

FAIRHALL

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS,
GUIDES & VOLUNTEERS

ISSUE 2

APRIL 2011



*Worked by Margerette Spottiswood Aged 14 AD. 1796
Afterwards Blackham*



THE JOHNSTON COLLECTION

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ADFAS LECTURE SERIES 2011

All Volunteer Guides of The Johnston Collection are either Full Members or Associate Members of the Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Society (ADFAS).

If you are an associate member only, then each lecture will incur a small fee. **The Melbourne Society** holds its lectures in the Theatrette, University of Melbourne, Hawthorn Campus, 422 Auburn Rd, Hawthorn at 8pm

6 April 2011

Casanova's Grand Tour - art and seduction in the 18th century

Mr Ian Kelly MA Hons (Cantab) MA (Cantab) MA (UCLA)

4 May 2011

Carried away: the Gorilla, the Maiden, and the Artist
Dr Ted Gott, BA, PhD (Melb)

29 June 2011

Gulbenkian: the Story behind the Man and the Museum
Mr Edward Saunders, BA Hons MA Oxon

27 July 2011

Berthe Morisot and Edouard Manet: an Extraordinary Relationship
Mr Michael Howard, MA Courtauld BA Hons

10 August 2011 - Half Study Day-Lecture

Behind the Scenes

Mrs Gwenda Robb, MA

7 September 2011

Wine, Women and Song? Dutch Genre Painting by Vermeer and his Contemporaries

Dr Sophie Oosterwijk, MA MA PhD FSA

5 October 2011

The Shakers of North America

Mr John Ericson, BA (Hons) CertEd MEd

9 November 2011

7.30pm Annual General Meeting

8.00pm *Behind the scenes on the Antiques Roadshow*

Mr Paul Atterbury

ADFAS YARRA

Morning lectures start promptly at 10.00 am.

Afternoon lectures start promptly at 2.00 pm and are held at the Theatrette, Glen Eira Centre, cnr Glen Eira and Hawthorn Roads, Caulfield South.

7 April 10am and 2pm

Australia's Stained Glass: Documents of Social Change?

Dr Bronwyn Hughes PhD

5 May 10am and 2pm

Artistic Highlights of the Croatian Coast

Mrs Nirvana Romell BED

2 June 10am and 2pm

The Ballet Russes

Ms Robin Haig

7 July 10am and 2pm

William Kent and the Palladian House

Miss Philippa Barton

4 August 10am and 2pm

The Art of Armenia: How and why it survived

Mr Andrew Spira MA BA

1 September 10am and 2pm

"Once Upon A Time": Children's books through the ages

Mrs Elizabeth Merry MA BA PGCE

29 September 10am and 2pm

Meet Me At The Waldorf: The extraordinary story of two iconic hotels built on Astor feuds, fortunes and patronage

Ms Mary Alexander MA BA

10 November 10am only followed by the AGM

Scandinavian Art and Design

Mr Paul Atterbury

DIRECTOR'S DESK



Welcome to the second issue of *Fairhall*.

Thank you for all the positive feedback on the new format and combination of Friends & Volunteers information. Congratulations to all those involved in making that, and this, issue happen.

It was an oversight on my part not to announce the recipient of a copy of *The Widow Clicquot: The Story of a Champagne Empire and the Woman Who Ruled It*, for the name of the new Newsletter. Thank you to all of you who contributed some inspired and sometimes humorous titles and subtitles, however the book goes to Volunteer Guide Sue Flanagan for her winning entry.

This issue is about building and buildings. As I write this column, I am pleased to receive an email from Lyn Hughes, a key coordinator for *We Three Kings of Orient Are: Christmas at The Johnston Collection 2009-2010*.

She says, 'You might also be interested to know that from The Johnston Collection tour we have now formed a Geelong Artisans Group. The Embroiderers, Trolley Dollys, Porcelain Painters and Lace Makers were the first to join, now we have the Patchwork Guild, Geelong Hand Spinners & Weavers and hopefully The Beaders, and we think the number will grow. We hope that in the future we may be able to hold large combined exhibitions in Geelong. Isn't it amazing what decorating a beautiful home will do!'

To me, this is a great indication of what museums can build and construct - not just an assemblage of bricks, mortar and collections, but those intangible and essential constructions of communities.

Louis Le Vaillant
Director | Curator

EDITOR'S REPORT



Welcome to the second edition of *Fairhall*, the Newsletter for volunteers, guides and Friends of The Johnston Collection. The response to the new format has been very encouraging, so thank you for your support.

The Johnston Collection is continuously changing and involvement can be very rewarding. Mr Johnston stated in his Will that he wanted the Collection to be used for educational purposes and the Newsletter is one way that this can be achieved. Another way of course, is by attending new tours, exhibitions, and lectures, which are always stimulating.

This edition has an architectural theme, addressing the contribution of Pugin to the Gothic revival, Piranesi's print of the *Baths of Caracalla* and My Collection dealing with favourite buildings. It extends also to various architectural styles and how these influence domestic furniture.

The Newsletter tries to reflect what is occurring at the Collection, so the next edition will deal with the exhibition *The Garden of Ideas* and the corresponding tour *Fair Hall to Glad Parlour: The Flower, Its Beauty and Meaning in Art & Ornament*, which will examine the flower as a decorative motif.

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the work of Anne Bell in editing and proofreading the Newsletter.

The Newsletter cannot exist without the support of all The Johnston Collection family, so if you have any ideas for an article, please contact me: anneglynn@netspace.net.au

Anne Glynn
Newsletter Editor

THE FRIENDS OF THE JOHNSTON COLLECTION

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



I am delighted to be presenting another report as President of the Friends of The Johnston Collection, especially after the marvellous reaction we have had to the combined Newsletter, *Fairhall*. I think you will all agree it was a stimulating edition full of interest, including many fascinating articles. It is a very good publication to pass on to a friend and create more interest in The Johnston Collection.

The Collection has many roles and one of these is being an educational body, and this applies to the Newsletter as well as the many and varied lectures. As you will see from the *What's On* there are some great lectures, one being of special interest to the Friends was *Discover Villas in the Western District* by Timothy Hubbard, as it related to our recent trip to the Western district. The trip was splendidly organized by Jane Morris, and we will all look forward to similar excursions in the future.

Our Christmas Party at the home of Peter and Patricia Walsh was an outstanding success - a fabulous party in a really beautiful home. The Walsh's paintings, antiques and furnishings are all superb, and it was wonderful of them to invite us to wander right through the house and garden. What a miracle that the teeming rain stopped at 4 pm! See pages 18 and 19 for photos.

In the Newsletter you will always be kept informed of upcoming events. The first this year was a morning at the historic Anglican Church of St George's, Malvern, which included a tour and an organ recital, plus of course, a delicious morning tea.

We were also recently invited to a special preview of Sothebys Decorative Arts Auction. The sale

included many amazing pieces including a large consignment from a West Australian collector. There is something I think you should all try to see which began in early March, and that is the re-arrangement of *Fairhall* house museum by the well known antique dealer, Francis Dunn. Founded by Francis' father John, Dunn's Antiques is the leading antique shop in Melbourne and I know you will be absolutely delighted by the way Francis rearranged the Collection.

By the way, our latest gift to the Collection, is an on-line booking system which is going to be a tremendous asset, as the Collection becomes busier all the time. You are all doing a wonderful service to the community by being a Friend of The Johnston Collection, and thus supporting this world famous house museum.

Finally I would like to thank my marvellous committee for giving so much time to future planning and making sure our organisation runs smoothly.

Robert Thomson

President

The Friends of The Johnston Collection

FRIENDS EVENTS

We look forward to your involvement in the upcoming events conducted by the Friends of The Johnston Collection. These events have three aims: to assist with fundraising for the Collection; to provide access to events, specialists, locations and homes that may not normally be available to the public; and to develop a convivial social programme that brings together individuals with similar interests. We welcome you to the following Friends events:

26 May 2011 at 10.30am

Visit to a private collection

Enjoy the hospitality of Bill Davis, Johnston Collection Ambassador and glass advisor to the Collection, and his wife Judith, as they share with us their passion for glass.

July 2011

Visit to a private collection

Opportunities to visit private homes are always popular events on the Friends' annual calendar. More details of this visit will be confirmed in coming months.

23 August 2011 at 6pm

Friends' Annual General Meeting

'At Home' at The Johnston Collection. In typical Friends style, the AGM is an opportunity to connect with fellow members and enjoy refreshments and a stimulating speaker. Papers will be distributed to Friends closer to the event.

17 September 2011

Garden Visits at Mt Macedon

Neil Robertson, the originator of the Open Garden Scheme, has kindly agreed to open his garden near Mt Macedon. We also plan to visit Chandpara, the country property so enjoyed by William Johnston.



PICTURED ABOVE |
Chandpara, circa 1986

Guest numbers are often limited when we visit private homes. We remind Friends to book early to avoid disappointment.

VALE Merell Browne

It is with great sadness that we note the death of Merell Brown on 30 January 2011.

Merell was a long time member of The Friends of The Johnston Collection and a strong supporter of the museum.

We send our sympathies to Marshall Browne and Justine Browne.

A FEW COMMENTS ON PUGIN AND PUGINESQUE ITEMS OF PLATE IN AUSTRALIA

Tom Hazell AO

Deputy Chair, The WR Johnston Trust



PICTURED ABOVE |
Eugène Viollet Le Duc
thurible (top section)
private collection, Melbourne

Augustus Welby Pugin was one of the greatest figures in the cultural history of 19th century Britain. In a very short life (less than 40 years) he accomplished, as he said himself, enough for three lifetimes. Pugin was the effective founder of the Gothic Revival Movement in Britain. For him, it was a religious and deeply spiritual experience which permeated all aspects of life. In effect, it was an attempt to recreate the world of the Middle Ages, to answer to the increasing materialism and vulgarity of industrialised Britain. To a significant extent, it was successful in that it presented an alternative to what we would now call a society obsessed with consumerism.

Simultaneously, in France and Germany, with Viollet Le Duc in Paris, and Mayer in Bavaria, the great Revival was taking place, and saw such seminal events as the completion of Cologne Cathedral (according to the original and rediscovered medieval plans) and the restoration of Notre Dame de Paris. The revivalists also attempted, through the manufacture of objects and artefacts, to recreate the world of Medieval Europe. But the passion and artistic brilliance, so evident in Pugin, was lacking to a great extent, in Continental Europe. This complex subject cannot be dealt with in a brief paper such as this, but insofar as Australia is concerned, it is an introduction.

Pugin, a committed Catholic, with all the enthusiasm of a convert, had friendships with the major leaders in the infant Australian Catholic Church, in particular with John Bede Polding, Bishop/Archbishop of Sydney and Robert Wilson, Bishop of Hobartown. When they appealed to him for help, it stirred his imagination to think that the Gothic Revival could happen in the Antipodes. Consequently, plans and models were sent to Australia for churches erected in Sydney and Berrima in New South Wales; Brisbane in Queensland; and in Tasmania. The Tasmanian "cultural and spiritual outreach" was all-encompassing, and even exemplar tombstones, vestments, and metalwork arrived in Hobart, as well as small scale models for churches.

For the Bishop of Melbourne, James Alipuis Goold, a devoted adherent of the Gothic Revival Movement, the firm of John Hardman of Birmingham, co-founded by Hardman and Pugin, sent large quantities of plate to Melbourne, for the Bishop to equip his new churches throughout Victoria. Much of this has disappeared in 150 years, with changing fashions and different needs, however, enough remains to indicate the high standard and quality of the works supplied. In my opinion, Pugin was at his best when supplying simple, but well designed items for the emerging, and still relatively poor, Catholic Church, here at the end of the earth.

GOTHIC REVIVAL

Anne Glynn

The Gothic Revival style of architecture developed in England during the early Victorian period, as a result of the popularity of writings by authors such as Horace Walpole, Sir Walter Scott and John Ruskin. They felt that the quality of medieval craftsmanship reflected a morally superior way of life, and a godlier and purer society. Therefore, they desired a nostalgic return to long forgotten and neglected art forms, and a rejection of the mass production and commercialism of the Industrial Age. This was combined with a romantic vision of the past, epitomised by tales of medieval chivalry, depictions of the ruins of medieval castles and abbeys in landscape paintings, and a fascination with medieval costume at the fancy dress events that were popular at the time.

Gothic Revival style was reflected in architectural elements such as pointed arches, steep sloping roofs with corner pillars, depictions of figures in

medieval costume painted in bright colours on furniture, and ceramics and tiles by Minton. The interest in chivalry led to heraldic motifs such as coats of arms being incorporated into designs.

Two of the best known Gothic Revival buildings are the British Houses of Parliament designed by Sir Charles Barry and A.W.N. Pugin in 1840, and Strawberry Hill, the home of Horace Walpole. This house was badly in need of repair and was listed as one of the world's 100 most endangered heritage sites in 1991. It has been restored to its former glory and recently reopened to the public. The contents, however, were irretrievably dispersed at a sale in 1842.

In The Johnston Collection there is a mid 18th century Chippendale Gothic style chair.



PICTURED ABOVE |
England
elbow chair, mid 18th century
 Mahogany, leather
 958 x 673 x 595 mm
 The Johnston Collection (A0126 -1989)

Editor's note: One of the homes that the Friends of The Johnston Collection visited on their Hamilton / Western District weekend in April was a good example of French Gothic Revival. The house is a National Trust property *Narrapumelap* homestead, 1873-78.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The whole secret of life is to be interested in one thing profoundly and in a thousand things well.
 Horace Walpole (1717-1797)

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY

Since its relocation by volunteers, the Reference Library is in the process of being re-catalogued.

As you can imagine, this is a fairly involved process, and we appreciate your patience as we carry it out.

If there are particular items that you are unable to locate, please contact Wendy Babiolakakis: wendybabz@hotmail.com

THE BATHS OF CARACALLA

Wendy Lee

The subject of the engraving is the interior of the central hall of the Baths of Caracalla. It is part of a series by Piranesi entitled *Veduti de Roma* (The Views of Rome) which was commenced in 1745.

Rome was a lifelong obsession for the Venetian born engraver Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720-1778). Combining the eye of an artist, the structural knowledge of an architect and the fieldwork of an archaeologist, he documented the ruins of Classical Roman architecture at a time when many of these lay half buried in otherwise deserted pasture land.

The spectacular large plates he produced became popular souvenirs for educated European travellers who were beginning to flock to Rome in the 18th century. Carried back to the travellers' home countries, these volumes served as pattern books for the architecture and design of the Enlightenment.

Our engraving shows a view of ruins with a large barrel vaulted arch to the left middle ground. The scale of the ruins is suggested by the size of the figures in the foreground. A gentleman is visible in the centre foreground and rustic figures of peasants are grouped together in the right foreground.

In 1754, Robert Adam wrote of Piranesi that "so amazing and ingenious fancies as he has produced in the different plans of the temples, baths and palaces and other buildings I never saw and are the greatest fund for inspiring and instilling invention in any lover of architecture that can be imagined." (1) Horace Walpole later spoke of "...the sublime dreams of Piranesi." (2)

The Baths of Caracalla located by the ancient Appian Way in Rome were named after the emperor Caracalla who reigned from 211-217 CE.

This building is among the most monumental and imposing archaeological complexes of the entire Imperial epoch. The ruins of the baths are enormous and very well preserved. They are a magnificent testament to Roman architecture, with many arches used throughout the building for both stability and aesthetics. The marble walls were littered with paintings and mosaics, the floors were also mosaics, and painted sculpture adorned many of the alcoves.



PICTURED ABOVE |

Giovanni Battista PIRANESI (1720-1778)

Italy

The Baths of Caracalla - The Interior of the Central Hall, circa 1765

ink on paper

420 x 650mm

The Johnston Collection (A0163 -1989)

600 marble workers and 6,000 tradesmen were employed to labour on this one project. It is said that Septimus Severus issued 13,000 prisoners of war from his campaigns in Spain to level the ground for the Caracalla Baths. Many of the sculptures were on a very grand scale - the Hercules figure that was found in the Baths in the 16th century stands 10ft 6 inches tall. The Baths were designed with a central axis with the intention that from end to end an assortment of statues could be visible.

The Baths accommodated some 1600 bathers in three bathing rooms. These rooms consisted of the frigidarium (a cold pool), the tepidarium (a lukewarm pool) and the calidarium (a hot pool). The underground vaulted facilities for servicing the hot baths and lukewarm baths were incredibly complex. There were gymnastic areas, other areas for games and competitions and an Olympic size pool at the back reserved for swimming. There were libraries and extensive gardens to walk in and enjoy. The Baths provided two basic functions for ancient Romans, they were a necessity in

sanitation as most of the population of Rome lived in crowded tenements without running water or sanitary facilities, and they provided an opportunity to socialise.

Although in semi ruins now, The Baths of Caracalla are a must see when visiting Rome. They are extraordinary when lit up at night, and during summer time the Baths become a platform for cultural events such as operatic performances.

References

1. Hugo Honour, *Neo-Classicism*, 1991, p.54.
2. Peter Murray and Linda Murray, *Penguin Dictionary of Art & Artists*, 1998, p.319.
3. G Kidder Smith, *Looking at Architecture*, 1990, p.3.

MY COLLECTION

Dorothy Morgan

There is an experience I feel many of you may share; once you form a connection with The Johnston Collection people start asking what you collect. My answer in the past has been 'nothing.' However, I can and do collect the memories of wonderful buildings I have been fortunate enough to visit. For me they are objects well worth becoming passionate about, however unattainable acquiring a collection might be. Expense, practicality and the sheer unlikelihood of Bramante's *Tempietto* ever coming on the market rule buildings out of the question.



PICTURED ABOVE |
Donato Bramante (1444 –1514)
Tempietto, Rome

A perfect little gem tucked into the cloisters of San Pietro in Montorio in the Trastevere district of Rome is the highlight. Completed by Renaissance architect Donato Bramante in the first decade of

the 16th century, this circular *Tempietto* or 'little temple', only about 5 metres in diameter, is in the form of an outer cylinder formed by Doric columns topped with a classical frieze and balustrade. An inner taller but more slender cylinder rises higher, topped by a hemispherical dome. The simplicity of the building's geometry and the harmony of its proportions make this a building I could contemplate for hours (although I only had 20 minutes before closing time). Bramante planned a circular cloister around his *Tempietto*, unfortunately the surrounding buildings now form a square, scarcely allowing one of the most beautiful buildings of the High Renaissance, perhaps even of all time, room to breathe.

Another amazing building, rather hemmed in by its neighbours, is the Prince Regent's *Royal Pavilion* at Brighton, England. I first became aware of the Pavilion when I offered to research it for a Gallery show at The Johnston Collection, so of course a visit was a must when in the southeast a couple of years later. Definitely one of the most exotic buildings in my collection, this Indian/Russian/Chinese fantasy, dare one even say confection, amazes but does not inspire in the way the *Tempietto* does.



PICTURED ABOVE |
The Royal Pavilion, Brighton

Naturally different buildings are in my collection for different reasons. The vast Baroque Russian imperial summer palaces outside St Petersburg, particularly Tsarskoe Selo or the Catherine Palace and Peterhof, are memorable for their sheer size, opulence and level of restoration. It is their smaller neighbour Pavlovsk which most appealed to me. Begun in 1780 by Scottish architect Charles Cameron as a gift from Catherine the Great to her son, the Grand Duke Paul, and his wife Maria Feodorovna, to celebrate the birth of their first son and the Empress's first grandson, this elegant Palladian mansion was more family home than palace. Almost totally destroyed

during the Siege of Leningrad, the story of its meticulous restoration incorporating objects hidden during the war is fascinating.

Robert Adam's Neoclassical *Kedleston Hall* in Derbyshire and his oval staircase at *Culzean Castle* on the southeast Scottish coast, part of his remodelling of the 16th century keep and said to be oval in order to fit into the space available, are memorable for their simplicity of line and elegant decoration.



PICTURED ABOVE |
Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire

However, many buildings appeal as much on an emotional level as aesthetic, and here I would include ecclesiastical buildings and a number of medieval and even earlier structures. There is nothing quite like the feeling of standing inside a simple ring of stones in a windswept Irish field.

A true collector is always on the lookout for the next perfect piece. Given my interest in embroidery and in Bess of Hardwick, her final home and masterpiece *Hardwick Hall* in Derbyshire is near the top of my list. Due to a misreading of the National Trust brochure we arrived on a closed day and even the exterior was barely discernable through the high dense hedge. Then there is Charles Rennie Macintosh's *Hill House* outside Glasgow. At least here I was able to walk around the exterior, although the house did not open until later in the day, by which time we were due a lot further north. Frank Lloyd Wright's *Fallingwater*, the *Alhambra* and *Hagia Sophia* are also on my list, but the truth is I will look with interest at almost any building.

So now I have decided that when asked if I collect anything I will say 'yes'!

Would you like to tell us about your collection?
contact: anneglynn@netspace.net.au

THREE CLASSIC ORDERS OF GREEK ARCHITECTURE

Anita Simon

The Corinthian Column

At The Johnston Collection we have two examples of these: The marble souvenirs that were probably brought back from Italy (below), and the fragments from an 18th century Meissen pink and white porcelain dessert table decoration.



PICTURED ABOVE |
Italy
sculpture (pair), 19th century
alabaster, marble
The Johnston Collection (A0455 -1989)

This design represents one of the three classic orders of architecture that we have inherited from the Greeks. These classical orders controlled proportion in Greek architectural design. The Corinthian column, made up of capital, pillar and base (as with our pieces) generally rests on a pedestal, and has a complex entablature above the capital that supports the pediment. The capital or decorative head is based on the spiny leaf of the acanthus plant. Its style was probably initiated in the 5th century BCE and was used in the 4th century BCE for interior columns. It has been an inspiration for architecture many, many times in the past 2000 years.

The Ionic Column, seen in the Green Drawing Room, is characterised by four spiral 'volutes' which decorate its capital. The design is based on the Egyptian lily and the volutes act as a decorative bracket supporting the architrave.

The Doric Column is simpler with a plain capital and no base. It is a very early design and it is characterised by its strength and elegance and the pure harmony of the order. It is taller and more

majestic than the Ionic order and is rather more delicate. Both orders were developed for the superstructure of temples and were originally constructed in wood.

References

Therle Hughes, *A-Z Collector's Terms*, Chancellor Press, 1979.

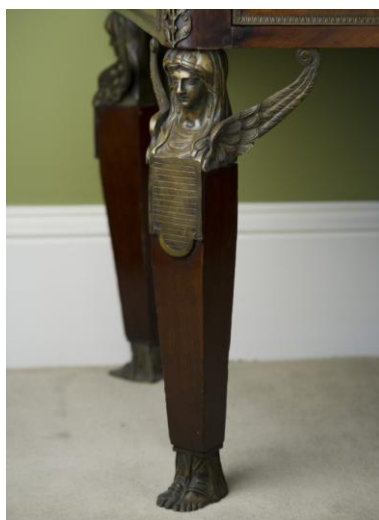
Botsford & Robinson, *Hellenic History*, Macmillan, 1957.

ORNAMENTATION

A **Caryatid** is a draped female figure that acts as a supporting column.

“The idea of using human figures as columns to support doorways and porches, goes back to classical antiquity, and reminds us that the human figure is the ultimate guide to correct proportions in architecture.”

The ancient Roman architect, Vitruvius wrote that clothed female figures represented the tribes of Caryae who lived in Peloponnese Greece, and supported the Persians in a war against the Greeks in 480 BCE. The Greek conquerors punished the women for their treachery by enslavement and hard labour, thus they were forced to carry burdens on their heads. Male caryatids are known as atlantes.



PICTURED ABOVE |

France

Bureau plat (detail), circa 1810

Mahogany, bronze

978 x 1270 x 622 mm

The Johnston Collection (A0093 -1989)

The earliest known examples of caryatids were on the Erechtheion in Athens (the Ionic temple of

Athena built 421-405 BCE, with many sections now in the British Museum). In Rome, caryatids were adapted for Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli and became central motifs in Classical Roman architecture. They then became popular in many architectural styles not only as supporting columns, but also as decoration.

Caryatids appeared on furniture, woodwork and metal work mainly from the 16th century to the 18th century. At The Johnston Collection, caryatids can be seen on the Regency mahogany knife box (1805), and the French Empire *bureau plat* (desk) with the separate cartonnier (1810).

References

Philippa Lewis and Gillian Darley, *Dictionary of Ornament*, 1986.

Michael Snodin, *The V&A Book of Western Ornament*, 2006, p.64.

THE LIBRARY

Helen Annett

There are two Georgian breakfront bookcases in The Johnston Collection. Bookcases such as these were made for a specific purpose and setting: for the libraries of Georgian houses of the nobility and gentry. A better understanding of the pieces themselves is gained by considering the architectural context for which they were originally intended, and through tracing the development of the domestic library and its bookcase.

The 18th century was the heyday of the library as an integral, frequently used room in the house, especially in the country, and domestic bookcases developed concurrently. These country house libraries evolved from the earlier study or closet, which was a room containing shelves, storage for books, pictures and curiosities. This was an area for a gentleman to dedicate himself to private study. Richly bound volumes were a luxury and were stored in locked chests under desks, or in aumbries, wall cupboards, when not being read. Small hanging shelves were used for displaying books, and for exhibiting one's wealth.

The route from monastic libraries and libraries of the Classical World to the domestic library is perhaps via collegiate libraries. Permanent libraries were established at universities in the Middle Ages.



PICTURED ABOVE |
England

Bookcase, 1765

Cuban mahogany veneer, pine carcass, oak lining,
glass

2667 x 2311 x 660 mm

The Johnston Collection (A0001 -1989)

In 13th century France, the Sorbonne University had designated book chambers, where books were either chained to desks or stored locked away in chests when not in use, presumably to prevent pilfering. When Lord Essex went to university at Trinity College Cambridge in 1577 his personal rooms also contained “a great desk of shelves for bokes [sic] in the study.”

Domestic bookcases and the emergence of the library in the country house date from the second half of the 17th century. During the reign of Charles II, the closet became the library.

Ham House has one of the oldest house libraries to survive. Here, the transformation from closet to library is evident, as the room is divided into two sections called the library, with presses for books, and the library-closet for pictures and objects of curiosity. On a less aristocratic scale, in 1666 Samuel Pepys began working with Simpson the joiner “with great pains contriving presses to put my books up in: they are now growing numerous, and lying one upon another on my chairs.” Clearly, something had to be done. Large bookcases made of oak-stained reddish brown were constructed for Pepys’ house near the Strand, and were later moved to his house in Clapham. There they were seen by the Bishop of Carlisle, together with models of ships, globes and with pictures and portraits of family and friends hung above them. Twelve of the bookcases are now in the Pepys Library at Magdalene College Cambridge.

With the influence of Palladianism in the early 18th century, due perhaps to the architectural background of William Kent, the architectural element of bookcases became more pronounced. The author and designer Batty Langley published guides for builders, carpenters and gardeners. He declared that bookcases were the province of architects and his *Treasury of Designs* of 1740 illustrates bookcases “true after any of the Five Orders”. However, Langley received complaints from cabinet makers that “’tis not possible to make cabinet-works look well that are proportioned by the Rules of Architecture.”

Around 1750 the formula of a bookcase with a central portion flanked by two recessed wings was established and the breakfront bookcase emerged. Even when the Rococo style was fashionable, the architectural breakfront shape was retained while assorted decorative motifs were applied somewhat like cake-icing, ranging from floral swags to eagle heads, and from pendants of fruit and flowers to dolphins.



PICTURED ABOVE |

The Library at *Ham House*, Surrey

In the 1762 edition of his *Director*, Chippendale comments on his designs for bookcases “the trusses, pilasters and drops of flowers are pretty ornaments ... but all may be omitted if required.” From here onwards the classical revival encouraged restraint in ornament to allow the outline and form of the bookcase to take prominence, and to complement the Neoclassical decor of the room for which it was intended. For example, bookcases could be designed to fit purpose-built recesses in the library. A pair of pinewood bookcases painted white with gilt detailing were made for Sir Matthew Lamb to complement and flank the fireplace in the library at *Brockett Hall* around 1765.

And during all this, what was going on in the library? From the room for adult study the library

had evolved into the hub of family life. Children had been let loose in the room. In Hogarth's *The Cholmondely Family in their Library* (1732) the boys are running amok amongst the books. The Library became the Sitting Room for family and their guests, with an emphasis on comfort and comparative informality. Musical instruments could be brought into the room, as well as children. "You can't imagine anything more cheerful than that room" wrote Lady Grey of her Library at Wrest in Bedfordshire in 1745. Could we perhaps call the Library the Family Room of the 18th century?

RECOMMENDED READING

Martin Wood, *Nancy Lancaster, English Country House Style*, 2005.

The book tells the story of Nancy Lancaster from her family home in Virginia to her adult years in England. She transformed the way people on both sides of the Atlantic decorated their houses and laid out their gardens. She bought out Sibyl Colefax in 1944 and went into partnership with John Fowler. This elegant book is richly illustrated with photos of the interiors of all the homes she lived in.

Mark Girouard, *Elizabethan Architecture: Its Rise and Fall 1540-1640*, Yale University Press, 2009.

Anthony Fletcher, *Growing up in England: the experience of Childhood 1600-1914*, Yale University Press, 2010.

Adam Lewis, *The Great Lady Decorators: The Women who invented Interior Design, 1870-1955*, Rizzoli, 2010.

THE 'GALLERY' HOUSE

Deidre Basham

It is safe to say that no one at the Executors Auction of 150 Hotham Street, on 2 October 1982 would have imagined the destiny of the humble cottage, despite the real estate blurb as a 'superbly positioned and pleasantly comfortable, compact townhouse with immense potential.'

Built in 1860 by R Dixon for J Scoular, it consisted of three rooms. The sale brochure of 1982 described the cottage with a living room, dining room, kitchen and bedroom. It was, however, in a neglected state and its new owner decided to rebuild. The architect, Nonda Katsalidis*, designed an almost completely new building, the exception being the retention of the bluestone foundations

and the front wall, allowing construction right to the edge of the footpath without the usual setback.

Despite the considerable constraints imposed by the site, namely its heritage overlay and size, the resultant award winning post-modern inspired building was well ahead of its time. Its height and curved windows referenced its Georgian and Victorian neighbours, while the interior succeeded in maximising space and light. Interior innovations consisted of glass bricks, an indoor garden, an unglazed shower recess, a spa, computerised air conditioning and security, as well as 'smart European kitchen appliances'.

Purchased by The W R Johnston Trust in 1989, it was initially used as a rental property and then in 2007, after undergoing modifications, it opened as The Johnston Collection Gallery. As well as home to the Christmas Emporium, the gallery currently hosts a full program of lectures, whilst awaiting the outcome of a planning application - a long way from the humble cottage of 1982.

*Nonda Katsalidis is currently a principal, together with Karl Fender, of Fender Katsalidis Architects (FKA) a prominent Melbourne architectural firm that designed Melbourne's tallest building, *Eureka Tower*.

References:

Sylvia Black, East Melbourne Historical Society (conversation)

Australian House and Garden, 1987

FRANCIS DUNN ARRANGES FAIRHALL

Interview by Christine Bell

'I am just a shopkeeper selling dead people's furniture'

Francis Dunn doesn't know when his love of fine furniture really began, because he was always surrounded by it in his family's house. His father, the legendary John Dunn, dealt in early English oak and walnut pieces, and his way of teaching his son was practical but sometimes rather confronting. In the upstairs workroom, pieces were looked at to check condition and examine the way an object had been made by placing it upside down. "Tell me about it", John Dunn would say to his son, who at first protested that he couldn't because it **was** upside down.



PICTURED ABOVE | Francis Dunn pictured in 'The Green Drawing Room'

These lessons had a lasting effect – these days, Francis dreams about furniture, and he walks around his shop feeling the surface of anything made of wood. No wear and tear, he says, means no age, and he dislikes the way some furniture is presented today – over-restored, without the patination which comes from the scarring and bruising that an object experiences during its long life. He likens the alteration to the skin of furniture to remove any blemish, to fashions in today's cosmetic surgery – procedures which remove evidence of the history of a piece (and a person).

These days Francis's love of furniture has settled on pieces made in Tuscany, for the most part solid wood which has been waxed over the centuries, and whose surface is much less fragile than the Queen Anne and Georgian veneered furniture that was the taste of collectors in the 1960s and 1970s.

Francis Dunn first met William Robert Johnston on an aircraft when he was travelling to London via Mumbai (Bombay) probably in 1972. Francis was then 22. He found WRJ a good conversationalist. Francis continued on to London, where he spent a great deal of time in museums, particularly the Victoria and Albert in South Kensington. WRJ was not so fortunate – 1972 was the year of his heart attack, which magnified his concerns about the future of his collection. This crystallised into his desire to establish a small house museum, decorated in the English manner.

In his rearrangement of *Fairhall*, Francis was faced with a dilemma – he had to work with just the collection, rather than add or take away objects as he would do in a private house. He walked around the house four times, and decided to treat each room as a separate entity, with an overall concept

of William Robert Johnston as a 19th century gentleman returning from Europe with the "booty".

The Yellow Room on the first floor, therefore became a statement about the Grand Tour – all portraits, with three centre tables covered with bronzes, statuary and related objects which might have been collected by the educated grand tourist for a grand house in England. The Study has been treated as a supper room where Mr Johnston would entertain special guests. He has put a lot of Staffordshire pottery in the bookcase, something that might not be expected for such a formal piece of furniture.

The Green Drawing Room has been arranged as one large space, with the sculpture of Mercury placed on a table in the central axis to give height to the space. He also placed the Venetian console table in this room, and the restored chairs and sofa from the Government House Calcutta suite.



PICTURED ABOVE | 'The Yellow Room' rearranged by Francis Dunn

While mulling over his ideas, Francis remembered that another dealer had bought two of the chairs from the Government House Calcutta suite, at the sale which followed Mr Johnston's death in 1986. These chairs, made by Percier & Fontaine in the early 19th century, have their original gilding and bear the stamp GHC. These have been borrowed from Imperial Antiques, and placed in what is now presented as the dressing room.

The future of a house museum, Francis believes, lies in the ability to attract young people to it. Because there is a tram stop outside his shop, he is often asked by school children if they can look around his display. 'Young people are very

inquisitive' he says, and they don't read the descriptive tickets attached to objects he sells. Instead they look, and ask questions. Dealers need to be generous with information, and to encourage enthusiasm, for these young people might well become clients later on. Museums need to be didactic, offer people accurate information about the objects in collections, and encourage visitors to look closely at displays. This is a way of educating the eye and developing knowledge, not only of the objects themselves, but their original function and history of use.

Francis Dunn wants visitors (and guides) to react to his rearrangement. 'I don't mind if they hate it', he says, because he does want a reaction – and he would be equally pleased if visitors loved it. Either way, people will have to think about **why** they have reacted as they have, and this will be a way of learning more.

OH DO GROW UP...

Childhood in England 1750–1850



PICTURED ABOVE |
birthing chair, circa 1850

Collection of Portland Historical Society

To celebrate the centenary of William Johnston's birth on 8 June 1911, the current Johnston Collection Gallery exhibition offers insights into the experience of English childhood from 1750–1850. An illustrated lecture is followed by a conducted tour of the exhibition that includes many rare books, paintings, games, clothes, toys and furniture of the period, lent from private and public collections.

There is a lecture series to coincide with the exhibition, detailed in the latest *What's On*.

THE CROSSING SWEEPER

Anne Glynn

Crossing sweepers were common in the streets of English cities in the 18th – 19th centuries. They were mainly young poor boys who would sweep the path ahead of a wealthy lady who wanted to cross the street without soiling her long dress. As the boy could then expect payment, this occupation was not viewed as begging but as legitimate employment. One shilling a day was considered “a good day's earnings” in the 19th century.



PICTURED ABOVE |
George Baxter (1804–1867)
England

Copper Your Honour? published 19 August 1853
Baxter print [oil colours] on paper
224 x 163 mm

The Johnston Collection (A1192 - 1998)

The boys would work individually or in groups. However, they became very territorial and would fight others in order to maintain “their turf.” Jo, a young homeless boy, was a character in Charles Dickens' *Bleak House* (1852–3) who was a crossing sweeper who “fights it out at his crossing among the mud and wheels, the horses, whips, and umbrellas, and gets but a scanty sum.” This character was supposedly based on a true person and the book enabled Dickens to address juvenile vagrancy that was a serious social problem at that time.

Included in the exhibition is another variation on this theme by the English artist, George Baxter.

ACKWORTH SAMPLERS

Anne Neri

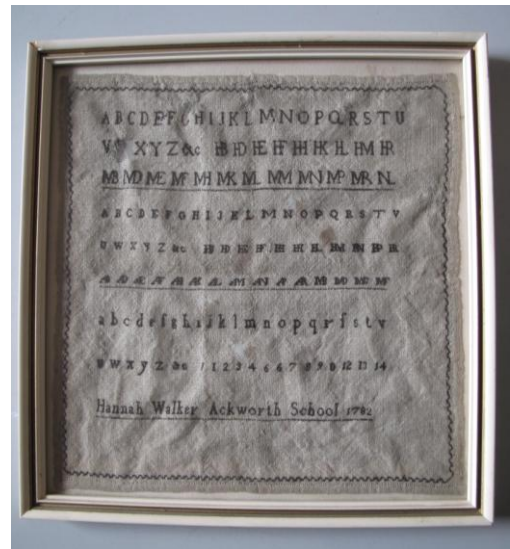
The historic Quaker School at Ackworth in Yorkshire was founded in 1779 after the first Rural Foundling Hospital buildings had been purchased in 1778. This semi-government institution, set up in response to the overwhelming influx of abandoned children experienced by the London Foundling Hospital, was established in 1765 and had been closed and put up for sale in 1773 due to the withdrawal of its government grant. Sounds familiar doesn't it?

The School was set up as a boarding school for both boys and girls for the children of Quaker families 'not in affluence,' Enrolment was usually for a period of one to two years, and during that time it is interesting to note that there were no school holidays! The curriculum stipulated that 'the English language, writing and arithmetic be carefully taught to both sexes and that the girls be also instructed in housewifery and useful needlework'. This emphasis on education also attracted pupils from the emerging middle class in spite of the spartan conditions.

Ackworth School today is a thriving co-educational Quaker institution with a well-documented history. In 1879 Henry Thompson, schoolmaster, was the author of *A History of Ackworth School During its First Hundred Years* and commented that 'little is recorded of the doings on the girls' side of the house'.

For many years there has been growing interest in the distinctive needlework samplers produced by the girls in the early years of the school, not only for the skill and patterns displayed, but as social documents of the time. However, it was not until 2006 that the definitive history of these samplers and their makers was published under the title *Quaker School Girl Samplers from Ackworth* written by Carol Humphrey, Honorary Keeper of Textiles at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

The earliest known example in the book is a sampler in the Ackworth School Collection completed by Elizabeth Smith in 1782. So it was with some excitement that Louis Le Vaillant recognised a sampler signed by Hannah Walker as a significant 'find' and requested that it be included in the current Johnston Collection Gallery Exhibition.



PICTURED ABOVE |
Hannah Walker
Ackworth, England
sampler, 1782
thread on linen
Private Collection, Melbourne

Provenance

The piece has been passed down through the women of the family of the present owner. On a visit to England in 1964 it was retrieved from a box that had been put aside for the local church fete. It was subsequently taken back to New Zealand, where it was framed, probably for the first time, and then transferred to Australia when the owner relocated there in 1970.

STAFFORDSHIRE STORY

Robyn Ives

The Tithe Pig

This Staffordshire figure called the Tithe Pig shows a farmer, his wife and a clergyman. The farmer is clutching a pig and has a basket of eggs at his feet. His wife in the middle of the group is holding her baby and has two piglets and a wheat sheaf at her feet. The clergyman is looking at the farmer's wife with displeasure. His mouth is firmly closed and his hands firmly clasped. He is also standing in front of some wheat sheafs.

What does it mean?

English church districts have been divided into parishes since Norman times and parishioners supported their clerics and funded pastoral care by paying tithes, of 1/10th of their annual produce, so payment was in kind.

The clergy had a problem with in-kind tithes as redeeming their payment was often difficult. In some cases they had to sell produce in the marketplace in competition with their parishioners or they would find their payment rotting in the fields waiting to be harvested.

Farmers too often had difficulty deciding whether the 1/10th payment could be made. If the sow had 6 piglets rather than 10, what payment was the church entitled too? Or if she had 10 piglets, could the farmer give the church the runt of the litter? Parliament made no effort to relieve the situation either, but by 1830 it was forced to act when starving farm labourers in the south and east of England rioted because the heavy burden of tithe payments left no money for their wages. The Reform Act of 1832 and subsequent acts eased the situation.



PICTURED ABOVE |
Derby, England
figure group 'Tithe Pig,' 19th century
earthenware, glazed
The Johnston Collection (A1200)

The figure shows the farmer's wife attempting to pay the tithe they owe the church, not by substituting the child for the pig, as is often thought, but rather telling the clergyman if he wants the pig he must take the child as well. This pottery figure illustrates the history and hardship of paying and collecting tithes. This Staffordshire figure features in the exhibition *OH DO GROW UP ... Childhood in England 1750-1850*

OVER THE TEA CUPS: THE POMP AND STYLE OF TAKING TEA

Lisa Arrowsmith



PICTURED ABOVE |
China
teapot, circa 1900
earthenware (Yixing ware)

Yixing teapots

One of the earliest forms of teapot exported to Europe by the Chinese was the earthenware teapots from Yixing in Jiangsu province in China. Potters in this area had been making earthenware vessels since around 1000 CE. During the Ming dynasty, 1368 – 1644 CE, the teapot was invented.

The clay called "zisha" from this region has some characteristics that make it perfect for teapots – it contains no toxic elements, and is very porous. This porosity means that it absorbs the flavour of the tea, making a better tasting brew with more and more use. It is said that you can make a pot of tea without any tea leaves from a Yixing teapot, because of the flavour it absorbs and releases! For this reason users never wash the teapots, only rinse. Porosity also means that the teapot retains heat well, another bonus for tea drinkers.

The clay comes in many colours from light buff to deep maroon and purple tones, and the designs are quite fanciful, often echoing nature – plants, twigs and animals were popular themes.

These little teapots appeared on English tables from the 1660s onwards and were seen as a more reliable alternative to the English soft porcelain versions that were also known as "exploding teapots"!

In The Johnston Collection we have a small contemporary Yixing teapot in our teaching collection very similar to the ones that we see in 18th century paintings of English families taking tea.

It will be on display in 'The Blue Room' during our *Over The Teacups* tours in March and May.

Visitors will learn about the history of tea drinking, the development of tea wares in China and England and the revolution in drinking and social mores that tea brought about in the late 17th and early 18th centuries.

Finally visitors adjourn to the Kent Room for a morning or afternoon tea of cucumber sandwiches, scones and pretty cakes and of course a choice of black, white or green tea!

ROGER AND CARMELA AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Roger and Carmela Arturi Phillips

A few weeks ago, we heard that The Royal Collection had purchased a copy of our book, *The Arturi Phillips Collection: A Catalogue of Portrait Miniatures*. It is lovely to imagine our own dear Nina, in the beautiful photograph on the frontispiece, sitting on the shelves of the Royal Art Library at Windsor Castle. Furthermore, we were to be invited to a reception at Buckingham Palace.

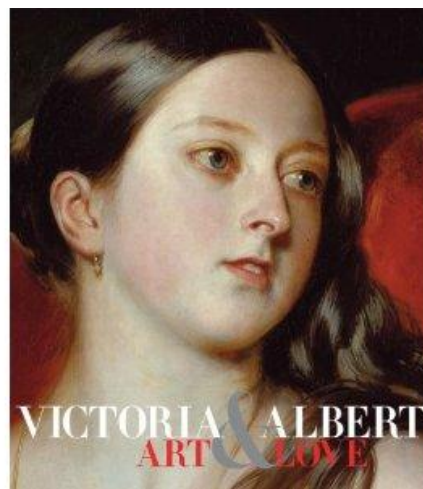


PICTURED ABOVE |
Buckingham Palace

The occasion was held to mark the publication of the catalogue of H M The Queen's Victorian Miniatures – over 1000 of them – photographed and catalogued by the Queen's Assistant Curator, Vanessa Remington, who had access to Queen Victoria's diaries and papers. The sumptuous exhibition, *Victoria & Albert: Art and Love* – extended to run until end December by popular demand – was a fitting backdrop to the intimate world of the miniature art form.

'Insiders' had expected HRH Prince Charles to attend. He is known to be particularly interested in miniatures and is Patron of the Royal Miniature Society. In the event, there was no representative from the Royal Family, but this did not dampen the enjoyment and enthusiasm of participants. It

was an amazing evening, full of the Who's Who of the Art World, including the legendary Sir Roy Strong, sporting a new look, almost unrecognizable, looking more like an older rock star than an art historian and former Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum.



PICTURED ABOVE |
Jonathan Marsden
Victoria and Albert: Art and Love
Royal Collection Publications, 2010

We were introduced to several descendants of famous artists, and during conversation embarrassingly discovered that we had been bidding against them in auctions, as they tried to regain their ancestors' fine work! They generously took no offence and continued to chat to us amiably. The evening resulted in many invitations and renewing of acquaintance. It was a very memorable event. The proceedings were discreetly brought to a close when staff circulated to collect wine glasses, murmuring 'thank you' and wishing guests 'goodnight'.

Editor's Note: *The Arturi Phillips Collection: A Catalogue of Portrait Miniatures* is available at The Johnston Collection Shop.

STOP PRESS

The Lilydale & District Historical Society will be celebrating Lilydale life and heritage with a special display, *Families of Lilydale* which includes a section

William Johnston: A Collection for the Nation.

This free exhibition will be held at the Old Lilydale Courthouse, 61 Castella Street, Lilydale from 16 April to 1 July 2011

For more information, please visit
www.lilydalehistorical.com.au

RECENT EVENTS:

Friends' 2010 Christmas Party at the Home of Peter and Patricia Walsh



PICTURED ABOVE |
Peter Walsh and Patricia Walsh



PICTURED ABOVE |
Graham Blackman, Anne Glynn, Pauline Blackman



PICTURED ABOVE |
Rob Logie-Smith, Dani Balmford, Caroline Simpson, John Simpson



PICTURED ABOVE |
Jan Wallage, Pam Golding



PICTURED ABOVE |
Julie O'Regan, Diana English



PICTURED ABOVE |
Ann Simon, Bernadette Dennis



PICTURED ABOVE |
Peter Watts, Jo Watts, Peter Walsh



PICTURED ABOVE |
Francis Dunn



PICTURED ABOVE |
Anne Neri, Denise Neri



PICTURED ABOVE |
Mary Bourne, Kay Weigel, Rosemary Charleston



PICTURED ABOVE |
Louis Le Vaillant, Anita Simon, Wilma Oxley



PICTURED ABOVE |
Robert Thomson, Mary Bourne, Georgia
Hutchison, Liz Cromwell, Hugh Ratten



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