



# THE ARTS SCHOLAR

ISSUE NO 41 WINTER 2025



Reflections on going Dutch: for an account of our September tour of some of the Netherlands' lesser-known art attractions, see pages 4-5



## THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF ARTS SCHOLARS

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

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## NEWS

### Strengthening our ties



Above: the Master with the Lady Mayoress signing the Armed Forces Covenant.

The annual Livery dinner was held at Pewterers' Hall in the presence of Lady Mayoress, Florence King. Pewterers is the mother company of Art Scholar Wendy Joseph who has recently served two years as their Master. A key element of the evening was the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant, a subject very dear to the Lady Mayoress who is a serving military reservist in the army.

In her year, she has campaigned for support for the Armed Forces Covenant from Livery Companies.

The Arts Scholars support three affiliated military units: the University of London OTC, the Thames Valley Wing Air TC and the Cultural Protection Property Unit. By signing the covenant, we deepen our commitment to our affiliated units and support all the Armed Forces community, ensuring that those who serve, or have served, along with their families, are treated fairly and with respect.

Victoria Wolcough was a hugely popular choice as Liveryman of the Year. The annual award is given to someone who has worked hard, been devoted to the Company and is not a serving member on the Court or a Warden.



Above: Victoria Wolcough.



### Roger Hall LVO

Congratulations to our Chaplain who has been appointed Lieutenant of the Royal Victorian Order by King Charles.

Admitted to the Company alongside the Master in 2010 Victoria has served on the Charity Committee since 2017 and chaired it for the last four years. Additionally she has sat on the Events Committee for six years.

## THE MASTER

### We are building for the future

Unbelievably, I am now more than halfway through my year in this busy role, working with our teams on various projects to really make a difference in my year, as explained below. My blogs will give you a further insight into my life as Master behind the scenes representing the Company as an ambassador.

First of all, as some are already aware, I have been working on my main aim to create a Livery Fund to financially strengthen our Company, and the Court has agreed to my initiative.

While the Company is financially sound, we need further operational resources. Older companies often have historic endowments which provide an additional source of income. As a young company, just 21 years old, we are not in that situation yet.

This will be an endowment fund, the income from which will be wisely used under the ultimate control of the Court, but at an operational level it will be looked after by the Master and Wardens, together with the Clerk. Please see the enclosed letter and donations form, noting that Gift Aid is not applicable. My sincere thanks to those who have already made a donation.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Genevieve Mather who is looking after the appeal.

Here are two examples of our work via our Education committee's projects, which are inspiring primary and secondary school children. Our volunteer members visit schools to engage children with our "Treasure Chest" sessions (see page 8) and our "Interactive Schools and Auction House Day" takes them to an auction house.

Child or not, who wouldn't enjoy opening a chest of curious objects with a story behind each item, or participating in a mock auction. It is essential to introduce youngsters to the arts world



Above: the Master and Wardens with the Clerk and Deputy Master

for their possible future careers. These operational costs are not covered by the Company or the Charitable Trust.

Secondly, as I am simply the caretaker for one year, I am working on team-building with regular wardens' meetings so that we prepare those who will become Master to have a plan, explore new ideas and ensure continuity across the years, rather than opening a new page with every master.

I also value the contribution of all our committee chairs, so I have one-to-one meetings to gain their input in a more personal forum. I would like to thank our Clerk, the Court, the Wardens, all the committee chairs, and those serving on our committees for all their work.

Thirdly, we have now had two successful members' dinner socials (see below), which are proving very popular as informal, relaxed events with no agenda other than to discover more about each other. The next dinner is on January 12th. It is ideal for newer members too.

I hope you feel that our Company is developing and growing in a very positive way, and I will always welcome your suggestions.

**Deborah Charles – Master**

### Food with friends

On an early October evening about two dozen Arts Scholars gathered at Coopers Restaurant in Lincoln's Inn Fields for the second informal supper. What a congenial occasion it was! There was no seating plan, which emphasised the informal nature of the evening, and the time just flew by.

Our Master, Deborah Charles, suggested that anyone who wanted to should stand up and give a very brief account of themselves. Not all of us did it, but it was revealed that quite a few had joined when we were still the Guild of Arts Scholars, Dealers and Collectors. In contrast, one of us had joined at the most recent admissions ceremony.

I cannot wait for the next informal supper. They are most enjoyable.

**Miriam Kramer**



HOLLAND

Beyond Amsterdam  
lies a land of surprises

From the outset, the Arts Scholars’ autumn tour of the Netherlands had been planned as an exploration of some of the lesser-known artistic delights of the country. The Master reasoned that most people would have visited Amsterdam at some time, but might not be so familiar with Haarlem, The Hague, Delft, Rotterdam or Leiden, let alone the Royal Palace at Het Loo or the extraordinary Kröller-Müller Museum in the depths of the Hoge Veluwe national park, midway between Arnhem and Apeldoorn.

Haarlem

And so it was that we enjoyed a constantly changing kaleidoscope of experiences, beginning in Haarlem. On our first morning it was a very short walk down to the banks of the Spaarne River and to the oldest museum in the Netherlands. The Teylers Museum was founded in 1778 as a centre for contemporary art and science and, as we were to find so often on our trip, a relatively modest exterior gave no clues as to the wealth of interest that lay behind.

The entrance hall was spectacular, as was the historic collection of fossils, coins, gems and other wonders that lay beyond. At the centre of the first gallery stood the massive electrostatic generator built for Pieter Teyler by Martin van Marum in 1784. Its shocking potential impressed us just as much as it had Napoleon who made a special visit to see it in 1811.

The afternoon found us on the far side of the city at the Frans Hals Museum, once an alms house for destitute old men and now the home of some spectacular works by one of the country’s most famous artists. However, for some of us the highlight of the visit was Lennox Cato’s impromptu seminar on the furniture and clocks in the less frequented rooms at the far end of the building.

When museum staff gathered round to hear more about the objects in their care we knew we were onto a good thing. Such are the joys of travelling with the Art Scholars.

The Hague

We were fully expecting something special from the Mauristhaus when we visited The Hague next morning. Though he was not with us on our tour, Past Master Paul Viney had already whispered that he considered this privately-formed collection to rank alongside the Frick or the Guggenheim. What is more, we had been primed the previous evening by a lecture in our hotel from art historian Jane Choy.

As a result in almost every room we recognised something familiar and this helped us focus more clearly when faced with so many wonderful works of art. *Vermeer’s Girl with a Pearl Earring* needed no introduction, of course. Indeed it was hard to escape from her enigmatic gaze in every gallery or souvenir shop we visited. But some of us were grateful to be alerted to his equally captivating *View of Delft*, or to the handful of exquisite

Right: relaxing on the boat back from the Huygens House Museum. Far right top: the churchwardens’ room in the Pieterskerk in Leiden. Far right bottom: a hint of the optical illusion created by foreground sand and distant canvas in the Mesdag panorama.



Holbein portraits, or the deeply moving Rembrandt self-portraits, or little masterpieces like Carel Fabritius’s trompe l’oeil of a tame goldfinch, pitted with fragments from the great explosion that not only destroyed a huge part of Delft in 1654, but also killed the artist.

After a taxing morning, I think that most of us approached our afternoon visit to the Mesdag Panorama on automatic pilot. We were totally unprepared for the extraordinary vista that greeted us when we climbed the stairs and gazed on a 360 degree vista which really does make you believe you are on a high sand dune overlooking the sea, beaches and village of Scheveningen in the late 19th century.

The scene is painted on a canvas 14m high and 200 metres in circumference. To create the panorama the celebratd artist Hendrick Mesdag stood on a ladder with his hat fixed by a pin in a frame above. The resulting sketch was scaled up and painted on the huge circular canvas in just a few months by Mesdag himself, assisted by his wife and two friends.

With the foreground masked by some artfully placed sand and flotsam and the atmosphere lifted by excellent lighting and the sound of seagulls, it is almost impossible not to be transported back to late 19th century Scheveningen.

This panorama was the biggest surprise of our trip in every sense and it has to be seen to be believed, so I shall say no more.

By the way, the notoriously tricky correct pronunciation of Scheveningen was used as a shibboleth during the Second World War to trip up potential spies and infiltrators.

Rotterdam

The huge effect of the War on the Dutch was brought home to us when we visited the great port city of Rotterdam, which was all but destroyed by bombing.

On a damp and chilly morning, there was a danger that the historically-minded Arts Scholars might be left cold by the tower blocks of modern Rotterdam. But, as the sun filtered through we began to warm to the exuberance with which the city has embraced contemporary architecture and engineering. Who could not be impressed once inside the over-arching horseshoe of the Markthal? This not only shelters a huge range of traders beneath a Horn of Plenty ceiling decorated with giant fruit and flowers, it also incorporates 228 apartments within the curved roof space and a four-storey car park and supermarket below.

It is another tour de force that has to be seen to be believed, as are the Erasmus Bridge and the extraordinary clusters of bright yellow cube houses designed in the 1980s by Piet Blom.

From the bustle of Rotterdam we were whisked away to the tranquility of the Huygens Hofwijck House, a wonderful rural retreat built by the polymath Constantijn Huygens in the 17th century (see front cover). Having arrived by coach we departed by canal boat (see above) on our way back to our hotel.

Het Loo and Kröller-Müller

Next morning we headed much deeper into the countryside to visit the Royal palace of Het Loo, built in 1685 as a rural retreat for our very own William and Mary. Here the wonderful formal gardens and, indeed, the coach house with many historic carriages and motor cars used by the Dutch royal family right up to the 1960s, proved just as fascinating as the great baroque palace itself.

If we had expected rather more from Het Loo, we were completely unprepared for the art that awaited us at the Kröller-Müller museum. This was another privately-formed collection amassed by Helene Kröller-Müller with the advice of H.P. Bremmer between 1907 and 1935, when it was handed over to



the Dutch state. At the heart of the collection are 90 paintings and 148 drawings by Vincent van Gogh. These alone are worth the visit, as many of them are major works, yet it is hard to pass by equally engaging images from Mondrian, Seurat, Leger, Braque, Picasso, even Cranach.

Next time we will be better prepared.

Leiden

Arriving in Leiden on the final day, our expectations were low. A proposed visit to the Bibliotheca Thysiana had fallen through, but we were in luck. September 14th happened to be Heritage Open Day in the city and many spaces normally closed to the public were open for viewing. The St Pieterskerk, a short

Continued on page 15

# CHARITY NEWS

## Warmth meets warmth at the Awards Lunch...

This year's Awards Lunch was held, as always, on our Charter Day of July 1, and found a large group of us at Watermen's Hall on the hottest day of the whole year. There was no air conditioning, but electric fans had been installed, while many ladies brought their own fans and gents were swiftly invited to doff their coats and ties, all of which produced an informal and very jolly atmosphere.

As things turned out this friendly atmosphere was enhanced by the lack of any official 'headline' speaker (due to the impossibility in these phone-free days of contacting a junior (or any) Government minister to give the main address). Instead, our decision to invite more students to describe what our grants meant to them and their future plans proved to be a great success.

They did us proud, but before they were given the floor, we began with **Rachel Tranter** from the Group on Education in Museums who thanked the Trust warmly for enabling GEM to offer grants to help a number of smaller museums and galleries to develop their education programmes. These have been funded from the final tranche of our 2023 Charitable Auction proceeds, intended inter alia to give children hands-on experience of the decorative arts.

There are now programmes at museums across the UK, for example in Leeds, Bradford, Wales, Oldham and Reading. These include the Cyfarthfa Castle Museum and Art Gallery outreach programme, taking paintings to schools and creating an immersive learning day for all participating pupils.

These grants are all aimed at participating museums providing "impactful hands-on experiences of the fine and decorative arts".

Then it was the turn of the individual recipients of our awards to tell us about their achievements and aspirations.

**Randeep Atwal** (V&A) updated us on her impressive progress in digitising the Wedgwood Archive at Stoke and how her enjoyment of archiving had inspired her to study for a master's degree in archiving, attached to the University of Dundee.

**Emily Rowley**, who is studying and making furniture at West Dean was very much enjoying the course and told us that the (very elegant) side table she had designed was included in the College's Chelsea Flower Show entry.

**Maddie Keates** spoke movingly of how, without the Arts Scholars' help, encouragement and mentoring, she would not have considered taking a master's degree at the University of Sussex. We are delighted that she has also volunteered to help with our intended alumni organisation for past beneficiaries of our awards.

**Rufus Martin**, whom we have sponsored this year through QEST, made a fine impression in his trademark white suit and with his positively Charles II flowing locks. He emphasised his delight at being able to buy good marble and carve the sculpture



Above: Rachel Tranter MBE, director of the Group on Education in Museums, was the first to speak.



Randeep Atwal



Clémence Couriet-Bossan



Emily Rowley



Rufus Martin



Maddie Keates



Yusra Yaqoub

which had featured as a QEST showpiece.

**Clémence Couriet-Bossan** (Warwick) is studying the Parisian art dealer, Georges Petit, who died in 1920 and was a promoter of the Impressionists and a rival to the more famous dealer Durand-Ruel.

**Yusra Yaqoub** is studying Modern History at Goldsmiths College and has recently completed work experience with Kerry Taylor Auctions (fashion). She is now considering a course in antique jewellery.

We were also delighted to receive a number of emails after the lunch emphasising how inspiring the students' testimonies had been and that this is just what our Charitable Trust should be supporting in such remarkably varied fields.

**Hillary Bauer – Chair of the Charitable Trust**

# CHARITY NEWS

## ...and meanwhile our charitable giving goes on

Your Charitable Trust is currently funding around 40 different institutions including 6 universities. Our careful spending of the Trust's income on your behalf is divided between the Charity Committee, with a budget of £35,000 and the Trustees, who directly manage the larger and recurring grants.

Space excludes a full list, but these last include grants to 11 students at 6 different universities, all having good History of Art Departments. These enable the student to travel to visit an archive for research or to present to a conference, which they would otherwise be unable to afford.

Our larger grants go to supporting a curatorial and conservation assistant at the Royal Collection to learn these skills from their huge and varied 'working' collection and for several grants to students at West Dean College, last year learning such varied skills as furniture-making and book-binding.

We also support the Portable Antiquities scheme at the British Museum, a curator at the Museum of London and the V&A archivist at Stoke.

Given the dearth of current arts education in schools, we have been delighted to continue support for Art History Link Up, who provide free art history education classes, especially to students from state schools, as well as the Magic Lantern schools arts programmes giving children opportunities to explore, discuss and bring to life famous works of art.

Smaller grants have gone to:

- Dr Johnson's House for an imaginative, early years learning programme
- a silversmith training bursary at Bishopsland Educational Trust
- support for school children's visits to English Heritage sites
- part funding of the restoration of Turner's largest painting and only Royal commission for The Battle of Trafalgar, 'one of the jewels in the National Maritime Museum's art collection'
- funding a glass research internship at the Stained Glass Museum
- a special case to display Magna Carta at the Society of Antiquaries

We have continued to support our military affiliations and a variety of City charities including Food Harvest, Pollinating London, the Big Curry Lunch and the Lord Mayor's Appeal.

We are most grateful to all members who generously support the Charitable Trust and to all those who serve on the committees, including the investment advisory committee who make sure we are maximising our returns on investment.

And a final note: we have improved our procedures with standardised application forms, receipt forms and post-grant impact assessments. Our auditors are pleased!

**Hillary Bauer – Chair of the Charitable Trust**

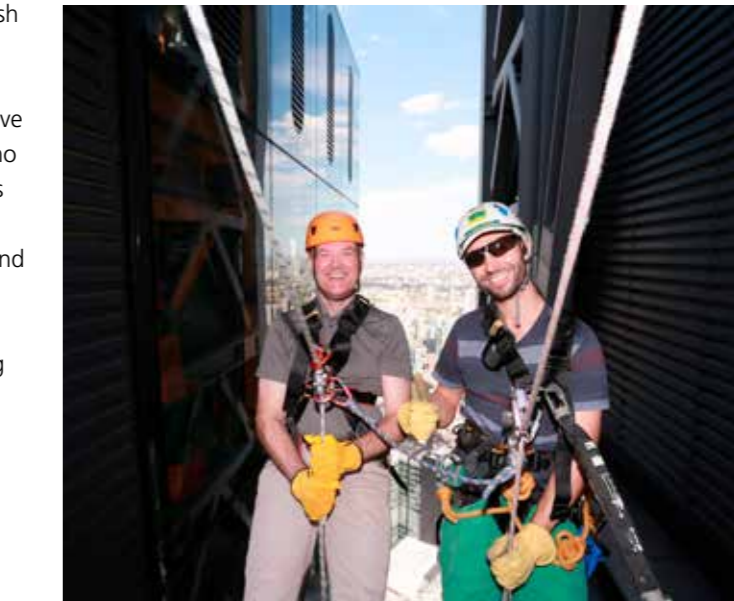
# NEWS

## Guidelines establish Art Scholars' identity

Over the past year the Communications Committee, ably chaired by Anne Somers, has been working hard to create a set of brand identity guidelines to ensure that the Company's communications, internal and external, are both stylish and consistent.

As Master, it was Roy Sully who oversaw this initiative and he explains its purpose very succinctly: "These guidelines are not just about design – they are about respect for our identity, ensuring that every message we share reflects our heritage and the unity of our Company."

The results are in printed and digital form with templates for logos, letterheads, business cards and invitations, as well as guidance on the best way to explain to outsiders the role of the Livery movement and The Arts Scholars' role within it. Anyone communicating on behalf of the Company can get logos and templates from the Communications Committee.



## Is he our Gallant Clerk? Abseilutely!

Earlier this year, The Lord Mayor invited thrill-seekers to abseil for charity 215 metres down The Leadenhall Building, famously known as 'The Cheesegrater'.

Thinking it was a great opportunity, I quickly agreed and began collecting the required £500 to participate. With incredible support from fellow Arts Scholars, not only did I reach my goal, but together we raised £1,770 for the Lord Mayor's Appeal.

The abseil took place on Friday, July 4th and was truly unforgettable. I am sincerely grateful to everyone who contributed and cheered me on that day.

**Alan C. Cook – Clerk**

# TREASURE CHEST

Handling the past means so much to a generation used to experiencing everything on screen



Right: Felicity Marno in the classroom, helping pupils get to grips with the past.

**So far this year we have taken the Treasure Chest Challenge to 25 classes in 11 schools, with more to come. Almost without exception the pupils have been highly engaged and excited to be able to examine these objects which are often windows into a new world for them.**

In late October we went to Leigh Stationers' Academy. Collaborating with another Livery Company's school is very satisfying. Joseph Sparks, the Principal, wrote afterwards, "We are very grateful to the Company of Arts Scholars for giving our pupils this unique experience. The chance to handle real historical artefacts has greatly enriched their understanding of history".

Here are some of the comments we heard from the pupils:

- "It is just beautiful," about a leather-bound book with gilt decoration
- "I almost feel I shouldn't touch it," said in awe about the World War II General Service medal
- "I like these, they are like the pillars on a building," about a pair of neoclassical candlesticks in a photo to compare with the Chest's Victorian brass candlesticks
- "I don't like the smell, is this tea 200 years old?," about the sample of green tea in a Regency tea caddy
- "Was it even bigger than Apple?," about the extent of the East India Company while examining an EIC coin;
- "I have seen this pattern before. My grandma has one!" about a Staffordshire Willow pattern plate c. 1820
- "I would never do that," about voyaging by sail to India or China with the East India Company when it could take two years for a round trip
- "That is my language," said with excitement by a boy from Iraq on seeing the Persian script on the East India Company coin

- "That is even older than my grandmother!" on realising a volume of Kipling's Just So Stories was printed in 1904
- "I am going to be an archaeologist," said with firmness by a boy drawing bones on his imagined family coat of arms, having looked at one on an Elizabethan sixpence
- "Can I buy any of these objects from your Company?"
- "That is very cool," on winding a pocket watch, seeing the wheels of the mechanism turning and hearing the tick
- "I like the Japanese dish as when I am 18 I am going to backpack around Japan."
- "This is better than a museum as we can hold all the objects."
- "I love history and learning about people in other times."
- "Oh, no," on being told to pack up, and, "when are we doing Part 2?"

A wide range of responses, illuminating a wide range of pupils' lives and aspirations.

If anyone would like to become a "Challenger" and be part of the team to take the Chest to schools, no prior knowledge necessary, do please contact me. It is immensely rewarding and we are enriching many children's lives.

**Felicity Marno**



Above: exploring the tea caddy.

# MITHRAS LECTURE

Long before Bake Off and Bish-Bosh, a tavern cook fed Fleet Street's fine diners



Above: after the main course – Marc Meltonville with (left to right) Mary Foster, Mary's guest Roberta Faccio and Shirley Day

An impressive number of members of the Arts Scholars are (not surprisingly) Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries of London, but it was a privilege for many of us lesser mortals to enter that impressive doorway in Burlington House.

All of us were agog with excitement at the thought of hearing about a famous cook from that premier food historian Marc Meltonville: a foodie extraordinaire, whose knowledge of historic cookery is unrivalled. He did not disappoint, and (unusually for lectures) there was a hope that he just would not stop (he is that good).

The Mithras lecture is always a tour de force, as we have an apparently never-ending stream of experts in esoteric subjects, and Marc's enthusiasm and encyclopedic knowledge of his subject gave us a memorable latest in this remarkable series.

Celebrity chefs have been around far longer than one would suspect. We currently have the sweary one, the bish-bosh one, the fish chap, that cake lady, and many others, whose cookery skills are seemingly less important than their personalities, but in the late 18th century we had one of the first of the breed – Richard Briggs, The Tavern Cook – a man who cooked in a number of taverns in the area around Fleet Street.

He was justly famous for being a remarkably good cook, working in small kitchens, over an open fire, with very basic equipment. He was also an early proponent of dining à la Russe (a fixed menu, served as separate courses, as we eat today), rather than the costly à la Française (a massive pick-your-own buffet).

He worked in taverns which had developed, by the 18th century, from places serving wine (not beer) into fine dining establishments, where you would book and eat with your friends, probably in a private room. This was not pub grub, this was serious

food, cooked superbly, and you would have been an affluent and fashionable person indeed to have dined at the Globe Tavern, the Temple Coffee House, or the White Hart Tavern in Holborn (still there, but with a rather less inspiring menu).

The evening ended with the traditional alcoholic reception, and discussion of how cookery methods have become rather simpler today. Briggs's cookery book, *The English Art of Cookery*, is available online, and contains a large number of his favourite dishes, a selection of which are in Marc's *The Tavern Cook*.\*.

Read the recipes and you will understand how time-consuming life was prior to the food mixer. You can even follow Briggs's recipe for toad in the hole (yes, the dish has been around that long), or try to find some skirrets to cook; it is a must for every Arts Scholar's bookshelf – or Christmas stocking.

**John Spanner**

**\*The Tavern Cook: Eighteenth Century Dining through the Recipes of Richard Briggs** by Marc Meltonville, Prospect Books, 256 pages, paperback, ISBN-13: 978-1-909-248-78-6. £17.99



Above left: Mary Spanner and Clive Stewart-Lockhart. Above right: new Freeman Pamela Campbell-Johnston (current Consort to the Grocers) with Roy Sully and Sonya Zuckerman.



# STUDIO VISIT



Above: Katharine Coleman

Describing themselves as the only incubator for craft talent anywhere, the Cockpit Studios in Bloomsbury and Deptford are centres of excellence in contemporary craft, providing studio space for 165 makers.

The Arts Scholars visited the original studio in Cockpit Yard, Holborn on July 8th, a number of the party coming straight on from a tour of the new London Museum site in Smithfield. What makes the Cockpit so special is that apart from providing space for exceedingly talented craftspeople, it provides business coaching to enable them to turn their artistic passion into a going business concern. Total annual sales last year were £6.5 million.

Our tour began with an introduction from David Crump, Head of Business Incubation. One of the first things David has to teach new students at the Cockpit is to ask enough for their work. Only 4% of those who apply for a place at Cockpit are awarded one. If you are producing the best then you must learn to charge accordingly.

Moving on, we visited the studio of Katharine Coleman who had given us such a fascinating presentation on Zoom in January. Awarded an MBE in 2009 for her services to glass engraving, her work is special enough for the V&A to have made a film about it. Widely exhibited in the UK and Europe, USA, New Zealand, China, Japan and Australia, Katharine's work can be seen in many public collections and publications.

From glass we moved to wood and the beautiful carvings of Clunie Fretton. Her dual experience in restoration and fine art enables her to work confidently with both historic objects and recent commissions.

Our final maker was Ute Decker, an internationally acclaimed jeweller whose clients even include the Middle Warden. Ute's work is exhibited internationally and can be seen in public collections including the V&A.

The Cockpit runs open studios twice a year in June and November. I urge you to go!

Roy Sully



Right: Katharine Coleman glassware.

# LINKLATER'S

## This is where art is put up before the law

Linklater's, a major City law firm, occupies a very modern, rather bland building next to the Barbican, with seemingly limitless corridors and meeting rooms. The resulting acreage of wall space is perfect to display the firm's vibrant modern art collection.

Arts Scholar Catherine Shearn is the collection curator and kindly took us on a tour back in February, explaining the ethos and rationale of her acquisitions en route.

We began in reception where Catherine explained that as Linklater's is a law firm the art reflects the company ethos: "intelligent, considered, confident". They are understated and not extravagant.

A large canvas of the City by Carl Laubin dominates the space. A painting by John Virtue in black and white inspired by scenes from the London streets and a steel construction by Anthony Caro complete this introduction to the firm and the collection.

We moved to the 1st floor and were shown a painting by London artist Alexis Harding in black and white immiscible oils and acrylics with a (temporarily) indeterminable mobile surface. Nearby, by contrast, was a brilliantly coloured, rigorously controlled work by John Copnall, part of the London Group. Catherine used these to expound her policy of patronising artists with local studios or connections with the London art scene.

Paintings are hung so that there can be a dialogue between them. At either end of one corridor is a Barbara Hepworth, resonant of Mondrian, while in another space a very different dialogue is created by a pair of muted, subtle grey/blue paintings by Rebecca Salter (Pres. RA) with two exuberantly-coloured abstracts by Albert Irvin RA opposite.

There can also be a dialogue between a work and its particular environment. A drawing by Edward Middleditch RA suggests the patterns of light through foliage and this is duplicated in the adjacent sitting area by the shadows on the floor cast by the tree outside, a dynamic link.

Catherine explained that with such a large collection it is possible to show an artist's development. For example, a large Victor Passmore screenprint of green forms suggests a landscape and has the same dynamic as two earlier and more naturalistic works, each of a tree covered fence.

Linklater's sponsor an annual art prize at East London University and Catherine and another judge create a short list of students' works which are then voted on by the staff and the winning pictures are put on display, actively involving the staff in the collection.

Schools are taken around, a bright, zig-zag Bridget Riley painting being especially popular, and this underlines the broad appeal of the artworks – the collection works on the conceptual, abstract level and also elicits a more immediate visual response. A vibrant environment for the grave practice of the law is created.

With many thanks to Catherine Shearn and Linklater's for a fascinating and eye-opening tour.

Felicity Marno

# THE GARRICK CLUB

## This is a club with a starring role as a major theatrical museum

A fortunate group of Arts Scholars visited the Garrick Club on May 9th, thanks to Paul Viney, former Master, who organised the visit and luncheon. Our knowledgeable guide, Sarah Hughes, led us through a fascinating two-hour tour.

We began with coffee in the Morning Room, surrounded by just a portion of the club's remarkable theatrical collection, considered the most comprehensive of its kind. Among its treasures are portraits of National Gallery quality, manuscripts, documents and artefacts like an 18th century armchair from the Drury Lane Theatre and David Garrick's very own fishing pole.

Founded in 1831 as a gentlemen's club for actors, writers and men of education, the Garrick was originally located on King Street near Covent Garden. The current clubhouse opened in 1864 on Garrick Street.

Named after famed actor David Garrick (1717–1779), the Club houses two companion Zoffany paintings depicting him and his wife in the gardens of their country home, acquired in 2011 through a bequest by member A. A. Milne, author of Winnie the Pooh.

The core of the collection, however, originated with Charles Mathews (1776–1835), a now nearly-forgotten theatre manager and comic actor. Acting aside, it was Mathews' obsession with purchasing all things theatrical, that has kept his reputation alive. An original member, he exhibited his collection at his home in Highgate. It included paintings by Thomas Lawrence, Johan Zoffany and George Clint, as well as works he commissioned himself. Though the Club initially rejected his collection, another member purchased it and donated it. The club has since added to the original 349 works.

We then visited the Irving Room, named after Sir Henry Irving (1838–1905), the first actor knighted for services to the stage. Paintings in this room depict scenes from Shakespeare, including James Archer's *Macbeth* (1875), and portraits of actress Ellen Terry (1847–1928). A notable work by John Collier, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1904), shows Terry with Madge Kendal and Herbert Tree as Falstaff. In real life, these two women could not stand each other, we learned. A portrait of Arthur Bourchier as



Above: *The Temple to Shakespeare at Hampton House with Mr. and Mrs. Garrick*, one of a pair of paintings by Johan Zoffany commissioned by David Garrick in 1762 to depict the grounds of his country house in Hampton. The companion piece is *The Garden at Hampton House with Mr. and Mrs. Garrick taking tea* which shows the actor with his fishing pole. These paintings were purchased in 2011, thanks to a bequest from A.A. Milne (1882-1956), author of Winnie the Pooh and a member of the club.

Long John Silver from *Treasure Island* painted by Gerald Kelly, a member of the Club, also hangs here.

The bar features portraits of both living and historic actors. A recent highlight is Benjamin Sullivan's painting of Damian Lewis, Benedict Cumberbatch and Matthew Macfadyen, depicted informally in the library during lockdown. It cleverly echoes George Clint's *The Clandestine Marriage* (1818), which hangs above the fireplace.

Other notable works include Edward Seago's portrait of Noël Coward, Stuart Pearson Wright's 2005 prize-winning image of Sir Michael Gambon as Falstaff, and Joseph Oppenheimer's 1934 portrait of Constance Cummings, later donated by the actress herself.

Our final stop was the Milne Room, home to John Everett Millais' portrait of Henry Irving and a bronze bust of A. A. Milne by Margot Rouleau-Gallais, complete with Pooh perched behind his shoulder. Dominating the room is David Roberts' dramatic landscape *Remains of the Temple of the Sun at Baalbec* (1847), gifted by the artist.

We concluded with a lovely luncheon and extended heartfelt thanks to Sarah for her expert and engaging tour.

Anne Rogers Haley

# HALL PLACE

## This house of many parts hides secrets well worth the telling

Hall Place, a Grade 1 listed building in Bexley, southeast London, describes itself as “One of the South East’s best kept secrets”. This is a much-overused phrase, but Hall Place must be right up there in the reckoning for those yearning for an oasis in one of London’s suburban spaces. William Morris’s Red House is nearby, adding another justification to Bexley’s claim for historical significance.

While Hall Place gardens are open daily, tours of the house can only be pre-booked.

Enter the Arts Scholars: on a sunny June morning a healthy-sized crew of us was ushered into the Great Hall, the core of the original 1537 construction made with stone from the nearby Lesnes Abbey, which had been closed by Cardinal Wolsey a decade earlier. The merchant and former Lord Mayor of London, Sir John Champneys, commissioned the building and the extent of his original property can be gleaned from the outside structure in the chequered flint and rubble masonry.

As the tour progressed we saw later additions to the house which was extended in the mid-17th century by Tenterden merchant Sir Robert Austen, in whose family’s ownership it remained until the mid-18th century. He had a grand vision but little idea of stylistic continuity when he doubled the size of the house with a wing constructed in red brick with sash windows.

The joy of the stuccoed ceilings in this later elegant extension more than made up for the architectural disconnect.

The estate was willed to the Hogarthian rake Sir Francis Dashwood, founder of the Hellfire Club, whose antics in West Wycombe Park, Buckinghamshire, ensured his notoriety. After his death in 1781 it passed through the family, becoming a school for young gentlemen in 1795.

Maitland Dashwood, grandson of Sir Francis, poured money into the property in the 1870s, putting it on the mains water supply and remodelling the interiors in the historicist fashions of Victorian England, with wood panelling and parquet flooring.

At the end of the visit, we enjoyed hearing about later tenants of the property, including Baron Emile Beaumont d’Erlanger and his Louisiana-born wife Mathilde, a society beauty. Lady Limerick was the last tenant and her mock-Tudor additions can be seen in a 1922 edition of Country Life magazine.

A stint as a US Army’s Signals Corps intercept station during the Second World War is recorded in the on-site museum collections.

A sense of the institutional afterlife in the Post-war period was evident in the feel of Hall Place. While the gardens opened to the public in 1952, the building housed a girls’ school, then Bexley’s Libraries and Museums Services, before Bexley Heritage Trust, which now runs it, successfully campaigned for a £2 million



Hall Place is full of contrasts.  
Above: the elegant 18th century stuccoed ceiling.  
Below: the more homely entrance hall.



Heritage Lottery grant awarded in 2005. The current site reaps the benefits of this money, with a visitor centre, education suite and waterside café.

It does not take much imagination to guess that this was where the Arts Scholars retired for lunch.

Viv Lawes

# THE WYVERN COLLECTION

## Arts Scholars are privileged to be shown such truly great collections

When a group of Art Scholars gathered in west London on a rainy day in late October to view the Wyvern Collection, little did we know what an astonishing treat awaited us.

Behind a modest entrance in a side street lies a collection of mediaeval and renaissance works of art that undoubtedly ranks as one of the greatest in the world. Displayed in ten rooms spread over three floors, some of the items are free-standing, some are attached to the walls, while many are displayed in beautifully-lit cabinets.

We were incredibly fortunate to be shown round by the owner of the collection, whose desire for anonymity we respect, and who, quite remarkably, has put the collection together in just 35 years.

He appeared to have an encyclopaedic knowledge of all the 2,000 objects in the collection as well as a command of world history covering several millennia. His delivery was relaxed yet masterful and his passion for the collection was obvious to see.

In the space of 90 minutes, it was impossible to admire but a fraction of what was on display, just as it is difficult in this article to convey the sheer breadth and depth of the collection.

We saw sculpture, metalwork, enamels and ivories. There was tribal art covering pre-Columbian, Egyptian, Byzantine and Sasanian stonework and silver, with a significant focus on material from the Silk Road. The majority of the collection dates from the 4th millennium BC to the 16th century AD. It is of outstanding quality and in excellent condition.

I could have used almost any of the works of art to illustrate this article but I have chosen an exquisite boxwood devotional tabernacle, c.1510.

The depth, quality and detail of the carving is quite breathtaking.

Several academic books on aspects of the collection written by leading scholars have already been published with more to come. Some pieces from the collection are on loan to major museums such as the Met Cloisters in New York.

The owner is very keen to develop the educational side of the collection and already leading museum curators, researchers,



Above: a miniature devotional tabernacle, probably north Netherlandish, c.1510-30. Boxwood. Courtesy of The Wyvern Collection.

collectors, students and academics from around the world have come to see the collection and attend lectures and seminars.

As Arts Scholars we are very privileged to see some truly great collections and this was undoubtedly such an occasion. For those of us lucky enough to visit the Wyvern Collection, it will live long in the memory.

Paul Viney

# NEW FREEMEN



Above: Hugo Brown, Oliver Coulson, Paul Hill, John Schofield (new liveryman), Matthew Sutherland, Louise Ryder, Marius Nasta.

**Hugo Brown** A museum professional with a working life spent at the National Trust and the National Gallery and a particular interest in the conservation and display of historic buildings and their contents.

**Oliver Coulson** A historian of medieval art and architecture, whose research focuses on the relationship between religious devotion and artistic representation in medieval England. Leader of the Norwich Historic Churches Trust, responsible for conserving and repurposing 18 grade 1 listed churches.

**Paul Hill** Director of the London operation of the Classical Numismatic Group, and has previously worked at Spink & Son, A.H. Baldwin & Sons and Bonhams. A specialist in ancient Greek, Roman and Byzantine coins and their related fields.

**Marius Nasta** A collector of etchings of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, Central Asian and Ottoman textiles and eclectic pieces of Modern Art. A lawyer focusing on entrepreneurial ventures in the real estate, business advisory and litigation funding sectors.

**Matthew Sutherland.** A former equity researcher with 10 years in the City and 20 years in Asia, now pursuing interests in the arts. He has a BA and two MAs in art historical subjects and is training to become a Blue Badge tour guide.

**Louise Ryder** A specialist recruiter with a long-standing interest in history, the arts and architecture and an active voluntary/extra-curricular life including 15 years at Highgate Cemetery as a volunteer tour guide.



## Turner corner

As mentioned in the Charity News report on page 7, the Arts Scholars have contributed to the restoration of Turner's monumental *Battle of Trafalgar*. Our funds have helped to repair the frame that surrounds the 8ft 6in x 12ft canvas.

# CAPTION COMPETITION



Following the visit to H Forman & Sons earlier in the year, our hosts generously offered a prize for the best caption to the photo above that captured our group during the visit.

This was the judges' shortlist:

- “Are you sure it needs all of us to take part in the sprinkler system test?”
- Frankly I think our precautions are now overdone for Fish and Chips lunches
- “Are you sure that it is the same costume for both liverymen and freemen?”

**But the winner is:**

- ‘Is it really a good idea to make the next Livery Medal out of plutonium?’

Sam Moorhead wins a trip to Formans with a guided tour and lunch.

## Another little diversion

Delays and diversions are part of everyday life at the moment, but how would you have reacted to the very special directions encountered recently in deepest Kent?

Your captions please. All entries must be sent to Simon Berti by January 31st: bertissimo@live.co.uk. This time there is a bottle of the finest English sparkling wine on offer to the winner.



# IN MEMORIAM

## Richard Gold

Richard Gold, who has died aged 76, must be ranked as one of the earliest members of our Company. He appears as number 27 in the ledger and his application, dated July 24th 2004, was to the then putative Guild of Historic Arts Practitioners.

In his professional life, Richard epitomised the gentleman auctioneer, always impeccably dressed and never without a buttonhole on sale days.

He started work as a porter, or in his words, “behind the green baize door”, at Christie’s. He went on to work under the renowned Leslie Weller at King and Chasemore in Pulborough, West Sussex where he honed his skills.

He joined Lawrences of Crewkerne in the early 1980s and went on to become a co-owner and director.

After leaving Lawrences, Richard was persuaded to join Duke’s of Dorchester. He was a key member of the team and his extensive knowledge and sense of humour made him popular with colleagues and clients alike.

Richard was proud to be a liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Art Scholars and remained active in the Society of Fine Art Auctioneers.



## Going Dutch

Continued from page 5

step from the botanical gardens where we began our visit, was a surprise in itself. Deconsecrated in 1971, this cathedral-like space is now a centre for concerts and other activities. We were amazed to find children happily swooping in a great arc on a swing suspended from the vault of the nave 100ft above them.

For us, though, the great attraction was signing first on the list for a rare visit to the Church Wardens’ room, a 17th century gem unchanged since the 1740s and complete with original leather wallpaper and heraldic painted ceiling, not to mention the wonderful Baroque glass cabinet and the little staircase in the wall leading down to the wardens’ very own wine cellar.

As we headed for the airport at the end of the day there was time to reflect on all that we had seen and realise that, as always, such experiences seem much richer in the company of lively and enthusiastic Arts Scholars.

Mark Bridge



One of the pillar-biting pious hypocrites we came across in St Bavo’s church, Haarlem

## Graham Jackman

Graham Arthur Jackman, who died in June aged 77, joined our Company in 2013 with a considerable City pedigree as a former Master of the Butchers and a member of both the Farmers and the Poulterers.

He was a larger than life character, becoming a Liveryman of the Arts Scholars and bringing his joie de vivre to any reception.

He was educated at St John’s, Leatherhead and attended the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester before becoming the third generation to join the family firm James Fortescue at Smithfield. He was widely respected in the poultry industry.

Outside the City, Graham was a racehorse owner and a collector of 18th and 19th century paintings, but his greatest claim to fame was as an international full-bore rifle shooter. He was President of the British Commonwealth Rifle Club and captain of a successful Great Britain team that toured the West Indies in 1986.



## Barbara Hall

I am privileged to be able to record my friendship with Barbara Hall whose husband, Canon Roger Hall, is Chaplain to our Company.

Barbara grew up in County Durham where she met Roger at school. Leaving school, Barbara began her nurse training at the RVI Newcastle in 1972. In addition to her SRN she was one of the first to get a nursing diploma and become a health visitor. In 1976 she moved to London to Queen Charlotte’s Hospital, qualifying as a midwife.

Roger and Barbara were married in 1978 and in 1987 Roger became an army chaplain. Barbara was able to use her qualifications to great effect during his many postings around the world which included Northern Ireland at the height of the troubles where she chose to work in Lurgan, at risk to herself on many occasions.

In 2007 Roger was appointed Chaplain to the Tower of London and The Queen. Barbara found work as senior practice nurse on the Isle of Dogs qualifying as a prescriber principally responsible for women’s health.

Despite having retired in early 2020, when Covid arrived, Barbara came back and worked throughout the pandemic, finally retiring in 2022. Diagnosed with cancer in April 2023 she sadly died in February this year, leaving Roger, three children and six grandchildren. She was a dear, kind friend to so many and will be hugely missed by all who were fortunate enough to know her.

Elizabeth Mellows





## Fragments of history from the shoreline

**T**housands of years of life, culture and trade on the Thames mean the London foreshore is rich in the detritus of its history. On two days at the end of August, Arts Scholars treasure seekers set out under the knowledgeable guidance of Stuart Wyatt of the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

The first group combed the shoreline around the Millennium Bridge in the environs of the Roman city. The second were at Wapping, former site of Execution Dock where pirates were strung up for three tides to discourage others.

The shoreline ranges mainly from gravel to large water-smoothed pebbles in a variety of hues, so it is seemingly impossible to discern any small objects. However cries of excitement were soon heard and small artefacts were presented to Stuart for identification.

On Friday the most exciting find was part of a German Frechen stoneware jug c. 1550-1650, with the letters CHTV AR. Stuart has been able to complete the

motto which in full translates as To be poor and pious is my wealth, not altogether a 21st century ideal.

On Saturday the neck of a 17th century wine bottle was found, still with its stopper, indicating a frustrated drinker as it must have been broken before being opened. Pottery was plentiful, including part of the base and leg of a medieval pipkin. Most of the ceramics were Victorian with the Willow Pattern ubiquitous.

Everywhere there are connections with the lives of Londoners. Leather soles of 18th century shoes with the holes for stitches miraculously extant, hint at a cobbler discarding his seconds into the river, areas of clay pipes suggest convivial times in a coffee house or pub, accumulations of iron ship nails are testament to maritime trade, from small river hoys to merchantmen trading with China. In fact lumps of coral are common and some came from the Pacific as ships used it for their lading in the 18th century.

Welcome pints and lunches were taken. On the Saturday we adjourned to The Captain Kidd. Although no item had belonged to a pirate, we were thrilled with the modest treasures we had discovered.

To complete the mudlarking experience,



Above: the Saturday Mudlarkers at Wapping  
Left: a sherd from a Frechan stoneware jug, c.1550-1650

on November 4th an Arts Scholars group went to the London Museum at Docklands to see the "Secrets of the Thames" exhibition. Its main aim is to make Londoners more aware of the often hidden wealth of history of their city.

To whet our appetites we had a handling session of pieces often found on the foreshore. We then went into the exhibition of items which had been found, mainly by mudlarkers who are the new volunteer archaeological army for the museum. The range was extraordinary – from a glass eye to a Roman sword, ancient flints to mediaeval rings, even some printer's type which had been jettisoned from Hammersmith Bridge so no one could use it again (but they did).

The commentaries on the objects by Stuart Wyatt and Kate Sumnall were both illuminating and exciting and made us want to rush back to the shoreline.

With many thanks to Georgie Gough and Stuart Wyatt.

**Felicity Marno**