was **Fyvie Castle**, the great tower house whose present dramatic appearance is largely due to Sir Alexander Seton who bought the estate in 1596. It was forfeit after the first Jacobite rising and acquired by the Gordons of Haddo as a house for a younger son of that house. It was sold in 1889 to a neighbour, Alexander Leith, who had

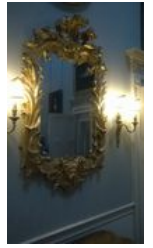


made a great fortune in the steel industry in the United States and had married an American heiress. He renovated the castle and installed his magnificent collection of paintings, mainly 18th and early 19th century Scottish and English portraits and these are the chief glories of Fyvie today. Among the richly carved baronial furniture were some interesting items. A set of particularly elaborate Chippendale-style splat back armchairs and sidechairs dispersed around the house turned out to be probably American since they were spotted in an old photograph of the Leith's New York apartment. Other American furniture identified by Christopher Hartley included a full tester bed with a dismountable canopy for summer use.

We then proceeded to **Haddo House**, the Palladian mansion built by William Adam for the 2nd Earl of Aberdeen but modernised in the early 1880s by the 7th Earl and his wife. Her father had employed the Adam-revival specialists Wright and Mansfield at his house at Guisachan near Inverness and at Brook House, Mayfair. They were the natural choice for Haddo which is perhaps their finest surviving commission. We admired the exquisite satinwood and giltwood pieces for the drawing room, the tall chimney glasses (reminiscent of Chippendale junior), and the mahogany furniture for the dining room. The library is



without doubt their piece de resistance with its two Wedgwood encrusted chimneys, the cedar bookcases inlaid with ebony decoration in the Adam style. The great library writing table is the most elaborate with ebony rams' heads and flutings and black and white Wedgwood medallions inset into the doors. Elsewhere in the house there was much to admire: a fine pair of palmbranch mirror frames surmounted by Prince of Wales feathers possibly by Thomas Vardy, and a tea table inlaid with brass stinging in the style associated with John Channon and others.



Next day we proceeded south to **Glamis Castle**, the ancient castle of the Lyon family, spectacularly rebuilt by the third earl after the Civil War. Despite our visit being hurried owing to the large numbers of visitors we were able to identify a number of exceptionally interesting



furnishings which would repay further study: in the Crypt - chairs with gilt leather and turkey work upholstery and a magnificent brass encrusted leather trunk; in the Drawing Room - a superb sequence of late 17th century portraits in their Sunderland frames, a number of Japanese lacquer cabinets and chests on frames, at least two Antwerp or Augsburg cabinets on stands, one with embossed gilt metal figurative panels, the other standing on three part-gilded blackamoors, with painted ivory (or marble ?) panels now replaced with scenes of Glamis and its environs painted on wood. The chapel with its decoration by de Wet and stained glass by Kempe is exceptional, while the Billiard Room contained a suite of ebonised chairs and tables with painted and gilt decoration from c1800. King Malcolm's Room is clad with hangings with 17th century appliqué birds, animals and flowers clearly from a bed, possibly the one in the King's Room with a japanned tester clad in gilt carvings and a valance with embroidered and couched decoration. We would have welcomed a more leisurely and informed visit which might have yielded more interesting and definitive results.

We were joined for our penultimate visit by Dr David Jones who was generous in sharing his great knowledge of the furniture at **Blair Castle**, the ancient castle entirely Georgianised by the 2nd Duke of Atholl who bought a great quantity of furniture from different suppliers mainly in the 1750s. We were able to admire the two suites of chairs by John Gordon, one with fish-scale (or dophinscale) carving, the four great rococo pier glasses and three tables by George Cole, mahogany pieces by William Masters and James Cullen, the suite of Louis XVI gilt chairs in the Drawing Room by Chipchase and Lambert, in addition to earlier pieces by Hodson and the great bed made for the family's apartment at Holyrood c1700 but brought here shortly afterwards. A great feature is the group of furniture made in local broomwood, including a bureau bookcase by George Sandeman of Perth. Plenty of superb furniture remains unattributed: picture frames and sconces close to Chippendale *Director* patterns, charming painted furniture in a simple Hepplewhite manner made for the Hermitage at Dunkeld, a superb serpentine lacquer commode, not to mention the Continental pieces including the great Piedmontese rosewood and walnut writing cabinet spec-

tacularly inlaid with mother of pearl ruin scenes. The pair of inlaid larchwood cabinets with glen tilt marble tops by George Bullock and a beautiful marquetry centre table by Baldock competed the roll call of illustrious British furniture makers of the golden age.

Blair contains the earliest surviving documented furniture by Chippendale: the pair of torcheres, 'neatly carved and painted white' but now gilt, costing seven guineas and a pole screen at £3. One of the torcheres was shown to us by David Jones in the private library juxtaposed with a contemporary 'copy' probably by the Edinburgh wright John Thompson. We were divided into groups to test our 'connoisseurship' and identify which was by whom. There was much discussion but fortunately everyone was correct in their verdict. We also examined and commented on the invoice for the broomwood bureau by Sandeson and noted the different components he had charged for in building up his itemised bill for twenty guineas. We are very grateful to David for organising this interactive engagement for us.

Our final visit next day took us to **Marchmont House** in the Borders. This great Palladian house was built c1750 for the third Earl of Marchmont, by an architect unknown but perhaps from a plan by William Adam or James Gibbs with one Thomas Gibson acting as executant. The superb rococo plasterwork is by Thomas Clayton and the house was extended and enhanced by Sir Robert Lorimer from 1914. After the family's departure and years of institutional use it was brought back into

private hands in 2007, and over the past four years has been entirely restored by the new owners and is being filled once again with specially acquired works of art. We were led by Francis Rae-makers, the curator, who explained that the rooms on the *piano nobile* have historic paintings of a grant tour theme and furniture from recent important sales, including superb tapestries from the Lingholme Collection. We admired a pair of John Gordon 'fishscale' chairs from Ditton Park – identical to the Blair Castle examples we had seen the day before; pier and chimney glasses by William Mathie similar to examples at Dumfries House, torcheres from the Lonsdale collection and much else. Particularly rewarding for the new owners is the repatriation of a magnificent embroidered heraldic firescreen with the arms of the 3rd Earl, crewel work covers for a pair of sofas, and a full tester bed by Lorimer. On the upper floor is a complete gallery of the Arts and Crafts movement which continues to expand almost daily: especially furniture by the Cotswolds masters and Glasgow and Edinburgh fin de siècle makers, pottery from Linthorpe, Pilkingtons, Burmantofts, and de Morgan, metalwork by Jeckyll and Dresser. A screen by Walter Crane had just arrived and was awaiting conservation. We left feeling we had just scratched the surface of a great collection in the making.

Our special thanks go to Tony Mills for managing all the complex arrangements of this visit (his last) and to Christopher Hartley and David Jones for their special insight.

Other Visits and Events 2017

Please see the website for reports on our recent visits to Burton Constable, Wessand Hall, Holker Hall and Leighton Hall