



# THE WILLIAM SHIPLEY GROUP FOR RSA HISTORY

Newsletter 39: November 2013

WSG Chairman, Dr Nicholas Cambridge has been appointed Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Buckingham, and our Honorary Secretary/Editor is now Honorary Faculty Fellow at the University of Brighton.

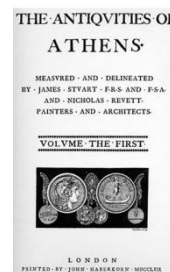
The Paul Mellon Centre for British Art and the Royal Commissioners for the 1851 Exhibition have both generously made awards towards the publication costs of the papers from the WSG conference on the 1862 International Exhibition as next year's *DAS Journal*. Once we have secured the last outstanding £2,000 publication can be confirmed.

## **FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

**11 December 2013** at 5.45pm. **The 1862 Exhibition: Machinery on Show and its Message** by John Agnew. This lecture is presented by the Newcomen Society and will be held in the Director's Suite at the Science Museum. Places are free but please contact the organiser Fred Starr, [newcomen.starr@yahoo.com](mailto:newcomen.starr@yahoo.com)

**21 March 2014** at 12.30pm. The WSG **AGM** followed by the Chairman's Address **Coffee Houses, Clubs and Societies in Eighteenth Century London** by Dr Nicholas Cambridge. Venue to be confirmed

**28 April 2014** at 6.30pm. **'Printed for the author': Johann Christoph Haberkorn - An 18th century London printer as collaborator in the publication of key works in the fields of art, architecture and design** by Graham Jefcoate, former Head, Early Printed Collections, British Library and Director, Nijmegen University Library. The Royal Academy have kindly allowed us to hold this meeting in their library at Burlington House, Piccadilly Spaces limited so please book



**12 May 2014** at 8pm. **Caleb Whitefoord. The Man Who Made Peace with America** by Dr David Allan, FSA, for the Borough of Twickenham Local History Society at St Mary's, Church Hall, Twickenham. Payment on the door.



Wine Merchant, Diplomat and Art Patron Caleb Whitefoord FRS. FSA (1734-1810) was elected a member of the Society of Arts in 1762 on the proposal of his next-door neighbour and friend, Benjamin Franklin. He was active in the Society's affairs serving first as a committee member then as chairman. In recognition of his long service in the Society's affairs he was elected Vice-President in 1800. This talk will consider the role Whitefoord played in the peace negotiations between Great Britain and America.

**2 July 2014** at 5.15pm. **The Tribulations of Johann Christoph Haberkorn: An Eighteenth-Century London Printer and his dealings with Pietists and Moravians** by Graham Jefcoate at Dr Williams's Centre for Dissenting Studies, 14 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0AR

## **EXHIBITIONS**

***Georgians Revealed. Life, Style and the Making of Modern Britain.*** PACCAR Gallery, The British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB. 8 November 2013-11 March 2014. Mon-Fri, 10.00am to 6pm; Sat 10.00am to 5pm; Sun 11.00am to 5pm. Tickets £8, over 60s £7, Students £5.

This exhibition explores the revolution in everyday life that took place between 1714 and 1830. Drawing on the British Library's uniquely rich and rare collections of illustrated books, newspapers, maps and advertisements, as well as loaned artworks and artefacts, *Georgians Revealed* brings to life the trials and triumphs of the ordinary people who transformed Britain forever.



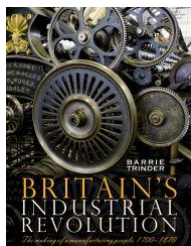
## **BENJAMIN FRANKLIN MUSEUM**

The Benjamin Franklin Museum in Philadelphia features 21<sup>st</sup> century hands-on exhibits and computer simulations designed to animate the character and wisdom of the 18<sup>th</sup> century sage and Honorary Corresponding Member of the Society of Arts, Benjamin Franklin. The exhibition space, next to the site of Franklin's original home, covers the life and times of Franklin, including his contributions to science, diplomacy and politics.



<http://www.nps.gov/inde/planyourvisit/benjamin-franklin-museum.htm>

## **BOOKS**



Barrie Trinder, ***Britain's Industrial Revolution. The Making of a Manufacturing People 1700-1870.*** London: Carnegie Publishing Company, 2013. ISBN 978 1859362198 (£19.99)

The book examines industrial change in every part of the British Isles, including Scotland and Ireland. Prominent, of course, are the districts which witnessed the most striking developments such as Manchester, Birmingham, the Ironbridge Gorge, Leeds, South Wales, the Central Belt of Scotland, the East End of London and the harbours of Cork and Belfast. In taking 1700 as his starting date Trinder makes use of the writings of Defoe backed up by modern research in local history, to show that manufactures flourished in many smaller locations such as Barnstaple, Maidstone and Northampton. By 1870 the north/south divide had widened and the scale of manufacturing increased. Queen Anne's prosperous kingdom of Lilliput had changed into Queen Victoria's Empire of Brobdingnag. Symbolic structures such as the Crystal Palace, Robert Stephenson's tubular bridges, Saltaire, the SS *Great Britain*, the Free Trade Hall in Manchester and Leeds Town Hall engendered a feeling of optimism amongst contemporaries and it is at this point, the year of the Education Act at home and of the Franco-Prussian war abroad, that the book reaches its conclusion.



As would be expected the work of the Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce is touched on at many points. A skip through the index shows references to members such as Arkwright, Babbage, Boulton, Bramah, Fairbairn, Franklin, Heathcote, Pulteney, Thrale, Watt, Wilkinson and Wedgwood and prize winners such as Bessemer, Abraham Darby III, Erasmus Darwin,



Doulton, Richard Lovell Edgworth, William Hincks and Joseph Whitworth. Shipley is there as the founder and mention is made of the Society's early industrial exhibitions. The modular cottages designed by Henry Roberts and sponsored by Prince Albert which were displayed at the Great Exhibition of 1851 and re-erected at Kennington in 1853 are illustrated in a colour photograph taken by the author, who has a special interest in the subject. WSG members will recall his pioneer contribution to the Prince Albert Society's proceedings, 'The Model Lodging House:

Window onto the Underworld'<sup>1</sup>. The view of the cottages (p.546) is but one of many hundreds of illustrations all accompanied by informative captions relating them to a thought provoking narrative, which makes the book deserve Peter Wakelin's description of it as 'compendious yet sharply incisive, expert yet wise, academically exact yet visually compelling, and at times almost poetic'.  
D.G.C. Allan

Adrian Shaughnessy, **FHK Henrion. The Complete Designer**. London: Unit Editions, 2013. ISBN 9780 957511422 (£65)

This is the first comprehensive monograph of the father of modern corporate identity in Europe, F.H.K. Henrion compiled with the help of his widow Marion Wesel-Henrion and the Design Archives at the University of Brighton. Lavishly illustrated it charts his early experiments as a pre-war poster artist and culminates in his work as the creator of some of the most celebrated logos of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Henrion was elected a member of the Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry (RDI) in 1959 and on his appointment as the Master of the Faculty in 1971



Ray Leigh and Trevor Chinn, **Drawn to Design. The work of Sir Gordon Russell CBE, MC, RDI, the celebrated 20<sup>th</sup> century furniture designer**. Gordon Russell Design Museum, 2013 (£20 hardback or £15 paperback + £5 p&p. To order a copy contact the Gordon Russell Design Museum 01386 854695)



Ray Leigh, former Chairman of Gordon Russell Ltd and Trevor Chinn, former Chief Designer for the company have compiled this collection of over 100 early designs for furniture, metalwork and glass by Sir Gordon Russell. Nearly each drawing is accompanied by black and white photo of the finished piece. Elected an RDI in 1940 Sir Gordon Russell was appointed Master of the Faculty in 1947.

## POPE'S VILLA

On 19 November WSG Honorary President, Dr David Allan, spoke at Radnor House School, Pope's Villa in Twickenham, on **Poets, Princes, Native Americans and the Blitz: Four Centuries of Radnor House History**. Although Pope died in 1744, ten years before the Society's foundation he was a close friend of Dr Stephen Hales, Founding Member and Vice President of the Society of Arts, and had been to school at Twyford where William Shipley had spent his childhood years. Radnor House

<sup>1</sup> *The Great Exhibition and its Legacy*, Prince Albert Studies, vol.20 (2002), pp.223-42



School occupies a mid-nineteenth rebuilding of Pope's Villa, but preserves the famous 'Grotto' to which William Borlase, Henry Baker's friend had contributed, Baker himself being a friend of both Hales and Shipley.

The name 'Radnor House' was taken from a nearby mansion which had once belonged to John Robartes, Earl of Radnor. Robartes died in 1757. The title was subsequently granted to Viscount Folkestone, Vice-President and son of the first President of the Society. The original Radnor House survived until the 1930s when it was threatened with demolition, being saved as a result of a campaign led by Queen Mary and Mrs Ionides (an RSA connection). The reprieve was only temporary since the house was completely destroyed in the Blitz. Its grounds remain as a riverside park called 'Radnor Gardens'.

Information about the current work of Radnor House School and access to Pope's Grotto may be obtained from the Headmaster's PA on 020 8891 6264, email: [hdolan@radnorhouse.org](mailto:hdolan@radnorhouse.org)



## **ANNIVERSARIES**

**2013** marks the **300<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the birth of the 18<sup>th</sup> century clergyman and author Laurence Sterne (1713-1768). He is best known for his novel *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* (1759-67). Sterne was elected a member of the Society on 5 November 1760.

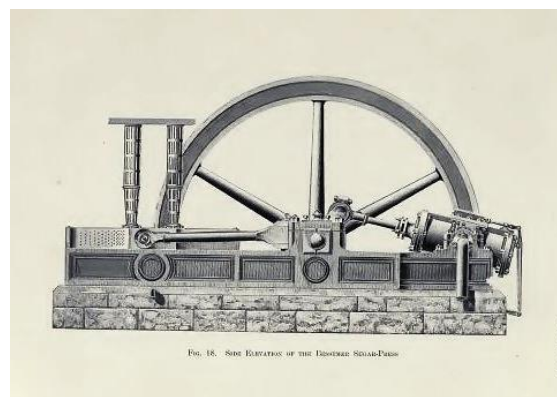


**2013** marks the **200<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the death of **Sir Henry Bessemer**, FRS (1813-1898). Despite modest educational beginnings Bessemer became one of the most important industrialists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Bessemer was elected a member of the Society in 1850 and a Council member in 1872. In that same year he was awarded the Society's Albert Medal 'for the eminent services rendered by him to Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, by developing the manufacture of steel'. A prolific inventor Bessemer had 110 patents to his name. One of these, his saloon for cross-Channel steamers, was stimulated by the Society's campaign to improve accommodation for passengers on this crossing. The *Bessemer* was built by the company he set up for this particular purpose. However, this invention turned out to be a rare failure as the swinging saloon did not work very well, and there were two serious collisions

with the pier at Calais. Bessemer was more successful with his hydraulic sugar cane press. In his auto-biography (published posthumously) Bessemer records the occasion when he attended a meeting of the Society of Arts where the engineer John Scott Russell stated that 'the new cane press of Mr Bessemer has the merit of introducing a principle at once new and of great beauty into the process while reducing the weight and cumbrousness of the machinery'. Russell added that Bessemer's machine removed 'the main obstacle to improving the working machinery of the colonies...the difficulty of transport'.

In his autobiography Bessemer provides us with a vivid account of a meeting at the Society of Arts. He was:

Much surprised to find the large hall crowded with spectators. At one side of the room was a raised dais, on which his Royal Highness, Prince Albert, was seated at a small table, and at his side was the Chairman of the Committee of Mechanical Experts, who had reported to the Prince the result of their deliberations. In front of the platform occupied by the Prince Consort, there was a long avenue covered with crimson cloth, and skirted on each side by rows of seats, occupied by ladies, who added to their personal charms all that the milliner's art could accomplish to give grace and *éclat* to the occasion. It was, I found, my rôle to brave all the dangers of this double battery of youth and beauty; and, like the good St Anthony, I had to keep my eyes fixed upon the crimson cloth, for I did not dare to look. If anything could add to the satisfaction of the moment, it was the presence...of the Chairman of the Committee of Experts...for this gentleman was no other than that talented and well-known engineer, Mr John Scott Russell...At the conclusion of Mr Scott Russell's address there was a round of applause, and this was followed by the rising of his Royal Highness Prince Albert, who complimented me in the kindest manner on the success of my invention – an invention which I had taken such unusual steps to prove, by bringing, as it were, the Colonies to us, and by resting my claims to recognition on actually accomplished facts. His Royal Highness then placed in my hands a beautiful Gold Medal. In briefly expressing my thanks I said that whatever advantages might in future result from this invention, they would be entirely due to the encouragement held out by his Royal Highness; and amid the warmest recognition from the assembled spectators, I beat a retreat with the prize I had received.<sup>2</sup>



In 1873, when he was President of the Iron and Steel Institute (now the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining) Bessemer established and endowed the Bessemer Gold Medal to be awarded annually for 'outstanding services to the steel industry'. This year (2013) it was awarded to Prof Kenneth Mills for his pioneering study of metallurgical slag.

**2013** marks the **centenary** of the discovery of the method of **X-ray crystallography** by Sir William Bragg and his son Lawrence in 1913. They proved the significance of this breakthrough by determining the internal structure of a diamond. Two years later they shared the Nobel Prize for this work. Broadcaster, author and distant cousin Melvyn Bragg tells the story of their groundbreaking work in his Radio 4 programme **Bragg on the Braggs** (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0383vb0>)



On 24 January 1923 Fellows gathered in the RSA's 'Great Room' to hear Sir William Bragg give the sixth Trueman Wood Lecture on 'New Methods of Crystal Analysis and their bearing on pure and applied science' but unfortunately Sir William had fallen ill, as had the Chair, Mr Campbell Swinton. The physicist George Shearer, who had been Sir William's right-hand man in a very large proportion of Bragg's investigations, stepped in and read the text provided by Bragg.<sup>3</sup>

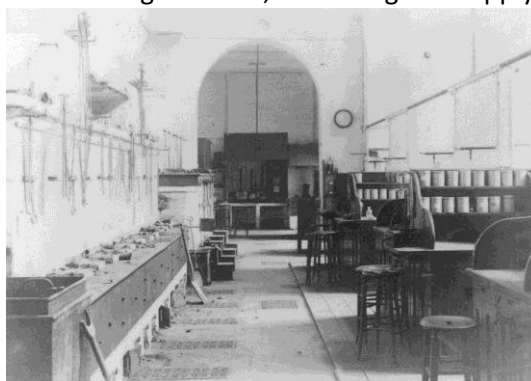
<sup>2</sup> Sir Henry Bessemer, *An Autobiography; with a concluding chapter* (1905), pp.93-5

<sup>3</sup> *Jnl RSA*, vol.71 (1923), p.267-

In 1936 Sir William Bragg, now Director of the Royal Institution, was able to attend the RSA in person to deliver his talk on 'The Development of Crystal Analysis'. In his opening Sir William said that 'the Royal Society of Arts honoured me greatly thirteen years ago by asking me to give the Trueman Wood Memorial Lecture for 1923. It is still a greater honour that I am asked to give this lecture...I hope I can tell you something which will interest you'<sup>4</sup>. The following year he took the Chair for Sir Ambrose Fleming's lecture on 'Guglielmo Marconi and the development of radio-communication'.<sup>5</sup>

To mark the centenary year of Bragg's pioneering work the Royal Institution have created the 'Crystallography Collection' of videos which explore the RI's unique role in the development of x-ray crystallography. There are also videos telling stories about modern day research and the continuing role of crystallography in cutting-edge science. See the RI's collection of videos at this website <http://richannel.org/blog/2013/june/crystallography>

**2013** marks the **centenary** of the death of **Arthur Crozier Claudet** (1855-1913). Claudet was a metallurgist who worked as Assayer to the Bank of England, the Royal Mint Refinery and other institutions. Elected a member of the Society of Arts in 1888 and Council Member in 1907. He served on the Councils of various other bodies, including the Institute of Chemistry, the Faraday Society and the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy where he was elected President in 1906. Claudet took a keen interest in various educational movements, devoting not only a large amount of time but also assisting them financially. Claudet supported the reorganisation, rebuilding and supply of equipment for the Royal School of Mines, the establishment of Imperial College of Science and Technology and the Imperial College Union. He was an active member of the Bessemer Memorial Fund which equipped the Bessemer Laboratory at South Kensington. Claudet also established a post-graduate grants fund, with Mr Hennen Jennings of Washington, D.C., to supplement the scholarships given by the Institution of Mining and Metallurgy, in order to assist graduates to take practical courses in the mines and works of the chief mining centres of the world.



*Bessemer Laboratory*

**2013** marks the **60<sup>th</sup>** anniversary of the coronation of HM Queen Elizabeth II. The Council Chairman, E. Munro Runtz, represented the RSA at the Coronation ceremony in Westminster Abbey. Three lectures with a bearing on the Coronation took place in the RSA's 1953 programme: 'Royal Portraits in Effigy; some new discoveries in Westminster Abbey', 'Buckingham Palace' and 'The Great Seal of England'. The first two papers were published in a special Coronation issue of the *RSA Journal*.

### **RDIs and Coronation Designs**

Several RDIs received commissions in connection with the accession and coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. Graphic and textile designer, Enid Marx was responsible for the new penny, halfpenny and three-halfpenny stamps. The scheme for the coronation decorations throughout the City of Westminster were drawn up by Sir Hugh Casson. One feature of his scheme, a triumphal arch in Whitehall was delegated to Prof Robert Goodden, who was also responsible for the design of the blue silk and gold thread fabric used for the curtains and hangings in Westminster Abbey. Woven by Warner & Sons and called Queensway this design depicts the first heraldic emblem of the Sovereign to show the kingdoms of England (rose), Scotland (thistle) and Ireland (shamrock) as well as the Principality of Wales (leek). The sample below is in the Braintree District Museum.

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<sup>4</sup> *Jnl RSA*, vol.85 (1937), p.228-

<sup>5</sup> *JnlRSA*, vol.86 (1937), p.41-



A.B. Read, better known for his designs for light fittings designed a commemorative plate for Poole Pottery and the illustrator and graphic designer, Edward Bawden, with Richard Guyatt, designed the Coronation decorations for the front of Selfridges department store in Oxford Street



**2013** marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of **HM Queen Mary** (1867-1953). The RSA Council sent HM Queen Elizabeth II 'the respectful and heartfelt sympathy of the Society...through the death of HM Queen Mary, whose long life and gracious and devoted service uniquely endeared her to all the peoples of the Commonwealth'. In 1938 the RSA awarded HM Queen Mary the Albert Medal for her 'unremitting interest in arts and manufactures to the great benefit of British Industry and Commerce'. On several occasions she visited the exhibitions of work submitted for the Society's Competitions of Industrial Design and in 1951 she came to John Adam Street to view the George Graham Bicentenary Exhibition of clocks and watches which had been organised by the RSA and the British Horological Institute. Held in the Society's Library (now the Benjamin Franklin Room) the exhibits included two watches lent by HM Queen Mary. One of these had been given to her when she was six years old. This watch had originally belonged to a former President of the Society HRH the Duke of Sussex.



*The gold watch lent by H.M. Queen Mary which was given to her at the age of six by the Dowager Duchess of Sussex. It had belonged to the Duke, the sixth son of George III, who was a former President of the Society*

*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. *Honorary Benefactor:* Ronald Gerard OBE, KStJ, FRSA. *Honorary Member:* Hermione Hobhouse MBE; *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)