

GRDM FRIENDS NEWSLETTER 7

Forthcoming Events:

UNITY IN VARIETY. DR CHRISTOPHER DRESSER, PIONEER OF MODERN DESIGN

Friday 6th April 2018

by **Matthew Winterbottom** at 6pm in the Edinburgh Room, Lygon Arms, Broadway

Dr Christopher Dresser (1834-1904) believed that well-made objects should be within the reach of the widest possible public and his design theory was based on the belief that natural forms should be abstracted and made geometric for use in ornamentation, as can be seen in his designs for ceramics, glass, metal, furniture, wallpapers and textiles. Considered to be the first industrial designer he fully embraced the implications of



industrial production and created forms and ornament for a wide range of manufacturers here in Great Britain as well as France and the United States. Dresser's work was influenced by Japanese arts and crafts, which he saw on his tour of Japan (the first by a European designer) in the late 19th century. He was also the author of a number of important books on the subject of ornament and design. See *booking form for ticket prices*.

About the speaker: Formerly Assistant Curator at the V&A Museum; Assistant Curator of Decorative Arts, the Royal Collection, and at the Holburne Museum in Bath, Matthew Winterbottom took on the radical redisplay of the decorative art collections of the Ashmolean Museum, when he was appointed their Curator of Nineteenth-Century Decorative Arts in 2014.

VISIT TO OWLPEN MANOR HOUSE AND GARDEN

Wednesday 16th May 2018

With its magnificent 16th century Tudor Great Hall, 17th century Jacobean Solar and 18th century Georgian Little Parlour this manor house was saved from ruin after many years of neglect by the outstanding Arts & Crafts architect Norman Jewson and is now home to Sir Nicholas and Lady Mander and their family. As well as an opportunity to see a series of unique painted textiles in the Great Chamber, Mander family portraits and objects, GRDM Friends will also see a representative collection of Arts & Crafts furniture and fittings. From its hanging terraces, Georgian mill pond and lake, walled kitchen garden, magnificent yew topiary, old roses and box parterres, the gardens at Owlpen have been much admired by some of our foremost garden designers including Gertrude Jekyll, Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe and Vita Sackville-West.



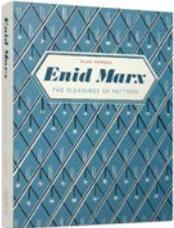
Lunch will be at your own expense in a nearby pub restaurant.

ENID MARX: THE PLEASURES OF PATTERN

Friday 22nd June 2018

by **Alan Powers** at 6pm in the Edinburgh Room, Lygon Arms, Broadway

Enid Marx (1902-1998), an important leading artist and designer, collector and writer, played an important role in British cultural life in the mid-20th century. Petite and charming, she was industrious, perfectionist, outspoken and campaigning. Her career spanned seventy years and a wide range of work, from stamps, rugs, books and book jackets, wrapping papers, logos and fabric patterns for London Transport. In 1944 she was appointed a Royal Designer for Industry (RDI), the only pattern maker recognised for this distinction. She worked with Gordon Russell on laminates for the wartime Utility Furniture Panel. Samples of her work, together with a large number of pieces folk/popular art she collected can be seen at Compton Verney.



About the speaker: Alan Powers specialises in 20th century art, architecture and design and has lectured and published on these subjects. His books include works on the artist Eric Ravilious (2013) Edward Ardizzone (2016) and the first monograph on the work of this prolific artist-designer, which was published in March this year and he will be bringing copies with him for our meeting.

VISIT TO WIGHTWICK MANOR

Tuesday 18th September 2018

Built for the successful 19th century industrialist Theodore Mander this is a rare surviving example of a house influenced by the aesthetic and arts & crafts movements. Mander was inspired to decorate the interior of the manor with wallpapers and fabrics designed by William Morris, tiles by William De Morgan, glass by Charles Kempe, after he heard a lecture by Oscar Wilde in Wolverhampton in 1884. We will also have an opportunity to see paintings by the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, including a temporary exhibition of work by Lizzie Siddall, the ill-fated wife of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. The visit will include a one hour guided tour of the house, an opportunity for a self-guided visit to the permanent William and Evelyn de Morgan exhibition, and an opportunity to investigate the wonderful gardens created by the Arts & Crafts garden designer Thomas Mawson. In 1937 Wightwick Manor passed into the care of the National Trust. (only 25 places available)



Cost: £15 payable in advance to cover coach hire cost
(make cheques payable to Friends of GRDM or by bank transfer Lloyds Bank, Sort: 30-80-34, Account: 38748068)

Entry to House and Gardens: FREE for NT members or
£10.50 for non-members payable in person on the day
£9.25 for savoury buffet lunch payable in person on the day.

My thanks to all the volunteers, Friends and guests who attended the talk by Roger Vltos on 23rd February. A lively and entertaining speaker Roger coped brilliantly during his talk on **The Private Frolics of Lord Berners**, while the new projector was being fixed. The Lygon have assured me that they will be giving their staff additional training to prevent such difficulties in the future. *Christopher Hotten, Friends Organiser*

NEW BOOK ON GORDON RUSSELL FURNITURE

Ray Leigh has completed his indispensable history of Gordon Russell furniture with *A Change of Direction. [Gordon Russell Furniture 1930-1940]* which will be launched on 15th March 2018 at Furniture Makers Hall in London. This volume covers the period when Gordon Russell relinquished his role as the company's designer to his youngest brother, Dick Russell and turned his energies towards the overall direction of the expanding workshops and promoting the firm. The company successfully faced the challenges of the 'Great Depression' and new Modernist designs emanating from Europe. This book is essential reading for anyone interested in Gordon Russell furniture, and in developments in design during the inter-war period. (ISBN 978-0-9575313-4-5 Price: £12.50. Please contact the Museum to order a copy. Tel: 01386 854695 email: info@gordonrusselldesignmuseum.org)



ADLESTROP

by Christopher Hotten, Friends Administrator

Apologies to those who know this story. Adelstrop, a small village off the A436, sits a few miles east of Stow-on-the-Wold. About 11.50am on 23rd June 1914 the express train from Paddington made a brief and unscheduled stop but no one got on or off. However, one of the passengers, the poet Edward Thomas recorded the scene. The American poet, Robert Frost, who he had met the previous year, encouraged Thomas to unlock his true talent and in two years he wrote more than 140 poems before the outbreak of World War I. Thomas enlisted in the British Army in July 1915 and two years later, at the age of 36, he was killed by a shell blast on the first day of the Battle of Arras. He never saw 'Adlestrop' in print. Three weeks after his death the *New Statesman* published this poem which has become one of the nation's favourites. The station is long gone, but the old station sign and bench, which carries a plaque inscribed with the words of this famous poem, have survived and can be found inside the bus shelter. As part of the centenary celebrations the actor Robert Hardy recited 'Adlestrop' in front of the sign. (see <http://adlestrop.org.uk/adlestrop-poem-centenary/>)

