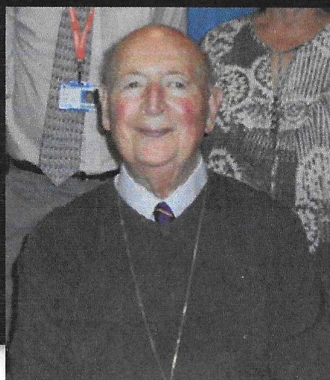


Dr David Guy Charles Allan (1925-2017)
FRHistS, FSA, Honorary FRSA



RSA Historian
Founder and Honorary President
William Shipley Group for RSA History

David studied for his BSc Economic History (1946) and his MSc (1950) with the London School of Economics, where he attended R.H. Tawney's history group in the cramped accommodation at Peterhouse, Cambridge. He was in the audience when Harold Laski filled the largest lecture hall in Mill Lane, with undergraduates of both universities, plus GIs and Polish soldiers and he recalled that he nearly killed Bertrand Russell who had ignored his bicycle on King's Parade. He also founded a Conservative society to inflame the left-wing majority, and participated in a Cambridge Union debate on the merits of a 'liberal education in a modern society'.

He joined the RSA in 1954 to assist in the arrangement and listing of the many old documents and letters that had been discovered tucked away in the nooks and crannies of the society's building in 1939. Realising that fellow historians would find this material of great value David began his lifelong study of the institution and its place in the wider world. His own research led to the award of a PhD in 1979 for *The Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce. Organization, Membership and Objectives in the First Three Decades (1755-84). An example of voluntary economic and social policy in the eighteenth century.*

David encouraged others to wander with him 'along the unfenced road' of the RSA's influence and activity from its foundation in 1754 to the present day, when he set up the RSA History Study Group in 1962.

He lectured and published widely on aspects of the RSA's history. From 1969 to 1970 he was appointed Visiting Associate Professor of History for the Division of Special Interdisciplinary Studies at Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio, USA. David wrote the biography of *William Shipley. Founder of the Royal Society of Arts* (1968, 1979) and co-authored the story of another founder member, *Stephen Hales. Scientist and Philanthropist* (1980). With Professor John L. Abbott he published *The Virtuoso Tribe. Studies in the Eighteenth Century Work and Membership of the London Society of Arts* (1992). David Allan became an authority on the Irish history painter, James Barry and his work through his study of the murals painted for the RSA's 'Great Room'. (See over for full list)

Following his retirement in 1998 David became a great supporter of his local history society in Twickenham, lecturing and publishing on aspects of the borough's history and any connections to the RSA.

Aware that there were still many nuggets to be unearthed in the RSA's rich archive and history David Allan founded the William Shipley Group for RSA History. Generous with his knowledge he was always available to discuss their interests with the students and researchers using the collections. He was always ready with an anecdote or a quote by Shakespeare or Pope to illustrate and enliven his talks. Despite his advancing years and the infirmities of age David never ceased thinking of new projects and papers. His contributions to the story of the RSA will be sorely missed.

Susan Bennett
Honorary Secretary, William Shipley Group

OCCASIONAL LECTURES AND SYMPOSIUM PAPERS: Benjamin Franklin House (London); Courtauld Institute of Art; Crawford Art Gallery (Cork, Ireland); Georgian Group; Historical Association; Lunar Society of Birmingham; Lunar Society of Cleveland; National Army Museum; National Portrait Gallery; New York Historical Society; Ohio Academy of Science; Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art; The RSA; The Royal Society; Society of Antiquaries; Tate Britain; University of London (Institute of Historical Research); University of Westminster (former London Polytechnic); Victoria and Albert Museum; Yale Center for British Art (New Haven, Connecticut), Prince Albert Society (Coburg, Germany), also various local history societies and U3A branch meetings.

BOOKS: *The Houses of the Royal Society of Arts* (1974, 79); *William Shipley: Founder of the Royal Society of Arts* (1968, 1979); *Stephen Hales, Scientist and Philanthropist* (with R. E. Schofield, 1980); *The Virtuoso Tribe* (with J.L. Abbott, University of Georgia Press, 1992); *RSA: Chronological History* (1999); *The Adelphi: Past and Present* (2001); *Science and Philanthropy in 18th century Teddington* (2004); Contribution to *James Barry 1741-1806. 'The Great Historical Painter'* (2005); *The Progress of Human Knowledge and Culture. A description of the paintings by James Barry in the Lecture Hall or 'Great Room of the RSA, London*, written by the artist and edited by David G. C. Allan (2006); contribution in *Cultivating the Human Faculties. James Barry commemorated 2006* Festschrift presented to Dr David Allan; 'Storied Urn and Animated Bust'. Notes on the Memorials at All Hallows Church, Twickenham. (2008); *The Coloured Mass. Art and Artists in the Twickenham Area from Tudor Times to the 21st Century* (2011) (London and Middlesex Archaeological Society Book Prize 2012)

ARTICLES in *American Philosophical Society Journal*; *Archives*; *Economic History Review*; *Eighteenth Century Studies*; *History Today*; *Journal R.S.A.*; *London Society Journal*; *LSE Connect*; *Milton Letter*; *The New Rambler*; *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*; *Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Enlightenment*; *Society of Antiquaries Journal*; *Prince Albert Studies* vols. 20 and 24, *William Shipley Group Newsletter and Occasional Papers*.

TRIBUTES TO DR DAVID G.C. ALLAN (1925-2017)

Dr Nicholas Cambridge, Hon Chairman, William Shipley Group for RSA History

I first met David in 2006 and was invited to join the William Shipley Group for RSA History by Susan Bennett, whom I met at the RSA when I was doing research for my MD in 2000.

One of the highlights was coming along to hear David's lectures that he gave to the numerous societies, organisations and symposia. These included the Royal Society of Arts, the Royal Society, the Society of Antiquaries, the Johnson Society of London, Benjamin Franklin House and the local history society in Twickenham. David also gave tours at the V&A Museum and Science Museum.

It was through David that I first met Professor John L. Abbott who used to come over to London each year from New York with his wife Mary. David, John, Mary, Susan and I

always had lunch at the RSA where we enjoyed good food, wine and conversation in true Johnsonian style.

David was a kind, thoughtful and motivational person who will always remain in our thoughts and remembered with great affection.

Susan Bennett, Honorary Secretary, William Shipley Group for RSA History

I first met David Allan in 1973 when he appointed me as his assistant. He opened my eyes to the important role the RSA had played in all aspects of history; social, economic, art, education, etc. He helped me develop my research skills so that when he retired I was able to reinstitute the History Study Group and continue his good work until I left the RSA. His legacy will continue through the work of the William Shipley Group for as long as possible.

He took great pleasure in working in an Adam building and seeing the Barry paintings nearly every day, and spreading awareness of these unique works. A kind and thoughtful man, he enjoyed talking with students and others about their areas of research. His knowledge and support will be sorely missed.

Professor Jack Manning, University of Connecticut

One characteristic dimension of David's life is not often remarked. From the early 1980s he gave two semester-length courses each year to American university students selected for the London Programme of the University of Connecticut. For a quarter century, first at Bedford College and later at City University, several hundred young Americans were privileged to follow David's account of British history, especially that of the 17th and 18th centuries. That account became their immersion into the historical underpinnings, intellectual, cultural and political, of the 'special relationship' between the two nations, at levels far deeper than what most Americans or Britains ordinarily achieve.

Many of them, from the perspective of adult experience, still offer fond recollections of how David's lectures marked for them the beginning of mature enquiry into culture and politics. In his own dry and understated manner, he was twice-weekly walking them through the very values expressed more grandly in the RSA's Benjamin Franklin Medal, now an emblem the significance of which is now newly revitalized by world events.

We are forever grateful for David's work with the University of Connecticut.

Susan Hewer, RSA Head of Design (1981-2008)

He was such a key person at the RSA and for so long

Peter Moore

His overwhelming interest and belief in other people, his fantastic erudition, and the total gentleness that came across are rarely conjoined qualities of his age.

Garry Headland

A wonderful man. It was a pleasure and a privilege to know him.

Anne Puetz

I remember David as a very, very generous man – with his time, his research and so supportive of younger scholars, even of those of a totally different methodology. He was truly the first proper historian of the RSA and, along with yourself, its memory

Tim Aldrich

David Allan was a lovely man with a gift for sharing his passion for the RSA and its remarkable history.

Graham Jefcoate

The end of an era. I think we can honestly say that Dr Allan created the topic 'RSA history' and ensured its importance was recognised.

James Srodes

I had just begun doing my research into the Ben Franklin bio about his time in the Craven Street house when the RSA's historian Susan Bennett arranged for me to have an impromptu tutorial with Dr. Allan. Gentle, amusing, and incisive, he at once latched on to my prime question: how did Franklin move during his time in London from being a loyal British subject (in 1757) to the on-fire Patriot by the time he left on the run in 1775? That afternoon's short course on Georgian politics and economics and social changes pulled it all together and set me in the right direction to do my own research during my time there. I can think of few American scholars of that period who could have matched it.

Tim Aldrich

David Allan was a lovely man with a gift for sharing his passion for the RSA and its remarkable history.

Makoto Ohno

I learned much from him



Dr David G.C. Allan showing HM The Queen items from the archive in 1974