



# THE ARTS SCHOLAR

ISSUE NO 40 **SUMMER 2025**



**Six million bricks:** Battersea Power Station made a huge impression on John Spanner. See page 12.  
*(And don't miss the caption competition on page 14)*





## THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF ARTS SCHOLARS

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Deadline for next edition – November 30th

## NEWS

### The new Livery Fund

The idea of a “Livery Fund” has been mooted over the years but has now been approved by the Court. This is totally separate from the Charitable Trust Fund and is intended for the Company and its members. It will take some years for this fund to accumulate.

#### What is it for?

- To support, in the long term, the core activities of the Company.
1. Company events – To benefit members, subsidising the cost of hall hire and events ticket prices in time.
  2. The Company future. We cannot stand still and need new goals, including the ongoing attraction of new members.
  3. Our core financial resources, to provide and sustain all our activities and purposes.

#### How are funds to be raised?

1. We are starting with a bequest from a former member.
2. Donations from members.
3. Fundraising as a company or by individuals.
4. Legacies – specified in wills for the Worshipful Company of Arts Scholars rather than the Charity.

Please contact the Clerk for further details

### The Mithras Award



Above: Sir Paul and Lady Jill Ruddock were presented with the annual Mithras Award by Lt Col Nana Twumasi-Ankrah MVO.

At the Banquet in February we were delighted to present the Mithras Award for this year jointly to Sir Paul and Lady Jill Ruddock to acknowledge their exceptional contribution to the historic and decorative arts in the United Kingdom, and indeed worldwide.

Their sponsorship of the Renaissance and Medieval Galleries at the Victoria and Albert Museum, and of the Medieval and Sutton Hoo Galleries and at the British Museum, is widely known. Sir Paul was Chairman of the V & A from 2007 to 2015. He has also been a Trustee of the British Museum and is a Trustee of the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Sir Paul has formed an important collection of medieval and ancient sculpture, artefacts and tribal art at the Wyvern Research Institute, while Lady Jill Shaw Ruddock has done much to sponsor and encourage the world of theatre and collects contemporary ceramics.

Both are highly qualified to be linked with our Company and it is very much hoped that we shall be able to work together in the future.

**Christopher Claxton Stevens**

## NEWS

### A river runs through it and I relish my year at the helm

HISTORICALLY, I am perhaps not the most conventional image of a Master of a City of London Livery Company. But this is a diverse, forward looking company of talents, knowledge and expertise, and I am truly honoured and proud to be Master, and only the second lady Master since we gained Livery status in 2014 .

My background is in travel and tourism, but more importantly in our culture and heritage, having run my own business as a London Blue Badge Tourist Guide since 2000.

On leaving school I worked in the City, in the Commodity markets and in Lloyds of London, before escaping to live and work overseas. Over the years I have so enjoyed guiding, mainly Americans, around the City of London, and explaining its uniqueness, so it is an honour to now play my part from within.

I am a keen rower and when I'm not in the City, you might see me “skiffing” (not skipping) down on the River Thames. By the way, you will be able to enjoy a big River Pageant on September 6th, organised by my Consort, Malcolm Knight, to celebrate the 1100th anniversary of the coronation of our Saxon King Athelstan in my home town, Kingston Upon Thames.

I was invited into the Arts Scholars 15 years ago, under our membership category of Arts Related Services. Within the Company, I worked on our Events Committee for 13 years, joined the Court in 2016, and stepped onto the first rung of the Warden's ladder in 2022, so I do feel I have completed my apprenticeship!

I am looking forward to working with our team of Wardens, John Benjamin, Sonya Zuckerman and Mary Foster, as well as our



ever-efficient Clerk, Alan C. Cook, the Court and the committees. The aims for my year, are to strengthen our thriving, increasingly well-respected Company, with bonds of friendship, having active and engaged members.

Additionally, I aim to sustain our Company longevity and ethos. Key to this will be the launch of the new Livery Fund which is intended to benefit members and our internal activities and will be quite separate from the Charitable Trust.

The financial aims of this new fund are briefly outlined on the facing page.

With my Consort Malcolm Knight, I very much look forward to meeting you all over the next year, at our various events and occasions. Please always feel free to contact me – [wcasdeborahc@gmail.com](mailto:wcasdeborahc@gmail.com).

With my very best wishes

**Deborah Charles – Master**



The Education Committee had its 50th meeting last February, so at the end they toasted its success and raised a glass to the next 50 meetings. Left to right: Viv Lawes, Tom Edwards, Georgina Gough, Deborah Charles, Roy Sully, Felicity Marno, Tom Christopherson, Catherine Shearn, Roger Massey, Cynthia Coleman Sparke and John Benjamin. For news of their practical support for education see pages 4 and 8-10.





Above: the Master in the classroom.

# Our Treasure Chest continues to enthrall...

The Treasure Chest Challenge is gaining momentum and we have had a busy year. By the time you read this, over 500 pupils will have handled, studied and learned about the wide range of objects in the chest.

There has been no clear favourite object. Many pupils love the tea caddies and how they were used, even smelling the different teas in the compartments. Others love the Japanese Imari dish with its bright colours and Oriental symbolism. Some are fascinated by the Elizabethan sixpence, and coincidentally learning about the Tudors and Royal crests.

The schools study World War II and being able to examine two different World War II medals through magnifying glasses is thrilling for the pupils, and provides a vivid connection with the people and events which they learn about in the classroom.

One boy, when he realised the copy of The Jungle Book he was holding was printed in 1903 remarked with awe: "It's over 100 years old. It is even older than my granny." His comment when he held the Roman oil lamp is unrecorded.

The teachers have all remarked on the level of engagement of the pupils, and their excitement at being able to handle pieces beyond their everyday experience is palpable. Several children have said that it was better than a museum as you could pick up the pieces and really look at them.

With the arts under so much threat in the educational and cultural spheres, projects such as this which open a window for children are highly important. Thank you to the Arts Scholars who have helped. Circulating objects around 32 pupils all desperate to have studied everything available in the session and answering their questions is hectic, if exhilarating.

If you would also like to help, please do contact me.

Felicity Marno

# 2025 Red Cross Market

The biennial market is looming once more, to be held at Guildhall on Monday 8th December (5 to 9pm) and Tuesday 9th December (10.30am to 7pm). Please put the dates in your diary.

The Arts Scholars will again be joining some twenty other livery companies and a host of professional stalls in selling what we do best – antiques and collectables – to raise funds for the Red Cross.

We are happy to collect small items for sale at any time, and if you would be prepared to join the rota for manning our stand in the Old Library, please do contact me. Thank you.

Christopher Claxton Stevens  
c.claxtonstevens@normanadams.com

# ...and even the older kids find our treasures cool

In early February the Livery Schools Link, which is dedicated to bringing City Livery companies and schools together, held their annual Livery Careers Showcase in the Guildhall. This is a major opportunity for the livery companies to meet a large number of primary and secondary pupils, 3000+ over two days, and expound upon the careers available in their fields.

This year, for the first time, the Arts Scholars participated. To entice the pupils to the stand and provide a gateway to a dialogue with them, we had a rather "Antiques Road Show" (or Treasure Chest) look with a wide range of objects on display, from a bronze of David after Verocchio, to an ex-shipwreck pottery chamberpot, via a Brighton Bun (a travelling candlestick) and a silver pig propelling pencil. This gave us plenty to help us engage with the pupils, which could then develop into a discussion of the possible careers open to them in the historic and decorative arts.

Some of the pupils were very direct, one smartly dressed student asked, "Can I make a lot of money in the Arts World?" while most were more interested in the scope of careers available, a subject of which they had no inkling prior to the event.

All we spoke to were intrigued by the objects. "Very cool" was the response heard several times, perhaps seeds for future interest.

Felicity Marno



# Each tide reveals more of London's deepest secrets

The popularity of mudlarking continues to grow, although the number of licences issued by the Port of London Authority has decreased slightly to around 4000. The public appetite for mudlarking led the London Museum and curator Kate Sumnall to develop the exhibition 'Secrets of the Thames: Mudlarking London's lost treasures' which is on at the Docklands museum until next March.

This is the first major exhibition on mudlarking. It features over 350 mudlarked objects and allows you to 'Step into the shoes of a mudlark'. The exhibition is a blending of archaeology with contemporary art and digital experiences, offering fresh perspectives on London and all its people, past and present.

It was an honour to welcome the Master and the Art Scholars as well as members of the Worshipful Company of Plumbers to a guided tour of the 'Secrets of the Thames' exhibition, it was lovely to catch up with many of you and I would like to thank the Company for your continued support, enabling me to extend the legacy of Geoff Egan and keep recording the wonderful treasures of London's past. I look forward to seeing some of you in your wellies down on the foreshore in the Autumn for a guided walk.

The fields and foreshore continue to produce some interesting and unique survivors, which are now recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database (PAS).

Treasure cases continue to emerge from the Thames mud. A Post Medieval gold finger ring with a purple stone dating from 1500-1600. This ring was found during the run up to the exhibition and was included in the poster, above. Unfortunately, it could not be included in the exhibition as it is currently working its way through the treasure process, but it does demonstrate that wonderful artefacts are still emerging at every tide.

A Roman copper alloy finger ring with a bust of a male wearing a radiate crown was also recovered from the City foreshore, the bust on the ring may represent the late Roman sun god, Sol Invictus "Invincible Sun". Another possible Roman find was a bell from Greenwich. It is decorated with incised design of animals running, a goat, a hare and a bear, at present this is undergoing further investigation as it may be the first of its type.

Just over 900 finds were recorded by me in 2024 and at the time of writing another 350 finds have been added in 2025.

Stuart Wyatt – Finds Liaison Officer for PAS



Left: Modern finds are not normally recorded on the PAS but some objects do make it, like this Great War 'On War Service' badge. They were issued by the Admiralty from December 1914 onwards to signify that the wearer was engaged in essential war work in shipyards and related employment.



Above: a moulded male bust from a colour-coated vessel probably from a cantharos made in Trier in the 3rd century AD. Similar examples were excavated near Trier in 1934 and were associated with the cult of Mithras. This is a very rare form, however another more complete cantharos was also found in the same area of the foreshore and is now on display in the exhibition.

# Yes, this really was written by a robot

Alan Freedland's January 27 Zoom presentation "AI for Art Scholars," only used AI for the images. This summary of the presentation was produced by ChatGPT and highlights the transformative potential of AI while addressing its societal impact and practical applications. It compares AI to the ancient Oracle at Delphi, underscoring humanity's aspiration for all-knowing tools, yet stresses the limitations of AI's human-derived knowledge. The presentation categorises AI systems into traditional programming, classic AI, and generative AI, showcasing their progression from rule-based logic to pattern recognition and creative outputs.

The societal implications of AI are profound, ranging from advancements in healthcare and education to challenges like misinformation and surveillance. Generative AI's ability to create new content, such as text, images, and music, is likened to the myth of Echo and Narcissus, reflecting human knowledge and biases. This underscores the importance of critically evaluating AI outputs and understanding their digital grounding.

For Art Scholars, AI offers tools like pattern-matching software to assess artwork authenticity, exemplified by debates on the de Brecy Tondo's attribution to Raphael. The presentation emphasises how AI can enhance tasks like summarising documents or analysing curated datasets, transforming workflows in academia and beyond.

To get the best from an AI Chatbot, Alan encouraged users to provide detailed context, engage in dialogue, and critically assess results. This approach positions AI as a valuable assistant, fostering innovation while remaining mindful of its limitations and ethical considerations. The presentation underscores that, when used thoughtfully, AI can enrich scholarly pursuits.



Independent museums have reaped benefit from our post-Covid grants

Memories of Covid have thankfully receded but members will recall that Trustees decided right after lockdown to try and alleviate the effects of the pandemic on some of the smaller organisations in the areas we support.

We worked with AIM – the Association of Independent Museums, asking them to choose the best way to allocate £150,000 over three years to support the smaller museums that had not qualified for any other kind of support.

This was money that we took from capital, bearing in mind that during Covid we had been unable to allocate as many grants as in normal years. This grant has now come to an end and we are delighted to report that AIM were able to select from a huge response

AIM have again emphasised that, during the Covid pandemic which was a time of great difficulty and uncertainty for the cultural sector, the partnership between the Arts Scholars Trust and AIM provided a valuable lifeline for smaller museums in the independent sector that have fine and decorative art collections. It allowed AIM’s smaller members to apply for funding to meet their individual needs as they emerged from the pandemic.

In the second and third year, the scheme was revised to be reactive to the cost of living crisis following the pandemic.

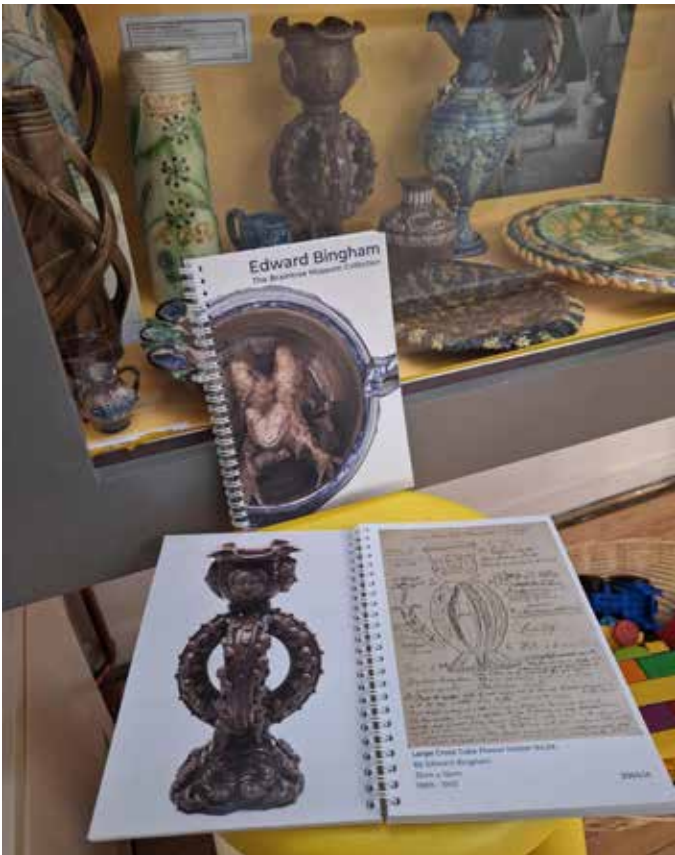
In all, 25 projects were funded between 2022 and 2024, enabling the recipients to protect, preserve, digitise, and display, historic and decorative art collections. These helped the various organisations to build new audiences, create new income streams, protect collections, and provide new learning and engagement opportunities.

The 15 projects funded in years 2 and 3 of the grant focussed on collections care and upskilling for staff and volunteer teams as well as improving display and storage conditions.

- They included:
- helping Nantgarw China Works museum with digitisation
  - improvements to a public area to allow appropriate displays at the Frogmore Paper Mill
  - training and provision for emergencies at Dulwich Picture Gallery
  - purchase of suitable storage at Elizabeth Gaskell’s House
  - reduction of Lux and UV light levels at St Ives
  - a project to prepare childrenswear for display to attract younger audiences at the Silk Museum.

Braintree museum have told us that the “...grant has allowed us to research, interpret and digitise a large and significant part of our ceramics collection benefiting new and ongoing displays, access, storage, and interpretation. Putting them into place improved access for future exhibitions, education and content and product development.”

Hilary Bauer – Chair of Trustees



Above: among those to benefit from post-Covid grants was the Braintree Museum which showcases the work of local potter Edward Bingham.

Our auction funds bring art into education

Arts Scholars will recall that the agreed purposes for the funds raised at the splendid auction in late 2023 included: “...enriching the cultural lives of pupils in both secondary and primary schools by enabling them to experience at first hand works of fine and decorative arts...”

This is well underway through the Treasure Chests initiative being rolled out to secondary schools, see page 4. In addition, the Charitable Trust has now partnered with GEM, the Group on Education in Museums to administer a total of nine grants from the £40,950 total grant fund to enable smaller museums and heritage organisations across the UK to support learning projects inspired by fine, decorative and applied art collections. Each of these has a turnover of less than £300,000 and will receive up to £4,500, payable in three annual instalments.

The funded projects span a wide range of artistic disciplines including painting, sculpture, drawing, design, ceramics, textiles and metalwork, reflecting the rich diversity of fine and decorative arts collections across the UK.

- The successful organisations include:
- Haworth Art Gallery in Accrington, which has a rich history in

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Art Deco – celebrating the anniversary in style

The Eva Weininger evening on April 10th, an anthology dedicated to Art Deco, was held at Pewterers’ Hall. A full house of around 90 was welcomed by Renter Warden Sonya Zuckerman and five expert and erudite speakers spoke with great knowledge and humour about the effect of Art Deco style on their chosen fields.

The evening commemorated the centenary of the 1925 ‘Exposition International Des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes’, and the publication of The Great Gatsby.

The Paris Exposition, organised by the French government to highlight French design and manufacture, ran for seven months and attracted an extraordinary 16 million visitors. It housed 15,000 exhibitors from 20 countries, excluding Germany and the USA. Clive Stewart-Lockhart informed us that Herbert Hoover stated that there was “no modern art in America” and thus they did not attend. That did not prevent them from adopting the style with panache, most memorably with the iconic Chrysler Building in New York.

Joanna Hardy spoke eloquently and entertainingly, as did all speakers, about the changing place of women in post-World War One Europe and the attendant liberating change in fashion: gone were corsets and stifling Victorian formality, in came shorter, looser dresses, more exposed flesh and bob haircuts. This stimulated a profound change in jewellery design and fashion, which become innovative and forward looking, embracing the Moderne, the Jazz Age and the Machine Age whilst taking inspiration from Egypt (post Tutankhamun), the near and Far East and the Aztecs. This was memorably described by Joanna as “speed dating jewellery”.

Richard Barclay reminded the Company that during this period posters were the pre-eminent form of advertising for a wide range of items, catering for a middle class with leisure time,

Continued from facing page

textile innovation and will help young people to learn about their local heritage through the related collection. They will also study dye plants and enjoy workshops on printing and dyeing.

- Cyfarthfa Castle Museum and Art Gallery which aims to offer pupils in Merthyr Tydfil an immersive learning experience with original artworks in their own schools.
- Dr Jenner House, where Dr Edward Jenner discovered vaccination in 1796, is exploring how the arts can help communicate the science of vaccination.
- Reading University Art Collection which will bring new life to the University’s underused Old Master drawings collections by appointing an Artist in Residence, who will lead drawing-based workshops to help pupils engage with original artworks, develop key skills and learn about art history. They will also highlight creative career pathways.



Above: the Eva Weininger anthology speakers. Left to right: Joanna Hardy, Clive Stewart-Lockhart, Wynyard Wilkinson, The Master, Sonya Zuckerman, Richard Barclay, Robert Myers.

including railways, beach resorts, ocean liners, razor blades, motor oil and new-fangled airliners. They were again forward-looking and innovative with clean lines and striking images, described by Richard as “minimum design for maximum effect”. He also reminded us that a flight from Croydon International Airfield to Cape Town took seven days, in noisy but luxurious aeroplanes.

Wynyard Wilkinson and Clive Stewart-Lockhart spoke passionately about silver and furniture respectively. They were united in their humorous dismissal of the British response to Art Deco, which ranged from unenthusiastic to a complete lack of understanding. Both produced numerous examples of pieces made in Britain post 1925, which were clunky pastiches, rather than futuristic and imaginative.

Robert Myers explained how the Shelley ceramics company briefly transformed their style from traditional Victoriana to classic Art Deco angularity. However, in keeping with the British response to innovative design, within ten years they had reverted to tradition.

The evening closed with a typically convivial drinks reception.

Guy Schooling

- Quaker Tapestry Museum which aims to establish a permanent textile art workshop for schools and will introduce pupils to the global Community Embroidery Project and help them to design and stitch their own samplers.

- The other recipients are:
- MonLife Heritage Learning
  - Gallery Oldham
  - Temple Newsam House
  - Bradford Museums & Galleries

The final tranche of the auction funds allocated to the Charitable Trust was to “... provide assistance to students who want to make a career in these sectors but are struggling financially or need other support.” The small remaining balance was allocated for a new bursary at West Dean College of Arts and Crafts.

Hilary Bauer – Chair of Trustees



# OUR STUDENTS

**The Arts Scholars’ Charitable Trust now supports the research of many students at universities across the UK.**

**On these two pages and overleaf students report back on how they have benefited from their awards.**

## Mandatory Palestine

Last year I had the pleasure and honour of receiving the Arts Scholars Travel Award to support a research trip to London and Cambridge. As a fourth-year doctoral candidate at the School of Art History at the University of St Andrews I am at the final stages of writing up.



My research focuses on inter-war modern art in Britain and Mandatory Palestine. It examines the connection between modern art in the 1920s and 1930s and the concept of freedom and liberty, arguing that artists at the time supported artistic freedom due to their support of other types of human freedoms.

The generous award allowed me to travel to London and Cambridge last spring, where I spent two weeks visiting archives. In London, I visited the Whitechapel Gallery archive, the Tate Archive and the National Archives. In Cambridge, I visited the special collections in Pembroke College and King’s College. I consulted plenty of primary sources about the cultural policies of the government in Mandatory Palestine, personal documents of British officials that engaged with art and culture, and information about artist David Bomberg, who worked in Palestine between 1923 and 1927.

These sources were crucial for writing the fourth chapter of my dissertation, which explores British cultural policies and their involvement in Mandatory Palestine’s art scene. I’m also working on an article about David Bomberg based on the materials I found during this research trip.

**Hemdat Kislev**



## Mermaids and Sirens

My PhD project explores androgynous depictions of mermaids and sirens in Victorian art, assessing how these mythical creatures became popular symbols of rebellion against societal gender roles in the 19th century. I focus on three Pre-Raphaelite artists – Edward Burne-Jones, Evelyn De Morgan and John William Waterhouse. I have discovered that personal relationships, spiritualist or occultist movements, the suffrage movement and the venereal disease crisis all contributed to their mermaid/siren paintings, as well as source texts such as Homer’s Odyssey and Hans Christian Andersen’s Little Mermaid.

A grant from the Arts Scholars allowed me to visit the Wolfson Centre in Birmingham for sketches and documents pertaining to Edward Burne-Jones, and two Pre-Raphaelite art collections in Oxfordshire (Buscot Park and Kelmscott Manor). These contributed to the Burne-Jones chapter of my thesis, as well as an article on the relationship between Burne-Jones and Rossetti recently published in Victoriographies (Edinburgh University Press).

**Cecilia Rose – Exeter**



## Carpaccio’s altarpieces

Vittore Carpaccio, a Renaissance artist from Venice, is renowned for his narrative cycles, most famously for his depiction of the life of St. Ursula in Galleria dell’Accademia.

My PhD research explores Carpaccio’s altarpieces, examining how he employed these works to inspire devotion that went far beyond reflecting the dedication of the altar. Through these works, Carpaccio addressed church doctrines, theological debates, and socio-political issues. I explore the strategies Carpaccio used to foster piety and the ways in which he strived to create a closer connection between humanity and God by engaging both the imagination and intellect of viewers.

Seeing Carpaccio’s work and that of his contemporaries first hand is crucial, as is access to the libraries and archives of Venice. I am grateful to The Arts Scholars for their generous donation, which has made this possible.

**Letitia Clulow - Warwick**

## Bones

Bioarchaeological research has highlighted the importance of studying mother-infant relationships. Studies suggest that the first 1000 days after conception can influence long-term health, longevity and genetic markers as the developing body responds to the environment and makes predictive adaptations.

My research analyses the skeletons of non-adults and adult females from Iron Age and Romano-British sites (4th century BCE to 4th century CE), a transition in Britain from regional Iron Age societies to a Roman province. This time of cultural and socioeconomic upheaval is ideal to view the long-term health impact of a major stress event.

I attended two amazing conferences in America, of the Palaeopathology Association and American Association of Biological Anthropology. I feel I got a great deal of career progression by meeting other experts in my field. I also won an award for best student presentation, above. I am very grateful to the Company of Arts Scholars for the funding.

**Rebecca Pitt - Reading**

## Selene and Endymion

As a recipient of the Art Scholars MA award, I am currently researching the artistic representations of the myth of Selene and Endymion coming out of France in the late 18th century. I am carrying out this research with a particular focus upon Anne-Louis Girodet de Roussy-Trioson’s interpretation, The Sleep of Endymion, from 1791.

Through the exploration of this painting’s representation of Endymion, Selene, and Eros I aim to investigate Girodet’s understanding of gender, sexuality, light and the psychology of sleep, all within the context of the French revolution. Girodet’s interpretation is of particular interest to me for its unfigured representation of Selene as moonlight and its eroticised and androgynous Endymion.

I am extremely grateful for this award and it has allowed me to put all my focus into completing my degree.

**Beth Pike – York**



## Film Colour

In the collective imagination, colour is often regarded simply as the property of objects and their surfaces, yet some of the most beautiful coloured phenomena – such as the boundless blue of the sky – do not even possess a surface. This kind of colour, often referred to as film colour, is the focus of my research.

Throughout my thesis, I address the ways in which a wide range of painters, from William Turner and Claude Monet to the contemporaries Martin Weinstein and Davide Battistin, have reproduced this particular kind of colour in the context of the Venetian landscape. The city, with its reflecting waters, coloured mists, and light-filled atmospheres, is an environment in which film colour manifests itself in a particularly poignant manner.

With the kind support of the Arts Scholars, I was able to purchase a digital camera, a set of lenses and a tripod, all of which proved fundamental for my exploration of the city and its visual environment.

In particular, the photography kit enabled me to compare real motifs observable in the city with their painterly reproductions, providing the necessary visual evidence to underpin my claims.

**Francesco Tollot**



## Art and Political Psyche

I am a recipient of an Art Scholars MA Award at York. Last year my research comprised the taught module ‘Art and the Political Psyche in Britain, 1979-1997’ which examined contemporary art practices through psychoanalytic interpretations on feminist, Black and queer politics.

I attended research trips to the Turner Contemporary in Margate, the Hepworth Wakefield and the V&A Museum in South Kensington.

Currently, I am enrolled in studies on J.M.W. Turner and am thrilled to study ‘Seeing Sculpture’: a survey on the development of modern sculpture in Britain through the lens of experimental writing.

For my dissertation I look forward to researching the 1994 exhibition ‘Us an’ Dem’ curated by the British art historian and artist Eddie Chambers and featuring work by Denzil Forrester, Faisal Abdu’Allah and Tam Joseph.

**Simal Rafique – York**





# OUR STUDENTS

## Smocking

Thanks to the support of the Company of Arts Scholars I was able to attend the College Art Association conference in Chicago to present a paper on my research, and also undertake a three-week artistic residency at the Ruth Smith Gallery in Devon. Presenting my research at a prestigious international conference was hugely helpful in terms of developing my presentation skills, confidence in public speaking as well as networking with other academics and artists in my field. I was also able to visit relevant museums and galleries for my research which added unexpected new ideas for my artistic research.

The residency allowed me to explore the technique of ‘smocking,’ used traditionally to create ‘smocks’ or ‘smock-frocks’ – garments worn by labourers in the 19th century and still being worn in different contemporary forms today. Smocking and its history is part of my practice-based research at the University of Exeter, and this residency was invaluable in supporting material research by physically doing and making.

As a result of this residency, I am now working with the gallery, a visiting academic from New York and local Devon arts organisations to create an exhibition and large-scale textile installation with workshops for local residents to learn more about smocking as a British heritage craft (taking place in 2026).

Sam Godfrey – Exeter

## Marie-Thérèse Reboul Vien

I am a PhD candidate at St Andrew’s and a predoctoral fellow at The Morgan Library & Museum in New York. My scholarship concerns 17th and 18th century French art, and my primary research interests include women as artists and subjects, gendered iconography, and the global reach and implications of natural history illustration. My doctoral thesis project will serve as the first comprehensive study of the artist and naturalist Marie-Thérèse Reboul Vien (1735-1806).

With the support of the Arts Scholars, I was able to undertake a research trip in June 2024 to work in the archives of the Accademia di San Luca in Rome. Reboul Vien spent five years in Rome while her husband was the director of the French Academy there. The archive conserves important documents relative to the family’s period of residence in the city and accessing these helped me make important new discoveries about Reboul Vien’s artistic pursuits and activities during this period in her life, which have hitherto remained unknown.

Tori Champion – St Andrew’s

# A SIDEWAYS LOOK

## The one that got away...

...an occasional new series from Cynthia Coleman Sparke

Arts Scholars are a marvellously disparate group, bringing together interests in a period, medium or national characteristic: Napoleonic weaponry, Chinese ceramics, Arts and Crafts jewellery and so on.

One thread that apparently weaves across our members is the failed pursuit and loss of a picture or work of art. By loss, I mean an object that was highly desired, thrillingly chased and then denied. I’ve often come across this affliction with prolific collectors, seated in their own Wunderkammern and lamenting the one item that slipped through their fingers.

The subject of ‘the one that got away’ recently resurfaced when I lunched beside Clive Stewart-Lockhart. As a group of us mused on the phenomenon, he recounted his own moment of defeat much more engagingly than I recall it below:

William Henry Pratt (1887-1969) was known professionally as Boris Karloff and best remembered for his portrayal of Frankenstein’s monster. His acting career encompassed numerous successes between Hollywood and Broadway.

He overcame a stutter to not only charm audiences but a total of six wives. Karloff’s final marriage was to Evelyn Hope Helmore, lasting 23 years until his death in 1969.

Following Helmore’s death in 1993, our very own Clive was called in to catalogue the contents of her flat in London for Dreweatts, including items from Boris Karloff. During the clearance of this property, Clive discovered the actor’s toupee lurking in a chest of drawers.

“I have always been fascinated as to why some bald men feel the need to wear toupees so I pounced on Boris’s to see if it would fit,” he recalled.

The fit was as perfect as Cinderella’s slipper and a superb match for Clive’s hair. He was so taken with it that he created a separate lot in the auction. But his hopes were eventually dashed when Clive found himself the underbidder to a prominent interior designer and dealer.

Why the late Christopher Gibbs required this particular toupee for his collection remains a mystery. Perhaps one of our Company with a keen interest in trichology, a gargantuan personal library and forensic research skills already has the answer.

Stay tuned!



Above: Karloff’s Frankenstein wig.  
Below: Clive in the toupee.



## The Chitra collection – just my cup of tea

In February a dozen Arts Scholars gathered in St John Street EC1 for a visit to an extraordinary private museum of teawares. Nirmal Sethia, owner and Chairman of Newby Teas, a luxury brand, decided to build a world class collection in 2011 and set about it in double time. By 2016 the collection was established and needed a permanent home.

The Chitra Collection is named after Nirmal’s late wife and comprises some 2000 items with around 30-40 per cent displayed in N. Sethia House. Having spent a relatively unhappy year working for a long-forgotten office equipment business out of that building in 1989-90, I was intrigued.

I love tea, too (white, without).

The collection tells the history of tea consumption from a European perspective and romps from China to India to Europe, taking in Russia, Meissen, Marie Antoinette, Napoleon and Lord Nelson whose mesmerizingly small teapot takes centre stage. We were truly in the presence of greatness. Our guide, curator Evelyn Earl, was an excellent host who put everything in context.

The great burst of collecting fever meant that quality is mixed but it is unlikely that there is a collection to match the Chitra anywhere. The best historical items are all on display. The collection also includes designs by contemporary silversmiths, as well as a modern KunstKammer of some of the craziest teapots designed and commissioned by Mr Sethia himself from Fulvio Scavia in Italy, who can scarcely have believed his luck in getting the work. Item 1342 features in The Guinness Book of Records as the most expensive teapot, valued at \$3m in 2016.

Only 12 people can visit at a time and the Events Committee is likely to organise future visits so that more of us can see the collection. I would encourage you to go and take in the tea ceremony that Newby Teas offers on the same site.

There is a first class website [www.chitracollection.com](http://www.chitracollection.com) where you can check out the pick of the collection by searching for the following numbers: 1136 & 863 reticulated teapots, 996 &



Above: Nelson’s tiny teapot



Above: the world’s most expensive teapot

Simon Berti

## Glass engraving, ancient and modern

Right: Marmalade, 2015, 20cm high, ruby over yellow glass overlaid on clear lead crystal. Blown to Katharine Coleman’s design by Potter Morgan Glass, after which it was cut, polished and wheel engraved. Image courtesy of The Scottish Gallery.



Katharine Coleman’s presentation “Spanish American Historian, Glass Engraver, Teacher, Researcher” was inspirational. Introduced by Roger Massey, Katharine’s talk was the first Zoom lecture of 2025.

As a young mother walking down Cork Street with her children, Katharine happened upon an exhibition of contemporary glass by Alison Kinnaird (b.1949). Since that opportune moment, she has taught herself the art of glass engraving, initially from classes at Morley College with Peter Dreiser, Britain’s greatest wheel engraver on glass.

Peter convinced Katharine to purchase a lathe to practice at home. At the time the cost was equivalent to a small car.

Katharine has constantly refined her practice. She worked with Neil Wilkin, a glass blower who created cylinders of glass with a double overlay which she cut through to create her designs. When Neil went to live in Australia, Katharine began working with other shapes.

It should be noted that there is no glass engraving element taught in any university glass department in Britain today. Katharine, who used to teach her craft at West Dean, founded the glass engraving website network in 2013 in Bild-Werk, Germany.

Bild-Werk Frauenau is a regional and international forum for glass with symposia and classes. Some lucky Art Scholars will see Katharine’s work and studio during a visit to Cockpit Studios on July 8th.

Recently she has turned her expertise to detective work. There is a puzzling group of 14 glasses known as the Hedwig beakers.

St Hedwig of Silesia (d.1243) is traditionally associated with at least 3 of them. They are unlike any other glass or rock crystal medieval objects and Katharine’s research indicates they are the work of a single Northern European engraver. Definitely influenced by Persian culture with their Zoroastrian designs, they are considered holy relics. Her research continues.



Hedwig Beaker, late 12th-early 13th century. Corning Museum of Glass

Anne Rogers Haley





Above: Edward III  
Left: Tim Schroder with St Dunstan

## For all its grandeur Goldsmiths is still a working Company

For our Goldsmiths’ Hall visit in February our guide was none other than Dr Timothy Schroder, Arts Scholars Liveryman and twice Prime Warden of the Goldsmiths’ Company. The Company’s first charter was issued in 1327 by Edward III, following the edict of 1300 establishing the right to test and mark gold and silver – a task it has fulfilled ever since.

Tim told us that the present hall is the third on this site. The last one, dating from the mid 14th century, survived the Great Fire of 1666 but by the middle of the 19th century the Company had outgrown its premises. The architect Philip Hardwick was given a simple brief: he was to create ‘the grandest building in London’, and it appears he succeeded – perhaps even exceeded – this instruction. The new Hall opened in 1835 with a banquet for the great and the good.

With that background information we began our stroll. First up was the Livery Hall. This is the magnificent setting for Company events but it can also be used by others; for example, it was the venue for our own Banquet last year. At one end is a buffet, essentially a display for plate. The Company, over its long history, has commissioned silver and gilt objects; now contemporary ones find a home where they can be admired.

We then visited the Court Room. The table was designed by Hardwick and accommodates 12 Court Assistants and the Prime Warden. The ceiling was taken from the earlier hall, and at one end of the room is a Roman altar found nearly 200 years ago when the foundations for the present Hall were dug.

Nearby is the Drawing Room. It sustained a direct hit in the Second World War but has been restored to its original design. Keen viewers of films and television series may recognise that it has stood in for such sites as the room in which Stalin was killed and the Buckingham Palace room where Her Late Majesty made television addresses. The adjoining Exhibition Room also suffered in the last war. It now houses cases for a changing display of the best of modern work by Company members and others.

In the entrance there are two display cases with changing exhibits. At the time of our visit the spotlight was on enamel, and mention must be made of the King Charles III Coronation Cup, designed by Clive Burr and

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## Battersea, a towering edifice of brick that redefines massive

Battersea Power Station has been an iconic London building since the first part (Battersea A, with 2 chimneys) was finished in 1935 - already a vast building, looming over the skyline. It became even more imposing when Battersea B, with 2 further chimneys, was built alongside it in 1955 to create the silhouette that we know today – double the size, double the vastness.

If it looks enormous from a distance, it is unbelievably so when you stand outside it, dwarfed by the massive walls, and the enormity only increases when you go inside. It redefines the word “vast.”

The floor area is twice that of St Paul’s Cathedral and it is one of the world’s largest brick buildings, incorporating six million bricks (a four-bedroom house uses 15,000).

It was decommissioned in 1983 and quietly rotted away for 30 years, while various visionary and lunatic plans for redevelopment were proposed and rejected. The current building restoration and regeneration of the area commenced in 2013 and the power station is now a “destination”, hemmed in on three sides by vast (sorry, that word again) blocks of rather smart apartments.

On April 29th we were privileged to be shown round the entire complex by our very own Arts Scholar Ian Swankie. He not only has an encyclopedic knowledge of the power station and its environs, but managed to impart some of this knowledge to us (which is where the first paragraph came from) with erudition, charisma and enthusiasm – the perfect tour guide.

We all paid rapt attention, we all became as enthused as he is, and we all wanted him to go on forever. We saw shops, restaurants, a control room (now a chic bar), gantries, walkways, massive bits of machinery, lots of big walls, lots of brilliantly-designed apartment blocks, and a new tube station.

All of this happened on a beautiful sunny day. And he fed us some jelly babies half way round to boost our sugar intake (there was a lot of walking to do after all).

As a finale, some of us ascended the lift in one of the chimneys to see the London skyline from the top – a great end to another remarkable Arts Scholars’ Grand Day Out.

John Spanner

## Pocket lunch brings out the rare, the quirky and the downright useful

An impressive 30 Arts Scholars gathered in the Aldermen’s Dining Room for our annual show and tell, the Pocket Lunch. As usual the event surprised and delighted in equal measure: 18 objects were presented and I offer the highlights here – there was a lot to take in very rapidly so recollections may vary.

Coins and medals always feature strongly due to their portability. Past Master **Paul Viney** fondly reminisced about how he attended his first auction following the assassination of Emperor Pertinax in 193 AD when the Praetorian Guard put the whole Roman Empire up for sale. (Some mistake surely? Ed)

Didius Julianus was the successful bidder but turned out to be a hopeless Emperor who was summarily despatched after only 66 days by the guards he had just bribed. However, his coinage had started to be minted and Mr V managed to acquire a Julianus denarius which must be one of the rarest coins of antiquity, as well as being the oldest object on show.

**Graham Barker** showed a copy of a 10-aureus coin representing the re-conquest of Britain in 296 by Constantius Chlorus, the reverse featuring the earliest depiction of London as joyful Britons welcome Constantius.

The congregation at the Guildhall were also surprised and delighted to learn that the Deputy Master’s book featuring Rebel Emperors would soon be back in print.

We saw sweetheart brooches from the Kenya Regiment, a Victorian gadget for warming curling tongs, Clichy paperweights and **Nigel Israel** produced a pipe in the shape of a rifle (the original smoking gun?).

**Felicity Marno** brought an item from the Treasure Chest that she takes to participating schools. A 20-cash coin, salvaged in 1985 from the wreck of the East Indiaman The Admiral Gardner, en route to Bengal and wrecked on the Goodwin Sands in 1809. The cargo comprised about 47 tons of coins which were packed

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Jane Short, which was executed by a dozen artisans. This was of great interest as we had already seen the Terence Cuneo painting depicting Her Late Majesty’s first visit to the Mansion House following her coronation. She was shown holding her own cup, and on the table in front of her was Elizabeth I’s Coronation Cup. All three were commissioned by the Goldsmiths’ Company.

The final stop on our official tour was the Library where Eleni Bide, the Company’s Librarian and Head of Archives, showed us a number of objects. The oldest we saw was a book from 1604 called A Goldsmith’s Storehouse. Rather than a manual of the trade it is a miscellaneous collection of information that the



Above: the Brighton Bun candlestick.



Above left: the Julianus denarius.  
Above right: the 20-cash coin  
Right: the Midget travelling coat hanger.

in casks, hence their good condition. The reverse has Persian script as this was the diplomatic language of Mughal India and states that it was worth the equivalent of 1¼ farthings. It was made at Matthew Boulton’s Soho Mint in Birmingham, the first automatic steam-powered coin press in the world.

Two travel objects must be considered before I sign off. **Anne Somers** presented the Brighton Bun, a charming pair of brass candlesticks from her late husband’s collection which folded into themselves for easy packing and **Andrew Gumley-Mason** brought The Midget, a chrome-plated travelling coat hanger patented in New York in 1913 which turned out to be the star of the show.

Simon Berti

author might find useful.

As we gathered in the entrance hall, thinking we were about to say our farewells, Tim had a treat up his sleeve. A suite of rooms recently vacated by the Assay Office is in the process of being turned into a conference and exhibition space. Although it is in the early stages of being a building site it was not difficult to see what an important and valuable asset it will be.

At the top of the grand staircase is an 11th century gold-covered wooden statue of St Dunstan. He is the patron saint of the Company. Both William Shakespeare and Thomas Gray reminded us that all that “glisters” is not gold, but I would venture that our visit to Goldsmiths was a 24-carat event.

Miriam Kramer



**Caption Competition** – suggest the funniest caption for the photo, right, and H. Forman and Sons have generously offered the prize of a tour of Forman’s Smokehouse for two, including a salmon-carving demonstration and a tasting plate lunch.

The prize must be taken before November 30th 2025. All entries must be sent to Simon Berti by June 30th: bertissimo@live.co.uk

# Smoked salmon: one of London’s forgotten arts is flourishing in the City

On a bright and cold early Spring morning in March some 28 Arts Scholars and guests met outside Hackney Wick Station and after a short walk in an area of London truly off the beaten track we duly arrived at H.Forman and Son, the last smoked salmon curers left in London.

We were first treated to a highly entertaining presentation given by Lance Forman, the great grandson of Harry Forman, who founded the firm in 1905 - exactly 120 years ago. Lance clearly loves his job and spoke with great pride and passion about his product. Freshness is absolutely key to creating the best smoked salmon and the fish is delivered to Forman’s within 48 hours of leaving the water. The entire curing process is done by hand, from the filleting to the salting, from the drying in state of the art kilns to the delicate oak smoking process.

The business has not been without its own series of setbacks; in 1998 the factory burnt down and two years later it flooded. A decade later it was forced to relocate to make way for the Olympic Park. It is a measure of Lance Forman’s remarkable resolve and sheer determination that, in spite of all these adversities, the business thrives as it does today.

After the talk we were asked to don white coats, hair protectors and shoe covers and were taken downstairs into the factory itself. Here we were given a brilliant (and extremely funny) demonstration by Darren Matson who has the distinction of being the Guinness Book of Records world smoked salmon slicer.

Above: Darren Matson



## BOOK REVIEW

### A truly great aunt

**Betty Joel. Furniture Maker, Designer and Businesswoman in 1920s and ‘30s Britain** by Clive Stewart-Lockhart. Token Press ISBN 978 0369 0454 8 366 pages. £50 to Arts Scholars via the website at bettyjoel.com

In his Weininger Lecture two years ago Clive Stewart-Lockhart awakened Arts Scholars and guests to the achievements of his great aunt, a highly successful and influential furniture designer and producer whose work had been largely forgotten. Now he has gone a step further and produced a really sumptuous yet scholarly book which will ensure her legacy is open to an even wider audience. The book was skilfully designed by Clive’s son George, a fellow Arts Scholar, and is illustrated throughout, mainly with contemporary photographs from the 1920s and ‘30s which evoke the atmosphere of the period.

It tells two interlinked stories. One is about a woman whose extraordinary sense of style and business acumen led her to dominate her field.

The other is a more personal and poignant tale of a very private person who left all that behind after the break-up of her marriage and became the white-haired old lady Clive first met in 1972.

All this, and much more besides – a fascinating read.

John Benjamin



Betty Joel, as depicted on the eye-catching yellow cover of Clive Stewart-Lockhart’s book.

### Jill Makepiece-Warne

I was pleased to act in locum tenens for the Master at the Memorial Service for Jill Makepiece-Warne, held in the magnificent 13th century Salisbury Cathedral in May. Jill was a valued member of the Court and an energetic Chairman of our Charity Committee.

Jill grew up in Whitstable, Kent where she acquired a life-long love of tennis and sailing. On leaving school she applied to join the Civil Service and was much surprised to find herself recruited by MI5, a fact that her two daughters, Amelie and Victoria, only found out several decades later.

In 1965 while working in Aden, which at the time was a British Colony facing increasing insurrection and violence, Jill met her future husband Tony who was Adjutant (later Major General) in the King’s Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. Jill was the perfect army officer’s wife and loyally supported Tony in his postings in Hong Kong, Berlin and Northern Ireland. Eventually they retired to Salisbury.

Throughout her life Jill did much charity work and for over 40 years she supported the army charity SSAFA. A talented seamstress, she embroidered many of the kneelers, chair seats, cushions and alms bags that now grace Salisbury Cathedral.

Encouraged by a friend, Jill started attending NADFAS lectures. In due course she joined the Trustees where her organisational skills were put to good use and ultimately she became National NADFAS Chairman working alongside the then President, Past Master Loyd Grossman.

Tragically, in 2022 Jill was diagnosed with Alzheimers but faced the inevitable decline with great fortitude and retained her love of music and nature to the end. She will be hugely missed by all who were fortunate enough to know her.

Paul Viney



### Michael German

Michael German, who died on January 6th, was a founder member of the Arts Scholars, contributing both financially and with moral support to the new Guild bravely launched by his fellow Kensington Church Street dealer Jonathan Horne. He was very proud to be a member and delighted to witness the Company’s growth and development.

After leaving the family firm of P.C.L. German in 1972, Michael specialised in arms and armour but soon branched out into a new new field and became an internationally respected authority on walking canes. The Ken Church Street business continues under Michael’s son-in-law, Arts Scholar Dominic Strickland with maritime antiques now added to the stock.



### Eva Greenspan

Eva Greenspan, who died on January 11th was a Liveryman of the Arts Scholars, having joined in 2013, and was also a member of the Musicians’ Company.

A former real estate lawyer, she collected Victorian and 20th century art and was a councillor in Barnet for 35 years, serving as Mayor in 2006-2007. Housing and education were high on her agenda. She was a trustee of multiple housing associations and governor of five schools. She was also heralded as an outspoken advocate for her local Jewish community.



## NEW FREEMEN

- Bruce Boucher** Director of the Sir John Soane’s Museum (2016-2023). Former professor of history of art at UCL, curator at the V&A and the Art Institute of Chicago.
- Ann Dannatt** Retired medical practitioner with a general interest in the arts, especially Chinese ceramics and mid-century Modern.
- Kirill Kalinin** Founder of AntikBar, a Chelsea gallery specialising in original vintage posters. Collector turned dealer with an interest in posters starting from 1993.
- Alexander Marr** Professor of Renaissance and Early Modern Art at the University of Cambridge, head of the Department of History of Art and co-chair of the Faculty of Architecture and History of Art. A specialist in European and British art and architecture 1400-1800.
- Clive Richards** A collector with a particular weakness for flintlock weapons and Waterloo medals. A former Royal Marines commando, professional rugby player in France and founder of a risk management company.
- Prof John Schofield** A collector of 18th and early 19th century silver, furniture and clocks. A medically-qualified consultant in cellular and molecular pathology.



Above: the Master with Ann Dannatt, Bruce Boucher, Clive Richards, Alexander Marr, Kirill Kalinin, John Schofield.



# That was the year that was

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,  
Bears all its sons away;  
They fly, forgotten, as a dream  
Dies at the opening day.

This verse from Isaac Watts' Oh God, Our Help In Ages Past sprang to mind as I started to write this article a week before I pass on the Mastership to Deborah Charles. Going through the diary I can count well over one hundred events attended, probably more like 150. The number is imprecise as one diary entry often covers several conjoined activities and it is beyond me, and to little purpose, to separate them.

An unexpected bonus of the blog which I have inflicted on you most months is that it has allowed me to go back over the year to remind myself what those many events entailed: the range is huge and impressive.

As I looked back, one or two themes seem to emerge from the blogs.

One is the ubiquity of Arts Scholars in the City. For example, at charity events you will always find an Arts Scholar or more taking a table, bidding in an auction or donating an attractive raffle prize. Thanks to Gaby Robertshaw we are even on the Corporation.

Another is the friendliness of the Company. When I run through a seating plan with the Clerk there is never the need to keep sparring partners apart. Wherever you sit you will have a good time if you have an Arts Scholar next to you.

Reviewing the Blog has reminded me that I have not said

as much as I should about The Consort. Quite apart from accompanying me on so many occasions, Shirley has flown solo, as it were, on many more. So, it is she who now knows how to take fingerprints, weave a basket or scavenge the foreshore for treasure as a mudlark: skills she has acquired through events run by fellow Consorts who are organised with matchless efficiency by the Chairman of City Consorts, Sonya Zuckerman.

Somebody else who has made this year very special is our Clerk, Alan Cook. The job of Clerk is hard to define. You can list specific duties easily enough but what is much more difficult to put into words is how you do those duties: when to speak and when forbear, as it were. This is a skill that cannot be taught; it is acquired through experience. We are fortunate that Alan does possess it, which makes the role of Master such a pleasant one.

**Roy Sully – Deputy Master**



Our hosts, Alexandra and Nicholas Verney



Paul and Sally Viney

## 21st birthday at Claydon

On May 17th Arts Scholars ventured way out of the City to celebrate the 21st birthday of the Company al fresco in the grounds of Claydon House in Buckinghamshire. We were privileged to be hosted by Arts Scholar Alexandra Verney and her husband Nicholas, whose family have been at Claydon since 1620.

Over an excellent lunch in a pitched marquee on their extensive lawns, Nicholas treated us to a fascinating history of the estate, including a rare sight of the ring recovered from the severed arm of Sir Edmund Verney after he was killed at the battle of Edgehill in 1642.

Past Master Tom Christopherson then led us through an entertaining (and happily less bloody, thus far) history of the Arts Scholars, from an ad hoc meeting at the British Antique Dealers' Association in 2004, to a Worshipful Company celebrating in style 2025. An afternoon tour of the house (now run by the National Trust) completed a memorable day.



Above James Drabble and Deborah Charles  
Above right: Diane and Bruce Boucher  
Right: Victoria and Gregory Wolcough

