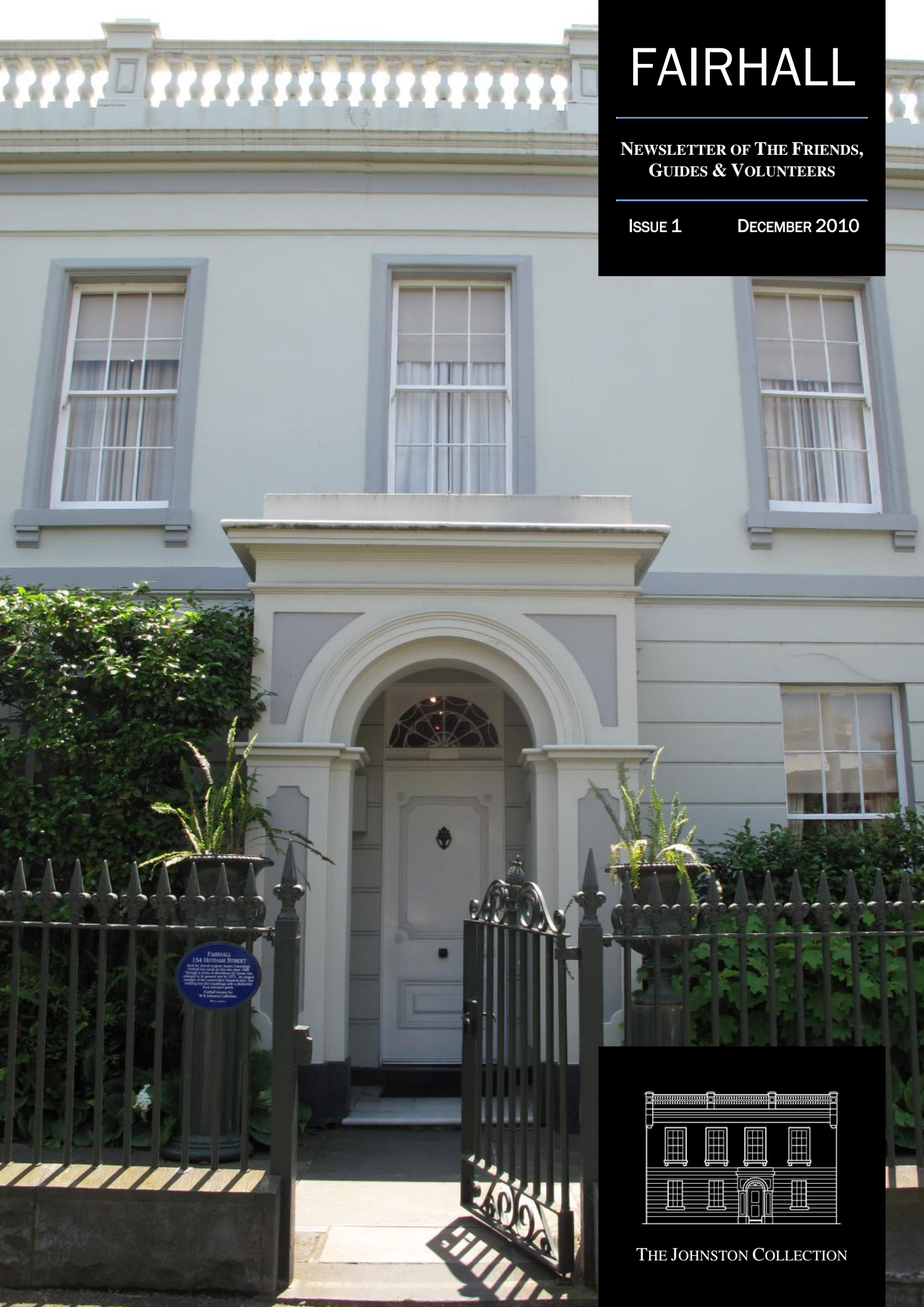


FAIRHALL

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS,
GUIDES & VOLUNTEERS

ISSUE 1

DECEMBER 2010



FAIRHALL
154 HOTHAM STREET
Built for David Carnegie by James Carnegie
Carnegie was born in 1810 and died in 1890.
He was a member of the Glasgow and London
Schools of Art and was a member of the
Glasgow and London Schools of Art.
He was a member of the Glasgow and London
Schools of Art and was a member of the
Glasgow and London Schools of Art.



THE JOHNSTON COLLECTION

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ADFAS LECTURE SERIES 2011

All The Johnston Collection Guides 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 Theatre, University of Melbourne, Hawthorn Campus, 422 Auburn Rd, Hawthorn at 8pm

2 March | Chris Bradley - *Treasures of the Silk Road*

6 April | Tom Errington - *Trompe L'Oeil: The Art Of Illusion*

4 May | Ted Gott - *Carried Away: The Gorilla, the Maiden, and the Artist*

29 June | Edward Saunders - *Gulbenkian: The Story behind the man and the Museum*

27 July | Michael Howard - *Berthe Morisot and Edouard Manet: An Extraordinary Relationship*

August | Special Interest Half Day (to be advised)

7 September | Dr Sophie Oosterwijk - *Wine, Women and Song? Dutch Genre painting by Vermeer and his Contemporaries*

5 October | John Ericson - *The Shakers of North America*

26 October | Paul Atterbury - Special Interest Half Day - *Eastern Dreams: The Victorian Fascination with the Orient*

9 November | Paul Atterbury - *Behind the Scenes on the Antiques Roadshow*

DIRECTOR'S DESK

Ten, nearly eleven years after the formation of The Friends of The Johnston Collection and the establishment of the Guides & Volunteers, it is wonderful to publish their first combined newsletter. After a few meetings with Robert Thomson and Anne Glynn talking out how it could work, we now have the first copy for you to enjoy. I know it will go from strength to strength and increase awareness of what our tremendous support groups do, and have done, over the period of each issue.

We held a modest competition for the title of the newsletter and it is marvellous to announce that, as you can see, it has been called *Fairhall*. We hope this name will add further recognition and awareness of the house museum and collection and will give the publication longevity as we continue to develop.

The Friends have organised numerous highly successful events and activities this year that have extended our understanding of the collection as well as being enjoyable social events – a significant criterion for all those who participated. Next year, an early highlight in their program will be the trip to the Western District to view some magnificent properties in the region. It will be well worth participating in the opportunity to see these houses, gardens and collections.

Guides will soon have a number of new colleagues added to their ranks, as the 2010 Trainee Guide intake training progresses from lectures and presentations to *Fairhall* tours and then to graduation. We look forward to being assisted by another group of guides who will bring further enthusiasm and expertise.

It's been a very productive year. I'd like to thank everyone for their support in the many new projects and events we have held, as well as your willingness to be involved in the programs we are developing for 2011. We will look forward to seeing you again.

Louis Le Vaillant
Director | Curator



GUIDES & VOLUNTEERS

EDITOR'S REPORT



This edition of The Guides & Volunteers' Newsletter has now been expanded to include The Friends of The Johnston Collection. The Newsletter is an educational and social tool that it is hoped will have a wide appeal. We look forward to sharing our enthusiasm for the decorative arts in general, and The Johnston Collection in particular.

The Friends of The Johnston Collection was formed in the year 2000, and since that time it has become the social arm of the Collection, providing us with some wonderful outings, including visits to private collections that are not open to the general public. With the money received The Friends either acquire a significant item, restore an item in the Collection or make an addition to the library. They have made the Collection a richer and more rewarding place for everyone.

The Johnston Collection has had volunteer guides who have been associated with Australian Decorative and Fine Arts Society since 1999. They are now an integral and valued part of the Collection.

Welcome to the trainee guides who have completed their lecture series and commenced their Christmas tours. Their expertise in many fields will be a bonus to The Johnston Collection and help to make a tour of *Fairhall* a rewarding experience for all our visitors.

Anne Glynn **Newsletter Coordinator**

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

THE FRIENDS OF THE JOHNSTON COLLECTION

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



As you are immediately aware, this is a new era for The Friends of The Johnston Collection. I am of course referring to the Newsletter, which has now been combined with the Guide & Volunteer Newsletter. This move is absolutely for the benefit of our members, because, to put it bluntly, you will receive so much more - that is, a greatly expanded Newsletter and an extra issue a year.

You will be thrilled when you see the number of interesting articles on all sorts of fascinating subjects. You only have to look at the list of contents to realize what a wide range of interests is being covered. The guides, volunteers and staff are all people who contribute to The Johnston Collection and as time goes on you will learn much from them.

It is our constant aim to continue to increase The Friends membership, as after all, as with many institutions like ours throughout the world, it is The Friends which are the continuing link with the community at large. I would like every member to encourage their friends to join our group, telling them about the benefits and informing them that they will be given a warm welcome. The welcome begins with a New Members evening to meet the Director and Committee, then drinks and a guided tour through *Fairhall*.

We always have new ideas; for instance, recently we had an evening at the showroom of the well known fabric house of *Brunschwig & Fils*, whose head office is in New York. This was a great success. Lesley de Meyrick, the showroom manager, opened up the world of magnificent fabrics, and as she is such a good speaker and a

charming woman all the members were fascinated.

There was full agreement that we want more evenings or days like this.

Also the Annual General Meeting was an exciting night held at *Villa Alba*, a famous historic house in Kew, whose restoration is proceeding, including the uncovering of the exquisite wall paintings so sadly painted over in the 1950s. After our meeting everyone had a good look around and was most impressed with what had been achieved. We then enjoyed catching up with our fellow members.

The absolute highlight this year was the **Christmas Cocktail Party** at the beautiful home of Peter and Trisha Walsh in Toorak, on Wednesday 1 December. Peter is a Trustee of The Johnston Collection. The house has a wonderful collection of antiques and art, which we all appreciated seeing. The party was great fun and very well-attended.

We have all sorts of events planned for the next twelve months, which you will hear about, and I look forward to seeing all of you!

As our dynamic Director, Louis Le Vaillant, recently said, 'The Johnston Collection is a hidden treasure, a jewel in the heart of Melbourne with amazing stories to tell.' We are fortunate to be part of this Collection and I can assure you that you will always be well looked after when you visit. Your support is truly appreciated.

I certainly look forward to seeing you soon, and in addition to Friends events, do not forget all the wonderful lectures which continue all year, to which you have priority booking.

Robert Thomson
President
The Friends of The Johnston Collection

**The perfect Christmas gift
for someone who has everything:**

A Johnston Collection **Gift Voucher** for a
Tour of *Fairhall*

\$22.00 single, \$44.00 double
and/or

A Friends of The Johnston Collection
Gift Voucher for 1 year membership

\$45 single, \$80 double

FRIENDS EVENTS 2011

Jane Morris

Late February - a morning visit to **St George's Church and Vicarage Malvern**
(see Brief History below)

1-2 April 2011 – Tour of Historic Western District including visits to homesteads of significant interest, a function at Hamilton Art Gallery with a private tour by Daniel McOwan, Director of the Gallery. Dinner will be at the renowned Darriwell Farm in Hamilton.

12 May 2011 – Bill and Judith Davis have kindly offered to open their house for a morning tea to view their personal collection which includes a wonderful **glass collection**. Bill Davis is a lecturer on glass and Ambassador of The Johnston Collection.

Information regarding these outings will be forwarded to you nearer the date.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ST GEORGE'S

Jane Morris

St George's Church, Malvern (consecrated 1888) is where we will hold our first function on 18 February 2011. Its history is intrinsically linked with Melbourne's in that, in 1891 the Foundation Stone for the parish hall was laid by the wealthiest man in the Southern Hemisphere, the well known pastoralist, Sir William Clarke (the Friends will be visiting one of his antecedent's homes on the Western District Tour in April). St George's was also the parish church for the state governors, whose residence was 'Stonnington' in Glenferrie Road from 1901 until 1932.

The Vicar of St George's, Reverend Canon Dr. Colleen O'Reilly, has kindly agreed to our visit, which will include a tour conducted by the historian of St. George's, Mr Brian Corless, a close study of the glorious stained-glass windows, an organ recital, and morning tea.



RECENT EVENTS:

An evening at *Brunschwig & Fils*



PICTURED LEFT |
Margaret Lorkin, Robert
Thomson and Bernadette
Dennis



PICTURED ABOVE |
Wendy Babiolakis, Andrew Dixon, and Myrna
Montague



PICTURED ABOVE |
Ruth de Coursier and Jocelyn Ng



PICTURED ABOVE |
Bridget Evans and Diana Dougall



PICTURED ABOVE |
Ron Brooks, David Barber, Pamela Barber

PICTURED RIGHT |
Paul Flanagan, Sue Flanagan,
Sharyn Richmond,
Louis Le Vaillant, Michael
Richmond



PICTURED LEFT |
Robert Thomson and
Lesley de Meyrick

PICTURED RIGHT |
Christina Cadariu, Ailsa
Ramsden, Jenny Carty,
Louise Box



TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE: THE GILDED AFRICAN

Pamela Gates

Many visitors to The Johnston Collection have been fascinated by this clock (shown below), so may like to know the story behind it.

The Gilded African was the name given by Napoleon to Toussaint L'Ouverture (1743-1804), the liberator of Haiti. The Swiss clockmaker, Jean David Maillardet (1768-1834) took this derogatory description literally, creating a gilt bronze automaton figure of Toussaint.

Toussaint, meaning 'All Saints,' was a self-educated slave, freed shortly before the slave uprising in the French colony of Haiti in 1791. He became its military leader and organising genius. The 'Ouverture' in his name, meaning 'opening' was given to him because of his seizing the advantage in his swift moving campaigns. He used it later of himself when rallying the people - in the sense of an opening or pathway to freedom. Their rebellion against the French was the only successful slave revolution in recorded history. Haiti prospered under Toussaint's leadership. He reorganised the government and instituted public improvements.

France had proclaimed freedom for all slaves at the National Convention in 1793. However, Napoleon wanted to reinstate slavery, and in 1802 he sent a large force to subdue Toussaint, who had become an obstacle to his colonial ambitions in the region. There was fierce resistance; Toussaint was treacherously seized and sent to France. General Leclerc, leader of the French forces, insisted that for Toussaint there must be "no possibility of escape and return to St Domingue where he has the power of a religious leader...[he] must be put in some fortress in the centre of France." He was thus put in a dungeon in the Jura Mountains, and after terrible privation, he died of cold and hunger.

The Gilded African clock is an example of automata - that is the imitation of life and nature by mechanical means. It originated with the ancient Greeks, and continued to be a source of fascination throughout history. The making of automata reached its peak with Carl Faberge, jeweller and lapidary to the Russian Czars.

A critical element in the evolution of automata was the combination of the art of the jeweller and that of the clockmaker. At first this was on a large scale, as in our own Gog and Magog in the Block Arcade in central Melbourne. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the production of automata of infinite variety for the amusement of the wealthy. Such is Maillardet's Toussaint, with his exaggerated African features, head and eyes that move, and a stomach that is a circular clock. He is richly clothed in shirt and trousers of gold, albeit gilt bronze.

The Gilded African is a caricature which demeans Toussaint and makes him a figure of ridicule. Wordsworth, on the other hand, wrote a sonnet extolling his virtues whilst he was still in prison, the last lines of which are:

*Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.*

This photo of a life size Toussaint L'Ouverture automaton was taken by Ellie Arrowsmith whilst visiting the Musée Carnavalet in Paris earlier this year.



PICTURED ABOVE |
Toussaint L'Ouverture (Automaton)
Musée Carnavalet, Paris

RECOMMENDED READING

Island Beneath the Sea by Isabel Allende, HarperCollins, 2010.

Isabel Allende's latest novel is set in St Domingue at the time of the revolution in the late eighteenth

century. It tells the story of the life of a slave who belongs to a French sugar plantation owner. It is a light story made interesting because of our knowledge of Toussaint L'Ouverture. A good, accessible book which increases our understanding of the revolution.

Toussaint L'Ouverture by Thomas and Dorothy Hoobler, Chelsea House Publishers, 1990.
(in TJC Library)

Georgian London by John Summerson, Yale University Press, 2003.

THE LIBRARY

Wendy Babiolakis

Many of you may by now be aware of the library move, and although not yet quite as it should be, it is still a marvellous improvement. The space seems "just right" somehow – a place for research, contemplation, or just a peaceful environment to rest in between tours.

Heartfelt thanks are due to Sharon and Joe Groher and Sue and Gary Chapman for the massive effort they put into the move and the giving up of their Saturday to achieve this for us. It needed the strength of a couple of action men and the guidance of a couple of practical women to create this wonderful space for our use and we really do appreciate the work they did.

There are several new books that have been purchased for the Library, and over the coming months, as the Library is refined, the titles will be listed in the Newsletter. The following are just a few:

The Secret History of Georgian London: How the wages of sin shaped the Capital by Dan Cruickshank, Random House, 2009

Cruikshank compellingly shows how the wealth of the sex industry came to affect almost every aspect of life and culture in the capital. This book would have some relevance for anyone involved in next year's Gallery talks on children.

Interiors of Empire: Objects, Space and Identity within the Indian Subcontinent by Robin D Jones, Macmillan, 2008.

The Architecture of the Eighteenth Century by John Summerson, Thames and Hudson, 1986.

Inigo Jones by John Summerson, Hamondsworth, 1966.

Palaces of the Raj: Magnificence and Misery of the Lord Sahibs by Mark Bence-Jones, Allen and Unwin, 1973.

Do not forget the magazine and journal subscriptions that the Friends kindly paid for. These are now more accessible and provide a nice opportunity to sit for a few minutes and browse through.

The Library is open for the guides to borrow books from. The Friends are invited to browse through the books for research but are unable at present to borrow. The Library is now situated upstairs in the Administration Building, so you can use it anytime without disrupting the lectures held in the Gallery.

ADDITIONS TO OUR NOTES

If you learn of any interesting aspects of the items in the Collection, please share your ideas with the other guides by including them in the Newsletter.

Robert PEAKE, *Portrait of Edward Lord Montague*



PICTURED ABOVE |
Robert PEAKE (attributed)
ENGLAND, (circa 1551-1626)
portrait of Edward Lord Montague, 1st Lord Montague of Boughton, 1601
oil on panel
1140 x 820 mm
The Johnston Collection (A0951 -1989)

The narrow bands decorating Lord Montagu's outer garments are embroidered in gold and are called guards which were bands of material in contrasting fabric or colour, used as a decorative

border or to cover a seam. His black doublet is slashed or pinked (i.e. has holes cut into it) to show the red chemise underneath. This was very fashionable in Tudor times - fabric from the loose chemise would even be pulled through the holes to form contrasting puffs on the surface of the outer garment.

Jonathan RICHARDSON, *Portrait of Lord Cowper*



PICTURED ABOVE |
Jonathan RICHARDSON
ENGLAND

untitled (portrait of Lord Chancellor William Cowper),
1706

oil on canvas

763 x 635 mm

The Johnston Collection (A1259 -2006)

When this portrait was painted in 1706 William Cowper was Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England and would have worn magnificently embellished garments on ceremonial and Court occasions. The heavy gold on his upper sleeve is almost certainly gold embroidery executed in a professional embroidery workshop.

A four poster bed

An interesting note about the Anglo-Indian bed is that the carved bed head is probably not an original component of the bed, but something that Mr Johnston organised to be made for it, perhaps in Indonesia. The carved head board has griffin decoration carved into it. The painted tester and curtains were added to the bed at a later time. The bed is one of two in the Collection and dates from 1800. It is made from Indian teak or cedar.



PICTURED ABOVE |
'The Bedroom', *Chandpara*, 1986, showing the
other bed in The Johnston Collection

THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR

21 October 1805

Michael Annett
CEO, RSL Victoria

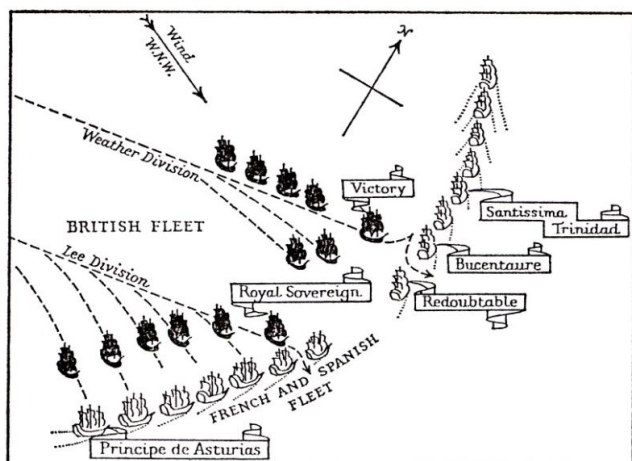
The Battle of Trafalgar was fought between the British Fleet, commanded by Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson, and the Combined Fleet of France and Spain, then allies, under Admiral Villeneuve. The battle was the most significant naval engagement of the Napoleonic Wars, and took place off the coast of Spain, between Gibraltar and Cadiz.

Nelson himself was killed by a musket ball, as marines positioned in the masts of ships of both sides sought to shoot down the officers of opposing ships. Nelson, in full dress uniform wearing all his decorations to inspire his men, was very conspicuous.

Although Nelson lost his life in the battle, his victory elevated him as a national saviour and hero. He was buried with great pomp at Westminster Abbey, and of course Trafalgar Square and Nelson's Column were created in honour of his victory. The shattering of the French and Spanish Fleets was reflected in the losses in the battle itself and the storm that followed the fighting. Of thirty three French/Spanish ships, seventeen were totally disabled, one sank in flames, and the rest retreated in disorder. Not one British ship was lost, either during the battle or the storm.

Nelson's tactics were bold and imaginative, and departed from the traditional line of battle in

parallel to the enemy's line of ships. He separated the British Fleet into two columns, one he led himself in *HMS Victory*, the other was led by Admiral Cuthbert Collingwood in *HMS Royal Sovereign*. They steered through the French-Spanish line at right angles, severing the head from the tail, confident that in the ensuing melee superior British seamanship and gunnery skills would destroy the majority of enemy ships concentrated in the tail, leaving the head without the time, or sufficient numbers, to affect the battle's outcome. And so it proved.



PICTURED ABOVE |
From *Touch and Take: The Battle of Trafalgar 21 October 1805*, by Michael Duffy, 1805 Club, 2005

At all times the British ships kept the “weather gauge,” or the benefit of wind direction, and thus had the advantage of greater manoeuvrability and speed. After years of patrolling the open oceans, blockading French ports and performing convoy duties, British seamanship was far superior to that of the French and Spanish sailors, whose ships had spent years tied up in harbours, inactive and untested. The battle quickly became an individual contest of ship against ship and the skill of each captain to manoeuvre his vessel, and the speed and accuracy of his gun crews became the deciding factor. The British use of “double shot”, two cannon balls linked by chain, that quickly dismasted French and Spanish ships was also decisive.

In the short term the Royal Navy's victory ensured Napoleon's plans to launch an amphibious invasion of England came to nothing. Britain's control of the sea was unchallenged after Trafalgar, and this meant the continuing blockade of Napoleon's empire became even more effective. He had to resort to tighter control of other European countries to counter Britain's economic strategy. This so-called Continental System increasingly

turned countries such as Prussia, Austria, Russia and Spain against the Napoleonic Empire, and Britain was able to re-establish alliances to fight France, that culminated in Waterloo in 1815.

The long-term consequence of Trafalgar was the mastery of the world's oceans that Britain maintained for the next century. This brought with it economic prosperity, worldwide Empire, the establishment of settler communities (such as Australia), and the “Pax Britannica”, that in large part prevented another global European war for the rest of the long nineteenth century.



PICTURED ABOVE |
ENGLAND
mirror, convex, circa 1810
gilded and ebonised wood, gesso, rosewood, glass
780 x 550 mm
The Johnston Collection (A0020 -1989)

Editor's note:

Visitors may recall the two convex mirrors in the collection. One has the two cannon balls attached to a chain as described, and the other has the cannon balls and rope on the frame. The success of the naval battles affected domestic furniture in England.

MERCURY

Pamela Gates

Flipping through Gombrich's *History of Art* I came across what I believe to be the prototype for our Mercury, by a Flemish sculptor named Jean de Boulogne (1529), whom the Italians called Giovanni da Bologna.



PICTURED ABOVE |
ITALY/HOLLAND

Jean de Boulogne (1529-1608)

Mercury, circa 1580

Bronze

Musée du Louvre, Paris

The background to this work, according to Gombrich, is thus: "Round about 1520 all lovers of art in the Italian cities seemed to agree that painting had reached the peak of perfection. Men such as Michelangelo and Raphael, Titian and Leonardo, had actually done everything that former generations had tried to do. No problem of draughtsmanship seemed too difficult for them, no subject-matter too complicated. They had shown how to combine beauty and harmony with correctness, and had even surpassed - so it was said - the most renowned statues of Greek and Roman antiquity."

This left the new artists in something of a quandary - what should they now do? One characteristic of the Mannerist period (as it came to be known) which pertains to Bologna's Mercury, was the elongation of the limbs, which led to a more gracious and sinuous style. Bologna was instrumental in making this style popular.

Bologna created a statue which conveyed a sensation of flight through the air by relying on free movement around which the figure is seen. Thus, the space becomes an active part of the composition. Mercury leaps into the air. The tip of his toe touches a gust of air coming from a mask personifying the South Wind. The statue is so carefully balanced that it seems to hover in the air, and at the same time glides through it. A classical

sculptor, or a Michelangelo, might have found such an effect contrary to their concept that a statue should remind one of the heavy block of matter from which it was shaped. Bologna defied these established rules, and created something new in Western art. Our own Mercury follows in the tradition established by Bologna.

HERMES/MERCURY

Anita Simon

Hermes (in Greek mythology), or Mercury (in Roman mythology), was the son of Zeus and Maia. Maia was one of the seven Pleiades, a group of stars identified by the Greeks.

Hermes was liked by, and helpful to, both gods and men. As the messenger of the gods, he was usually represented with wings at his ankles and sometimes with a winged hat. He was swift like the wind, quickly snatching up objects, so that he was also claimed by thieves. An apocryphal story about the mischievous Hermes is that, on the same day that he was born, he stole and hid Apollo's cattle and promptly hopped back and hid in his cradle. When Apollo accused him of the theft he denied it with such a cheeky wink that all the gods laughed.

Zeus made him return the cattle and, in addition, Hermes gave Apollo the Lyre which he had just invented by forming it from the shell of a tortoise. In return, Apollo appointed Hermes 'celestial herdsman,' and gave him the caduceus, a winged whip or wand entwined with snakes. Arcadian shepherds saw Hermes as the protector of their flocks and huts.

He also guided men on their voyages, in their business ventures and affairs, and with his gifts of eloquence and invention. His own ingenuity aided many humans, such as Perseus, Orpheus and Odysseus, but he helped many of the gods as well. For example, he was able to deliver safely Zeus' small son - and therefore his own stepbrother, Dionysus, to his aunt Io, despite Hera's anger at the child's birth.

Hermes brought good luck in all kinds of enterprises and finally, as Hermes Psychopompus, he conducted the souls of the dead to Hades, their final dwelling place.

Reference

Larousse Encyclopaedia of Mythology, Paul Hamlyn, 1964, pp.133-137.

FROM THE COLLECTION:

A pair of red lacquer Vases



PICTURED ABOVE |
CHINA

vase (pair), 19th century

red lacquer

275 x 150 mm

The Johnston Collection (A0457 -1989)

Lacquer is derived from the sap of the *Rhus* tree, and from Stone Age times in China and Japan was used to decorate objects such as bowls and boxes made of wood, or other objects that have a hard smooth finish. It is impervious to insects and water and hardens on exposure to air.

Lacquering on wooden articles requires many layers of lacquer. Each layer takes several days to dry and harden before the next layer is applied. There would be up to 250 layers, so it is labour intensive, time consuming, and could take up to two years of preparation before carving could commence. The lacquer fumes and colouring in their raw state are highly toxic; for example, the colouring cinnabar, which was derived from mercury, provides the characteristic red colour.

The surface could be carved or decorated with shells, mother of pearl or perhaps gilded with gold, silver and copper. These lacquered items would be regarded as prestigious pieces so often made for the Imperial Court.

It wasn't until about 1600 that lacquerware reached Europe through the Dutch East India Company. It came in the form of cabinets, screens, boxes, vases and chests. Its unique and exotic quality appealed to the Europeans, who tried to imitate this technique. As the best lacquer furniture came from Japan, the process became known as *japaning*. The imitations were not as lustrous, and the drawings were more naïve than those produced in China and Japan.

The vases are probably from China. On the neck of the vases there are densely carved stylised flowers and scrolling plants. On the bodies are four medallions that illustrate scenes from literature, possibly from the novel *A Dream of Red Mansions*, which was one of the most famous and influential works of literature in the history of China, written in the early eighteenth century, but not published until 1791.

The garden settings on the medallions feature unusually shaped rocks called "Scholar rocks." It was thought that the Immortals lived on the Penglai Islands in the Eastern Sea. One early Emperor decided that instead of the annual pilgrimage to worship these deities, it would be easier to erect rocks resembling the Penglai islands in the Imperial garden, so the deities could take up residence and save him the stress and turmoil of travelling. Later these eccentrically shaped rocks were collected by scholars, who would place them on their desks, and in their gardens, hence the name.

References

Highlights from a lecture given by Ruth Clemens in June 2010

Dictionary of Antiques by George Savage,
Mayflower Books, 1978

MY COLLECTION:

Georgian Jelly Glasses

Andrew Dixon

I have been intrigued by Georgian glass since becoming involved at The Johnston Collection. In the Georgian period (1714-1830), the English (and later Irish) became famous for the excellence of their "glass of lead." Invented by George Ravenscroft in the late seventeenth century, it took over from Venetian soda glass that had dominated the European market for centuries.

In Georgian times, on completion of the main course, guests would move to another room, perhaps the drawing room, and whilst standing and moving around would partake of "the dessert." In a stately home, such entertainment might be presented during the summer in a banqueting house.

A wide variety of jelly glasses, syllabubs and custard cups were used to serve single portions of desserts. These were often displayed and served on a dining table or sideboard as part of a pyramid of tazzas, topped by a sweetmeat.

The variety of sweetmeats such as jellies, compotes, and mousses served, required an array of glasses now of interest to collectors. There are countless variations in size, shape and decoration. Some are plain, others are engraved or slice cut. Some have one or two handles. There is a whole new language to describe the elements that make up these items. The short stems can be rudimentary, annular, knobs moulded, pontils polished or roughly snapped, rims everted, and bowls fluted or trumpet.



PICTURED ABOVE |
Georgian *jelly glasses* from the collection of Andrew Dixon, left to right, circa 1780, circa 1770, circa 1770, and circa 1820

I began collecting jelly glasses a couple of years ago, usually buying one at a time from antique dealers at fairs or on eBay.

The craftsmanship of handmade Georgian glass holds great appeal, and jelly glasses are much more affordable than wine glasses of the same period with many of the same characteristics of craftsmanship, technique, and touch. I also like to use them.

Would you like to tell us about your collection?

Contact: anneglynn@netspace.net.au

THE FORK

Anne Glynn

With the celebration of Christmas approaching, our thoughts turn to fine dining. You may be interested in knowing how the fork was developed, and how it gained popularity.

Cutlery refers to edged tools such as knives and scissors while flatware refers to forks and spoons.

The use of knives goes back to prehistory, whilst the earliest known documentary evidence of the fork for eating appears in an Italian glossary in 1023. It was thought, however, that the Romans used a type of pronged utensil. By the fourteenth Century, a “sucket” or two pronged fork was used when eating - for example, preserved ginger in syrup or candied citrus fruits and berries - to prevent the fingers from staining.

It was known that Lorenzo de’ Medici had eighteen forks in 1492. It was not until 1574, after travelling in Italy, that Henry III of France introduced the concept of eating with a knife and fork to other parts of Europe. This was linked to the adoption of plates rather than bowls, and to serving individual portions rather than dipping into the communal platter.

The earliest English table fork was known in 1632 but became standard equipment for the aristocracy in the 1670s. By the late seventeenth century, three and four tined silver forks appeared, though the two tined steel fork remained in use, especially for game.

When dirty, it was customary to clean the cutlery and flatware with the napkin. Early commentators on matters of etiquette advised “You should avoid wiping them with the tablecloth, which is an unpardonable impropriety” and “You should cut the meat on your plate, and then carry it to your mouth with the fork. I say with the fork, because it is...very indecent to touch something greasy, or in a sauce or in a syrup etc with the fingers.” These table manners were some of the rules for good etiquette that were important to the refinement of taste for all classes in the eighteenth century.

By the early nineteenth century it became customary when setting the table to have the knife on the right, fork on the left, with different sizes of these for the meat and dessert course. Today, we continue to set the table in this way. We do have an array of forks for different purposes, e.g. fish forks, and cake forks. The use of splades (half fork, half spoon) makes eating boneless cubed meat, as in stews, easier.

References

Elegant Eating - edited by Philippa Glanville & Hilary Young, V&A, 2002, p.54, p.56, p.85

Feast: A History of Grand Eating by Roy Strong, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2003, p.170, p.247



PICTURED ABOVE |
Nativity Scene, 2003
 The Embroiderers Guild, Victoria
 The Johnston Collection

CHRISTMAS

The English writer and poet Thomas Tussler (1520–80) captured the spirit of Christmas in this poem:

*At Christmas play and make cheer
 For Christmas comes but once a year
 Good bread and good drink, a good fire in the hall
 Brawn, pudding and souse, and good mustard withall:
 Beef, mutton and pork, shred pies of the best:
 Pig, veal, goose and capon and turkey well drest:
 Cheese, apples and nuts, jolly carols to hear,
 As then in the country is counted good cheer.*

from *The Keeping of Christmas 1760–1840* by Peter Brown, Fairfax House

CHRISTMAS RECIPE

Sue Flanagan

In Australia, in the summer of the twenty-first century, we might prefer this ice cream.

WHITE CHOCOLATE AND RASPBERRY ICE CREAM

125g fresh or frozen raspberries (and/or strawberries)
 2 tbsp icing sugar

1 cup white chocolate bits
 150g blanched/toasted almonds (optional)
 2 litres vanilla ice cream, softened
 fresh raspberries/strawberries to serve

To soften ice cream, place in a large bowl and set aside for 15 minutes. Process raspberries and sugar until roughly chopped. Fold chocolate bits and raspberry mixture through ice cream. Spoon into a freezer container (see below**). Smooth surface, cover with plastic wrap and freeze overnight or until firm. Serve topped with raspberries and raspberry sauce. Serves 8.

RASPBERRY SAUCE

Blend 125g fresh or frozen raspberries with 2 tablespoons icing sugar and 2 teaspoons orange juice until smooth.

ABOUT THIS RECIPE

** To freeze ice cream, spoon back into tub. You can also spoon into a greased and lined 22cm round springform pan or 7cm deep 10cm x 20cm (base) loaf pan. Cover ice cream surface with plastic wrap to prevent ice crystals forming.

Remove ice cream from freezer 5 minutes before serving. ENJOY!

CHRISTMAS TREE

Anne Glynn

The evergreen fir tree was a symbol of eternal life to the ancient Egyptians, Chinese and Hebrews. Others believed that gods and spirits lived in trees. In Northern Europe, during the Winter Solstice, it was a popular custom to decorate the house and barn with evergreens to scare away the evil eye.

The modern Christmas tree originated in Germany. It was the main prop of a medieval play about Adam and Eve, performed on their feast day, 24 December. It was known as the Paradise Tree and represented the garden of Eden and its Tree of Knowledge with apples hanging from it. Over time, people hung wafers and biscuits, symbolising the Eucharist, the Christian sign of redemption. Candles were later added as a symbol of Christ.

By 1531, people were buying small trees from markets to take home to decorate. The custom became so widespread that a forest protection act was required to save trees over four feet high from felling. Christmas trees were introduced into England in the early 1800s, and popularised by Prince Albert, the German husband of Queen Victoria, who set up a tree for their children at Windsor Castle. The idea of Christmas trees was spread into America by German settlers in the seventeenth Century. The New York Rockefeller Centre defied the gloom of the depression in 1930 by displaying 700 blue and white electric lights on its Christmas tree.

Today, the Christmas tree holds a magical appeal as a symbol of hope and joy.

References

Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 30, p. 284

Christmas traditions and celebrations by Ron Thomas and Joe Herran, Macmillan Press, 1995

THE GUIDES AT THE JOHNSTON

Helen Annett

Elegant and erudite
Soigne and serene
The Guides at the Johnston
Are the smartest I have seen.

Sophisticate and literate
These Guides they inspire awe
They meet the bus, they greet the guests
They open wide the door.

Well presented, often scented
With passion and with glee
They take the tour, they show the house
They pour a cup of tea.

Intelligent, informative
Learned and astute,
They educate, they radiate
When taking round a group.

Ably led and amply fed
With cake on training days
They listen to the one in charge
And follow in a daze.

And there are other helpers
More professional than us
They organise, they supervise
They drive the Johnston bus.

Elegant and erudite
Soigne yes sublime
The Guides at the Johnston
Are always on time.



PICTURED LEFT |
Trainee Guides with Robyn Ives
Left to right: Denise Way, Elizabeth Anderson, Anna Paule, Roisin Murphy, Anne Hodges, Mark Edgell, Sandy Gumley, Walter Heale, Jan Heale, Elizabeth Oakes
Not pictured: Simon Sieradzki, Lynette Spencer



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