



SPRING/SUMMER 2007

NO. 46

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Spring is always a welcome time for those of us involved in the day-to-day operations of the American Friends of Attingham. The selection of students for the summer programs and the awarding of scholarships – tasks that are foremost in our mission – are behind us, the Annual Appeal and other fundraising efforts are being brought to a happy conclusion, the transition from outgoing to incoming board members is complete, and the busy season of programs is gradually subsiding. The slower pace of the summer months gives us the much-needed time to finish ongoing tasks (a review of our financial portfolio), to prepare for the next season's programs (so far, events in NYC, Boston, and San Francisco), and to focus on special projects (most notably, our web site).

The beginning of June also signals a time when our attention shifts to England as this year's students prepare to head off for the Study Week, the Summer School and the Royal Collection Studies program. This summer, fifty Americans will attend the three Attingham programs, our able administrator, Libby De Rosa '05 and I among them! Thanks to the kind invitation of our English colleagues, I will join members of the Study Week in Northern Ireland for the first half of the course (after which Annabel Westman will join the group for the second half). In mid-July Libby will have the opportunity to spend a few days with the Summer School, and in early September, by courtesy of Giles Waterfield, she will attend the Royal Collection Studies program. We each look forward to these opportunities to reconnect with Attingham and to meet the many interesting students who will attend this summer's courses.

This year the American Friends held an abundance of special events that were indeed special and very popular (as you will read in the reports by Missy McHugh and Libby De Rosa). We are especially grateful to Deborah Hatch RCS '01 for her help in organizing a lecture by Susan Jenkins SW '94, '06, on the patronage and collecting of the first Duke of Chandos, and to Ann and Gordon Getty for opening their San Francisco home to us for the event; to Alex and Loie Acevedo of Alexander Gallery for hosting our Mid-Winter Reunion; to the Bard Graduate Center for giving us a private tour of the exhibition *James 'Athenian' Stuart: The Rediscovery of Antiquity*; to Katherine Howe '75, and her committee of loyal alumni for their hard work in organizing a stimulating four-day trip to Houston; to the Royal Oak Foundation for co-sponsoring events with us in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Washington; to Roger Moss '66, for generously providing lecture space at the Philadelphia Athenaeum for a talk by Lisa White; and to Amy Meyer, Director of the Yale Center for British Art, for inviting our membership to the 2007 Mellon Lectures by Giles Waterfield. Thanks also go to Margize Howell '85, and Kay Allaire '91, for underwriting a splendid evening at the Cosmopolitan Club for Giles's many New York admirers; and, lastly, to Anne Fairfax '99, and Richard Sammons '00, for hosting our Annual Meeting at the Institute of Classical Architecture and Classical America and presenting an entertaining slide lecture on their firm's architectural projects.

At the Annual Meeting three new directors were elected to the board: Judith Barter '75; Melissa Gagen '93; and Gail Kahn '96. They replace outgoing directors: Charles Lyle '77, Missy McHugh '98, and Jeff Groff '92. We thank them for their able and committed service and welcome Judith, Melissa, and Gail. Beth Wees' 81, who has served two consecutive terms as Vice President will also rotate off the board but will remain chair of the Selection Committee. In addition the Nominating Committee submitted a slate of board officers to be voted on by the board at its next meeting. They are Jeff Groff '92, Vice President; James Mundy '06, Vice President for Development for one year, renewable; and Missy McHugh '98, Secretary. We thank Jared Goss '92, Barry Harwood '93, Katherine Howe '75, Margize Howell '85, and Peter Trippi '95 (chair) of the Nominating Committee for their two years of service.

As reported at the Annual Meeting, the Board plans to hold it's first-ever board retreat in the fall of 2007. We will gather for one full day to discuss a range of issues including AFA's mission, general operations, financial goals, short and long-range planning, and development. I hope to report more on this endeavor in the next Newsletter.

This year, the American Friends of Attingham was fortunate to be able to offer scholarship assistance to all students requesting financial aid. I would like to thank the many alumni and friends who generously provided the much-needed funds for this year's scholarships, and to offer special thanks to the following individuals and foundations for their support of a full or partial scholarship: David Maxfield '85, Dick Button '71, Gilbert Schafer '95, Carmine Jones '06, Bunny Williams, the English-Speaking Union, the Royal Oak Foundation, the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, the Rosenthal Foundation, the Edward Maverick Fund, Charles E. Peterson Fund, the Class of 2006, and an anonymous donor who gave a scholarship in honor of J. Stewart Johnson. We are deeply grateful to each of them for their ongoing scholarship support.

Last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank the members of the Board and our Administrator for their inspired and dedicated work. They make my job an effortless pleasure!

Molly Seiler '87, President

LETTER FROM ENGLAND

On April 30th Trustees, Council members, staff, and many supporters of the Attingham Trust attended a reception in the Goldsmiths' Hall in the City of London to pay tribute to Annabel Westman's twenty-five year involvement with the Trust. It was a typically merry and noisy 'Attingham' occasion, but the highlight of the evening was the star herself, dressed in a



dazzling jacket worthy of her reputation as a leading textiles expert. We were delighted that Molly Seiler, President of the AFA, was able to attend.

John Lewis, Chairman of the Attingham Trust, paid tribute to Annabel's tremendous contribution over twenty-five years – starting from her own attendance on the course in 1977, when scholars still slept in the narrow metal beds in the attics at Attingham Park, and were roused at dawn by George Trevelyan to appreciate the glory of an English dawn chorus. From 1980 -- 2000 Annabel served as Secretary to the Trust and thus became the lynch-pin of the organisation, understanding all aspects of the Trust's fund-raising for scholarships and guiding its expansion into delivering not just the Summer School but the Study Week (founded in 1986) and Royal Collections Studies (1996). As there is no central office for the Trust, and each member of staff works from his or her own base, Annabel's skill in co-ordinating all the Trust's activities has been invaluable – and still is.

Annabel's Joint-Directorship of the Summer School from 1992-2005, first with Geoffrey Beard and then with Giles Waterfield, will be remembered by all alumni as a period when fine scholarship and attention to historic detail were combined with tremendous good humour and fun, as thousands of photographs in 'Attingham' files all over the world bear witness – and every member of each succeeding Summer School will still have Annabel's laughter and precise instructions ringing in his or her ears every time July comes round. It's wonderful that Annabel continues to serve the Trust in her role as Director of Studies, keeping an overview of all three courses and developing more sources for Scholarship funding. The most recent success has been the establishment of a new scholarship for an Australian participant by the WR Johnston Trust, and we receive our first scholar on the Summer School this July. Annabel will be teaching again on the Summer School and Royal Collection courses this year, where scholars will be able to learn more of her involvement in recent historic textile projects, including the State Bedchamber at Chatsworth.

Lisa White, Director of the Summer School

UPCOMING JUNE/JULY LECTURES

Missy McHugh '98, departing chair of the Programs Committee, has arranged for the AFA to co-sponsor lectures with the American Friends of the Georgian Group. She had already implemented a highly-successful co-sponsorship program with the Royal Oak Foundation which has enabled us to offer superb lectures to our members in several cities across the U.S. We thank Jennie McCahey '06 for initiating that program. Now we offer two summer lectures in New York sponsored by AFGG.

Tuesday June 26, "Georgian Style in the Colonies" by Eryn Brennan.

Thursday, July 19, "The Architecture of Mott B. Schmidt" by Mark Alan Hewitt '80.

Each lecture and reception takes place at 6 pm at the Collectors Club, 22 East 35th Street, NYC. Cost to Attingham members is \$45. To reserve send payment to AFGG, 122 East 58th Street, NY, NY 10022.

We shall be notifying you of upcoming lectures co-sponsored by Royal Oak and AFGG BY EMAIL ONLY, so if you think you might be interested in future events, please send your email address to Libby De Rosa at Attingham2@att.net.

E-MAIL ADDRESS SWEEPSTAKES

Snail mail postage now costs 41 cents and we are using e-mail whenever possible to alert you to upcoming regional and national Attingham events. To help you hurdle any lingering inertia about sending us your address we are holding our first-ever contest. Send us your e-mail address by August 31, and one lucky winner will be drawn from all the new email submissions to receive a special prize. You will be notified by e-mail (of course) if you are our winner. Send your address to Attingham2@att.net.

HOW WAS HOUSTON?

As David Maxfield '85, said, "Who knew?" From the moment we convened at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston for an introductory welcome by Peter Marzio, Director of the MFAH, to our delicious jambalaya farewell lunch given by Ginny Elverson '74 -- ably assisted by Robin Michael '76 and Bill Pillsbury '69 -- Houston was a glorious experience. Our Houston alumni formed an organizing committee twenty-strong, brilliantly orchestrated by Katherine Howe '75, Director, Rienzi and the Dora Maar House, and Curator, Decorative Arts at MFAH, to show us a fascinating, diverse, and totally unexpected city.

Katherine and her committee created a themed visit that succeeded in introducing us to Houston's historical development as well as its outstanding collections. Our architectural guide, Stephen Fox, enlightened us about the growth of the city from early farmhouses to planned neighborhoods and towering office buildings. We visited private collections that ranged from 18th-century American furniture to dazzling contemporary glass. We were treated to a present-at-the-creation description of the Byzantine Fresco Chapel Museum (François de Menil, 1997) by Elsian Cozens as we sat admiring the frescoes and the elegant building that houses them; we dined al fresco on a perfect spring afternoon at Bayou Bend (John F. Staub and Birdsall P. Briscoe, 1928) before touring the extraordinary collections assembled by Miss Ima Hogg. That same afternoon at a drinks party at Rienzi (Staub, Rather & Howze, 1954), its director, our indefatigable leader, Katherine Howe, along with Cindi Strauss '96, Associate Curator, MFAH, and Christine Gervais '04, Assistant Curator, MFAH, showed us the collections and discussed future plans for the estate.

Missy McHugh commented that "one of the stand-outs was seeing so many diverse and lovely residential neighborhoods." For Peter Lang '85, the highlight of the trip was the visit to the Live Oak Friends Meeting House, (Leslie K. Elkins, 2001) with its installation by artist, James Turrell. We were invited to lie down on the pews to look up at the barrel-vaulted roof with its Turrell-designed lighting and opening to the sky. As Peter described it, "[We watched]... for an hour and three quarters looking through the roof at the spectrum of colors as the sky changed from dusk to dark. Who would have thought there were so many shades of blue and how calming it was to look at the sky? I loved ...the description of the meetinghouse as 'noble,' a feeling I certainly shared."

The theme of Houston's rich diversity included an array of dining experiences. In addition to sampling Gulf Coast cuisine at Ginny Elverson's house, we dined old-South style at the Bayou Club, ate like oil barons at the Petroleum Club, and downed margaritas and upscale Mexican food at Hugo's.

The Houston trip also benefited from the generosity of David Maxfield '85, who donated a scholarship for a young professional to attend our program. The recipient was Christine Gervais '04, Assistant Curator, MFAH. Her presence was a great addition to the group, and we are deeply grateful to David for initiating and implementing the scholarship. David was so pleased with the results of his first effort that he has offered to provide a matching grant for future scholarships to the Attingham domestic study trips so that a graduate student or early-to-mid-career applicant may attend. Our hope is that other tour participants will donate so that we can build on David's initiative.

Libby De Rosa '05, Administrator

SELECTION COMMITTEE REPORT

The Attingham Summer School Class of 2007 promises to be an excellent one, culled from an outstanding group of candidates. Twenty-four Americans will join an equal number of students from the United Kingdom, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand, maintaining the strong international profile that has characterized the Summer School in recent years. Our scholars this year, aged 25 to 60, hail from Delaware, the District of Columbia, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. They represent a wide range of interests and skills developed as architects, museum directors, curators, preservationists, interior designers, teachers, auction house professionals, archeologists, and graduate students.

I was assisted this year by a dedicated committee composed of Jeffrey Herr '98, Danielle Kisluk-Grosheide '86, and Angelyn Chandler '05, with guidance from Director Lisa White, President Molly Seiler '87, and our Administrator, Libby De Rosa '05. My sincere thanks go to each of them for their thoughtful consideration of the applications. Board Treasurer, Paul Parvis '85, provided astute advice on the allocation of scholarships, which were awarded in varying degree to seventeen students. Funding remains critical to attracting the very best candidates, and we are enormously grateful to those individuals and organizations that provide much-needed scholarship monies. Three newly-created grants this year illustrate the continuing generosity of our alumni and supporters. For information on how you might help, please contact Libby De Rosa at attingham2@att.net.

As in years past, nearly 100% of applicants learned about the Summer School from you, our alumni. Please consider assisting us again next year by recruiting strong applicants for the Class of 2008. They will find information and applications on our web site: www.attinghamtrust.org.

Beth Carver Wees '81, Vice President for Selection

LOST AND FOUND: SUMMER SCHOOL CLASSMATES OF 1987 AND 1997

To the Class of 1997, congratulations on your tenth anniversary. We are searching for your lost classmates: *Margaret Lichter, Kathleen Lawrence, Margaret M. Tamulonis, and Kristina Wilson*. Class of 1987, best wishes on your twentieth Summer School anniversary. We have lost touch with: *Peter Hammell, William Hickman, Lawrence Jones, Diana Larsen, Sue Pittman, Natalie Shivers, and Susanna Whitman*. If you know the whereabouts of any of these lost ones, please contact, or ask them to contact, Libby De Rosa at Attingham2@att.net. Thanks!

WELCOME SUMMER SCHOOL CLASS OF 2007

Raymond Armater, Executive Director, Locust Grove, The Samuel Morse Historic Site, Poughkeepsie, NY; **Leslie Buhler**, Executive Director, Tudor Place Foundation, Inc, Washington, DC; **Gustavo Carrera**, Preservation Project Manager, Page Ayres Cowley Architects, NYC; **Marie Louise de la Vergne**, Partner, M. Clayton Brown, New Orleans, LA; **Margherita Desy**, Site Manager, Phillips House, Historic New England, Salem, MA; **Kathryn Galitz**, Assistant Curator, Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC; **Alexandre Gamelas**, Architect, Fairfax & Sammons, NYC; **J. Ritchie Garrison**, Director, Winterthur Program in Early American Culture, University of Delaware, Wilmington, DE; **Anne Goslin**, Collections Manager, Historic Hudson Valley, Tarrytown, NY; **Michelle Hargrave**, Research Associate, Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, Design and Culture, NYC; **Hilary Hunt**, graduate student, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD; **Cynthia Jenkins**, Executive Director, Preservation Society of Charleston, Charleston, SC; **Laura Keim**, Curator, Stenton, National Society of the Colonial Dames of America, Philadelphia, PA; **Kristie Lalire**, Assistant Director and Curator, Dodona Manor, George Marshall International Center, Leesburg, VA; **Susan Lundgren**, former volunteer, Minneapolis Institute of Arts and University of Minnesota Arboretum, recently transplanted to England; **Anne Nellis**, Research Associate, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, Washington, DC; **Shax Riegler**, graduate student, Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, Design and Culture, NYC; **Justin Sarafin**, Dependencies Project Director, Monticello, Charlottesville, VA; **J. Stanton Thomas**, Associate Curator, Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, TN; **Nicholas Vincent**, graduate student, Winterthur Program in Early American Culture, Winterthur, DE; **Sarah Vukovich**, graduate student, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA; **Sung Won**, graduate student, Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum, Parsons, the New School for Design, NYC; **Yao-Fen You**, Rousseau Post-Doctoral Fellow, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA; and **J. Christopher Young**, Intern Architect, Atkin Olshin Lawson-Bell Architects, Philadelphia, PA.

ALUMNI NEWS

“John Kelly’s Washington” column in the *Washington Post* featured an interview with Virginia Biddle, SW ’83, ’84, ’85, to honor Pearl Harbor Day. In the midst of an adventuresome life, Mrs. Biddle, now 102, was in Honolulu on Dec. 7, 1941. Bridget Colman ’97, has joined the board of the American Friends of the National Portrait Gallery of London. Lorraine Gilligan ’85, is consulting with historic sites in the New York metropolitan area on topics of preservation, strategic planning, and adaptive reuse of structures. John N. Pearce ’66, continues as director of the James Monroe Museum of the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Va. For the past five years Hank Dunlop ’80, has been historic interiors consultant for restoration of the Leland Stanford Mansion museum, originally the Sacramento home of the founders of Stanford University and now a state park that also functions as the venue for the governor’s protocol events. In October the restoration project received the Trustees Award for Excellent in Historic Preservation from the California Preservation Foundation, their highest award. Melinda Nasardinov ’04, is working on an exhibition about kitchens for Historic New England. Charles Lyle ’77, is the new executive director of the Webb-Dean-Stevens Museum in Wethersfield, Ct. Roger Scharmer ’73, has sold his house in Mill Valley, Ca. and will be spending more time in Montague, Mi. working on landscape design. DC Historic Preservation Planner, Stephen Callcott ’00, negotiated a settlement ending a 30-year controversy regarding Tregaron, a country house estate (Charles Adams Platt and Ellen Biddle Shipman, 1917) adjacent to Rock Creek Park. Settlement involves construction of nine houses on less than one acre of the property with the

remaining thirteen acres to be transferred to a newly-created Tregaron Conservancy that will rehabilitate the gardens and open the site to the public.

We note with sorrow the deaths of two members of the class of 1963. Samuel A. Morrow was an antiques dealer and interior designer in Washington, DC, whose firm, Morrow, designed important interiors from the 1960s until he sold the business in 1995. Kennedy played a major role in the administration of the American Friends during Phelps Warren's tenure as President, and continued loyally to attend events in New York until this year.

ADDITIONAL DONORS TO THE SYBIL BRUEL SCHOLARSHIP

Our thanks to the following donors to the Sybil Bruel Scholarship whose names were not listed in the Autumn Newsletter:

Carolyn Clark
Barbara Delaney
Nancy Goyne Evans
Kathleen Eagen Johnson
Grace Yeoman Thaler

PROGRAMS COMMITTEE REPORT

The two major events organized by the Programs Committee over the past year were the overnight visit to Boston in October and a four-day trip to Houston in March. The Boston event marked the successful culmination of the Sybil Bruel Scholarship Campaign spearheaded by Tom Appelquist '87. (As reported in the Autumn 2006 Newsletter.)

The Houston trip brought together alumni from around the country as well as a good representation of Houston alums. Brilliantly organized down to the last detail by a team led by Katherine Howe '75, Director of Rienzi and the Dora Maar House, and curator of decorative arts at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the visit was in the Attingham tradition, featuring expert commentary, very full days, and convivial nights. The Houstonians welcomed us warmly and thanks to the superb architectural historian who was our guide, we saw the great variety of neighborhoods the city comprises.

Last month, we were delighted to welcome Giles Waterfield, who had just completed giving the Mellon Lectures at Yale. Giles offered to give a talk for us entitled "Pulling up the Blinds: The British Country House Today." This took place at the Cosmopolitan Club on April 26. We used this opportunity as a fundraiser, and following the lecture had a gala cocktail reception in the club's library. Thanks to the particular generosity of Kay Allaire '91, Margize Howell '85, and Molly Seiler '87, who were patrons for the event, it raised approximately \$4,500 in combination with the tickets purchased for the reception.

The Midwinter Reunion, in January, was held this year at the Alexander Gallery on Madison Avenue and drew in excess of seventy people. To encourage as many people to attend as wish to do so, we do not treat this event as a fundraiser, but we do manage to break even and sometimes make a small profit, as was the case this year.

The committee sponsored a recruitment event on February 1 at the Bard Graduate Center to coincide with the *James "Athenian" Stuart, 1713-1788* exhibition. Alumni who brought a prospective candidate were given a reduced price for the tour and reception.

As always, lectures are an important component of our offerings. I am very happy to report that since our last annual meeting, we have established very close ties to the Royal Oak Foundation and we have co-sponsored a number of lectures with them, in New York and other cities. These lectures included talks in New York by Peter Inskip on Sir John Soane's Moggerhanger House; in New York and Philadelphia by Summer School director Lisa White on state beds; in Philadelphia and Boston by John Martin Robinson on Arundel Castle; in Boston by Simon Thurley on Chiswick; and in Philadelphia by Susan Jenkins on the collection of the First Duke of Chandos. These talks are a wonderful way to involve alumni who live outside New York in Attingham activities and we are especially grateful to Jennie McCahey '06, and Program Director of the Royal Oak Foundation for her generosity in sharing these programs with us.

I wish to thank Richard Sammons '00, for graciously agreeing to be the keynote speakers for the Annual Meeting. I have had the great good fortune to work with a superb committee: Allison Ledes '79, Molly Seiler '87, Libby De Rosa '05, and Judy Sheridan '83, with frequent assists by Margize Howell '85. To you, my sincere thanks.

Missy McHugh '98, Programs Committee Chair

SAVE THE DATES

BOSTON: TUESDAY, SEPT. 19, Ian Gow, Head Curator, National Trust for Scotland, will speak about, and sign copies of his book, *Lost Houses of Scotland*. The program is co-sponsored with the Royal Oak Foundation and the National Trust for Scotland Foundation USA. It takes place at New England Historic Genealogical Society, 101 Newbury Street, at 6 pm. Reservations required; \$25 for members. E-mail mnicholl@royal-oak.org for more information.

NEW YORK: MONDAY, SEPT. 24, John Wilton-Ely will present '*Sublime Dreams*': *Piranesi and the British Country House*, co-sponsored with the Royal Oak Foundation and Christie's Auction House, to be held at Christie's, 20 Rockefeller Plaza at 6 pm. Reservations required; \$25 for members. E-mail mnicholl@royal-oak.org for more information.

NEW YORK: OCT. 2, at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum we will join a private tour of the exhibition *Piranesi as Designer* led by Sarah Lawrence RCS '06, co-curator of the exhibition. Details to follow.

NEW YORK: TUESDAY, OCT. 23, Tessa Murdoch, Deputy Keeper, Victoria and Albert Museum, and frequent Attingham Summer School lecturer, will speak on *Noble Households: 18th Century Inventories of Great English Houses* and will sign her new book. Lecture and reception are co-sponsored with the Royal Oak Foundation and will be at the Grolier Club at 6 pm. \$25 for members. E-mail mnicholl@royal-oak.org for more information.

SAN FRANCISCO: SATURDAY, OCT. 27, pre-opening breakfast at the San Francisco Fall Antiques Show, including a chat with Martin Wood, featured speaker at the show. This special event is graciously arranged for us by Lisa Podos '92, the new executive director of the show. Details to follow.

