

Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum

Newsletter
December
2010

Visit the website: www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/support/friends/index.html

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The past year has been very successful for the Friends with 177 new members joining since January so that our membership stands at 2083. I hope you will like the new membership cards sent out with this newsletter. Show your card to get 10% off in the Museum Café between 10am and 12pm in the mornings and after 3pm in the afternoons.

The Friends' Committee all put a huge amount of time and energy into preparing and running the programme and I would like to thank them for all they do. I would like to mention in particular the new series of talks given by PhD students from the History of Art Department, which has been conceived and arranged by Sue Rasmussen. Those lucky enough to be at the first of these had a real treat. Loyd Grossman, who is doing research on the painter Benjamin West, shared with us some of his discoveries in archives as well as his extensive knowledge of the eighteenth century's cultural background to West's paintings. More of these informal talks for small groups are planned and I am sure will be very popular. We know that there is particular pressure on the local Cambridge tours and visits and indeed on museum based tours. We are doing all we can firstly to offer more such visits and secondly, to ensure that booking is fair and clear. We are also making clear which events are for Friends only or whether guests are welcome. In the winter programme are two early evening events at which you are welcome to bring guests.

Partly because we are aware that a relatively small percentage of the membership participate in the programme at all and partly because we want to encourage constructive feedback, do please tell us if there is something you would like us to offer. We would welcome views on what we arrange so do please use the feedback form accompanying this newsletter to make comments and suggestions or, if you prefer, you can email on fitzmuseum-friends@lists.cam.ac.uk.

A very happy Christmas and New Year to you all.

Margaret Mair



Friends visiting a Slip and the Old Forge at Chatham Historic Dockyard.



Frank King explains the sundial at Downing College
Photo: Ms Bridget Smith

Are you missing out? Send us your e-mail address to make sure that you are not!

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS FOR 2011

Bloomsbury at King's College

Wednesday 19th January 2011
Wednesday 9th February 2011
from 2.30 to 4.30 pm

King's College has well known historic connections with Bloomsbury. The rooms of Maynard Keynes and Dadie Rylands have been restored to their original decorative schemes and the college archives hold important letters, documents, and photographs. The college librarian, Peter Jones, has generously agreed to show us some of these treasures. The visit will finish with tea at the Provost's Lodge with the wife of the Provost, Gillian Harrison

20 places on each tour. Friends only.
Tickets: £16 each to be allocated by ballot during the first week of January
Organiser: Gillian Harrison

The Polar Museum

Exclusive evening view and talk

Scott Polar Research Institute

Wednesday 26th January 2011
6.00 – 8.00 pm

This is a very special private evening view of the recently re-opened and re-designed Polar Museum. The Director of the Scott Polar Research Institute, Professor Julian Dowdeswell, will introduce the evening in the lecture hall. Then he and the Librarian and Keeper of Collections, Mrs Heather Lane, will show Friends the unrivalled collection of art and artefacts illustrating the history of polar exploration and answer questions. Wine and nibbles will be served and are included in the ticket price.

Tickets: £12.50
80 places. Guests welcome.
Organiser: Margaret Mair

A Date for your Diary

The Friends are planning a full day trip to Kelmscott Manor, near Lechlade, Oxon, the home of William Morris, on Thursday 5 May 2011. Full details in the April Newsletter.



The Christmas Shopping Event was a great success. Friends enjoyed complimentary coffee and mince pies and were able to do lots of shopping in a happy atmosphere. Many thanks to Camay Cameron-Chapman and her staff.

Museum Tours for Friends

Tuesday 8th February 2011 at 11.00 am
Thursday 10th February 2011 at 2.00 pm

We are offering two introductory tours to **All Galleries** for mainly new Friends to familiarize members with layout and contents.

Thursday 17th February 2011 at 2.00 pm

There will also be a more detailed look in the **Antiquities Galleries** focusing on selected themes and specific items from the Egyptian, Greek and Roman galleries.

Groups will be small (10-12) and the tours will last 1 - 1 1/2 hours.
The three tours are free and for Friends only.
Organiser: Marr Grieve.

Glass and Ecclesiastic Jewels from the second half of the 19th century

Tuesday 22nd February 2011
Saturday 5th March, 2011
2.00 pm to 3.30 pm



St Radegund

Two Cambridge places retain the highest quality imprint of late nineteenth century artistic achievement - Jesus College Chapel and All Saints' Church. Astonishingly, Bodley, Pugin, Kempe, Morris, Burne-Jones, Wyndham Hope Hughes, Leach, & Madox Brown were all working in this small corner of Cambridge over a thirty year period in the second half of the nineteenth century. The tour with Nicholas Chrimes will focus on the stained glass and architecture in these places. It will start in the courtyard garden of Westcott House, and move on to All Saints, then Jesus Chapel. It will last 1 1/2 hours.

18 places on each walk. Friends only.
Tickets £12.50. Allocation of places by ballot on 20th January 2011.
Organisers: Nicholas Chrimes & Gillian Harrison.

History of Art Faculty Talks

Wednesday February 2nd 2011

Wednesday March 2nd 2011

at 1 pm for 45 minutes

There will be two more lunch-time talks this term, given by PhD students from the Faculty. Where appropriate talks will be given in front of the objects in the galleries in the Museum.

Wednesday February 2nd 2011

Blaithin Hurley will be talking about a late sixteenth-century spinetta-a-tavola: 'The role of music in the furnishing and decoration of sixteenth-century Venetian music rooms'.

Wednesday March 2nd 2011

Hannah Malone will give a talk entitled: 'Decadence, Dionysus and Death: a Roman Sarcophagus at the Fitzwilliam Museum.'

15 places on each talk. Meet at the Courtyard entrance Friends only.

Organiser: Susan Rasmussen

Cheffins Fine Art Auction:

A Private View

Tuesday 22 March 2011 6.00 until 8.00 pm

The evening offers a very special and exclusive opportunity to attend a Private Sale Preview of the March Country House and Fine Art Sale. Cheffins' experts will be available to discuss some of the pieces in the sale, and there will be a short talk about a few of the more interesting lots. Mr Paul Gooderham will also give a potted history talk about Cheffins, the firm, and its historic links in Cambridge. The company recently celebrated its 185th year in business.

Ticket price includes champagne, canapés and sale catalogue.

Tickets £15.00 per person. Guests welcome.

Ticket allocations at the end of February.

Organiser: Cazy Walshe

The Friends would like to thank Dr Frank Salmon, Head of the Department of History of Art, for the interesting, amusing and informative talk which he gave as the Sue Purdy Lecture in November. From his arrival in Cambridge as a student the Fitzwilliam Museum loomed large on his architectural horizon and he shared his early research and discovery of the Museum with us, together with the intrigues in the Competition to design and build it. An enjoyable evening.



Burghley, Stamford, Lincolnshire

Friday 15th April 2011 A full day visit

This palatial Elizabethan house was built by William Cecil, the first Lord Burghley (1520 – 1598). Set in the magnificent Capability Brown landscape, the house is well known for its historic collections of paintings, ceramics and other superb works of art. After coffee/tea on arrival, the Curator of the 2011 Treasury Exhibition, "European Ceramics at Burghley", will give us a brief talk about the exhibition before we view it. We will then have a private guided tour of the State Rooms in two groups, before lunch in the Orangerie. Following lunch the gardener will give us an introductory talk about the gardens, after which we will be free to explore them before our cream tea and departure.

Departure 9am Trumpington Park & Ride, returning approx 5pm.

Tickets: £47.50 (including coffee/tea, lunch and cream tea) Guests welcome.

Organiser: Jane Dix



We should like to thank Nicholas Chrimmes, seen talking to Monica Thomas, for his energy and enthusiasm in organizing and leading local visits and tours for the Friends. Using his considerable research and knowledge, gained when writing his book *Cambridge - Treasure Island in the Fens*, we can be assured of many more exciting and informative tours.

Remember to have your membership card with you when you visit the Courtyard Cafe for coffee, between 10.30a.m. and 12.00 noon or for tea after 3.30p.m. for your 10% discount.

Money Matters

Last year, I reported that subscriptions had risen to £55,000 despite the recession. Although the country is still in a state of financial crisis and this is hitting most charities' income, I am pleased to report that Friends' subscriptions have risen again to approximately £66,000 in the year ended 31 July 2010. This includes Gift Aid. Last year I exhorted Friends to sign Gift Aid forms. The scheme enables us to receive a Government top-up of £10 on double subscriptions and £6.25 on single subscriptions without it costing Friends anything. If you would like to receive a Gift Aid form or if you cannot remember if you have already completed one, please contact Penny Cleobury who will be able to help.

The Director has made a deliberate decision to allow the amount of un-spent subscriptions to increase because it is important to have a significant sum available in case the Museum wants to make an expensive acquisition, especially as potential funders will often only make a donation towards an acquisition if the Museum is able to cover a large part of the cost.

As you are probably aware, absolutely all of your subscriptions are passed to the Museum for acquisitions. This means that we have to find

money from other sources to cover administration costs, including Penny's salary. Unfortunately, these costs again exceeded non-subscription income by approximately £10,000 a year. This is despite non-pay costs actually falling by more than 8% and non-investment income rising by more than 14%. But low interest rates have hit us badly, a problem that will probably continue.

The Committee continues to address the problem of the gap between income and administration costs. One of the benefits for Friends is the exclusive programme of trips and events. When setting the ticket price for a trip, we aim to cover costs. Because the Committee member organising the trip does not know what the take-up of tickets will be, we usually end up with a small surplus of income which goes towards administration costs. The Committee frequently reviews ticket prices and whether we should consciously aim for a surplus to defray administration costs, but we keep coming back to the important aim of not making trips too expensive.

John Pegler

A Message from Merry Proby, Chair of the Marlay Group



Dear Friends

I understand that you all appreciate the value of the Fitzwilliam Museum so I write to ask if you would be interested in becoming a Patron by joining the Marlay Group. Our funds support many valuable projects in the Museum including conservation, education and renovation. Last year we were able to donate over £100,000. Patrons also enjoy a special social programme each year which includes an invitation to the Director's Dinner as well as private visits to London exhibition and private houses. If you would be interested in becoming a Patron in 2011 please contact Sue Rhodes in the Museum Development Office (sr295@cam.ac.uk Tel: 01223 332939) who will be pleased to give you more details.

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Merry Proby".

Special Offer for Friends - Three concerts for £50

The Corn Exchange has offered Friends of the Fitzwilliam a discount on top tickets for the last three in its International Concert Series. Each seat normally costs £32 but buy one for all three concerts for £50. Take a guest and save even more.

Find out more and buy tickets at www.cornex.co.uk or 01223 357851