

THE CHIPPENDALE SOCIETY



President: the Lord St Oswald

NEWSLETTER No. 146
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www.thechippendalesociety.co.uk



THE 'PANSHANGER' CABINETS – A NEW DISCOVERY

New technical analysis of the veneers of a pair of cabinets supplied by Thomas Chippendale to Peniston Lamb, 1st Viscount Melbourne, c.1772–73, has permitted a digital reconstruction of the original brilliant colours of the woods. It is possible that the cabinets were intended for the display of a Sèvres dessert service ordered by Lord Melbourne in 1771.

Read about the analysis and see comparison images in the recently published article, 'Neo-classicism in technicolour: the Melbourne cabinets' by Adam Bowett with a note on the Melbourne Sèvres dessert service by Rosalind Savill in the June issue of *The Burlington Magazine* (pp. 464-473).

SUBSCRIPTIONS & EMAIL

In spite of several reminders, some subscriptions for this year remain unpaid. If you have not already paid, please do so now. Please help us keep costs to a minimum by requesting that the Newsletter be sent to you by email in future if you do not already receive it by this method.

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EVENTS FOR 2019

York Furniture Discovery Day Monday 21st October 2019

This full day looking at furniture encompasses the collections of two houses in York - Treasurer's House and Fairfax House. It is led by the Society's Chairman, Dr Adam Bowett

We will meet at Treasurer's House at 11am. The house is a 10 minute walk from the railway station and close to the Minster. Car parking is available at the station for a fee.

Treasurer's House was originally built as the house for the Treasurer of the medieval Minster. Since the post was abolished at the Reformation the house suffered in different guises until a Wakefield entrepreneur, Frank Green, bought it in 1897 and restored it from a near ruin. The house was given to the National Trust in 1930. Rooms have been designed around Frank Green's collections of furniture and other decorative arts and it is the furniture that will be our chief interest. The house will be

open to the public during our tour.

12.00-2.00 pm: please make your own arrangements for lunch.

We will meet in the afternoon at 2.15 pm at Fairfax House for a private visit. Fairfax House is a fine Georgian townhouse built by John Carr for Lord Fairfax. Most of the outstanding rococo stucco work is original as is much of the woodwork. The rooms hold the Noel Terry collection of furniture, once described as one of the finest collections of English furniture in private hands. Recent scholarship takes a more nuanced view, as we will discover during this privileged tour.

The cost for this day, including two admissions and the expert guiding is £30. Applications, with a cheque made payable to the Chippendale Society, must be received by the 30th September 2019. Please note that there is no transport included in this study day.

NB there is an application form.

CHIPPENDALE SOCIETY CHRISTMAS EVENT

Study Visit to Norton Conyers followed by Christmas Lunch at Goldsborough Hall Thursday 12th December 2019

We are most privileged that Sir James and Lady Graham have agreed to open their home, Norton Conyers, near Ripon, for a private visit before our Christmas lunch. The house has been in the Graham family since the seventeenth century and is famous for reputedly being the basis for Rochester's Thornfield Hall in Jane Eyre following a visit by Charlotte Bronte in 1839. Supposedly in times gone by a mad woman was imprisoned in the attic. Furniture by Wright and Elwick and rare wallpaper by William Morris are other highlights. Our tour will be conducted by Sir James and Lady Graham and will include the interesting attic rooms. We will also be delighted to see the results of recent extensive restoration.

Following this very interesting morning we will travel to Goldsborough Hall near Knaresborough, once the home of Edwin Lascelles, brother of Daniel of Harewood

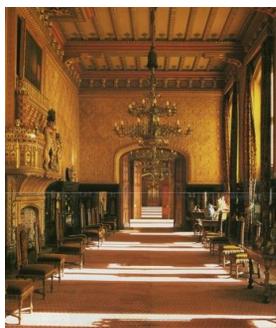
House and also a patron of Thomas Chippendale. In the 1920's the house became the home to the Princess Royal and although there is no longer any Chippendale furniture some fine features remain from the Jacobean period and from Robert Adam's improvements. James Lomax will give us a short talk on the Chippendale connection in the Library before lunch.

The cost is £67.50pp to include Britannia Coach travel, entrance and guided tour of Norton Conyers house and attic rooms, a three course lunch followed by coffee and mince pies in the Dining room at Goldsborough Hall. Please send your application form and cheque, made payable to the 'Chippendale Society' to Cathy Lambert, Hon Events Secretary, Nesfield Hall, Nesfield, Ilkley, LS29 0BN, Applications to be received by the 30th October. Please assume you have a place unless you hear to the contrary.

NB there is an application form.

REPORTS

Brockfield Hall and Carlton Towers, Study Tour Wednesday 1st May 2019



Carlton Towers Venetian Drawing Room

Twenty-seven members came on this study day. We began at Brockfield Hall near York where Simon Wood, the current owner, was our guide for the morning. Brockfield Hall (1804) was designed by Peter Atkinson, assistant to John Carr of York, for Benjamin Agar esq., a successful lawyer. As we looked at the south front, John Hardy explained it was a characteristic early Regency house based on the villas lining the banks of the Brenta Canal in Venice.

Inside was a cantilevered stone staircase curving past a wonderful Venetian window. Two alcoves on the staircase contained plaster figures and were probably originally intended for holding oil lamps. The pretty hanging colza oil hall lamp was perhaps an original feature. The other room of note is the spectacular Oval Drawing Room. Mr Wood explained that surviving drawings confirmed that the grand marble fireplace embellished with vines and Egyptian nymphs came from Nidd Hall near

Harrogate. A beautiful display of unusual glass walking sticks furnished both alcoves and much of the furniture came from Mr Wood's mother's family, including a sofa table with the Gillow stamp in the drawer and the typical sunflower and anthemion designed keyhole.

Our tour included a brief but very interesting introduction to the Staithe Group of artists of which Simon Wood is a collector and dealer. In the Dining Room we were able to browse his extensive collection.

Brockfield's restrained domesticity was vastly different to the neo-Gothic extravagance of our next house, Carlton Towers. However, there is a family connection between the two as Mrs Wood is the daughter of the late Lord Martin Fitzalan Howard, uncle of Lord Gerald Fitzalan Howard, the present owner of Carlton Towers. The Manor of Carlton has been in the Stapleton family since the Norman Conquest. It descended by circuitous inheritance from his Stapleton and Beaumont forbears to the late Miles, 17th Duke of Norfolk whose second son, Lord Gerald and his wife Emma now have made Carlton Towers their home. It is run as a highly successful commercial venue for weddings, events and conferences.

Our first view of the house from the drive was spectacular, with towers and battlements bedecked with gargoyles. The grand curving entrance steps are flanked by heraldic beasts, the same Talbot hounds which support the Beaumont coat of arms. The walls have mostly been covered in dun coloured render scored to look like stone, concealing the house's origins in a Jacobean hall of 1614 with a Georgian wing. The architects of the neo-Gothic makeover were the antiquarian owner, Henry, 9th Lord Beaumont and E.W Pugin. After quarrelling with Pugin Lord Beaumont employed John Francis Bentley (known for his ecclesiastical work, particularly at Westminster Cathedral) to complete the interiors. They combine rich symbolism with the highest quality craftsmanship. The Entrance Hall is embellished with heraldry and beautiful stained glass, leading to an Inner Hall with more stained glass and a view to the Armoury (now a sitting room), with extensive woodwork by John Erskine Knox who lived at Carlton Towers for fifteen years while doing the work.

REPORTS

Brockfield Hall and Carlton Towers, Study Tour cont. Wednesday 1st May 2019

Lunch was served in the Venetian Drawing Room. Here the grand neo-Gothic chimney piece is enriched with Stapleton heraldry and the black display cabinets designed to house Venetian glass (hence the name of the room) now contain china. Between the cabinets are scenes from *The Merchant of Venice* painted by N.J. Westlake. Other items of note were the fireplace tiles by William de Morgan and the brass firedogs, chandeliers and extravagant curtains all designed by Bentley. The long dining table was set formally with crisp white linen and large candelabra whose lit candles were reflected on the golden walls, made of plaster stamped and gilded to look like Spanish leather. A memorable lunch!

The next room in the enfilade, the Card Room, is smaller but equally richly decorated with oak linenfold paneling by Knox, fireplace tiles by William de Morgan and chandeliers and curtains by Bentley. It contains almost the only 18th century furniture visible in the house: a set of stained oak hall chairs derived from plate XVII of Chippendale's 1762 *Director*.

We took tea in the final room of the enfilade, the Picture Gallery. The walls are hung mainly with paintings brought to Carlton by Ethel, wife of the 10th Lord Beaumont, from the collection of her father, Sir Charles Henry Tempest and were purchased in Paris and Rome in the early nineteenth century. The double doors at the end of the Picture Gallery lead to a brick wall which is where the money ran out, so the Great Baron's

Hall, Chapel and Grand Staircase were never built.

Other notable rooms on our tour were the Georgian Bow Drawing Room which contains a collection of fine eighteenth century inlaid Dutch furniture and the Priest's Hiding Hole Bedroom. There are two Priests Holes in the house and this one is accessed through stairs in a cupboard.

The finale was a visit to the former servants' quarters beneath the house. We began underneath the grand entrance stairway where there is an ingenious heating device aimed at keeping the stairs warm whilst guests await their turn to 'make an entrance'. In the Housekeeper's Sitting Room the wallpaper replicates a piece of the original Chinoiserie wallpaper with blue birds and flowers perhaps from the 1770s that was discovered in a cupboard. In the room opposite is a table called the 'Domesday Table' said to have existed before the building of the original house in 1614. After examination it was decided that it was not as old as Domesday and might have been a banqueting table for a great hall as it was decorated on one side only. In the Duchess's Dining Room, John Hardy noted a side table which he suggested could be Gillow as it had a sunflower motif between the handles.

It was a very interesting day with two markedly different houses - restrained elegance at Brockfield Hall and eccentric extravagance at Carlton Towers.

Cathy Lambert and James Lomax

London Half-Day Study Tour Monday 8th July 2019



Spencer House table designed by John Vardy and possibly carved by Thomas Vardy

Fifteen members enjoyed this study afternoon which commenced at Spencer House in St. James's. It was particularly appropriate since the Society had visited Althorp last summer (see Report, Newsletter 143). We had an excellent blue badge guide who was deeply knowledgeable about the house and collection.

Spencer House was built between 1756 and 1766 by John, first Earl Spencer, after his marriage to Georgiana Poyntz. Conveniently positioned at the edge of Green Park, this handsome and dignified house, designed by John Vardy, was built in the new Neo-classical taste as a 'Temple of the Arts' for fashionable entertainment. Vardy was responsible for the exterior and the ground floor rooms, as well as some of the furniture. In 1758 he was replaced by the more 'fashionable' James 'Athenian' Stuart, recently returned from Greece. The house was subsequently altered by Henry Holland in the 1780s and more recently suffered under successive tenants after the family moved out in 1926. In 1941, fearing bomb damage, the entire contents and architectural fittings were removed to Althorp, and shortly afterwards the house was damaged by a bomb and the ceiling of the Painted Room destroyed. By the time Lord Rothschild took over the lease in 1985 the house was in a sorry state. Architectural features and furniture were restored or replaced and among the highly skilled craftsmen employed was Dick Reid who, amongst other things, carved the replica marble fireplaces. Wherever possible furniture and paintings have been replicated or acquired and supplemented by long term loans including those from the Royal Collection Trust, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the National Trust, Temple Newsam

House and the Royal Pavilion, Brighton. The result is a truly extraordinary house.

We assembled in the Hall for our tour and were immediately introduced to Vardy's classical architecture. The Doric frieze is decorated with swags, sacrificial instruments and bucrania (ox-skulls) derived from the Temple of Jupiter and the Tomb of Cecilia Metella, published by Piranesi in his *Antichita Romane* in 1756. This replication of original Roman ornament sets the scene for the whole house. The hall chairs made for this room are now at Althorp and follow one of Chippendale's early neo Classical designs in the 1762 *Director* (pl.XVII). The Morning Room, altered by Henry Holland, looks plain by comparison and although he also altered the Little Eating Parlour next to it, the splendour of Vardy's apsidal alcove with diagonal coffering remains as does his ceiling. Furniture of note here was a gilt Neo-classical side-table with fluted legs, lions' masks and Greek key frieze attributed to Sir William Chambers (on long term loan from Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire). In the adjacent Library we were encouraged to touch Dick Reid's white marble fireplace replicating the original by Devall. The idea was that touching will help give the surface an appearance of age.

Vardy's original ceiling remains in the Dining Room but much of the decoration was altered by Henry Holland. The most significant furniture was the pair of tables designed by John Vardy and possibly carved by his brother Thomas. They evoke the house's themes of festivity and celebration with their Bacchic masks, festoons of vines and winged panthers for legs. They had been sold after Holland's alterations but are now back on long term loan from Temple Museum and the V & A. The architectural climax of Vardy's ground floor is the Palm Room, with its carved and gilded palm trees (a symbol of marital fertility), coffered domed alcove and two apses. The stunning colours of green and pink for the coffering and the lavish use of gold is based on the original scheme. The *en suite* seat furniture was copied from a pair of the original chairs now owned by the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Massachusetts

In the Staircase Hall Vardy's style met that of 'Athenian' Stuart. The lower part of the stairwell is Vardy's of 1758 and the upper part, including the segmental barrelled ceiling is by Stuart. The first room upstairs is the Music Room. Furniture of interest was a Neo-classical side-table of c1770 with a top of yew marquetry, attributed to Ince and Mayhew. A commode of a similar date and design was also attributed to Ince and Mayhew. Lady Spencer's Room was rich and extravagant with red damask wall hangings. The ceiling in pink, sky blue and gold is based on the ceiling in the Baths of Augustus in Rome and although the circular panels were meant to contain classical scenes, Stuart never finished them. It seems that he was often tardy with his work and a liking for alcohol was mentioned. In the corners were a pair of Ince and Mayhew satinwood corner cupboards of c.1770, in green stained and shaded marquetry with Siena marble tops.

REPORTS

London Half—Day Study Tour *cont.* Monday 8th July 2019

The Great Room that followed is probably the most imposing in Spencer House, designed for receptions and balls and hung with fine pictures. It is still used for this purpose today. The coffered ceiling in green, gold and white is derived from the Temple of Concord and Victory in Rome as illustrated by Desgodetz (reprinted 1729). It symbolises everything the room is designed for - conviviality, the arts, love and beauty. The original marble topped pier tables and looking glasses designed by Stuart are now at Althorp and have been replaced by Dick Reid's excellent copies.

The finale was the Painted Room. Spectacularly decorated in green, gold and white, it is a celebration of the Triumph of Love and in particular of Lord and Lady Spencer's own happy marriage. Designed and, it is thought, largely painted by Stuart, it was started in 1759 and completed in 1765 and remains one of the earliest Neo-classical ensembles in Europe. The remarkable suite of seat furniture designed by Stuart for this room is on permanent loan from the Victoria and Albert Museum. The sofa backs are curved following the curve of the room and the arms are carved with winged lions.

On leaving Spencer House we walked on to Ryder Street where we were the guests of Chippendale Society member Mackinnon Fine Furniture. This summer Mackinnon is celebrating The Age of Walnut and gilt, gesso and lacquer work c.1680-1740. Among

the star exhibits was a walnut bureau attributed to Peter Miller, c.1725, made for the Duke of Chandos. There was a pair of red and gold japanned armchairs by Giles Grendey, part of the famous suite formerly at the Lazcano Palace in northern Spain, and a very rare red japanned bachelor's chest of c.1700-1710. The interior surfaces, untouched by light, were spectacular. Charlie Mackinnon explained the difference between japanning and the original oriental Japanese lacquerwork. Our thanks are due to Charlie Mackinnon and May Geolot who made this visit possible.

We reconvened at the back entrance to the British Museum for our visit to the Prints and Drawings Room as the guest of Chris Coles, Assistant Collections Manager, Prints and Drawings. The highlight was undoubtedly seeing the original Vardy drawings of the tables from the Dining Room at Spencer House, but there were many other fine drawings and prints in addition, including a fine selection of furniture makers' trade cards.

Our busy afternoon finished with a welcome glass of wine at a member's flat nearby in Coptic Street. A well-earned rest after a busy, interesting and informative day.

Cathy Lambert and James Lomax

Four Day Study Tour to Derbyshire and Staffordshire 18th to 21st June 2019

Twenty-five members enjoyed our Derbyshire/Staffordshire study tour in June. They joined us, not only from all around the UK, but from Malaysia too! We stayed at the Park House Hotel in Shifnal where both the food and accommodation were excellent. Our visits were enhanced by comprehensive notes and photographs compiled by James Lomax.

We started with a visit to **Kedleston Hall** in Derbyshire. We had hoped that here and at Sudbury would be led by Andrew Barber, curator with the National Trust for over 30 years and responsible for supervising much of the recent restoration work on the two houses, but unfortunately he was too ill to be with us. Built for Sir Nathaniel Curzon between 1758-65, Kedleston was based partly on Palladio's Villa Mocenigo and partly on Holkham Hall, Norfolk. A variety of architects were employed, including Matthew Brettingham, James Paine and James 'Athenian' Stuart, but it was Robert Adam (with Samuel Wyatt as clerk of works) who was mainly responsible for the house we see today. The south front, based on the Arch of Constantine in Rome, bears the motto 'Amicis et Sibi' - 'for himself and his friends' - it was a house for entertaining. The central part of the house as designed to show off Curzon's art collection with the living quarters in one of the four pavilions. Adam, or perhaps his assistant George Richardson, also designed much of the furniture, some of it made by the firm of Linnell or the virtuoso carver James Gravenor and his team.

The awe-inspiring Marble Hall was conceived as a top-lit 'Egyptian Hall', with twenty Corinthian columns, a ceiling designed by George Richardson and plaster work by Joseph Rose. The columns were quarried at Curzon's quarry in Radcliffe, but he subsequently decided to have the columns fluted in-situ and the cost was a staggering £26,000. The Adam/Richardson designed sarcophagus stools were made by Linnell. The circular Saloon originally held Curzon's sculpture but was subsequently altered to a ballroom with the addition of a sprung floor and four large stoves which changes the look Adam originally tried to achieve. The Drawing Room has a marine theme; the walls in deep blue damask and with four grand settees loosely based on an Adam design and supplied by Linnell, decorated with a fantasy of nymphs and sea creatures. The Exeter carpet in pinks and blues reflects Adam's mosaic ceiling and is one of only four in existence. The pair of Linnell card tables are particularly interesting Francophile Neo-classical examples.

The Library has a more masculine feel with octagonal glazing bars to the bookcases to reflect the Adam ceiling. The superb Blue-John fireplace was made from stone from the estate. The blue damask State Apartment is dominated by the immense state bed topped by black ostrich feathers. Palm-front decorated seat furniture pre-dates Adam (Bradshaw 1740s?) and the huge heraldic mirror and pairs of pier glasses add to the grandeur of the room. In the adjoining 'Wardrobe' is an open Chinoiserie cabinet probably pre-dating Kedleston and supplied to the London House. The Dining Room has an apse at one end and was originally designed to display the family silver and knife boxes on three shaped tables and plinths. Here were also displayed the perfume burner/candelabrum designed by James Stuart and based on the Lanthorn of Demosthenes at the ancient Choric Monument of Lysicrates in Athens. Important early neo-Classical furniture abounds; tables by Adam, plate warmer by Stuart, but the chairs designed by James Wyatt, and normally here, were not on display.

At the end of an interesting morning we visited the Indian museum in the basement which houses the collection of George Nathaniel, Marquess Curzon (1859-1925), Viceroy of India. The highlight was an ivory veneered suite of chairs and sofas, a gift of the Maharajah of Benares. We also had an opportunity to visit the 'picturesque' landscape which includes a variety of outdoor structures including a pretty bridge and cascade, a fishing house/bath/boat house, orangery and hexagonal temple.

We had lunch at nearby **Sudbury Hall**, a complete contrast to Kedleston. It was built 1668-1676 by George Vernon, who was probably largely his own architect. It is an imposing house, with diapered brickwork, great paneled chimney stacks and a central cupola crowned with a gold ball. Sudbury remained in the Vernon family for many years, tenanted on occasions and eventually given to the Treasury in lieu of tax in 1967 and subsequently transferred to the National Trust. Sadly, most of the contents were sold at various house sales and so the house is quite sparsely furnished.

It is the plasterwork and carving that is of the greatest interest at Sudbury. The Great Staircase was carved by Edward Peace and its plasterwork ceiling is by Robert Bradbury and James Pettifer (c.1675). There was some discussion amongst the group about the materials used. Twenty years later Louis Laguerre was commissioned to fill the plasterwork panels with figurative paintings. In the Saloon was more wonderful plasterwork and carving, while in the Drawing Room we admired an early lime wood carving by Grinling Gibbons. The arrangement of dead game, fish and fruit, vegetables, nuts and flowers is almost life-like. According to George Vernon's account book for 1678 it cost £40 and the apocryphal story was repeated to us that if the pea pods were carved as open, the piece had been paid for. In this case they were.



Kedleston Hall Drawing Room settee made by Linnell after designs by Adam and Richardson

REPORTS

Four Day Study Tour to Derbyshire and Staffordshire cont. 18th to 21st June 2019



Sudbury Hall Long Gallery Flemish ebony cabinet

The Long Gallery, an old fashioned feature, spans the length of the house. Here again is plasterwork by Bradbury and Pettifer, this time with shells and palm fronds, curling seed pods, acanthus leaves and dancing grasshoppers. We were fortunate to see the interior of the seventeenth century ebony cabinet with the doors and drawers painted by Frans Francken the Younger (1581-1642). The detailed paintings depict Biblical scenes and the condition of the interior was remarkable. Other significant furniture included a suite of chairs and settee with walnut frames similar to those by Thomas Phill at Canons Ashby, and a fine gilt overmantel mirror or picture frame conceived as an heraldic cartouche. A conversation piece by Charles Phillips dated 1734 depicts the Warren family in an interior with a billiard table: a very early depiction of this type of furniture.

In the 19th century the house was rented by Queen Adelaide, widow of William IV, who lived here for three years. In her bedroom there was much discussion over a floral inlaid table in the Dutch style. The consensus was that a lack of wear and the more static floral marquetry combined with a marriage of top and bottom implied a nineteenth rather than an eighteenth-century attribution.

On Wednesday morning we arrived at **Weston Park**. This was the home of the Earls of Bradford until, facing crippling death duties in 1981 and following negotiations with the Treasury, it was given to the nation. In 1986 the Weston Park Foundation was established and we were lucky to have the curator, Gareth Williams, as our guide.

The house dates from the 1670s and is thought to be the design of Elizabeth Wilbraham, assisted by a little known architect, William Taylor. She had her own copy of the English edition of Palladio's *First Book of Architecture* (1665) which is heavily annotated with her own notes (currently in the library at Weston Park). Gareth gave us an illuminating history of the family. Many provident marriages were made, enabling successive lines of the family to extend and develop the estate. One of the most interesting periods for our group is the period of 1805-1807 when Orlando, the second Earl, used Morel and Hughes as furniture suppliers. Along with the decorative arts there is a spectacular collection of paintings which includes works by Holbein, van Dyck, Lely, Kneller, Reynolds, Constable, Bassano, and Tiepolo. The third Earl was Master of the Horse to Queen Victoria in the 1870s-1880s, and a great horse enthusiast, collecting some important horse paintings by George Stubbs and John Ferneley which surrounded us in the Hall.

Furniture highlights in the Hall included a set of mahogany hall or garden armchairs (one showing its original green paint) derived from a design in the Director and two pieces supplied by Morel and Hughes; a Regency bookcase and Louis XV writing table. In the Silver Room and Passage we saw a wonderful George I gesso table attributed to the workshop of James Moore the elder, bearing the crest of Richard Newport, second Earl of Bradford. A superb silver toilet service was made by Jacob Bodenick, London 1679. Here too is the handsome silver Standing Cup which originally was the Great

Seal of Charles II and which Lord Keeper Bridgeman had melted down following his refusal to affix the seal to the King's Declaration of Indulgences! In the Breakfast Room was a suite of shield back chairs probably supplied by Gillow. A fine Chinoiserie pier glass suggested a link to the Shropshire architect and designer Thomas Farnolls Pritchard. In the Second Salon there were two fine Regency mahogany folio cabinets with hinged leather-lined tops, supplied by Gillow in the 1830s. In the same Salon were two sets of Regency armchairs and a pair of bergère chairs decorated with ram's head arm supports and supplied by Morel and Hughes in 1806. A set of fine mahogany 'French' armchairs attributed to Paul Saunders and Samuel Norman c.1760 lined the walls. In the Library the two Greek revival 'Klismos' chairs caught our eye and the 'Cupid's Bow' cornice poles all supplied by Morel and Hughes in 1806. The bright and airy Drawing Room houses a fine collection of French furniture; a 'bonheur de Jour' in the style of Jacob Frères, a Louis XVI 'Console Desserte' in the style of Charles-Claude Saunier, a pair of sideboards attributed to Jacob Frères and a marble topped 'Pompeian' centre table attributed to Jacob. A stuffed bright yellow parrot had been a present to Countess Selina, wife of the third Earl, by Benjamin Disraeli. Assumed to be a male, it unfortunately died after laying 23 eggs! A late eighteenth-century Anglo-Indian miniature table bureau of ivory veneered on to sandalwood is typical of the work from Vizagapatan on the Bay of Bengal made for the English market in India.

The final room was the Tapestry Room, hung with silk and wool tapestries from the Gobelins Workshop in Paris. They are signed by the painter-designer, Francois Boucher and by the director Jacques Neilson and dated 1766. Similar sets were supplied to Newby Hall, Osterley Park, Moor Park and Croome Court. The tapestries are in wonderful condition, the 'rose camas cramoisy' ground colour still a deep rose pink. Furniture of interest in the Tapestry Room included more of the Saunders and Norman suite, a pier glass by Morel and Hughes (1806) and the Louis XVI marquetry commode acquired by Sir Henry Bridgeman in Paris in 1766. The original seating for this room is not known, nor whether it was covered with matching 'rose cramoisy' tapestries.

There was just enough time to view the Capability Brown landscape and the charming Temple designed by James Paine (1770). Always described as the 'Greenhouse' at Weston, it does in fact combine an Orangery, Circular Tea Room and Music Room. Many of our members would agree with the words of Benjamin Disraeli, Prime Minister, 1874-1880, who wrote to a friend 'You will find Weston beautiful, I marvel whether I will ever see the likes of it again. It is a place that always pleased me'. Of course, this comment may have been coloured by his (platonic) relationship with Selina Weld-Forester, wife of the third Earl, to whom in his seventies he wrote over 1000 letters.

After a lunch at Weston Park we went to **Chillington Hall**. Chillington has been in the Gifford family since 1178 and our guide, the owner, is the 29th Gifford to live at Chillington. The original building on the site was a twelfth century castle. This was replaced by a Tudor house which in turn was altered in the early part of the eighteenth century for Peter Gifford by the architect Smith of Warwick. The house was further remodelled between 1786-1789 for Thomas Gifford the younger by Sir John Soane. Soane altered the south side, adding a grand portico with ionic columns after the Temple of Fortune in Rome, and two three-storey wings. The gardens were remodelled by Capability Brown in the 1760s.

We were greeted by Mr Gifford in the Grecian Hall painted in the original bright turquoise and with dramatic ionic columns. He gave a short introduction to the house and explained that both Thomas Gifford and John Soane were unmarried when the house was altered and it therefore has something of a masculine aspect, although the house is painted in the original colours which are generally very bright. He also touched on the earlier history, telling us that Queen Elizabeth I had once stayed and house was also considered as a prison for Mary Queen of Scots but was rejected, partly because it did not have a big enough brewhouse to supply ale for her large retinue.

On the ground floor was some excellent Gillow furniture, including two side tables with reeded legs topped with part of the Gifford crest - a panther with flames issuing from the mouth. In the dining room the Gillow furniture including a sideboard, dining table, wine cooler and knife holder and plate warmer. The Dining Room also houses two excellent family portraits by Pompeo Batoni. The Saloon has some typical Soanian architectural features - a large top-lit dome and coffered arches similar to his work at the Bank of England.

REPORTS

Four Day Study Tour to Derbyshire and Staffordshire cont. 18th to 21st June 2019

Mr Gifford explained that condensation was damaging the dome and when repairs were made the workmen found an excellent system of channels installed when the dome was built had been blocked, preventing the escape of the condensation. An unusual large metal object in the Hall turned out to be a heater. Mr Gifford added that central heating was installed in 1910 and only to the corridors. The Morning Room contained a fine 1840s Chippendale Revival overmantel mirror. Our final room was the Drawing Room. The mirror over the fireplace with the panther's head in the centre was made for the room by Gillows as was much of the rest of the furniture in the room.

Back in the Grecian Hall we were served tea after which Mr Gifford guided us through the pretty gardens to the handsome Home Farm and estate buildings. Now no longer in use, this extensive double quadrangle of farm buildings has a building for every farm use from stables to brewing with accommodation for workers above. On the south side of Capability Brown's Pool is a 'Grecian' Temple, probably designed by Robert Adam.

On the morning of our third day we visited **Shugborough**. This is the estate of the Anson family, later Viscounts Anson and Earls of Lichfield, and now more popularly known as the home of the photographer Patrick, Lord Lichfield. In 1966 the estate was offered to the Treasury as part-payment of death duties and after some time under the auspices of Staffordshire County Council it was handed over to the National Trust.

The house was built for Thomas Anson, a bachelor and founder member of the Society of Dilettanti who developed the Estate after gaining his inheritance from his very successful brother, George, Admiral Lord Anson (First Lord of the Admiralty). Unfortunately, much of the original furniture for the house was sold in 1841 to pay the gambling debts. The early Georgian house was much altered between 1790 and 1806 by architect, Samuel Wyatt, who added a colonnaded entrance.

Our visit coincided with a semi-permanent exhibition on the theme of 'travel', suggesting the exploits of the Admiral. To the annoyance of many, piled packing cases in some rooms made it impossible to see many of the works of art. However, the dazzling Red Drawing Room (Wyatt 1794) was still intact. The vast pier glasses and overmantel mirror must have been a technical achievement at the time. The fourteen gilded chairs and two matching sofas were made by Charles Smith and Co and cost £296. The English cut glass chandelier with 300 droplets is thought to be original. The white and gold pier tables and two gilt tripod stands are possibly by 'Athenian' Stuart and thought to be from Thomas Anson's original collection. The French Furniture was collected by the 2nd Earl and includes a fine 'secretaire à abbatant' by J. H. Riesener and a bombé kingwood commode by Delaire from around 1740.

The Dining Room with ruin paintings by Nicholas Dall and plasterwork by Francesco Vassalli is undergoing extensive restoration so was only partly visible, while the famous 'Hercules' tables had been removed from view. The 'Chippendale' Library Writing Table, formerly in the Drawing Room, has been moved to an ante room. This piece is not original to the house and is thought to be from Sir Laurence Dundas's commission of the 6th November 1765 'a large Mahogany Library Table of exceeding fine wood and rich carved ornaments to match the bookcases the top covered with superfine green cloth and strong castors £37'. This writing table was given by Sir Henry Price of Leeds and was formerly at Wakehurst Place, Sussex, then at Clandon Park and fortunately removed before the fire. We were able to inspect the table at some length and to compare it with a picture of the bookcases it was supposed to match. The consensus was that the quality of its carving was nothing like good enough to be from Chippendale's workshop, nor the quality and cuts of the mahogany. Nor did its scale and disposition correspond to any of Chippendale's documented examples of this period, for example at Dumfries House or Nostell. Likewise the large chinoiserie China Cabinet in the inner hall could only be an Edwardian copy from a Chippendale design. However the exquisite chinoiserie frames of the back-painted mirrors were probably made for the Chinese House in the park together with other Oriental pictures and frames brought back by the Admiral.

The Rococo Library seemed intact and is a charming and comfortable room with plasterwork by Vassalli and furniture mainly by Charles Smith. In a surprisingly 'Soanian' way, mirrors on arches and columns cunningly extend perspective uniting two different sized rooms and create a feeling of spaciousness. The apartments of Patrick, Lord Lichfield contain many photographs of his life and personal effects and give an insight into his busy and glamorous life in the 1960s and 70s. However, even in these apartments one had the sense that some of the furniture and decorative arts had been removed.

In the 1760s Thomas Anson commissioned James 'Athenian' Stuart to create a series of garden buildings and follies mainly based on the antique. Fortunately we had allowed enough time to see most of these, including the Tower of the Winds (1765), the Doric

Temple (1760), The Triumphal Arch and The Choragic Monument of Lysicrates. The Chinese House (from 1745) was built from a design supplied by one of the Admiral's staff, and the Ruin and the Cat's Monument date from this earlier period. Sadly, the Chinese Pagoda and 'ferme ornée' are no longer in existence and the Mill and working farm are no longer 'working'.

With so much to see at Shugborough our afternoon visit were briefer but no less interesting. Our destination was **Hoar Cross Hall**, preceded by a tour of the **Church of the Holy Angels** on the Hoar Cross estate. Hoar Cross had been the Hunting Lodge of the Meynell family who inherited Temple Newsam through marriage in 1841. The present house was built in 1871 by Hugo Francis Meynell Ingram and his wife Emily Charlotte, daughter of the first Viscount Halifax. The architect was Henry Clutton, who made the house much resemble Temple Newsam. On the premature death of her husband, Emily built the Church of the Holy Angels as a memorial to him using the architect G. F. Bodley. The result is a charming and moving example of the Victorian Gothic Revival on which no expense was spared. Our tour was led by curator and church warden Peter Humpidge, who was extremely amusing and enlightening. Inside was stained glass by Burlison and Grylls, carved figures of the stations of the Cross by J. B. de Wint and A. de Boeck of Antwerp, a wonderful filigree rood screen by Ratee and Kett with figures by Zwink of Oberamagau and of course the tombs of both Hugo and Emily in a side chapel.

As ever, time ran out and we made our way through the gardens back to Hoar Cross Hall which has been a hotel and spa since 1989. Here we enjoyed afternoon tea in the library, which appeared not to have changed since the nineteenth century. We were allowed to visit the ground floor rooms and gardens which gave us a taste of the Tudor-Jacobean Revival splendour of the former house.

On our last day we travelled to Barlaston near Stoke-on-Trent to visit the **Wedgwood Museum**. The museum was saved for the nation by an appeal from the Art Fund and is now run by the V&A. We took a self-guided tour of the working factory where we were amazed at how many procedures are undertaken by hand over and above painting and decorating. Quality control was extremely stringent and perfection paramount as the pieces are today very expensive. The second part of our visit was a guided tour of the museum by curator, Rebecca Klarner, and the archivist, who led us through the eventful life of Josiah Wedgwood. Some of the museum highlights through time were - a Black Basalt First Day's Vase (1769), a Black Jasper 'Portland' vase (1789-90), a Queensware dessert plate from the Frog Service (1773-74), a Parian pâte-sur-pâte vase (1875), a bone china Fairyland lustre vase (1920), a Keith Murray Queensware vase (1935) and a bone china teacup and saucer by Jasper Conran (2005). It was an illuminating visit giving all of us a deeper understanding of the firm of Wedgwood and a fitting end to our four-day study tour.

Cathy Lambert and James Lomax



Weston Park Tapestry Room