I never imagined the day when I might find myself writing an obituary for Geoffrey. A larger than life character, he had enormous energy and vitality of spirit that seemed to defy age. His ebullience and internationally recognised scholarship was an ideal combination for Attingham, a cause he was devoted to as so many alumni were to him.

Geoffrey first became involved with the Attingham Summer School in July 1966 when he was asked to lecture under the formidable eye of Helen Lowenthal, its founder. He was an instant success. At the time he was director at Cannon Hall near Barnsley and had just co-founded the Furniture History Society (1964) whose Journal he edited for the next ten years. From a career in museums he went on to become director of the new Visual Arts Centre at Lancaster University from 1972-82 after which he retired to Bath with his wife, Margaret, to pursue his writing and teaching. An architectural historian, his specialisation in the decorative arts had been given early encouragement by the likes of Margaret Jourdain and Ellis Waterhouse and was based on prodigious archival research. His interests were wide but it is on the subjects of plasterwork and furniture that he is particularly well known. He was a prolific author publishing many seminal articles and some 37 books including, Craftsmen and Interior Decoration in England 1660-1820 (1981/2010) and Upholsterers & Interior Decoration in England 1530-1840 (1997). He was awarded an OBE in 2007 for services to heritage.

Geoffrey helped steer The Attingham Trust, first as a valued support to Helena Hayward (director 1976-85), and then as its director until 1994. His inspired teaching and generosity in imparting his encyclopaedic knowledge were hallmarks of his success and many a scholar is indebted to his kindness. He was Attingham’s chronicler and its best ambassador to the States, a country he loved and who loved him, lecturing from coast to coast and spreading the Attingham word. At the same time he created a strong bond with the American Friends of Attingham (AFA) through his close friendship with Sybil Bruel, their administrator. Her death just days after Geoffrey’s is another poignant reminder of those vibrant and happy days still memorable to so many. Both of them were vital to the success that the Trust and the AFA enjoy today.

Attingham gave Geoffrey the perfect outlet for his artistic skills. He redesigned the publicity and his distinctive calligraphic hand signed many a certificate. No one was as innovative as he in designing a costume for the last night party. His eccentric creations with odd bits of coloured paper and wire coat hangers put together in the early hours are legendary as were his eloquent speeches spoken with great aplomb (and hand waving) on numerous occasions. He combined these talents with a great sense of fun - his laughter often ringing out across a crowded room – a sound to be remembered. As director, president and trustee, Attingham owes him a huge debt of gratitude and I know that I speak for many, in particular John Lewis, Chairman of The Attingham Trust, that it was a privilege to have known him and be counted among his friends. For Geoffrey, ‘Attingham should be concerned always about the development of friendships and happiness, in the pursuit of useful knowledge’. The number of Attingham tributes that have been received shows that he fully achieved his goal.

Annabel Westman
Executive Director, Attingham Trust

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1 Geoffrey Beard, Attingham, The First Forty Years, Leeds 1991, p.170
CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

John Lewis

The Queen marked the milestone of the longest reign in Britain’s history in the Scottish borders while Royal Collection Studies was in full swing celebrating its twentieth year with champagne and a visit to Clarence House. Prince Charles, Chairman of The Royal Collection Trust, sent his ‘warmest good wishes’ and congratulated Attingham on realizing and perfecting over this period the inspired, simple but previously unexplored idea of enabling curators, conservators and scholars from all over the world to have the opportunity of coming together to study the Royal Collection in its historic settings….Long may this continue!’ These warm words are in great part thanks to the dedication of the staff of the Royal Collection Trust, particularly Jonathan Marsden and his predecessor, Sir Hugh Roberts, and our own dedicated team, Giles Waterfield who has directed the course since its inception, Sara Heaton, Administrator, and Annabel Westman. The Prince’s sentiment could equally apply to the other Attingham courses dedicated to the study of the historic houses and their collections for the past 64 years. One of its most ebullient stalwarts, Dr Geoffrey Beard, sadly died this year but he will be remembered with great affection and gratitude.

With the recent appointment of The Rt Hon. John Whittingdale OBE MP as Secretary of State for the Department of Culture Media & Sport, we can only be pleased that he is particularly knowledgeable in the sector, having served not only as Shadow Secretary of State to the Department for some years but also as a member, and Chairman, of the DCMS Select Committee. We trust his considerable experience in the Department’s area of responsibility will manifest itself in an understanding and appreciation of the problems of historic buildings and the enormous contribution they make to the tourism economy.

AMERICAN FRIENDS OF ATTINGHAM

Sheila fflorell • AFA President

We recently welcomed Mary Ellen Whitford as Administrator of the American Friends of Attingham. She comes to us from the Preservation Foundation of Palm Beach. Having completed an M.Sc. in Architectural Conservation at the University of Edinburgh, she looks forward to meeting Attingham Trust staff and tutors when she visits the 2016 Summer School. Cheryl Hageman, former Administrative Director, is now a Manager at the Metropolitan Transit Authority’s Arts and Design Program, where she’ll be helping conserve artworks embellishing subway stations throughout New York City and working with artists on new projects. I see a future Attingham tour in the making!

Last April a group of alumni visited a Usonian community just north of New York City. Embodying his Utopian vision, Frank Lloyd Wright envisaged a distinctly American (i.e. Usonian) style of affordable housing. One original owner, who worked with Wright, still lives in his house and welcomed the group. Washington, DC area alums gathered at Hillwood, Marjorie Merriweather Post’s house museum (Amy Ballard ’01; RCS ’04, SP ’05 and Doug Weimer ’10 serve on the Board), for an evening get together and tour provided by Attingham alumnus Liana Paredes ’96 and Estella Chung ’15.

Autumn highlights included Giles Waterfield’s lecture, “The People’s Galleries” on 21 September, and walking tours of important murals by Hildreth Meière. Early November’s Study Trip takes us to Saint Louis, where Jason Busch ’01, Genevieve Cortinovis ’14, and other alumni lined up a spectacular program in the 50th anniversary year of Eero Saarinen’s Gateway Arch. Next year’s Study Trip will probably be New Orleans and environs and we would welcome participation from the worldwide Attingham Community.

We’ve lost Attingham stalwarts on both sides of the Atlantic: Sybil Bruehl, AFA Administrator from 1985-2005 and Geoffrey Beard, Director of the Summer School, 1986-1994. They were such close friends that the doorman at Sybil’s New York flat thought that Geoffrey was her brother, as he and his wife visited the Bruels so often. This bond exemplifies a great dividend of the Attingham experience: the opportunity to interact and stay connected with people from all over the world. Please be in touch if you are coming to the US. We have alumni throughout the country who would love to welcome you.
Dr Olga Pujmanová

A reception at the British Embassy in Prague, the former magnificent palace of the Thun family, was held during the Study Programme with the Attingham Trust in 1962. How could this happen you may well ask. Well, thanks to an extraordinary and happy coincidence and of luck in my life! Miss Helen Lowenthal loved to amuse people by describing her first visit to Prague in 1963. On that occasion she came with a group of friends interested in Baroque architecture. She worked in the Victoria and Albert Museum at that time and knowing that a trip to a country behind the Iron Curtain could be an adventure she wrote to Professor Jan Kvet from the Institute of Art at Charles University asking him for his assistance and eventual help.

But I have to confess that the long and happy hours of my waiting for the group at the airport ended with an immense surprise and immediate anxiety: instead of the expected group of students I saw a group of people who were contemporaries of my parents or grandparents and the majority of them with walking-sticks! I wished I could have disappeared or sunk into the ground! How could I accompany these nice, sweet old people to one of the most horrible hotels in Prague? I could not—of course—so I tried my best with the help of various friends to find them better accommodation and then to save them from many other unpleasant realities. Luckily I succeeded and dear Helen was forever grateful.

At that time I hadn’t the slightest hope to be allowed to travel abroad. But in the latter part of the sixties the situation got slightly better and Helen Lowenthal immediately took advantage of this and invited me to England and to Attingham. I was there twice, in 1965 and 1967. And then for years she asked me to recommend a candidate from Czechoslovakia.

Your Excellency and honoured guests—I am speaking here in the name of the Society of Friends of the National Gallery in Prague, a private institution established at the beginning of the nineties (1992) after the happy change of the regime.

One of our first members abroad, and the first in England, was Miss Helen Lowenthal [founder of The Attingham Trust in 1952]. How could this happen you may well ask. Well, thanks to an extraordinary and happy coincidence and of luck in my life! Miss Helen Lowenthal loved to amuse people by describing her first visit to Prague in 1963. On that occasion she came with a group of friends interested in Baroque architecture. She worked in the Victoria and Albert Museum at that time and knowing that a trip to a country behind the Iron Curtain could be an adventure she wrote to Professor Jan Kvet from the Institute of Art at Charles University asking him for his assistance and eventual help.

When she was 80 we celebrated her birthday here in Prague and that made her happy. I can still remember her saying with her most beautiful smile: “I love your country and I love Prague”. Helen always appreciated the large number of castles, palaces and monuments that we have in this country. We often thought and discussed how wonderful and useful it would be to organise something like Attingham in Prague. In fact, I started seriously to think of this, together with some of my colleagues from the Educational department of the National Gallery in Prague. Unfortunately, though, it was impossible to organize it at that time which is why I now so much appreciate the present Attingham Study Programme in the Lands of the Czech Crown, knowing what satisfaction it would have given to Helen Lowenthal.”

Dr Olga Pujmanová worked in the Education Department at the National Gallery and is President of the Society of Friends of the National Gallery in Prague. Since 1967 there have been 36 Czech participants on the Attingham courses.
49.06 miles on foot and 269 flights of stairs later the group emerged from a rigorous ten-day Study Programme, the first to be held in central Europe. It was arranged with the invaluable support of Mrs Nad’a Goryczková, the Director of the National Heritage Institute, and her staff. The course concentrated on castles and houses in central, eastern and southern Bohemia and Moravia where the interior decoration and collections original to the house have survived or been restituted using family archives and the invaluable ‘black books’ compiled in the early 1950s. Based in four locations, the properties were also chosen to reflect the rich and varied history of this complex country and the interests of the thirty-one members who hailed from thirteen different countries.

Starting in Prague, once at the heart of the Holy Roman Empire and its subsequent rule by the Habsburgs, the golden era of Charles IV (1316-1378) was explored with special visits to Karlštejn Castle designed to house the imperial regalia, and St Vitus Cathedral with the chapel of St Wenceslas. The visit to Prague Castle, now the seat of the Czech President, was considerably enhanced by privileged access to study the historic spaces and collections. It was not possible to arrange the course chronologically but various themes were pursued, ‘Making connections was one of the delights of the Study Programme’ (Dr David Bostwick, UK). Essential links were made between the properties of major families including the Lobkowicz family in whose impressive town palace a reception was held. ‘This course has enormously expanded and benefited my work by allowing me to discover the historic houses and collections of the Czech royal and aristocratic families’ (Dr Vanessa de Cruz Medina, Spain). The importance of Renaissance mural decoration, stucco and sgraffito was examined at Telč Castle, a UNESCO heritage site; Jiníčkův Hradec where in the basement of the lavishly decorated Rondel a quartet played with the music coming up through the floor; and the delightful Italian-inspired residences of Kratochvile and Bučovice. Many of the aristocratic houses were later extended and transformed including Mrníchovo Hradiště and Velké Losiny with its extraordinary survival of wool hangings and painted canvas decoration of c.1700. A day was spent studying the 18th century opulent interiors of the palace of the archbishops of Olomouc at Kroměříž with its magnificent library and art collection and at Český Krumlov with its splendid theatre remodelled in 1766 where an evening performance was organised partly sponsored by The Attingham Trust. The gardens were also studied here as they were at Červený Dvůr where an English landscape garden had been installed in the mid-19th century. By this time English Gothic Revival architecture had become a major source of inspiration as examined at Hrádek u Nechanic and Huboká nad Vltavou, the latter with its superb interiors and furnishings providing a contrast to the French taste at Sychnov.

Privately-owned houses included Častolovice with its impressive 16th century Knights’ Hall and Nové Město nad Metují furnished in the early 20th century by a number of famous Czech and Slovak artists.

The house visits were complemented by lectures on their history, interiors, paintings, collections, murals and gardens given by Dr Josef Stulík, Dr Vlastislav Ouroda, Dr Petr Pavelč, and the four crucial members of the Czech planning committee, Dr Eva Lukášová, Inka Truxová, Kateřina Cichrová and Dr Andrea Steckerová, with support by Dr Ludmila Ourodová and Dr Milena Bravermanová. My heartfelt thanks go to them, Mrs Goryczková, and also to Dr Olga Pujmanová who gave a special address to the gathering of Czech attingham alumni held at the British Embassy. Sarah Nichols, Deputy Director was a huge support on the course, and I would also like to thank Milan Svoboda for his tireless administrative help and Michaela Vachová for her assistance.

‘The Programme offered me experiences and knowledge that are of incomparable value for my professional development’ (Alison McQueen, Professor of Art History, McMaster University, Canada)

In 2016, the Study Programme will take place in Denmark, 1st – 8th June
This year’s Summer School participants were a studious and fun-loving group. Some even added an extra country house to their challenging list of visited houses by going to Woburn Abbey on their free afternoon. Members from the UK and the USA were joined by participants from Australia, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Ireland, The Netherlands, Poland, Singapore and Turkey.

New this year was a very successful visit to Standen – an Arts and Crafts house, currently the focus of Philip Webb centenary celebrations. As ever, our studies in Sussex were greatly enhanced by long-standing friends and contributors: John Martin Robinson (Arundel), Andy Loukes, James Rothwell, Annabel Westman (Petworth), Deborah Gage (Firle Place), together with Attingham Trustees Rosalind Savill and Sarah Medlam.

As we drove north to Derbyshire the moated manor house of Broughton Castle in Oxfordshire formed a welcome respite. Among those who contributed to the central section of the course were Andrew Barber (Kedleston, Calke Abbey and Hardwick) and the full collections team at Chatsworth, headed by Matthew Hirst. The Duke and Duchess of Devonshire remain particularly generous, personally welcoming us into their home. At Hardwick Hall we were joined by Richard Ireland, David Bostwick (plasterwork) and Annabel Westman (textiles). This year we visited Boughton House, where the Duke of Buccleuch spoke eloquently about the development of the house and gardens. Musicians Peter and Liz Cowdrey performed a moving recital based on the historic music archive.

The journey to Bedfordshire was broken by a private visit to Lamport Hall where we learnt about its long-standing collaboration with the University of Leicester’s MA in Country House Studies. At Audley End we were guided by Laura Houlston and Mia Jackson and joined by Giles Waterfield who discussed the paintings collection with Alice Tate-Harte. We had a magical dinner at recently restored Moggerhanger Park, designed for two generations of the same family by Sir John Soane. The park, landscaped by Humphry Repton, is the subject of current fundraising efforts.

We spent a full day at Wimpole Hall with Wendy Monkhouse and Iain Stewart, including seminars by Mark Purcell (the library) and David Adshead (architectural drawings). During an evening reception at The Higgins, Bedford we saw its Arts and Crafts collections and notable William Burges furniture.

Sir Tim and Lady Clifford welcomed us to their home at Ampthill Park, providing a lively personal tour, at once scholarly and anecdotal. We had an opportunity to handle an Enigma machine during Tom Briggs’ lecture on code breaking prior to the School’s visit to Bletchley Park.

During the last few days we visited West Park to see the ongoing reconstruction of the gardens including the recently opened Dairy and Garden Sculpture Collection as well as the English Heritage Archaeological Collections Store, now housed on site. We were also able to consider the magnificent memorial statuary in the De Grey Mausoleum under the enthusiastic tuition of Dr Roger Bowdler. Lord Salisbury welcomed the group on our final visit to Hatfield House, where members enjoyed the private apartments; a revelatory re-attribution of a Dutch oil painting (presented by Charlotte Bolland), a visit to the archives to see some supremely important documents; and a seminar on arms and armour by Kay Smith.

Our grateful thanks go to all who shared their expertise as well as to our wonderful administrator Rita Grudzień.

’I feel the Summer School was rather like looking through a constantly turning kaleidoscope, the meaning of whose patterns will only be fully revealed in time. Studying objects at first hand, intensively, and in the company of specialists, was the best kind of learning experience’.

(Dr Jane Eade, curator, National Portrait Gallery, UK)

In 2016, the Summer School will take place between 30th June – 17th July.
The twentieth session of Royal Collection Studies was celebrated in various ways. By kind permission of the Prince of Wales, a party was given at Clarence House, to which we invited past and current supporters and speakers. At Cumberland Lodge an entertainment in words and music on the theme of the ruling queens of England (six in all, to date) was devised by Sholto Kynoch and Giles Waterfield. An additional all-day event for the members and curators from the Royal Collection Trust and Historic Royal Palaces was held at Greenwich at the end of the course. There we studied the current building projects at the Queen’s House, the Royal Observatory and the Painted Hall.

31 members attended, selected from the numerous well-qualified applications received. They were drawn from Australia, Austria, France (5), Germany, Ireland, The Netherlands (4), Poland, Sweden, the UK (8) and the USA (7). We were very pleased to welcome so many course members from the US, including two members of the board of the American Friends of Attingham. We also hope that the inclusion of an Austrian curator from the Kunsthistorisches Museum will persuade more of his compatriots to apply. The Vice-Chairman of The Attingham Trust attended the whole of the course.

The course members came from a wide range of backgrounds. They included museum directors and curators; representatives of heritage bodies; doctoral candidates; and members of the art trade. Substantial financial support from our generous supporters ensured that no suitable applicant was turned down for financial reasons. We are most grateful to them, as well as to the institutions that paid for members of their staff. The hospitality that we received, including a visit to the refurbished Deanery at Windsor Castle, was greatly appreciated. Teaching was carried out by the staff of the Royal Collection Trust and Historic Royal Palaces, as well as a cadre of visiting speakers. Sara Heaton acted as an impeccable administrator, and we greatly enjoyed staying at Cumberland Lodge.

In 2016, Royal Collection Studies will take place between 4th - 13th September.

French Eighteenth-Century Studies

From a pool of some thirty strong applications, fifteen members were selected to attend the third French Eighteenth-Century Studies course held in partnership with the Wallace Collection and led by its senior curator, Dr Helen Jacobsen. Among the participants were museum curators, auction house specialists, and academics from across the globe, forming a lively and stimulating group. Guest lecturers included Rosalind Savill, Charles Truman and Dr Carolyn Sargentson. The course followed the successful format of the previous two years with four days of intensive teaching and discussion mainly taking place in the museum galleries and one day spent with the curatorial staff at Waddesdon Manor. Subjects covered included paintings, furniture, porcelain, textiles, sculpture, silver, armoury, works on paper, books, and gold boxes. Many thanks go to all the lecturers and tutors involved, not least to Dr Christoph Vogtherr, Director of the Wallace Collection, and those who assisted in the planning, particularly Rebecca Parker who efficiently organised the course before her maternity leave.

In 2016, French Eighteenth-Century Studies will take place between 9th - 14th October

French Eighteenth-Century Studies Members

- TEREZIA BARDI
  Vice Director General, Eszterháza Centre for Culture, Research & Festivals, Hungary
- DIANA BERRY
  Trustees, The Attingham Trust, UK
- MONICA BILFINGER
  Curator, Swiss Federal Office, Switzerland
- ANNE BISSONNETTE
  Associate Professor, University of Alberta, Canada
- CHARLES GARNETT
  International Consultant, Arthur & Company (HK) Ltd, Hong Kong
- ALEXA GRAY
  Manager, Adrian Sassoon, UK
- STEPHEN JACKSON
  Senior Curator, National Museums Scotland, UK
- ANNE KEMKARAN-SMITH
  Curator, Leeds Castle, UK
- VINCENT LIEBER
  Curator, Château de Nyon, Switzerland
- STEFFAN LOWKJÆR
  Assistant Curator, The Royal Collection, Denmark
- FRANÇOIS ROTHLSBERGER
  Director, Furniture Dept., Christie’s, Switzerland
- SUSAN SCHOELWER
  Curator, George Washington’s Mount Vernon, USA
- LEILA TULULI
  Curator, The Royal Collection, Sweden
- KJERSTIN VEDEL
  PhD fellow, Frederiksborg Castle, Denmark
- AMELIA WALKER
  Associate Director, Country House Sales, Christie’s, UK
Once again The Attingham Trust received sufficient funding this year to assist everyone who needed financial help to attend one of the courses. We are eternally grateful to all our donors - charitable bodies, private individuals and institutions from all over the world - who make these scholarships possible and without whose support we could not maintain our academic standards.

To try and ensure this flow of funding, a leaflet has been produced on how to support the Trust through a regular payment, a donation or a legacy which we hope will stimulate others to give generously and increase our endowment fund. The demand for places is on the increase thanks in part to the enthusiastic efforts of alumni Ambassadors who are now operating in seventeen countries in addition to the UK and USA (listed on the Attingham website - www.attinghamtrust.org). We thank them all for the important part they play in the continuing success of The Attingham Trust.

MAJOR DONORS
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The Gerry Charitable Trust
The Monument Trust
National Trust
Nina Stanton
E. Clothier Tepper

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Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco
Adrian Sassoon
The Victoria and Albert Museum
The Lewis Walpole Library

FRENCH EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STUDIES
The Attingham Trust
Kate de Rothschild