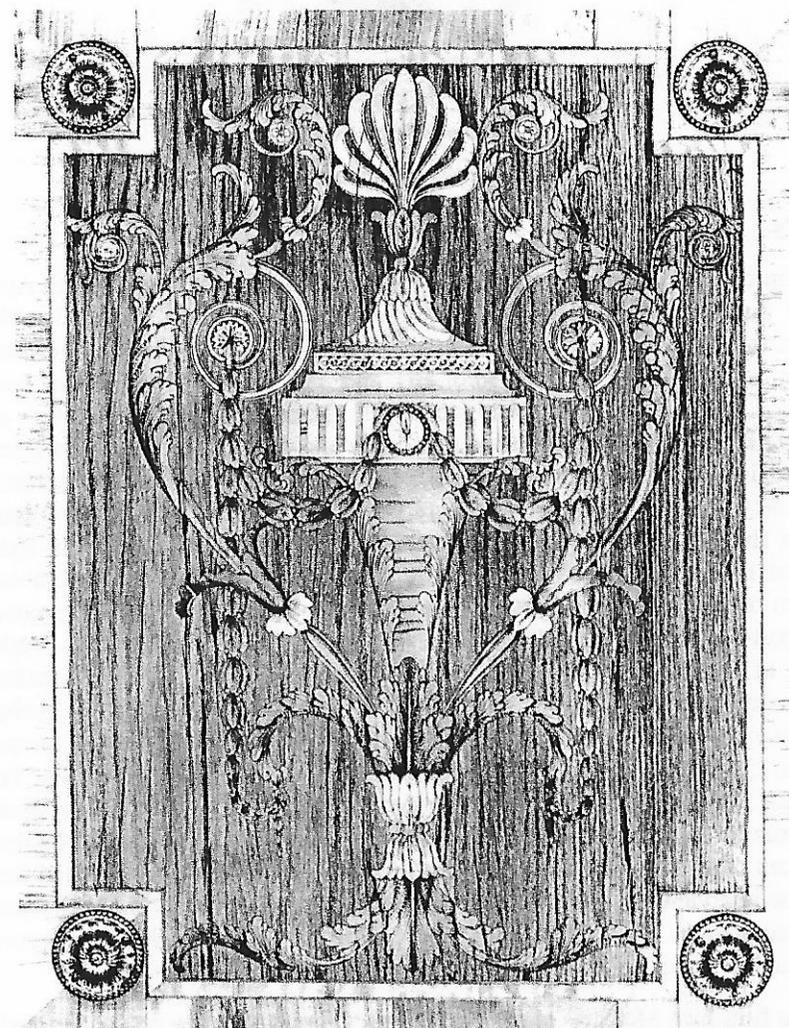


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The Chippendale Society

President: Lord St Oswald



Panel from the Harewood Library Writing Table (Temple Newsam)

NEWSLETTER No 98

May 2004



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www.thechippendalesociety.com

NEWS

The film on Thomas Chippendale shown on BBC 1 at prime time on 4th April, as part of the series *Brilliantly British*, was a welcome introduction to the life and work of the master. Presented by the engaging Hilary Kay, with contributions from (among others) Adam Bowett, John Bly and Jack Metcalfe (from the Society's membership) it sought to place Chippendale in the artistic context of his time and to celebrate his unique achievement as a designer and craftsman. Starting in Otley and then moving to the hothouse atmosphere of St Martin's Lane we saw the rise of an ambitious, yet perhaps socially insecure young man, to become the very fountain head of the avant-garde. The programme was possibly at its weakest in trying to interpret his response to the stylistic trends of the 1750s and 60s (there was no mention of Gothick) and it was a pity that there was something of a gloss over the early post-*Director* years. Much of the filming took place around his Yorkshire houses, at Nostell, Harewood, and Temple Newsam. They all seemed to come alive spectacularly with the special effects of firelight seen against pierced mahogany splat-back chairs (at Nostell), or with vaporised ice in the dramatised encounters between Chippendale and Sir Rowland Winn (ironically enough, filmed at Temple Newsam). Colonial Williamsburg provided the setting for some of the workshop sequences as well as a discussion of Chippendale's place in the development of American craftsmanship and design. Some of the most memorable parts of the film were the interviews with traditional craftsmen: carvers and chair makers, japanners and marqueteurs. The Society's own contribution (in addition to providing considerable advice) was the loan of our copy of the 1754 *Director*.

For the film Jack Metcalfe made a **marquetry panel**, copying one of the cupboard doors of the Harewood Library Writing Table. The timber composition of this door was first analysed for the exhibition in 2000 at Harewood House, but this is the first time an authentic reconstruction using the nine different woods or stained timbers has been attempted. The result is certainly pretty startling in the vibrancy of the colours which accentuates the boldness of the design. By necessity the dyes used had to be 'off the peg' before a second panel is made using bespoke colours more closely matching the originals found on the table itself. The panel is on display at Temple Newsam.

Also on display at Temple Newsam is a **touch-screen presentation of the Harewood Library Writing Table**, created by students of Prince Henry's Grammar School, Otley, showing it 'exploded', with all the doors and drawers open, its construction and the various timbers used. There is also a consideration of other contextual matters such as neo-Classicism, the timber trade, and the extent of the British Empire in the 1770s. This way of interpreting a piece of furniture which cannot otherwise be touched or opened by visitors is surely to be applauded.

ANNUAL DINNER

The Annual Dinner will take place at **Otley Golf Club on 15th June 7.00 for 7.30.**

The Society's guest this year will be Lady Legard

No tickets will be issued but applications, including seating preferences, should be made by completing the reservation form below and returning it with your cheque. There will be a choice of starters and desserts but you are asked to indicate your preference for the main course, either

- (A) Individual Beef Wellington
- (B) Duo of Plaice and Lemon Sole
- (C) Vegetarian
- (D) Gluten-free

.....
Please reserve.....places for the Annual Dinner at £18 each.

Total amount enclosed £

Please indicate the number of each type of main course choice

A() B() C() D()

Name

Address

..... Tel. No.....

I/We would like to sit with

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

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