

THE CHIPPENDALE SOCIETY



President: the Lord St Oswald

NEWSLETTER No. 155

www.thechippendalesociety.co.uk

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Pier table, c. 1775. Thought to be one of two supplied by the Chippendale workshop for the drawing room at Nostell Priory and subsequently moved to Boynton Hall, East Yorkshire. Photo: Godson & Coles.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

We are now well into our calendar of Society events, but one significant event is missing from this year's schedule. The Society usually holds its annual dinner at the Otley Golf Club in the first week of June, but this year the Queen's platinum Jubilee took precedence and the Chippendale Society annual dinner did not take place. For the past few years the Committee has in fact been considering alternatives to the Golf Club venue. So long as our membership was centred in and around Otley the Golf Club was a convenient and, on a summers evening, a delightful place to celebrate the memory of Thomas Chippendale's birth. But with a more widely based membership and, sadly, the inevitable absence of some of our most loyal and long-serving local members, Otley has become increasingly less convenient, especially for anyone south of Leeds.

On the other hand, our Christmas lunch has grown steadily more popular, and for the last two years has been held at Goldsborough Hall, conveniently situated near Knaresborough and close to the A1. The committee has therefore decided not to continue with the June dinner at Otley, and instead to make the Christmas lunch our main social event of the year. Our AGM and annual lecture, held in late May, will remain the focus of the Society's formal calendar and we would like to encourage greater attendance there.

Adam Bowett

SUBSCRIPTIONS & EMAIL

Just a reminder to all our members that subscriptions were due on the 1st January 2022. The subscriptions remain the same at £14.00 per single member and £21.00 for a joint membership.

Payments may be made by Pay Pal via our website or cheques may be sent to me at The Croft, Breary Lane, Bramhope, Leeds LS16 9AE. Alternatively a payment may be made by bank transfer; Barclays Bank plc, Sort code 20-37-13, Account number 80260274, Account name - Chippendale Society Membership Account. Thank-you, Peggy Pullan, Membership Secretary, email; fh817@ncf.ca.

REPORTS

Nostell Priory Study Day 12th April 2022



National Trust Curator Simon McCormack and several Chippendale society members subjecting a japanned Chippendale press to close inspection. Photo: Sue Bourne

Twenty members attended this fascinating day at Nostell Priory where we were given privileged access to the furniture collection, allowing experts to investigate and discuss specific pieces in detail. We began with an illuminating lecture from Dr Kerry Bristol, senior lecturer in History of Art at Leeds University and Chippendale Society committee member. Kerry is also Historical Advisor to the National Trust at Nostell. We learned much of the Winn family's background and how family dynamics affected the decoration and furnishing of their homes.

Our tour began with a look at the famous Dolls' House. Family tradition states it was made by the young Thomas Chippendale, but there is no evidence to support this claim. However, it is of the finest quality, leading experts to believe it was made for adults rather than for children. Its fireplaces are taken from James Gibbs' *Book of Architecture* (1728) and each piece of furniture is made with careful precision; for example, the White Lacquer Cabinet in the Drawing Room is fitted with an ivory interior.

In the Lower Hall the 'Apothecary's Counter' caused some discussion. It was supplied by Chippendale in 1771 and since it is finished on the back it was meant to be free standing. It is thought that Sabine and Rowland Winn may have contemplated building an Apothecary/Drug room in which this item would have been installed, but it currently languishes in a dark hallway.



Nostell Priory, Yorkshire, east front.

The Muniments Room followed. Usually the fittings of such a room were purely functional but Tim Phelps, Chippendale Society conservator who has worked extensively on them, pointed out their high quality. The locks and keys are similar to those on the Adam-designed bookcases in the Library, suggesting the same maker might have fitted out both rooms.

In the Top Hall were the eight hall chairs supplied by Chippendale in 1775, each displaying the Winn family crest. Originally painted to match Robert Adam's decorative scheme, they now retain the later grained finish applied by Thomas Ward in 1819. The Saloon - approached directly from the Top Hall - is also an Adam design. The furniture originally planned for the saloon was sparse - two pier tables and pier glasses and a set of sofas and chairs, all supplied by Chippendale. These are still in the room but more furniture has since been added, such as the delightful Pembroke table with a backgammon board in the drawer, originally supplied by Chippendale for the Tapestry room in 1769. This reminded us that one of the ongoing curatorial questions at Nostell is how the rooms should be presented - as originally designed or as they have evolved over the centuries?

The Library was completed to Adam's designs in 1766 and it was one of the highlights of the visit. We viewed the now rarely seen interior of the medal cabinet, designed by Chippendale to hold Sir Rowland's collection of coins and seals. Costing £38 in 1767, the interior is as nearly perfect as the day it was supplied. Further treats were in store when we reached the State Dressing Room and State Bedroom, both designed in the Chinese style with furniture supplied by Chippendale. Here the dressing drawer of the green and gilt chinoiserie commode was opened to reveal the beautiful interior and the matching press still had its startlingly bright original colour and distinctive marbled paper-lined trays.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Curator Simon McCormack and his staff for giving us unrivalled access to the Nostell collection and to Kerry Bristol for sharing her wonderful scholarship.

Cathy Lambert

REPORTS - cont.

Visit to Kiplin Hall and Langton Hall 19th May 2022



Mahogany cabinet inset with Italian marble panels, c.1760.

Kiplin Hall was built in the 1620s for George Calvert, first Baron Baltimore and founder of the colony of Maryland. It is a fine three-storied cruciform-planned brick mansion with gables and ogee-capped projecting bays. In the 18th century the property passed by inheritance to the Crowe and Carpenter families, thence to a cadet branch of the Talbots, Earls of Shrewsbury. It went into a steep decline for most of the 20th century but has been taken in hand from 1997 with astonishing results.

We began our visit with coffee in the Hall clad with Victorian panelling and surrounded by family portraits: Trevisani, Zoffany, Angelica Kaufmann, and Watts are all represented in the house as well as the usual fashionable artists. Our knowledgeable guide explained how the paintings, acquired by the successful Anglo-Italian merchant and picture dealer Christopher Crowe in the 18th century, are among the treasures of the house.

In the Drawing Room we encountered a remarkable cabinet, faced with *pietra dure* drawer-fronts depicting Italianate landscapes. It is in a typically hybrid Chippendale style, with 'St Andrew Cross' open legs, Chinese style fretwork, and *rocaille* cresting and pendant. It has affinities with designs for 'Chinese Cabinets' and 'Library Bookcases' in *The Director* and was probably commissioned Christopher Crowe II about 1760. There were more examples of *pietra dure* mounted on smaller furniture elsewhere in the house. Also in the Drawing Room is a magnificent breakfront bookcase with classic hexagon and square glazing above wide central drawers (for estate plans), and with a delicately fretted swan-neck pediment. It was probably intended for the Library, which was rebuilt as an extension in the 19th century.

The Library introduced us to the extensive Arts and Crafts influence throughout Kiplin, evidenced by William de Morgan tiles and vases, Morris embroideries and especially marquetry and inlaid cabinets and boxes. The latter reflect the skill and taste of Beatrice Carpenter who gave classes at Bolton-on-Swale and exhibited at the annual Home Arts and Industries exhibitions.

The Library also contained some of the extensive suite of mahogany wheelback chairs seen throughout the house, and an early, probably 18th century, invalid's wheelchair. In the Dining Room, somewhat incongruously, were two hall chairs and a hall bench, exquisitely carved in early neo-Classical motifs and with the crest of Talbot, Earls of Shrewsbury inset in the backs. They recall the suite made for Spencer House. In the Gallery were a pair of fine lacquer chests on stands, a group of late 17th-century London caned chairs and a group of Dutch Marottesque backstools. Continental and Oriental pieces include an eccentric 'Italian' four poster bed, with beautiful Arts and Crafts hangings, a pair of Indian 'Savonarola' chairs of ebony inlaid with ivory decoration and figures, and a fine Italian serpentine walnut commode inlaid and engraved with bone. A 17th-century style 'sleeping chair' with hinged back caused some comment.

We moved to the adjoining estate at Langton Hall, privately owned by the former agent for Kiplin. The house was built c.1770 for John Smelt but the architect of the house is not known. With its twin projecting bays and central Venetian window it has affinities, perhaps, with the work of John Carr. Many later accretions were demolished when the house was remodelled in the mid-20th century by Sir Martyn Beckett.

The owners welcomed us with a generous lunch in the dining room and told us the history of the family, surrounded by fine portraits. In the elegant Drawing Room there were a number of fine pieces, in particular a monumental William Kent gilt pier glass, acquired by the present owner's father, in the style of Benjamin Goodison and similar to examples at Goodwood. The warm summer sunshine emerged in time for us to enjoy a tour of the beautifully maintained gardens led by our hosts.

James Lomax



Mahogany breakfront bookcase, c. 1775.

REPORTS *cont.*

Chippendale Society Annual Lecture

23 May 2022

Dr Kerry Bristol: Town versus Country. Rethinking Thomas Chippendale's Nostell Account

This was our first AGM and annual lecture of the post-Covid era, delivered by Dr Kerry Bristol, senior lecturer in History of Art at Leeds University. Kerry is also a special historical advisor to the National Trust at Nostell Priory, and a member of the Chippendale Society committee.

This lecture complimented Dr Bristol's introductory talk for our study day at Nostell in March, when she discussed the background and complex relationships within the Winn family, including the significant character and influence of Sir Rowland Winn's (5th Baronet) Swiss wife, Sabine. Now she focussed on Chippendale's furnishing campaign from 1766 onwards, both at the London house in St James's Square and at Nostell priory. By disentangling the combined bills of the two houses, Dr Bristol was able to show that St James's square was furnished in haste; a good deal of the existing furniture in the house was retained, and Chippendale's role was to supply additional pieces, mainly of a domestic nature. Some of these can be identified today at Nostell, but much was disposed of after Sir Rowland's death in 1785.

The story of Nostell's furnishing is far more complex. By analysing the sequence of Chippendale bills and relating them both to Robert Adam's designs and to the progress of work on the house itself, Dr Bristol revealed the Winn's furnishing priorities. The sequence did not follow any architectural logic but followed instead the personal requirements of Sir Rowland and his wife. Sir Rowland's library, for instance, was one of the first rooms to be completed, and so were Sabine's apartments. The wonderful green and gold japanned state bedroom suite followed later, and some rooms, such as the Drawing Room, were still incomplete by the time of Sir Rowland's death. The fitful pace of work was exacerbated by chronic financial problems, at a time when the Winns also had one eye on Harewood House, whose lavish interiors set the standard for others to follow. Chippendale, as is well known, bore much of the brunt of Sir Rowland's frustration, although it is clear that Sabine had a powerful influence on her husband's thinking.

With the aid of a house plan numbered according to the sequence of furnishing, Dr Bristol presented us with an illuminating new interpretation of Chippendale's work at Nostell. Much that was previously puzzling or obscure has become clear, and the seemingly haphazard nature of the commission now makes much more sense. As a result, Nostell Priory emerges as a more complex and interesting house, and Chippendale's role in it is now much better understood.

Adam Bowett

EVENTS

Study Afternoon at Clifton Castle

31st August 2022

We are pleased to offer a half-day study tour to Clifton Castle, at Clifton-on-Yore, near Masham, North Yorkshire, the home of Lord Downshire and his family. The present house was built by Timothy Hutton of Marske, High Sheriff to Yorkshire, in 1844. It was purchased from his heirs in 1970 by the 8th Marquess of Downshire and inherited by his son the 9th Marquess. The tour of the house includes the private ground floor rooms and the celebrated 'Emblematic Heads' table made by Thomas Chippendale for Harewood House. After the tour we will be able to visit the gardens.

As this house is only a few miles from Masham there will be no coach for this event, so please make your way to the house for 1.45pm. More detailed instructions will be sent to those attending. Applications please by July 20th 2022.

The cost of this Study Afternoon is £25.00 to include admission, private tour and tea/coffee and biscuits

Chippendale Collection Study Day at Temple Newsam House

15th August 2022

This day is devoted to Chippendale Society collection. It will be led by Adam Toole, Temple Newsam and Chippendale Society curator, with assistance from curator emeritus James Lomax and the Society's chairman Adam Bowett. We will begin with a house tour (11.00-13.00) looking at the Society's furniture on display, as well as other Chippendale pieces in the Temple Newsam collection.

This is a rare opportunity to have a close look at all our Chippendale furniture and to see many other things not usually on display.

There will be no coach transport to this event. Temple Newsam is situated just off the Leeds ring road near Cross Gates, to the east of the city and close to the M1. More detailed directions will be sent to those attending. Applications please by 20th July 2022.

The cost of this Study Day is £35.00 to include admission, all guided tours, tea/coffee on arrival and a two course light lunch

Lunch will be in a private room adjacent to the Stables Café (13.00-14.00), followed by an afternoon session (14.00-16.00) looking at works on paper, including all editions of the Director, original Chippendale drawings, ephemera and smaller objects.