



Building History Newsletter

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Survival of Stowe tapestries confirmed



Source: Stowe House Preservation Trust

Norry Welch (Cohort 5) recently completed a successful professional placement with Stowe House Preservation Trust. As part of her work there she examined catalogues relating to the sale of the house contents in the 1920s. Prominent among the contents were a set of tapestries which used to hang in the Dining Room (see the 1905 *Country Life* photograph above).

The tapestries were commissioned by Richard Temple, 1st Viscount Cobham (1675-1749), from Urbanus Leyniers of Brussels. Five large tapestries depicted the Triumphs of Ceres, Bacchus, Neptune, Mars and Diana, all bearing Cobham's coat of arms and his motto: 'templa quam dilecta'. There were also six narrow panels depicting trophies on Cupid supports set between the windows and a pair of even narrower strips filling spaces next to the doors. In 1922 all of the tapestries were put up for sale at auction. The auction records show that three of the Triumphs were sold to a German shipping tycoon who had a home in Switzerland with his American wife, who was an art collector.

Information volunteered to the National Trust some years ago had pointed to the survival of the tapestries in Switzerland. Norry was able to visit the house (near Lake Lucerne) and confirm that the tapestries there, which comprise the Ceres, Neptune and Diana, and all the narrower panels and strips, were indeed those once belonging to Stowe. The whereabouts of the Triumphs of Mars and Bacchus are not known.

Application deadline

Applications are invited from graduates with a good 2:1 or better, to be received no later than 30 June 2017. Please contact the Course Director or Course Administrator (email addresses below) for information about the course. Full details available at <http://www.arct.cam.ac.uk/courses/mst-building-history-1>.

Awards

Rodolfo Acevedo Rodriguez (Cohort 5; below) received a Research Support Grant from the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art for his research into 14th-century gatehouses, and presented a 'research lunch' in February on the gatehouse at Thornton Abbey in North Lincolnshire.



Amy Boyington (Cohort 1) received a small grant from the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain to investigate papers relating to Saltram House, Devon, in the late 18th century, as part of her doctoral research into female architectural patronage.

Sophie Hetherington (Cohort 4) has received a grant to present a conference paper to the International Network for the History of Hospitals in Malta, based on her dissertation research on the Victorian Asylum at Fulbourn, Cambridgeshire.

Gillian Roberts (Cohort 4) will benefit from a travel bursary to support background research for her study of the Wolverhampton-based Arts and Crafts architect, William J. H. Weller.

Jana Schuster (Cohort 4) has been awarded a substantial bursary to attend the Royal Collection Studies programme with the Attingham Trust this September. She will also be the recipient of an AHRC award, and a Judy and Nigel Weiss Scholarship from Robinson College, which will enable her to study for a PhD on Boughton House.

Two Cohort 6 students were awarded conference bursaries by the Vernacular Architecture Group: Helen Winton to attend the Winter Conference at the University of Leicester, and Jessica Jones to attend the Spring Conference in Hertfordshire.

Students and alumni

Cohort 5 students have completed their professional placements with a variety of hosts. Rodolfo Acevedo Rodriguez worked with the Paul Mellon Centre, where he undertook detailed research on Doddington Hall, Lincolnshire, as well as undertaking short placements with



English Heritage and Historic England. Other students benefited from placements at Amersham Museum, Holkham Hall, Montacute House and Wimpole Hall (both National Trust), New Forest National Park Authority, Purcell UK, South West Heritage Trust, Spheron Architects and Stowe House Preservation Trust.

Wendy Andrews (Cohort 1) presented a paper drawing on her doctoral research into the V&A's Cowtan archive at the 'Working with Wallpapers: Future Directions in Wallpaper Research and Interpretation' conference, organised by the Wallpaper History Society at Wrest Park last September. This April she gave a paper focusing on the firm's role in the Gothic Revival at the conference of the Historic Interiors Section of Icon in Cambridge.

Lee Bilson (Cohort 3) has been offered a place to study for a PhD at the University of Liverpool, exploring craftsmanship and its significance to masonry.

Ophelia Blackman (Cohort 3) has started work as an Architectural Conservation Consultant at Stephen Levrant Heritage Architecture in Chiswick.

Alex Bowring (Cohort 3) now has a new part-time role as Conservation Officer for the London Borough of Islington, alongside continuing casework for the Victorian Society.

Amy Boyington (Cohort 1) appeared on the Holkham episode of Channel 4's 'Phil Spencer's Stately Homes', which featured research from her MSt dissertation. She and Alex Bowring have jointly taken over the organisation of the Young Georgians, which was run from its foundation by Oliver Gerrish (Cohort 4).

Matt Cooper (Cohort 3) has joined the Georgian Group's Casework Committee and is now an Affiliate Member of IHBC.

Molly Edwards (Cohort 4) has started working as a Heritage Monitoring Officer, working with Buildings at Risk for Monmouthshire County Council, based at Usk.

Lorie Komlyn (Cohort 4) presented a paper in Boston, Massachusetts, based on her dissertation research exploring the late 19th and early 20th-century opera houses of New England – typically multi-purpose buildings combining entertainment, civic and/or commercial functions.

Jana Schuster (Cohort 4) has published a 'think piece' in the 16 December 2016 issue of the *Architectural Review* entitled 'Architecture's responsibility towards history', which reports on the recent 'Meeting Architecture: Fragments' series of events at the British School at Rome. You can read it at <https://www.architectural-review.com/rethink/architectures-responsibility-towards-history/10015113.article>.

Tszwai So (Cohort 5) has published an article in *RIBA Journal* describing the creative journey that led to his award-winning Belarusian Chapel in Finchley: see <https://www.ribaj.com/intelligence/re-embodiment-memories>. The design continues to earn plaudits and Tszwai has recently been nominated for a RICS award in both the 'Design through Innovation' and the 'Community Benefit' categories.

Parsa Tazrian (Cohort 3) is working in the Archaeology Department of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Dhaka, Bangladesh, on a potential UNESCO World Heritage Site inscription for Panam Nagar, 15th-century capital of Bengal.

Helen Warren (Cohort 4), has joined CgMs as a Heritage Consultant, based in Cheltenham, where Jessica Jones (Cohort 6) also works part-time.

Course Director

The Course Director, Dr Adam Menuge, was elected President of the Vernacular Architecture Group in January. During the past few months he has been undertaking pro bono investigation and research for the Tithe Barn Trust, which seeks to restore and return to beneficial use the aisled and thatched former tithe barn in Landbeach, Cambridgeshire (see photograph; the subject of a visit by Cohort 6 in January). The project has received a substantial award from the Architectural Heritage Fund. This will enable the Trust to operate effectively in preparing a Heritage Lottery Fund bid.



Elsewhere, Adam Menuge has been examining the 15th-century hall house which houses Amersham Museum, currently undergoing a major re-fit, and conducting further research on West Stow Hall, Suffolk. With Claire Gapper and Pete Smith he is organising a Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain (SAHGB) study visit to the predominantly 17th-century Slyfield House, Surrey, which some students were fortunate enough to view last August.

Course contributors

David Adshead is the co-editor of a major collection of essays, *Hardwick Hall: A Great Old Castle of Romance*, published by Yale University Press for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art. In October David will direct a new short course on the London House for the Attingham Trust: for more details, see www.attinghamtrust.org.

Christine Hiskey's long-awaited and substantial study of Holkham is now available. *Holkham: The Social, Architectural and Landscape History of a Great English Country House* is attractively produced by Unicorn Books and is based on research in the Holkham archives over many years.

John Minnis has published a new book, *The Railway Goods Shed and Warehouse in England* (2016), in Historic England's 'Informed Conservation' series. John's book explores a once ubiquitous but now imperilled building type, explaining its role in wider systems of rail-borne distribution. John also has a new book out exploring the 20th-century development of England's roads through aerial photography.

