



GORDON RUSSELL DESIGN MUSEUM

Newsletter No.8

December 2012

'GORDON ROCKS': KIDS TAKE OVER THE MUSEUM

One of ninety museums taking part in Takeover Day on Friday 23 November the Gordon Russell Design Museum welcomed Year 5 and 6 pupils from St Mary's RC Primary School. The students experience all aspects of the museum's work from acting as guides to manning the reception desk and welcoming visitors. As well as helping former master-craftsman and employee of Gordon Russell Ltd, Martin Blakeman, prepare descriptions of chairs in the museum's collections the students were also



learnt about furniture restoration from Ian Lloyd-Oswell, and expert restorer. Describing their experience at the museum one student wrote in the comments book that 'Gordon Rocks'.



Welcoming visitors to the museum

A Year 6 pupil discusses the centre piece of the museum's collection with Chair of the Trustees, Richard Paice. The 'Paris Cabinet' will also feature on the Antiques Roadshow in 2013 when John Bly will talk about Gordon's prize winning work.





TRACING THE ARTS & CRAFTS

In September this year Whitecroft Traditional Tours arranged a visit to the museum for their William Morris groups. Participants came from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA to trace William Morris' connection with the area and the whole ethos of the Arts & Crafts movement. Michele Hill wrote that their visit to the museum made it all 'fall into place'. She added that 'Personally I will never look at dove tail joints in the same way

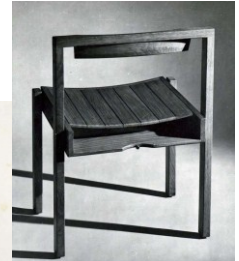
ever again (!!), and I will treasure two old pieces of furniture my Mother left for me many years ago after she died. I really don't think one really appreciates handcrafted furniture unless they have learnt the background and story behind its creation and your guides certainly had passion and pride for this area of craftsmanship'.

They all wished to thank museum's volunteers for the part they played and, in particular, she thanked Robert Herringshaw who showed the group a rare William Morris wood block of the 'Strawberry Thief'.



R.D. 'DICK' RUSSELL ON SHOW

The Gordon Russell Design Museum has lent a 1930s Murphy radio cabinet and a 1950s Coventry chair which were designed by Gordon's brother, R.D. 'Dick' Russell to the RCA's current exhibition *The Perfect Place to Grow. 175 Years of the Royal College of Art*. In 1948 Dick Russell was appointed Professor of Wood, Metals and Plastics in the School of Furniture Design at the RCA. He moved his practice into the College to enable students to see how a professional design studio was run.



ART DECO AT THE ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

As part of the RSC's revitalisation of the Royal Shakespeare Memorial Theatre the firm of Hands of High Wycombe, supporter of the Gordon Russell Design Museum, delivered replicas of the Art Deco metal tables and chairs which had originally been made at Gordon Russell's workshop for Elisabeth Scott's design for the Royal Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in 1932.

Sara Aspley, Director of Commercial Services at the RSC, said that in commissioning this furniture from Hands they were 'acknowledging the historical collaboration between Elisabeth Scott and Gordon Russell'. They are now located on the terrace of their Rooftop Restaurant where members of the public can enjoy tea and cake and 'a slice of the theatre's history'.

