

COSTUME SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Above from left:
Ffion Thomas and her
1938 dinner dress;
Melanie Woolven and
1882 dinner dress.
*Main picture and
inset:* Louise Taylor,
winner of the Patterns
of Fashion Award
2011 and her winning
1770 polonoise.
Photographs:
Liz Booty



AUTUMN 2011

From the Chairman

The Costume Society has been in existence for 45 years, the world is changing, so we thought we should also make a few changes to the Costume Society.

Firstly we have a wonderful and exclusive Costume Society journal *Costume*; the 2010 edition is very beautiful, especially the stunning cover illustration. As you are aware, we explained in the AGM minutes last year, from 2012 we will be publishing two journals a year, Spring and Autumn, plus the two Newsletters and an improved website. All this will be very interesting, but of course there will be extra cost implications for the Society, and the Committee has decided the membership fee will have to increase, from 1 January 2012. Full details of the new fees can be seen on page 3, and on the enclosed Subscription Renewal leaflet.

We must thank the Publication team, our Editors Penny Ruddock and Verity Wilson, Reviews Editor Christine Stevens and the Editorial Panel, and a very big thanks to James Snowden who is retiring after many years compiling the yearly list of new books for the journal.

Nigel Arch our Vice-Chairman and Fundraiser has decided to step down, and we thank him very much for his contribution to the Society. We must say an official goodbye and thank you to Pat Poppy, our Membership Secretary for 16 years. Thank you to the officers who have agreed to continue to serve the Society, and to the retiring trustees; a special thanks to Lindsay Evans Robertson who has been a member of the Costume Society nearly forever as Hon Secretary and trustee, so we are very sad to lose such a valuable and special member we thank him for his commitment and loyalty to the Society.

Three new trustees have been elected, Kerry Taylor, Professor Lou Taylor, and Linda Ballard, we welcome them all.

Congratulations to Linda Richards Symposium Co-ordinator and Kate Loubser of Worthing Museum the Academic Co-ordinator for their admirable work in providing the delegates with such an excellent venue for our Symposium: *Pleasure, Leisure, Travel* and of course *Fashion*. Linda Richards is leaving her post after organising five Symposia and her former colleague from the Museum of London, Michelle Thomas, will take over in January 2012.

We have planned a splendid Study Day *Deconstructing Couture* at London College of Fashion on October 15th; the photograph in *Costume* of the tailored suit by Mattli a London couturier and the article will give you a taster for a very interesting day.

Hope to see you there.

Sylvia Ayton

The Hon Treasurer writes about next year's subscriptions!

I want to write a few words about two major changes for 2012 approved at last year's AGM: doubling the issues of *Costume*, and a related subscription increase, the first since it went up from £18 to £24 ten years ago. The balance sheet in the 2010 financial statements shows restricted funds (which have to remain intact to earn interest to pay the annual awards) of £120,518. The big increase from £24,736 in 2000, thanks to generous donations and careful stewardship, means the Society is financially sound, able to fulfill its charitable status and to increase grant-making when bank interest rates normalize again. Unrestricted funds relate to each year's operating expenditure; - a small negative figure is no cause for concern provided the next year's subscriptions are received on target.

Since Maney Publishing took over publication of *Costume* six years ago, the price of *Costume* has been agreed in advance. So in calculating the increase, we knew £9 was needed from every member to meet the cost of each year's extra issue of *Costume*; nevertheless it was agreed that the increase for students should be limited to £21. A further £3 was deemed sufficient to meet known and future expense increases for five years, hopefully longer, making £36 for full members. Additional postage abroad having roughly doubled, a further £4 must be added for each overseas member to £40 full, £25 student.

I hope that spelling out next year's subscription increases will encourage

members to change to paying the new rates. Considerable difficulties were created last time by many members' banks still paying the same old rate even a few years after the change. So it is important that a replacement standing order form is completed and sent as soon as possible after receiving the subscription renewal notice which will clearly show the amounts due. Doing this will avoid complications for Fiona Starkey, our new membership secretary.

Thank you.

Chris Godfrey

2012 subscriptions	UK Members	Overseas Members
Full Membership	£36.00 p.a.	£40.00 p.a.
Student Membership	£21.00 p.a.	£25.00 p.a.

All copy for the Spring 2012 Newsletter must be received by 31 December 2011.
Email: newsletter@costumesociety.org.uk
Post: Anthea Jarvis, 10 Highgrove Park, Liverpool L19 9EQ

Forthcoming Events

De-constructing Couture

The Society's annual London Study Day, hosted by the London College of Fashion, explores the world of Couture.

Venue: London College of Fashion, 20 John Princes Street, London W1M 0BJ

Date: Saturday 15 October 2011

Time: 10.30 – 16.15

Tickets: Members £20, Non-members £25, Students £10.

Refreshments: Not included



Introduced by Alexandra Kim, Curator of the Royal Dress Collections at Kensington Palace, the day will examine the changing nature of couture production, the relationship between couturier and client and the commercial and artistic aspect of this most controversial and inspiring branch of fashion.

Alongside papers on the relationship between theatre and fashion at the turn of the nineteenth century and the emergence of Couture as Art Form in the present day, there will be papers on Charles James and Thea Porter as well as an insight into the world of Vivienne Westwood.

There will be a small display of couture garments from the collection of Leicestershire Museums.

Further details can be found on the website or in writing from:

Philip Warren, Collections Resources Centre, 31-33 Hayhill, Sileby Road, Barrow upon Soar, Leicestershire, LE 12 8LD.

Tel: 01509 815514

Please apply for tickets enclosing cheque in payment and SAE to CS Bookings, 10 The Orchard, Locking, Weston-Super-Mare, BS24 8DU: see Booking Form enclosed.

Connoisseur Visit

Innovation and Tradition at the Museum of London

Venue: Museum of London, 150 London Wall, City of London, EC2Y 5HN

Date: Thursday 29 March, 2012

Time: 13.30 – 16.30

Tickets: Members £10, Non-members £15. (Refreshments included)

Join Beatrice Behlen, Senior Curator of Fashion and Decorative Arts for an afternoon of eighteenth century dress, contemporary millinery and London tailoring. Beatrice will explore the making of the Pleasure Garden, the recent display of c18th dress which includes millinery creations by Philip Treacy, and then lead a store visit to look at examples of the museum's collection of London couture tailoring.

There are a maximum of 24 tickets available. The group will be divided into two for the store visits, which will last an hour. During this time the rest of the group will be free to view the Pleasure Garden and the other displays within the museum. Please note that there are lifts/escalators to all floors, and a small number of seats can be provided in the store for people who may not be able to stand for an hour. Seated visitors might not be able to see everything close-up.

Further details can be found on the website or in writing from:

Philip Warren, Collections Resources Centre, 31-33 Hayhill, Sileby Road, Barrow upon Soar, Leicestershire, LE12 8LD.

Tel: 01509 815514

Please apply for tickets enclosing cheque in payment and SAE to CS Bookings, 10 The Orchard, Locking, Weston-Super-Mare, BS24 8DU: see Booking Form enclosed.

The Annual Symposium of the Costume Society

The Executive Committee of the Costume Society has decided not to hold a Symposium in 2012. We have arrived at this decision after careful consideration of the effect of the Olympic Games on travel and accommodation arrangements and costs for all concerned.

The Programme Sub-Committee is to present an exciting Study Day in Bath on Saturday 7 July 2012; *Cutting, Cantilevers and Construction*. The day will consist of two speakers; students presenting their work for the *Patterns of Fashion* award, and the Society's Annual General Meeting.

More detailed information will appear on the website costumesociety.org.uk

Kerry Taylor Auctions: Sale Preview

Report on Costume Society Visit, 16 March 2011

A small group of Costume Society members were privileged to attend the sale preview of *Passion for Fashion and Fine Textiles*, to be held on 17 March.

Kerry Taylor initially outlined her career experience working for Sotheby's and gaining years of invaluable experience developing her "passion for fashion" philosophy. Now she is running her own auction business, which specialises in fashion items old and new, owned by the rich and famous. She exudes enthusiasm and great delight in explaining how various historical fashion items came to be included in this particular sale.

As we entered "La Galleria" we were exposed to items with royal connections. Firstly the famous see-through knitted dress designed by Charlotte Todd and worn at St Andrews fashion show by Kate Middleton in 2002. Adjacent pieces from Diana Princess of Wales's collection added to the press interest in this particular sale.

However Kerry guided us initially towards items from the Mary Holden Illingworth collection. Mary was the daughter of a very successful inventor and manufacturer in the wool trade. The supporting documents charted Mary's life, which detailed the clothes and also provenance details. Kerry talked at length about a velvet gown from 1881 designed by Charles Frederick Worth. This item had been altered from the original, which affects the ultimate auction value.

The more significant fashion pieces were displayed on mannequins, but many garments were hung on rails. It was a delight to be able to look at some memorable couture items close up and to touch them. Also included in this sale were some special pieces that belonged to the Duchess of Windsor. The collection items included some delicate nightdresses with lace trimmings. Handbags, accessories and personal effects were interesting to look at and admire.

Of the 20th century couture items was an example of a well-recognised dress from Yves Saint Laurent *Mondrian* collection 1965. This version was made especially for the owner in crepe de chine instead of the original wool version. Apparently the designer gave the only other example to the V&A Museum in South Kensington.

More details can be viewed at www.kerrytaylorauctions.com

Gillian Maskelyne



Yves St Laurent Mondrian dress, 1965. Photo: Kerry Taylor

Brides revisited
Wedding Dress Study Day
Chertsey Museum,
Saturday
14 May 2011



Any fears that I might have for the future of provincial display and access to British costume is invariably eased by a visit to a costume display at Chertsey Museum. Olive Matthews collected the cream of costume.

Our day began with a very warm welcome from the staff and museum trustee Valerie Cummings. Veronica Isaac, who is standing in for Grace Jones, Keeper of Costume, whilst on maternity leave, introduced us to the gallery but took pains to inform us that she could take no credit for the wedding dress display. On the other hand, she was thoroughly enjoying the spectacle, as we did!

Grace and her staff had achieved yet again a fascinating mix of wedding dresses dating from 1780 to 2001. Sourced mainly from the Olive Matthews collection, Grace had arranged the dresses as tightly as was feasible with the number of trains involved. The backdrop was gothic arches framing mirrors. Unfortunately the mirrors appeared to have been nullified by the lighting. Nevertheless the arrangement of the gowns did result in a great deal of close examination by a very eager group of society members. Corresponding wedding photos, where available, decorated the walls and TV footage of society swells and royalty entertained us from a wall-mounted screen.

We started the day viewing the dresses in the gallery and during the lunch break and at the end of the study day we were all drawn back like moths to the gallery.

Dr Joanna Marschner, Senior Curator Historic Royal Palaces, was the first of three speakers. This was of course a wonderfully defining moment. How would Kate Middleton dress? What direction would she have been given as a royal bride?



Top: View of part of Wedding Dress display.
Above: Display of wedding photographs from Hampshire Museums' Service.
Photos: Heather Toomer



Veronica Isaac displays a wedding coat. *Photo: Heather Toomer*

Dr. Marschner led us through a myriad of royal bridal dresses, the earliest being the regency gown of Princess Charlotte, one of six royal bridal dresses within the Royal Palaces collection. We learnt the value of promoting British workmanship, symbolism and the sourcing of fabrics which reflected the nation's alliances: diplomacy at its strictest.

Alison Carter and Catherine Leonard, Senior Keeper of Art and Design and Collections Assistant respectively, both represented Hampshire Museums Service with enthusiasm and passion for their resources. Dating wedding photos by Alison was a task which she took on gallantly as various of us members presented her with faded Victorian prints of wedding days long gone. Dating photos from spotting hairstyles, hat confections, tight sleeves, short dresses, long dresses was no mean feat. Wedding photos had flooded into her resources after her appeal for data. We enjoyed viewing just some of them.

Catherine Leonard's presentation was focused on the wedding dress displays at Milestones, Basingstoke, just one of the many centres of exhibition of rural life which Hampshire Museums Service operates. A 20th century overview of changing styles and influences on brides and their grooms was enjoyable. Middle England was well represented. It is always enthralling to see the influence of couture dressmaking on the provinces. The day ended with a small selection of bridal items sourced by Veronica Isaac from the Museum's reserve collection laid out on trestle tables. This was a delightful opportunity to don white gloves and inspect at our leisure.

A great deal of inspiration, understanding and knowledge was imparted to us and I know that the young Romanian bridal dressmaker to whom I had given a lift had just experienced the complete history of British wedding dresses in one sitting. We didn't stop reflecting all the way back to the coast. A great day; thank you!

Pam Wright

STUDY DAY:
Deconstructing Couture
 Saturday 15 October 2011
 10.30 – 16.15
 London College of Fashion, 20
 John Princes Street, London
 W1M 0BJ

Name _____

Ticket no. _____

This portion will be returned to confirm your booking. Please bring it with you. If you do not supply an SAE, we cannot confirm your booking
 If you are unable to come, please ring 01934 823 252. If there is a waiting list your ticket can be resold.

STUDY DAY:
Deconstructing Couture
Saturday 15 October 2011
 London College of Fashion, John Princes Street, London W1M 0BJ

Name _____ Tel _____

Address _____

_____ postcode _____

email _____

Please send me Costume Society members' tickets at £20.00
 ... Non-members' tickets at £25.00
 ... Students' tickets at £10.00

I enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to **The Costume Society**

*Please send your cheque with this slip and a stamped self-addressed envelope to: **The Costume Society, 10 The Orchard, Locking, Weston-Super-Mare, BS24 8DU.***

VISIT:
Innovation and Tradition at the Museum of London
 Thursday 29 March 2012
 13.30 – 16.30
 Museum of London, 150
 London Wall, EC2Y 5HN

Name _____

Ticket no. _____

This portion will be returned to confirm your booking. Please bring it with you. If you do not supply an SAE, we cannot confirm your booking
 If you are unable to come, please ring 01934 823 252. If there is a waiting list your ticket can be resold.

VISIT:
Innovation and Tradition at the Museum of London
Thursday 29 March 2012
 Museum of London, 150 London Wall, City of London, EC2Y 5HN

Name _____ Tel _____

Address _____

_____ postcode _____

email _____

Please send me Costume Society members' tickets at £10.00
 Non-members' tickets at £15.00

I enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to **The Costume Society**

*Please send your cheque with this slip and a stamped self-addressed envelope to: **The Costume Society, 10 The Orchard, Locking, Weston-Super-Mare, BS24 8DU.***

Music, Fashion and Fantasy

**A Costume Society Study Day in association with the
London College of Fashion**

London College of Fashion, Saturday 20 October 2012

From Masquerade to Lady Gaga

From court masquerade to 21st century pop and from the ball room to the club venue the relationship between music, fashion and the fantasy of a created persona is the subject for the Costume Society's annual London study day.

This is a call for papers for those interested in presenting an illustrated talk on the subject of the cross fertilisation of ideas, influences and creativity between fashion and music and the fantasy of dressing the part.

We are interested in hearing from you if you can offer a paper on these or related themes:

- ❖ Collaborative musical and fashion projects
- ❖ The influence of music on dress for social or performance dancing
- ❖ The creation of the iconic musician or the fantasy persona through dress
- ❖ Mainstream Pop and Fashion identities
- ❖ Dress, Fashion, Music and sub-cultural identities
- ❖ The history of dress for musical performance or accompaniment
- ❖ Dressing for the stage in Opera or Musical Theatre, Film and Television
- ❖ Music inspired by fashion or a particular garment

If you feel you that you are able to give a formal illustrated presentation of either 20 or 50 minutes to an audience of students, teachers and lecturers, researchers,

curators, collectors, fashion and performing arts designers and makers, then please send your brief CV details with an abstract of no more than 500 words on your proposed area of presentation electronically to:

philip.warren@leics.gov.uk

Hard copies can be sent to Philip Warren, Leicestershire County Council Museums, Units 31-33 Hayhill, Sileby Road, Barrow upon Soar, Leicestershire, LE12 8LD

Abstracts must be sent to the above address by Friday 30 March 2012 when they will be assessed by Philip Warren, Principal Curator of Collections for Leicestershire Museums and Shaun Cole, Course Director, MA History & Culture of Fashion & MA Fashion Curation at the London College of Fashion

Notification will be made by the 27th April 2012. Rail travel expenses (for the presentation) and speakers' fees of £50 (20 min) and £100 (50 min) will be paid to successful speakers.

Symposium 2011; held at the Eastbourne Centre, 8-10 July 2011

Pleasure, Leisure, Travel and Fashion

Report by Bärbel Krause

The Symposium took place at the modern Eastbourne Centre, where the delegates met on Friday night for drinks and lively conversations. In the first session Professor Lou Taylor presented her booklet, a listing of dress collections in the South of England. Uncovering a wealth of treasures, it provides the "key evidence of the cultural significance and historical importance" of those collections, and is a valuable source for every dress historian doing research.

Saturday morning greeted us with beautiful sunshine and a stunning view over Eastbourne's beach, Grand Parade, and the Pier.

New York based Professor Diane Maglio was the first speaker with *Palm Beach Peacocks in the Sands: Flamboyant American Men's Resort Wear 1920-1930*. She made the audience chuckle over beach pyjamas, robes and towels with decorative oversize patterns being a "confidential expression of sartorial self-assurance". PhD student Marta Kargol from Krakow, Poland, continued with a *Discourse on sport clothing in Krakow in the second half of the 19th century*, an enlightening insight to the outfits worn by Polish sports enthusiasts and members of sports organizations.

Hannah Wroe from Nottingham Trent University gave a practical approach to *The Significance of Summer Dress in the Making of a Holiday Wardrobe 1935-1955*. In the "golden age for the dressmaker", sewing your own summer wardrobe was an essential and creative part in women's lives.

Keynote speaker Dr Sarah Cheang gave a well researched expert view on *Mandarin's Mantles: Chinese Influences on Western Fashion*. Concentrating on women's fashion in the early 20th century, she explained "Chineseness" meant in Britain leisure and pleasure, not only for clothes but also in architecture (garden pavillions and pagodas!). Claire Watson, University of Leeds, analyzed clothes within a socio-historical setting by showing the garments worn by a family which had for generations worked in the textile mills. Spending their summer holidays by the sea, leisure wear became a very much longed for symbol for the few weeks away from their hard daily lives.

The following **Student Design Award**, as always chaired by Sylvia Ayton, was presented by 2nd year students from Northbrook College University of Brighton. Architecture as one aspect of the project and "Transformer" travel outfits as the other, all garments did have a surprise, and some surely the "Wow!" factor. The winning design, menswear based on classical architecture, was by Adam O'Sullivan.



Student Design Award winning outfit by Adam O'Sullivan.
Photo: Liz Booty

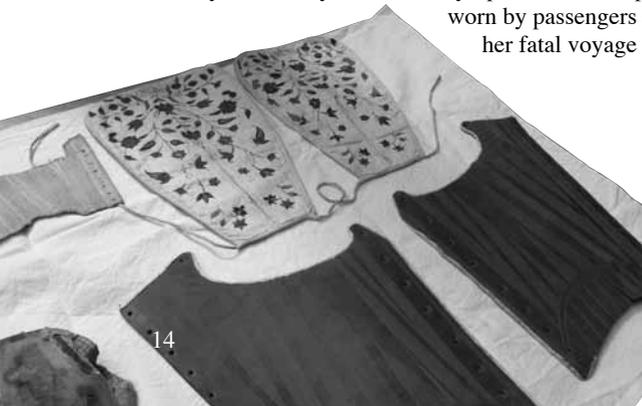
The afternoon was spent under the guidance of Curator Kate Loubser and Assistant Curator Gerry Connolly at Worthing Museum and gave us all an amazing insight into very well presented costume galleries and the costume store, as well as a hands-on approach to several displayed pieces of costume. Particularly notable were a lovely embroidered blackwork woman's jacket dating from 1612, a rather severe looking baby's corset and a dress made from WWII silk maps.

The day closed with an after-dinner lecture excellently presented by Alexandra Kim, curator at Kensington Palace, on Dress and Travel in the 18th Century. She showed why at that time special travel wear was absolutely necessary, and how some more comfortable and practical garments thus became fashionable for other occasions.

Sunday morning began with the Society's AGM, followed by a Keynote lecture by Philip Warren, *The Active Catwalk, Fashionable Dress Transformed by Sport*. Philip discussed the development of sport and leisure wear for the middle classes from the 1860s onwards, enthraling the audience with a series of scintillating images, and left all contemplating what aspects of sportswear were demonstrated in their own clothes that day. Danielle Sprecher introduced the intriguing subject of the lavalava, the traditional dress for men in Polynesia, explaining how emigrants to New Zealand, who originally only wore the lavalava at home, now incorporate elements into everyday dress as an expression of cultural identity. Dr Geraldine Biddle-Perry then explored the growing popularity of cycling in suburban south London in the 1880s and 1890s, and the adoption of variations of the Norfolk suit by cycling clubs as the ideal embodiment of practicality, respectability and fashion.

Before lunch the winner of the **Patterns of Fashion Award** was announced by Jenny Tiramani, who had judged the entries, and congratulated the students on the exceptionally high quality of their creations. Three student finalists presented their garments; Ffion Thomas and Melanie Woolven from Arts University College, Bournemouth, and Louise Taylor from Wimbledon College of Art. Louise was declared the winner, for her exquisite reproduction of a 1770s brocade gown with hand-quilted petticoat. (*The three finalists and their creations are illustrated on cover*).

In the afternoon the last session of papers began with a Keynote by Anthea Jarvis, *Caught on Camera*, examining how much information on the clothes worn for leisure and holidays can be extracted from photographs, both professional and amateur, in the period 1860-1910. Veronica Isaac followed with a comprehensive look at the extensive wardrobe a young lady would need to dress for "The Season" in suitable style to ensure an advantageous marriage, and Grace Evans finished off the day, and a very successful Symposium, with a poignant account of the clothes worn by passengers of all classes on the Titanic on her fatal voyage in April 1912.



18th century pockets and leather corset, Worthing Museum.
Photo: Fiona Starkey

2011 Symposium Reports by Student Bursary Winners

As a student on the MA Fashion Curation course at London College of Fashion who has just begun final project research, being able to attend the Costume Society's Symposium 2011 was both enlivening and encouraging. I am extremely grateful to the society and their publishers, Maney, who make the Student Bursaries available.

The variety of papers and the depth of the research presented meant that beyond information that was directly relevant to my own research there was a wealth of different methodological approaches and ways of approaching research questions. For those studying curation or working with historical dress the symposium is also a fantastic opportunity to get a sneaky peek at archives or collections that you may not know much about or have not had an opportunity to visit.

My own research seeks to establish a link between Beat travel narratives and clothing worn and inspired by Beats and beatniks. Phillip Warren's keynote speech was particularly interesting in that he challenged delegates to interpret the multiple ways sportswear has impacted on the clothes that we wear now. For me, this same influence on what we now consider 'everyday' dress is present in the jeans, t-shirts, work-wear and sportswear worn by the Beats.

I was lucky enough to be introduced to a number of delegates who were encouraging about my field of research and only too happy to offer advice which I have been able to follow up. I would like to extend my gratitude for the encouragement and genuine interest that the Costume Society offered me.

Niamh Tuft

The symposium's theme: *Pleasure, Leisure, Travel and Fashion* showcased an ideal selection of papers, particularly for my research. I am currently working on my dissertation for the MA History of Design and Material Culture at the University of Brighton. I feel so privileged to have been given the opportunity to attend the symposium this year and also to meet so many fantastic and interesting people. There were many attending the symposium whose work I have read, work which was partly responsible for stimulating my interest in dress history.

I found Philip Warren's paper especially useful for my research into knitted jerseys used for sport and leisure wear in the late 19th century. Also, Dr Geraldine Biddle-Perry's research into the Norfolk jacket and cycling clubs revealed an important point regarding the naming of cycling costumes that I hope to discuss in my study of women's ready to wear dress in the 19th century.

Above all, I spent the entire day learning new things. The symposium encouraged me to look at my ideas and research differently, drawing inspiration from the subjects and speakers presented.

Katherine Buckland

As a recent graduate from the University of Brighton's Fashion and Dress History course, I have been spending a great deal of time researching and referencing my final year dissertation. So it was wonderful to actually put some faces to the names of some of the people that I have quoted in my work. Not only did I get the chance to meet so many interesting people who share my enthusiasm for dress history, but also I was able to listen to some very interesting papers on topics that I would not have normally focused on. I am very grateful to the Society for giving me the opportunity to attend the symposium and I hope to attend many more once I have found a job in my much sought-after profession.

Katherine Cutlan

All the above attended on the Sunday only



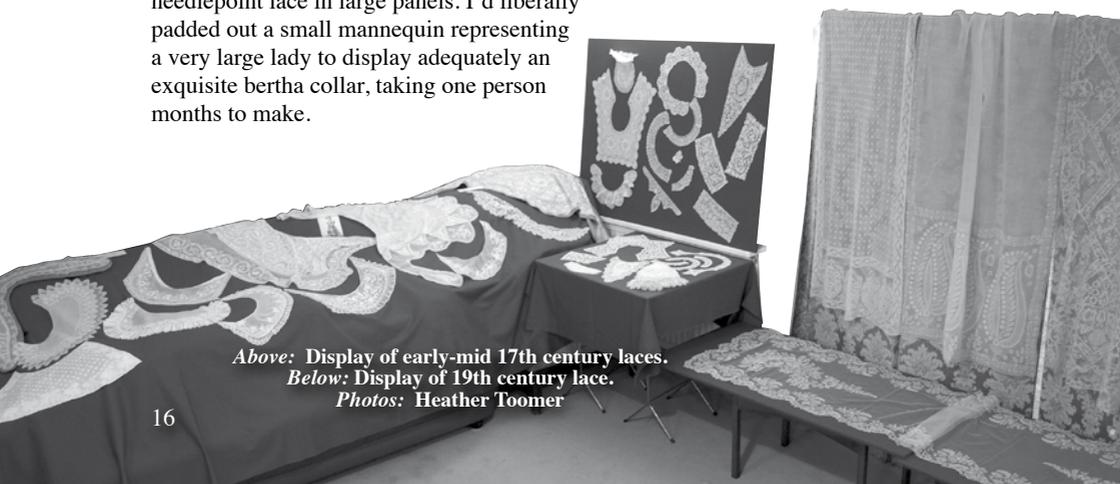
Lace & Whitework Embroideries

At Home with Heather Toomer

Report of Visit 21 July 2011

I was privileged to assist Heather by pinning up lace display boards the day beforehand and she must already have spent days choosing the small selection of her collection she could display even using most rooms. She opened the day itself by saying 38 years ago she saw an advertisement for lace believed to be from a wedding trousseau which might make a nice blouse. She could only afford part but her addiction started! After expert advice dated it to about the 1880s, she bought the rest: fortunately she never did make the blouse. She showed us long rolls of lace (skirt draping?) and other pieces, including beautiful lace sleeves with almost invisible buttons/loops to the cuff.

Room displays started with geometric bands of late 16thC. Italian Reticella lace and a collar like the girl's in a Hals portrait (adjacent pictures illustrated lace being worn). Many ostentatious examples of early 17thC. lace affordable only by the wealthy were followed by dense lace collars masquerading as linen from our Commonwealth period. The Restoration reintroduced flamboyancy with almost three-dimensional needlepoint lace in large panels. I'd liberally padded out a small mannequin representing a very large lady to display adequately an exquisite bertha collar, taking one person months to make.



Above: Display of early-mid 17th century laces.
Below: Display of 19th century lace.
Photos: Heather Toomer

In other rooms downstairs Heather fielded questions on the wide variety of 18th and 19thC. lace items displayed. Highlights were a blonde silk shawl, a Honiton or Brussels lace apron, a pretty pink-lined whitework bag and (upstairs) 18thC lappets worn with lace caps at court occasions.

Twenty-five whitework babies' robes suspended in chronological order from bedroom walls mimicked two centuries of adult fashions. On a bed was a saffron silk satin baby's robe (1760-80) with needlepoint lace decoration, laid on a rich Christening pane with wide silver bobbin lace border – these were surely the jewels in Heather's crown.

Janet Godfrey

Yarwood Report 2011

Veronica Contreras, Packing in fashion: A material culture study of the Louis Vuitton trunk: 1875-1914

M.A. History of Design and Material Culture, University of Brighton

Travelling is not only going from one place to another but also carrying what we need while we are away from home. It therefore involves more tangible objects than the verb could suggest. This was even truer in the 19th century when crossing the Atlantic could take weeks and travellers stayed for months at their destinations. From the middle of the century improvements in the means of transport lead to more people travelling more frequently between Europe and America. Passengers in first class took large quantities of luggage holding the many items of clothing necessary to be properly dressed as well as toiletries, jewels, books, rugs, cushions and even deck chairs to make the journey more comfortable.

It is in this environment that Louis Vuitton founded his company in Paris in 1856. In 1875, in tune with the spirit of the time, Vuitton created his Wardrobe Trunk which won a Gold Medal in the Universal Exhibition of 1889. The Vuitton trunk became a valuable object in itself and part of the fashion and haute-couture scene. Hand-made, designed in detail, secure, attractive and customizable, the wardrobe trunk was an expression of luxury and quality that positioned the brand and matched the values of the elite.

This object is the focal point of my dissertation, a case where the container is as important as the content. The trunk's surface displays not only the brand monogram, but also the name of its owner and labels from hotels and places visited. Boundaries are perfectly sealed to protect the interior from damage and the trunk is securely locked by a patented mechanism which only opens with the owner's key. The striped interior with its hangers and drawers lined in fabric allows the organisation and safe-keeping of clothes and accessories without the need for packing and unpacking. The trunk is still produced by Louis Vuitton, but after 1900 it was also replicated by other manufacturers. Although it could be called a 'timeless' object, this item of luggage is rooted in the time of its creation and informed by contemporary historical and cultural conditions.

The journey of my research has been fascinating. Every time I find new information, my own journey takes an unexpected turn and I uncover new connections suggesting

relations between different aspects of society. Through the object, it is possible to increase the knowledge about how fashion shaped the material world and how fashion is inspired by the society that creates and embraces it. Fashion accessories like the wardrobe trunk are used by people to express their thoughts, to convey shared values but also to make statements as individuals.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Costume Society. Firstly, because the Yarwood Award has enabled me to visit archives and to look at physical objects. And secondly, receiving such acknowledgement of my work is a strong motivation to carry on my research in the best possible way.

Veronica Contreras

Museum Placement Award Joint Winner 2010 *Jennifer Rothrock* was awarded a placement with Brighton Royal Pavilion and Museums

Curator's report: Martin Pel, Brighton Royal Pavilion and Museums

The exhibition, *Dress for Excess*, which opened in February 2011, celebrates the life of George IV and the Regency era through the dress of the period. The exhibition consists of period garments on open display across the Royal Pavilion with a separate room dedicated to George himself. To tell the story twenty-eight items were chosen. For display some of the items needed replica parts or in one case needed to be re-created completely. Through Amy de la Haye, Jennifer was recommended to me who took on the task with talent and enthusiasm.

The first garment Jennifer made was a replica of George's corset, otherwise and rather euphemistically known as his body-belt. The Museum of London holds an original pattern dating from 1824 for the corset but unfortunately the actual garment no longer exists. Jennifer copied the pattern, researched the history and re-created the corset. It has been incredibly popular with the public, not only giving a tangible example of his size in later life but also an insight into how he viewed himself. The public are often surprised and amused to learn George wore a corset!

Jennifer is currently working on another two items which will form part of the theme on neoclassicism and its influence on dress which are to be displayed from August 2011 until February 2012. (Although the exhibition is on for a year, items on open display will be changed after six months for conservation purposes.) The first is a silk underdress for a muslin gown, circa 1795-1800. The gown has delicate whitework embroidery all over, with a separate golden-coloured silk-ribbon



Interior of Louis Vuitton trunk, Christie's sale, 5 July 2011.

Photo: V. Contreras



From left to right: Bodice of striped silk, 1790s, which needs a skirt; Creating an underdress for 1790s muslin gown; Jennifer mounting embroidered muslin dress c.1795-1800; Re-creation of George IV's body belt.

All photos: Brighton Royal Pavilion and Museums.



'bodice'. The second item is a replica 'skirt' to complement a tight-fitting striped silk bodice, circa 1790s. On studying the bodice it appears that it originally would have also had an overskirt attached at the back; so Jennifer's replica 'skirt' will consist of a petticoat with an overskirt.

The generous sponsorship by The Costume Society of Jennifer's work has allowed *Dress for Excess* to display three very good pieces from Brighton's collection. The whitework embroidered dress is the best example we have and is pivotal in telling the story of Regency dress, as is the bodice; the only one in the collection from the 1790s. George's replica corset has to be the ultimate example of George dressing for excess! I hope Jennifer finds this work as beneficial in the long-term as Brighton Museum has found it in the short.

Jennifer Rothrock, Award Winner

The goal of my placement is to create three replica garments for the collection at Brighton Museum and the exhibition *Dress for Excess*. I will be working with Martin Pel, curator of Fashion and Textiles, from May 2010 until August 2011.

My first task was to visit the Museum of London and copy the pattern of a body belt worn by George IV. The construction of the belt as shown on the pattern was consistent with corsetry of the time, except for the method of joining the belt at the back. I questioned whether or not a body belt made for a large man such as George IV would have required a different method of closure. After some months of research Martin found a chapter in Robert Doyle's *Waisted Efforts* on this specific belt and it answered our questions regarding buttons and loops, which was consistent with the pattern markings.

The next two projects are a shift and a skirt that complete garments being displayed in *Dress for Excess* in August. One of these is a Regency cotton dress that came to the museum without a shift. The dress embodies the Regency style, in fine Indian cotton, natural colour, with floral embroidery. My third project is a skirt for a gorgeous, striped silk bodice in the collection. We are researching the proper silhouette and fabric to go with this bodice.

Benefits from the Award

There are many curatorial debates about reconstructing period garments, whether it should be done at all or if done; how far do you go with period correct materials and construction for a garment that will be in a museum collection? I feel that as long as effort is made in sourcing and constructing the garments to a high standard, the benefits of replica garments outweigh any lack of authenticity. The most exciting part of this project is seeing my work on display in *Dress for Excess* and knowing that the garments I've created will be held in the dress collection for the long term.

Future plans

I recently completed an MA degree in Fashion Curation at London College of Fashion. I am passionate about historical clothing and hope to gain experience managing, curating and exhibiting dress collections in local and national museums. I also hope to continue creating replica garments. I am truly grateful for the opportunity the Museum Placement Award has given me, and for the time I've spent working with Martin Pel at Brighton Museum.

Announcements and requests

Straw and Wax Jewellery from Mali

I am researching the straw and wax jewellery from Mali, and am stuck. I have found two sentences in LaDuke's *Africa, Women's Art, Women's Lives*, and a bigger bit in the *Shire West African Jewellery*. I know the Lettice Sandford collection in Hereford Museum, and am chivying the Fowler Museum in California. I have tried all the big ethnological collections with no luck.

Any information or leads would be gratefully received by Anne Dyer, Westhope, Craven Arms, SY7 9JL, elizabeth@westhope.com

Images from the Woolmark Collection

The London College of Fashion has put on line some 2,000 photograph images taken from its Woolmark collection.

The International Wool Secretariat, now the Woolmark Company, was established in 1937 to undertake research and the global promotion of wool. To that end, it built up a large library of promotional photographs and accompanying press releases which it generously donated to the London College of Fashion in the 1980s when relocating and short of space. The 2,000 or so black and white photographs date from the 1940s – early 1980s and capture both the fashion of the time and the style of photography. Press releases give additional information about the garments, their designers/manufacturers, the photographer, and other points of interest.

Visit www.vads.ac.uk/collections/LCFWOOL.html for details and to view the images.

Exhibitions 2011 -2012

American Museum in Britain

Claverton Manor, Bath, BA2 7BD
Tel: 01225 460503

Marilyn - Hollywood Icon

20 dresses worn by Marilyn, plus personal items.

12 March – 30 October 2011

www.americanmuseum.org

The Fashion Museum

Assembly Rooms, Bennett Street,
Bath, BA1 2QH. Tel: 01225 477173

What will she wear?

The Enduring Romance of the
Wedding Dress.

Including photos of 1930s couture
dresses

14 February 2011 – 8 January 2012

Sport and Fashion

4 February 2012 onwards

www.fashionmuseum.co.uk

Fashion and Textile Museum

83 Bermondsey Street, London SE1
3XF.

Tel: 020 7407 8664

Tommy Nutter: The Rebel on the Row.

8 July – 23 October 2011

From Catwalk to cover

18 November – 26 February 2012

www.ftmlondon.org

Gallery of Costume

Platt Hall, Rusholme, Manchester
M14 5LL Tel: 0161 245 7245

Yves Saint Laurent: Designer in Focus.

14 September – 31 December 2011

www.manchestergalleries.org

Harris Museum and Art Gallery

Market Square, Preston, PR1 2PP,
Tel: 01772 258248

Global Threads: Asian Textiles and Fashion Today.

14 May 2011 – 30 June 2012

www.harrismuseum.org.uk

Lady Lever Art Gallery

Port Sunlight Village, Wirral, CH62
5EQ

Tel: 0151 478 4136

The Finishing Touch

Women's Accessories 1830 – 1940

27 May – 11 December 2011

www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

Sudely House

Mossley Hill Road, Liverpool, L18
8BX.

Tel: 0151 724 3245

Costume Drama

Fashion from 1780 – 1850

Until 7 May 2012

www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/sudley

York: Fairfax House

Castlegate, York, YO1 9RN

Tel: 01904 655543

Revolutionary Fashion

26 August – 31 December 2011

www.fairfaxhouse.co.uk

Courses and Conferences

DATS 2011 Conference, York Unlocking the wardrobe – access to collections

National Centre for Early Music, York
3-5 November 2011.

Includes a day at the Bowes Museum to see and discuss new Fashion and Textiles Gallery

Further information:

Caroline Whitehead, 25 Paddock Hill, Ponteland, Newcastle-on-Tyne, NE20 9XL.

cs.whitehead@tiscali.co.uk

Association of Dress Historians (formerly CHODA)

Inaugural New Research Day

Art Workers' Guild, London
5 November 2011.

Further information:

helen.walter@network.rca.ac.uk

Textile Society AGM and Conference 2011

Textile collections and sharing of knowledge

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
25-27 November 2011

Further information:

Louanne Collins, Treasurer, 159a Chester Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport, SK7 6HD.

louannecollins@hotmail.com

University of Brighton Conference Developments in Dress History

University of Brighton, Brighton
8-10 December 2011.

This conference reflects on Prof. Lou Taylor's contribution to the discipline of dress history and its current place in the academic field of arts and humanities.

Further information:

Louise Purbrick, l.purbrick@brighton.ac.uk

<http://artsresearch.brighton.ac.uk/research/centre/design-history-and-material-culture-research-group/events>

Kensington Palace Conference The Making of a Monarchy for the Modern World

Kensington Palace, London W8 4PX,
6 – 8 June 2012.

For further information:

www.hrp.org.uk/aboutus/whatwedo/ourcurators/conferences.aspx

Costume Colloquium 111 Past Dress-Future Fashion

Florence, Italy
8-11 November, 2012.

Announcement and Call for Papers: deadline for submission 31 October 2011.

Further information:

www.costume-textiles.com
or contact info@costume-textiles.com

Costume Calendar 2011-12

2 October 2011	Textile Society	London Antique Textile Fair, Chelsea Old Town Hall, London SW3	www.textilesociety.org.uk atf@textilesociety.org.uk
8 October 2011	WECS	Janet Arnold Study Day: <i>Shops and Shopping</i> BRLSI, Queen Square, Bath	www.wofecostumesociety.org
15 October 2011	Costume Society	Study Day: <i>Deconstructing Couture</i> London College of Fashion, John Princes Street, W1M 0BJ	*Costume Society Bookings See back page
5 November 2011	Association of Dress Historians	Inaugural New Research Day Artworkers' Guild, London	helen.walter@network.rca.ac.uk
3-5 November 2011	Dress and Textile Specialists	Conference: <i>Unlocking the Wardrobe</i> National Centre for Early Music, York, YO1 9TL	Caroline Whitehead cs.whitehead@tiscali.co.uk
19 November 2011	WECS	Meeting: <i>Brittany through the eye of a needle</i> Bath Bowling Club, Pulteney Road, Bath	www.wofecostumesociety.org
25-27 November 2011	Textile Society	AGM and Conference: <i>Textile Collections and Sharing of Knowledge</i> Ashmolean Museum, Oxford	www.textilesociety.org.uk
8-10 December 2011	University of Brighton	Conference: <i>Developments in Dress History</i> University of Brighton, Brighton, East Sussex	Louise Purbrick l.purbrick@brighton.ac.uk

continued on back page

Costume Calendar 2011-12

continued from previous page

4 February 2012	WECS	Meeting: AGM and <i>Whitework</i> Bath Bowling Club, Pulteney Road, Bath	www. wofecostumesociety. org
4 March 2012	Textile Society	Antique Textiles Fair, Manchester Armitage Centre, Fallowfield, Manchester M14 6HE	www.textilesociety. org.uk atf@textilesociety. org.uk
29 March 2012	Costume Society	Visit: <i>Innovation and Tradition</i> Museum of London, London Wall, London EC2Y 5HN	*Costume Society Bookings See below

Events listed include those organised by costume and textile societies which have close links with the Costume Society. Information published in good faith. The Costume Society cannot be responsible for errors, omissions or alterations.

As accommodation may be limited, it is always advisable to book in advance or phone to check that tickets are still available. Please include a stamped addressed envelope with all enquiries.

***Costume Society Bookings**

10 The Orchard,
Locking,
Weston-Super-Mare
BS24 8DU



The Costume Society, 150 Aldersgate Street, London EC1A 4AB
CostumeSociety.org.uk