



# THE WILLIAM SHIPLEY GROUP FOR RSA HISTORY

Newsletter 47 December 2015

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### **Tuesday 2 February 2016 at 6.30pm. Sir John Hawkshaw and the Severn Tunnel.**

The Victorian Society Lecture will take place at the Art Workers' Guild, 6 Queen Square, London WC1. Tickets £11 on door.

Sir John Hawkshaw (1811-1891), an active member of the Society of Arts, designed one of the most difficult 19th century civil engineering projects, to provide a direct link from England to South Wales with the construction of the Severn Tunnel, which remained the longest tunnel in Britain until 2007. For booking information see <http://www.victoriansociety.org.uk/events/lecture-sir-john-hawkshaw-and-the-severn-tunnel/>



*Sir John Hawkshaw inspecting the Severn Tunnel during construction*

### **Wednesday 16 March 2016 at 2.45pm. The William Shipley Group 12th Annual General Meeting and Annual Address** (details to follow)

**Wednesday 17 March 2016 from 10.00am. Animating the Georgian London Town House.** A conference organised by the Paul Mellon Centre, the National Gallery and Birkbeck College will be held in the Sainsbury Wing Lecture Theatre, National Gallery, London, WC2N 5DN. Tickets: £55 /£48 senior citizens/£45 National Gallery Members/£28 students

Expert speakers will discuss both famed and little-remembered London houses, and discuss how these residences were designed, furnished and ornamented. The significance and function of these properties for owners and their families and the experience of guests and visitors will also be considered. See [http://www.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk/media/\\_file/events/animating-georgian-london-town-house-conf-prog.pdf](http://www.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk/media/_file/events/animating-georgian-london-town-house-conf-prog.pdf) for full programme.



*Spencer House*

**Saturday 7 May 2016. Before the Docks: London River and Port in Eighteenth Century** from 9.45am. Docklands History Group 5th Annual Symposium, Main Lecture Hall, Museum of London, No.1 Warehouse, West India Quay, Hertsmere Road, Canary Wharf, London E14 4AL.

Organised by Chris Ellmers, Founding Director of the Museum of London Docklands) and Professor Sarah Palmer, a noted maritime historian at the University of Greenwich the full programme is available at <http://www.docklandshistorygroup.org.uk/BEFORETHEDOCKS-Programme1a.pdf> or email [info@docklandshistorygroup.org.uk](mailto:info@docklandshistorygroup.org.uk)



## EXHIBITIONS

**Peter Blake. Portraits to People.** Waddington Custot Galleries, 11 Cork Stret, London W1S 3LT. 24 November 2015 to 30 January 2016

This first exhibition of Peter Blake's portraiture, selected by the artist, includes his paintings of fashion designer and fellow RDI, Paul Smith, the actress Helen Mirren and the musician Ian Dury, who was taught by Blake in the sixties. Blake, elected an RDI in 1987, is also showing a significant group of new works, continuing his series of Wrestlers and Circus Acts. The centrepiece of the exhibition is a three-panelled Elvis Shrine. This is the first time that many of these works have been available for public display.



Peter Blake, Tattooed Woman 3, 2015, watercolour on paper, 5 7/8 x 4 1/8 in/ 14.9 x 10.5 cm

**Everybody Razzle Dazzle. Liverpool Biennial 14-18 NOW.**

2 April 2015 to December 2016

WW1 Centenary Art Commissions and Tate Liverpool have commissioned Peter Blake RDI to dazzle one of their Mersey ferries. He first visited Liverpool during his National Service with the RAF in the early 1950s and he regularly sailed from the iconic waterfront when he went to Belfast for training. His distinctive pattern, 'Everybody Razzle Dazzle', based on his use and interest in colour, monochrome and shape can be seen on the ferry Snowdrop until the end of 2016.



**The World of Charles & Ray Eames.** Barbican Centre, Silk Street, London EC2Y 8DS. Ticket price £14.50

In collaboration with the Eames Office this extensive exhibition surveys the rich careers and extraordinary work of Charles and Ray Eames through objects and projects produced during their life time using a variety of tools; film, multi-channel slideshows, furniture, products, drawings, sculpture, painting, graphic design, models, props, together with exhibition and installation artifacts. Also on display are the personal letters, doodles and notes they sent to one another, revealing their constant exchange of ideas. Charles Eames was appointed an Honorary RDI in 1960.



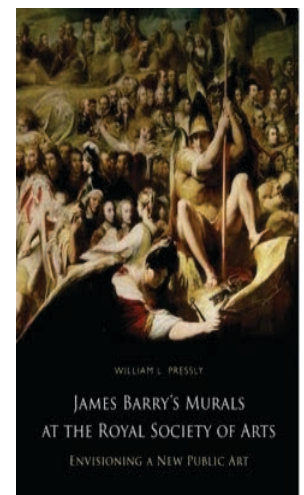
## AWARDS

### WILLIAM M.B. BERGER PRIZE

William L. Pressly, James Barry's Murals at the Society of Arts – Envisioning a New Public Art, Cork University Press, 2014

Our congratulations to WSG Member William L. Pressly who has been awarded the 2015 William M.B. Berger prize for British Art History for his analysis of the murals painted for the 'Great Room' of the Royal Society of Arts by the 18th century Irish painter James Barry. Dr Loyd Grossman CBE presented him with the £5000 prize at a reception held at the Society of Antiquaries of London on 7th December.

Robin Simon, editor, *British Art Journal*, which administers the prize said that 'Barry's strange and wonderful murals, hidden away in the heart of London, are one of the great episodes in British and Irish art and one of the most mysterious. Professor Pressly's remarkable explanation is a triumph of research and reflection and the book is beautifully written'. He added that 'nothing could be more fitting than that this superbly produced book should have been published by Cork University Press, the city of James Barry's birth'.



In *Envisioning a New Public Art* Pressly has brought together over thirty years of research in order to demonstrate Barry's pioneering approach to public art and the highly personal nature of his work. Numerous close-up details help us read the hidden narrative Pressly has deciphered within the six murals Barry painted for the [Royal] Society of Arts.

RSA Historian and WSG Honorary President Dr David G.C. Allan and Professor Pressly have shared a long-standing interest in Barry and his murals. Both have published widely on the subject over the years and they contributed some of their findings in the volume edited by the WSG Honorary Secretary, *Cultivating the Human Faculties*. James Barry (1741-1806) and the Society of Arts (2008). The paintings can be viewed by appointment by contacting Eve Watson, Head of Archives on 020 7451 6885 or email [evelyn.watson@rsa.org.uk](mailto:evelyn.watson@rsa.org.uk)



*Prof W. L. Pressly receives his award from Dr Loyd Grossman*

### D&AD PRESIDENT'S AWARD, 2015

Graphic designer and RDI Margaret Calvert was chosen to receive this year's prestigious D&AD President's Award. With her colleague Jock Kinneir she designed many of the road signs used throughout the United Kingdom, as well as the Transport and the Railway Alphabet fonts. She came up with the simple, easy to understand pictograms, including 'men at work', and 'schoolchildren nearby'. Her D&AD President's lecture can be seen here <http://www.dandad.org/en/presidents-lecture-margaret-calvert/>



### DESIGN WEEK HALL OF FAME

The Hall of Fame aims to recognise individuals within design who have made a significant contribution to the industry, have provided inspiration and incisive thinking, or who have simply created consistently brilliant work. Seven of the first ten designers to be admitted to the Design Week Hall of Fame are Royal Designers for Industry (RDIs). They are:

Renowed typographer, art director and brand strategist **Neville Brody**; **Edward Barber & Jay Osgerby** whose work spans industrial design, furniture and site-specific installations; **Margaret Calvert** who has also just completed a digital font, with Herik Kubel, of her Transport lettering which has been adopted as the official face for Gov.uk; museum and exhibition designer **Dinah Casson**, who has also been almost constantly involved with design education since the 1970s; creative director **Prof Malcolm Garrett** who has earned a global reputation for his influence on graphic design and popular culture; **Sir Jony Ive**, Apple's Chief Design Officer, whose work has been recognised by numerous design awards and was made a Knight Commander of the British Empire in 2013 'for his services to design and enterprise'.



Neville Brody



Margaret Calvert



Malcolm Garrett

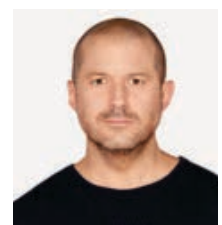
Edward Barber  
& Jay Osgerby



Dianah Casson



Sir Jony Ive





## MINTON ARCHIVE SAVED

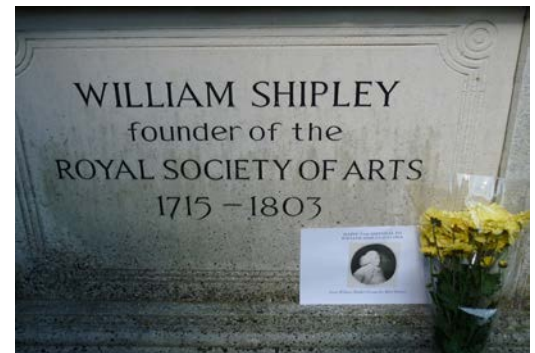
A fundraising campaign led by the Art Fund has secured the Minton Archive of the Staffordshire pottery companies, Minton and Royal Doulton. The archive has been gifted to the city of Stoke on Trent and will be owned, managed and made publicly accessible by the Staffordshire County Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council Joint Archives Service. The scope and scale of this archive provides an insight into design and manufacturing processes of the pottery industry from the 18th to the 20th centuries. Elected in 1846 Sir Herbert Minton was an active member of the Society, contributed to the Society's Educational Exhibition of 1854 and presented the mosaic floor for the main entrance hall of the RSA's house in John Adam Street.

For his design for a white stoneware beer jug, with a blue stained neck and relief of hops and barleycorn in white, entered for the Society's 1846 decorative arts competition, Minton was awarded a Silver medal. He also made other versions, including one decorated with vines and grapes. Minton identified this award on a ribbon moulded in relief on the base of these jugs, and the inclusion of the name 'M&Co' is one of the earliest examples of a design carrying the factory's name



## WILLIAM SHIPLEY (1715-1803)

As this year was the tercentenary of the birth of the Society's founder William Shipley the WSG has made an application, on behalf of the RSA, for the erection of a memorial tablet on the site of Rawthmell's Coffee House, Covent Garden, where Shipley held the foundation meeting of the Society on 22 March 1754. Members will be informed when the final permissions are granted. To mark his tercentenary the William Shipley Group laid flowers on Shipley's tomb at All Saints Church, Maidstone.



## *Thrice happy the country which can boast...a Shipley*

Count von Berchtold, *Essay to direct and extend the inquiries of Patriotic Travellers*, 1789

## PATRIOTISCHE GESELLESCHAFT von 1765 BICENTENARY

The Patriotic Society of Hamburg was founded on the model of the [Royal] Society of Arts and the Société Royale d'agriculture de la généralité de Paris (founded 1761) in 1765. A letter survives in the RSA archive from their founder. He writes, 'he always considered this body (Society of Arts) as the wise and enlightened mother to a weak child, who is in need of a good education'.

Their 250th anniversary celebrations this included a reception for 500 guests in the Great Hall of the Hamburg City Hall and a lecture by the Deputy Prime Minister of Schleswig-Holstein, on the subject of 'What's patriotic' and their open day attracted 5,000 visitors to the home of the oldest civil society organisation in German-speaking countries. A festschrift was also published on their behalf, *City and Civil Society. 250 years Patriotic Society from 1765 for Hamburg. History - Present - Perspectives*. The William Shipley Group for RSA History wishes the Patriot Society of Hamburg continuing success in their mission 'to promote science and education, caring for the needy, helping students and the promotion of tolerance in all areas of culture and international understanding.'. For more information on their work see their website <http://www.patriotische-gesellschaft.de/>



### **MRS ELEANOR COADE (1733-1821)**

The Landmark Trust has recently completed their restoration of the 18th century seaside villa Belmont House, Lyme Regis. This Grade II building is the former home of Mrs Eleanor Coade who devised a formula to enable the mass production of architectural embellishments and statuary of the highest quality. Visitors can now stay in this Georgian architectural gem and see examples of her Coade stone in the intricate face of Neptune on a keystone, the urns, frieze and quoins which decorate the villa. <http://www.landmarktrust.org.uk/belmont/>

The 2015 Georgian Group Architectural Awards have just been announced and Belmont House received the award for the Restoration of a Georgian Building in an Urban Setting.

Mrs Coade's manufactory at Lambeth also produced four copies of a bust of the artist James Barry in her eponymous stone. One of these busts was given to the Society of Arts in 1819 but its current whereabouts is a mystery but the copy assigned to St Paul's Cathedral is still on display in the crypt close to the memorial to Sir Christopher Wren. For this story see Alison Kelly, 'A bust of James Barry for the Society of Arts', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, vol.123 (1975), pp.819-22)



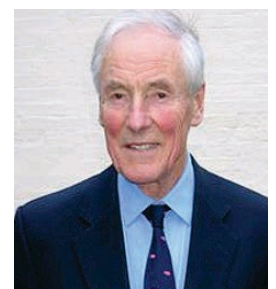
*l to r: Coade stone detail, Belmont House,  
James Barry's bust in St Paul's Cathedral*



### **OBITUARIES**

#### **SIR GEORGE ADRIAN HAYHURST CADBURY CH (1929-2015)**

It was no surprise when, after an exemplary record as Company Chairman for Cadbury and Cadbury Schweppes for over fourteen years, the Stock Exchange and the Financial Reporting Council turned to Sir Adrian Cadbury to chair a committee on corporate governance. His subsequent report remains the prime source for any study on the subject and has also been the foundation of the work of the RSA's Tomorrow's Company inquiry. Following on from the RSA's project Tomorrow's Company was founded in 1995 as a not-for-profit, agenda setting think-tank to inspire and enable companies to be a force for good, with Sir Adrian Cadbury as its Patron. For information on the current activity of Tomorrow's Company see <http://tomorrowscompany.com/>



#### **BRIAN SEWELL (1931-2015)**

Six years ago Brian Sewell, a self confessed Luddite who did not own a computer or mobile phone, wrote for the *RSA Journal* about his debt to modern technology and innovation. All sorts of miraculous technologies had enabled the surgeon to replumb his heart had kept him going much longer than either of them had thought.



## HABLOT KNIGHT BROWNE (1815-1882)

by Nicholas Cambridge, Honorary Chairman, William Shipley Group

This year we celebrate the bicentenary of the birth of Hablot Knight Browne, also known as Phiz, an English artist who illustrated the works of Charles Dickens, Charles Lever, and Harrison Ainsworth. Born on June 11th 1815 in Lambeth of Huguenot ancestry Hablot Knight Browne was the fourteenth of Catherine and William Loder Browne's fifteen children.

In 1832 at the age of seventeen he was awarded the Society of Arts Silver Isis medal for the best illustration of an historical subject, and the following year a second medal for his large etching depicting John Gilpin's ride. However, the following year he abandoned engraving and began other artistic work, with the ultimate object of becoming a painter.

### Artistic Career

Apprenticed to the engraver William Finden, in whose studio he obtained his only artistic education, Browne learned the technical details of engraving. Finden's were the leading engravers of the day. They executed a large number of plates of all sorts, either for framing, or as illustrations for books. These were the days of keepsakes, books of beauty, and annuals of various kinds with several men engaged on one plate. In 1835 Phiz was one of several artists co-operating on the production of a book called *Winkle's Cathedrals* (3 vols) which offered a picturesque aspect of architecture that helped to inspire the 19th century Gothic revival in Britain.

Later in the spring of 1836 he met Charles Dickens who was looking for someone to illustrate *Pickwick*. In the original edition, issued in shilling monthly parts from early 1836 until the end of 1837, the first seven plates were drawn by Robert Seymour, who committed suicide in April 1836. The next two plates were by Robert William Buss. Browne and William Makepeace Thackeray visited the publisher's office with specimens of their work for Dickens's inspection. The novelist preferred Browne. His first two etched plates for *Pickwick* were signed "Nemo," but the third was signed "Phiz," a pseudonym which he retained for all his future work. When asked to explain why he chose this name he answered that the change from "Nemo" to "Phiz" was made to harmonize better with Dickens's "Boz."

Phiz developed the character Sam Weller graphically just as Seymour had developed Pickwick. Dickens and Phiz became good friends and in 1838 travelled together to Yorkshire to see the schools where Nicholas Nickleby became the hero: afterwards they made several journeys of this nature in company to facilitate the illustrator's work. Other Dickens characters illustrated by Phiz were Squeers, Micawber, Guppy, Major Bagstock, Mrs Gamp, Tom Pinch and David Copperfield.



Hablot Brown (Phiz) circa 1870s



With a countenance greatly mollified by the softening influence of tobacco, requested him to "fire away." by Phiz (Hablot K. Browne). Household Edition (1874) of Dickens's *Pickwick Papers*, p. 225.



Sir Leicester Dedlock by "Phiz" (Hablot Knight Browne) for *Bleak House*, p. 424 (ch. 43, "Esther's Narrative")

Of the ten books by Dickens which Phiz illustrated, he is best known for *David Copperfield*, *Pickwick*, *Dombey and Son*, *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Bleak House*. Browne made several drawings for *Punch* in his early days and also towards the end of his life. He designed the wrapper, was used for eighteen months from January 1842, and also contributed to *Punch's Pocket Books*.

In addition to his work for Dickens, Phiz illustrated more than twenty of Lever's novels (among them *Harry Lorrequer*, *Charles O'Malley*, *Jack Hinton* and the *Knight of Gwynne*). He also illustrated the novels by Harrison Ainsworth and Frank Smedley. *Mervyn Clitheroe* by Ainsworth is one of the most accomplished of his works. Until 1867 Browne was in continual employment until he suffered an illness that caused a degree of paralysis. After recovering, he produced many woodcuts and in 1878 he was awarded an annuity by the Royal Academy.

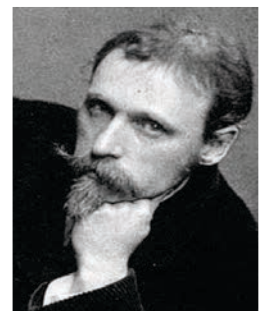


Blue plaque, Ladbroke Grove, London

## ANNIVERSARIES

**2015** marks **140th** anniversary of the birth of educational administrator and practitioner, Edmund Milton Rich CBE (1875-1959). From working as a demonstrator at Central Technical College in 1905 to serving as Chief Education Officer for the London County Council Education Authority from 1905, he drew on his wide experience when surveying the history and prospects of 'Technical Education' for the paper he gave to the RSA in 1941. A Vice-President, then Council Member, Rich represented the RSA for a number of years on the Chadwick and Armstrong Memorial Trusts.

**2015** marks the **centenary** of the death of Walter Crane (1845-1915) considered one of the most important artists, designers and book illustrators of the Victorian era. A leading figure of the Arts and Crafts Movement he was an active member of the Society of Arts. He gave lectures on the decorative art as well as chairing the Society's Applied Arts Section Committee. The Whitworth Art Gallery and the Rylands Library jointly purchased the Walter Crane Archive of more than four thousand items from his studio, which covers all aspects of his art and design work. An online exhibition marking Crane's centenary can be seen at <https://rylandscollections.wordpress.com/2015/03/14/marking-walter-cranes-cente->



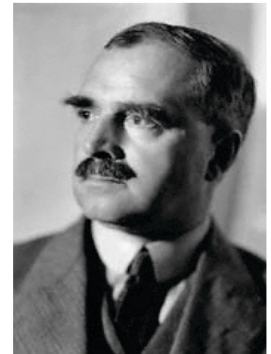
To mark the **100th** anniversary of the birth of Finnish designer and RDI Tapio Wirkkala (1915-1985) Artek are re-releasing a set of glass lampshades he created in the 1960s. A leading figure of the post war design movement in Finland Wirkkala is best known for his design of the Finlandia vodka bottle and the Finnish markka banknotes from 1955. Wirkkala was appointed an Honorary RDI in 1964



Lampshades designed by Wirkkala and re-released by Artek

**2015** marks the **centenary** of the award of the RSA's most prestigious award, the Albert Medal, to Professor Sir Joseph John Thomson 'for his researches in physics and chemistry, and their application to the advancement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce. In making the presentation the RSA Chairman Dr Dugald Clerk FRS remarked that 'his brilliant work also has industrial possibilities in the region of motive power; but altogether apart from this, the new knowledge of the nature of the atom and molecule mark an epoch of intellectual advance of the highest importance to mankind'. Thomson's medal can now be found in the collections of the Science Museum, London.

**2015** marks the **75th** anniversary of the death of Sir Arnold Talbot Wilson (1884-1940). Sir Arnold entered the Indian Army in 1904 and was subsequently transferred to the Political Department in which he occupied many important posts, culminating with his appointment as Civil Commissioner in the Persian Gulf at the early age of 33. He joined the RSA in 1920 and from 1926 to 1929 served on the Council. He read two papers and in 1937 a series of Cantor Lectures on 'Working Class Insurance'. He presided on many public committees and was also Chairman of the International Exhibition of Persian Art (1930) and for some years he was Editor of *The XIXth Century and After*. A highly gifted writer with a prodigious memory, Wilson was no easy to get to know intimately, but once his armour was pierced it was said there was no stauncher or more generous friend. He volunteered for service in the Second World War and died on active service, 'a death which he himself would have chosen'.



**2015** marks the **75th** anniversary of the death of the sculptor, typeface designer, stonecutter and print-maker, Eric Gill. He was one of the first members appointed a Royal Designer for Industry (RDI) by the RSA in 1936. Douglas Cockerell RDI wrote Gill's obituary for the RSA Journal and paid tribute to a craftsman whose 'work will outlive him and his influence continue long after his death'.



*De Havilland DH108 'Swallow'*

**2015** marks the **50th** anniversary of the death of the aviation designer and aircraft engineer Sir Geoffrey de Havilland (1882-1965). In 1920, with several of his wartime colleagues, he founded the De Havilland Aircraft Company. His Mosquito has been considered the most versatile warplane ever built and his Moth introduced a whole generation to the delights of private flying. Appointed an RDI in 1944 de Havilland provided a model of the D.H. 108 for display in the 'Design at Work' exhibition of RDI's designs.

**2015** marks the **70th** anniversary of the Design Council founded to elevate the UK's industrial design standards in manufacturing to support Britain's economic recovery. To celebrate the Design Council searched their archives to find previously unseen photographs which tell the story of seven decades of championing design to improve people's lives. <http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/celebrating-70-years>

**2015** marks the **70th** anniversary of the election as a Fellow of the RSA in 1945 of the distinguished architect Sir Edward Brantwood Maufe (1882-1974). He was the Royal Institute of British Architects representative on the War Memorials Advisory Council set up following the RSA's Conference on War Memorials. Maufe also designed the Memorial at Runnymede in 1953 to mark the signing of Magna Carta 800 years ago in 1215. For the story of the RSA and the design of war memorials see WSG Occasional Paper no.19

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; Dan Stanley, FRSA, Philip Emery FRSA, Susan Bennett, MA, FRSA (Honorary Secretary, Editor and Treasurer)