

New Members Evening

The intention was to spend the evening in the Chairman's garden meeting new members - but despite it being the longest day, the typical British summer weather was against us so we admired the garden through the windows and chatted inside instead. New members are a vital part of any organisation and the Committee, who had prepared a selection of rather delicious 'nibbles', aimed to make those who had recently joined ADFAS feel at home. In giving a welcome to the Class of 2012, Peter Wilson briefly outlined what ADFAS had to offer and hoped that, in time, some might consider joining the committee without whom none of the activities we all enjoy throughout the year would take place.



For Your Diary...

Wednesday, 19 September

A visit to two sites in South London

(Please note incorrect day in Programme Card)

There is a double-bill with a difference for this visit. We are aiming to immerse ourselves in 1930s Art Deco decadence at Eltham Palace; built by the wealthy Courtauld family next to the remains of Eltham Palace, it is among the finest examples of Art Deco architecture in England. With its beautiful gardens there should be something for everyone.

Our second venue is the Palladian villa designed by leading architect Sir Robert Taylor and constructed c.1764-67 for sugar merchant and Vice-Chairman of the British East India Company, Sir John Boyd. It stood in over 600 acres of pleasure grounds and agricultural estate - over 200 acres of which today form Danson Park.

For booking please contact Lissa Wilson (01420 543892)

Thursday, 22 November

A Special Interest Day devoted to European Porcelain

Anton Gabszewicz makes a welcome return to Alton DFAS to spend a day tutoring us on the ever-popular topic of European Porcelain. Well known from the BBC TV Antiques Roadshow, our speaker was formerly Head of European Ceramics at Christie's and has published extensively on British Porcelain and lectured on the subject all over the world.

Based at Beech Village Hall those attending will be served coffee and biscuits on arrival and receive lunch with a glass of wine.

For booking please contact Kit Butterfield (01420 88356)

PS: If a booking for an event is cancelled, a refund will only be made if the activity is full and there is a replacement from a waiting list.

Visit to The Royal Pavilion, Brighton

It was 7.30 in the morning. The weather forecast was dreadful and the Guildford by-pass was closed by an accident. Nevertheless forty six intrepid members set off, with Ray at the wheel, to meet up with Jackie Marsh-Hobbs at The Royal Pavilion.

Jackie had given our April lecture on “The Secrets of The Royal Pavilion” and she had shown so much enthusiasm and passion for this building that we asked her to show us round as our guide. This she did with the same passion she had shown during her lecture.

It is an extraordinary building – built by The Prince Regent, later George IV, for partying, and it showed. The main downstairs rooms were just full of glitz. Not everyone’s cup of tea, but it just has to be seen. By the time Queen Victoria came to the throne the building had been enveloped by the town and no longer offered any privacy or seclusion. Victoria built Osborne House on the Isle of Wight and The Royal Pavilion was scheduled for demolition. At the last minute it was saved by Brighton Council, who bought it in 1850. However, by then, in anticipation of the demolition, all the furniture, and many wall-coverings, doors and fireplaces had been removed and transferred to other Royal Palaces, mainly Buckingham Palace.

A huge restoration job was undertaken and some of the furnishings were returned on loan and today, although on-going restoration in some of the rooms is taking place, the Pavilion looks very much how it must have looked in the time of Prince Regent’s parties!

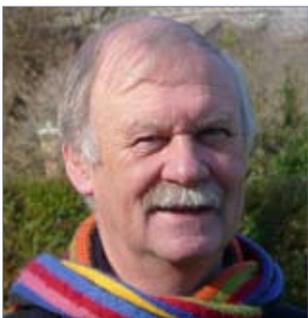


Decorative Chinese wall covering in the Royal Pavilion

Everyone enjoyed Brighton, exploring the Lanes and choosing one of the myriad of restaurants in which to have lunch. The rain came, but perhaps not quite as badly as had been forecast and we all had our umbrellas! Another motorway accident, this time on the M25, confronted us on the return journey but Ray found another cross-country route and we arrived back in Alton, safe and sound, only about thirty minutes later than planned!

Peter Wilson

A Capital Day



Back in March at Beech Village Hall Tom Beaumont James introduced us to the art and architecture of Winchester. It was amazing to learn how so much has been discovered about the city in the past few decades. From his schoolboy days as a local resident, to his later involvement with excavations, historical research

and teaching at King Alfred’s College, now the University of Winchester, we were provided with an illustrated chronology that encouraged us to visit this historic city in search of his examples.

In the morning we had two sessions – the first devoted to the early history from the Romans to the Normans, including the birth of the future King Henry III (1207-72) in the city, and this was followed by an examination of the period from the Black Death (1348-50) up to the present. There was more detail relating to William of Wickham, Bishop between 1366 and 1404 who endowed New College in Oxford and Winchester College – the latter to provide replacement clergy following the Black Death when 65% of the population perished. The removal of the

remains of the many Bishops including Swithen (852-862) and Saxon Kings provided links between the old and new minster churches, whilst illustrations from the Winchester Bible, one of the major artistic treasures of medieval Europe, were shown. Building types of different ages were explained and we heard that the Round Table had been dated to c.1290, although it had been re-painted in 1520 with a bearded King, presumed to be Henry VIII.

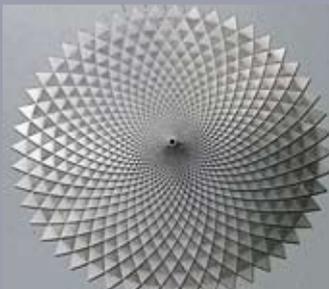
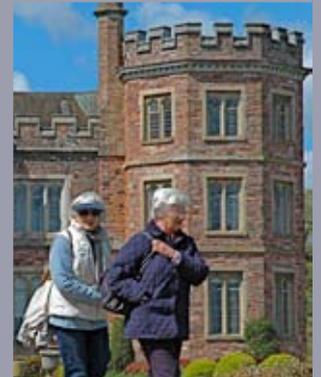
The cerebral morning was followed by a practical session in the afternoon when we had an opportunity of handling historic material from excavations and attempting identifications. There were lively discussions between members and answer sheets to be completed before our speaker provided solutions which ranged, amongst others, from Roman tiles to Medieval stonework, fragments of Samian pots dating from the First century AD to eighteenth century salt-glazed stoneware and coins representing Roman times and George III.

At the end of the day Peter Wilson gave the vote of thanks – both to Kit Butterfield and her team for another delicious lunch, and for ensuring the day went smoothly, and to Tom Beaumont James for a fascinating insight into the past of historic Winchester.

Tony Cross

Plymouth

The Plymouth trip in April was a very pleasant cultural experience enjoyed by 37 members. The journey to the south west was halted at Montacute House for coffee, a tour and lunch and later Buckfast Abbey before arriving in Plymouth. On Friday morning there was tour of the city and afterwards some made a pilgrimage to the Plymouth Gin Distillery. The afternoon drive across Dartmoor to Castle Drogo was 'rather moist' so the gardens were off the itinerary for the afternoon. On Saturday the group crossed the Tamar to visit Lanhydrock and despite the forecast, there were a couple of hours to enjoy the Lost Gardens of Helligan before the heavens opened! The evening delights of Plymouth were enjoyed by some of the party. Mount Edgecumbe House and Earls Garden occupied Sunday morning whilst Port Eliot house was the afternoon venue. The return on Monday was enlivened with stops at Knighthayes Court with its famous gardens and Stourhead. This selection of pictures by Gordon Sharp, our roving reporter, aims to give a flavour of the places visited. Votes of thanks to Ray and Lissa rounded off a varied and enjoyable visit. There is a proposal to visit East Anglia next year – details to follow in due course.



Forthcoming Lectures

11 September - AGM at 7.30pm
The Influence of Netherlandish Art on the Italian Renaissance

Dr James Lindow

Generally considered to be a one-sided cultural exchange from Italy to the countries north of the Alps, this talk aims to demonstrate the significance of innovative Flemish art in the south. Looking at Florence, the impact of Netherlandish art is considered from the perspective of leading patrons including the Medici and painters including Botticelli and Leonardo. Flemish art was valued, both economically and aesthetically and appears in many household inventories and leading Florentine artists adopted the stylistic changes to satisfy an increasing demand.

9 October
The Benin Bronzes: Masterpieces of African Art

Dr Claire Walsh

Among the most important and valuable works of art from Africa, these antique bronze sculptures from the West African kingdom of Benin astounded critics when they were first seen in Europe in the late 1890s. They could hardly believe that such technically accomplished sculptures were created by African artists. The superb workmanship and outstanding aesthetic quality of Benin's royal sculptures rivals the very best work of the Italian Renaissance. This lecture reveals the sophisticated production processes, the symbolism and ritual use of the bronzes as well as investigating the response of avant-garde artists of the early 20th century.

13 November
Iran – Land of Great Kings, Shahs and Ayatollahs
John Osborne

This lecture will examine the Persian Empire that was contemporary with Classical Greece and ruled by great Kings such as Darius and Xerxes. Their royal palace at Persepolis, destroyed by Alexander the Great has monumental architectural remains and a wealth of relief sculpture which reveals the ethos of the Persian Empire and the symbolism of Kingship. The development of the architecture of mosques and palaces of Iran is also explored. Finally, the political and religious context is explained – how the Shi'a form of Islam took root and flourished and eventually became the ruling creed in the 20th century.

Here's to The Duke

The death of the Duke of Wellington on 14 September 1852, 160 years ago next month, and his state funeral on 18 November caused as much public interest at that time as did Sir Winston Churchill's, another commoner, over a century later. Wellington's body lies in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral inside a massive sarcophagus of Luxullianite, a very distinctive variety of Cornish granite, which rests on a block of unpolished Peterhead granite, carved to show four sleeping lions.



Alfred Stevens (1817-75) the sculptor of the impressive monument to Wellington in the North aisle of St Paul's, was a native of Blandford Forum, Dorset. In 1856 Stevens took part in a competition for a monument, originally intended to be set up under one of the great arches of St Paul's. Stevens agreed to carry out the project for £20,000 - a quite inadequate sum, as it turned out and he devoted most of his career to this scheme, constantly harassed and finally worn out by the interference of government, want of money and other difficulties. Unfortunately he did not live to see the monument installed and for many years it was placed in a small side chapel, where the effect was utterly destroyed and its magnificent bronze groups hidden from view. However, it was moved to its originally intended position in 1892.

Having enjoyed the patriotic events of the summer of 2012, no doubt there will be interest in commemorating the bi-centenary of the Battle of Waterloo in June 2015. So on your next visit to London why not get a 'head-start' and call into St Paul's to see the Wellington tomb and memorial? Apsley House and the Wellington Arch might also be on your list of 'places to go'. In addition, why not pay a visit to the former country home of the Iron Duke at nearby Stratfield Saye? Amongst the notable features to be seen are the gravestone of his trusty steed, Copenhagen, and the great funeral car which bore the coffin of the Duke through the streets of London 160 years ago.

Tony Cross

Church Recording



records and library; and, in the pipeline, are woodwork; metalwork; and windows; with photography ready and waiting for the compilation to begin. Progress may be a little slow but

The following records at WestWorldham are almost complete: memorials; stonework; textiles; painting and photographs; miscellaneous; heraldry;

there is such a wealth of historical interest to be discovered and researched, and all facts must be correct - I am indebted to all the Church Recorders for giving up so many hours to the task. We had a compilation training day at the beginning of May which was useful - although slightly daunting.

The photograph shows the brass plate fixed to the base of the font and I would be extremely grateful if any member is able to translate the gothic Latin, accurately, for inclusion in the Record.

Rosie Sirl