

A most interesting new feature was the microscopic identification of the twelve different marquetry timbers found on one of the doors of the Library Writing Table, undertaken by Ian Fraser and Adam Bowett. The results will be fed into a computer and a simulated photographic reconstruction of the extraordinarily colourful original appearance of the door will be attempted. It will be on display in July, making a second visit to this exhibition a 'must'.

Christopher Gilbert had begun work as the guest curator for this exhibition before he died and much of its success must be credited to him. Jane Sellars and her team are to be congratulated on implementing his vision with great style.

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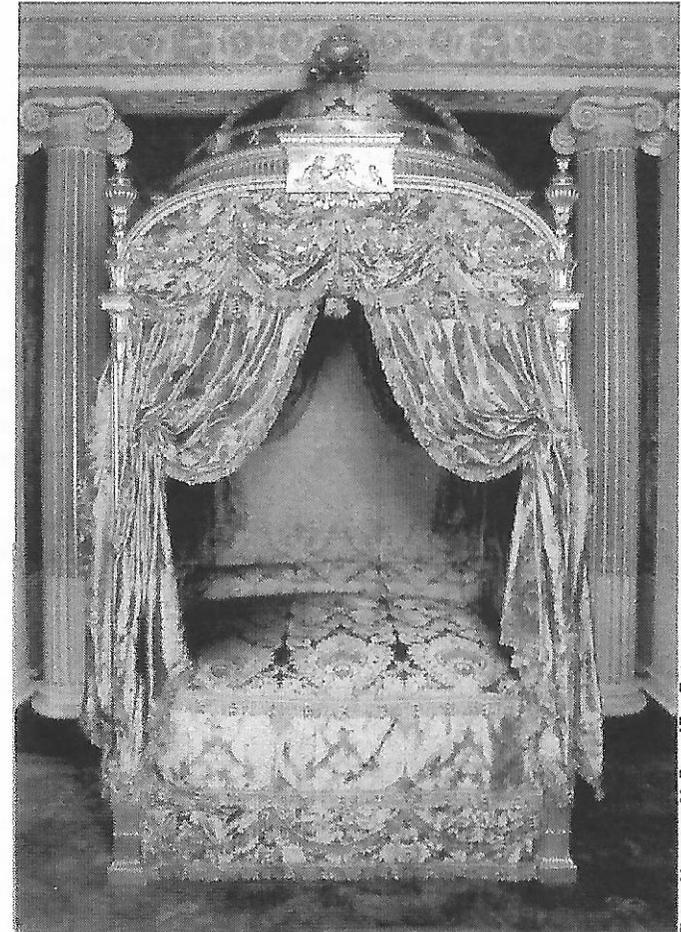
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The Chippendale Society

Chairperson: Pat Lofthouse



Photograph by courtesy of the Harwood House Trust

NEWSLETTER No 87

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Report on the Society's activities

Private view of *The Art of Thomas Chippendale: Master Furniture Maker*

On 5th April, at the invitation of Lord and Lady Harewood and the Harewood House Trustees, some 120 members and guests attended a private view of the biggest Chippendale exhibition for over twenty years. After drinks and a short introduction in the Dining Room we were able to view this remarkable show which was spread throughout the main rooms of the house.

The centrepiece and raison d'être of the exhibition was the return and re-installation of the State Bed; at £250 (excluding the cost of the hangings) it was the most expensive piece of furniture Chippendale ever made, although it could be equally well be described as a building, taking the form of a Temple of Love or *pavillon de grand luxe*. Having been dismantled c1840 it had long been forgotten about, slowly festering and disintegrating in store. A Heritage Lottery Fund grant of nearly £200,000 enabled it to be triumphantly restored. It was reunited with black lacquer pieces originally supplied to the State Bedroom: the secretaire (see Newsletter no 85), and the pair of cabinets on stands, together with six of the original armchairs now reupholstered in green silk en suite with the bed.

Other pieces originally supplied to Harewood and now returned for the duration of the exhibition included the Library Writing Desk (from Temple Newsam), the knee-hole 'toilet bureau' (from the V&A Museum), one of the silvered looking glasses and the pier table with 'Emblematic Heads' in ivory (surely a masterpiece on a par with the Diana and Minerva commode) from the Yellow Drawing Room. The Society lent most of its collection to the exhibition, including all its ex-Harewood material and all its drawings.

There were two rooms given over to themed didactic material (*Otley, St Martin's Lane, The Director, Neo Classicism, The Harewood Commission, Other Yorkshire Clients, Chippendale the Younger*) and an interesting

section on 'the Workshop' illustrating the various branches of Chippendale's business activities. The Gallery had a catwalk of over 30 documented chairs from Harewood and elsewhere, enabling one to see an extraordinary range: at one end was one of the majestic armchairs designed by Robert Adam for Sir Laurence Dundas (£20), and at the other one of the 'star back' bedroom chairs from Paxton (£1-6-0d). Elsewhere in the State Rooms pier tables were re-united with their pier glasses and chairs returned to their original locations.

In order to illustrate his full range of styles and the development of Chippendale's career there were many loans from other houses (Blair Castle, Dumfries House, Aske Hall, Newby Hall, Foremark Hall, Burton Constable, Nostell Priory, Paxton House, Goldsborough Hall and pieces made for David Garrick). Particularly memorable were the newly-discovered bureau bookcase from Foremark, and Garrick's toilet table (lent from Anglesey Abbey).

continued overleaf

FUTURE EVENTS

The **Annual General Meeting** will be held on **Monday 8th May** at the Civic Centre, Otley at 8.00 pm. All members are welcome.

The **Annual Dinner** will be held at Otley Golf Club on **Tuesday 6 June** at 7.15 for 7.45. The speaker will be Lord St Oswald, our President-Elect.

No tickets will be issued but applications, including any seating preferences, should be made by completing the reservation form below and returning it with your cheque for £14 per head. Please indicate if any vegetarian meals are required. Guests and potential new members are very welcome.

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Please reserve places for the Annual Dinner at £14 each. Total amount enclosed £

Name.....

Address.....
.....
.....

Please tick if any vegetarian meals are required and indicate how many

I would like to sit with.....

Please make cheques payable to *The Chippendale Society* and send to: John Holdsworth Esq, 74 Riverside Park, Otley, W Yorkshire LS21 2RW.