



THE WILLIAM SHIPLEY GROUP FOR RSA HISTORY

Newsletter 46: September 2015

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday 23 October 2015 at 11.30am. Royal Designers for Industry & Liberty by Susan Bennett, Honorary Secretary, WSG. Fashion & Textile Museum, 83 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XF. Entrance: £9.00 (concessions £7)

This talk will consider the long standing connection between the RSA, the Royal Designers for Industry and the department store named after its founder, Arthur Lasenby Liberty. Liberty took an active interest in the work of the Society's Applied Arts Section. Alongside other key names in the design world he gave lectures to the RSA. The continuing connection with Liberty through the work of the RSA's Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry will also be considered.



Tuesday 24 November 2015 at 1pm. Wax Anatomies in the Medical Museum by Dr Sam Alberti. Hunterian Museum, Royal College of Surgeons, 35-43 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3PE. Tickets: £4 (Free to RCS Fellows, Members, Hunterian Society members)

Joseph Towne worked for fifty years crafting exquisite bodies in wax. Dr Sam Alberti explores Towne and his waxes in their historical context and compares them with other models in modern medical collections. Many of Towne's techniques died with him.



Joseph Towne, Wax model of the brain

EXHIBITIONS

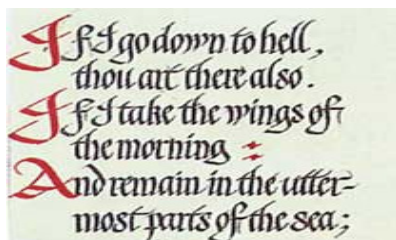
Pen to Printer: the influence of Edward Johnston. Crafts Study Centre, Falkner Road, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7DS 28 July to 26 September 2015. Open Tuesday to Saturday

This exhibition brings together the Crafts Study Centre and the Edward Johnston Foundation in exploring how Johnston's researches into the tools, materials and methods of the ancient scribes has led to a new understanding of letterforms. The influence of his work and teaching has spread through all branches of calligraphy, letter cutting and the printed word. In January 1905 Johnston gave a talk at the RSA on 'Calligraphy' which he illustrated with 42 slides. Sir William Rothstein believed that it was because of his association with Johnston that he was asked to chair the talk given by Alfred Fairbank on 'The Teaching of Handwriting: a suggestion'. RDIs Eric Gill and Percy Delf Smith both acknowledged Johnston's influence in their own work.



Edward Johnston in the year 1903

Edward Johnston, 1903



Liberty in Fashion. Fashion & Textile Museum, 83 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3XF. 9 October 2015 to 28 February 2016. Entrance: £9.00 (concessions £7)

This exhibition celebrates the 140th anniversary of the company and charts Liberty's history as a fashionable place to shop as well as its role as the source and originator of key trends in fashion history.

Liberty is celebrated throughout the world both as a department store and for its distinctive textile prints. Liberty's clients and friends included the artists and aesthetes Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Frederic Leighton, Oscar Wilde, Dame Ellen Terry and James McNeill Whistler. Liberty continued to adapt to changing taste while maintaining its identity. The Twenties and Thirties saw the development of the floral prints with which it is still associated. 'Young Liberty', introduced in the 1950s, showcases the best of new British and international design. Over 150 garments, textiles and objects will be on display illustrating Liberty's strong relationship with designers since 1875. Arthur Lasenby Liberty was an active member of the Society's Applied Art Section Committee and a number of Royal Designers for Industry are connected with the firm of Liberty.

Daniel Maclise: The Waterloo Cartoon. Weston Rooms, Burlington House, Royal Academy of Arts, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BD, 2 September 2015 to 3 January 2016. Complimentary entry with valid exhibition ticket or £3 general admission



The Royal Academy is putting one of its rarely exhibited treasures on display to coincide with the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. Daniel Maclise (1806-70) produced this 13m wide cartoon of The Meeting of Wellington and Blucher after the Battle of Waterloo, using extensive research and eye-witness accounts. The finished painting is still on display in the Houses of Parliament. Maclise designed the Swiney Prize cup for use by the Society of Arts from its first award in 1849.

Shakespeare in the 18th century: Johnson, Garrick and friends. Dr Johnson's House, 17 Gough Square, London EC4A 3DE. 10 August to 28 November 2015. Free after usual admission charge.

This exhibition explores the contributions of Johnson and his circle to the treatment of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century. On display will be a selection of prints, portraits and books from the permanent collection of Dr Johnson's House as well as items from several private collections. Both Johnson and Garrick were members of the Society of Arts.

Bouncing off the Wall 2015. 20th Century Graphic Arts Fair celebrating the Gordon Cullen Mural at Greenside School, Westville Road, London W12 9PT. Sunday 30th September 2015 11.00am to 5pm.



Free entry but donations to the mural fund welcomed.

Planning consultant, artist and writer Gordon Cullen was elected an RDI in 1975. A key motivator in the 'Townscape' movement, Cullen's skill as a planner and architectural illustrator won him the admiration and respect of professional colleagues. He painted this mural in 1952-53 as part of Erno Goldfinger's design for Greenside School.

REPORT: 'LORD FOLKESTONE AND THE SOCIETY OF ARTS: PICTURING THE FIRST PRESIDENT'

On 9th June 2015 the WSG in conjunction with Birkbeck's '18th-century Research Group at the School of Arts' met in the Keynes Library, Birkbeck College, for a talk by Amelia Smith on Lord Folkestone, his art collection and his involvement in the founding of the Society of Arts. Before introducing the speaker, Dr Susanna Avery-Quash, Senior Research Curator (History of Collecting) at the National Gallery, highlighted the longstanding and unique links between the Gallery and the Radnor family of Longford Castle, near Salisbury. In order to carry out research on the important art collection built by at Longford by Lord Folkestone and subsequent generations of his family, Dr Nicholas Penny, (Director of the National Gallery) encouraged her to develop a collaborative PhD. To do this, she called on support from Dr Kate Retford at Birkbeck College, an acknowledged expert in country house studies, to be a co-supervisor. They appointed Amelia Smith as their student and have been very fortunate in their choice. Amelia has spent the last eighteen months working through the little-known Radnor archives carrying out innovative research for her thesis. The results have already helped the guides at Longford Castle by providing fresh information for their public tours, including new details about the commissioning or purchase of major works of art in the collection; the tours continue to be very popular and to receive rave reviews. See the National Gallery website <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/whats-on/calendar/longford-castle-july-2015> to book tours. Some of the very great paintings from Longford Castle are currently on loan to the National Gallery, notably Holbein's portrait of *Erasmus* and Sebastiano del Piombo's majestic *Portrait of a Lady*, while some of the National Gallery's finest paintings once formed part of Folkestone's collection - notably, Holbein's *Ambassadors* and Poussin's *Adoration of the Golden Calf*. The current Lord Radnor is supporting plans to transform Amelia's PhD thesis in due course into a book. The WSG hopes soon to publish Amelia Smith's talk as an Occasional Paper.



Longford Castle

THE VILLAGES OF ENGLAND



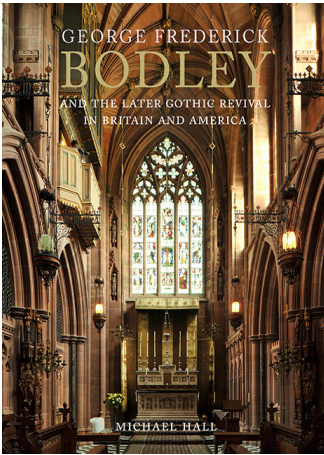
In her Channel 4 travelogue actress Penelope Keith used *The Villages of England* (1932) as her guide to Britain's 'Hidden Villages'. The painting for the distinctive dust jacket was the work of Brian Cook. Helped by new printing technology he was able to use colour in an innovative way – blue trees, mauve shadows, brown streets, bright orange roofs and even yellow sky featured in the 150 book covers he designed for Batsford. For business reasons and at his uncle's request Cook adopted his mother's maiden name, and took on the chairmanship of the family firm of Batsford from 1952 until 1974.

Brian Batsford also served as Chairman of the RSA's Council from 1973 to 1975. He felt a great affection for the Society and he specially painted views for the RSA Christmas cards for 1979, 1981 and 1983. These were hugely successful and sold in large numbers.



BOOK REVIEWS

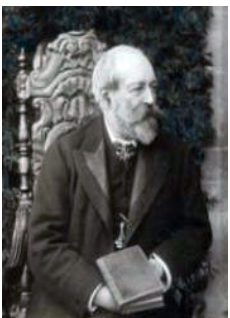
George Frederick Bodley and the Later Gothic Revival in Britain and America by Michael Hall. New Haven & London: Yale University Press published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2015. 508 pp. 200 color + 100 b/w illus. ISBN: 9780300208023 Cloth: £50.00



This is a biography of the broadest and best kind. The number of pages exceed 500, which might be expected for an architect active right up to his death, with his 55 years in practice concluding while Bodley (1827-1907) was designing cathedrals for Washington D.C. and San Francisco. However, the length of the book is the result of the author's accomplished contextualisation; Michael Hall has skilfully interwoven details that extend the story from the late seventeenth century to the present century, from ancestors who included a prosperous eighteenth century London laceman, to Bodley's legacy as witnessed both in American Gothic and in the work of English architect, Stephen Dykes Bowers, and the latter's scheme for the cathedral in Bury St Edmunds, completed by Warwick Pethers in 2005.

The remarkable achievement that this book represents stems from two facts. The first is, as pointed out by its author, that Bodley left no memoirs, and the office papers that may well have been retained by both of his successors – his former pupil and last partner, Cecil Hare (until the latter's death in 1933), and another Bodley pupil, A. Victor Heal (retired in 1968) – were destroyed by bombing in 1941. Among published works there is only one chapter by David Verey in *Seven Victorian Architects*,* which discusses the work of Bodley and his long-term business partner Thomas Garner (1839-1906), and this was in 1976. Thus it is no exaggeration to describe the present volume as both 'long awaited' and 'a labour of love'.

For an insight into the breadth of research required to build a full picture of Bodley's life and influence, it is worth reading the author's acknowledgments, which underscores the second fact that makes this book exceptional: it is the result of some 25 year's work. Hall first studied Bodley's work in 1989 for his MA and while continuing this interest, became a consummate writer and noted architectural historian, the editor of *Apollo* magazine from 2004 until 2010 and a former architectural editor and deputy editor of *Country Life*. In addition the author of several books and with lengthy involvement in the Victorian Society, he guides the reader through the intricacies of his topic with an eloquence and energy that reveals his personal knowledge, not only of the written evidence, but of the extensive material evidence left to us by Bodley, his associates, colleagues and pupils. This means that sensitive observations of stone- and brickwork, carving, stained glass, painting and stenciling are accompanied by discussions of

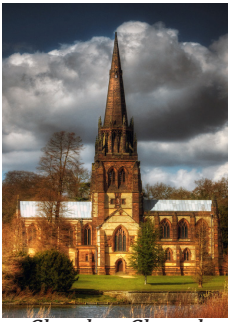


George Frederick Bodley

the more ephemeral aspects of an interior, namely furniture and textiles. In doing so Hall places Bodley in the context of virtually every major architect – and many minor ones – as well as several score of patrons, builders, craftsmen and critics.

A brief review cannot do justice to the extraordinary richness of detail Hall provides. More than a comprehensive biography, the author delicately interweaves multiple, complex histories. His explication of Bodley's contribution to High Victorian and its following 'developed Gothic', shows the architect's emphasis on wall planes and simple geometric forms to be the basis of sustained innovation, as Bodley next evokes English precedents including those that informed his few but influential Queen Anne houses. Hall argues convincingly that Bodley's earlier churches are Pre-Raphaelite architecture, making a good case for the reassessment of the church and secular worlds of this period as closely interdependent, rather than separate as histories thus far have tended to suggest. Such a reassessment could well begin with Hall's statement that Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris became stylistically static, whereas Bodley moved towards ever more delicate forms incorporating neo-classical restraint and compositional arrangements to forge an original re-casting of Gothic antecedents, a synthesized style that had widespread influence. Surviving buildings can be found in United States, Australia, India, and Italy, as well as the United Kingdom

*Thames & Hudson, ed. Jane Fawdett, pp.84-101



Clumber Chapel

At the same time, Hall brings alive Pugin's and Ruskin's influence. He adds the important caveat that the first two gothic revival styles are erroneously called 'Ruskinian', since the latter abjured Tractarianism, which gradually came to define practices in the English High Church. Here Hall's knowledge of ecclesiastical matters guides the reader through the range of religious possibilities, from evangelical to Rome, and their significance for architecture and the arts. He highlights, for example, that the links between Bodley, G.E. Street and William White went beyond their time in the office of George Gilbert Scott to a shared commitment to Anglo-Catholicism.

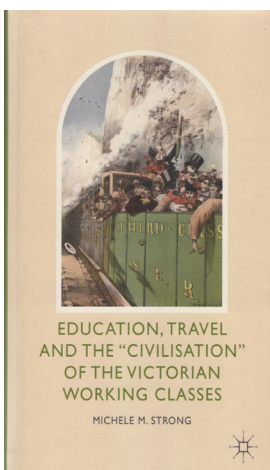
Hall also, particularly in his discussion of Clumber Chapel, takes up the topic of the melding of the Hellenistic and Hebraic (or Greek and later Gothic), in relation to aestheticism, religion and homosexuality. Hall's discussion of sexual politics here and elsewhere in the volume introduces a thoughtful and essential dialogue, handled with 'great refinement and great delicacy', the very words Bodley chose when linking Greek and later Gothic architecture (p.293).

The 26 chapters flow chronologically but also divide into topical discussions, many worthy of an entire book. The architectural merit of late Victorian gothic revival buildings is thoroughly argued by Hall, as is the error made by Modernist historians in dismissing (or at best overlooking) Bodley's late abstract style. This book undoubtedly will become essential reading on the latter subject, but should also be consulted by those interested in religious thought and sensibilities, Victorian and Edwardian art and design movements, sexual politics, and restoration versus conservation. One hopes subsequent scholarship will follow Hall's model, itself analogous to Bodley's own: a refined yet dynamic synthesis of details revealing society's desire for beautiful architecture

*Mary Schoeser, FRSA
Honorary President. The Textile Society*

Editor's note: As a member of the Society's Applied Art Section Committee George Frederick Bodley chaired a meeting on 21st March 1905 when the architect Frederick Bligh Bond spoke on 'West Country Screens and Rood Lofts'. Two years earlier Bodley had lectured in the 'Great Room' on 'Some principles that may be guides for the applied arts', for which he was awarded the Society's Silver Medal. Concerns about the impact of skyscrapers on London's skyline are not new. The Society's *Journal* records that following a talk in the Great Room by the architect Thomas Graham Jackson in 1904 on 'Street Architecture', Bodley joined Walter Crane, J.W. Waterhouse, Aston Webb and others as a signatory on an address to the London County Council about proposed development in the Strand. They asked the Council to adopt a plan with a less detrimental effect on the positions of St Mary-le-Strand and St Clement Danes, and expressed the hope that the height and frontage of the new buildings would not overpower the two churches and Somerset House 'which are and should remain the principal ornaments of the Strand'.

Education, Travel and the "Civilisation" of the Victorian Working Classes, by Michele M. Strong, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2014, ISBN 978-1-137-33807-5, viii+243



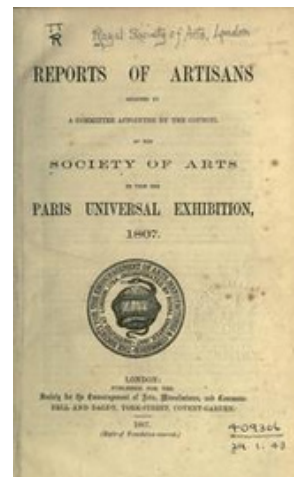
Michele Strong's book focuses on the way in which travel featured in educational discussions in Britain after the middle of the nineteenth century. She traces how artisan travel to exhibitions between 1851 and 1889 became an established and important feature of Victorian life, and the nature and purpose of such artisan and working class trips abroad. She shows how such a tradition laid the basis for, and influenced, educational travel in technical education at polytechnics after 1889 and into the twentieth century. The book reveals how, while maintaining its importance, the purpose and nature of educational travel evolved over half a century or more. Underlying the whole is a thesis that educational travel offered reformers during the Victorian period a method not just of improving British industry, but also cultivating and controlling the working classes. As Strong reveals, while educational trips did indeed lead to the production of an 'artisan aristocracy', itself convinced of the value of the reformist agenda, the literature produced by artisan

reporters nevertheless testified to working-class resistance to the goals of reformers and the modernising agenda which lay behind them.

Strong's first chapter highlights the role of Thomas Cook and the Great Exhibition of 1851 in germinating notions of the value of travel as an educational agent. Excerpts from Cook's correspondence and journal the *Excursionist* show how Cook absorbed the Great Exhibition organisers' evangelising agenda and combined his own commercial interests into a zealous and moralising campaign in favour of travel. By 1867, working men's clubs, middle class reformers, and organisations such as the Society of Arts, combined to send some 3,000 men to the exhibition in Paris. Strong draws particularly upon 84 artisan reports held in the RSA archives to open a window onto the experiences and views of these British visitors to France. Between 1867 and 1889, Strong shows how artisan tours were repeated for other foreign exhibitions, and how such tours featured in political reform and as a backdrop to the Technical Instruction Act of 1889. Her final chapter focuses on the significance of foreign travel at Quintin Hogg's Regent Street Polytechnic, showing how by this point travel served a multiplicity of functions – social, economic, and imperial.

The book suffers slightly if understandably from over-ambition. To cover Cook, the 1850s, several organisations during the 1860s, several exhibitions in the 1870s, and the Polytechnic after 1889 was a tall order. Important areas are missing: the background of artisan reportage, for example, was not invented in Britain but rather its background lay in Continental European traditions pre-dating 1851, a subject not treated directly here. The theme of educational travel evolves so far as to become somewhat lost. The chapter on the Polytechnic – while fascinating in itself – no longer focuses on trips abroad but the interaction of Hogg with former pupils abroad. The conclusion, dealing with discussion of the educational value in relation to Jade Goody, is distracting. There are also some worrying generalisations there about attitudes to the working classes under Thatcher and Blair. More centrally, the argument that reformers wished to tame the working classes, drawing intermittently on Foucault, sounds at times like conspiracy theory and requires greater appreciation of the moral motives of the reformers as well as the ambitions and demands of the reformed.

On the other hand, the book is significant for identifying, recapturing and analysing the artisan literature held in archives such as those of the RSA. It places such reports alongside other more well-researched genres of travel literature, and points out the significance of educational travel in relation to reform and the working classes. There is absorbing detail about Cook, Hogg and other significant Victorian reformers. There are also many thought-provoking references, such as connections between liberal reformism and colonial administration and the position of women in discussion of working class education. It is a valuable addition to research as well as a fascinating read.



John R. Davis
Professor of History and International Relations
Kingston University, London

RESPONSE TO CASTING THE CRUCIFIXION

Julius Bryant, Keeper of Word and Image at the V&A Museum, wrote in response to the article by Ronald Sim in WSG Newsletter no.45 that he found this most interesting, particularly the references provided by Mr Sim which he had missed in his own paper on 'The Anatomical Crucifixion' published in *Apollo* June 1991. In his former position, as Chief Curator & Director of Museums and Collections at English Heritage, Mr Bryant had borrowed this cast for the exhibition at Kenwood House on 'The Artist's Model in England'.

CHRISTOPHER DRESSER SOCIETY

A £10,000 bequest led to the formation of the Christopher Dresser Society at Teesside University to bring wider recognition to this influential figure in the history of design. The society seeks to create a focal point for those with an interest in Dresser and to provide opportunities to develop, share expertise and develop resources for scholars and others. Following the acquisition of a significant collection of Dresser artefacts the Dorman Museum in Middlesbrough unveiled the Christopher Dresser Gallery in 2014. Paul Denison, principal lecturer in design history at Teesside University said that 'Dresser's peripatetic life had meant that nobody had really laid claim to him' but Middlesbrough had a strong case as Dresser had helped to found the Linthorpe Art Pottery there in 1879 to help with unemployment at a time of economic depression. Harry Lyons, collector and authority, spoke to the RSA History Study Group in 1999 about his research on 'Christopher Dresser: People's Designer', with included Dresser's links with the Society. For news of events and information on the Christopher Dresser Society see <https://dressersociety.wordpress.com/>



CFA VOYSEY SOCIETY

The CFA Voysey Society has been founded to encourage research into all aspects of the life and work of one of the leading figures of the Arts and Crafts movement. Charles Francis Annesley Voysey (1857-1941) was one of the first twelve Royal Designers of Industry appointed by the RSA in 1936. Professor Anne Anderson will be giving the Voysey Annual Lecture on Friday 6th November 2015 when she will speak on the 'Architect and aristocrat: Voysey and Lady Lovelace'. Non members are welcome to attend. For more information on the Voysey Society and to book a place at the talk see <http://www.voyseysociety.org/>

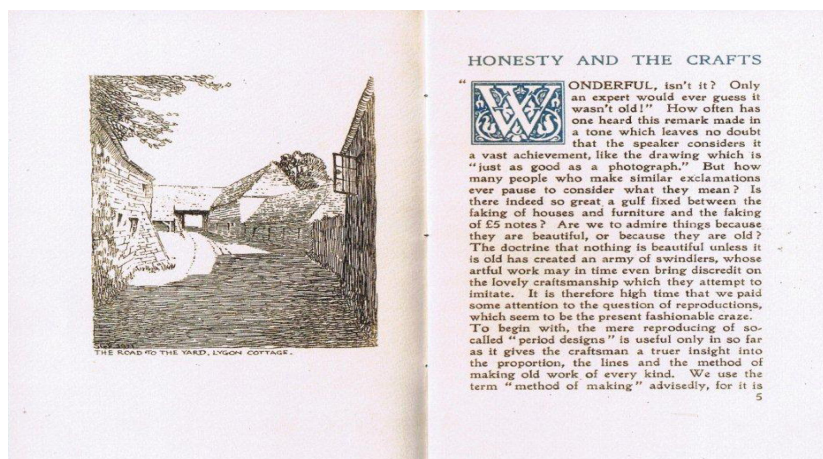


ICONIC CHAIR DESIGNED GOES BACK IN PRODUCTION

Luke Hughes has been designing furniture for cathedrals and churches across the UK and the USA for the last twenty-five years. He recently signed an agreement with the Gordon Russell Trust to bring the 'Coventry chair', designed by Dick Russell RDI for Basil Spence's new Coventry Cathedral, back into production. See http://www.lukehughes.co.uk/about/news_story/reviving_the_coventry_chair/

Dick's design for the Coventry chair is featured in a new book, *Advancing the Product. [Gordon Russell Furniture - a continuing adventure 1946-1986]*. This heavily illustrated hardback volume looks at the post-war output of Gordon Russell's company in Broadway. Written by former company Chairman and founder member of the Gordon Russell Design Museum, Ray Leigh and former Chief Designer for the company, Trevor Chinn, this book, and the first volume covering the pre-war period can be purchased from the Gordon Russell Design Museum at a cost of £20 each. (grussellmuseum@btconnect.com)

The Gordon Russell Trust has also published a facsimile edition of *Honesty and Crafts*. This leaflet, which was originally published in 1923, provides an insight into the beliefs which guided Gordon Russell (later an RDI) throughout his life. Priced at £6 this is also available from the Gordon Russell Design Museum.



THE ROBIN AND LUCIENNE DAY FOUNDATION LAUNCHED

The Robin and Lucienne Day Foundation was launched at the Royal College of Art on 6th May 2015. An invited audience of over a hundred people, which included family members, friends, staff and fellow RDIs, as well as representatives from the design industry, design education, design museums and archives to hear about the Foundation's plans. Paula Day spoke about her parents' outstanding contributions to British design, and that she had founded this charity to promote an appreciation and understanding of the nation's design heritage, to encourage public access to the design legacies of Robin and Lucienne Day, and to provide opportunities for further study. In 2013 the Foundation donated the entire contents of Robin's last studio to the Design Museum, with the exception of the technical drawings which were donated to the Archive at the V&A.

To celebrate the centenary of Robin Day's birth in 2015 the Foundation is collaborating with the Furniture Makers' Company to give 100 state schools a Robin Day Furniture Design Award certificate and a copy of Lesley Jackson's *Modern British Furniture* to the best GCSE Design and Technology students. A series of events and exhibitions for 'A Day in London' is being arranged as part of the 2015 London Design Festival. The programme will be available as an e-newsletter on 7th September. For more information see the Foundation's website <http://robinandlucienndayfoundation.org/news>



675 chair

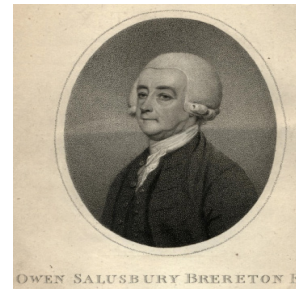
The Foundation has licenced Case Furniture to produce the 675 chair, originally designed by Robin Day in 1952. Design retailer twentytwentyone (<http://twentytwentyone.com/>) contributed to the celebrations with a special edition of Robin Day's Reclining Chair, which they invited ten of the county's foremost designers, including RDIs Margaret Howell, Kenneth Grange, Jasper Morrison, Barber Osgerby, Matthew Hilton and Terence Woodgate to upholster in contemporary fabrics to complement the historic design.



The ten upholstered Reclining chairs on display at twentytwentyone

ANNIVERSARIES

2015 marks the **300th** anniversary of the birth of the antiquarian Owen Salusbury Brereton (1715-1798). Three years after his election as a member in 1762 Brereton was elected as one of the Society's Vice-Presidents. He held this office until his death. Brereton collapsed on his way to the races at Egham and subsequently died at his home in Windsor. In paying tribute to their Vice-President, who had served 'with great credit to himself and advantage to the Society', the Society published his portrait as the frontispiece to vol.19 of the *Transactions*.

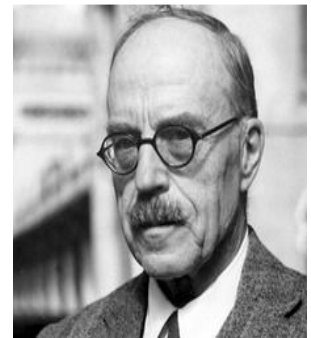


2015 mark the **160th** anniversary of the death of George Townsend Andrews (1804-1855). In 1824 Andrews was awarded the Society of Arts Silver Isis medal for an original architectural design for houses in Greek architecture. The following year he entered the Royal Academy Schools and studied architecture under Sir John Soane. Andrews became best known for his designs for stations for George Hudson's railways at Filey, Pocklington and Scarborough, as well as many others. Andrews did not confine his practice to the railways he also designed churches, bank headquarters and the White Hart Hotel and Montpelier Baths, Harrogate. The De Grey Rooms in York were built to his design offering suitable accommodation for the officers of the Yorkshire Hussars annual mess, as well space for concerts, balls, public entertainments and meetings.



G.T. Andrews, Filey Station

2015 marks the **130th** anniversary of the birth of the chemist and inventor, Sir Henry Tizard (1885-1959). 'The secret of science' he once said, 'is to ask the right question, and it is the choice of problem more than anything else that marks the man of genius in the scientific world. Tizard's chosen problem was aeronautics. He carried out work of outstanding importance in the application of scientific knowledge to problems of defence, including promoting the practical use of radar during the Second World War, and the 'octane rating' used to classify gasoline was an outcome of his work in chemistry. His proven ability as an administrator during the war led to his appointment as Permanent Secretary of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, and he also served as Rector of Imperial College. Tizard was also appointed Vice-President of the RSA from 1929 to 1932 and served on the Council from 1935 to 1936. In acknowledgement of his success in applying scientific principles to aeronautics and the indebtedness of the nation 'for ensuring the high efficiency of our aircraft, with which our devoted airmen achieved that success which the Prime Minister [Winston Churchill] has, in never-to-be-forgotten terms, recognised and commended' the RSA awarded Tizard its most prestigious award, the Albert Medal, in 1944. Two years later he was awarded the Gold medal of the Franklin Society of Philadelphia.



2015 marks the **115th** anniversary of the death of Howard Henry Room (1842-1900) At the age of nineteen he started work at the Society of Arts in 1861 as a junior clerk. Within a few years he was promoted to chief clerk before taking on the role of the Society's Accountant in 1875. His obituary states that 'the duties of this office he discharged with assiduous care and ability'. He was also in charge of the Society's Examinations, a duty affording full scope for the minute accuracy and painstaking care which characterised all his work. All who came into contact with him found him courteous and kind, and his considerable powers of organisation and unswerving sense of purpose gained him respect and regard of those worked with him. H.H. Room came from a family of artists. Before her marriage his mother, as Miss Louisa Derby, was awarded a silver Isis medal by the Society in 1828 for a pencil drawing of a landscape by Claude in the National Gallery.

2015 marks the **centenary** of Lady Lugard's talk in the Great Room on 'The Work of the War Refugees Committee' set up to 'get the Belgian women and children out, if possible, from under the German guns'. In reply to her question to the authorities about what would happen to the refugees Lady Lugard was told 'We leave that to you'. With only 48 hours before the arrival of the first 1,000 refugees she was able to set up a committee to organise relief for the Belgians. The country responded generously to requests for help. Within a fortnight they had hospitality for 100,000 persons at their disposal. The Society's Chairman thanked Lady Lugard for her informative presentation and agreed with the committee's resolution that employment should be found for the Belgian refugees, he was quite sure that they would prefer to work. Over a quarter of a million Belgians fled their homes following Germany's invasion of their homeland. Lady Lugard was made a Dame of the British Empire in 1916 in acknowledgement of her work for the refugees.



Detail from painting by Fredo Franzoni showing the Belgian refugees landing in Folkestone. (Folkestone Town Council)



Belgian Refugees housed at Alexandra Palace

2015 marks the **80th** anniversary of the death of the electrical engineer Alan A. Campbell Swinton (1863-1930). The Society awarded him their Silver medal for the talk he gave in 1896 on Rontgen's X-Ray photography. There was so much interest in this subject that the Great Room could not accommodate them all and many were turned away. In his 1920 lecture on 'Wireless Telegraphy and Telephony' Swinton prophesied that 'some day we may have the Prime Minister, or even the Monarch himself, addressing by word of mouth, and at one and the same time, all the different parts of the British Empire'. Swinton has the unusual distinction of being elected Chairman of the Society for two periods, 1917-19 and 1920-22. When he came into office the lease of the house had expired and the Society was being threatened with either buying the freehold or paying an enormously increased rent. Swinton started a purchase fund and donated the sum of £1,000 to get it started. A later anonymous gift of £30,000 ensured that the RSA would continue to occupy the building designed for the Society by the Adam Brothers in 1774. Thanks largely to his position in life and his genial character Swinton had numbered among his friends nearly all the most eminent men of science from the late 19th to early 20th century.



Honorary Patron: Lord Asa Briggs of Lewes FRSA. Honorary President: Dr David Allan, FRSA; Honorary Vice-Presidents: Gerry Acher, CBE, LVO, FRSA; Sir Paul Judge, FRSA; Professor Franz Bosbach, Director, University of Duisburg-Essen. Committee: Dr Nicholas Cambridge FRSA (Chair); Dr David Allan FRSA (Director of Studies); Prof John Davis FRSA (Deputy Chair); Anthony Burton; Paul Leonard, FLS; Jonathan Rollason, FRSA; Susan Bennett, MA, FRSA (Honorary Secretary, Editor and Treasurer)