

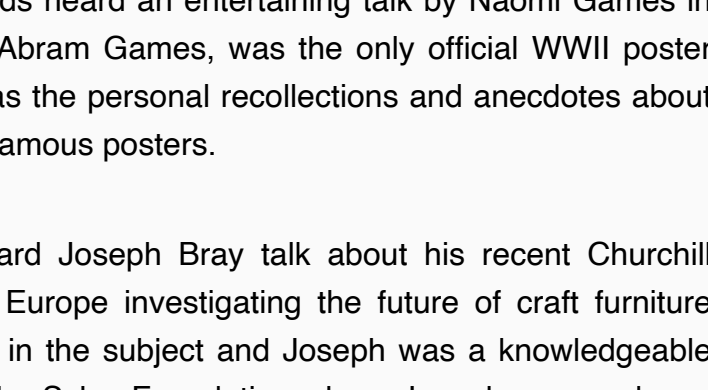
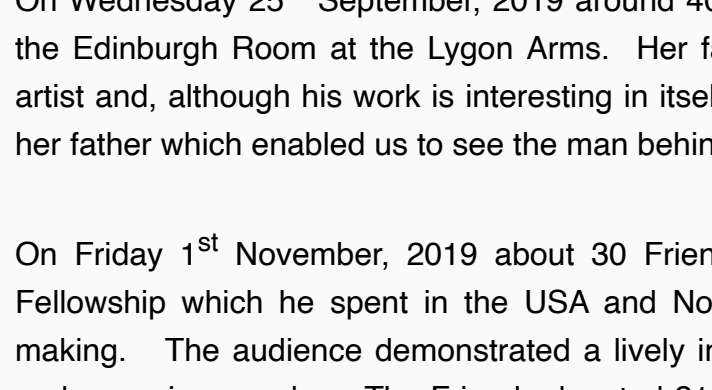
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RECENT TRIPS

Twenty Friends made the long journey to Hampshire on Wednesday 12th September, 2019 to visit the Barseley Workshops and Bedales School. Blessed with excellent weather we had a very informative and interesting visit.



RECENT TALKS

On Wednesday 25th September, 2019 around 40 Friends heard an entertaining talk by Naomi Games in the Edinburgh Room at the Lygon Arms. Her father, Abram Games, was the only official WWII poster artist and, although his work is interesting in itself, it was the personal recollections and anecdotes about her father which enabled us to see the man behind the famous posters.

On Friday 1st November, 2019 about 30 Friends heard Joseph Bray talk about his recent Churchill Fellowship which he spent in the USA and Northern Europe investigating the future of craft furniture making. The audience demonstrated a lively interest in the subject and Joseph was a knowledgeable and engaging speaker.

I remind Friends that after each talk the Speaker is invited to join me and a few Friends for supper at the Lygon Bar and Grill or in the Lygon Wine bar. If you would like to join the diners (at your own expense!) after a future talk do email me and let me know.

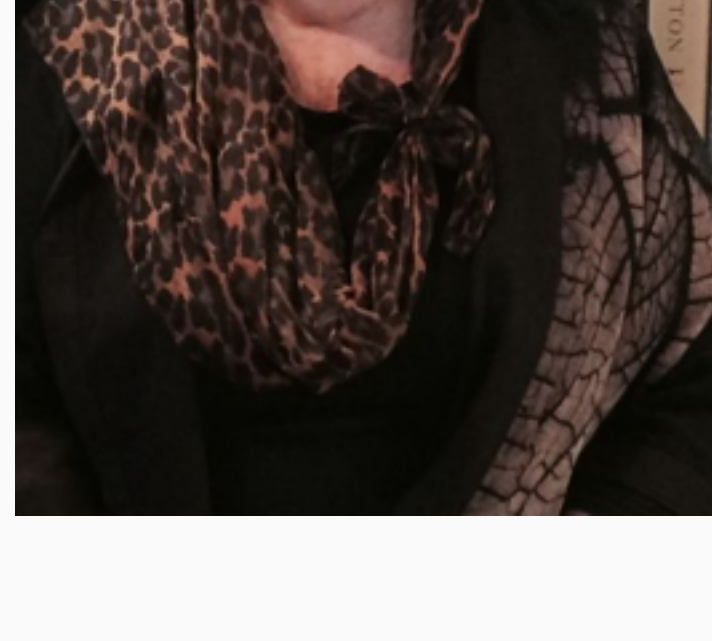
2020 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Please note that booking for 2020 events will open in the New Year.

- Friday 3rd April: Talk by Mary Schoerer
Wednesday 29th April: Visit to Home of Ambrose Heal, Beaconsfield
Friday 15th May: Talk by Megan Aldrich
Thursday 28th May: Drinks at Snowhill
Friday 11th June: Talk by Magnus Englund
Wednesday 24th June: Visit to Rousham House and Gardens
Wednesday 16th September: Visit to St Catherine's College, Oxford
Friday 6th November: Talk by Maurice Collins

DETAILS OF 2020 TALKS AND TRIPS

Tickets will be available online in the New Year and we will alert you by e-mail when booking opens.



Friday 3rd April 2020 at 1730 for 1800 in the Edinburgh Room, Lygon Arms, Broadway

Mary Schoerer: 'MARIANNE STRAUB - A DESIGNER'S DESIGNER'

Arriving in Bradford in 1932 to study power weaving, Swiss-born Marianne Straub (1909-1994) was to become one of Britain's most influential designer/weavers. This talk is a chance to glimpse the creative output of a handweaver committed to well-made mass-produced textiles, one who remained active until her return to Switzerland in 1992.

Her biographer, Mary Schoerer, introduces the range of her work, including the cloths she designed for Gordon Russell Ltd. Some, such as the Welsh tweeds first produced in the mid-1930s, remained favourites among the clients of the firm for over two decades, and Dick Russell is also known to have used them in his own home.

Joining Warner & Sons in 1950, she soon took up residence in Great Bardfield, Essex (where her immediate neighbours were Edward and Charlotte Bawden) and began teaching, latterly at the Royal College of Art. Among her freelance designs were those she produced for London Underground, including one remaining in use on the Piccadilly Line until recently. An example of this, together with a small selection of other Straub cloths, will be available to examine on the evening.

Our speaker MARY SCHOESER has been a predominantly freelance historian since 1991. Mary Schoerer MA FRSA has written diverse publications (26 books, over 50 essays in books and over 120 shorter pieces), which include Textiles: A concise history (T&H, 2003), Silk (Yale University Press, 2007), and Textiles: The art of marking (Thames & Hudson, 2012 and 2013). For nine years in the 1980s the Archivist for Warner & Sons, there she was introduced to Marianne Straub, co-creating a book and exhibition on her life's work in 1984. From 1991 a consultant archivist to numerous firms, her knowledge of British manufacturers extends to a sound understanding of textile and wallpaper production itself. This has facilitated restoration work with English Heritage, the National Trust and other historic property owners and also informed 36 curatorial projects, most recently a Designers Guild exhibition for the Fashion & Textile Museum in London. Extensive academic experience included a part-time research position at Central Saint Martins (2000-2011) and receipt in 2016 of an Honorary Senior Research Fellowship from the V&A Museum. President of the Textile Society, she is also Patron of the School of Textiles, Coggles Hall (www.schooloftextiles.co.uk).

COST: VOLUNTEERS FREE, FRIENDS £5, OTHERS £10

Wednesday 29th April 2020: VISIT TO BAYLINS FARM, BEACONSFIELD

GRDM Friend Oliver Heal is providing a UNIQUE opportunity for just 20 Friends to visit the house purchased by his grandfather AMBROSE HEAL in 1919.

BAYLINS FARM is a convincing demonstration of the powerful influence the ideas of William Morris had on the generation of designers that followed at the beginning of the 20th century. Sir Ambrose Heal (1872-1959), the renowned furniture retailer, designer and manufacturer, acquired and restored this 15th century timber framed farmhouse in 1919 and it has remained the Heal family home ever since.

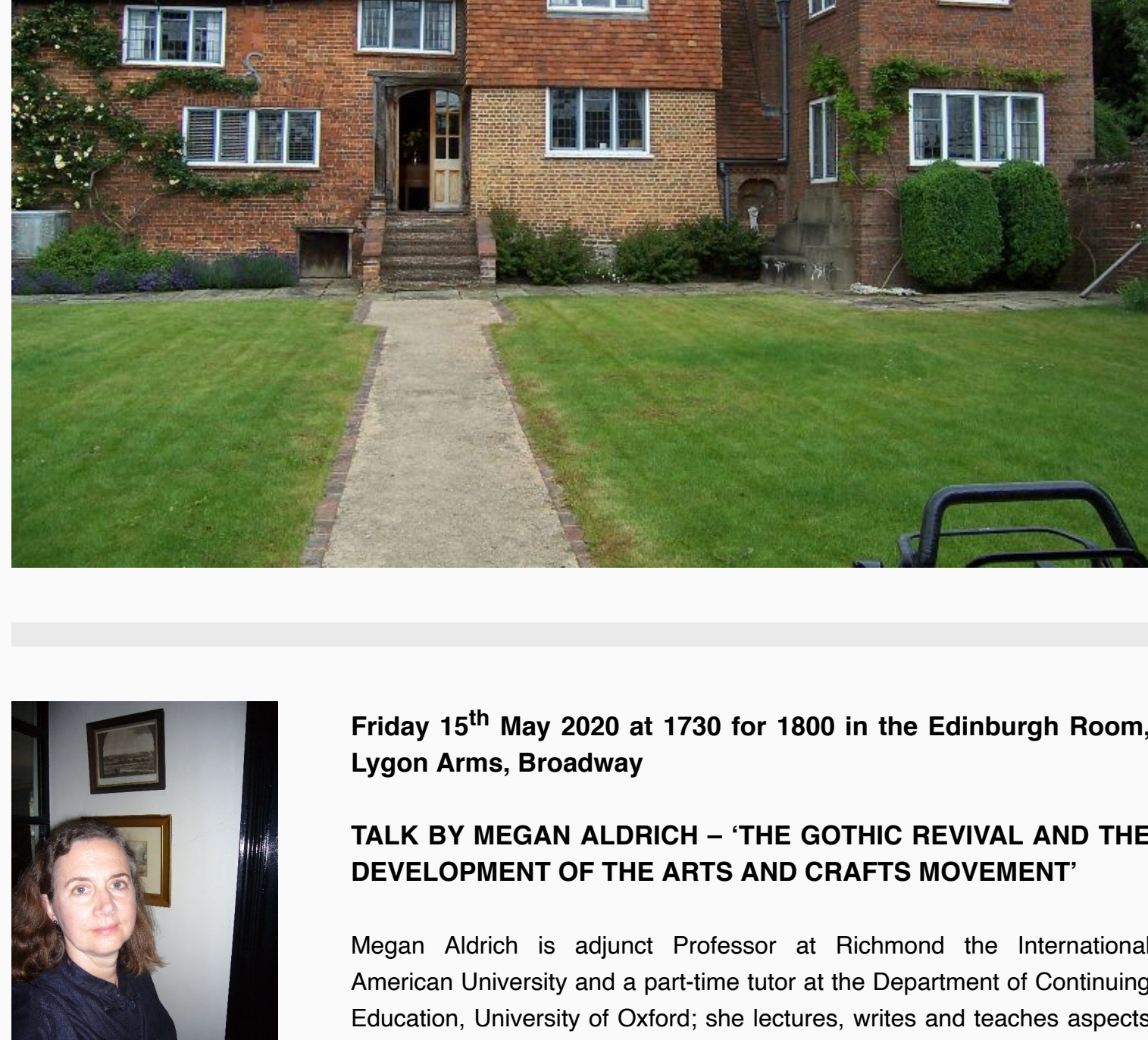
Still furnished with unique pieces of Ambrose Heal's furniture made in his own Cabinet Factory it shows how deeply influenced by the Arts & Crafts Movement he was even after World War One when he was, at the same time, also designing furniture for mass production. His profound adoption of the ideals propounded by Ruskin and Morris is evidenced by the sympathetic restoration work in line with SPAB guidelines that he carried out on the buildings that had been used as a working farm until that point. Its five hundred year history from Medieval Manor Hall onwards can still be read from its structure inside and out. The interior decoration however is largely a reflection of Arts & Crafts ideas and includes examples of the work of Morris, de Morgan, Romney Green, MacDonald Gill (Eric Gill's brother) and Edward Maufe. Perhaps the most noteworthy example of Ambrose Heal's furniture made in the arts of the time is the oak sideboard he commissioned from Sidney Barnsley and which turned out to be the last piece Barnsley made with his own hands. There are traces too of Scandinavian and German influences to be found in this interior which is a rare and therefore important survivor of an elusive period for historians of interiors.

As a family home for three generations it has naturally acquired layers of later influence but the fundamental layout and furnishing of Sir Ambrose Heal and his wife Edith remain remarkably intact. His 1926 Sunbeam motor car still stands in the garage.

Ambrose sent his elder son Anthony (father of Oliver) to learn cabinet making at the Russell Workshops in the 1920's and the house still contains the wardrobe he made there. It was a crucial step in his career although he never practised as a cabinet maker. After WWII Anthony served on the Design Council with Gordon Russell and Heal's sold GR furniture. When Ray Leigh was Master of the Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers, Anthony made a pilgrimage back to Broadway in his Sunbeam just a year before he died.

Lunch at the nearby Royal Standard of England PH at your own expense.

COST OF TRIP £25.



Friday 15th May 2020 at 1730 for 1800 in the Edinburgh Room, Lygon Arms, Broadway

TALK BY MEGAN ALDRICH - 'THE GOthic REVIVAL AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT'

Megan Aldrich is adjunct Professor at Richmond the International American University and a part-time tutor at the Department of Continuing Education, University of Oxford; she lectures, writes and teaches aspects of architectural and design history, including interiors and furniture, and consults in the heritage sector. She was formerly a Senior Lecturer and Academic Director of Sotheby's Institute of Art in London. Recent publications include Antiquaries and Archaisms: the past in the past, the past in the present (Spire Books, 2009); Art and Authenticity (Lund Humphries, 2012); Thomas Rickman and the Victorians (Victorian Society, 2019); and articles in the journals of Garden History (2016), and Furniture History (2018). She is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.

COST: VOLUNTEERS FREE, FRIENDS £5, OTHERS £10

Thursday 28th May 2020: EARLY SUMMER DRINKS AT TOWER HOUSE, SNOWHILL, 1700-1900.

Our Friends Claire and James Wright own and regularly visit Tower House in Snowhill which Sydney Russell, Sir Gordon's father, purchased during the Great War and which was the Russell family home for many years. They have generously invited volunteers and Friends to join them for drinks on the 28th May. This is a rare opportunity to visit one of the most significant places in the Gordon Russell story.

VOLUNTEERS FREE; FRIENDS £10.

Friday 22nd June 2020 at 1730 for 1800 in the Edinburgh Room, Lygon Arms, Broadway

TALK BY MAGNUS ENGLUND AND LEYLA DAYBELGE - 'ISKON AND THE BAUHAUS IN BRITAIN'

In the mid-1930's three giants of the international modern movement, architect, refugee in Hansestadt in the most exciting new apartment block in Britain. The Lawn Road Flats, or Isokon Building as it came to be known was commissioned by Jack and Molly Pritchard and designed by aspiring architect Wells Coates. Magnus and Leyla will tell the story of the Isokon from its beginnings to the present day; not just of its design and architecture but of war, sex, death, espionage and the infamous dinner parties!

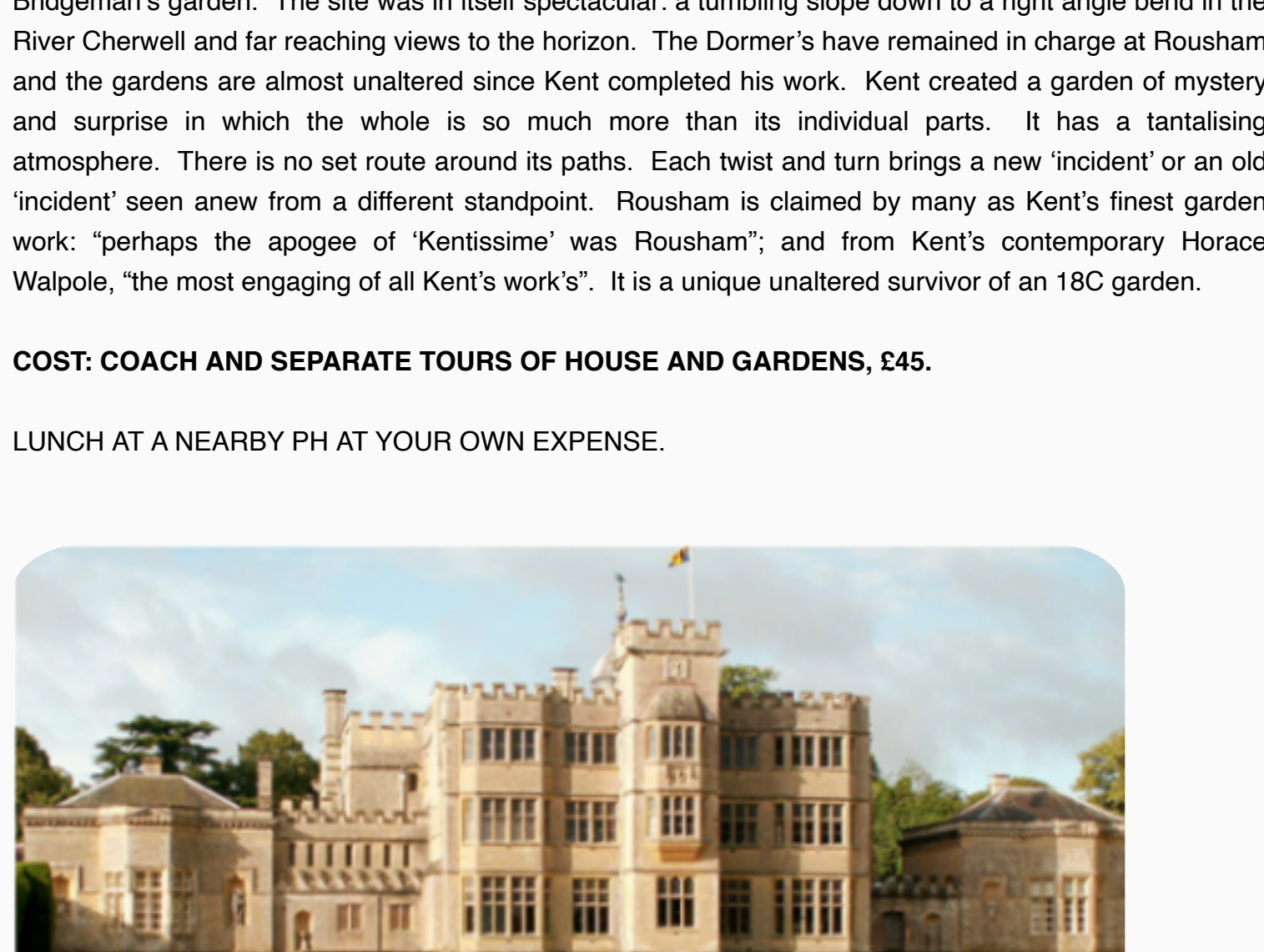
Dick Russell and his wife Marion Papler were Isokon residents at one time. After WWII Jack Pritchard tried to sell the Isokon Company to Gordon Russell but without success. Both men were fond of Pevsner.

Magnus Englund was a resident of Jack and Molly's penthouse in the Isokon Building. He has championed the building's revival and is a trustee of the Isokon Gallery. He was the co-founder of the popular interior design company, Skandium.

Leyla Daybelge is a journalist and TV news presenter who writes regularly for the Telegraph, among others. She was previously Head of Press for Contemporary and Design at Sotheby's.

They are the co-authors of 'Isokon and the Bauhaus in Britain' published in March 2019 to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Bauhaus.

COST: VOLUNTEERS FREE, FRIENDS £5, OTHERS £10



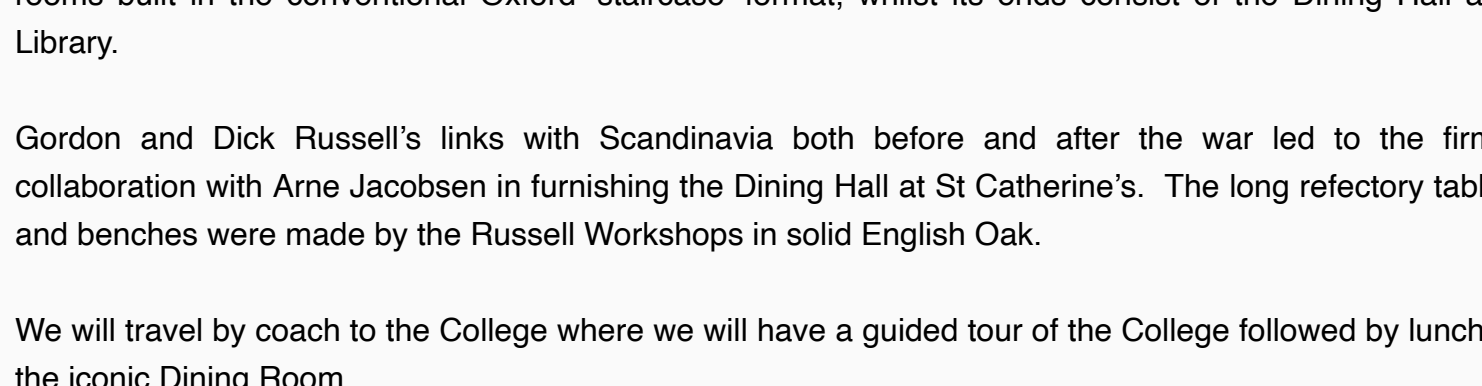
Wednesday 24th June 2020 - VISIT TO ROUSHAM HOUSE AND GARDENS

'Rousham is uncommercial and unspoilt, with no tea room and no shop. Bring a picnic, wear comfortable shoes and it is yours for the day'. 'No children under 15. No dogs.' This is the written introduction that greets the visitor on arrival at Rousham House and Gardens, a few miles from Blenheim Palace. We will enjoy guided tours of BOTH the House and Gardens.

Rousham has been the family home of the Dormer family since the mid-seventeenth century. In the early eighteenth century the house passed into the hands of Colonel Robert Dormer and on his death in 1737 to his younger brother General James Dormer. After James Dormer assumed ownership of Rousham he turned immediately to William Kent to design elements of the house interior and re-design Charles Bridgeman's garden. The site was in itself spectacular: a tumbling slope down to a right angle bend in the River Cherwell and far reaching views to the horizon. The Dormer's have remained in charge at Rousham and the gardens are almost unaltered since Kent completed his work. Kent created a garden of mystery and surprise in which the whole is so much more than its individual parts. It has a tantalising atmosphere. There is no set route around its paths. Each twist and turn brings a new 'incident' or an old incident 'seen anew from a different standpoint'. Rousham is claimed by many as Kent's finest garden work: "perhaps the apogee of 'Kentsianism' was Rousham"; and from Kent's contemporary Horace Walpole, "the most engaging of all Kent's works". It is a unique unaltered survivor of an 18C garden.

COST: COACH AND SEPARATE TOURS OF HOUSE AND GARDENS, £45.

LUNCH AT A NEARBY PH AT YOUR OWN EXPENSE.



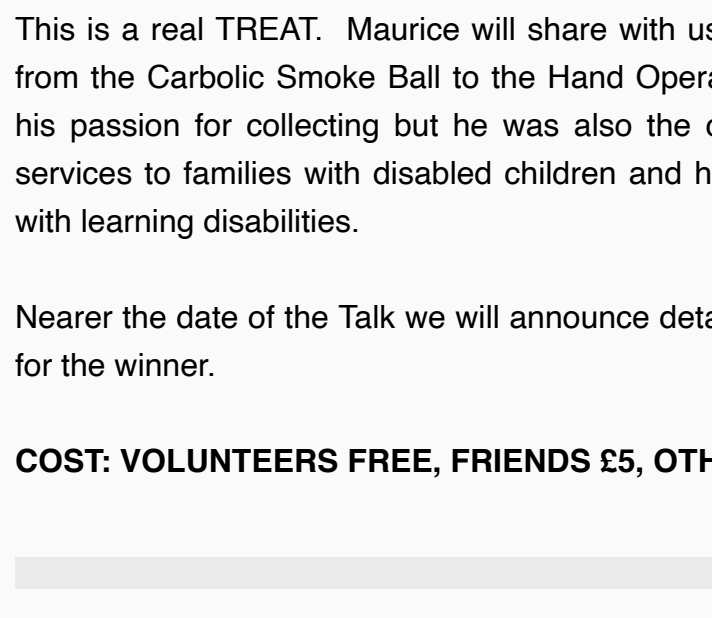
Wednesday 16th September 2020: VISIT TO ST.CATHERINE'S COLLEGE, OXFORD

St Catherine's College Oxford was built in 1962 by the Danish architect Arne Jacobsen. His vision was to build an entirely modern solution to the challenge of creating an integrated environment which would be both practical and aesthetically pleasing, whilst still reflecting the elements of a traditional Oxford college. The result was a rectangular quadrangle at the heart of the college surrounded by buildings in glass and concrete, which married modern materials with a more traditional layout. Its sides are formed by student rooms built in the conventional Oxford 'staircase' format, whilst its ends consist of the Dining Hall and Library.

Gordon and Dick Russell's links with Scandinavia both before and after the war led to the firm's collaboration with Arne Jacobsen in furnishing the Dining Hall at St Catherine's. The long refectory tables and benches were made by the Russell Workshops in solid English Oak.

We will travel by coach to the College where we will have a guided tour of the College followed by lunch in the iconic Dining Room.

COST: TO INCLUDE THE COACH FARE, TOUR AND 3 COURSE LUNCH: £50.00



Friday 6th November 2020 1730 for 1800 in the Edinburgh Room, Lygon Arms, Broadway.

TALK BY MAURICE COLLINS

'BRITAIN'S BEST COLLECTOR': 'ECCENTRIC CONTRACTIONS AND INGENUOUS GADGETS OR GRANNY HAD ONE BUT SHE THREW IT AWAY!'

This is a real TREAT. Maurice will share with us the fruits of a lifetime collecting Eccentric Contraptions from the Caribic Smoke Ball to the Hand Operated Page Turner. Maurice has written prolifically about his passion for collecting but he was also the co-founder of the Charity Kth and Kids which provides services to families with disabled children and he has been awarded an OBE for his services to people with learning disabilities.

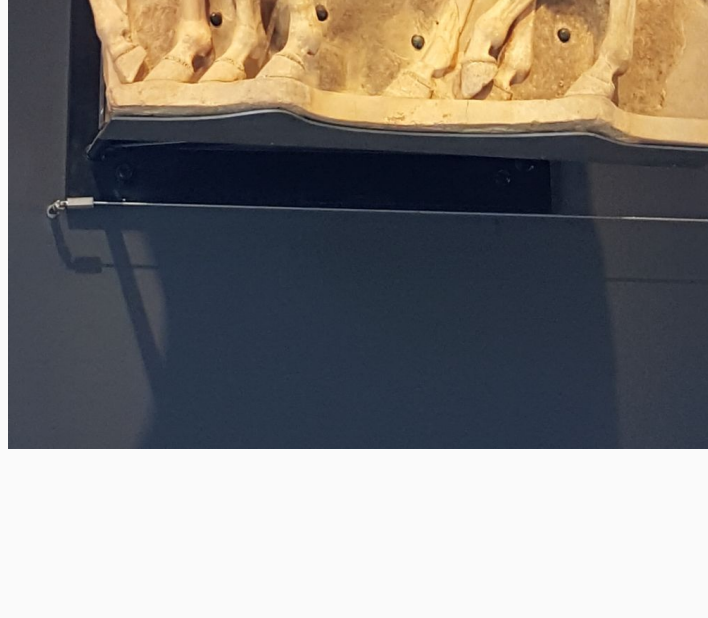
Nearer the date of the Talk we will announce details of a Quiz for those who attend with a tantalising prize for the winner.

COST: VOLUNTEERS FREE, FRIENDS £5, OTHERS £10.

AND FINALLY.....

A little further afield for this quarter's conclusion. Among the many fascinating books which I was given for my 70th birthday was "30,000 years of art - the story of human creativity across time and space" published by Phaidon. It details over 600 works of art created across the ages or man. I was disappointed to find how little I had seen personally, particularly those created before the Birth of Christ.

However, there is an exception. Docking at Civitavecchia, the Port of Rome, a couple of years ago we avoided the long trip to Rome itself and instead made for Tarquinia about 20 miles north. Just outside the city are dozens of extraordinary Etruscan tombs. In the city is the National Archaeological Museum which contains one of man's greatest works of art - the Winged Horses, dating from 300BC. This artefact of the Etruscan civilisation originally stood in a Temple overlooking the city and would have drawn the chariot of a goddess. The spirited horses are powerfully rendered in painted terracotta and extruding and curving at the bit. They are an extraordinary survivor from nearly 2,500 years ago.



Christopher Hotten
December 2019

