



THE AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE GEORGIAN GROUP

20 West 44th St. #508, New York, NY 10036 • (212) 991-9191 • office@americangeorgians.org

Summer 2009

Dear Friends,

What a rich and rewarding season we have had. So many aspects of life in the eighteenth century were examined that there was something for just about everyone this past spring.

In February we were pleased to meet a number of new members at a delightful reception at Michael and Marsha Ambler's house. In March, Francis Morrone gave us tips on how to distinguish between Federal style and Greek Revival, which can be tricky. Catherine Leitch, at a lively lecture in April at the Collectors Club, described how American history pops up all the time in England. Also in April we joined members of the Royal Oak for a talk by Caroline Knight at the Grolier Club on eighteenth-century houses built in the country that by the twenty-first are within the city of London. On the theme of Anglo-American ties was the fascinating story Andrea Wulf told us of John Bartram, who sent botanical specimens from the New World to England and helped create the English Garden we know today. She gave illustrations from her book, *The Brother Gardeners*, at the Collectors Club in May. We were treated to a preview tour of the Metropolitan Museum's new American wing, with Peter Kenny as our guide; the exhibit includes many examples of art and architecture from the early life of the United States. At the end of May we enjoyed a marvelous talk by Brian Lavery on life in Lord Nelson's navy. This event was held at the New York Yacht Club and was sponsored by AFGG member Nancy de Waart, whom we thank for a wonderful evening. We were joined by members of the Jane Austen Society as well.

In addition to the very busy schedule of events here at home, we celebrated the work of Andrea Palladio in his native region, the Veneto, this past April 21–28. You can read about this very exciting tour in the pages of this newsletter. The new issue of *The Georgian* is enclosed. The magazine contains interesting articles and photographs, as well as a calendar of upcoming events sponsored by the Georgian Group. We continue our efforts to **help support the Georgian Group** by raising funds for the restoration of the windows at their Fitzroy Square headquarters. A list of donors appears here and we urge all our members to contribute to this very important campaign.

Our fall program is shaping up. Our annual trip to England will be October 12 to 16; we will visit the **Lake District of Cumbria**, and stay at Storrs Hall Hotel, with views of Lake Windermere. Other events planned for the season are described in this newsletter. Our **annual meeting** will be held at the penthouse residence of our honorary patron, Sir Alan Collins, in early December.

You will also want to keep in mind trips planned for the spring of 2010, to **Charleston, South Carolina**, in March and to **Rome** in May. More about these trips is inside. We look forward to seeing everyone at AFGG events.

Drayton Hall interior

John Kinnear
President

The 18th Century London Furniture Trade, 1640–1720
lecture and reception

Adam Bowett

Monday, September 21, 2009, 6:00

The Grolier Club

57 East 60th Street

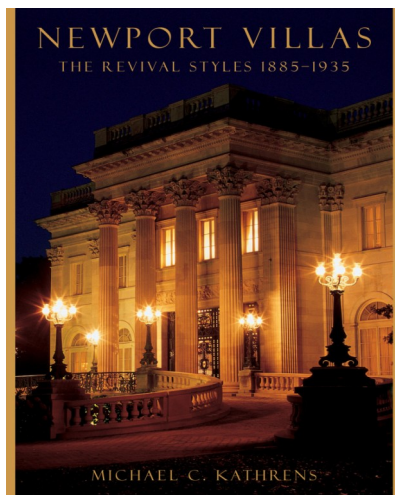
Furniture making in the eighteenth century was a sophisticated, well organized industry, employing cabinet makers, chair makers, turners, upholsterers, carvers, iron mongers, japanners, and a host of other workmen. Dr. Adam Bowett is a furniture historian with a special interest in English furniture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He is the author of a number of books, including *Early Georgian Furniture*, due to be published in September. He is a recent fellow at the Victoria and Albert Museum, where he has been studying the history and use of cabinet woods in British furniture. This lecture is also sponsored by the Royal Oak Foundation and the American Friends of the Attingham Summer School.



A reception will follow the lecture.

Please make your reservations through the Royal Oak Foundation: www.royal-oak.org, or call Robert Dennis at 212/480-2889, ext. 201. *Space is limited; register early.*

\$30 per person.



Mansions of Newport
lecture and reception

Michael C. Kathrens

Wednesday, September 23, 2009, 6:00

The Collectors Club

22 East 35th Street

Everyone who loves a grand house will enjoy this survey of the Gilded Age mansions of Newport by architectural historian Michael C. Kathrens. The most accomplished architects of the period designed these seaside villas, many of them more extravagant and opulent than the great houses of Europe. Michael Kathrens has recently published *Newport Villas: The Revival Styles, 1885–1934*, which includes floor plans as well as archival photographs of the sumptuous houses, which run the gamut of revival styles from colonial to Renaissance to Classical and Georgian. Copies of the book will be available for purchase.

The lecture will be followed by a reception.

Please make your reservation on the form enclosed and return it to us by September 16.

\$45 per person.



**Landmarks and Landscapes: an Evening
with Christopher Gray**
cocktail reception

Guest of Honor, Christopher Gray

Tuesday, September 29, 2009, 6:00

The Arsenal, Central Park

Fifth Avenue and 64th Street

Please join us for a special cocktail reception for members and guests honoring Christopher Gray. Few people have written as affectionately and knowledgeably about the architecture of New York City. Christopher Gray has been writing the Streetscapes column in the New York Times since 1987, and in that time has drawn attention to some of the loveliest and most interesting buildings in the city. Join us on the roof of the Arsenal (or third floor if raining) to lift a glass in appreciation for all he has done for historic preservation.

Please reserve on the enclosed form and return it to us by September 22.

\$45 per person.

The Country Houses of Sir John Vanbrugh
lecture and reception

Jeremy Musson

Monday, December 7, 2009, 6:00

The Collectors Club

22 East 35th Street

Sir John Vanbrugh, 1664?–1726, is probably best known as the designer of Blenheim Palace and Castle Howard. He was also well known as an outspoken dramatist, producing two scandalous Restoration comedies, *The Relapse* and *The Provoked Wife*. They were controversial in their day for their sexual explicitness and defense of women's rights. As an architect, he was a colleague of Nicholas Hawksmoor, with whom he worked on a number of houses. On his own, he designed Seaton Delval Hall, which was inspired by the humanistic values of Palladio and adapted to a Baroque form unique to Vanbrugh. Jeremy Musson is an architectural historian, writer, and broadcaster who, in the past few years has been co-author and presenter of The Curious House Guest series on BBC2. He was architectural editor for *County Life* for nearly ten years, where he specialized on the English country house. He is the author of several books, including *The Country Houses of Sir John Vanbrugh*, which will be available at the lecture for purchase.



Our lecture will be followed by a reception.

Please reserve on the enclosed form and return it to us by November 30.

\$45 per person.

Classical Inspiration: Rome

May 2010

The AFGG will be sponsoring a trip to Rome together with the Georgian Group in May 2010. On our trip to the Veneto this spring we learned about the classical designs of Andrea Palladio. Next year we will visit Rome, where we will see, among other classical sites, the Portico of Octavia, and the Temple of Fortuna Virilis, both of which served as sources for Georgian works in England. Our distinguished guide will be John Wilton-Ely, well known to AFGG members for his lectures on Piranese. Professor Wilton-Ely is emeritus professor of the history of art at the University of Hull and an expert on the wellsprings of Georgian design. More information on this trip is in your current issue of *The Georgian*, on page 71. Additional information on dates, accommodations, and costs will be sent to members separately.



Portico di Ottavia



Georgians in the Carolina Low Country

March 24—28, 2010

Next March the American Friends of the Georgian Group are planning a five-day trip to Charleston, South Carolina, and its Low Country environs. Timed to coordinate with the opening of the Charleston Antiques Show and Gibbes Museum Antiques Forum, the package will include special early entrance to the opening night of the show and scholarly lectures and tours offered by the trip on Wednesday tour of the oldest part of



toric private houses. We America's finest Georgian built in the 1760s and still builder. Densely filled portraits, silver, and por- every sense of the word, accessible. We will also some of the famous plan- beautiful Drayton Hall. visit to another wonderful erous hospitality of will be able to sample it at held in private houses.

AFGG and the Georgian Group together and will be open to members on both sides of the Atlantic. Information about accommodations and costs will be sent separately to members, but be sure to save the dates now for this very unusual and enjoyable trip.

Drayton Hall

AMERICAN FRIENDS OF THE GEORGIAN GROUP
RESERVATION FORM, FALL 2009

The 18th Century London Furniture Trade

lecture and reception, **Monday, September 21, 6:00**

The Grolier Club, 57 East 60th Street, New York City

Please reserve directly through the Royal Oak

Mansions of Newport

lecture and reception, **Wednesday, September 23, 6:00**

The Collectors Club, 22 East 35th Street, New York City

Please reserve _____ places at \$45 per person

enclosed \$ _____

*Reserve by September 16

Landmarks and Landscapes

cocktail reception, **Tuesday, September 29, 6:00**

The Arsenal, Central Park, Fifth Avenue and 64th Street, New York City

Please reserve _____ places at \$45 per person

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The Country Houses of Sir John Vanbrugh

lecture and reception, **Monday, December 7, 6:00**

The Collectors Club, 22 East 35th Street, New York City

Please reserve _____ places at \$45 per person

enclosed \$ _____

*Reserve by November 30

Total enclosed \$ _____

Please make your check payable to **The American Friends of the Georgian Group** and mail it to us at
20 West 44th Street, #508, New York, N.Y. 10036

NAME _____

TELEPHONE _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

contact us at 212/991-9191 or at office@americangeorgians.org

Annual Meeting

and

Christmas Party

Our annual meeting and Christmas party will be held in early December at the residence of
Consul General Sir Alan Collins, honorary patron of the American Friends of the Georgian Group.

Invitations will be mailed separately.

SUPPORT THE GEORGIAN GROUP WINDOW RESTORATION FUND

We want to thank those friends of the AFGG who have contributed to our ongoing campaign to restore the windows at the Georgian Group headquarters at

Michael Ambler
Leonora Ballinger
Andrew Blum
Peter Buffington
Curt DiCamillo
Gary Dycus
Mary Ann Free
Vivien Gurfein
Jennifer Gyr
John Kinnear
Korin Mediate
John Shannon



Molly Smith
Ruth Soren
Joseph Spang
Sheila Stephenson
Geniel Strock
Kathy Stuart
Janet Sutter
Jessica Tcherepnine
Betty Whiddington
David Wood
William Younger

Report on the Veneto Visit April 20—29, 2009

The AFGG, together with its London-based parent, sponsored a visit to the Veneto in April 2009 to visit Palladio's finest palaces and villas. Our group was the ideal number, seventeen in addition to our excellent leaders, and was most congenial. There were eight from New York and the northeast, including Marsha and Michael Ambler, Paulette and Paul Cushman, Ann and George Selden, Vivien Gurfein, and Mary Riggs. We also had participants from Washington: Raymond Bahr and Michael Mahoney; from Florida: Joan and Charles Haworth; and one West Coast member, Janet Sutter. In addition, we made new friends from England: Clare and Theodore Agnew and Valerie and John Kingman.



We stayed in a charming hotel just outside of Vicenza, the Villa Michelangelo, which was built in the eighteenth century and modernized in the 1990s. It had a very good restaurant and a small elevator for those needing it.

Our daily tours started at a comfortable 9:00 or so, and always included one or two villas or palazzi before lunch. A highlight of the tour was the several midday cocktail parties and luncheons at very private villas not ever open to the public. After long, restorative lunches, our afternoons offered more of the same. Evenings, spent either in the hotel or in Vicenza, were always fun. We visited all the most famous villas, many still privately owned and lived in, and all looking in wonderful condition in honor of Palladio's 500th birthday in 2008. We were in awe of these buildings, filled with frescos by the likes of Tintoretto and Veronese, which have stood in pretty much original condition for 500 years and which inspired the Georgian style of architecture that swept England and America in the eighteenth century.

For all of this we are indebted to Lord Charles FitzRoy who, with his partner, Jane Rae, seemed to know everyone worth knowing in the Veneto. We recommend their London-based organization, Fine Art Travel, for AFGG members who want a special experience in travel.

—Michael Ambler