WECS
Wardrobe
Spring issue 2022
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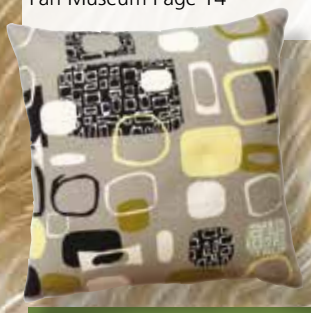
Calendar

Janet Arnold Study Day Dressing for success - medieval style
Saturday 15 October 2022
■ Bath and County Club

Visit
tba Summer 2022
■ Trowbridge Museum

Christmas meeting Father Christmas - the origin story
Saturday
19 November 2022
■ Bath and County Club

Main image
Flaunting it!
Fan Museum Page 14



October STUDY DAY

Dressing for Success Medieval style

Saturday 15 October 2022

09.50 - 16.15

■ **Bath and County Club, Queen's Parade, Queen's Square, Bath BA1 2NJ**

At time of going to press, we don't have the detail of all our speakers' talks, but they're a talented lot: some of their publications are listed here if you've a taste for homework.

The day's programme is:

9.50 Registration with coffee/ tea

10.20 Gale Owen-Crocker

From Folk-dress to Fashion: Clothing in the Middle Ages.

11.20 Coffee/tea

11.45 Sarah Thursfield

The First Cut: : the emergence of the gored tunic in the first millennium CE

12.45 Lunch

13.40 Rebecca Shawcross

Getting to the Point: Exploring Medieval shoe fashion including the distinctly lewd toe poulaine condemned by the church

14.40 Coffee/tea and raffle

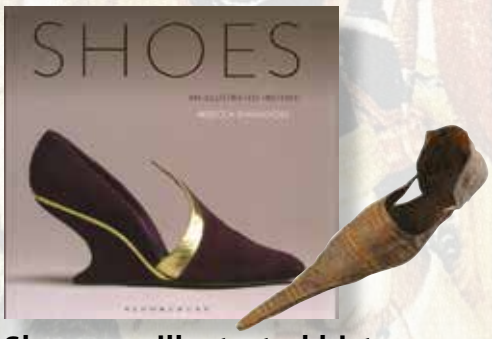
15.10 Benjamin Wild

Thoroughly Modern .. Medieval? The rich history of fashionable dress in the Middle Ages is evidenced by its use as a source of inspiration with modern designers

16.15 Close

Medieval Clothing and Textiles

This volume of essays opens with a survey of the discipline of medieval clothing and textiles, written by founding editor Gale R. Owen-Crocker. The range of the other essays extends chronologically from the early Middle Ages through the C15 and covers a variety of disciplines. Topics include the conception of the author as a "wordweaver" in the literatures of Anglo-Saxon England; intertextual literary identities established through clothing in the *Nibelungenlied* and the *Völsunga Saga*; the historical record of clothing and textiles at the court of King John of England; medallion silks, their use in Western Europe, and their representation in art; the vestments of Beguines and other penitential movements in the C13 and C14; and a depiction of heraldic textile weaving in late-medieval art.



Shoes: an illustrated history

Rebecca Shawcross' new book is a guide from Louis XIV to Laboutin and is billed as having five ancient shoes so weird they make crocs look normal.

Marriage Portrait of Jakob Fugger and Sybilla Artzt. Thoman or Hans Burgkmeier, 1498 © Schroder collection

Northern Renaissance portraits

■ **Holburne Museum, Great Pulteney Street, Bath BA1 2NJ**

The Holburne Museum recently announced the opening of a new display of masterpieces of Northern Renaissance painting, on loan for twenty years from the Estate of Bruno Schroder, who died in 2019.

Though small, this collection consists of paintings of international standing, including major works by artists such as Lucas Cranach the Elder, Hans Holbein the Elder and Ulrich Apt. Perhaps the most important painting of the group is Hans Burgkmair's 1498 portrait of Jakob Fugger and his bride Sybilla Artzt *(shown left).* Known as Fugger the Rich, Jakob Fugger was an Augsburg merchant and banker who was the major financial force behind the Habsburg dynasty.

As well as the nine important paintings, the display includes a rare complete set of Albrecht Dürer's sixteen engravings illustrating Christ's Passion.

Contemporary portraits - always great source material for costume study! The Holburne café's not bad either.

The First Cut: the emergence of the gored tunic in the first millennium CE

Before there were patterns, when cloth was a precious commodity, who decided how to cut and re-arrange it into a shaped and sewn garment?

The Medieval Tailor's Assistant

is the standard work for both amateurs and professionals wishing to recreate the clothing of the Medieval era for historical interpretation or drama. This new edition extends its range with details of fitting different figures and many more patterns for main garments and accessories from 1100 - 1480. It includes simple instructions for plain garments, as well as more complex patterns and adaptations for experienced sewers. Advice on planning outfits and materials to use is given along with a range of projects and alternative designs, from undergarments to outer wear. Early and later tailoring methods are also covered within the period. There are clear line drawings, pattern diagrams and layouts and over eighty full-colour photographs that show the garments as working outfits. The garments are presented with brief notes on their historical background in three main layers, underwear, main garments and outer garments for men, women and children. There is a section on 'How to use the book' with detailed instructions on techniques, planning, materials and, in particular, cutting methods from 1100.

A taster from Benjamin Wild's website: **Benjaminwild.co**

The cosmopolitanism and confidence of the C14 is perhaps best typified by the poulaine, a slipper-like shoe characterised by its long pointy vamp. The length of the shoe's 'pike' grew to some extraordinary proportions and often curled back on itself. Critical commentators likened it to a scorpion's tale. European rulers issued sumptuary restrictions that eventually curbed courtiers' enthusiasm for this ostentatious design. "Horned shoes" or "cow's-mouth shoes" could represent the commercial expansion of the C15 and C16. Depicted in the paintings of Pieter Bruegel, these shoes were commonly seen on the feet of the (wealthy) town dwellers who were assuming an increasingly important role in society and politics.The (high) heeled and bowed shoe of courtiers and aristocrats, or perhaps the 'bucket-top' boot of cavaliers, could reflect the insouciance and increasing insecurity of the C17 Ançien Régime.

Father Christmas

The Origins story

Saturday 19 November 2022
14.00 - 16.00

Bath and County Club, Queen's Parade, Queen's Square, Bath BA1 2NJ

The Christmas meeting will be at The Bath and County Club on Saturday 19 November starting at 2pm. To get us in the festive spirit, we will have our usual mince pies and mulled wine, before a presentation by David Birks from Trowbridge Museum on the origins of Father Christmas. He will talk about the history and clothing worn and also the difference between Father Christmas and Santa Claus.
Booking forms and further details will be in the Summer edition of *Wardrobe* due out towards the end of August. As agreed at the AGM, there will be a small charge for the Christmas meeting.

You may wear your fairy or elf outfit on the day!*

*even if you're over 40!

Trowbridge Museum Visit

Summer 2022

Trowbridge Museum, The Shires, Trowbridge BA14 8AT
trowbridgemuseum.co.uk
01225 751339

It is our hope to arrange a visit to Trowbridge Museum in the summer (probably June or July) to see their costume collection and discover more about Trowbridge's connection with cloth making in the West of England. Once details have been finalized we will email everyone with the programme details, timing, cost, etc.

Out & About

■ Chertsey Museum
The Cedars, 33 Windsor Street,
Chertsey, Surrey KT16 8AT
www.chertseymuseum.org

Blooming Marvellous:
Flowers in fashion, 1700s- 2000s
until 3 September 2022

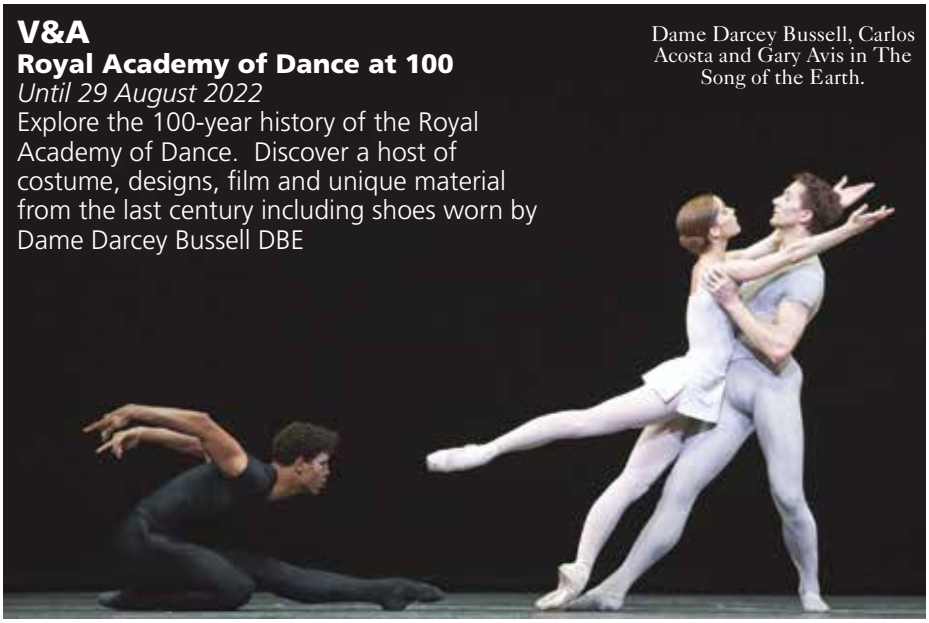
The exhibition features gorgeous garments selected along a floral theme from the Olive Matthews Collection. Men's, women's and children's dress and accessories from the C18 to the present day, with beautiful examples of woven, printed, embroidered and sculpted blooms, are displayed in our fresh and fragrant fashion gallery.

V&A

■ V&A, Cromwell Road,
London SW7 2RL
vam.ac.uk

Fashioning Masculinities: The Art of Menswear
Until 6 November 2022
At a moment of unprecedented creativity in men's fashion and reflection on gender, this exhibition explores how designers, tailors and artists - and their clients and sitters- have constructed and performed masculinity and unpicked it at the seams.

V&A
Royal Academy of Dance at 100
Until 29 August 2022
Explore the 100-year history of the Royal Academy of Dance. Discover a host of costume, designs, film and unique material from the last century including shoes worn by Dame Darcey Bussell DBE



Dame Darcey Bussell, Carlos Acosta and Gary Avis in The Song of the Earth.

Goldwork sampler and detail for the Queen's Coronation robe, shown right, 1953.

■ Fashion and Textile Museum,
83 Bermondsey Street,
London SE1 3XF
www.ftmlondon.org
Info@ftmlondon.org

150 Years of the Royal School of Needlework: Crown to Catwalk
Until 14 September 2022

150 Years of the Royal School of Needlework will explore this historic organisation's contribution to the world of embroidery. The exhibition will present collaborations with the great names of the Arts and Crafts movement, commissions produced for the British royal family, contemporary works created for top international designers and pieces by the RSN's talented students.

Dress to Redress

Exploring Native American Material Culture

■ The American Museum, Claverton Manor, Bath BA2 7BD

americanmuseum.org
enquiries@americanmuseum.org
01225 460 503

1until 3 July 2022

Dress to Redress: an exhibition of the work of contemporary Anishinabe artist Celeste Pedri-Spade, featuring a series of spectacular wearable-art pieces, personal artefacts and photography alongside historical items from the Museum's collection. The exhibition demonstrates the continuing legacy and profound importance of visual and material culture, focusing on the role of strong women in community and using fashion to explore how stories and experiences of Indigenous and European women both connect and disconnect. Inspired by various designs and materials Pedri-Spade uses her work to remedy the past, revising male-dominated historical narratives that fail to recognise the powerful role that women have played in their respective communities. This is the first time Celeste Pedri-Spade's work has been exhibited in Europe.

Jane Austen Regency Week

■ Alton Community Centre, Amery Street, Alton, Hants GU34 1HN
Marie Kellie marie.kellie@altoncommunitycentre.org.uk
Marie on 01420 85057

A series of Jane Austen related events *from 18 -26 April*

Offering *'a massive programme of events this year, something for everyone'* kicking off on Saturday 18th June with Regency Day in Alton High Street from 10am till 3pm with market stalls, carriage rides along with Regency Re-enactors and Mill Cottage Farm Experience. Ending on Sunday 26th June with the Regency Supper.

There is the usual mix of guided walks, talks and tours, and the popular Wyards Cream Tea event.

Bold and Brash Colourful Fashion 1770 - 1990

■ Totnes Fashion and Textiles Museum, Home of the Devonshire Collection of Period Costume
Bogan House, 43 High Street, Totnes TQ9 5NP

17 May - 30 September 2022

Tues. to Fri. - 11.00 to 16.00hrs.

www.totftm.org

tel: 01803 862857

The Regency Wardrobe

Exhibition

until 11 September 2022

■ The Royal Pavilion, Brighton
www.brightonmuseums.org.uk

The Regency Wardrobe is a collection of imagined garments reflecting the fashion, style and history of the Regency period, including the Royal Pavilion interiors and Brighton high society. Ballgowns, walking dresses, parasols and bags bring life to the magnificent interiors of the Royal Pavilion.The centrepiece of the exhibition is a new dress created for the Royal Pavilion and on display in the magnificent Music Room. *Symphony of Stars* is a stunning life-sized court dress inspired by the architecture of the Music Room and the Chinese wallpaper in the palace.

'Looking East' one of the five Silhouette dresses © The House of Embroidered Paper.

Photograph by Ray Sullivan

The House of Embroidered Paper

Garments formed with paper and thread woven through with story, history and memory

■ Bath and County Club, Queen's Parade, Bath BA1 2NJ

20 November 2021

Presented by Stephanie Smart

Report by Patricia Cooke

This was a rare and exciting opportunity to hear from a speaker who has perfected the art of creating garments and objects made of paper but also imbuing them with strong history, memories and sense of place.

Stephanie Smart is a conceptual artist who graduated with a Decorative Arts degree from Nottingham Trent University and was initially inspired by a paper kaftan decorated with illustrations and writing which had been made for a Sultan and displayed in the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul.

Stephanie's 3D paper sculptures are produced using all mediums of paper namely tissue, paper tableware, card, rice- and greaseproof paper and rolled paper straws decorated with embroidery thread. She also uses a quilling technique (the art of coiling thin paper strips in to decorative shapes) to add further dimensional effects to her sculptures. The art of quilling, also called paper filigree work was practiced by women of quality in Regency England.

The House of Embroidered Paper was formally established in 2017 and is both a fashion house and Fine Art studio. The garments and objects created are based on reinterpretations of a period in history and are not direct copies.

Ideas for a collection are inspired by a specific historical period, the places where events took place and infused by the people who lived or worked there.

Stephanie's *Regency Wardrobe* collection draws on sources from that exuberant era which encompasses the period from 1795 and ending in 1837. Items and events in both the Royal Pavilion in Brighton and Firle Place, as well as historical events of the time inspired the collection which is formed of eleven life size outfits, twelve accessories, four wall hangings and one piece of furniture all evoking the distinctive themes of fashion, architecture, literature, politics and culture of that age. Inspiration for the decoration also included the undercurrents taking place in that period where one dress *'Faded Glory'* depicted embroidered teeth which represented the fallen at the battle of Waterloo whose teeth had been taken to make sets of false teeth for the wealthy.

The collection was first displayed in autumn 2021 at Firle Place, Sussex, originally a C15 Manor House and remodelled in later times. Firle had been redecorated in the colours of the Regency period for the filming of Emma and the garments, accessories and objects were placed within these historic rooms. The finale of the exhibition of which the paper ballgown was a highlight was displayed on a chalk design floor in the Manor's ballroom, this technique of chalking floors was used in the Regency period to prevent dancers slipping and a local artist created the specific design for Stephanie's exhibition.

Another theme of the collection was Walking dresses which shows three dresses created of white paper, decorated with whitework techniques popular in the Regency period, rouleaux trims (made from rolled paper), frills and scallops.

The complete collection used an estimated 28,000 metres of decorative thread and the assistance of several volunteers.

For those wishing to see the collection it is due to be displayed at the Royal Pavilion, Brighton and also Worthing Museum and Art Gallery between March and September 2022. Details on previous page.

Top: Stephanie Smart putting the finishing touches to the exhibition in Firle Place.

Other photos show examples from the exhibition and below: the display of beautiful cards Stephanie brought with her to WECS on the day.

AGM 2022 and

Ashley Gray: Textile Revolution

The postwar female designers whose vision and vitality changed the world

Speaker Ashley Gray *Report by* Angela Bailey

Our AGM speaker, Ashley Gray of Gray MCA, gave us an absorbing talk on some of the women who were part of the design revolution in 1950s and 60s England. He began by showing us photographs of eight artists whose textile designs helped change the way our homes were furnished after the drab post-war years. Ashley set the scene with changes in art, literature, music, plays and films, which were influenced by pre-war developments here, and, of course, at the Bauhaus in Germany.

This was how modernism in art was brought into the home as part of the furniture. Ashley sees the 1950s as an evolutionary period, and the 60s as a revolutionary time, with a new feeling that anything was possible, with London 'blossoming', according to Zandra Rhodes, as the 'centre of the so-called swinging sixties'.

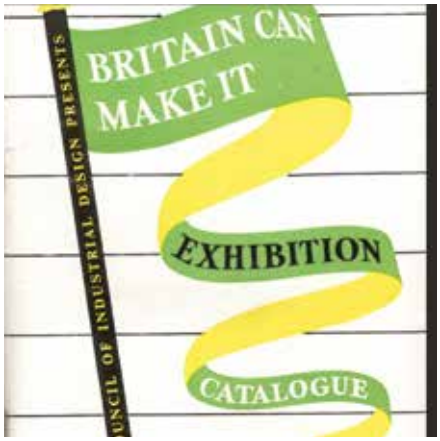
Of course, the movement had started long before, with, among others, Roger Fry and Vanessa Bell's Omega workshop in 1913, the Rebel Art Centre in 1914, and Marion Dorn's wonderful carpets for among others, the Savoy Hotel group and Claridges.

Ashley then gave us a tour d'horizon of the lives and work of eight talented women whose textile designs were at the forefront of this movement that came into our homes in the 1950s and 60s.

First up is **Enid Marx** (1902-98) who studied painting under Paul Nash at the Royal College, and – typical of several of the other women he spoke about here - was forced to transfer to textile design. Although she was failed by the College's degree examiners, she went on to be hugely successful and designed book jackets, postage stamps and London underground seating. She also joined the Utility Textiles Advisory Panel during WW2. She picked up her degree, somewhat belatedly, in 1982.

Marianne Straub OBE (1909-94) was born in Switzerland where she studied hand weaving under the Bauhaus tutor Heinz Otto Hurlmann. In 1932, she moved to Bradford to study the techniques of weaving (Swiss colleges did not accept women at that time). After the war she contributed to the *'Britain Can Make it'* catalogue (see next page) and eventually joined Warner and Sons where she designed the textile 'Surrey' that featured at the Festival of Britain in 1951. She too contributed to London Transport's moquette upholstery and to textiles used on the QE2.

At this point Ashley pointed out how Britain benefitted from the tragedy that befell Europe, with émigrés settling in London - even if they really were en route



to the USA. The 1951 Festival of Britain was an effort to promote British design and technology in the austerity years, and was marketed by the *Ambassador* magazine, which had been started in Amsterdam in 1940 by Hans Juda and Elspeth, his photographer wife. *Ambassador* became the essential marketing and press journal for Britain to, as Hans put it, 'export or die'. Incidentally, Elspeth had also studied at the Bauhaus and was a pioneering fashion photographer for, among others, Harper's Bazaar.

Perhaps the best-known of the group, **Lucienne Day** (1910-2010) trained at the Croydon School of Art where she developed her interest in printed textiles. During her second year she went on a two-month placement with Sanderson wallpapers, but with her enthusiasm for modern design, and marriage to modern furniture designer Robin Day, she began to practise as a freelance fabric designer to clients including Horrockses. Gradually, however, she moved towards designing furniture fabrics and signed up with Edinburgh Weavers, and later she moved to Heals, and in the '60s to John Lewis. The 1951 Festival of Britain was the turning point in her career. Her 'Calyx' design, influenced by Alexander Calder, Joan Miro and Paul Klee, became a best seller and won a gold medal at the Milan Triennale in 1951. Later on she worked with Crown wallpapers and the German company Rasch, Wilton carpets, and Rosenthal ceramics in Germany. She also (with her husband) acted as design consultant to BOAC.

In 2003 she said that she wanted her work to be seen by people and to be used by people. Many of her designs reflected her love of gardening and botany; towards the end of her life she designed more painterly items such as wall hangings.

Jacqeline Groag (1903-89) was born in Prague and studied textile design in Vienna, where she became known as a 'frontrunner of the Hoffman school of textile design'. By the mid-thirties she had travelled to Paris, New York and Milan (another Triennale gold medallist) but by 1939 she and her husband had fled the Nazi invasions of Czechoslovakia and Austria, and settled in London. She too had her work featured in the Festival of Britain, and later, with Misha Black at the Design Research Unit, worked on the interiors of boats, aircraft and trains, including the moquette for the London underground upholstery. Ashley referred to her 'traffic light', 'pebbles' and 'dolls' designs that were featured in the *Ambassador* magazine in 1953.

Ashley's next subject, **Marian Mahler** (1911-83) arrived in Britain in 1937 and worked as a freelance designer. She had trained at the Kuntsgewerbeschule in Vienna and at the Royal State Academy. Her best client was David Whitehead and twenty of their designs were chosen to be displayed at the Festival of Britain. She also designed covers for Penguin books (including *Fashion Plates* by James Laver). Her overall philosophy was to design affordable textiles using the then-new roller-printer manufacturing process using rayon and cotton. This was of course very appealing to the younger clientele.

All this activity coincided with an exhibit called *Art Since 1945* at the Tate Museum, imported from the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art (MOMA). Ashley told us that many students from the Royal College were thrilled with what they saw, unlike the established authorities at their college, who were furious. The catalogue for the show was in colour and became much sought-after, and its influence continued.

Nicola Wood arrived at the Royal College of Art in 1957, having studied in Southport and Manchester. She studied at the same time as Zandra Rhodes and

From the top:
Marian Straub's '*Britain Can Make It*' catalogue,
Lucienne Day's *Calyx* design
Jacqueline Groag and her mid century Festival cushion cover for Sanderson in mustard, yellow and grey.

David Hockney, among others. She then studied in New York at the Parsons School of Art where she designed book covers and advertisements for the *New York Times*. She came back to London in 1964 and produced textile and paper designs for Heal's, Liberty's and commissions for Rasch Textil. She emigrated to the USA in 1984 and is now a celebrated artist in her own right.

Barbara Brown (1932-) also from the northwest of England, attended Canterbury College of Art and then the Royal College, graduating in 1953. Again, she was 'diverted from her original area of interest (sculpture) to designing textiles. She taught others (amongst whom were Zandra Rhodes) and also worked with Heal's. She is best known for her strong geometric award-winning designs for the 1960s and 70s. She was best known for her op-art designs, using mathematical formulae to create optical illusions in a range of vivid colours. She also designed ceramic tableware for Midwinter Ltd as well as teaching at Guildford school of art and Hornsey College of Art.

Above: Sweetcorn and *Frequency* by Barbara Brown
Left and below: Althea Macnish and her *Golden Harvest*
Below: Ashley Gray with Angela Bailey

Ashley's final artist**, Althea Macnish** (1924-2020) born in Trinidad, moved to Britain in the 1950s, and has a current exhibit at the William Morris Gallery in London, which opened in April 2022. She was already a successful painter when she arrived in the UK to study at the London College of Printing. She also studied architecture and, eventually, textile design at the Royal College of Art. Her painterly approach to all her work shows the vibrant energy and colour of Trinidad, with the flora and fauna of the island reflected in her textiles.

All these artists benefitted greatly from the foresight and support of Tom Worthington, managing director of Heal's. He had joined Heal's in 1929 and with his assistant Jenni Allen scoured the art schools for new talent. He aimed to provide a wide range of designs for long print runs, in order to support the artists involved. About 80 new designs per year were chosen.

Ashley concluded his talk by reiterating the extraordinary talent that put modern art into the post-war home. Because these women (and others) were ruled out of other artistic endeavours in their youth, such as sculpture and fine art, their talent showed through with textile designs that in the end were possibly more influential to the mass market at the time, and continue to enthral us eighty years later.

Handbags - An Historical Journey

Speaker Sarah Delves
Report by Vivienne Isbister

Sarah gave a very interesting and entertaining talk about handbags. The first of four talks for our Spring Study Day.

A trained conservator of antiques, Sarah exhibits at quality venues including museums and is now an expert on handbags. She had a selection of bags of varying shapes and sizes on the display table. Some were used for evening, small, exquisitely embroidered by hand, with silk, inclusive of beads, while others were for more general daily use.

The value of such items at auction depends on the brand, quality and size of the piece.

Sarah's talk was illustrated with images and items from her personal collection.

She briefly outlined the history of bags. Women throughout history have needed something in which to carry their personal items. The earliest was a purse in leather or fabric from the Stone Age, 2500-2000 bc, decorated with dog's teeth.

Then we were shown a Courtauld bag from Iraq, 1300-1330 in brass and copper with silver and gold inlay.

The name 'Handbag' came into general use from about 1880. Before that date they went by various names such as girdles, pouches and reticules and even codpiece, an early middle English name for a purse. It's also where Henry VIII kept his jewels!!

In earlier centuries women wore pockets tied around their waists, and this continued up to 1890-1900.

Apart from holding personal items, bags or purses were also made to hold gaming tokens. These bags could be very elaborately embroidered (usually by men) and often decorated with the coat of arms on the flat base. Inside the gathered purse a small tubular counter box containing the tokens was kept. During the Stuart era socially elite children as young as eight would own a gaming bag.

At this time bags were also made to hold sweets, known as 'sweet bags' which could be given as gifts.

We saw a Victorian metal châtelaine purse made of silver and gold.

Also a black umbrella/parasol style bag lined with silk which opened

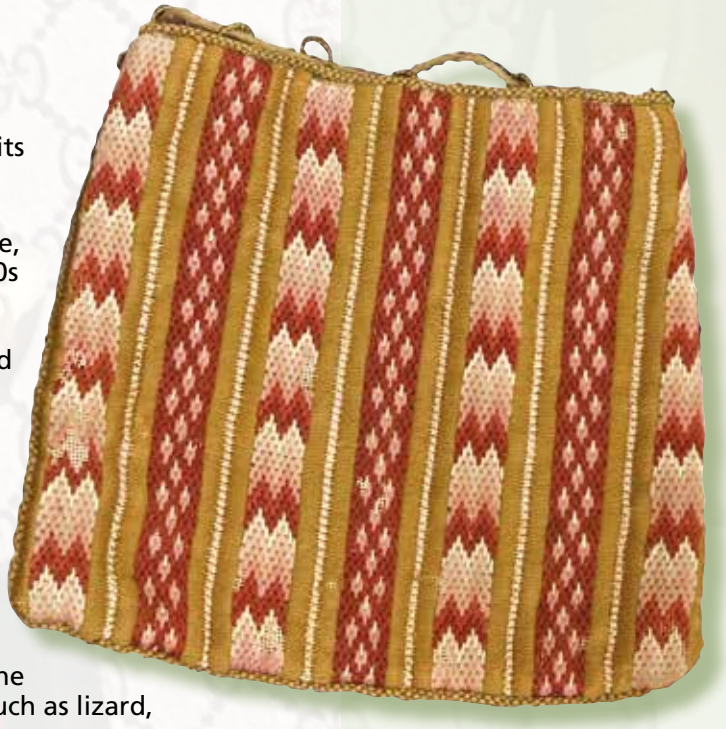
Opposite page, from the top:
Sarah Delves
C17 gaming purse for keeping your gaming tokens
Display tables with an eclectic mix of bags through several centuries.
Centre bags are the Victorian chatelaine 'chain mail' style purse
A delightful 'suitcase style bag and below right, a handbag embroidered in bargello style wools.

Study Day

Accessories

Saturday 2 6 March 2022

■ Bath and County Club
Queen's Parade
Bath BA1 2NJ



out in the same way as an umbrella. It's thought its use could have been for the period of mourning.

During the latter part of the C19 *Art Nouveau* designs became popular, such as a diamanté purse, inclusive of hallmark dated 1915. During the 1920s a lady could have use of a 'compact purse' and for evening a beaded bag with a hand held loop attached at the back. Or again for evening a hand beaded ostrich feather bag.

Geometric shapes appeared during the *Art Deco* era using manmade materials such as aluminium and Bakelite. Clasps on bags and purses were known as 'kissing clasps' due to the cross over design.

Lucite, which is recyclable, was used in handbags and later in aeroplane cockpits.

WWII saw leather handbags made to carry a gas mask; a legal requirement at the time. Later in the 1940s handbags made from skins were popular such as lizard, snake and crocodile.

In the 1960s PVC was used and in the 1970s large suede bags, sometimes of patchwork design, became popular. Designers such as *Dior* and *Chanel* introduced their own lines.

The 1980s saw a very heavy 'Dallas' telephone bag with the inclusive dial and fully functioning phone produced in colours red, white and black. In 1984 the 'Birkin bag' came onto the market. Now selling at auction for substantial sums.

Alexander McQueen has since introduced the 'Pretty Bag'.

A very informative talk which gave us a good insight into the history of the handbag. With Sarah's knowledge and expertise she is the person to ask when buying or selling that special antique bag.

Straws and Tams

Speaker Alasdair Peebles
Report by Caroline Levett

Alasdair Peebles explained that 30 years ago he started buying things at Christie's that no one else seemed to want – dresses, Chinese shoes – whatever appealed aesthetically.

His interest became focused on boys' and young men's wear. (This is a hobby – his main career is painting fantastic interiors - do have a look at his stuff on line).

Alasdair started his presentation with the 1846 Winterhalter portrait of the future Edward VII as a four year old. The suit was an exact replica of that worn by ratings on the Royal Yacht – *Victoria and Albert* - and was made by the ship's tailor. The only variation was that a sailor would have had only one blue shoulder band – indicating which watch he was on.

Curiously it was a further 30 years before other mothers followed Queen Victoria's example in significant numbers.

Making of sailor hats for boys – as opposed to sailors - took off in the 1870s when boys - and indeed girls - around the world were to be seen in sailor suits as 'best dress' and for weddings and school uniforms. In the 1870s many mothers wanted not parodies, but replicas of real uniforms. A lady writing to the *Queen* magazine in 1875 wrote proudly of her commission from a ship's tailor in Harwich, who also provided black silk handkerchieves to tie under the collar, and lanyards for bosun's whistles. Alasdair confirmed that gloves were not worn with sailor suits, other than mid-shipmen wearing evening dress.

The Royal Navy did not standardise ratings uniforms until 1857, perhaps in response to the captain of the HMS Harlequin who arranged in 1853 for his crew to dress as harlequins. The three narrow white stripes seen on the young prince's collar and cuffs became the standard. Navy blue became the colour for home waters, and White the standard wear for hot climate – because it was washable.

Straws

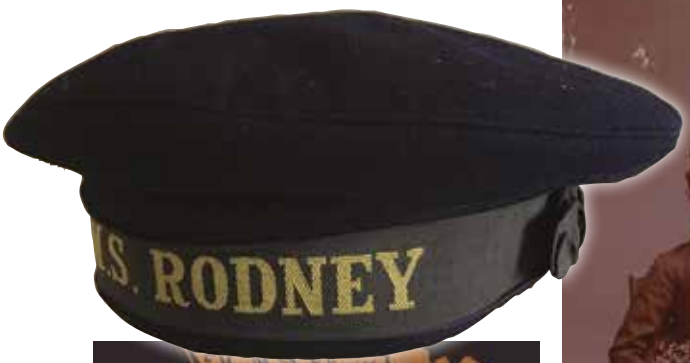
Hats had been worn by sailors for many years, and were specified in the 1857 regulations. In 1877 the requirement was for: *The hat to be four inches high in the crown, three inches wide in the brim, and seven inches across the crown, and made sennit, covered with brown holland painted black, with a hat ribbon bearing the ship's name; and in warm climes the same hat uncovered.* 'Made sennit' simply means plaited. Plaited hats made in the UK were of straw, although sailors had always plaited hats using any suitable fibre they could find, for example palm leaf fibres. The covering and painting is shown clearly in the illustration below. The covered sennits lasted as standard wear only until 1880, but the uncovered sailors straw hat was not abolished until 1921.

In Britain the making of straw hats had started as a cottage industry and plaiting schools were introduced with trainees as young as four. Wheat straw from Tuscany was of much finer quality than UK straw until straw splitters were introduced. By the 1890s Chinese and Japanese straw dominated the market.

The outside edge of the brim was traditionally bound with silk petersham, and the crown wrapped with a silk taffeta ribbon. Cheap hats were bound with cotton tape and had cotton taffeta ribbons. Sailors held their hats on with chin tapes, but for children, elastic (available in the 1840s) was more common.

The centre of the crown, where the start of the making process tends to create a hole, was covered with a button. On boys' hats this was often quite ornate and made to look like a compass. On sailors hats it tended to be less ornate, and was either hand stitched or simply a hexagonal pattern of wider straw.

The ribbon around the hat is called a 'tally', and shows the ship's name. Before the 1860s names were painted on the tally. After that the names were often woven into the tape for boys, or embroidered for sailors. These designs on tallies were not standardised, and for boys' hats a very wide range of



Etonian boating chic

Left: Man o' war caps, tams and tallies *Below:* the French accent has a red pompom.

Newhaven Fisher lads wearing tams in 1840

machine made ribbons were produced. A letter from a nine year old reflected on his allegiance to the ship named on his hat, when his sister got his hat wet.

The makers marks inside the hats, called tipps, show whether a hat was made by a traditional naval manufacturer, or by a civilian maker. Rose of Gosport made a significant proportion of hats right through to the 1920s and 1930s.

Some of the versions for boys had rather wider brims, often turned up. In other countries including Russia – they were turned down.

Tams

In the 1880s the black covered sennit hats were replaced by sailors' tams or man o' war caps. These evolved from knitted and felted caps of the sort worn by fishermen – like these from Newhaven in the 1840s. They were much more practical than the covered straw hats – they slipped on easily and did not blow off.

Initially they were unstructured, but gradually became the stiffened version that is still worn.

Versions of these are the sailor hats worn round the world. The Russian version is rather stiffer.

The French version famously acquired a red pompom, captured in the glamorous velvet hat from Alasdair's collection (shown above).

Officers Hats

Straw hats and Tams were for naval ratings – not for officers. Young boys also wore 'Middy' caps based on midshipmen's hats worn by boys on the first rung as naval officers. Edward VII's eldest sons Albert Victor and George (later George V) both served as midshipmen and etchings of them in uniform were widely circulated in the 1870s.

In the 1890s young cadets on a training ship were taking their headgear less seriously: *Nobody cared how you looked on Sundays. You wore the smallest hat that would stay on the back of your head, took a chunk out of the back and covered it with gold braid – but only away from the ship.*

It was a different matter at Eton. Etonians wore - and wear - straw hats bedecked with flowers during the annual procession of boats, and the coxes wear a variety of officers hats, as captured in the photo, top of the page.

Treasures of th

Speaker Jacob Moss
Report by Annie Rose

Hot off the Press:
Jacob Moss has left the Fan Museum after eleven and a half years to pursue a new career in catering in Cornwall. He will also be continue giving lectures for the Arts Society. We wish him the best of luck.

Jacob Moss finished our study day with a wonderful journey through the origins and delights of fans…especially highlighting the work of the Fan Museum.

Jacob has been curator there for eleven years. It is the UK's only museum devoted to the history, culture and artistry of fans.
The Fan Museum is based in Greenwich and occupies a pair of Grade II listed townhouses built in 1721, lovingly restored to retain their period character and elegance. It was founded by Helene Alexander who is the director.
It is home to a diverse collection of fans from around the world, dating from the C12 to the present day……it opened in 1991.
Mrs Alexander has been collecting fans for many years and by the 1980s her collection numbered over 1000 fans, mainly C18. That was when her husband founded the Fan Museum. Jacob was recruited in 2010 and since then the museum has been able to develop a considerable number of initiatives, which had been in the pipeline, but not implemented.

Covid restrictions meant the museum has been closed for the last two years and only recently re-opened.

We were treated to wonderful photographs - an early example was of a fan that is in the Cairo Museum, the Tutankhamun Golden Fan (The Ostrich Feather Fan shown right), dated approximately 1325BCE and rediscovered in 1922. Stumps of feathers can still be seen in the holes on the outer edge. The Golden Fan depicts the King returning from the hunt and attendants carrying ostriches.

The fan above is designed by Victor Vasarely
Below: the base of the Tutankhamun ostrich feather fan

There are two categories of fan ….fixed and folding. Sticks may be ivory, mother of pearl or wooden. Styles are brisée, (perforated), cockade, (full circle), cabriolet (open) or palmette fans. Covers would be of silk, paper or lace.

Fan making: Eventailliste by Diderot, 1751.
Many skilled people are involved in the processes of creation of a fan, which was a key C18 fashion accessory.
The process, from the preparation of the paper and its painting and fixing of the sticks and ribs was mainly performed by female workers .

e Fan Museum

The preparation had a low status and painting a higher status. The fans range from simple to extravagant i.e. ostrich feather and gold was a symbol of status and wealth.
Among many examples, we were shown fans from C16 to the present day. C16 fans were an exotic novelty, *"La Dame de Rosso"* 1555, holding a paddle shaped, fixed fan,
"Girl with Fan", holding a flag fan, a ventarolo, 1590s, *"Florentine Lady"* 1571, folding fan and an Elizabethan embroidered fan, 1590.
In the C17 France led the way and fans were now used in the West as well as the East.
A Charles II 1660 fan with woodcut decoration, a folding "censored fan", 1670 from France and a 1690 Italian tortoiseshell fan depicting Alexander the Great defeating the King of Persia.
The C18 was the Golden Age of fans. Guernico(1621), printed in 1780 and used on a fan in 1790. A fixed Chinese fan in lacquer with deep carving.
Chinese C19 fixed fan, a *pien mien*.
Very interestingly Samuri warriors carried flag fans into battle…. they were both a signalling tool and a highly elegant solid weapon.

Around 1760 'everyday' fans could be found in Covent Garden ..mainly printed, also masked fans with eye holes and wedding fans in silk and lace.
By the 1850s fans had become more decadent. Jacob introduced us to Alexandre, pre-eminent fan maker in France who was fan maker to the courts of Europe. He created them for Empress Eugenie, the Queen of the Netherlands and Queen Victoria to name but two.
Not only did Alexandre paint fan leaves and produce designs for many of the montures (sticks and guards) he was also the first *eventailliste* to employ printers and designers. These printers and designers were part of the côterie of fashionable artists working in France at this time. Carousels of figures, *putti*, flowers, needlepoint…. montures of sumptuously carved ivory, engraved mother of pearl and lavish gilding. Sticks of gold and gem stones and tortoiseshell.
Many of his fans bear his signature…what a prize that would be!

The Belle Époque opened up new avenues and there are fabulous over-the-top examples. One such, gruesome to us today, is a Bird of Paradise fan where the head and the body are used.

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Keep your powder dry

Speaker Sarah Delves
Report by Tony Cooper

Having warmed up the audience with her talk on handbags that morning, Sarah Delves launched into her equally interesting and entertaining talk about powder compacts and powder boxes. This has to be held as a magnificent achievement after the eleventh-hour notice she'd been given.

Now I have to confess that the subject is one of which I have only peripheral experience but when your editor tells you to write about something, you say *"How many words?"*.

As an introduction Sarah outlined the purposes to which make-up has been applied over human history. It has been a signifier of status; it isn't strictly necessary for one's well being and is costly, so one has to have money to spare. It has been used for ritualistic purposes; rites of passage and shamanic rituals. Then there is frightening your enemy (woad springs to mind but treat *Braveheart* with a pinch of salt).

Make-up can be used to conceal. This may range from the camouflage warpaint that infantrymen smear over their faces to something with which to cover that rogue spot that's appeared just before your big date. Leading on from the latter, there is the use of make-up to enhance one's charms, which brings us on to what is deemed to be attractive.

Both oriental and occidental cultures have set great store by a pale complexion as it shows the person to be above toiling in the fields. Natural pallor was often enhanced by the application of lead- or arsenic-based preparations and, as always, there were those who took the fashion to an extreme, sporting a deathly-white visage.

The Egyptians (okay hands up those who immediately thought of Cleopatra!) were heavy users of make-up; in particular, kohl and what we now would call eye-shadow made from ground beetle wings. The kohl had a definite practical use as it helped to reduce the glare of the sun. There is no doubt that influences from Cleopatra have reappeared in makeup styles and continue to do so.

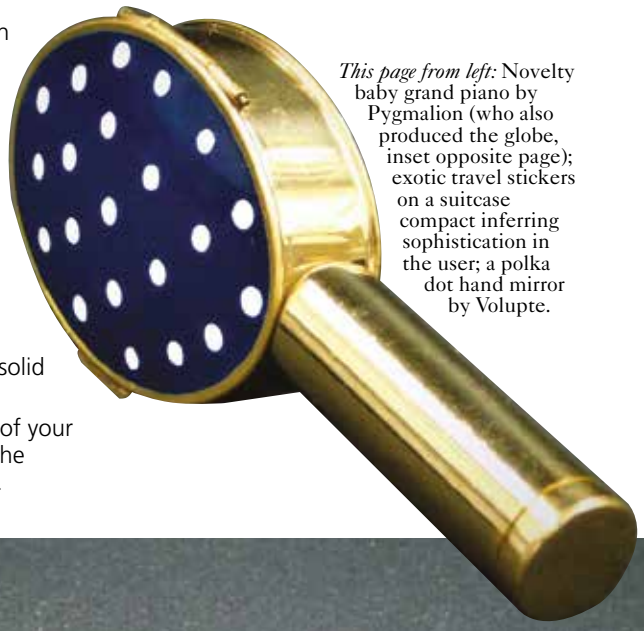
Sarah showed us images of a few C13 powder pots in ceramic and wood before moving on to C18 and early C19 ones in porcelain, silver, papier mâché, crystal and glass. Later, loose powder could be purchased in cardboard pots, which could be printed and were setting the trend towards strong branding.

It was possible to buy powders mixed to a desired shade. (Why my mind is drawn to the B&Q Dulux paint mixing centre, I'm not sure. Maybe it's a bloke thing.)

Officially the Victorians didn't approve of make-up, considering it the mark of a "fast" woman and the road to ruin. After all, women on the stage wore slap and their moral standards were a given. Nevertheless, the women at the time became masters – sorry mistresses - of the natural look but ever so slightly enhanced. The attitude hung around into the Edwardian period but took a turn during the Great War, when young women had both disposable income and the freedom to spend it as they wished.

But how do powder compacts differ from powder pots? Powder pots generally remained on the dressing table and their contents used in preparation for meeting the world whereas compacts were (and still are) a mobile repair kit. Compacts were refillable, originally with loose powder but from the 1920s with solid cakes of compressed powder called "godets".

Whilst your powder pot may suit your taste within your dressing room, the style of your selected compact is likely to be influenced by your outfit, other accessories and the occasion. The almost endless variety of styles has proved a magnet for collectors.



This page from left: Novelty baby grand piano by Pygmalion (who also produced the globe, inset opposite page); exotic travel stickers on a suitcase compact inferring sophistication in the user; a polka dot hand mirror by Volupte.

After the discovery of the treasures of Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922 there was a fashion for Egyptian revival. Not surprisingly this was reflected in the styles of compact on the market in the following years but was soon to be eclipsed by the rage for Art Deco.

In addition to the typical bold geometrical designs of Art Deco some compacts of the period feature the more delicate guilloche enamel decoration. This is characterised by a repetitive engine-turned metal ground filled with a transparent – usually coloured – glass enamel. Notable manufacturers were Stratton and Kigu.

In the '30s there was also a taste for "butterfly wing" compacts and other jewellery. The poor butterfly involved was the morpho, whose large iridescent blue wings would be shaped and placed behind glass. The glass would often be painted on the back with exotic scenes. A cheaper alternative to the wings was a similarly coloured foil and if you are - or aspire to be a collector, Sarah advised looking carefully at whether what was behind the glass had wrinkled; if so it is foil rather than butterfly wing.

Even Salvador Dali got in on the act with his *Telephone Dial* compact for Schiaparelli. To me this was a more complete design than his Lobster telephone. Genuine examples are going for thousands and even poor reproductions (*"inspired by…"*) for several hundred.

After the second world war, compacts became considerably larger even supersize but the quality went downhill with cheap pressed chromed steel being used. Later, with the throw-away culture gathering pace, plastic compacts were seen as disposable. Nevertheless in the '40s and '50s manufacturers such as Volupte were producing compacts for every purse from acrylic to precious metals and inset paste jewels.

There the slide presentation ended and we went on to the substantial array of actual compacts Sarah has brought along. It has to be said, you can't beat looking at the real thing.

Unfortunately I only got to see one end of the exhibition table as there was too much of a crush at the far end. And who could blame them?

In evidence were beautiful examples of classic art deco elegance, novelty items and "party cases" (where powder compacts and handbags merge). Some of the latter group included compartments for cigarettes and one even contained contemporary cocktail fags with gold tips; no doubt considered the height of sophistication at the time.

There were lucite (acrylic) compacts presumably to go with one's lucite handbag (see the article about handbags earlier in this edition). The basic acrylic is clear and is a perfect medium for adding colour or glitter or both.

Novelty forms included globes and a baby grand piano by Pygmalion, a hand mirror by Volupte, whose handle accommodated a lipstick. Interestingly, although in the form of a hand mirror, one has to open the lid to use the mirror for powdering one's nose.

I was particularly intrigued by the compact that, at first glance looked like a camera. The knob that looked like the film winder was the butt end of the lipstick and one side opened for the powdering exercise and the other side could accommodate one's fags (or - according to one modern-day auction site - one's sewing materials). Incidentally, only one example included the means to light one's cigarette and there was conjecture that a lady could expect a gentleman to be on hand to oblige. And would that constitute an introduction?

Sarah mentioned that whilst there are compacts and related items out there that fetch high prices, there are still lots out there at modest prices if the collecting bug strikes. All I can say is look out for a run on Estée Lauder items in the local area.

Thank you Sarah for a most engaging presentation, even for an old man like me.

Above: the Dali telephone Dial (the stand came later, I hope).
Below, from left: ; 'Cameras' with lipstick and compartment for ciggies, and a selection from the end of the table Tony couldn't quite get to, showing the sparkly plastic in a couple of forms and a painted butterfly wing compact.

continued from page 15

A contemporary Frenchman Sylvain Le Guen is today making beautiful, practical folding fans.
This gifted Frenchman has created exquisite fans… including designs by Victor Vasarely, 2017 and a fan based on a corset and the spreading wings of a peacock, Street Fans. Sylvain's imagination, exquisite craftmanship and his origami trademark make these fans so interesting. He has since moved to Japan.
It was truly enthralling to be taken on this journey, highlighting the amazing fans of the past and present.
Now a visit to Greenwich is a must. To this very original museum that has sprung from one woman (Helene Alexander)'s vision and love of and collection of fans from around the world and covering hundreds of years. Finally a question was asked about 'the language of fans' how were they used in a seductive way. Jacob said that this was most likely based on myth…..I wonder…
Many thanks to Jacob Moss and his vibrant presentation, a very enjoyable and inspiring talk to end our study day.

What do my clothes say about me? Studio portraits in Bath, 1890s-1900s

By: Ann Cullis, a Trustee of Bath Industrial Heritage Trust, the charity which runs the Museum of Bath at Work

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The Museum of Bath at Work tells the stories of Bath's working, business and industrial life in the C19 and C20. We show the other side of Bath – not the well-off visitors coming to take the waters or do some sight-seeing, but the manufacturing and service industries that employed Bath residents. Visitors to the Museum often find it a revelation – come and visit!

For 2023 we have plans for an exhibition based on the collection of 500 studio photographic portraits from the T.C. Leaman Studio at number 7, The Corridor in Bath. This article introduces the project, and we hope that perhaps some members of West of England Costume Society may be interested to help us.

The glass plate negatives are from the 1890s and early 1900s, all studio portraits of individual sitters or occasionally two people together. The exhibition will look at the social and working context of Bath in the 1890s: the jobs and family backgrounds of those sitters who we can identify, and where they lived; and the shops where they would have gone for tailoring, dress-making, ready-to-wear clothes, hats, jewellery, gloves, shoes, hair-dressing, haberdashery, and corsetry.

We have a team of volunteers researching some of the surnames on the plates: we are concentrating on the more unusual surnames as giving us the best chance of identifying people. Research in Census returns turns up fascinating clues, and we can then search birth, marriage and death records; sometimes the individual will appear in the *Bath Chronicle & Weekly Gazette*. We are researching shops and small factories in the Bath Historical Directories, advertisements in the newspaper (which can tell us how much things cost), and wanted ads for workers; and also the history of the T.C. Leaman Studio, run by Tom Carlyle Leaman when he took over from Algernon Spurge (such a Dickensian name), and the photographic process of having your portrait taken at this time.

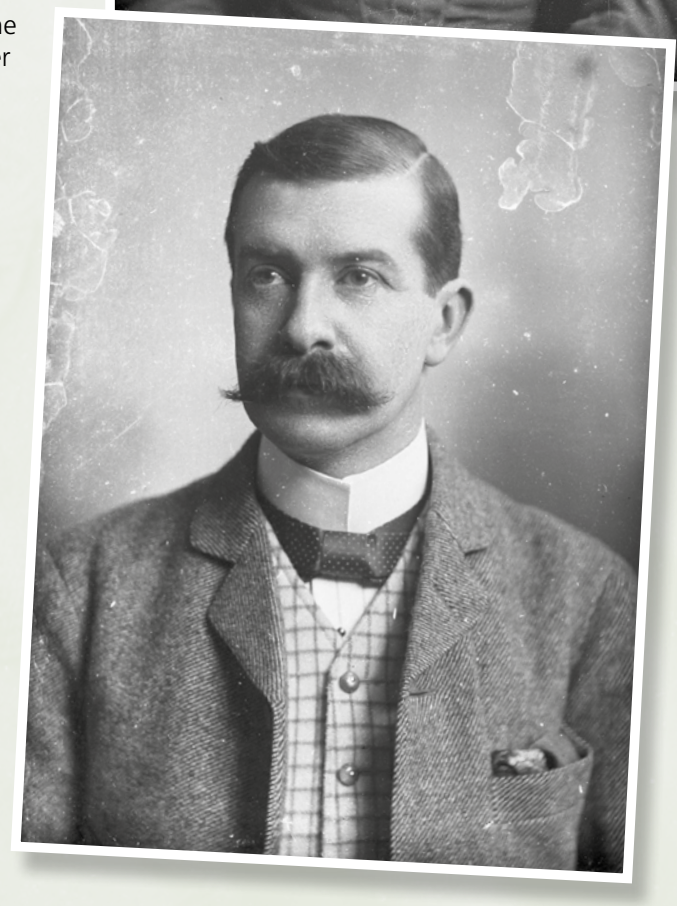
Two typical examples of the portraits are Mr Moutrie and Miss Bottle. Mr Moutrie wears a thick tweed jacket with carefully placed handkerchief, checked waistcoat, stiff high collar, and a neatly trimmed moustache. He was an auctioneer and land agent, and in 1911 became General Manager of Bath Races, and was very active in Bath organisations. Miss Bottle wears a dress of what appears to be a substantial fabric with an asymmetrical drape and pleating detail, very plain except for a simple pin on the collar; but what is fastened on a cord to her collar? It looks like a small tobacco pipe – is this possible?

If you are interested to contribute to this project on a voluntary basis, we would love to hear from you. We are particularly looking for knowledge on these topics:

- Typical colours of dress in the 1890s-1900s
- Complexity of making (for example, fabric, drape, tucks)
- Corsetry – what kind of corsetry structure is beneath the visible garment?
- Hairdressing styles

Please do get in touch with Ann Cullis ann.cullis1960@gmail.com

We also plan to produce a publication to accompany the exhibition, and to do a 'symposium' event to share the research – we would welcome West of England Costume Society members to contribute to this, too.



Miss Bottle and Mr Moutrie

We think we know what is on the cord round Miss Bottle's neck, but what do you (the readers of this article) think?

"Hitherto [up until the mid-18th century] man had vied with woman in the splendour of his garments, woman's only prerogative lying in décolleté and other forms of erotic display of the actual body; henceforward, to the present day, woman was to enjoy the privilege of being the only possessor of beauty and magnificence, even in the purely sartorial sense."

J.C. Flügel, *The Psychology of Clothes, 1930*

Flügel was referring to a cultural phenomenon that he named the *Great Masculine Renunciation*. It was a sea change that was inspired by the ideals of the "Age of Enlightenment" (otherwise known as the Age of Reason and Revolution). That alternative epithet comes from the intellectual move away from dogmatism and towards fresh thinking in all walks of life – philosophy, science, medicine, finance, religion and politics.

The Great Masculine Renunciation

(or why male clothing is so boring)
By Tony Cooper

In her interesting blog on the subject, Anastasia Vartanian, a fashion journalism graduate of the University of The Arts London, says:

"It was a revolution in male dress which was prompted in part by other, bloodier revolutions. Ones which have received exponentially better documentation, likely owing to the Renunciation's proximity to fashion, an arguably "unacademic" topic. But I argue that fashion is one of the best indicators of social, ideological and political change."

The Revolution with the capital "R" was, of course, happening with bloody ferocity in France in the last decade of the 18th century and never was there a more compelling reason to eschew one's flashy clobber and blend in with the hoi polloi. To wear dress associated with the royalist *ancien régime* made the wearer a clear target for Robespierre's Jacobins; much better to look like the *sans culottes*.


Sans-cullottes by Louis-Leopold Boilly

There was more turbulence over the pond with the American Revolutionary War (as the British called it) but unlike the civil unrest in France, this was a military encounter. Nevertheless the Renunciation movement became associated with American republicanism, with Benjamin Franklin giving up his wig during the revolution, and later Charles Ogle in his Gold Spoon Oration of 1840 denouncing the supposed excesses of the then President, Martin Van Buren.

Ostentatious clothing that signalled social status fell out of style in favour of more functional, utilitarian garments in muted colours. This trend in men's clothing coincided with the notion that men were rational and that women were frivolous and emotional (don't shoot the messenger!).

By the turn of the C19 bright colours, frills and furbelows were pretty much the preserve of women and the suit had a monopoly hold on male dress codes. Dark-coloured clothing became the norm for men's apparel. The high heels adopted in Europe at the beginning of the C17, fell out of fashion for men by the 1740s. The tight-fitting breeches that accentuated the musculature of the male leg, were replaced by pantaloons. Stockings and expensive wigs and

fabrics were also abandoned. Intellectual acuity was valued above physique.

Perhaps the last gasp of male sartorial unorthodoxy was described in the *Oxford Magazine* as follows:

"There is indeed a kind of animal, neither male nor female, a thing of the neuter gender, lately [1770] started up among us. It is called a macaroni. It talks without meaning, it smiles without pleasantry, it eats without appetite, it rides without exercise, it wenches without passion."

The *Town and Country Magazine* for March 1772, when the craze was at its height, was only slightly less pejorative:

"The Italians are extremely fond of a dish they call Macaroni, composed of a kind of paste; and, as they consider this as the summum bonum of all good eating, so they figuratively call everything they think elegant and uncommon 'Macaroni'. Our young travellers, who generally catch the follies of the countries they visit, judged that the tide of Macaroni was very applicable to a clever fellow; and accordingly they instituted a club under this denomination, the members of which were supposed to be the standards of taste in polite learning, the fine arts and the genteel sciences; and fashion, amongst the other constituent parts of taste, became an object of their attention. But they soon proved, they had very little claim to any distinction, except in their external appearance."

Cartoonists showed them as grotesques - effeminate, grossly-bewigged and heavily made up figures of ridicule. Today they wouldn't look too out of place on Ru Paul's *Drag Race*! That the macaroni was the butt of such ridicule at the time is testament to how ripe society was for the Renunciation yet to come.

In the minds of many of us there exists a Georgiano-Regency fog of dandies, fops, popinjays, coxcombs, beaux, macaronis and "exquisites" and, for once, we can be forgiven for that. Over the C18 and early C19 the terms were variously applied to men who paid excessive attention to dress and fashion (and very little else).

By the end of the century the macaronis found the term "dandy" taken by a more masculine reactionary group who eschewed the excesses of the macaroni (although they certainly had excesses of their own). George Bryan "Beau" Brummell is arguably the most famous dandy of all and the man who truly changed the course of men's fashion.

He placed great store by personal grooming being described as: *"never unperfumed, immaculately bathed and shaved, his clothing always perfectly brushed, perfectly fitted, showing much perfectly starched linen, all freshly laundered."*

He dressed simply and plainly, preferring wool and cotton fabrics - carefully tailored jackets and pantaloons in dark or neutral colours worn with white shirts. A typical outfit for Brummell consisted of a blue woollen tailcoat with brass buttons, buckskin coloured pantaloons and immaculately polished boots. And he didn't wear a wig or makeup. The only extravagance was an elaborately-tied cravat. (Incidentally, the cravat could be subject of a whole new article.) (*Editor's Note:* I will take you up on that, Tony!)

I previously implied that the flashing of men's pins was on the wane. Well Brummel was an exception. His style could best be described as "reserved elegance" but with good tailoring to showcase a man's physique. He also demonstrated that impeccable taste needn't cost a fortune.

One can only imagine how radical Brummel's new look would have appeared to the rich and famous with whom he associated who would have been used to extravagant clothing. In modern parlance one might call him an "influencer". His style influence rubbed off on the Prince Regent. It is just unfortunate that Prinny's anatomy didn't warrant parading ("*Alvanley, who's your fat friend?*").

Ultimately Brummell became the epitome of "the celebrity", a man chiefly famous for being famous (nothing new there, then).

Thus the post-Renunciation convention for men's dress in the Western

Caricature of Beau Brummell
by Robert Dighton 1805

Accounts clerks at the Gas, Light and Coke Company

world were set – a three-piece ensemble of waistcoat, jacket and trouser. It is sometimes said that Beau Brummel invented the three-piece suit. However, this is overstating the case; it was around the 1870s that the three-piece suit, as we understand it today, appeared. Prior to that there had been no thought given to producing all three key articles of clothing from the same material.

Just as women's skirt fullness waxed and waned and hemlines and waistlines rose and fell, for men there were periodic variations in the fit of the jacket, width of lapels, width of trouser leg, position of waistline, leg length and so on.

In Victoria's reign the frock coat made a brief comeback as an alternative to the tailcoat. There was a morning dress, which usually took the form of a tailcoat with light(ish) trousers and evening dress in dark colours. Trouser legs were narrow with no turn-ups and jackets, fitted.

For business, Edwardian men gradually gave up the frock coat in favour of the morning coat. Lounge suits were becoming acceptable for private gatherings, usually those where no women were present.

In the inter-war period there was a noticeable move towards the short lounge coated suit both for everyday wear and for business. Long coats quickly went out of vogue and the morning coat was relegated to "formal" occasions just as we see it today, usually hired, for weddings. During the 1920s, short suits were always worn except on formal occasions in the daytime, when a morning coat would be worn. Older, more conservative, men stuck with their beloved frock coat or "Prince Albert coat" as it was dubbed.

At this time trousers legs became straight and wide, sometime measuring up to 23 inches around the bottoms, and were pressed with a crease. This trend gave rise to the even more extreme "Oxford bags", popular amongst younger men. Trousers were worn very highly waisted and turn-ups appeared, both features continuing until rationing in World War II. Single-breasted suits were in style while the double-breasted suit was mainly worn by older, more conservative, men. Jacket lapels were worn peaked and were wide. This continued and became more exaggerated in the 1930s. (Remember all those movies of Al-Capone-esque characters?)

The fate of the ubiquitous waistcoat was sealed by a strange style change around the mid '30s. Prior to that, jackets and waistcoats were fitted and all was well. Then, jackets were cut to be loose-fitting but waistcoats were still snug and all was still well. It was when they began producing waistcoats in a loose style that things started to go wrong. No matter what the wearer did those garments rode up and gathered round the chest proving to be most uncomfortable. What to do? Leave it off of course. This is when the double-breasted suit really came to the fore and remained there for a couple of decades.

1940s beachwear?

Rationing of cloth and clothing during World War II, and after, led to a radical simplification of styles with the double-breasted suit and turn-ups falling out of favour.

Throughout, the style icons were Hollywood movie stars and the males tended largely to be conservatively dressed. However, the occasional royal made a splash; as Prince of Wales, Edward made a visit to the USA in 1924 and was seen to wear "flannels". They had generally been regarded as sportswear but he set a trend for them as every day wear. This was eagerly adopted by the likes of Fred Astaire

through to the 1940s.

I have childhood memories of The Suit my father had. Unless I am mistaken, it was a brown pinstripe job with medium reveres, a waistband almost up to his armpits and, surprisingly, turn-ups. Braces were a must. He told a tale about him getting it made to measure in India in 1946 just before being demobbed and complained that it never fitted. It seemed that the latest styles in Blighty were not in the ken of the Indian tailor concerned.

After work relaxation, 1950s style

And what better illustration of sartorial mores of the 1950s could there be than the instruction booklet for Meccano? Note the proud dad, just home from the office, still in his suit, pipe firmly clamped in his strong jaw.

The lighting suggests the building work being carried out in front of a roaring open fire. How I remember those – a scorched front and a cold back! No doubt mother would still be beavering away in the kitchen, knocking up something wonderful for tea.

In the 1960s almost everything narrowed – lapels, sleeves, trouser legs – to go with the narrow collars and stringy ties and Chelsea boots. However, the jackets were straight.

One of my favourite humorous writers, Alan Coren, complained that (and I paraphrase with apologies to him) when he was young, suits were voluminous and flapped around his stick-like limbs like sails in the breeze. Later when the suits were slim he no longer was, making him look like an overstuffed sofa.

Banks have always been seen as the last bastion of dress standards (remember all the hoo-ha about trouser suits for women?) and even into the '70s, in the height of summer in an un-air-conditioned office one had to seek grudging permission to remove one's jacket.

The 1970s saw an inevitable backlash with many features broadening markedly and the waistcoat making another appearance. Whilst jackets became waisted and sleeves narrow, lapels widened and trouser legs became tight to the knee with bell-bottoms. This latter feature was taken to extremes by the hippy tendency when they would open up the outer leg seam and insert a usually gaudy gore. Such garments get the name "loon pants", not to disparage the wearer; it was an abbreviation of "balloon pants".

The suit returned to what we might call the classical style in the 1980s with the waistcoat again largely being consigned to history. The jacket straightened and became looser but there was still a choice of double- or single breasted styles with the latter being the more popular and, subject to minor changes, continuing into the twenty-first century.

It goes without saying that in this article I have been talking about generalities and trends but there has always been the counter culture in some form or other that has produced its own rebellious interpretation of the suit. There was the jazz suit, the zoot suit, the western suit, the Nudie suit (don't get excited, it's named after its originator Nudie Cohn), the collarless Nehru/Beatle jacket, Teddy-boy drapes, the Mod suit and the Power suit with its exaggerated shoulder pads. And you can always rely on Vivienne Westwood to rock the boat.

All that said, and despite the increased informality to date, at least we men know what to wear at the key moments in life – hatches, matches and dispatches – we can't go wrong with a good suit.

Now which tie…?


1960s me

Accessorising my Regency wardrobe.

By Vibeke Ormerod

I was very much looking forward to the accessories study day, and it didn't disappoint!

Accessories have long been interesting to me, they can be well worth investing in, not least because one doesn't grow out of them ! They don't "shrink in the Wardrobe" like clothes do, unless they are belts, like the many Mulberry belts I have from years ago, that are hoping one day to be taken out again!

And period accessories are no exception. I love them too. When I started regency dancing in 2008 I would carry with me to the ball, a little drawstring bag like most other ladies, usually in silk, a reticule. Reticule means a little bag, net or workbag.

These little "handbags" were used in the last decade of the C18 and the first three of the C19. They ranged from a simple fabric draw string bag to more elaborate, knitted or embroidered bags, sometimes baskets.

Like Sarah Delves explained, they came into use when the fashions changed at the end of the C18 from panniers and wide skirts to the slim fashion of the empire style. Earlier, women would carry pockets inside their skirts, bags with a slit at the top, they would have one either side, tied to the waist, and the pockets would hold the same as any useful bag. The empire fashion didn't allow for bulging pockets under the dress so the reticule came into use.

One of the many advantages of the reticule was how easy it was to make. Any seamstress could make one, either sewn, or knitted. Countless instructions with illustrations were printed and women were making them in all shapes and sizes.

Needless to say, I fancied a reticule that was different form the norm.

On a Costume Society outing I saw just the thing: a tiny knitted pineapple purse with metal beads incorporated. I was smitten! Here is a similar one from the Kyoto Institute.

A pineapple reticule was a symbol of wealth and luxury and I thought I had better make one. I gave up on the knitting so mine is (mostly) hand sewn.

Another reticule style I really like is the little basket with a built in draw string bag. I think they originate from the workbag that ladies carried with them to hold their embroidery, knitting or even their letters.

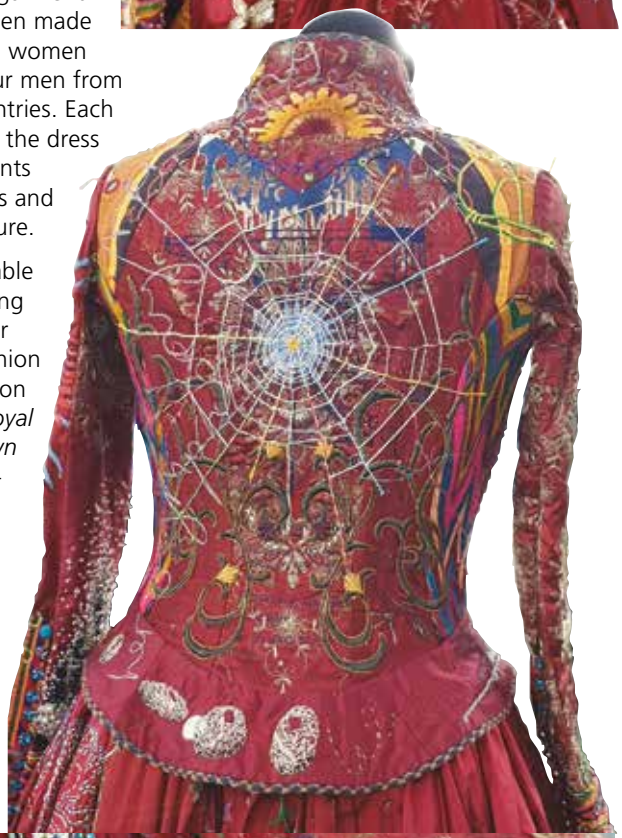
In a reduced size these bags looked good as reticules and they were often very elaborately decorated with painting or beautiful embroidery. The basket part would often be made from card with a wood content, then varnished with shellac and covered with silk and it was carried by the handles of the drawstring bag.

Left, from the top: Knitted pineapple reticule from the Kyoto Institute.
My (mostly) handsewn pineapple reticule in cotton and silk.
My modern interpretation of the basket reticule in double buckram covered with silk.
Extant basket reticule covered in painted silk. From Pinterest with no origins.

The Red Dress

By Ann Brown

It was November 2021 that the Red dress was on display at the Connect centre in Wells. The Red Dress project inspired by Somerset artist Kirstie Macleod, provides an artistic platform for individuals around the world, many of whom are marginalised and live in poverty, to tell their personal stories through embroidery. During the twelve years from 2009 to 2021, the red dress travelled the globe being continuously embroidered. Constructed out of 73 pieces of burgundy silk dupion, the garment has been made by 231 women and four men from 28 countries. Each image on the dress represents themselves and their culture.



If you were unable to see this amazing dress in Somerset, it's tour continues. It goes to The Fashion and Textile Museum in London as part of *150 years of the Royal School of Needlework: Crown to Catwalk* from 1st April – 30th August.

fashiontextilemuseum.org

The dress then continues it's journey around the world.

Pictures taken at the Connect Centre in Wells by Jeanne Evans and Pat Ardron

On a visit to Norway

By Ann Brown

On a cold and windy January day, way up in the Arctic Circle during a holiday on the coastal boat along the Norwegian coast, we stopped at a small town called Honningsvåg. Grips on our shoes we battled strong winds, snow and ice to visit the small museum in the town. Here we learnt about the Nazis burning down towns and villages, ordering people to leave their homes to get through to the Russian border and I was really taken by the story of Lily Nicolaisen's knitting machine evacuated in secret.

Lily Nicolaisen acquired this knitting machine (above) for 1,000 kroner. It was a great deal of money at the time, so Lily risked placing herself in debt in order to make a living off knitting. She did make knitting her profession and she continued selling her products during the war. Customers provided the wool and received knitwear in return.

When the evacuation became inevitable Lily had the knitting machine moved to Baklia, where she had grown up. It was widely assumed that the smaller villages would be spared but when people understood that the small locations were also to be evacuated, the knitting machine was packed into a box and brought on board one of the evacuation vessels. Plenty of goods and people had to fit on board and the captain ordered that the knitting machine be returned to the shore. But Lily's brother managed to smuggle the box on board anyway. Lily left on another boat but her brother was on the boat with the knitting machine. It was cumbersome to travel with a knitting machine and when the boats were separated on the way to Tromso the knitting machine was buried at Oksfjordhamn.

The knitting machine was eventually brought to Lofoten and transported to Ullfsjord, where the family stayed a few years before returning to Honningsvag. The machine was used diligently all the way into the 1960s.

Amongst the displays were a pair of German military boots from World War II, later used by workers at a local fish factory. In contrast there were several costumes as worn by the indigenous Sami people who are renowned for herding reindeer, creating distinctive handicrafts and their harmonious relationship with nature.

A fascinating small museum, covering many aspects of life in that region of Norway, so well worth a visit if you venture up into the Arctic Circle.

Remembering Iris Shopland

2 September 1928 - 13 February 2022

We are sad to announce that Iris Shopland, who was a well loved and long-standing member of WECS, has passed away.

Iris was treasurer of the society for many years. She was a fun and engaging lady who usually attended dressed in something very elegant and tasteful, but just occasionally, outrageous. The first thing you checked on Iris were the shoes - she was well known for her spectacular high heels.

Iris was an enthusiastic member of the Bristol Light Opera Company and at one memorable (some would prefer to forget) Christmas meeting in the Abbey Church House in 2001 her worlds combined when several members put on a cabaret along with the mince pies and clotted cream. Iris performed *"Nobody loves a fairy when she's forty"* . You had to be there!

On March 25 Canford Crematorium in Bristol resounded with : *There's no business like show business* and as you would expect she didn't go without the high heels! Several WECS members joined in the packed congregation for a great send off.

Using natural fibres would reduce the footprint of fashion
***Photo:*Plaw Hatch Farm**

Extract from the Spring 2022 edition of *'Wicked Leeks'*, published by Riverford Organic Farmers

The Missing Middle

Almost everybody has heard of the 'farm to table' movement, with its suggestion of a direct connection between fields and the plate, mediated only by a brief sojourn in the kitchen. For some (crops)... this picture is more or less accurate. But for others (the) narrative passes over a key piece of the puzzle: processing.

This is the 'missing middle' of the system: the vital yet often undervalued or ignored services that transform ... grain in a field into the flour in a baker's kitchen.

...

Rosie Bristow is a Master's student at Heriot-Watt university, studying how small to medium scale processing equipment can play a part in developing a regenerative textile industry for the UK.

She's particularly interested in flax, and the linen fabric it can be used to make. Britain once had a thriving flax industry, but over the last few centuries it has been lost, with no flax being commercially grown and no mills left to produce it.

"I feel like we ought to be able to make clothes and home furnishings for ourselves without it being so extractive and destructive of the planet.... The missing link is the processing equipment" says Bristow. *"If we had that, it would link up the two sides: farmers interested in growing a new fibre crop and fashion or interior designers interested in using regenerative textiles."*

Companion article at hw.ac.uk has:

Straw into gold

Over the last year... Rosie Bristow has grown and harvested a hectare of flax, and processed, spun and woven fabric samples using open-source prototype machinery.

(On 17 March 2022) Rosie ran a successful flax processing and spinning workshop in collaboration with Studio HILO, who offer open tools and expertise for small-scale textile manufacturing environments.

The practical demonstration workshop gave people the chance to come and learn how regenerative agriculture connects to sustainable fashion and see raw flax plants turned into linen yarn along with fashion designer Nick Evans.

Spinning straw into Gold. *Photo* hw.ac.uk

Rosie says: *"We had a great time running the flax processing and spinning workshop! In the morning we demonstrated the Roller Breaker and Rotor Heckler machines which take the flax from being its raw straw like state into looking like silvery hair, and then after lunch we had a virtual workshop with Sara from studio HILO who invented an open-source 3D printed spinning machine.*

We then demonstrated our own version of the 3D printed spinning machine as well as an old school spinning wheel.We spun the flax from its sliver fibre state into yarn, as well as doing some very experimental attempts at spinning some highland cow hair one of the students bought in!"

The event took place at the Borders campus and was made possible by the Annual Fund, who have funded the creation of the roller breaker, rotor heckler, and a 3D printed spinning machine (by studio HILO).

Check out instagram for more information on the project:
@straw_into_gold
@studio_hilo
@firstprinciples
Email susan.kerr@hw.ac.uk

The Events organizers need your help please!

As you will see in this edition of *Wardrobe* the October study day and the Christmas meeting have been organized for this year. The Events organizers (Angela Bailey, Annie Rose and myself) need help to plan next year's study days and events.

As you know, 2023 is our Golden Jubilee and we would like to make it special and have people helping to take the Society forward for the next jubilee.

Please will you consider helping us to arrange events and study days? We need ideas and suggestions of speakers to approach and also people willing to help contact speakers and help finalize the programmes. It sounds a daunting task, but with members working together and spreading the load it becomes more manageable. I have found that speakers who have been asked are always delighted to come and speak and find us a vibrant Society.

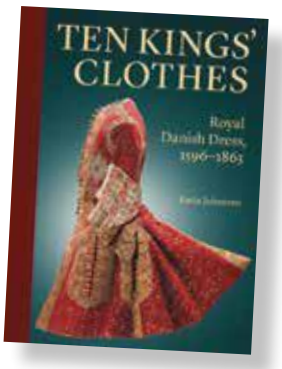
As I mentioned at the AGM, I am standing down from the committee, both as Treasurer and Events organizer. I have been on the committee since 2006 and feel it is time for others to take over. If no-one comes forward, what will the future of the Society be?

If you would like to know more or wish to help, please contact me by email: treasurer@wofecostumesoceity.org or sarah@tiramisu.co.uk

Thank you.
Sarah Bartlett.

Ten Kings' Clothes: Royal Danish Dress, 1596-1863

New book to be released in English this autumn. I have just purchased it in Danish, it is written by Danish/American Katia Johansen who has worked with the Danish royal wardrobe for more than 30 years! It is a huge book and pricey but I love my copy!
Vibeke Ormerod



Ten Kings' Clothes is the history of the Danish kings' wardrobes from Christian IV to Frederik VII illustrated by Rosenborg Castle's costume collection, world famous for its age, extent and the garments' elegance, magnificent fabrics and embroidery. The royal costume is rarely exhibited, and this richly illustrated book thus offers an exclusive glimpse into the royal wardrobes. Historical garments tell not only their own story of the kings' coronations and weddings but also aspects of everyday life at court, including the contributions of tailors, embroiderers, valets, portrait artists, castle stewards and laundresses. *Ten Kings' Clothes* is not only a history of Denmark, but also the history of one, special, family. Her Majesty Queen Margrethe has written the foreword.

Publisher: Aarhus Universitetsforlag
ISBN: 9788771845150

We came across this while scrolling through t'interweb: In Groningen, the Netherlands, a facade stone showing the interior of a C17th Knitted stockings shop with two saleswomen behind the counter serving a couple of customers.
The facade stone is from the second half of the C17 and it is apparently known from records that in 1742 the widow Lever's knitted stockings store, with this facade stone, was in Amsterdam, located at Wijde Heisteeg.
Have you come across any other interesting titbits?

Embroidery Atelier

Sue Rangeley (a previous WECS speaker) has a new book available from mid-May.

The blurb says: "An artist's studio holds the secrets of their creations; *Embroidery Atelier* explores the visions and passions of a contemporary embroiderer. Artistic embellishment pursues themes for fashion, accessories and inventive samples. Stunning images by the photographer Michael Wicks capture the essence of Sue's original creations."

Visit www.suerangeley.co.uk for details.

Keep *Wardrobe* full!
What have you been doing, reading, discovered online?
Write and tell us so we can share.
Copy for the next newsletter to Vibeke Ormerod by 30 June please

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