



Newsletter number 109 December 2012

CARING FOR KENWOOD UPDATE

Those of you who may have been to Kenwood recently will have noticed that the entire house is now completely covered in scaffolding and a temporary roof has been installed. Work has begun in earnest on the exterior finish, and after several trials a successful technique has been found for removing the old paint on the South Elevation, which has proven to be more difficult and time consuming than anticipated. A sample



section of the new colour has been tested and agreed.

During the paint stripping process, it was revealed that the South Elevation pilaster capitals and bases were severely cracked and in fact made of 1950s pre-cast cement which has aged badly and will need to be recast. However a successful and cost effective method for achieving this has been agreed. Further trials have taken place on the North Front exterior finishes, and a colour, texture and technique has also been approved.

Inside the house, the big discovery of the project so far has been the underlying



floorboards in the Adam Library which are in exceptionally good condition and thought to be the original 18th century boards.

The English Heritage Curatorial team continue to work to develop the designs of the South Front Rooms in particular, and we look forward to sharing these with the Friends as they are confirmed in the coming months.

Work on the **Kenwood Dairy** buildings started on 1 October and **is** progressing well. The external cement render has been painstakingly removed, and sections of original render have been discovered. These will be retained where in good condition and, importantly, used to inform accurately the reinstatement of the render on the Dairy buildings in their entirety.

Ian Vallance English Heritage

THE FRIENDS CONTRIBUTION TO CARING FOR KENWOOD

The Council has decided that the Friends will fund the restoration of the Entrance Hall of

Kenwood House. English Heritage needs £38,000 for this part of the Caring for Kenwood Project. We have promised £32,000 from our capital reserve and will need to raise a further £6,000 to reach the target figure. A letter asking for your help is enclosed with this newsletter. Please give generously!

VISIT TO GEFFRYE MUSEUM 18 July 2012



Alex Goddard, Head of Collections, gave the Friends a fascinating introductory talk. The Museum portrays the changing style of the English domestic interior from 1600 to the present day in eleven chronologically arranged rooms. Historic documents regulating the care of orphans, inventories and probates were researched to establish a typical middle class family home at a certain period. Much of the older furniture comes from London homes in Newington Green, Soho and High Holborn.

The attractive houses were originally built as almshouses in the 1780s by the Ironmongers' Company to house needy workers. The Friends visited two houses restored to show the lifestyle of the poor and elderly between the 1780s and 1880s.

In 1914 the buildings became the Geffrye Museum named after Sir Robert Geffrye, Lord Mayor of London and Master of the Ironmongers' Company. There is also a walled herb garden and four period gardens that complement four of the rooms. It was a most enjoyable visit to an historic oasis in London. The Friends thank Alex Goddard and Angela Cox for arranging such an interesting day.

THE LADIES OF KENWOOD 11 October 2012

On 11 October Friends of Kenwood were given exclusive early-morning access to the Wellington Arch, Hyde Park, before it opened to the public.

We toured the 'Ladies of Kenwood' exhibition which was showing in the Arch's Quadriga Gallery while Kenwood House is closed for repairs.

Cathy Power, Senior Curator of Collections, spoke with insight and affection about the women linked to Kenwood's history over 250 years. During research, the 'cast' of female characters had increased and some individual stories had emerged, but often it had been a process of piecing together tantalisingly few clues.



In the 18th and 19th centuries three countesses, each married to a successive Lord Mansfield, managed Kenwood and took significant decisions about buildings, architects, decorations and furnishings. That great historical resource, the Accounts book, seldom provides details, however, so some subtle detective-work was needed.

The lives of dairymaids and housemaids and the relationships between Kenwood indoor and outdoor staff are glimpsed occasionally, as when an outraged head gardener complains that a housemaid was wearing "almost the only rose in the flower garden".

One individual story has particular appeal for us today, that of Dido Belle, whose lively face appears in a charming double portrait beside (and slightly behind) her cousin, daughter of the future 2nd Earl. Dido's father was Lord and Lady Mansfield's nephew. Her mother was black. The child Dido came into their household as a companion, not a servant. She lived at Kenwood from about 1765 until Lord Mansfield's death in 1793. His will ensured her financial security and her freedom.

Other feminine aspects of Kenwood are the gifts, over the last century, from women who for differing personal reasons wanted their own collections - jewellery, miniatures, portraits and even shoe-buckles - to find a home there.

Many paintings of elegant women are at Kenwood, often collected by Lord Iveagh, who bought the house in 1925. He lent three of his 'Iveagh Beauties' (a Romney, a Gainsborough

and a Raeburn) for an exhibition in 1894; they are reunited here.

'The Ladies of Kenwood' exhibition closed at the end of October but when Kenwood reopens this intriguing narrative will be included. We felt privileged to have been given this insight into their lives. Ann Bronkhurst, - a Friend of Kenwood

IDENTIFYING TREES 13 June and 5 September 2012

The Tree Workshops were a great success and much enjoyed. We thank Bettina Metcalfe, a member of the International Dendrology Society, for her inspiring leadership.

DIAMOND JUBILEE LECTURE Wednesday 17 October 2012 THE TWENTIETH CENTURY CORONATION

Sir Roy Strong

The members who filled the Old Kitchen to hear Sir Roy Strong's absorbing lecture on twentieth century coronations were captivated by his erudite and spirited account. We learnt that Britain's coronation ceremony is the oldest surviving ritual of its kind. Each one was fashioned in some way as a response to Britain's world standing at the time, but also there was a degree of personal preferences and inclinations. The 'balcony scene' such a stalwart of any royal occasion is a relatively new tradition taking place on a specially enlarged balcony constructed in 1913. The lecture stimulated many questions and speculation about the next coronation while the buzz continued over a glass of wine. We are most grateful to Sir Roy for coming to Kenwood and giving us the benefit of his prodigious knowledge and insight into a fascinating subject.

NEW LOGO

The Council thanks Robin Wyatt for the two designs for our logo. One heads this newsletter and is also on our website and stationery. A small circular logo is on our application form and compliment slip.

MARTIN ANDREWS 1943-2012

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of a very loyal Friend of Kenwood, Martin

Andrews. Martin was an architect and then landscape architect by profession, and the arts, heritage and architecture featured highly amongst his interests. He was also actively involved in the Georgian Group, the Ancient Monument Society, Chelsea Art Society, and the Heath & Hampstead Society. He was a fount of information, regularly attended our Sunday lectures, and always made valuable contributions to the general pot of knowledge. He will be much missed by all who enjoyed seeing him at Kenwood and we send our deepest condolences to his family. We are very grateful to Martin for his generous legacy to the Friends of Kenwood.

A way of helping our activities would be to make a legacy to the Friends of Kenwood. Leaving a bequest is not complicated and is very tax efficient. If you choose to include the Friends in your will, you will need to direct your gift to our registered charity number: 273258.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Despite the dispiriting economic outlook, the work of the Development Committee has continued with some success. Both Pentland and Aberdeen, two of our Corporate Benefactors have renewed their subscriptions. Bonhams 1793 Ltd and Hiscox our two other Corporate Benefactors still have some time left on their donation. Nationwide offered us £100 and Martin Andrews kindly left us a legacy of £1000.

We received a very generous donation from the Coral Samuel Charitable Trust. Coral Samuel was one of the original benefactors when Kenwood needed support in the 1970s. We are very grateful to all such loyal friends.

For those who want to be more involved and **continue** to help with the extensive restorations in the House, we have developed new categories of membership, the Rembrandt and Vermeer groups named after the two most valuable paintings in the collection. They offer far greater benefits than ordinary membership. Do please get in touch with us if you feel able to support us in this way either by writing to info@friendsofkenwood.org.uk, sending us a letter at Friends of Kenwood, Kenwood House, Hampstead Lane NW37RJ or telephoning Helen Payne at 07775 894146

LATE MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

It's never too late to renew your membership, so if you forgot to do so over the summer, please renew now! We really need your help so that we can make a difference to the restoration project currently underway, so please do continue to support us. Membership also makes a nice present – why not buy a subscription to the Friends of Kenwood as a Christmas present?

You can now pay in many different ways: by cheque (made payable to 'The Friends of Kenwood'), by standing order, or by **PayPal**. If you would like to pay by standing order, please contact info@friendsofkenwood.org.uk and we will send you details; if you would like to pay by PayPal, please go to <http://www.friendsofkenwood.org.uk/membership.html> and follow the simple instructions to pay online.

LECTURES UNTIL JUNE 2013

Sunday, 16 December 2012 at 10.30 am (**Please note change of date**)
AUGUSTUS JOHN Tristan de Vere Cole **This Lecture will be followed by our Christmas Party**



Sunday, 20 January 2013 Dr Kathleen McLauchlan:
FRENCH IMPRESSIONIST SKETCHES.

17 February Dr Geoffrey Hales: **MARY KINGSLEY – VICTORIAN LADY TRAVELLER**

24 March Dr Alan Borg: **MUSEUM OF THE KNIGHTS OF ST JOHN**

21 April (**AGM**) Dr Valerie Doulton:
DOULTON CERAMIC FACTORY

19 May Dr Martin Roylton Kisch:
REMBRANDT'S DRAWINGS.

Sunday, 16 June Dr Frances Sands
ROBERT ADAM'S DRAWINGS FOR KENWOOD

Registered charity 273258

VISITS 2013

Saturday 19 January at 11.45 am **ST PANCRAS HOTEL**

We meet at **St Pancras Renaissance Hotel, Euston Road at 11.45**. The cost is £20 and the tour last about 90 minutes.

Wednesday 6 March at 10.30 am **STRAWBERRY HILL HOUSE**

We meet at **Strawberry Hill House at 10.30 am**. The cost is £18.00.

If you wish to reserve a place for these events, please return the booking form.

GARDEN EVENTS 2013

Tuesday 2 April 2013 **TREE WORKSHOP**
Looking at the Magnolia blossom at Kenwood.

Thursday 16 May **SPRING TOUR OF THE KENWOOD ESTATE**

These Garden Events are free but numbers are limited, please contact Elizabeth Inglis to book a place either by telephone 020 8450 8802, or email: efinglis@dsl.pipex.com,

Our corporate benefactors



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