

# THE CHIPPENDALE SOCIETY



President: Lord Ronaldshay

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[www.thechippendalesociety.co.uk](http://www.thechippendalesociety.co.uk)



## CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

At Dreweatts' *Town and Country* sale on 31 January this set of six Chippendale chairs were sold for £95,000. They are part of a suite supplied about 1773 to Sir Penistone Lamb, 1st Viscount Melbourne (1745-1828), for the Saloon of his country seat at Brocket Hall in Hertfordshire. The suite originally comprised twelve armchairs, twelve chairs without arms (including these six) and four sofas, along with magnificent pier glasses and torchères. Elevations of the Saloon showing parts of the suite were illustrated in James Paine's *Noblemen and Gentlemen's Houses* (1783), and these are the only contemporary records to survive of any Chippendale furniture in situ.

The suite remained intact until at least 1923, when it was shown in Country Life photos of Brocket's interiors, and at that time it still had its original red silk damask upholstery. Since then, Brocket has passed to different owners and the suite has gradually been dispersed, particularly in several sales during the 1990s. It is now split between a number of private collections, and so it is useful to be able to record these six chairs in one of their rare public appearances.

Adam Bowett

## ONLINE EVENTS BOOKING

This newsletter inaugurates our new online booking form for events. The aim is to make it easier and quicker for members to book their places and at the same time make our administration and banking procedures more efficient. See **Forthcoming Events, p. 7** for links. However, we know that some of you prefer to use pen and cheque book or credit/debit card so bookings can still be made by letter, phone call and email in the usual way.

## REPORTS

### Kent Study Trip 17th to 20th September 2023

#### Wrest Park

We broke our journey to Royal Tunbridge Wells at Wrest Park, Bedfordshire, former home of the de Grey family and now managed by English Heritage. The current house was built in the 1830s by Thomas, 2nd Earl de Grey (1781-1859), replacing the much altered earlier house with one modelled on an eighteenth-century French chateau. Sadly, the contents were sold off in 1917 and, following use as a First World War military hospital, a severe fire and conversion to government offices after the Second World War, the house was eventually rescued from dereliction by English Heritage in 2006.

English Heritage have renovated the structure and interior State Rooms to give visitors a taste of Wrest Park's former grandeur. As well as the State Rooms our private tour included two bedrooms, one lined in Chinese silk and the other in French wallpaper. Protected by panelling during years of institutional use, these wallpapers are in wonderful condition. The hand painted silk dates from the eighteenth century and was probably hung in the old house, while the nineteenth-century block-printed wallpaper is by Zuber et Cie. It is in the design 'Eldorado', illustrating with great accuracy the plants and animals of America, Asia, Europe and Africa.

Perhaps the most important aspect of Wrest Park is the garden, which is one of the most complete surviving examples of an eighteenth-century formal garden. There have been subsequent changes over the centuries but it still includes many eighteenth and nineteenth-century garden buildings in excellent condition. The view from the front of the house down the 'Long Water' to Thomas Archer's Pavilion is majestic. The Pavilion was built between 1709 and 1711 to hold hunting parties and occasional suppers and is the garden highlight, amongst the many statues, a Dairy, Chinese Temple and Bridge, Petit Trianon, Bath House, Bowling Green House and Orangery.

Cathy Lambert



Wrest Park. Photo English Heritage



Above: Wrest Park, 18<sup>th</sup> century Chinese hand painted silk wall covering.  
*Photo Cathy Lambert*



Left: Wrest Park, 19<sup>th</sup> century French wallpaper by Zuber & Cie.  
*Photo Cathy Lambert*

#### Ightham Mote

Our first visit on Monday morning was to Ightham Mote, one of the most picturesque properties in the National Trust portfolio. The moated house seems to float on water. Here we had an excellent private tour. The origins of the house were early fourteenth century and the timber roof of the Great Hall illustrates an unusually sophisticated form of construction. This, together with the building of two Solars, indicates the early owners were of some considerable means. There are no real indications as to why the house was moated. Our guide put forward a few ideas; other than for an element of defence, these included to keep fish or to empty the moat each year onto the fields below and use as compost!

The first recorded owner of Ightham, about 1360, was Sir Thomas Cawne, a local MP who fought alongside Edward, the Black Prince, in France. The house then passed through marriage to the Haute family. Richard Haute was a first cousin of Elizabeth Woodville, Edward IV's queen, but despite being on the losing side in the Wars of the Roses he managed to keep his lands. Our guide pointed out various emblems - the Portcullis, Tudor Rose and Pomegranate - showing the support for the Tudor Court of Richard Clement, another subsequent owner. In 1592 the Selby family took over and owned Ightham for nearly 300 years. They eventually had financial troubles and the house changed hands again and was bought in 1889 by Sir Thomas Colyer-Fergusson. His grandson James also had financial troubles and in 1951 the house was sold to its saviour, Charles Henry Robinson (1892-1985), an American who fell in love with Ightham and filled it with his collections.

## REPORTS

### Kent Study Trip (*cont.*) 17th to 20th September



Ightham Mote.  
Photo Ightham Parish Council

As with many houses with multiple changes of ownership, many additions and alterations were made throughout the centuries, including a romantic Gothic remodelling by the Victorian architect Richard Norman Shaw, who added panelling to the Great Hall to keep out draughts. Hence there is little remaining of the original medieval decoration, but upstairs in the New Chapel there is a painted barrel-vaulted ceiling bearing emblems of owner Sir Richard Clements' allegiance to Henry VIII. The Drawing Room followed - the most sumptuous of all the rooms with a grand Jacobean fireplace displaying the Selby coat of arms.

The influence of Charles Henry Robinson is seen in his bedroom, dressing room and library. In the dressing room the National Trust has put up a Colefax and Fowler replica of the original wallpaper which had been supplied by Charles Henry Robinson's family paper-making business in Portland, Maine. Although the exposed beams in the bedroom are some of the oldest in the house, the New England-style grey paint gives the room a very modern look. The library is similar, with a light and comfortable feel, displaying personal mementos from the life Charles Henry Robinson spent here. In 1985 Robinson died, leaving the house to the National Trust. Together with other major bequests the Trust was able to start a twenty-year renovation which commenced with preventing some of the main parts of the building falling into the moat. We came away feeling that a house like Ightham would need constant repairs for many years to come.

Cathy Lambert

### Bourne Park

From Ightham we went to Bourne Park, the Kent home of Dr Christopher and Lady Juliet Tadgell. The house, built in 1702, was bought by Lady Juliet and her then husband, Mr Somerset de Chair, in 1982. Lady Juliet is the only child of Peter, the 8th Earl Fitzwilliam, who died in an aeroplane crash in 1948. After the death of the 10th and last Earl Fitzwilliam in 1979, Lady Juliet inherited the Fitzwilliam family heirlooms, many of which were formerly housed at Wentworth Woodhouse, near Rotherham in South Yorkshire. Now known as the 'Wentworth Fitzwilliam Collection' many of the superb paintings were exhibited at the Gulbenkian Museum in Lisbon in early 2016, but they have not been exhibited in the UK since the mid 1980s and are seldom seen by the public.

Our tour of the ground floor rooms was led by our host Dr Tadgell, a distinguished architectural historian. In the panellled entrance hall we saw the portrait of Thomas Wentworth, 1st Earl of Strafford, painted by Sir Anthony Van Dyck about 1635. Alongside was Daniel Mytens' portrait of King Charles 1st, Van Dyck's portrait of Queen Henrietta Maria with her 'court dwarf' Jeffrey Hudson, and the portrait of Lucy Percy, Countess of Carlisle, again by Van Dyck. In one of the smaller drawing rooms were paintings by Jan Van Goyen, Aert Van Der Neer and Meindert Hobbema, along with fine pieces of furniture inherited by Lady Juliet. In the Music Room, furnished with unusual corner sofas from Wentworth (probably by Gillows), we saw the portrait of William 4th Earl Fitzwilliam by Sir Thomas Lawrence, unfinished at the time of Lawrence's death. In the same room is the portrait of Charles, 2nd Marquess of Rockingham, by Joshua Reynolds and the Philip De Laszlo painting of Maud, 7th Countess Fitzwilliam (she was Lady Juliet's grandmother).

The first of the two dining rooms contained side tables and chairs by the celebrated eighteenth-century Wakefield cabinet makers Wright and Elwick. Here hung four paintings by George Stubbs; Mares and Foals, Scrub with John Singleton, Whistlejacket with his groom and two other stallions. A portrait of George Stubbs himself by Ozias Humphrey was bought for the collection by Dr Christopher and Lady Juliet.

In the larger Dining Room, we saw more furniture by Wright and Elwick and monumental torcheres by Gillows (all from Wentworth), along with a cabinet containing samples of the celebrated Rockingham China, the factory supported by the Earls Fitzwilliam in the early nineteenth century. Throughout the house Lady Juliet and Dr Tadgell have added many early religious paintings as they fill gaps in the collection. The paintings are all in wonderful condition and are expertly lit to show them to their best advantage.

David Allott

## REPORTS

### Kent Study Trip (*cont.*) 17th to 20th September



Knole, Green Court.  
Photo Cathy Lambert

#### Knole

On the morning of our third day we visited Knole, widely regarded as one of the greatest historic houses in the UK. The present house dates from the sixteenth century, was briefly owned by Henry VIII and eventually purchased by Thomas Sackville in 1603. Sackville, created Earl of Dorset in 1604, was a clever businessman and courtier and set about making vast improvements to Knole. Subsequent generations added to these to make Knole what we see today, with (reputedly) 365 rooms and seven courtyards filled with a wonderful collection of fine and decorative arts.

The collection has come together partly through inheritance via Lord Treasurer Lionel Cranfield of Copt Hall in Essex, but principally because Charles Sackville, the 6th Earl (1643-1706), was Lord Chamberlain to William III, which entitled him to take as perquisites furnishings from the royal palaces. Consequently, there is today more seventeenth-century royal furniture at Knole than in the Royal Collection.

We were given a 'Special Highlights' tour of the collection, commencing in the Great Hall, hung with family portraits and portraits of royal allegiance. We then proceeded up the Great Staircase, which is painted *en grisaille* illustrating the four ages of man with the five senses and six virtues (although interestingly temperance is not represented!). At the bottom of the staircase is a reclining plaster figure of La Baccelli, an Italian dancer and one of the 3rd Duke of Dorset's lovers, re-positioned after many years in the attics. The Great Stair leads to the first-floor apartments, their Long Galleries hung with portraits and lined with seventeenth-century furniture removed from the royal palaces. The quantity of furniture is so vast that it is perhaps one of the longest lasting impressions of the interior of Knole.

Most spectacular are the State Bedrooms. The Spangled Bedroom is so called for the silver and silver-gilt spangles or sequins embellishing the silk hangings. In the Venetian Bedroom is the State Bed made for James II around 1688. It is hung with high quality Genoese velvets and carved with James's monogram. The matching armchairs and stools are attributed to the royal joiner Thomas Roberts.

The third State Bedroom is the King's Room. The bed, embellished with silver-gilt, is decorated with cupids, bows and arrows and flaming hearts, and was originally made for the Duke of York (the future James II) and his second wife Mary of Modena in 1673. In the King's Room is a very rare set of silver furniture supplied in 1680 to Frances Cranfield, Countess of Dorset, by the royal cabinet maker Gerrit Jensen. Only two other examples survive in England, both in the Royal Collection.

At the end of our tour we visited the Gatehouse Tower to see the rooms that Edward Sackville (1901-65) renovated and lived in between 1926 and 1940. He was the younger cousin of Vita Sackville-West and he inherited Knole in 1928. An active member of the Bloomsbury Group, his rooms have a highly coloured decorative scheme with many items painted by his friends.

Cathy Lambert



Knole, 17th century chair and stools.  
Photo Cathy Lambert

#### Chartwell

From Knole we went to Chartwell, purchased by Sir Winston Churchill in 1922 as a retreat from London. It is now managed by the National Trust and is one of their most popular houses, so we were pleased to have our timed tickets on a reasonably quiet day. Although we did not have a private tour, praise must go to the room guides who were both informative and interesting.

The house is set on the hillside overlooking the Weald of Kent; it has Tudor origins but subsequent owners have altered and enlarged the house, not always in a sympathetic manner. Churchill employed architect Philip Tilden to transform the house once again; his estimate of £8,000 soon tripled due to the complexity of the plans, causing the Churchills great anxiety. The major alteration was the extension overlooking the gardens in which windows on three sides gave a light and airy feel to the rooms and tremendous views. The house is elegantly furnished and decorated to a large extent with family items and gifts, and hung with Winston Churchill's own pictures.

## REPORTS

### Kent Study Trip (*cont.*) 17th to 20th September



Chartwell.  
Photo Cathy Lambert

The most exciting room is Churchill's study, with its high Tudor ceiling and those extensive views over the Weald. Floorboards resemble the deck of a ship, over which Churchill paced whilst working (his preference to sitting down). A significant part of Churchill's work took place in his bedroom, where he remained in bed after breakfast, reading the papers and dealing with correspondence until lunchtime. This is an incredibly plain room. The most significant item is a print of a 12ft tall picture in the National Gallery titled 'Some Statesmen of the Great War' by Sir James Guthrie. In this picture Churchill looks directly at the viewer in a beam of light as if the artist knew he was meant for greater things. It was commissioned in 1918 when Churchill was trying to rebuild his reputation after the Gallipoli disaster.

Considering Churchill's heritage, born at Blenheim Palace to the second son of the Duke of Marlborough, it is not surprising that the grounds contain everything you would expect in a grand home and more. Churchill made considerable changes to the grounds, creating lakes, a walled garden, orchard, terraces, croquet lawn, heated swimming pool and a studio where he could paint. The famous carp pools were in place when they bought the house, but the cascade was installed in 1948 by designer Gavin Jones after Lady Clementine had seen the design at the Chelsea flower show.

In 1946 Chartwell was purchased from the Churchills by a group of friends and admirers who wanted the house kept for posterity as a tribute to the man who saved the nation. In 1965 Winston Churchill died and Lady Clementine was happy to hand over Chartwell in 1966 to the National Trust.

Cathy Lambert

### Penshurst Place

On our last morning we visited Penshurst Place, the ancestral home of the Sydney family. The origins of the house are in the fourteenth century and what we see today is largely what was built by the rich London merchant Sir John de Pulteney, four times Mayor of London. It was finished in 1341.

The house eventually came into the ownership of the Dukes of Buckingham, but Henry VIII suspected Edward Stafford, 3rd Duke of Buckingham, of treasonable links to the former Plantagenet dynasty. Despite lavishly entertaining Henry at Penshurst in 1521, Buckingham was executed and the house became crown property. Eventually in 1552 Edward VI rewarded his tutor and steward of his household, Sir William Sydney, with the house and estate and the Sydneys have owned Penshurst ever since.

We had an excellent curatorial tour which commenced in the Baron's Hall. Completed in 1341, this would have been the hub of the house. Traces of original fourteenth-century glass can be found in the window of the Minstrels' Gallery. There are two massive trestle tables on either side of the hall, each over 6 metres long. Here servants and less important people sat opposite those of importance on the dais. There is still a central hearth from which smoke used to escape through a vent in the roof.



Chippendale society members at Penshurst.  
Photo Cathy Lambert

Our tour continued to the State Dining Room or West Solar. A copy of the painting 'La Volta' illustrates Elizabeth I dancing the Volta with Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, in this very room. The adjacent Queen Elizabeth Room has a set of late seventeenth-century upholstered furniture including day bed, winged armchair and six high-backed chairs all with original rose damask and green silk embroidery. Hanging from the ceiling are three exquisite rock crystal chandeliers. The highlight of the Tapestry Room is an eighteenth-century gilt table with inlaid top in the style of William Kent. The Long Gallery is hung with pictures illustrating the history of the house and family. The final room of the tour, the Nether Gallery, displays a collection of historic arms and armour, including a German executioner's sword.

## REPORTS

### Kent Study Trip (*cont.*) 17th to 20th September



Penshurst, upholstered daybed, c.1700.  
*Photo Cathy Lambert*

After lunch we had time to visit the Grade I listed gardens, a large part of which was constructed during the reign of Elizabeth I. There is a mile of yew hedging designed to create gardens within gardens and in all the gardens stretch to eleven acres.

Cathy Lambert

#### **Chiddingstone Castle**

On our last afternoon we visited Chiddingstone Castle. We were fortunate to have a curatorial tour which helped bring some sense to the castle's history and that of its last owner, Denys Eyre Bower (1905-1977), whose collection is on display.

The house began not as a castle but a Tudor town house in the High Street of Chiddingstone village, where it was known as High Street House. From the sixteenth century it was home to the Streatfield family for twelve generations. In the early nineteenth century Henry Streatfield (1757-1829) remodelled the house into the style of a medieval castle, at the same time blocking the road and diverting it around his grounds to create the present garden and park.

By 1900 the Streatfield family had run out of money and Chiddingstone had several owners before being purchased by Denys Eyre Bower in 1955. Denys began his career in banking but he had been a collector all his life and had an eye for buying fine things when out of fashion, at reasonable prices. In his forties he decided to retire from the bank and become a full time antiques dealer, buying Chiddingstone to house his collections. These

remain in the house today, an eclectic mix covering, among other things, ancient Egypt, Japanese lacquer, and Jacobite memorabilia. To help finance his habit he sold tickets at the door and gave guided tours. Denys left the Castle and collections to the nation and a charitable trust was set up which still cares for them today.

Cathy Lambert

### Christmas Lunch, Goldsborough Hall 13th December 2023

Our Christmas lunch was attended by 33 members and guests at Goldsborough Hall near Knaresborough. Before lunch we gathered in the Conservatory for a short lecture by our Chairman Adam Bowett on 'New Chippendale Discoveries'. It was interesting to learn about new information coming to light, and with some detective work in matching new pieces of Chippendale furniture with established pieces fresh Chippendale attributions can be made.

After the lecture we enjoyed a wonderful three course Christmas lunch. Many thanks go to Adam Bowett and the staff at Goldsborough who made our lunch so special.

Cathy Lambert

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

**Annual membership subscriptions for 2024 were due on 1<sup>st</sup> January. If you have not already paid and wish to make arrangements to do so, please contact the Membership Secretary Peggy Pullan.**

[membership@thechippendalesociety.co.uk](mailto:membership@thechippendalesociety.co.uk)

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### Visit to Brotherton Library, University of Leeds 26th March 2024

This visit to view the *Part of the Furniture Exhibition* at the Brotherton Library will be led by Mark Westgarth, Associate Professor of Art History at Leeds University and a Chippendale Society member. The exhibition features rare and beautiful furniture design books from the library of John Bedford, the late antiques dealer and book collector whose collection was bequeathed to Leeds University in 2019. Further information about the exhibition can be found here: [History of furniture exhibition at University of Leeds - Antique Collecting \(antique-collecting.co.uk\)](https://antique-collecting.co.uk)

We will meet at the Library at 2.00 pm, 26 March, for an hour's guided tour which will be followed by free time to view the exhibition at leisure. Lunch, tea and coffee are available at any of the cafés nearby. Please make your own way to the library: unfortunately, only 20 places are available, although if there is sufficient demand the event may be repeated.

The cost of the tour is £10, and members **should sign up online using the form on the events page of our website:**

<https://thechippendalesociety.co.uk/current-events>

If you are unable to book online, please contact Cathy Lambert: phone 07950206002 or email [cathylambert2@gmail.com](mailto:cathylambert2@gmail.com)

**Applications to be received by 11 March.**



Fold out page of designs from *The Cabinet of Practical, Useful and Decorative Furniture Designs*, by H Lawford (1855)

### Study Day to Bolsover Castle and Welbeck Abbey 16th May 2024



Bolsover Castle Photo English Heritage

We start our day with tea/coffee and biscuits followed by a guided tour of Bolsover Castle, a Stuart mansion near Worksop, designed by John Smythson for Sir Charles Cavendish (d. 1617). It was completed about 1621 by his son William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Newcastle. The exterior is modelled as 'Norman' castle with an unusual and complex interior with both state and private rooms, some retaining their original seventeenth-century decoration.

Later, after his return from exile during the Civil War, William built the Riding House where he could indulge his passion in training horses. After serious decline it has been rescued by English Heritage.

In the afternoon we visit Welbeck Abbey, only 20 minutes away. Welbeck Abbey was built as a monastery of the Premonstratensian order and in the eighteenth century became the country residence of the Dukes of Portland.

Our curatorial tour takes in the 6 State Rooms which contain a number of pieces of Chippendale-period furniture. We will be also able to visit the Harley Gallery where are displayed many of the works of art collected over 400 years by the Dukes of Portland and their families.

The cost for this day, including coach travel, all admission fees, two guided tours and tea/coffee and biscuits on arrival at Bolsover Castle, will be £80. For those who do not wish to use the coach the cost will be £70. **Please sign up using the online form on the events page of our website:**

<https://thechippendalesociety.co.uk/current-events>

If you are unable to book online, please contact Cathy Lambert: phone 07950206002 or email [cathylambert2@gmail.com](mailto:cathylambert2@gmail.com)

**The closing date for applications is 30th March 2024.**

**ADVANCE NOTICE: AGM 2024 13 May, Temple Newsam House**