

Newsletter

AUTUMN 2016



THE
HOLBURNE
MUSEUM
FRIENDS

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The Newsletter cover shows one of the fun stalls - selling hats, bags and beads - part of the Friends' celebration day for *100 Years Here*.

Cover photograph
© Antonia Johnson

Storeroom visit: An opportunity for you:

If you would like to have a look in the Museum's storerooms then please buy a ticket for the draw - we sell just a few, at £5 each, so your chances of winning are high - please complete the form in the centre of the Newsletter.

It will be your choice whether you have a chance to see decorative art with Catrin Jones, Curator of Decorative Arts, or pictures with Amina Wright, Senior Curator. Our only request is that you report back (no need for a long essay) to the Newsletter Editor so other Friends can share your discoveries.

Thank you and good luck in the draw!

Chairman's letter

Dear Friends

I'd like to offer thanks to all of you: for encouraging others to become Friends, for your generous donations to our celebratory day's stalls (see p. 15), for giving your time or your cakes (!), for coming on the day, or for bidding on our silent auction items; or maybe for joining in one of our other outings; in all ways helping to raise money for the Holburne.

We forget sometimes that our eminently successful and highly regarded museum still needs funding, or some of the activities which help to 'change lives through art' may not be able to continue. Might you have considered leaving a legacy to support the Museum? If you have, just get in touch with me or with Jane Ibbunson, Head of Development at the Holburne. We can boast that many Friends have done so, small amounts and large, in cash and in kind; past Newsletters have paid tribute to individuals who have made a difference.

This *100-Years-Here* year the Friends will have raised an appreciable sum over and above the regular budgeted-for amount. We are proud of the Friends' contribution to the Museum's core activities, and this summer we supported the very successful Stubbs exhibition, but given our extra efforts we can this year go



further and will be selecting a special project (to be announced) which when it goes on display will we hope attract even more people to become supporters of the Holburne.

If you are interested in finding out more about how the Museum ticks, then do talk to one of the Committee about joining us, taking part in focus groups, or helping to realise dream trips in the company of Friends and the knowledge that time spent feeds into all that the Museum does and can do.

Soon after this reaches you the sold-out trip to Spain takes place - check the website for a report later this month, and perhaps you will be inspired to join the Portugal tour next summer, it's a great way to really get to know other Friends.

I look forward to seeing many of you on the 21st October for the Silver preview and the Robertson Lecture.

Antonia Johnson

Important Membership Matters

Changes behind the scenes

Between now and December we will be merging the Friends database with that used by the Museum (for Patrons and Contemporaries etc). The records will be quite separate and continue to be maintained by me, but it will be more efficient for the Friends and the Museum to work from one system.

As some of you know the system for renewing subscriptions has already been changed to relieve pressure on the Front Desk volunteers. Once you have paid at the till, you may visit the exhibition at no charge, but you will no longer be given membership cards there and then. These will be sent by me when I receive details of your payment, so it is more than ever essential that you complete the form so that I have a paper record, can send you new membership cards, and you can continue to get all the benefits of being a Friend.

In spite of reminders being sent out in plenty of time, several of you are not updating your Standing Orders as requested. Please do this as soon as you can when you get a reminder so that we don't have to chase you for additional payments, thank you.

In anticipation of changing Data Protection law, we now ask all Friends to sign an agreement giving us and

the Museum permission to contact you about news and upcoming events.

You will find this agreement on renewal forms, so please remember to tick the box. If you are a Life Friend with no email address you will find a letter enclosed with this Newsletter, which should be returned to me at the Museum in due course.

Contacting us

The best way of contacting us and of getting a quick reply is by email - holburnefriends@gmail.com
All the committee members access this but please put the addressee's name or the subject in the subject box; events and visits are organised by different people, whose names will be found under the relevant details in the Newsletter.

We are trialling the use of a mobile phone number - 07402 102001 - but this will be irregularly manned and will not necessarily get you straight through to the person you want to contact; each article in the Newsletter about forthcoming events or visits ends with the name of the organiser. Front Desk volunteers will not be able to help you with this kind of information but one of the Development team may be able to help.

*Undine Concannon,
Honorary Membership Secretary*

Friends' Private View

Friends are invited to a Private View of the exhibition:

Silver: Light and shade

Friday 21st October 2016, 6:00-7:30pm, drinks served in the Ballroom.

Catrin Jones, co-curator of the exhibition, will give a short introduction at 6:45pm.



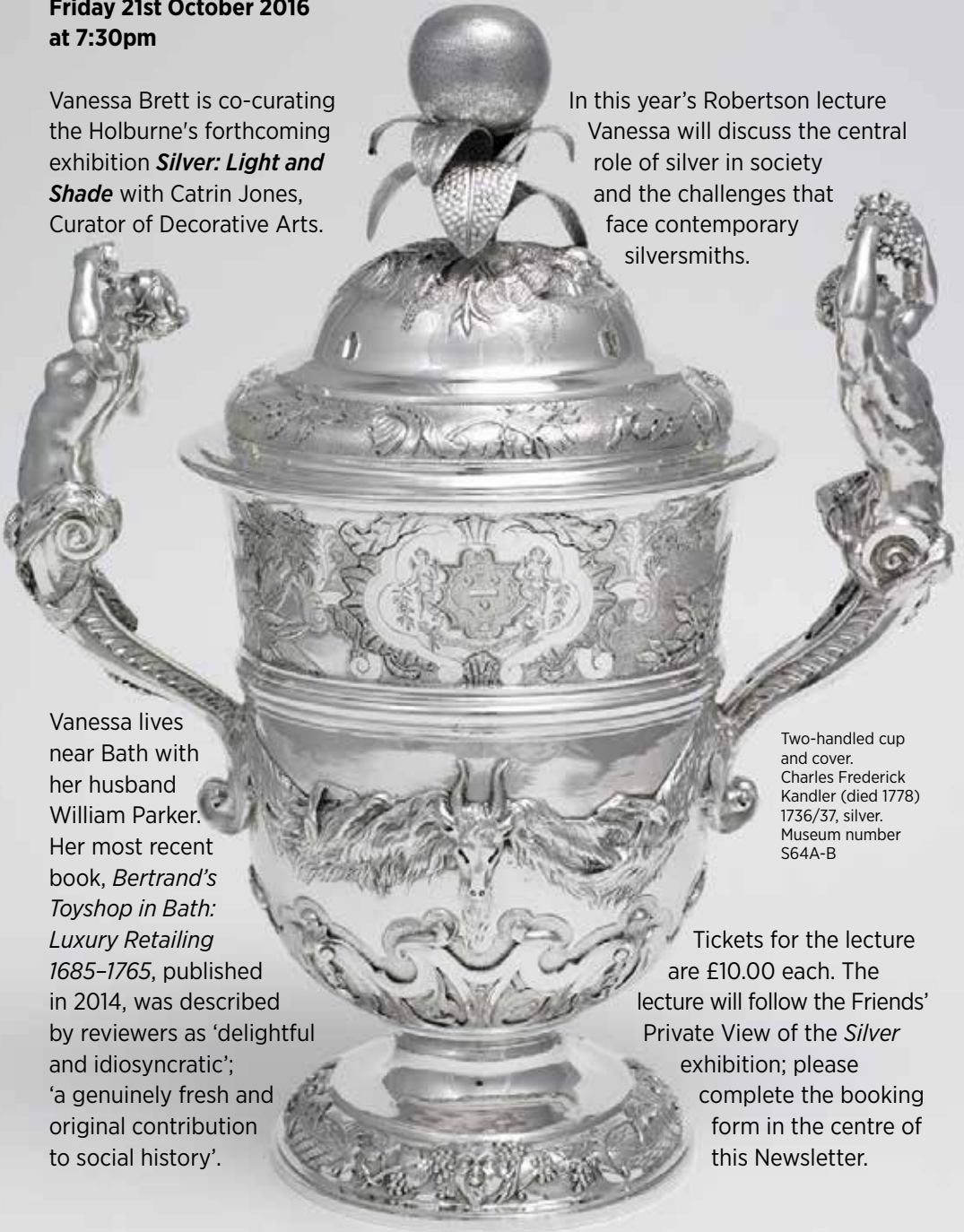
Dish made by Clive Burr (b.1953),
engraved and enamelled by Jane Short (b.1954)
Millennium
1999, Silver, Sterling standard with champlévé
and basse-taille enamel
Collection: The Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths

The Robertson Lecture 2016 - Vanessa Brett: Silver

**Friday 21st October 2016
at 7:30pm**

Vanessa Brett is co-curating the Holburne's forthcoming exhibition *Silver: Light and Shade* with Catrin Jones, Curator of Decorative Arts.

In this year's Robertson lecture Vanessa will discuss the central role of silver in society and the challenges that face contemporary silversmiths.



Vanessa lives near Bath with her husband William Parker. Her most recent book, *Bertrand's Toyshop in Bath: Luxury Retailing 1685-1765*, published in 2014, was described by reviewers as 'delightful and idiosyncratic'; 'a genuinely fresh and original contribution to social history'.

Two-handled cup and cover.
Charles Frederick Kandler (died 1778)
1736/37, silver.
Museum number S64A-B

Tickets for the lecture are £10.00 each. The lecture will follow the Friends' Private View of the *Silver* exhibition; please complete the booking form in the centre of this Newsletter.

Autumn tree walk

Tuesday 1st November 2016 2-4pm Royal Victoria Park and Botanical Gardens, Bath

Come and admire some of the beautiful 'Champion' trees in their autumn splendour in these two lovely parks near the centre of Bath, in the company of our expert dendrologist, Antonia Johnson.

This is a rare opportunity to learn more about the fascinating topic of trees in general, on a circular walk with many different and fine examples of trees to discover.

Tickets are £15 each, on a "get yourself there" basis. Please complete and return the booking form in the Newsletter.



A day trip to London

Sunday 20th November 2016

We are reviving Sidney Blackmore's successful Sunday coach trips to London. An opportunity to see some of the wonderful exhibitions, catch up with friends in the capital or a spot of Christmas shopping perhaps?

There is a taster about some of the current not-to-be-missed exhibitions on the page opposite.

This is a transport-only trip, all other arrangements, including pre-booking of exhibition tickets, will be at your discretion.

Departing from the Holburne Museum promptly at 8.30am, the coach will stop c.11am by Trafalgar Square and continue to Tate Britain on Millbank where others can be dropped off. There will be only one departure point: Trafalgar Square at 5.30pm sharp, for return to the Holburne by c.8pm. Picking up and dropping off at the Balustrade on the London Road will be an option.

Return coach travel: £28 each.

Please complete and return the booking form in the Newsletter

Self portrait (detail) Gustave Courbet (1819-1877)
1852, black chalk and charcoal.
© British Museum



British Museum: *French Portrait Drawings from Clouet to Courbet*

(8th September 2016 to 29th January 2017)

Over 65 portraits including work by Fantin-Latour, Lebourg and Watteau.

Tate Modern: *Wilfredo Lam*

(14th September 2016 to 8th January 2017)

Discover the fascinating career of one of the most iconic Cuban artists.

Royal Academy: *Abstract Expressionism*

(24th September 2016 to 2nd January 2017)

Exploring the boundless creative energy of American art in the 1950s.

National Portrait Gallery: *Picasso Portraits*

(6th October 2016 to 5th February 2017)

Covering all periods of Picasso's long

career, including masterpieces and paintings never seen in the UK before.

National Gallery: *Beyond Caravaggio*

(12th October 2016 to 15th January 2017)

The first UK exhibition to explore the impact of Caravaggio's work on his contemporaries and followers.

Tate Britain: *Paul Nash*

(26th October 2016 to 5th March 2017)

Uncover the surreal and mystical side of English landscapes through one of the most distinctive British painters.

Tate Britain: *Impressionists in London*

(2nd November 2016 to 29th April 2017)

The story of the artists who fled to Britain to escape war in France.



Woman in Hat (Olga) (detail)
Pablo Picasso (1881-1973)
1935, oil on canvas.
© Centre Pompidou, Paris
MNAM-CCI, dist.RMN-Grand
Palais/Droits réservés.

Overseas visit: A taste of Portugal

Wednesday 7th - Tuesday 13th June 2017

This trip, focusing on Portugal's two most important cities, will give a fascinating insight into the history and culture of this once powerful seafaring country.

We fly from Bristol to Lisbon, staying for 3 nights at the 4* Hotel Avenida Palace. Lisbon is one of the oldest cities in Western Europe, predating London and Paris by centuries and considered one of the world's most attractive maritime capitals.

We will explore Lisbon both on foot and by coach, including visits to the Museum of Ancient Art, which houses the largest collection of paintings in Portugal, and the historic Belem district. Friday will be a full day's tour to the stunning summer residence of the Moorish kings of Portugal at Sintra and to Cape Roca, the most westerly tip of Europe. Saturday will begin at the outstanding Gulbenkian Museum before travelling north to Oporto where we will check in to the 4* Hotel NH Collection Porto Batalha. Oporto is built along the hillsides overlooking the mouth of the River Douro and boasts spectacular views and a long history.

Sunday will be spent visiting many of the beautiful sites in the city as well as a port wine lodge and on Monday we travel to the cathedral city of Braga and then to Guimaraes, known as the 'Cradle of Portugal' where the first rulers founded their capital. On Tuesday there will be free time to explore Oporto before the late afternoon flight to Bristol.

The cost is £1295 per person sharing a double or twin room (single supplement: £370) which includes 6 nights bed and breakfast, dinner on three evenings and lunch on four days. ***Easyjet flight times and prices are yet to be confirmed which is why airfares are not included.***

Flights will be booked on your behalf when 2017 schedules become available. For all further information and details please contact Heritage Group Travel on **01225 466620** or email **heritage@grouptour.co.uk** quoting the Friends of the Holburne Museum/Portugal. After Heritage has sent you a booking form, places are reserved on receipt of the completed form and deposit. **Book by 18th November deadline please.**

Lisbon, view across the Old Town



Overseas visit: A taste of Portugal continued

Please note that bookings for the Portugal visit must be made by 18th November, while spaces are still available.

The early 16th-century *Torre de Belém*, near Lisbon; it is also known as the tower of St Vincent.
Photograph by Richard Bartz.



Visit to The Grove and Haseley Court

We met our charabanc outside the Holburne on a slightly dank morning, but a lot less 'humide' than the weather in France. We made our way north into Oxfordshire passing fields of yellow rape, and trying to ignore the streams of rain on the coach windows. Actually the mood in the bus was rather buoyant and by the time we arrived at our pub near the Grove, the rain had disappeared.

After a restorative cup of coffee, we made our brief way to the Grove, David Hicks' last house and garden, where we were met by his ebullient designer son, Ashley. We were given a wonderfully personal and episodic tour of the great man's garden, which was laid out with all the precision of the *Draughtman's Contract*. Nature had definitely been bent to David Hicks' will with trees felled, trees planted, walls holed, barns dismantled, all to attain 'the best possible taste'.

Stand-outs for me were a room of *Magnolia grandiflora* and a row of mounted Corinthian capitols rescued from a Mountbatten house being dismantled in London. The garden was as full of artefact as plants and designed with great wit. Witness the use of pebbledash on David Hicks' birthday tower, built for him to design in, but in which he spent hardly five minutes, according to Ashley. The visit was like a theatrical performance from an assured comedian. Although Ashley courted his

father's disapproval at every opportunity, I think DH was probably looking down with fatherly pride.

After a return to our pub for a substantial lunch, we had a quarter of an hour's ride to Haseley Court, where we were greeted by owner Fiona Heyward. While her humour was more gentle than Ashley Hicks', we felt the influence of another stylist, Nancy Lancaster, of Colefax and Fowler fame, who had designed this garden amongst others. The Heywards had bought the house and garden from her. She had lived on in the stable block, and died here aged 97, so we had a direct comparison with David Hicks' life. In fact Fiona said that he had advised them to extend their avenue of limes at the front of the house, to great effect.

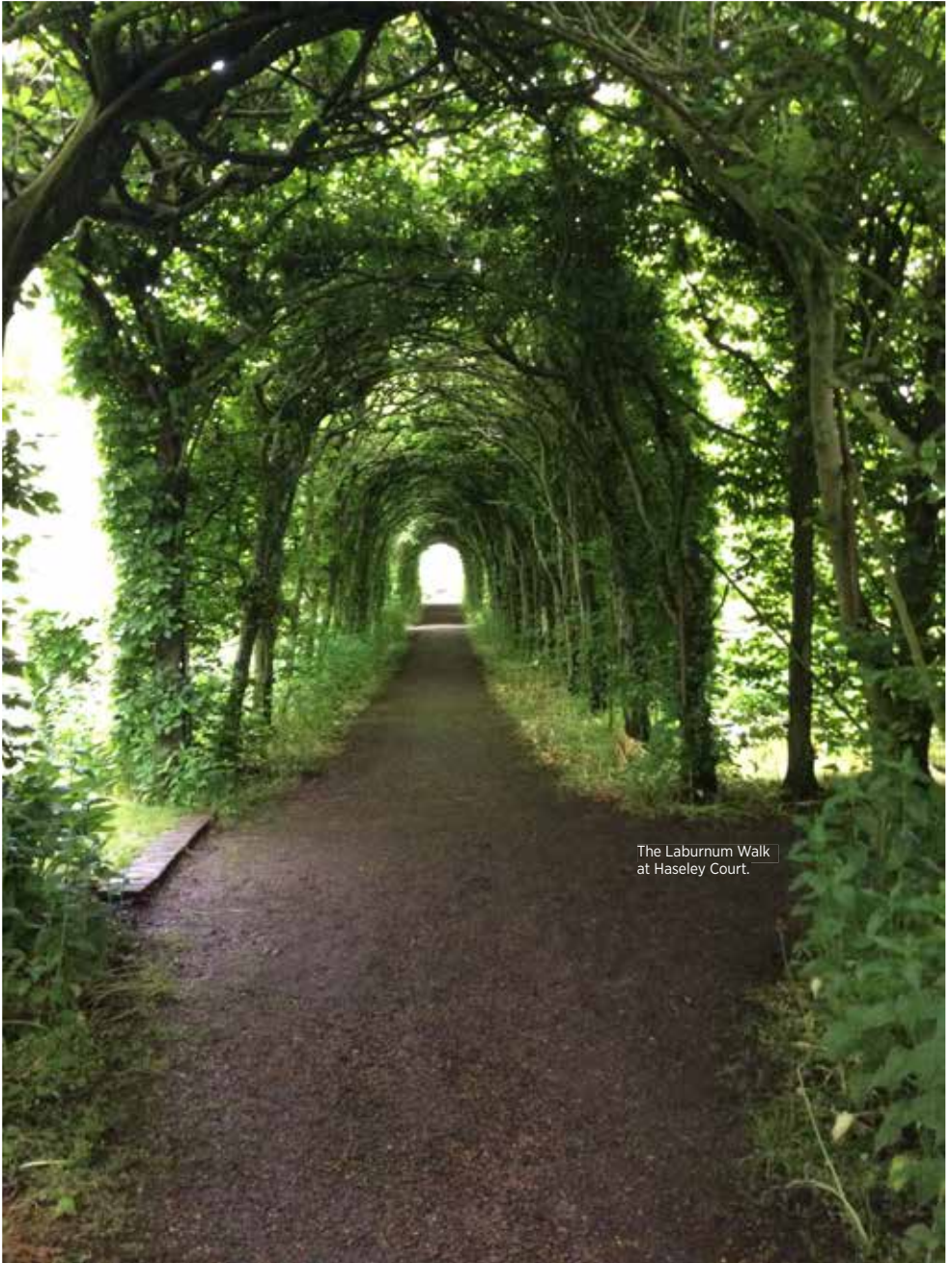
Once you entered the garden proper you became aware of Nancy Lancaster's guiding hand. It was all about colour, whether the stunning yellow of the laburnum walk, the coral of the huge peony blooms or the pink of the clematis climbing at least two stories up to the roof. I found the older part of the house at the back more sympatico, and it appeared to tie in well with the garden that led up to it. The garden itself was a plantsman's heaven and Fiona Heyward appeared well in control of it, with the undoubted assistance of her stalwart head gardener.

Visit to The Grove and Haseley Court *continued*

By now it had started to drizzle again, but we took tea in the shelter of a converted barn. After tea we just had time for a final look round. I found myself in my favourite garden room, full of tall yew and box topiary, pruned to fantastic shapes like something out of Alice in Wonderland. David Hicks would have approved!

Thank you to Minnie Tatham for organising such an enjoyable day and for being so clever as to offer us the comparison between the gardens of these two famous stylists. Hardy Amies next?

Matthew Harragin



The Laburnum Walk
at Haseley Court.

Holburne Friends celebrate *100 Years Here*

The last weekend in June was a lively mixture of pleasure, celebration and fundraising for the Holburne Friends.

Friday evening, 24th June, was packed with events. We had a private view of the magnificent summer show *Stubbs in the Wild*, held our AGM, and were entranced by a concert of music, songs and poetry performed by the Holburne Ensemble and Richard Frewer.

The evening ended with an enjoyable and convivial party in the Garden Cafe, meeting Friends old and new. The Silent Auction also got our fundraising efforts off to a flying start.

On the Sunday we turned our attention to marking the 40th anniversary of Sidney Blackmore's Book Sale Bonanzas as well as celebrating the Holburne Museum's *100 Years Here*.

Fun and fundraising combined as the Silent Auction entered its final day; we had stalls offering professional valuation of antiques, books, pictures and collectibles and selling hats, bags and beads, and we ran a successful tombola. Sunday's windy, drizzly weather did not take the shine off a great weekend, as we raised just over £6,500 whilst having a lot of fun too.

Tim Locke



Richard Frewer (far left) with members of the Holburne Ensemble, who gave the Frank Brown memorial concert as part of the Holburne Friends *100 Years Here* celebrations.

Holburne Friends celebrate *100 Years Here* continued

Heartfelt thanks

A huge thank you goes to all who helped in the success of the celebration weekend, very much a team effort, but expertly led by Olivia Eliot, Minnie Tatham and Richard Frewer.

To those who gave lots for the Silent Auction, tombola prizes, hats, bags and beads, to those who lent tables, tents, equipment and bunting, designed stylish book bags (below right), posters and signs, arranged publicity, baked delicious cakes and other tasty fare, who played and sang beautifully, to those who helped set up and man stalls and tents, gave time trouble and effort, or for simply coming along and supporting us on the day, a sincere *thank you* from the Holburne Friends.

Many thanks also to the Museum staff for all their patient help and continued support.

We couldn't have done it without you!



Early morning on Sunday 26th June, shows some of the valiant team of Friends Committee members, and much needed helpers, all working together to put up the tents, stalls and other preparations for the day of celebrations.



Downside Abbey visit

A sunny August afternoon saw Holburne Friends on Trish Tassis's latest tour - to Downside Abbey, guided by Steve Parsons, the Project Activity Manager there. The Abbey has never been completed; what we see today was built in four stages between 1882-1925, by four teams of architects, including Giles Gilbert Scott who was responsible for the beautiful nave; the west front remains unfinished.

The first part of the Abbey opened in 1882 and unusually has a north-south axis; originally a temporary measure. There is a shrine to Oliver Plunkett - the last Catholic martyr in Britain, executed in 1681. His remains (or at least some of them) are in a modest stone coffin to the right of the altar. Among the magnificent stained glass windows here one shows St. Wulstan, distracted by the aromas of a roasting goose, resulting in him praying for deliverance from such distractions and vowing to become a vegetarian!

We then visited the St. Sebastian chapel, designed by Ninian Comper. The altar figure of Sebastian was carved from a single piece of alabaster, and flanked by statues of St. George and St. Nicholas. Nearby hangs a beautiful 15th-century painting by Botticini of saints attending a bishop. We moved on to the Lady Chapel, also by Comper; the altar is also a single piece of alabaster surmounted by gilt reliquary arks. The stained glass

windows of the chapel depict biblical scenes but poignantly, several of the figures are shown with real faces of pupils from Downside who never returned from the First World War. The final highlight was a mid 15th-century life-size wooden statue of the madonna and child, most unusual in portraying her with very long flowing hair. We were lucky to see it; the statue is often on loan to museums worldwide, such is its rarity.

Finally, we entered the Library; the 1971 octagonal building designed by Sir Francis Pollen, adjoining the Abbey. The Library contains over 500,000 items, and we were shown just a tiny fraction of this fabulous collection. We saw letters written by Henry James, the Duke of Wellington and Dickens and books on display as part of the Library's commemoration of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death. Of these, perhaps the most magnificent was the exceptionally rare 1000-year-old *Lambach Prophetorium* volume.

Our thanks to Trish Tassis for organising a fascinating visit and to Steve Parsons for sharing his knowledge of Downside.

Mark Hake



Holburne Friends being shown rare letters and documents at Downside Library. Photograph © Jonathan Davis

Downside Abbey visit continued

Steve Parsons, Project Activity Manager at Downside Abbey, centre, showing the Holburne Friends group the North Transept, with the shrine to Saint Oliver Plunkett. Photograph © Jonathan Davis



Visit to Woolstone Mill and The Old Rectory

Marshaled graciously by Minnie Tatham we journeyed into the heart of England, exchanging motorways for the country lanes of Oxfordshire. Woolstone Mill House, is being developed by garden designer Justin Spink. It is a garden in progress, but it is already magical in its imaginative intimacy. Fuelled by coffee and cake we were escorted informatively by Justin around the garden's different areas; divided by yew hedges cut so that their contours harmonise with those of the rolling landscape.

At one end was what Justin calls his 'Perennial Meadow' - a visually delightful tapestry of subtle autumn colours. At the more traditional end of the garden, on chalkier soil, are medlar trees and chalk-friendly roses. A mill stream links the two garden areas and one person was tempted to put, not just a toe, but a foot, in the water whilst skipping across the stepping stones. Woolstone is not just a garden, it is a family home: its informality, soft forms and shapes left us feeling contented with a wonderful visit.

The perfect day continued in the afternoon with a visit to The Old

Rectory at Farnborough which was once judged by Country Life magazine to be the "finest Parsonage in England". In 1945 it was given to John Betjeman and his wife by his in-laws; he described it as "dirty but classy looking"!

We saw the arboretum with its excellent collection of magnolias and a fine double herbaceous border across the rolling lawns. The large vegetable garden was particularly impressive. The scarecrow apparently used to wear a mask of Tony Blair but that has now been replaced by the head of an eagle! The swimming pool garden was a particular delight, sheltered by walls of cypress and hydrangeas. There was an elegant summerhouse which housed the changing rooms at one end. The back wall had a large window which overlooked the arboretum and the views beyond. Before leaving for home we walked over the road to All Saints Church to look at the Betjeman Memorial Window designed by his friend John Piper. The stained glass window was made up of three enchanting panels showing fish, fruit and butterflies. *Michael Jones (Woolstone) and Brenda Beeton (The Old Rectory)*



Walk and talk to Cleveland Pools

Early one September evening a group of 20 hardy Friends took a walk via Sydney Gardens behind the Holburne Museum and along the Kennet and Avon canal, to reach the Cleveland Pools. The group was led by Sally Helvey, one of the Trustees of the Pools who is also a local historian and tour guide, specialising in some of Bath's many "hidden gems".

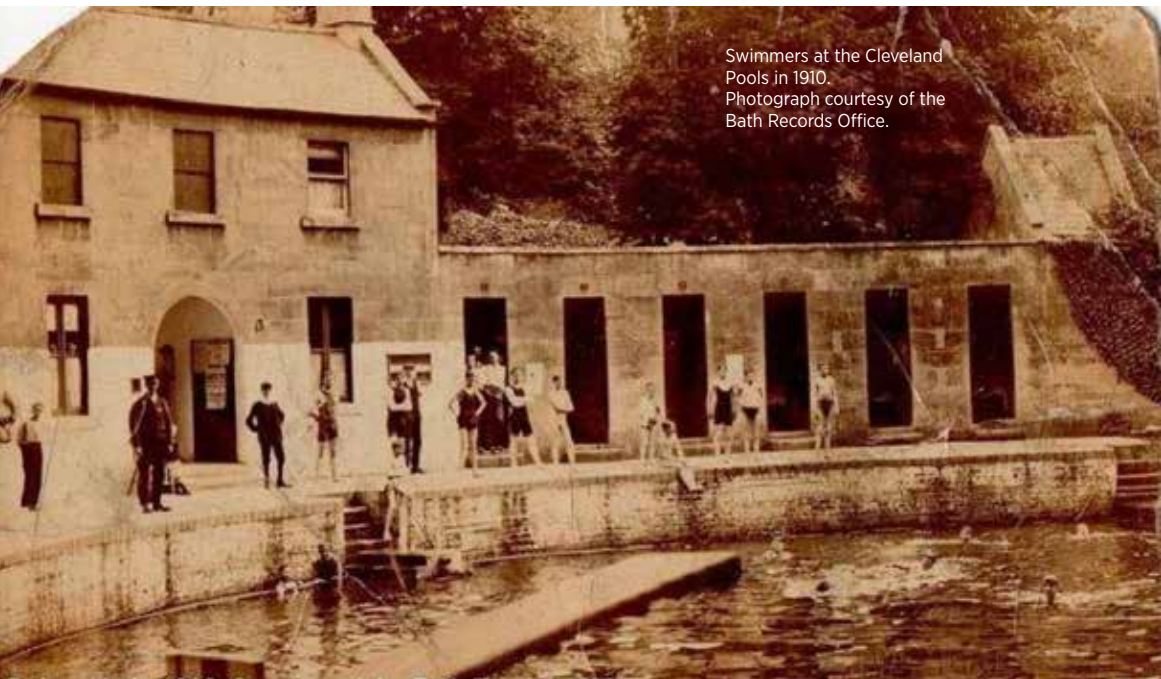
The Pools are certainly tucked away at the edge of the river Avon on a leafy bank, and are the country's only surviving Georgian lido, providing generations of Bath citizens a chance to cool off in the summer heat until its closure in 1984. We were given a slide show where Sally delighted us with the history of the Pools from its

construction in 1817, expansion to include a special Ladies Pool and "Perpetual Shower Bath", even its use for immersive baptisms and a trout farm, through to present day plans for restoration and eventual re-opening.

Many thanks to Sally Helvey for an illuminating talk and to Kim De Morgan for organising such a fascinating visit.

The future of Cleveland Pools, as a first class natural swimming pool for the local community, is contingent on the raising of additional funds (£220,000) in order to unlock the Heritage Lottery matched funding of £3.6 million.

The Cleveland Pools are currently open by appointment or on a local tour that Sally Helvey leads on Tuesdays at 11 am from the Bath tourist office. All current details and events are found on their website: www.clevelandpools.org.uk



Swimmers at the Cleveland Pools in 1910.
Photograph courtesy of the Bath Records Office.

Profile: Holburne Development team

The Museum's recently appointed Development team comprises Jane Ibbunson and Oliver Merchant. Their dual role is to raise the Museum's public profile and help raise funds to support the Holburne's work.

Jane and Oliver answer a few questions about their work and what they love about being involved in developing the Holburne Museum.

What attracted you to the museum/ heritage sector?

JANE: I have been working in the voluntary sector for 20 years and really like the ethos and feeling that I am making a difference. My husband is an artist and I have always been fascinated by the stories that art reveals – the fashions, social norms and the lives of the artists. So it was a combination of these and meeting the Holburne's Director Jennifer Scott and being swept away by her positivity and enthusiasm!

OLIVER: This may sound very grand, but I see museums as our collective memory, and working in a place that preserves and shares those memories is a real privilege.

Did you study heritage-related subjects at college or university?

JANE: No, I did my degree in Sociology and German - I spent a year in Leipzig as part of the Erasmus scheme and did some voluntary work – so that was when I decided I wanted to work in the voluntary sector when I returned.

OLIVER: I studied Photography at Bath Spa University, which covered everything from art history to graphic design to photographic practice, but nothing directly heritage-related!

What aspects of your work do you find most fulfilling...a typical day?

JANE: I love talking to our all our donors who share such a passion for the Holburne. Every day is completely different – for example I recently had a meeting with Bath Council as we are working on a joint project, then lunch and a tour at the University of Bath and in the afternoon we had a visit from our Grants Officer from the Lottery. Other days I can be at the computer filling out an application form – it just depends.

OLIVER: I find all of it fulfilling to some degree. I'm not sure there is such a thing as a typical day; the Museum



Left: Jane Ibbunson,
Head of Development
Right: Oliver Merchant,
Development Officer.

Both photographs
© Evoke Pictures

Profile: Holburne Development team continued

has a rhythm based on the main exhibitions, so I could be preparing for the next Private View, managing the membership process, writing copy for the website, or perhaps working out the details for another event. Saying that, every week starts with counting the donation box money!

What do you see as the challenges and opportunities in the heritage sector?

JANE: I never intended for fundraising/development to be my long term career – but the excitement gets under your skin. You cannot describe the feeling when a project is completed and you know you have been part of that. To be honest I have not found the Museum sector either easier or harder than the health or the environment sector. It is a matter of finding the right project or passion for the right organisation or individual. There is more and more evidence that being able to appreciate art is beneficial for our mental health and wellbeing – I think this will present new opportunities for the heritage sector.

OLIVER: It's a very interesting time. Fundraising enables the heritage sector to operate; sadly not all of our national heritage is government funded. There's a lot of change around government funding (local and national) sector-wide, which is already taking its toll on a number of cultural sites. We are very lucky at the Holburne to have such dedicated and supportive members,

from Friends to Patrons. There is a stark difference between London and the regions; 90% of cultural philanthropic giving is in London, and government culture spending in the capital far, far exceeds what it spends elsewhere. But this is being challenged, and so there is opportunity here too.

Your views on the Holburne's future?

JANE: To keep going in the right direction – over the next 3 years we are planning to enter into more international partnerships, co-ordinate more research on the benefits of creativity and move away from being dependent on funding.

OLIVER: I'd love for the Holburne to have an even larger and lively membership community, who feel truly involved and at home here. Part of what drew me to the Holburne was its commitment to contemporary art, so I'd like to see that thriving too.

A favourite work from the Collection?

JANE: Gainsborough's *Byam Family* portrait. The story of how he added in the daughter and changed the fashion – and did this in his studio over a period of 45 years so it was on view to the public marketing his work is ingenious!

OLIVER: The Nicolaes Pickenoy *Unknown Man* I find captivating; his expression feels so modern, and his clothes are wonderfully rich and detailed. I'm also a big fan of the spoons display; I'm a very keen cook, so I find the history of how people used to eat very interesting.

Storeroom visit: Discovering travelling treasures

I have always been fascinated by travelling, and revisited Egypt and Venice this year, so it seemed natural, when I was lucky enough to visit the Holburne's storeroom, to see whether the museum collection contained any objects relating to these places.

Amina Wright, Senior Curator at the Holburne, was able to find some very interesting and beautiful pieces in that regard. She started by showing me a two-volume travelogue published by Volney shortly before the French Revolution. In these, he details his extensive and intrepid travels through northern Egypt and Syria, which at the time were both part of the Ottoman Empire. Volney was obviously a man of some means as he was able to spend two to three years in the region, and for no other reason than to satisfy his curiosity. He spent time documenting his many experiences, visiting ancient monuments and sites as well as great cities such as Cairo and Damascus.



Amina Wright, left, and Mark Hake, right, admiring one of the travelogues from Sir William Holburne's collection.

Photograph © Jonathan Davis

Next, we moved onto another two-volume work, by Tournefort, but this time a more formal journal, published in 1718 and the result of an official, government-sponsored, mission to Greece, Turkey and the Caucasus. Tournefort was part of this mission in his capacity as a member of the Royal Academy of Sciences and "Chief Botanist to the late King"- presumably given the date of the book this refers to Louis XIV. There are some detailed maps of various Greek islands that he visited - a remarkable one of Delos shows various ruins and monuments including what appears to be a circular basin, referred to in the legend as "an oval for a sea fight"! Presumably, like various Roman arenas, this was once used for the reconstruction of naval engagements.

Also surprising to contemporary eyes and without a hint of irony is Tournefort's observation that the apparent lack of attractive women in the Caucasus meant that "the art of ogling we had learnt in Paris" was of little use! He explains the sinister reason for this absence - namely that prettier girls were sold into slavery before their 10th birthday and transported elsewhere within the Ottoman Empire.

Amina showed me a folder with etchings by Robert Goff (1837-1922), primarily produced in the late 1890s and just before the First World War.

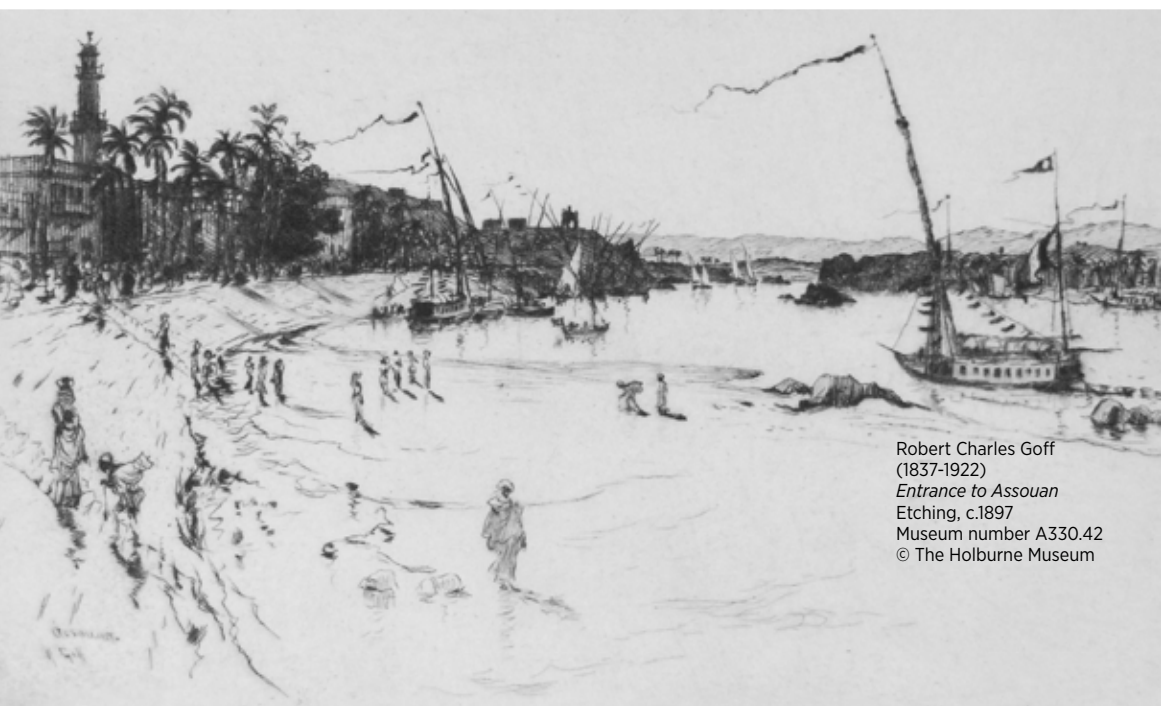
Storeroom visit: Discovering travelling treasures continued

Goff came late to the arts, having spent his life in the British army, but upon retiring as a colonel in 1878, he decided to focus on the technique of etching, which he had learned from a fellow officer. Goff was an inveterate traveller and this provided wonderful source material for much of his work. We looked through beautiful scenes of Venice, as well as Rome, Florence and Lucca; Goff also spent time in The Netherlands and further afield - to Egypt and Japan. Closer to home, he painted extensively around Brighton and Hove and also tranquil scenes of the River Itchen. What linked the vast majority of these works was water - Goff obviously loved to depict water in all its forms. From the stormy seas off the Sussex coast to the Nile in 'Assouan' and the Grand Canal in Venice he was adept at capturing the quality and

depth of water. Goff's style was influenced by some of his contemporaries and earlier artists - as we went through the various etchings we saw clearly the influence of James McNeill Whistler, Atkinson Grimshaw, Turner, Constable, perhaps even Van Gogh.

So, a very rewarding visit for me and many thanks to Amina Wright for giving up her time and expertise to show me these "hidden treasures". It was a pleasure to be introduced to a highly talented artist with whom I was not at all familiar, but who clearly was as intrigued and stimulated as I am by travelling. Perhaps the Holburne might even contemplate a small exhibition of its collection of beautiful prints by Goff?

Mark Hake



Robert Charles Goff
(1837-1922)
Entrance to Assouan
Etching, c.1897
Museum number A330.42
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Do check Tim Locke's refreshed pages on the Holburne website for updates and news of events and visits etc:
<http://www.holburne.org/support-us/friends-of-the-holburne-museum/>

The Holburne Museum

Great Pulteney Street
Bath BA2 4DB

The Museum is open daily

10am to 5pm

(Sunday and Bank Holidays

11am to 5pm)

Closed 24th to 26th December
and 1st January

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The Robertson Lecture 2016 - Vanessa Brett: Silver

7:30pm Friday 21st October 2016

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Autumn Tree Walk, Bath

2:00-4:00pm Tuesday 1st November 2016

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London day trip (NB transport only)

Sunday 20th November 2016

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Email holburnefriendstours@gmail.com with any queries.

Bookings for the Portugal trip (7th-13th June **2017**) can **ONLY** be made direct via
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**Please book your tickets for this wonderful trip by the deadline of
18th November 2016, thank you.**

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