

THE ATTINGHAM TRUST

FOR THE STUDY OF HISTORIC HOUSES AND COLLECTIONS

ISSUE
23

ANNUAL REVIEW

2025

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

Timothy Cooke OBE • Chairman

This has been a busy year for Attingham on many fronts. Unusually, we ran six courses in total, welcoming 151 participants from Asia, USA, Australia, Europe and the UK, and I am extremely grateful to the course directors, coordinators, lecturers and hosts who put together such engaging and stimulating programmes and to those providing administrative support. It would appear that, far from diminishing, the demand for professional study and debate on historic houses and collections is as strong as ever, and that the Attingham mix of close-up, contextual study with discussions around interpretation, engagement and social and global histories is continuing to fill a demand from institutions around the world. Above all, we thank our 2025 participants for their lively contributions during the courses, which makes the experience of an Attingham programme all the richer.

The Trust successfully managed its transformation this year into a new legal status (CIO) with all the associated administrative upheaval that this entailed; I am confident that we face the future in a stronger position as a result and would like to thank our long-suffering Treasurer, Ewa Manias, in particular for her assistance with the transfer. The trustee body remained the same, but this December we said goodbye to Diana Berry who retired from the Board after nearly two decades of commitment to Attingham, including the last eleven years as a Trustee. I would like to thank her for her practical support, her sound advice and for her invaluable contributions as an ambassador over the years. Also retiring this year was Beth Carver Wees, the

out-going President of the American Friends of Attingham, who has been involved with the AFA in many capacities over two decades and who could always be relied upon for her wise counsel and warm engagement.

As the international and UK economies continue to pose challenges for charitable organisations all around the world, we are acutely aware of the need to grow our financial resources in order to guarantee the future

stability of Attingham and its scholarship model. This year, as in many previously, we are extremely grateful for the generosity of our regular donors and are excited to have welcomed new ones into the Attingham family; we would like to acknowledge in particular a generous donation by the Oliver Ford Foundation. Since my statement in last year's Annual Review, we have all

been deeply saddened by the death of Dame Rosalind Savill, our much-loved trustee and friend, who had been involved with Attingham since first attending the Summer School in 1975, fifty years ago. With the support of her family, we launched an appeal to raise an endowment for a scholarship in her name and we have been overwhelmed by the response, raising nearly £300,000 already (see p.2). My fellow trustee, Adrian Sassoon, was a driving force behind the appeal and I would like to thank him and Helen Jacobsen for conducting such a successful campaign. Our special thanks, however, are due to all those who have contributed so generously to the endowment. With Helen as CEO, Attingham is facing the future in a healthy financial position, a sustained reputation for excellence and with quiet confidence.



OBITUARY

Dame Rosalind Savill, 1951-2024

Attingham Council member and Trustee

Lisa White and Annabel Westman



At Boughton House, Northamptonshire, by permission of the Duke of Buccleuch & Queensberry

If one word alone could define Ros Savill's relationship with the Attingham Trust, it would be loyalty. Indeed, that loyalty encompassed so much over very nearly fifty years of her involvement, from her first days as a young scholar to her final, sparkling seminars on Sèvres porcelain at Boughton House for the Attingham Summer School before her untimely death in December 2024. Over those decades she gave practical support to the course directors, perception to the Scholarship Committee of which she was the first Chair in 1980, guidance as a member of the Attingham Council (1981-91) wisdom as a Trustee from 1998, and commitment to the development of Royal Collections Studies from its inception in 1996. Her support was unwavering, laced with love and wonderful good humour.

As Annabel says, 'it was her character that always shone through everything she did, uniting scholarship with enjoyment and fun – the essence of 'Attingham' and its key to learning. She had a gift for speaking, and her lectures and tutoring on Sèvres were inimitable, always without notes, always to time, combining basic information for the uninitiated with new research to inspire others. One always came away stimulated and uplifted.'

Ros attended the Attingham Summer School in 1975 on a Leverhulme Scholarship when she was a young Museum Assistant at the Wallace Collection. At that time the course was based at Attingham Park, which housed Shropshire County Council's Adult Education College under the wardenship of Sir George Trevelyan, who with Helen Lowenthal had founded the Summer

School in 1952. Living conditions there were very different from the more luxurious billets now enjoyed by members at West Dean and elsewhere – basic rooms with minimal washing facilities (jugs and basins!), bone-shaking coach rides to country houses, late evening dashes down the drive to the Mytton and Mermaid pub for extra refreshment – and above all the inspirational enthusiasm and leadership of Helen Lowenthal and Helena Hayward.

In no time Ros became an essential element in the Summer Schools of the later 1970s, acting as amanuensis to Helena and dealing deftly with the challenges of accommodating and entertaining American alumni during the famous 'third week', which at times resembled a hilarious travelling circus of current and former scholars descending on patient, sometimes alarmed, owners of country houses in the West Midlands.

As Ros's expertise in ceramics developed in the 1980s and 1990s, and her career at the Wallace Collection brought new demands on her time, she nevertheless remained steadfastly loyal to the Attingham cause, expanding its international reputation under the chairmanship of John Lewis. Later, she was sought after to become firstly, Director of the Summer School, then Chairman of the Trust, but she recognised that the pressures of her responsibilities in Manchester Square, and the arrival of her beloved daughter Izzi, would not permit her to take on yet more onerous roles. But she continued to deliver her magical seminars on Sèvres during successive Summer Schools, (often enhanced by Izzi's delightful presence) at Goodwood, Firle and latterly at Boughton. Lecturing abroad, especially in the USA, brought further contact with many Attingham alumni, and she willingly undertook promotion of the courses to new generations.

Much has been written in other obituaries about her stellar career at the Wallace Collection, her brilliant research and publications, her chairmanship of the French Porcelain Society and her numerous other achievements, but for the Attingham Trust and all its beneficiaries, it was her love and loyalty that will be remembered with huge affection and respect. And what fun we had!

DAME ROSALIND SAVILL SCHOLARSHIP: INAUGURAL SCHOLAR REPORT

Dr Simon Spier • Curator, Ceramics and Glass, 1600-1800

It was an honour and a privilege to attend this year's Attingham Trust Summer School supported by the Dame Rosalind Savill Scholarship. It is an almost impossible task to express in words the experience of the intensive 16-day journey around England's country houses and heritage sites, being guided by and interacting with the country's experts across fine and decorative arts, conservation and heritage management. Naturally a highlight was the opportunity to spend this time with an international peer group including 40 people spanning a broad range of professions, specialisms and interests and most of the world's continents.

This year the group began in Sussex and from there travelled to Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, with the final leg taking place in Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire and including some truly spectacular houses and sites. Highlights included the first part spent in the beautiful surroundings of West Dean College, a down-to-the-minute programme at Petworth and Chatsworth (both public and private sides of the houses) and, a long-held ambition for me, visiting the porcelain collections at Burghley House. Much could be written about the houses, lectures, generously provided lunches and dinners and the infamous closing celebration, so I will provide only one moment of reflection on how profound an

experience Attingham is, and what it meant to be the inaugural Dame Rosalind Savill Scholar.

In the final week the group visited Boughton House. Everyone who I had spoken to who had done the Summer School said that the usual handling session of Sèvres porcelain, led by Dame Rosalind Savill was a highlight. She brought the objects to life – through the stories she told about the people who they were made for, or describing the painstaking and risky business of producing high-quality porcelain when it was still a largely unfamiliar product in Europe, she made even those who were sceptics of Rococo ceramics find something to love. The shock of her death at the end of 2024 reverberated through the art world, and when accepted onto the Summer School, I knew her absence from the course that year would be keenly felt. It was truly special – and a huge surprise – to be the first recipient of the scholarship established in her name.

When we arrived at Boughton the Duke of Buccleuch paid a touching tribute to his friend – the day was dedicated to her memory and he had placed in a prominent position a photograph of her in the hall, which we were all led past and asked to spend a moment to enjoy and reflect upon. Later, touring the house, we reached the long corridor in which there are numerous cases



At Boughton House, Northamptonshire, by permission of the Duke of Buccleuch & Queensberry

splendidly displaying the Sèvres. One case is occupied by numerous pieces from the important service made for Louis XV in 1753, decorated with the attractive – and then brand new – blue ground colour that would become synonymous with the factory. The Duke didn't explain any of this, but instead described his quickening pulse when, every year on the course, Ros Savill would grab the largest piece of the service, a platter some 60 cm in length, and raise it precariously above her head with her characteristic confidence and theatricality, in order to better show it off.

As I stood and admired the pieces, slightly disappointed that we would not get to experience them in the same way that other

alumni had, I was reminded of the fact that objects can hold many meanings, both scholarly and personal, and that being a part of the Attingham community was not necessarily solely about being immersed in country house histories. It could also be about engaging with the long heritage of the Attingham Trust itself. Just as important as what you learn on the course is the longer commitment to fostering and supporting an international group of professionals and enthusiasts, making friends with people who share interests and challenge one another. This is the core of a healthy discipline, and it feels more than appropriate that one person each year will go forward doing this through the generosity of the Dame Rosalind Savill Scholarship.

OBITUARY

CAROLINE RIMELL, 1932-2025

Attingham Study Programme Director and Trustee

Judith Goodison

Although born and brought up in the USA, Caroline loved living in England with her British husband and bringing up her two daughters there. She had gained her Geography degree at Stanford University, then her Masters in Librarianship at the University of Michigan, but was fascinated by English history and architecture and took a great interest in art history activities.

Following her artistic interests, Caroline first met Helena Hayward on a continental art tour which happened to be led by Helena and her husband John, both distinguished art historians involved in a number of artistic ventures. Helena, recognising Caroline's enthusiasm for art and her energy, encouraged her to do a course at the Study Centre for the Fine and Decorative arts, founded by Erica O'Donnell. After this Caroline started lecturing for NADFAS and the WEA in Reading. She volunteered as a guide lecturer at the V&A, and set up her own company running courses and tours aimed at ex pat Americans in London. She lectured on a wide range of topics at Sotheby's, and on the history of English country house architecture at the KLC School of Interior Design.

Helena also introduced Caroline to the Furniture History Society, the Georgian Group and, eventually, to The Attingham Trust. To all these groups Caroline generously gave her time and expertise. She was an active member of the Furniture History Society, and from 1989-

2011 she was Chairman of the FHS Activities Committee. During these years her energy and considerable knowledge, along with help from other committee members, resulted in many interesting and successful visits in Britain and tours abroad. In the 1990s, Caroline joined the American Committee of the Georgian Group. For 26 years, she and Susan Bradbury organised and led very successful tours designed for their American Friends, visiting some of the most important Georgian houses in Britain.

At Attingham, she co-directed the Study Programme with Judith Goodison from 1992 to 2003, then with Neil Burton, followed by Kate Morgan until 2008. Over that considerable time a different programme each year was researched, arranged, then put into practice, all over Britain and occasionally abroad. After her retirement from the Study Programme Caroline then served as a Trustee. Working with Caroline was a joy. She was always full of fun and energy and up for any challenge of which we had a number, particularly on our recces. She was full of ideas, and always friendly and welcoming to participants. She will be remembered with great warmth.

Caroline was born in 1932 to Katherine and Albin Doe in Racine, Wisconsin, USA; she died at her home in Sonning, Berkshire on 29th April 2025, aged 92. She married Anthony Rimell (deceased) in 1956 and is survived by their daughters Katherine and Alison and granddaughter Amy.

THE ATTINGHAM SOCIETY

Helen Jacobsen • Executive Director

The strength and breadth of the Attingham network continues to grow as we welcome all our new course members every year into the alumni group. Our largest event in London is the Annual Lecture and Reunion, which this year was held at the Society of Antiquaries where Steven Brindle delighted over 100 of us with his insights into London's lost interiors of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Followed as always by drinks, we were able to catch up with old friends and make new connections in the Attingham tradition. Other alumni events this year included wonderful tours of two exhibitions: 'Versailles and Splendour', curated by Attingham alumna Anna Ferrari and 'The Edwardians: Age of Elegance' at the King's Gallery, hosted by curator Kathryn Jones. Later in the summer, alumnus John Whitehead guided a group of us around Treasure House for an early morning preview of the renowned international fair.

We have also been further afield, with visits to Paris for two spectacular exhibitions, 'Le Dernier Sacre' at the Mobilier national and 'Les Très Riches Heures du duc de Berry' at Chantilly with director and alumnus Mathieu Deldicque. We

are so grateful to all those alumni who are happy to host Attingham Society groups and for the opportunities to view these unique events. In the Netherlands, an international alumni group was hosted at TEFAF by Adrian Sassoon and Nynke van der Ven, and Eloy Koldeweij, our Dutch ambassador, arranged a reunion for Dutch alumni in June.

Elsewhere, our alumni in Australia managed two receptions in 2025! As Annabel Westman writes: 'It was great to meet up with some of the Australian Attingham alumni on a recent trip to Melbourne and Sydney where a lively reception was held in both cities. Together the alumni spanned the years from the early 1980s to now, including five who attended the courses this year. At one of his properties in New South Wales, National Trust of Australia curator Craig McPherson, the Copland Scholar for 2025, gave an excellent resumé of his recent Summer School experience'. Meanwhile, the American Friends of Attingham continue their full programme of events as you can read about on p.6, and we encourage alumni wherever they may be to keep in touch and be active members of the network.



Australian Attingham alumni reception at Lindesay, Sydney, New South Wales.

AMERICAN FRIENDS OF ATTINGHAM

Anne Kenny-Urban • AFA President



Six AFA Presidents: Sheila ffliott, Morrison Heckscher, Beth Carver Wees, Margize Howell, Anne Kenny-Urban, and Clo Tepper.

Greetings from across the Pond! The past year has been a busy one for the American Friends of Attingham. We kicked off the year in January with our annual Mid-Winter Reunion during the Winter Show. Once again, the Society of Winterthur Fellows co-hosted the event, and alumni from both organizations enjoyed a convivial evening together.

In March, Diana Toole, Jennifer Klos, Abbey Brach, Sean Sawyer and Gina Wouters participated in a virtual panel on installing contemporary art in historic houses. A visit to the Rhode Island School of Design in April offered alumni the opportunity to see The Art of French Wallpaper Design exhibition thanks to Emily Banas, Andrew Raftery and William H. Bates III. Then in May, Carter Hulinsky and his colleagues welcomed AFA for a tour of Bunny Mellon's estate Oak Spring Garden in Virginia.

May also saw the return of the Tracey L. Albainy Memorial Lecture. AFA was delighted to co-sponsor this free lecture with the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts. Attingham Trust Trustee and Curator, Dr. Wolf Burchard, delivered a fascinating lecture, Louis XIV's Savonnerie Carpets: The World's Largest Jigsaw Puzzle, to a full house.

Next on the schedule was the alumni Study Trip to Buffalo, a delightful long weekend exploring the city and its art thanks to the

thoughtful itinerary prepared by Alexis Mucha. And shortly before the start of the Summer School, AFA held its annual welcome reception for incoming Attingham students thanks to the generosity of William H. Bates III, Anne Fairfax and Richard Sammons.

In the fall, the Annual Meeting included a sold-out tour of the National Arts Club in Manhattan. At the conclusion of the meeting, Beth Carver Wees, outgoing AFA President, was recognized with a board resolution honoring her 20+ years of service to the organization. Two weeks later, AFA hosted the Annual Fall Lecture at the Explorers Club. Perennially popular Attingham lecturer Jeremy Musson was the speaker at the fundraiser this year, sharing insights from his most recent research in his lecture, Renishaw Hall in the Age of Sir George Sitwell. As the year closed, AFA was actively engaged in its Annual Appeal which supports scholarships and we anticipate another successful year of fundraising to support future Attingham students.

It goes without saying that this busy calendar of activities requires significant planning and, in addition to the work of our board and our volunteers and hosts, it is our enthusiastic Administrator, Erin Kuykendall, who works tirelessly through the year to ensure the success of all of AFA's activities. We look forward to another active year of engaging programs in 2026.

THE 72ND ATTINGHAM SUMMER SCHOOL

David Adshead and Tessa Wild • Course Co-Directors | Sabrina Silva • Course Coordinator

Members of this year's Summer School came from ten countries: France, India, Canada, Australia, Belgium, UK, USA and The Netherlands. An informed and engaging group, they brought a rich and diverse range of experience and professional specialisms, from decorative arts, furniture and silver, to the preservation of historic sites, textile conservation, archives, museum education and interpretation.

Over the course of 16 days, based in Sussex, Derbyshire and Northamptonshire, we visited 26 properties where over 80 lecturers, tutors and property staff imparted their invaluable knowledge and enjoyed lively discussions with the group. We welcomed several new lecturers to the Summer School with explorations of the impact of the East India Company on country houses and collections (Professor Margot Finn), Orientalism and the British country house (Emile de Bruijn), and sustainable agricultural practices for farmed land on historic estates (Professor John Gilliland). We also greatly valued the return of a number of highly distinguished experts including Professor Maurice Howard, Christine Riding, Adam Bowett, Annabel Westman, Richard Ireland and Michael Hall.

In our final leg, we explored the rich estates and collections of Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire. At Boughton House, we were

warmly welcomed by the Duke of Buccleuch and enjoyed stimulating seminars on furniture, archives, silver, and the recent conservation work to the ceiling paintings, from Yannick Chastang, Crispin Powell, James Rothwell, Mark Perry and Saskia Huning respectively. At Burghley, Jon Culverhouse gave a riveting account of the principal collectors and a tour of the collections in the family wing of the house. Patricia Ferguson brought the significant collection of Asian ceramics vividly to life, and Lydia Hamlett addressed the complex iconography of the Heaven Room and the Hell Staircase. Bruce Bailey expertly introduced the houses of Northamptonshire and at Drayton House he led a tour of its fine architecture and richly layered collection. Robert and Charlotte Brudenell were generous and informative hosts at Deene Park, and we also visited Kirby Hall and two important buildings connected to Sir Thomas Tresham: Lyveden New Bield and the enigmatic Rushton Triangular Lodge which led to much conjecture as to its true meaning and purpose.

We would like to express our gratitude to all the owners, custodians and experts who generously contributed to the course and to the members who shared their knowledge and insights. Our grateful thanks go to Sabrina for her dedication and deft organisation throughout.



At Apethorpe Palace, Northamptonshire

ROYAL COLLECTION STUDIES

Helen Jacobsen • Director | Beatrice Goddard • Course Coordinator

Thirty participants came from Sweden (2), UK (4), Hungary (2), USA (8), Croatia (1), Australia (4), Portugal (1), Spain (2), Denmark (1), Norway (1), Poland (1), the Netherlands (1), Germany (1) and Japan (1), bringing with them a wide set of specialisms and skills, including an architect, two conservators, a historic house director, twelve curators or directors of museums, six curators from royal, imperial or presidential collections, two art market professionals and two academics.

The enormous work put into the course by the Director and curators of The Royal Collection Trust was hugely appreciated by everyone. Of particular note was the generosity of the curators in sharing their knowledge and the passion and enthusiasm with which they did so. Highlights of the programme this year included object-

based study sessions, lectures contextualising the collecting of a wide array of monarchs from Charles I and Henrietta Maria to George V and Queen Mary and three visits to conservation studios – paper, paintings and furniture – which offered the participants a chance to see the way in which the collection is looked after and once again proved of great interest to international curators working with similar challenges.

In addition to the work of the RCT, we also benefitted from a morning of privileged access at Westminster Abbey and from the generous commitment of Historic Royal Palaces, which provided access and expertise in and around several of its sites. HRP curators were unflinching in their support, notably during the weekend where we greatly appreciated Sebastian Edwards and Lee Prosser giving up so much of their time for two excellent

days at the Banqueting House, Kensington Palace and Kew. At Kensington, exhibition curator Matthew Storey took us round ‘Dress Codes’ and explained how he had managed to involve the 16-18 age group in the curating, which gave rise to much interest and some envy amongst curators in our cohort who traditionally find it very difficult to engage this demographic with heritage.

The course arrangements were perfectly executed and the smooth running was noted by all participants. This is down to the hard work and cooperation between Beatrice and various members of the RCT team but especially Mark Ayling and Sarah Workman. Without these three, the course would not have been the success it was and I would like to thank them all for both their long-range planning and the behind-the-scenes work which goes on during the course itself.



The King's House at the Tower of London

THE LONDON HOUSE COURSE

David Adshead • Course Director | Sabrina Silva • Course Coordinator

As in previous years, the programme was designed so that members would be able to gain an understanding of the chronological development of the London house. We progressed from the medieval and early-modern periods, for which physical evidence is fragmentary, through London's post-Restoration and post-fire development, to the speculative estates of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, before concluding with more recent examples of individual houses and housing, public and private - Hampstead Garden Suburb and Camden concrete! We began and ended with architecture on paper - maps, record and design drawings, for built and unbuilt houses. Our thanks to Olivia Horsfall Turner, Charles Hind and Frances Sands, with whom the group enjoyed privileged access to the extraordinarily rich collections of the RIBA, V&A and Sir John Soane's Museum.

We enjoyed contextualising lectures from historians, curators and residents; walking tours; and visits to particular buildings. In total, some 30 hosts, guides and lecturers helped us along the way, and we were welcomed with great generosity and hospitality by private owners and institutions. We are particularly grateful to Sarah

Nichols (who helped Giles Waterfield run the very first LHC) for hosting a party at her apartment in Art House, King's Cross. Tom Croft enabled access to two sets in Albany.

One innovation this year was to study the 'Fine Rooms' at the Royal Academy, and we are grateful to Rebecca Lyons for suggesting and facilitating this. Neil Bingham, new to Attingham, gave a brilliant tour, helping us to understand what had survived from Lord Burlington's day. In addition to all the individuals who enriched the week, we thank: the Charterhouse, Georgian Group, Historic Royal Palaces, National Trust, Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, RIBA, SJSJ, Survey of London, and the V&A; and the course members - from Denmark, France, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, UK and USA - for their enthusiastic contribution to our week long voyage through London's streets.

Last but not least, I would like to thank Sabrina Silva for all her work in planning her first London House course, Ewa Manias for her help with the budget, and Rebecca Parker for being available to advise. As ever, we made new international friends, and had a very enjoyable time.

THE HISTORIC HOUSE IN IRELAND

Elizabeth Jamieson • Course Director | Rita Grudziń • Course Coordinator

The course was arranged for those who had missed the second part of the 2022 Study Programme owing to Covid. Held in the Republic of Ireland, it included visits to 11 properties in and around Cork and West Waterford.

There were 18 members of the course, including representatives from the USA (8), UK (5), Ireland (2), Australia (1) and the Netherlands (2). The group was made up of seven curators from historic houses, three university lecturers, two architects and consultants together with a registrar, an interior designer and emeritus directors. All members had a strong professional engagement in the subject and the cohort bonded brilliantly and were very active in on-site

discussions.

The programme included places not normally open to the public (Lismore Castle, Clonegam Chapel, Woodhouse, Kilshannig House) and also focused on some of the more important historic houses in southern Ireland, such as Curraghmore and Bantry. As we experienced each house in situ, the members examined how distinct models of ownership created contrasting experiences in their approach to display and presentation. This, together with our more traditional emphasis on the intensive study of architecture, landscapes and collections, made for a stimulating week.

A visit to newly-opened Emo Court was arranged en route back to Dublin and we arranged a day's activities on the following day for



At Dromana Gate, Co. Waterford, Ireland

those who were travelling home from there.

Our thanks are due to all our speakers and lecturers, and to the house owners who opened up the doors to their homes over the course of the week – in particular the team at Lismore Castle who rolled out the red carpet for our visit and gave us a delicious dinner, kindly sponsored by one of our alumna. Thanks also to Mary Heffernan who arranged the out-of-hours visit to

Emo Court and to Donough Cahill and his team at the Irish Georgian Society who generously hosted a reception for course members and Irish alumni in Dublin.

My special thanks to Rita whose kindness to members during the course is always appreciated, together with her careful planning and attention to detail at all stages, helping to keep us on track and on budget!

NEW PERSPECTIVES IN COUNTRY HOUSE STUDIES

Elizabeth Jamieson, Course Director | Rita Grudzień, Course Coordinator



At Wentworth Woodhouse

This Short Course took place in Yorkshire during a week of unexpected but glorious sunshine. Members were keen to explore some of the new and emerging aspects of the culture of the English country house, namely its global and colonial histories; women's role in the elite household, the working country house and the way in which contemporary artists can effectively mediate community engagement. Houses were selected where these aspects were positively celebrated, rather than being seen as issues that needed to be resolved. There were 22 members in the cohort, from the UK, USA and Europe; they included museum directors and curators, university lecturers, postgraduate student, a conservation officer and an artist.

The course comprised visits to seven houses,

all with varying models of ownership, interspersed with lectures, object-based study (Chippendale furniture, contemporary embroidery, the 18th-century 'Lister Chaise', Van Dyck paintings) and discussion sessions which proved enormously stimulating. Houses included Brockfield Hall, Kiplin Hall and Birdsall House, while lectures and round-tables covered subjects as diverse as the National Trust's approach to Global Histories and Inclusion, and Trees, Nature and the Country House.

At Burton Constable we learnt about the Yorkshire Country Houses partnership and the difficulties of running an enormous house with limited resources. At Harewood House we heard from David Lascelles about his family's involvement with sugar plantations in Barbados and the transatlantic

slave trade. Diane Howse led a conversation with artists in residence Lela Harris and Dr Rommi Smith, who spoke about how their art has illuminated the collections. At Shibden Hall, once home of Anne Lister (famous more recently as the inspiration for the TV series 'Gentleman Jack'), we discussed the changing interpretations of the house over the 20th century and examined the 17th-century interiors. Possibly the most inspiring experience was our visit to Wentworth Woodhouse, with its close engagement with the local community. CEO Sarah McLeod talked eloquently about how working with the local community actually works in practice, and we discussed the current 'House of Fun' exhibition, devised and inspired by local children and held throughout the rooms of the house.

Questions arising from both presentations and visits opened up long and interesting debates on interpretive strategies and their applicability in participants' own professional situations. Sincere thanks are due to all the house owners and curators who allowed us access to their properties and to Rita for her energy, enthusiasm and attention throughout the planning and delivery of this course.

THE ATTINGHAM STUDY PROGRAMME: FROM GRANADA TO MADRID

Helen Jacobsen and Annabel Westman • Course Co-directors | Cristina Alfonsí • Course Coordinator

Based in Granada and Madrid, the course traced the development of Spanish architecture, interiors and decorative arts from the 15th to the 20th centuries. There were 25 participants from the UK, USA, Poland, France, the Netherlands and Canada, comprising curators and conservators, academics, designers, art historians and heritage trustees. With expertise in Asian and European ceramics, Islamic art, furniture, paintings, architecture, textiles, fashion, silver and Spanish literature, this made for a hugely stimulating and participatory week.

Some of the many highlights included the Alhambra, where we were hosted by the World Monument Fund, and had privileged access to several of the smaller areas of the complex. Visits to the early 16th-century cathedral, royal chapel and monastery of San Jerónimo deepened our understanding of religious art and the early Renaissance in Spain, while in La Mancha we visit the Palacio del Marqués in Viso where the full flowering of the Renaissance was evident in the stunning Mannerist fresco paintings by late 16th-century Genoese artists.

In Madrid we were hosted warmly by the Patrimonio Nacional, where many curators generously gave their time and expertise. A private visit to the Palacio Real included the

private audience apartments, the conservation studio, the kitchens and the Armoury, and we were given special access at El Escorial, where we studied the Goya-designed tapestries woven in the Royal Tapestry Manufactory, their colours still as vibrant as the day they were woven; the Habitaciones de Maderas Finas; and, perhaps most exquisite of all the places we visited, the Casita del Principe.

A visit to the Royal Tapestry Manufactory, founded in 1721, opened our eyes to tapestry and carpet-making skills, while the focus on decorative arts continued at the newly-opened Galleries of the Royal Collection. Guided by our generous hosts from the Patrimonio Nacional, we marvelled at the collection, and were hugely impressed with

the architecture, internal space, display and interpretation of the museum. The penultimate day brought us up to the 20th century, with private visits to the Instituto Valencia de Don Juan and the Palacio de Liria. The highlight of the final day – and one of the highlights of the week – was the exquisite Casa del Labrador at Aranjuez with its remarkable late 18th-century interiors.

We all came away much more aware of the enormous artistic legacy that is so beautifully preserved and expertly looked after in Spain. We are grateful to our generous hosts and our superb lecturers, and especially to Cristina, for her persistence, patience, kindness and sense of humour which were appreciated by everyone.



At Casa del Labrador in Aranjuez, Spain

DAME ROSALIND SAVILL SCHOLARSHIP APPEAL

Helen Jacobsen • Executive Director

Launched in March 2025, we are delighted to report that almost £300,000 has been donated to our endowment appeal to set up a scholarship in Ros Savill's name to enable a decorative arts

scholar to attend either the Attingham Summer School or Royal Collection Studies. We would like to thank all those who have most generously supported our appeal:

Lucy Abel Smith
Aldama Foundation
The Al Thani Collection
Catherine Armitage
R. Barber
Antonia Barker
Barness Trust
Nicholas Blake
Anne Beckwith-Smith
David Beevers
Lady de Bellaigue
Belvedere Trust
Diana Berry
Madeleine Black
Ted Bosley
Sir Bruce Bossom
SE and JC Bridcut
Edmund Burke
Izzi & Harry Calkin
Charles Cator
Christie's
Margaret Civetta
Tim & Sara Cooke Foundation
Lord Crathorne
Diana Davis
Mary Dawson
Duke of Devonshire Charitable Trust
Bernard Dragesco and Didier Cramoisin
Martin Drury
Stephen Duffy
Alice Dugdale
Giles Ellwood
Foyle Foundation
Deborah Gage
Mary Gatacre
Sophie von der Goltz
Lady Goodison
Nicholas and Judith Goodison's Charitable Settlement
David Hall
Sara Heaton
Lady Heseltine
Bill & Jenni Hicks
Suzanne Higgott
Jeannie Hobhouse

John Holden
Heather Holden-Brown
Victoria & Tom Holliday
Rory Hutton
Helen Jacobsen
J & L Joll Charitable Trust
Hugh Langmead
The Leche Trust
Sir John Lewis
James Lomax
Rosemary Lomax-Simpson
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