



THE ARTS SCHOLAR

ISSUE NO 42 SUMMER 2026



Blue Badge, Blue Plaque: following his installation as Master, John Benjamin presented outgoing Master Deborah Charles with a specially created Blue Plaque, in recognition of her role as a London Blue Badge Guide. John sets out his agenda for the year to come on page 3. Deborah reflects on the highlights of her year on page 7.



THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF ARTS SCHOLARS

FURNITURE MAKERS' HALL, 12 AUSTIN FRIARS, EC2N 2HE

MASTER John Benjamin FGA DGA
UPPER WARDEN Sonya Zuckerman
MIDDLE WARDEN Mary Foster
RENTER WARDEN Anne Somers
DEPUTY MASTER Deborah Charles

Court of Assistants

Ken Dark Phd FSA
Mark Dennis Phd FSA
James Drabble
Wendy Joseph KC
Felicity Marno
Christina Munday
Ronald Monro Ferguson
Neil Redcliffe JP
Anne Rogers Haley
Catherine Shearn
Clive Stewart-Lockhart
Richard Williams
PAST MASTERS

Roy Sully
Graham Barker DL FSA
Alan S. Cook
John Spanner TD
Georgina Gough
Paul Viney
Sir Loyd Grossman CBE PhD FSA
Tom Christopherson
Alastair Leslie TD
Alderman Ian Luder JP
The late Nicholas Somers FRICS
Christopher Claxton Stevens FSA
Philippa Glanville OBE, FSA
Mark Bridge
The late Dr Geoff Egan FSA
The late Jonathan Horne MBE OStJ FSA
Geoffrey Bond OBE DL FSA OStJ
The late Lord Brooke of Sutton Mandeville CH FSA
CLERK – Alan C. Cook
CHAPLAIN – Rev Canon Roger Hall LVO MBE
ALMONER – John Hudson MRICS

Newsletter Editor Mark Bridge

All copy should be sent to:

Simon Berti - bertissimo@live.co.uk

Deadline for next edition – November 30th

NEWS



Above: presenting the Arts Scholar Chorister's Medal, left to right, Roy Sully, Alan C. Cook, James Drabble, Anne Rogers Haley, David Ruckert, Fusun Ruckert, Oscar Saurin, Shirley Day.

Supporting St Paul's great choral tradition

Every day a group of schoolchildren enter St Paul's Cathedral. Off go jackets and backpacks, on come cassocks, ruffs and surplices. After a short rehearsal they troop into the cathedral, open their mouths and sing as one, giving voice to a tradition of choral music in the Church of England that has survived largely unchanged for almost 500 years. The choral tradition is one of the sounds of Britain, it is the envy of the world.

The Worshipful Company of Arts Scholars is now part of that tradition as we have just become a Chorister Medal supporter. I am very grateful to all those who have contributed so generously to allow this to happen. Our supported chorister is an eleven-year old who will form part of the new girls' choir being created to run alongside the boys.

The cathedral believes that any child with a good voice should have the opportunity to become a chorister, ensuring that the life-changing experience is open to young people from a wide variety of backgrounds. Whilst many choristers go on to make careers in music, some excel elsewhere such as Sir Alastair Cook, the England cricket captain, or General Sir Peter Beale, who went from being Head Chorister to become the director of army medical services. Sir Peter observed that being a chorister taught him discipline and an ability to perform under pressure. Something that his son, Sir Simon Russell Beale, another head chorister, clearly learned too.

The Arts Scholar Chorister's Medal was created by Oscar Saurin and is beautifully crafted in silver. Oscar is a Freeman of the Goldsmiths' Company. Shirley and I were delighted to present the medal to the Company as a memento of our year as Master and Consort.

At a time when musical education in the UK is under real threat, St Paul's is committed to creating the largest cathedral choir and chorister education programme in the world, transforming the lives of talented young people and offering music that enriches the lives of millions of others.

Roy Sully

Whatever happens during my year, education will be at its heart

Well, the big day has come and gone and by the time you all read this I will have been installed as the 19th Master of the Worshipful Company of Arts Scholars.

When I was 'sounded out' over three years ago about being considered for elevation to the position of Warden, May 28th 2026 seemed a dim and distant prospect. Modern life, however, has other ideas and the time has simply swept by, never more so than during the past year which has been a whirlwind of committee meetings, livery dinners and other Company and City events.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s I was a jewellery cataloguer and valuer at Phillips Auctioneers and during all that time one of my closest friends and colleagues was Paul Viney, now a Past Master of the Arts Scholars and former Chairman of Woolley and Wallis, the Salisbury saleroom.

When I left Phillips in 1999, I started my own independent consultancy and Paul kindly asked me to be a part-time jewellery specialist at Woolleys, introducing me to his insurance broker David Needham. When I joined Arts Scholars in 2008, I knew nothing about the City Livery – its structure, traditions and rituals. Then we were still known as The Guild of Arts Scholars, Dealers and Collectors, but already a vibrant young organization. I went on to become a Founder Liveryman of the Company, and the rest, as they say, is history.

What amazes me about Arts Scholars is just how far we have come in such a short space of time. One thing I do know, our reputation extends far beyond the City and a measure of this is just how many people in the art world and beyond, not only know about us, but talk about us and, I suggest, would very much like to become part of us.

I think that our burgeoning profile (and the fact that we are known to hold fantastic events) has meant that we have definite clout and influence. Indeed, the measure of this is the number of times that members have been asked to take an active part in arts-related conferences and associated activities.

So, what are my hopes and aspirations for Arts Scholars during 'My Year'? I have never made a secret of the fact that I am keen to support young people embarking upon an arts-related career.

When I first joined the Company I had a meeting with Past Master Tom Christopherson who asked me what I would like to achieve as a member of Arts Scholars. My response was unequivocal, I wanted to bring the civilizing and intellectually nourishing influence of the arts to young minds who are



barely taught the subject in school and rarely, if ever, get the opportunity to hear about (let alone handle) some of the remarkable things which we often take for granted.

Fast forward to today, and I can honestly say this is one area where Arts Scholars are making a real and tangible difference. The Education Committee, under the deft steerage of chairman Felicity Marno, is developing the Company's own remarkable Treasure Chest scheme (see page 7) in which a range of vintage objects as diverse as a bronze, old coins and keys, a tea caddy and a pocket watch are taken around schools and are shown and explained to very young children. I can assure you that their universally positive response is a delight to see.

Another initiative involves auction houses opening up their doors for the day to a group of some twenty-five Year Ten students from a local school (see page 6). These youngsters attend workshops, handle objects and even take part in a 'virtual' auction. Again, their reaction makes all the hard work worthwhile. If you would like to contribute to either of these ground-breaking schemes or, indeed, any other aspect of the Company's day-to-day activities, then please do not hesitate to let me know. My email address is john@johnbenjamin.co.uk

I would like to say a huge thank you to my predecessor Deborah Charles for all the incredibly hard work and time she invested in the success of the Company during her own year, setting up the Livery Fund, organizing social suppers and launching Wardens' meetings, among a host of new initiatives (see page 11).

Finally, there is one person whom I would like to mention on behalf of all of us in Arts Scholars and that is our indefatigable Clerk, Alan C. Cook. His cool-headed support and wise counsel are, quite simply, irreplaceable.

John C. Benjamin - Master

NEWS

In recognition of a worthy ambassador

The Mithras Award is given annually by the Company to someone who, although not a member of the Arts Scholars, is primarily active in the United Kingdom, and has made an exceptional contribution to historical or decorative arts.

This year we had a strong field of nominations to work through, but we were thrilled when, at the Banquet in February, the Lady Mayor presented the award to Hilary Kay. Besides being the current President of the Arts Society, Hilary has been a stalwart ambassador for our industry for many decades, on TV and radio and as an author and lecturer.

As the longest-serving member of the Antiques Roadshow team (since 1978), her face has become known to millions, with her wide specialist knowledge from scientific instruments and clockwork toys to costume and textiles.

Hilary worked at Sotheby's until 1999, having been their youngest-ever auctioneer. She and her husband Michael now also run their own media company, the Art Institute.

Christopher Claxton Stevens



Above: Hilary Kay

The Alumni Group

The Arts Scholars Alumni group has been launched. Each year, the Company supports over a dozen postgraduate students in History of Art and Conservation through research awards and bursaries. In their final year, these students are invited to join the Alumni, which now includes six years of award recipients.

During their studies, scholars benefit from the experience of Arts Scholars through career advice and support. As Alumni, they join a growing and diverse network of arts professionals, offering mutual support and opportunities to build relationships that will benefit both current and future generations. As the network develops, it will become an active forum for sharing ideas and news between alumni and members of the Worshipful Company.

The Alumni primarily connects via WhatsApp, alongside organised activities such as gallery visits, specialist talks, career sessions, and mentoring. The group enables the Company to maintain strong ties with its scholars, who may later choose to support future generations in turn.

The Alumni is administered by Catherine Shearn.

Felicity Marno



Above: they made it all possible – John Benson (centre left) set the questions, John Spanner (centre right) was his inimitable self as the question master, while Anne Rogers Haley (left) and Mary Spanner (right) made it all add up.

Our first ever quiz, and surely not our last

Which sea has no shoreline? If such conundrums are your cup of tea then you should have been deep underground in the basement of Balls Brothers' wine bar just off Mincing Lane on March 3rd.

Dark, brooding and eerily deserted, the venue was strangely menacing from outside but just right for the purpose once inside – large enough to accommodate all the teams yet cosy enough to create that mixture of good fellowship and lightly veiled aggression that is the pub quiz tradition. Other established customs were observed with heckling, groaning, querying of answers and drowning of sorrows. The bowl supper, on the other hand, was rather more sophisticated than the pub quiz norm.

During a year when the Master was encouraging more informal contact between members, this was the ideal event to initiate. Not only were our minds stretched, but we had fun and got to know each other just a little better.

And in case you were wondering, the Master's team won, fair and square, and that shoreless sea was the Sargasso.

Mark Bridge



Above: even the winning team were reduced to scratching their heads at times.

Three wise men dig up ancient mysteries

On the last evening of April, Arts Scholars and their guests gathered at Pewterers' Hall for an evening of talks organised by Renter Warden Mary Foster. All three speakers were eminent archaeologists and members of our Company. The subjects ranged from a site over 7,000 years old to the comparatively recent late 11th century.

First to speak was Michael Lewis, curator of the British Museum's Bayeux Tapestry exhibition and former head of the Portable Antiquities Scheme. His talk – **The Chew Valley Hoard: Discoveries that Changed History** – was a fitting combination of both roles. He described how a group of metal detectorists unearthed a remarkable hoard of around 2,500 coins from the late 11th century. Roughly half bear the profile of Harold II, the remainder William I. One theory suggests the Harold coins were commissioned by Gytha, Harold's mother, to support her grandsons' bid to reclaim power from the Normans.

Valued at £4.3 million, some coins are now on display at the Museum of Somerset while others are touring. The long-term plan is for the collection to be reunited on permanent display in Somerset.

Ken Dark, Professor at the University of Cambridge, then presented **Finding Jesus's House in Nazareth**. He explained how he and his team found a house in Nazareth which, he is quite convinced, was known by Jesus. Nazareth has a population of about 65,000, of whom about 30% are Christian. Working backwards through the site's history, he explained how successive buildings had been constructed there.

In the 1850s, the Sisters of Nazareth built a convent near the Church of the Annunciation. Over time, they carried out



Above: Michael Lewis, Ken Dark and Simon Underdown

extensive excavations, uncovering so many artefacts that many were simply given away. Beneath the convent lay earlier ecclesiastical buildings, including a 5th century Byzantine cave cathedral. Deeper still were the remains of a 1st century dwelling, also described by a 4th century pilgrim, along with two tombs.

Was this a house known to Jesus? We can never know for certain, but Ken presented a compelling case that it is possible.

The final speaker, Simon Underdown, Professor of Biological Anthropology at Oxford Brookes University, spoke about excavations in southern Jordan, an area offering early evidence of the shift from nomadic foraging to settled farming some 7,000 years ago.

A 2018 discovery revealed a limestone structure. Further excavations in 2023 and 2025 uncovered more, arranged in a channel stretching about one kilometre. Initially thought to resemble a Neolithic shrine in the Negev Desert, the site has since raised more questions than answers. Tiny tiles dating from the 7th to 5th centuries BCE were found, and ground-penetrating radar used with Jordanian colleagues identified additional structures.

The purpose of these remains is still unknown, hence the apt title of Simon's talk, **Riddles of the Sands**. No stone tools were found, the channel cannot hold water, it is too small to function as a game fence, and the shaped limestone blocks had been transported from some distance away.

With this archaeological mystery left unresolved, Mary gave the vote of thanks and we adjourned to enjoy one of humanity's most welcome advances: a glass of wine and nibbles.



Above: the 1st century house excavated by Ken Dark and his team in Nazareth.

EDUCATION

Bidding for a future in the auction industry

Arts Scholars John Benjamin, Felicity Marno and Cynthia Sparke represented the Education Committee at Rosebery's Auctioneers in South East London on April 23rd. This was the third such event launched by our Livery, partnering schools with auction houses to offer insight into the varied aspects of this industry.

Building on the success of our first schools/ auction house session delivered at Canterbury Auction Galleries, the programme includes short talks, specialist workshops, a 'Basic, Better, Best' competition, a lunch break and the closing highlight of the day, a mock auction.

This time, it was 25 art and photography students from Years 9 and 10 at Leigh Stationers' Academy, an ideal group of curious and anticipatory 14-15 year olds.

A welcome by Ben Griffiths, Rosebery's MD was followed by Master Elect John Benjamin introducing the Livery Company.

Later in the day, Claire Hayter, administrator of the Education Committee's Schools/Auction House Scheme spoke enthusiastically about bringing the next generation into employment. She described how the auction house provides a hub for all manner of jobs in shipping, marketing and law – all well beyond specific art specialisms.

Students engaged with diverse workshops ranging from prints to jewellery, pictures and works of art, asking questions as they learned the tools of the trade. Hands-on sessions included examining jewellery settings through loupes and checking a canvas with a UV light. As a result, one young man assured us he could now tell real from fake gemstones while others marvelled at a tea caddy, a fake Banksy and a pair of bronze horse figures.

The activities were described by students as 'eye-opening' and palpable enthusiasm was expressed with 'I want to study THAT'. The idea that photography is pivotal to the marketing of art online was a 'light-bulb' moment and watching a young person imagine that an interest in a subject could lead to tangible employment was hugely rewarding.

As always, the highlight of the day was the mock auction when the students were handed virtual cheques to bid on



a dozen items. They competed fiercely for items as varied as a Rabanne armour dress, a Rolex watch and a Picasso print, sometimes pooling their funds for the winning bid. Everyone in attendance was caught up in the fun orchestrated by auctioneer Jack Wallis at the rostrum.

The full day was a rousing success, thanks, in large part, to meticulous planning by Claire Hayter, who liaised with the auction house to deliver a varied and well-paced programme. Rosebery's were superb hosts, dedicating several enthusiastic young specialists to work with the visitors and laying on a tasty lunch for which the students and accompanying staff from the school were very appreciative.

It seems evident that partnering GCSE students with an auction house for a day spent within a buzzing saleroom is a winning formula. Feedback from our previous event at Sworders included letters of thanks from parents remarking on the enormous impact of such a careers event for their child.

We are told two students went on to take up work experience placements at Sworders gaining tangible footholds into a tight job market. We therefore know the Schools/ Auction House Scheme has merit and we witness it gaining momentum with every joint event.

Cynthia Coleman Sparke

This is cultural treasure, not just some old stuff

The Treasure Chests we take to schools contain objects from many times and places: a Roman oil lamp, an East India Company coin from Bengal, Second World War medals, a Japanese okimono, and a Regency tea caddy, among others. One pupil remarked that opening the tea caddy was like “lifting the lid on history” – and on culture.

Most pupils have never handled such objects and approach them without preconceptions. In a multicultural society, these artefacts often represent unfamiliar cultures, acting as portals into new worlds that make both the unfamiliar and the familiar more accessible.

Examining an object’s history and meaning helps pupils understand and appreciate different cultures. What once seemed “other” becomes relatable. In Treasure Chest workshops, pupils work in pairs – often from different backgrounds – discussing and interpreting objects together. This develops visual literacy and communication skills, while encouraging respect for differing perspectives. Greater understanding fosters openness, which in turn supports social cohesion.

Exploring objects from their own cultural background can be equally powerful. It helps pupils connect past and present, strengthening their sense of identity and belonging. The tea caddy is a favourite example, linking a familiar daily habit with its historical context, adding depth and meaning to everyday life.

This hands-on experience is especially valuable in a digital age. For children accustomed to screens, holding a 1,700-year-old object like a Roman oil lamp, and imagining its use, can deepen their awareness of history, continuity, and shared human experience.

In sum, studying decorative arts objects can promote intercultural understanding, strengthen identity and self-worth, and enhance social engagement. For further discussion, see the Cultural Learning Alliance (www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk).

Felicity Marno



Above: Somali girls examining the contents of the Treasure Chest.



Above: Henry Moore’s controversial altar

Enjoying the Wren, Moore, Palumbo effect

St Stephen Walbrook is one of 52 churches Wren designed after the Great Fire and was his parish church when he lived at No. 15 Walbrook. Its dome reflects Wren’s original concept for St Paul’s.

Originally, worship centred on a carved wooden pulpit with a large tester. Today, the focus is on a central circular altar by Henry Moore, commissioned by churchwarden Lord Peter Palumbo as part of a £1.3 million restoration (1978–1987). Carved from polished travertine marble, the eight-foot altar weighs several tonnes. It was only installed after Palumbo and Moore removed part of a wall. The Court of Ecclesiastical Cases Reserved later approved its use.

Our visit to the church in January was organised by Arts Scholar Evelyne Bell and guided by the Rev Stephen Baxter. We also enjoyed an organ recital by Jonathan Dods, Director of Music and organist at St Martin-in-the-Fields.

Adjacent to the church, tucked into an alley, stands the Walbrook Club, a Queen Anne-style townhouse, originally constructed in 1952 as offices for property developer Rudolph Palumbo and his son, Lord Peter. The Club is now run by his grandson, the Hon. Philip Palumbo, who led our tour.

We began in the lower ground floor Oak Room, where the table and chairs were designed by Mies van der Rohe. Nearby hangs his drawing for an unbuilt 1960s City project commissioned by Lord Palumbo.

The ground floor bar forms the Club’s centrepiece. Behind it sits a 1920s model of the Italian ocean liner *Saturnia*.

The dining room, formerly Lord Palumbo’s office, features his 1960 portrait by Oskar Kokoschka. Vintage Beirut posters reflect Lady Palumbo’s heritage, while Winston Churchill’s Homburg hat is displayed on the windowsill.

Across the hall, the Green Room hosted our traditional English tea. Though no longer under Albert Roux, the kitchen remains excellent. Seating just 12, the room is dominated by a photograph of Lawrence of Arabia. A cityscape of Venice by Ben Johnson completes the setting.

Anne Rogers Haley

CHARITY NEWS

Your contributions help in so many ways'

The Arts Scholars' Charitable Trust relies on the generous donations of members (that means you!) and income from its investments to fund its grant-making. These grants are focused on three main areas: education, internships, and the City and Livery, alongside grants to individual organisations.

In 2025–26, the Trust is supporting students across the UK who are studying subjects related to the study, curation, and conservation of art in its broadest sense.

It is funding hands-on courses at West Dean, including furniture and book conservation, as well as postgraduate study at six universities: Sussex, St Andrews, Exeter, Warwick, Reading, and York (see facing page). These grants are intended to help students build careers in the arts.

The Trust also funds an assistant at the Royal Collection Trust, who works on conservation projects within its million-



Above: Randeep Atwal in the Alan Wedgwood Reading Room.

object working collection; the most recent project involved re-gilding two beautiful large plant stands from Buckingham Palace. The Trust continues its support for the London Museum's Portable Antiquities Finds Liaison Officer.

A four-year sponsorship of the V&A's archive assistant, who has been cataloguing the Wedgwood Barlaston archive, is now nearing completion. In addition, the Trust now has a three-year agreement with the King's Foundation to support a diploma student, of limited financial means, in subjects aligned with our objectives.

The Trust also helps address the decline of art education in schools by supporting organisations such as Art History Link-Up, the Association for Art History and the Group for Education in Museums, all of which work with school children.

The Charity Committee awards grants totalling £35,000 each year to a wide range of projects. These include support for Charleston's wall-painting conservation; an Arts Scholars Student Residency at the Curwen Print Centre; a horological and scientific skill-based internship at the National Maritime Museum and a contribution to the new London Museum for the conservation of the "Cocoa Rooms" salvaged from the Smithfield site.

City-related grants include annual support for the Lord Mayor's Appeal, the Big Curry Lunch for ABF The Soldiers' Charity, the Sheriffs' and Recorder's Fund (which helps prison leavers into work), and both the Thames Valley ATC and the University of London OTC.

The Trust also provides financial support for the Education Committee's very successful Treasure Chests project.

Finally, the Trust provides the Master each year with a £1,000 grant to support a charity of their choice. This year our most recent Master's choice has included the London Museum.

Most recently, the Trust has reviewed its investment managers and, following advice from the Investment Advisory Committee, has agreed to appoint Cazenove Capital as the firm best placed to provide the income we need to continue our work.

And as we are often asked for more information about how funds are used, please note that details of all our spending are always available for anyone to see on the Government's Charity Commission website (short link: <https://tinyurl.com/yhasxus3>). We will soon be adding this link to the Company's website.

Hillary Bauer – Chair of Trustees

£4000+ for Red Cross

Last year's Red Cross Christmas Market, held at Guildhall on December 8-9th, was a huge success with a best-ever total of around £190,000 made for the British Red Cross. The Arts Scholars' stall, amongst the livery companies in the Old Library, did extremely well too, contributing over £4,400.

I am hugely grateful to all the members who so generously gave items to sell, and to the splendid team who helped sell it all, from Caithness scent bottles to 17th century oak joint stools! The vintage costume jewellery just sold and sold and the tables, laden at the start and replenished for the second day, were looking distinctly thin by closing time.

The next Market will be in December 2027. Having run four Red Cross stalls for the Arts Scholars over the past ten years, I feel I would like to pass on the baton. If some kind member would like to volunteer, I would be delighted to discuss what is involved. The selling staff find it enormous fun and I am sure will be happy to continue to help. Please do get in touch. – this is a really worthwhile charitable contribution in the City.

Christopher Claxton Stevens



OUR POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS



University of St Andrews
Jamie Carstairs
Research on Manchester-born photographer Charles Frederick Moore (1838–1916), active in China for over 25 years. His significant body of work was long misattributed, leaving him largely forgotten. This project seeks to restore Moore's authorship and place in the history of photography in China.



University of Warwick
Smriti Dutt
Examines the Chamba Rumal, an embroidered textile from Himachal Pradesh known for its intricate double-sided stitching and narrative imagery. Her interdisciplinary work explores textiles as carriers of memory and identity, contributing to a more nuanced, decolonised understanding of South Asian art and cultural traditions.

The Arts Scholars' Charitable Trust now supports the research of many students at universities across the UK. Here students report back on how they have benefited from their awards.



University of Exeter
Abby Moore
Focuses on Chilean poet and artist Cecilia Vicuña (b. 1948). Her research explores how Vicuña's fibre-based, ephemeral works challenge perceptions of reality, emphasising participation, embodiment, and the relationship between human and non-human worlds.



University of St Andrews
Niamh McAndrew
Research on late medieval manuscript rolls, challenging their study in isolation. By examining a wider range of rolls together, her work aims to reassess their role within late medieval English manuscript, visual, and material culture.



University of Warwick
Yuxuan He
Focuses on 15th and 16th century Northern Italian incised slipware within a broader Eurasian context. Using a material-centred approach, the research explores how techniques, uses, and aesthetics evolved as this craft moved from Asia to Renaissance Italy.



University of Sussex
Isaac Clark
I have greatly enjoyed completing my MA at Sussex. The course has given me opportunities to visit galleries, meet industry professionals, and undertake a work experience project with the V&A. I am currently working on my dissertation, which explores British photography and masculine identity. I am very grateful for my scholarship, which has made this experience possible.



University of Exeter
Tamar van Reissen
Her PhD on Pieter van Roestraten (1630–1700) and the Anglo-Dutch Exchange, examines the Dutch painter's still lifes, produced in London for elite patrons. Through an object-based and archival approach, it explores themes of global trade, power, and cultural exchange in the late 17th century.



University of York
Lucy Ditchfield
For my final thesis, I am researching the body as a fashion object through postmodern theories of fashion and culture. As part of my degree, I have taken modules including Rethinking Aestheticism and Who Owns Antiquities? I have particularly enjoyed studying artists such as Albert Moore, Simeon Solomon, Rossetti, and William Morris, as well as exploring the writings of Ruskin and Pater in my final essay.

A pocket full of gems

Our annual Show and Tell in the Aldermen's Dining Room at the Guildhall always surprises even the weariest Arts Scholar with the range and diversity of objects presented. Not least among the surprises is the realisation that many of us have enormous pockets in which to store our treasures. This a selection of my personal highlights from the 15 objects presented.

Coins and medals are always a staple, so when Timothy Millett – a medals dealer to his core (website www.historicmedals.com) – stood up we licked our lips in anticipation. Imagine our surprise when he produced an 1830s powder horn showing an early steam train. What a tease.

Louise Ryder had blown in from Tunbridge Wells (on one of those 1830s locos?) and mounted a spirited defence of Tunbridgeware. Noting that the modern collector can be dismissive of the genre as a Victorian equivalent of the fridge magnet, Louise pointed out that many examples contain woods from upwards of 40 trees and that her modest Victorian stamp box would have cost the equivalent of £400 today. You can get a fridge for that kind of money.

If things do not work out for Louise in her current role, her appointment to the Tunbridgeware Marketing Board is a shoo-in.

We were surprised and delighted to see Past Master Philippa Glanville, who presented an Arts and Crafts West Country brooch dating from the 1930s bought by her late husband, Gordon. Roger Massey presented a piece of 16th century Japanese porcelain commissioned by the Dutch East India Co for export. The form was a copy of German stoneware, which in turn was copying German glassware. An early example of globalisation in the arts.

Upper Warden and MC for the day, John Benjamin, presented a doily made of beetle wings gifted to him by Smallhythe Place in Kent, formerly home to Dame Helen Terry, the leading stage actress of her day.

John takes up the tale: "One of her most celebrated roles was Lady Macbeth, immortalised in a painting by John Singer Sargent and now in the Tate Gallery. In this painting she is wearing the famous beetle wing dress embroidered with over 1000 iridescent wings taken from a species of Indian jewel beetle known as *Sternocera Aequisignata*.

"These wings were deliberately chosen by her costume designer, Mrs Alice Comyns-Carr, since their metallic blue-green surface perfectly reflected old-fashioned stage limelight creating a menacing, serpent-like effect which perfectly demonstrated the character's ruthless ambition.

"A number of the beetle wings which were not used on the dress were sewn onto decorative doilies and I was fortunate enough to be given one after I had catalogued all the Smallhythe jewellery for the National Trust."

Ronald Monro Ferguson brought a mourning ring dedicated to one of his ancestors. Hector Munro was a young army officer mauled by a tiger during a picnic in India in 1792, now known familiarly as The Unfortunate Munro. His death has been immortalised in ceramic which can be seen at the V&A: search Google for The Death of Munro. Unlucky Hector is also thought to be the inspiration for the Tipu's Tiger automaton, also at the V&A. Extraordinary stuff from a remarkable family.

I will finish with yet another piece related to an object in a major collection. Rachel Bebb presented a maquette by Charlotte Mayer (1929-2022), a Czech-born sculptor who fled to Britain to escape the Nazi occupation in 1939, aged 10. The Thornflower was created to commemorate Mayer's grandmother who died at Treblinka. Appropriately the full-size piece is now in the collection at Coventry Cathedral. The humble maquette was the star of our show and moved all who handled it.

On the train home one thought kept nagging away, why do we only do this once a year?

Simon Berti



Above: Roger Massey with his Japanese export ware.

Below: Charlotte Mayer's maquette.



DEPUTY MASTER



It has been an honour to represent our flourishing Company

It hardly seems anytime since I was installed in early June 2025 and flew up to Aberdeen within hours to participate in the Masters' weekend as the newest Master on the scene! From then on my diary was taken over by the Livery world, engaging in all kinds of events.

What have been the highlights? Within our Company calendar: my Installation, our delicious banquet at Merchant Taylors' Hall with the Lady Mayor and my guest speaker Sharon Ament, Director of the London Museum, the Admissions Ceremonies, the Charitable Trust Awards Lunch, meeting our University of London Officer Training Cadets on several occasions, the Advent Carol Service at St Peter ad Vincula and spending seven days with a wonderful group of our members touring the Netherlands on the tour I organised. The most moving was planting the Remembrance Cross in St Paul's Churchyard on behalf of WCAS along with all the other Masters.

Externally: walking in the Lord Mayor's Show, learning about the training of the St Paul's choristers, the sponsored walk and visit to Brixton prison. It sounds rather blasé, but the number of lunches and banquets are also very enjoyable, as well as a challenge to one's waistline, so regular exercise had to be squeezed in whenever possible!

Engaging with so many other Livery Companies has been enlightening and I have learnt that we all have our different nuances of operation and levels of activity. We are, by far, one of the most active in terms of the events we offer for our members and known for our friendliness. This has been evidenced with the success of some more informal events such as our members' dinner socials and the quiz night.

Despite the unavoidable increase in quarterage, we still have a very encouraging uptake on new member enquiries and joiners.

Naturally there are many meetings and a great deal of work behind the scenes. I would like to thank the Wardens, Court, Committee Chairs and committee members, never forgetting that we are all volunteers.

Additionally, I thank our wonderful Clerk Alan, who is so supportive. Also thanks to my Consort Malcolm Knight who attended as many events as his health permitted.

During my year, we have increased our social events and the Livery Fund has been established for the long term benefit of the Company. Thank you all for your support. It has been an honour to represent you, one that I will treasure as I move onto my role as Deputy Master and wish John Benjamin a wonderful year.

Deborah Charles – Deputy Master



Above: John Benjamin's beetle-wing doily from Smallhythe Place.

Above right: Ronald Monro Ferguson's mourning ring dedicated to Hector Munro
Right: Philippa Glanville's 1930s Arts and Crafts West Country brooch.



Left: Louise Ryder's Tunbridgeware stamp box.

Below: Tim Millet's railway-themed powder horn.



WINE WALK



Painting the town red (white, blue, pink and green)

On a blustery Tuesday afternoon in April, 30 Arts Scholar seekers after knowledge assembled in Guildhall Yard to learn about wine in medieval London. We were met by (a) Dr Matthew Green, historian and walking medieval vade mecum, and (b) some white wine – a great start.

We learned that London was a miamic nightmare in those days (it's much better now), that wine has long been considered "creator of the world's happiness" (a fact we all accepted without demur), that wine was the most traded commodity then, and that drinking too much was an alien concept. The middle and prosperous classes could drink five pints a day – we were not told what state they were in after this.

Refreshed by the white wine, we moved on to St Mary Aldermary in Bow Lane. Here we had some pink wine (as we medievalists call it – rosé being a modern wine for hen parties). It was all going rather well – there was a lot of wine. We learned that there were wines of all colours, the best being blue, then green (which was dyed with grass), but pink was the most widely drunk.

The lowest rated wine was white, because it is the same

colour as the tears of sinners. As we sat and drank, the anchorite window in the church was pointed out. Now, I've passed that church a thousand times and never knew that it was the home of a series of anchorites and anchoresses, who were so pious that they were immured with not a lot to do but pray and watch the services through a small window inside the church. And you thought your life was a bit bleak. Why did they do this? I hear you cry. Well, it was not only a noble vocation (apparently), but was also a rather extreme form of insurance policy – there's no chance of committing sins if you're walled up in a church.

We then lurched woozily on to the Fred Cleary garden adjacent to Mansion House Tube station, which was a vineyard (and still is, in a rather bijou fashion). During the medieval Warm Period London had a high concentration of vineyards, with more than 100 in the City. The number reduced during the Little Ice Age from the 1350s, so it was rather nice to see this one still there.

We learned of the plagues, particularly that of 1348, of plague death pits (once memorably described by an Italian visitor at the time as resembling a macabre lasagna), of the dog massacre of 1348, and of the Black Death cults. I think we were all most taken by the "live like a king club", which is probably a good way to face impending doom.

And finally, feeling surprisingly chipper after all the gloomy information we had ingested; possibly not that surprising after all that booze, though, we arrived at Queenhithe, where King Alfred came to the City in 886, and had our third wine of the day. Yes, it was red, as you may have suspected.

John Spanner

Stitches in time add up to a really great day out

Seven Saxon Kings, several million stitches, a very special coat of arms and – under the impeccable leadership of The Master – we Arts Scholars had a joyous day of it.

Hidden away at one end of Kingston Market is a delightful church with all sorts of lovely features including (we may be Arts Scholars but we are, after all, only human) a café selling excellent pastries and coffee. It was here we met and our 'inner man' duly set up for a morning delving deep into some spectacular life-sized embroidered panels which celebrated the seven Saxon Kings crowned in Kingston.

The panels – specifically designed for the arches in the church walls – were vibrant with colour and gold thread and shimmering beads. They were created by Jacky Puzey who was there in person to give us a very full lecture. We learned about the history and process involved in making each of the first six, followed by a preview of the magnificent seventh. Who knew you could make the characters speak so eloquently through needlework?



Above: Charles Pineles, right, reunited with his coat of arms at the Royal School of Needlework.

Well, by the end of the morning we all knew.

It should have been enough for anyone, but it turned out to be only the First Act. The Interval was a joy in itself. The Master had arranged for the aforementioned café to supply us with a picnic which we ate as we floated down the Thames to Hampton Court and the Royal School of Needlework, where the Second Act opened.

We were given the warmest of welcomes to a place about which we have all heard but which we can rarely access. The Royal School of Needlework is part of the palace, yet entirely private – a place of quiet and beautiful industry.

A lecture by one of their principal 'stitchers' made the history so accessible and the work so enticing that we were all itching to have a go ourselves. Then we were guided through an exhibition which demonstrated what the needle is capable of, with examples from many periods and cultures. We oohed and aahed our way around it, stunned by the variety of size, design, colour and artistry.

From small domestic pieces created by children to giant framed panels upon which teams of skilled embroiderers had worked for many months, everything was fascinating.

We were, I think it's fair to say, well and truly wowed. But that was nothing to the 'wow' we delivered to our hosts when they discovered that amongst our number was Charles Pineles, whose coat of arms was there, hanging proudly over the whole proceedings as one of their prize exhibits.

Wendy Joseph

Left: Eardred, the fourth of the seven Saxon kings now commemorated in embroidered panels at Kingston All Saints. Eardred was a sickly monarch, reigning for less than a decade (946-955), hence his haggard appearance and the angel of death who lurks over his right shoulder, surrounded by skulls. Despite his short reign this king was severely tested in re-uniting Northumbria with the rest of England. The flames refer to his burning of Ripon Minster on the march north. The figure on the horse is Bishop (later Saint) Dunstan.

CYBER SECURITY

Is healthy scepticism your ultimate online defence?

Following the recent Arts Scholars' Cyber Security webinar, held in collaboration with the Information Technologists, we are sharing some of the highlights of the presentation on keeping yourself and others safe.

Cyber security can feel technical or intimidating, but protecting yourself online does not require expert IT knowledge. In reality, most cybercrime succeeds not because criminals are brilliant hackers, but because they trick people into clicking links, opening attachments, or sharing information through emails, messages, adverts, or fake websites.

Be Vigilant

The biggest risks online usually come from phishing scams, ransomware, weak passwords and oversharing personal information. Attackers often create urgency ("act now"), fear ("your account is at risk"), or tempting offers ("you've won a prize") to push people into making quick decisions. A good rule is simple: if something feels unusual, rushed, or too good to be true, it deserves a second look.

A few everyday habits make a huge difference

- Be cautious with emails by checking who messages are really from and where links might lead before clicking. Check that the URL or sending email address does not look strange.
- Keep your phone, laptop, apps and antivirus software updated, as updates often fix security weaknesses.
- Use strong, different passwords for important accounts, and switch on multi-factor authentication wherever possible for an extra layer of protection.
- Social media also deserves care. Limiting what you share publicly, such as travel plans, location check-ins or personal details, reduces opportunities for fraudsters to impersonate you or target your home and accounts. Be wary of ads, job offers, and deals on social platforms. Scammers often use these channels.

What to do if you are affected

If you think you may have been compromised, act quickly but calmly. Most incidents become more manageable when addressed early.

You should immediately:

- Change Passwords
- Contact Financial providers if necessary
- Contact Service Providers
- Disconnect from the Internet
- Run Anti-Virus / Anti-Malware tools
- Note down all relevant information
- Get specialist help from a recognised IT support person

You should also:

NEW FREEMEN



Left to right: William Agnew, Fiona Fotheringham, Andrew Marsden, Anastasia Tennant and Pamela Campbell-Johnston

William Agnew Art dealer with over 45 years' experience in British and European sculpture and works of art from the Middle Ages to the First World War. Interests include architecture, country houses and gardens, as well as maritime artefacts.

Pamela Campbell-Johnston Art historian with a particular interest in 1920s–30s British domestic architecture and Modern British art. A graduate of the University of St Andrews, she lectures to schools, universities, adult groups and The Arts Society. She also works as an arts consultant and curator.

Fiona Fotheringham Formerly worked in the collectors' department at Christie's South Ken and Edinburgh offices. Her collections include Boscobel oak and Admiral Duncan memorabilia and she co-owns family collections of pipe stoppers and miniature porcelain. Also a holistic therapist. Daughter of Past Master Alastair Leslie.

Andrew Marsden Business and brand strategist with 30 years in the Livery, serving as Sheriff of the City of London in 2022–23. A passionate collector of antique maps, walking canes, antiquities, and natural curiosities.

Anastasia Tennant MBE Arts professional since 2000, specialising in the preservation of national heritage. Began her career as an in-house lawyer at the National Trust, then worked at Christie's as a director. Later senior policy adviser in the museums and cultural property team at the Arts Council.

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- Preserve data / backups
 - Notify the authorities (police, Report Fraud)
 - Contact your insurer

Once you know what is happening:

- Plan how to notify stakeholders and data subjects
- Learn from the incident
- Monitor for repeat attack or further abuse of lost data

While cyber threats are real and constantly evolving, most everyday risks can be greatly reduced through awareness, healthy scepticism, and a few sensible habits.

Cybersecurity is not about being paranoid, it is about building small routines that help protect you, your organisation and the people around you.

Mark Dalrymple

Mark Dalrymple, the distinguished Fine Art Loss Adjuster whose expertise led to the recovery of numerous stolen and missing works of art, passed away on March 20th, aged 72, leaving



behind a remarkable professional legacy and a lasting impact on both the insurance and art worlds.

Mark built a career defined by precision, integrity and a great depth of knowledge in fine art and antiques. He became widely respected for his ability to navigate complex, high-value claims involving theft, damage, and international recovery.

In perhaps his most famous case, Dalrymple represented the insurers of Leonardo da Vinci's *Madonna of the Yarnwinder*. The painting was stolen from Drumlanrig Castle in 2003. He famously announced the "substantial" reward that eventually led to its recovery in 2007 through a police sting operation.

He was also instrumental in the recovery of two Turner paintings (valued at £24m), a Titian (£8m), and works by Goya and a *Portrait of a Gentleman in a Black Hat* (attributed to the circle of Rembrandt), recovered after years missing from a European private collection. Mark's investigative skill, persistence, and extensive network of contacts proved decisive in the return of the works to their rightful owners.

A defining achievement of Mark's career was his role in helping to establish the Council for the Prevention of Art Theft (CoPAT). Recognising the growing threat posed by organised art crime, he worked alongside insurers, law enforcement agencies, and art market professionals to create this collaborative body. His practical experience and insight were instrumental in shaping CoPAT's direction, resulting in the lobbying of parliament to abolish the medieval law of Market Overt (known as the Thieves' Charter) and the introduction of the CoPAT Code of Due Diligence, adopted nationally in 1999.

Beyond his professional practice, Mark was deeply committed to the wider industry. He held active roles in key insurance and fine art organisations, including the RICS Art and Antiques Faculty, contributing his expertise to committees focused on valuation and best practice. He was a founder Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Arts Scholars. With a genuine passion for art history and preservation, he often attended exhibitions supporting emerging artists.

Outside his career, Mark was a bon viveur. Never far from a glass of red wine, he loved to socialise and was always great fun to be with.

He leaves behind a legacy that will continue to influence the field for years to come.

Anne Somers

Nigel Israel

Nigel Israel joined the Arts Scholars in 2008. When he applied, he described himself as a gemmologist and listed his professional qualifications. These made for impressive reading and doubtless ensured a seamless passage into the freedom.

But it was the list of 'clubs and affiliations' that would have stood out most: no fewer than 17, including three other Livery Companies and running

the gamut of the politically respectable (the Carlton Club) through the academically worthy (the London Topographical Society, the Society of Antiquaries and the Society of Jewellery Historians) to the mildly eccentric (the Scotch Malt Whisky Society and the Curiosity Club).

And, not satisfied merely with joining clubs and societies, he founded one of his own: JPH (standing for Jewels, Plate and Horology), which he ran for many years, hosting a daunting array of speakers. Such a list immediately suggests a man who, although highly respected for 'what he did', was a serious polymath too. But wide-ranging interests were just one of his qualities. Others were generosity, eccentricity and sheer joy.

Nigel was extraordinarily generous with his knowledge and with his time. Boundlessly energetic until brought down by his illness, he seldom missed society gatherings and joined endless committees, to which he brought sharp thinking, common sense and practical knowledge, tempered by a wicked sense of humour.

This was partly verbal and partly sartorial. For Nigel had a distinctly eccentric love of regalia. Given half an excuse he would derive great joy from wearing a dress sword to a white tie event and if not entitled to any regalia by virtue of office, would cunningly devise some of his own, in the form of some brooch or jewel that was particularly apposite to the occasion.

Beyond all these qualities, however, the one for which many will remember Nigel best was not so much his eccentricity or his generosity, but the sheer joy he squeezed out of life. For Nigel might fairly be described as a professional bon viveur, one who considered that any day in which a good lunch was not followed by a good dinner (and perhaps an engaging lecture too) was a day wasted. Key to such a lifestyle, of course, was friendship, for these are not things you do alone. And this was a gift that Nigel had in abundance.

He will be deeply missed by an extraordinary number of friends.

Tim Schroder



Annual Banquet

Excellent company, good food and fine wine were only three ingredients that made our banquet on February 2nd a memorable event.

Our guest speaker, Sharon Ament, up-dated us on all that has been happening at the London Museum and gave us a preview of what we can expect to see when it re-opens in the former Smithfield Market complex.

The Lady Mayor, Alderwoman Dame Susan Langley DBE, then presented three awards on behalf of the Arts Scholars. Flt Lt Richard Malia was announced as the best adult leader at the Thames Valley Wing of the Royal Air Force Cadets. Salihah Baig was the best officer cadet from the University of London Officer Training Corps. The annual Mithras Award for lifetime achievement in the decorative arts, went to Hilary Kay (see page 4).



Sharon Ament, Director of the London Museum



Fusun Ruckert, David Ruckert, Flt Lt Richard Malia, Roy Sully



Evelyn Bell, Charlotte Narbeth, Cecilia Narbeth



Sonya Zuckerman, Deborah Black, Georgina Gough



Alexandra Verney, Rebecca Poulet



Miriam Kramer, Alan C. Cook, Susan Bracken



Isabella Corble, Jim Moyes



Alexander Marr



Yexue Li



Viscount Knebworth



Isabella Kent



Luke Macdonald