



THE ARTS
SOCIETY
HAMPSTEAD
HEATH

Newsletter No 58
April 2020
www.tash.org.uk



Visit to Burghley House: Thursday 9 July 2020



Our summer visit this year is a coach trip to the famous Burghley House in Stamford, Lincolnshire. We will stop briefly in Stamford before arriving at Burghley House. Stamford became the first designated conservation area in all of England and Wales in 1967. It consists of a whole streetscape of pale limestone townhouses, churches, almshouses, cottages and imposing civic buildings.

Burghley House is a much-loved family home which has been in the Cecil family since the 16th century. William Cecil was treasurer to Elizabeth 1 and he had the magnificent house built between 1555 and 1587. The exterior largely retains its Elizabethan appearance, but most of the interiors date from remodellings before 1800. The collection of fine art is extensive and varied, and includes one of the finest collections of Italian Old Master paintings in private hands.

It also houses a major collection of English portrait miniatures and Chinese snuff bottles as well as important pieces of English and Continental furniture.

Visitor facilities include the Orangery restaurant, gift shop, gardens and beautiful walks around the historic parkland laid out by Capability Brown in the 18th Century and still occupied by a herd of fallow deer.

On arrival we will have time to explore the gardens, have lunch and then be taken on a one-hour guided tour of the house at 2:30pm

Further information and a flyer to book will be available from Michael Franklin closer to the time.

mikepfrank@btinternet.com

Special Interest Day: 23 April 2020 10:30 - 15:15

Cultural Revolution in the Heart of Europe: Gavin Plumley



Gavin Plumley

Don't miss our Special Interest Day with acclaimed writer, broadcaster and lecturer, Gavin Plumley. Gavin's lecture to us in February 2018 on The Art & Culture of Fin-de-Siècle Vienna was a total tour-de-force which was judged by all present as outstanding.

The lectures will cover the Czech lands, Slovenia and Hungary through the prism of their capital cities: Prague, Ljubljana and Budapest.

Further information from lstellman@aol.com or download the form from our website: www.tashh.org.uk

Visit to Southwark Cathedral: 7 January 2020

Our visit took us just south of London Bridge to an area of London which used to be part of the City of London before it was restricted to London Bridge and the north bank of the river Thames. We were greeted by our Cathedral Guide, Mike Murphy, who gave us a very entertaining and informative tour.

Established in Saxon times, probably by St Swithun, then Bishop of Winchester, the original church was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and later rededicated to the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ, and only became a cathedral in 1905 when the Diocese of Southwark was created out of the original Diocese of Winchester. Having been mentioned in the Domesday Book, it fell into disrepair and was rededicated as an Augustinian priory by two Norman knights to St Mary Overie (the Church of St Mary over the Water), becoming a church again after the Reformation.

It is famous for its 21 stained glass windows. The most remarkable of the modern windows are "Christ in Majesty" (1950), the blue window over the screen behind the choir by Sir Ninian Comper, and at the western end of the church, the "Creation Window" (1903) created by Henry Holiday, one of the second generation of Pre-Raphaelite artists, whose studio was in Hampstead. Others include the martyrs St Thomas-à-Becket, who worshipped in the church, King Charles I and Archbishop Laud, and a modern creation, immediately above a memorial to him,

commemorates the works of William Shakespeare who probably worshipped in the church and whose plays were staged nearby and now at the modern Globe Theatre established by Sam Wanamaker, in whose memory there is also a tablet.

Possibly, the most famous resident of the priory was the court poet John Gower who lived there at the start of the 15th century. He was a friend of Chaucer, famous for The Canterbury Tales about the pilgrimage to Canterbury which begins in Southwark; a stained glass window shows a group of pilgrims setting off from the church. Gower died at the priory and left a large part of his money to St Mary Overie. His beautiful tomb is in the nave of the Cathedral.

The Cathedral is an amazing blend of late Saxon architecture mixed with medieval, Norman, Renaissance and 19th century works, including some by Pugin and other architects keen to preserve the spirituality and style of the original building, and includes many interesting memorials and statues, including many of the "bargainers" who raised money for the restoration of the church in the middle ages.

After the tour, about 20 of our group stayed on for lunch at the nearby Pulia Restaurant which by all accounts was excellent. Thanks to Michael Franklin for organising such a successful visit.

Myke Jacobs



Statue of William Shakespeare



Christ in Majesty stained glass window (1950)



The Creation Window (1903)

Visit to the Museum of Brands: 24 February 2020



This is a fascinating museum which is far more than the story of packaging.

We started with an informative talk by Liam, one of the staff, who explained that this was the collection of Robert Opie. He started to collect the packaging from everyday objects in 1963. He accumulated contemporary packages from supermarkets but then started to collect backwards as far as the Victorian era.

By 1975 he had so much of interest that he approached the Victoria and Albert Museum who agreed to run "The Package" exhibition. This was very successful with huge media coverage. In 1984 he opened his first museum in Gloucester Docks. By 2005 he had moved it to a mews house near the present site in Ladbroke Grove as he collected yet more objects. This building was opening in 2015. Interestingly it was previously the home of the London Lighthouse (a hospice for patients with HIV/AIDS).

There are 12,000 items in the museum which range from grocery items and toys to fashion and Royalty memorabilia.

Over time packaging has become more sophisticated. Originally it focussed on the manufacturer's name - e.g. Mr Coleman but then names were dropped so Robertson's marmalade became Golden Shred and snappy logos such as OXO were developed.

It was fascinating to follow history as we walked through

the cleverly described "Time Tunnel". The wonderful Victorian memorabilia included cameras, phonographs, toy trains and a wonderful collection of Polka sheet music. I was amazed to see posters showing Thomas Cook's International network in 1874 and W.H. Smith book stalls in 1848.

We walked on to The Great War where children played the Dreadnought Shooting Game and we reminisced over huge tins of Fox's Glacier Mints and Barretts' liquorice allsorts.

War again led to paper rationing and blander packages. Perhaps there is a parallel now with sustainability and outside the tunnel there was a whole exhibit devoted to this important topic.

The rise of the self-service supermarket in the 1950's greatly affected packaging with more goods being sold directly off the shelf and more tinned goods. The changes became less startling as we raced towards the 21st century but for us it was a wonderful morning of reminiscence. A final quote by Keith Waterhouse (Daily Mirror) - "For me it was like standing on the three-legged stool and peering into the pantry cupboard of my childhood home in the 30's."

Many thanks to Michael Franklin for organising such a great visit.

Selina Gellert

Access to Kenwood House for lectures

Please note our starting time of 10.45am. Members should be seated by 10.35am.

For security reasons, Kenwood House have stipulated that TASHH members will not be allowed into the House before 10am.

Visit to Shri Swaminarayan Hindu Mandir, Neasden: 4 March 2020

Grey skies did not detract from the beauty of the Shri Swaminarayan Hindu Temple in Neasden. The creamy white Bulgarian limestone exterior greets visitors with delicate figures of deities, decorated windows and balconies. The Mandir, House of God, is as welcoming as it is imposing and has become a glorious part of the otherwise rather uninteresting Neasden skyline. It was created as a place of worship, learning, celebration, beauty, community, charity and peace.

Our Arts Society group of about 30 members, were welcomed and taken into the Haveli, a cultural centre as well as a prayer hall, by a charming guide. The Haveli is adjacent to the Mandir and both the exterior porticos and the interior were exquisitely carved by skilled workers in India from English Oak and Burmese Teak. Visitors and worshippers are welcomed by a breathtaking parade of elephants, lions, peacocks, swans and parrots in addition to carved columns, balustrades and canopies. It is a masterpiece of traditional Haveli architecture, a skill developed in the 17th century in Gujarat and Rajasthan in western India.

An introductory video outlined a brief history of the Mandir which was conceived as a place of worship in London for the East African Asians who came to the UK in the 1970s. The project was inspired by the fourth spiritual leader of the Swaminarayan sect, Bhagwan Swaminarayan, but it was the fifth successor, His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj who was ultimately responsible for the building and completion of the Mandir. After his demise in 2016, Pramukh Swami Maharaj was succeeded by His Holiness Mahant Swam Maharaj who is due to visit the Mandir this summer to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary.

More than one thousand volunteers worked on the building and many more contributed and donated to the project. Qualified volunteers offered their services in varying ways, from electrical wiring, insulation work, plumbing and drainage to landscaping and polishing the delicately carved marble pieces.

Following the video we had the privilege of attending prayers in the maha-mandap, Great Hall or nave, which is a stunning milky-white sanctuary of carved Carrara and Ambaji Marble pieces of varying sizes, assembled by hand, without steel or nails, into a huge three dimensional puzzle. The cantilevered dome brims with beautiful floral motifs. Natural daylight seeps in through the delicate stone lattice work windows, enhanced by subtle lighting which floods the dome with different pastel colours. Visitors from all faiths or none are all welcomed into this glorious sanctum. In the recesses around the outer wall, wooden shrines covered in gold leaf contain sacred images of the Deities, the six gurus of the Swaminarayan sect. The Great Hall is too beautiful to describe here, one comes away with a renewed sense of peace and quiet. Even the young school children in the Great Hall were silent and restful.

After the prayers, we visited the permanent exhibition on the lower floor of the Mandir and gained an insight into the values and wisdom of Hinduism.

A delicious buffet vegetarian lunch in the Shayona restaurant completed our visit. The tasty dhals, vegetarian curries and other delights were enjoyed by all. Thanks, Tamara Rabin, for organizing this excellent visit.

Loretta Mahmud



Interior



Exterior

Introducing Members of the Committee



Michael Franklin: Tours

Michael Franklin joined the Committee last year and will be taking over as Tours Organiser from Indira Mootosamy after the Genoa trip in June. He has now retired, having been a businessman for 40 years. He has previously been a trustee of Hampstead Garden Suburb Trust and before that, Chair of Hampstead Garden Suburb Horticultural Society. He looks forward to organising our very popular TASHH trips.

Terry Clarke: Secretary



A resident of Hampstead Garden Suburb for the past forty-five years, with a passion for languages, sport and culture, I have enjoyed an eclectic career working for a variety of international organisations as well as qualifying as a fitness instructor and leading walks on Hampstead Heath and in the Chilterns. I am divorced and live with my dog Maisie. I consider myself fortunate to have travelled extensively, done many Norwood bike rides, ski every winter and still enjoy tutoring French and Spanish. As a member of the HGS U3A, I regularly attend current affairs meetings. I love the arts and like to keep up to date with what is going on in the galleries and museums, at the opera and ballet, as well as in the theatre and cinema. Being part of the TASHH committee has introduced me to many more aspects of art as well as giving me the opportunity to be part of a great team.

Celia Newgas: Membership Secretary



My mother-in-law was one of the founding members of HHDFAS, (the Hampstead Heath branch of NADFAS) as our society was called back then. She recommended I put my name down on the waitlist. Eventually, my name came up and I have enjoyed many happy times on and off the committee.

An Engineer and Accountant by training, my interest in Art prompted me to start studying the History of Arts Foundation Birkbeck course at the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute. I never realised just how hard it was to write essays! Now I just listen and learn for pleasure.

I am fortunate to live in Highgate and am able to walk across the heath to Kenwood House for our lectures - a perfect combination of exercise and culture!

Summary of Dates for your Diary

NEXT IN THE LECTURE ROOM

Thursday 16 April 2020

**AGM followed by Tapestry, the Ultimate Wall
Decoration**
Susan Kay-Williams

This lecture will introduce some of the most important sets of tapestries in Europe including the Lady and the Unicorn, those commissioned by the Dukes of Burgundy in the 15th century, Rafael's designs for Pope Leo X, Henry VIII's Abraham tapestries, Louis XIV's 17th century series around the Seasons and the Months made at the Gobelins factory and on to the 21st century set commissioned by the Queen of Denmark. Susan will explore the designs and the craft of tapestry and why it has been the most expensive form of artistic expression until recent times.

Chief Executive of the Royal School of Needlework, based at Hampton Court Palace, Dr Kay-Williams is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and of the Chartered Institute of Marketing. She has a longstanding interest in textiles, especially colour, and published her first book "The Story of Colour in Textiles" in 2013.

Thursday 14 May 2020

Gaudi and his Architecture in Barcelona
Anthea Streeter

Anyone who has been to Barcelona will know the extraordinary buildings of this great Catalonian architect, who spent his life working there at the turn of the 20th century. This lecture would make an excellent introduction for those planning to visit Barcelona to see for themselves the realisation of Gaudi's outstandingly imaginative designs in this vibrant Catalonian city.

Anthea Streeter studied the Fine and Decorative Arts in London and continued her studies at Harvard University where she became interested in 20th century architecture. Since returning from America she has taught on courses in Oxford and London, lectured on the Country House course in Sussex, and for several private groups around the country.

VISITS

24 June 11:00

Hampstead Walk/Keats House

9 July 2020 08:30 - 17:30

Visit by Coach to Burghley House

Monday 26 October 11:00

Spencer House

Thursday 26 November 14:00

Second visit to Sir John Soane's Museum

Flyers will be emailed for these outings

SPECIAL INTEREST DAY

23 April 2020

Cultural Revolution in the Heart of Europe
Gavin Plumley

*Please consult our website
www.tashh.org.uk for the full extent of our
activities and to download forms to book for
events.*

**AS A RESULT OF COVID-19 ADVICE
FROM THE GOVERNMENT, ALL
FUTURE EVENTS MAY BE SUBJECT
TO CANCELLATION**



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