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### **GRDM FRIENDS NEWSLETTER 15**

## Contents

Booking system News Dates for your 2020 diary Forthcoming Talks and Trips And finally... The Broadway Pottery

### BOOKING VIA ART TICKETS

Most users have adjusted well to the new system and I am very happy to continue to book tickets for those of you who have had problems booking via Art Tickets.

Booking is now open for drinks at Snowshill on 28th May; the talk by Magnus Englund on 11th June and the visit to Rousham on 24th June. See individual event information below for links for booking tickets.

### NEWS

### 2020 SUMMER PARTY

We are delighted to announce that the Summer Party for Friends and Volunteers will take place in the Orangery at Sezincote House and Gardens on Friday 3rd July. Booking details will follow in due course but please note the date in your diaries.

For those of you who don't know, the house at Sezincote is Indian in style, complete with a dome, built in 1805, with the gardens designed by Humphry Repton. Two years later the Prince Regent visited Sezincote and, it is said that he was inspired to incorporate some features into the Royal Pavilion at Brighton.

I can say with absolute confidence that the sun will shine this year but, if by some mischance, there is a shower of rain we will be warm and snug in the delightful orangery, which serves as the tea room when the house is open to the public. Located in Bourton on the Hill, about 15 minutes drive from Broadway going towards Moreton in Marsh, and there is ample parking.

### 2020 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

# Friday 3rd April: Talk by Mary Schoeser

Wednesday 29th April: Visit to Home of Ambrose Heal, Beaconsfield - SOLD OUT

Friday 15th May: Talk by Megan Aldrich

Thursday 28th May: Drinks Snowshill

Friday 12th June: Talk by Magnus Englund

Friday 3rd July: Summer Party at Sezincote

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 AND BOOKING FORMS FOR TALKS AND TRIPS 2020



Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1730 for 1800 in the Edinburgh Room, Lygon Arms, Broadway

### Mary Schoeser: '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 Schoeser, 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.

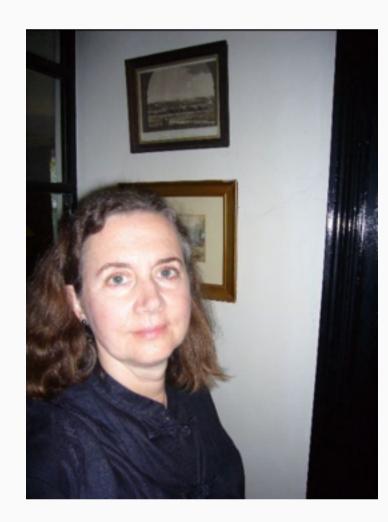
Our speaker MARY SCHOESER has been a predominantly freelance historian since 1991. Mary Schoeser MA FRSA has written diverse publications (26 books, over 50 essays in books and over 120 shorter pieces), which include Textiles: A concise history (T&H: 2003), Silk (Yale University Press, 2007), and Textiles: The art of mankind (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, Coggeshall (www.schooloftextiles.co.uk).

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

Click here for booking form

Wednesday 29th April: VISIT TO BAYLINS FARM, BEACONSFIELD - SOLD OUT

This 15th century farmhouse acquired in 1919, restored by the renowned furniture retailer, designer and manufacturer Sir Ambrose Heal (1872-1959) has remained the family home ever since with pieces of furniture by Heal as well as an interior decorated by key figures of the Arts & Crafts Movement.



Friday 15<sup>th</sup> 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 parttime 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 Archaists: 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

Click here for booking form

Drinks at Tower Close, Snowshill, WR17 7UU Thursday 28th May 2020, 1700-1900pm

'I remember asking my father for a copy of the plans of a small, old house at Snowshill, near Broadway, which he had bought. These I studied with great care as they gave me a valuable link with home...I wrote detailed reports on different aspects of the planning and the carrying out of the repair work.' (*A Designers Trade* by Sir Gordon Russell).

This was 1916 and Gordon was writing from the Trenches in France of the house which was to become his father Sydney's family home. Our Friends, Claire and James Wright, who now own Tower House have generously invited us to visit for drinks on what will be a delightful Summer evening.

Volunteers, Free; Friends £5. Click here for Booking Link



Friday 12th June 2020 at 1730 for 1800 in the Edinburgh Room, Lygon Arms, Broadway

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

In the mid-1930's three giants of the international modern movement, Bauhaus professors Walter Gropius, Marcel Breuer and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy fled Nazi Germany and sought refuge in Hampstead in the most exciting new apartment block in Briton. 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 Pepler 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 close to 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 Click here for booking form

# Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> 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 'Kentissime' was Rousham"; and from Kent's contemporary Horace Walpole, "the most engaging of all Kent's work's". It is a unique unaltered survivor of an 18C garden.

COST: COACH AND SEPARATE TOURS OF HOUSE AND GARDENS, £45. <u>Click here for booking</u> <u>form</u>

LUNCH AT A NEARBY PH AT YOUR OWN EXPENSE.



Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> 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 6<sup>th</sup> November 2020 1730 for 1800 in the Edinburgh Room, Lygon Arms, Broadway.

TALK BY MAURICE COLLINS

"BRITAIN'SBESTCOLLECTOR":'ECCENTRICCONTRAPTIONSANDINGENEOUSGADGETSORGRANNYHADONE 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 Carbolic 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 Kith 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.....

### The Broadway Pottery

I had not heard of The Broadway Pottery until two or three months ago when Diana Williams kindly gave me this charming little preserve pot. At my suggestion the Broadway Museum recently, and beautifully, displayed her collection which she had been adding to for some time.

She also provided me with an online article by the noted potter Marshall Colman [https://marshallcolman.blogspot.com/2017/01]





Fig.1. Preserve Pot

Fig.2 Diana Williams collection on display at Broadway Museum

He writes about the history of 20<sup>th</sup> century Cotswold Potteries, including the one in Broadway. Like many of the other potteries Broadway specialised in 'slipware' in which 'lead-glazed earthenware is decorated with coloured clay mixed with water known as "slip". The main methods are trailing a line of slip through a fine tube, scratching through a slip of one colour to make a line of contrasting colour by revealing the clay beneath, or by painting'. Colman notes that slipware was made at Broadway 'under the direction of A.E. Wheeler, about whom nothing is known, who he was, where he learned pottery and where he went after winding up the business'.

Intrigued I set out to discover the pottery, and the man behind it. There are many Broadway folk who have illuminated my search. I am grateful to them for their recollections but any inaccuracies which follow are my responsibility.

A.E. Wheeler was in fact Alick Edward Wheeler, a quiet unassuming man with a moustache. He and his wife lived on the Offenham Road in Evesham. No one remembers there being any children. Sylvia Riley had the impression that Mr Wheeler came into pottery later in life. 'He had the bearing of someone like an accountant; he wasn't an artisan sort of person', she said. Mrs Wheeler was 'golf mad' and played at Evesham. In 1950 Alick Wheeler purchased a plot of land at the bottom of Fire Station Lane, which in those days was little more than a track. He employed a local architect Tom R. Bateman (not the more famous C.E. Bateman who designed the dining room at the Lygon in 1909) to design. Planning permission for Lower Fold, a modest house (much extended since) was granted in September 1950.

No one recalls what he did for a living but Wheeler came to Broadway intent on keeping bees, setting up hives in the orchard at Lower Fold and harvested the honey to sell. Today Terry Firkins maintains the hives to make 'Cotswold Honey' at Kingham.

Evidently Wheeler became dissatisfied with the containers in which he sold his honey and in 1955 applied for, and was granted, permission to construct a workshop/pottery in the grounds of Lower Fold to make small pots for his honey. Whether he made them himself as well as tending the bees is not known with certainty but it is known that he employed Muriel Tudor-Jones, who lived with her mother on the High Street in Broadway between Little Gables and what was then the barber shop.

Muriel was an experienced potter. She had worked at the Coldstone Pottery and later established a pottery in Chipping Campden. Marshall Colman says she worked in Broadway from 1959 to 1963 but a local source has suggested that it was Muriel who started the pottery on Wheeler's land and it must have been around 1955. Mrs Elsie Crump (now deceased) has been described to me as 'the backbone of the pottery'. I was also told of a schoolgirl (still with us) who, for a short period, spent her school holiday filling pots with honey in the sheds next to Lower Fold. Margaret Charlesworth, now 97 years young, and living, as she has done for the past 72 years, on Sandscroft Avenue in Broadway, also worked in the pottery. It was delight to visit her, her son John and daughter Margaret Poole, and share their memories of Broadway and the Broadway Pottery.

John recalled that his father, born in 1919 worked for Gordon Russell as a cabinet maker both before and after the Second World War. He joined the Yorkshire Regiment of the Royal Artillery on the outbreak of the war and, according to John, he was the last man off the beach at Dunkirk. When he tried to board a boat he was told he would be shot but he replied he would get shot if he stayed and climbed on board

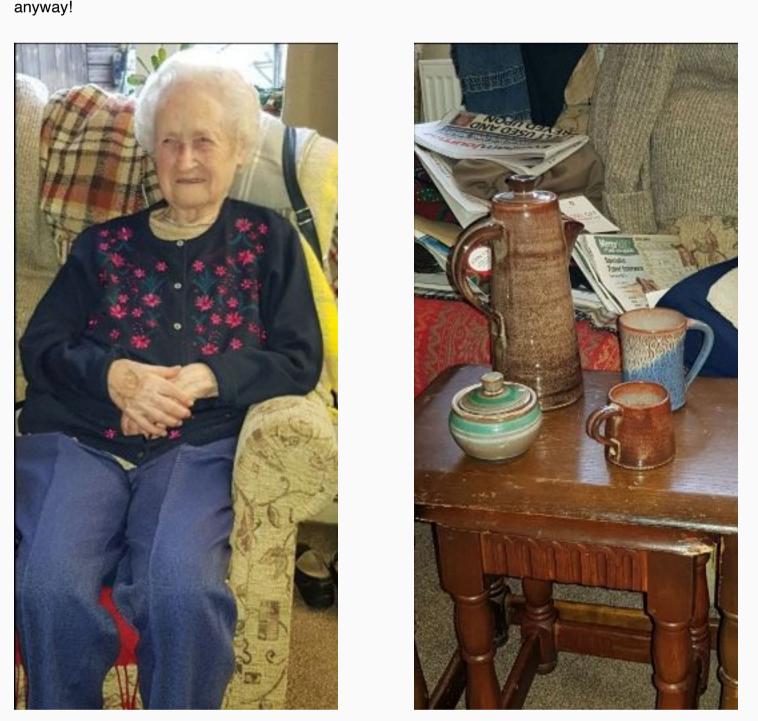


Fig 3 Mrs Margaret Charlesworth Fig 4 Mrs Charlesworth's own collection of Broadway Pottery

Margaret Charlesworth worked for Gordon Russell during the course of the war making gun cotton boxes, NAAFI furniture and, memorably, wing tips for Mosquito bombers - all baby boomer boys will remember that the Mosquito was largely made of plywood. Margaret's mother, Beatrice Sunley worked as an office cleaner for Gordon Russell before the war.

Margaret Charlesworth remembers joining the Broadway Pottery in the mid-1960's and stayed for about 5 years. "I did all sorts. Mr Wheeler filled the pots with honey and I put the labels on. I did fettling, that is cleaning all the seams and making them smooth before the pots were fired. Also working there were Elsie Crump and Betty Rose. Elsie Crump did the dipping of the pots in the glaze. Betty Rose did the same as me. The pots were made in moulds, we all put the clay in the moulds, Elsie Crump in particular. Miss Tudor-Jones made the moulds. We made cups, jugs, jam and honey pots." Margaret Poole told me that the Pottery made coffee sets which consisted of 6 coffee cups, a sugar bowl, milk jug, spoon holder and coffee pot. She said that every time there was a wedding in the family she bought a coffee set and so they will be scattered all over the country! John Charlesworth remembers a Len Goldburg working with his mother at the pottery. Len "threw pots" and "was very good at it." There is good evidence that pots were thrown as well as moulded.

The honey and the pots were sold locally. Diana Williams inherited her first pot from a relative who bought it somewhere in the Cotswolds. It was that pot which fired her interest. Sylvia and Peter Riley had a little shop where the Olive Branch B&B now is. It was a Mace Shop where "we sold all sorts including Hoola Hoops and sledges and the honey in the pots Mr Wheeler made."

David Robinson remembers Alick Wheeler as he sold Broadway Pottery in his shop in Broadway. "He made small pots and dishes. He used to price them up and I picked them up by the box and they always sold." He recalled "a presentation at the Broadway Golf Club for a group of visiting Americans. Mr Wheeler made 24 or 36 ashtrays with 'Broadway Golf Club' on them which we gave to the visitors." David also recalled collecting fancy used champagne bottles which he took to the Pottery. "Mr Wheeler put them on trays in the Kiln, which was set to a very high temperature. The bottles collapsed in on themselves and made lovely table ashtrays. They were marvellous, didn't cost anything and we sold them!"





Fig 5. Milk jug (Sylvia & Peter Riley)

Fig 6. Vase (Sylvia & Peter Riley)

It seems that in the late 60's or early 70's Alick Wheeler and his wife decided to retire. He closed the Broadway Pottery, possibly in 1969 and in April 1972 he sold Lower Fold to Tom Bateman who had designed and built it for him more than 20 years earlier. It seems likely that he moved to Shropshire because some years later Margaret Poole took her son on a trip to Acton Scott near Church Stretton and took the opportunity to visit the Wheelers nearby. She no longer has the precise address but recalls Mrs Wheeler making them a cup of tea. At that point the trail goes cold. What became of them?



Fig 7. Broadway Pottery Mark

That was not the end of the pottery. Tom Bateman let it out. John Charlesworth remembers the first tenant as Brian Sykes who lived in Stow on the Wold and then Henry Cumberland who later made pottery at Childswickham and whose son now owns the Wayside Café in Wickhamford. But eventually he left and the pottery was no more.

If you have memories of Broadway Pottery I would love to hear them, even if it is simply to correct mistakes and errors in this account.

Christopher Hotten Valentine's Day, 2020



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