



Society of Antiquaries of London

Annual Review 2010



Left: for nearly twenty years a team of volunteers from the National and Decorative Fine Arts Society (NADFAS) has carried out invaluable work, repairing and cleaning books from the library.

Below: this granary and byre are two of the farm buildings at Kelmscott Manor that we plan to restore and convert as part of a new Learning Centre.

Opposite, top: volunteers Liz Dormer and Jane Price cataloguing the Kelmscott Manor books collection.

Opposite, below: artist Tivon Rivers helped to launch the new Paint Box facility for visitors to Kelmscott Manor, providing free materials for painting or drawing at the Manor, by the river or in the village.



The year in review

This digest of the activities and achievements of the Society of Antiquaries covers the period from October 2009 to September 2010. It looks back over another twelve months of collaborative effort between the Society's 2,800 Fellows, who are elected by their peers in recognition that they 'excel in the knowledge of the antiquities and history of this and other nations', the Society's 26 full and part-time staff at Burlington House and Kelmscott Manor, and some 150 volunteers who give material assistance to the Society by serving as trustees and committee members and giving us the benefit of their academic and professional advice, or by documenting and conserving the Society's library, archives and museum collections or by helping us to open Kelmscott Manor and its associated shop, cafe and garden to the public.

This human resource is what enables the Society to mount a full programme of weekly lectures and seminars from October to June every year, open Kelmscott Manor, the Oxfordshire home of Arts and Crafts pioneer William

Morris, run a library renowned for the richness of its resources for the study of the material past, publish the peer-reviewed *Antiquaries Journal* and the influential *Salon* newsletter and provide a venue for the cultural heritage sector, serving as a meeting place and a forum for the many national societies with whom we share common interests.

These are the day-to-day activities that are often neglected in reporting on the year's highlights, but it is important to acknowledge them as the lifeblood of the Society, and to thank everyone who contributes to them and to the fulfilment of the Society's mission, which is 'the encouragement, advancement and furtherance of the study and knowledge of the antiquities and history of this and other countries' (Royal Charter, 1751).

Looking to the year ahead, we hope to submit an application shortly to the Heritage Lottery Fund for developing Kelmscott Manor into a vibrant educational resource and plans are in hand to



Our key objectives

- improving public access to the Society and its historic assets
- fostering public understanding of the cultural heritage and engaging in public policy formulation
- supporting research and communicating its results

take our *Making History* exhibition to Boston and Yale, in 2011–12, to raise the profile of the Society in America, engage with the Fellowship in North America and help raise funds for the 'Making History' development campaign.

The success of that fundraising is crucial not only to our plans for Kelmscott Manor, but also for fulfilling our ambitious plans for the library at Burlington House, completing our paintings conservation programme, creating new endowments for supporting research and publications,

expanding the Fellowship internationally and for continuing to play a leading role as an advocate for the cultural heritage in public policy. Fundraising will thus assume an increasingly important place in the Society's activities in the months to come, and we hope to be able to persuade individuals and institutions that the Society's key objectives are well worth supporting with generous donations.

Maurice Howard, President
John Lewis, General Secretary

Improving public access to the Society and its historic assets

Accredited Museum status was awarded to the Society by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) in 2009. This award recognizes our commitment to providing public access to the collections at Kelmscott Manor and Burlington House and acknowledges that we meet the MLA's rigorous standards of professional curation.

Our plans to improve access and good stewardship still further were marked by the launch of our 'Making History' development campaign by David Starkey in December 2009, aimed at raising the funds for major improvements to the Burlington House library and Kelmscott Manor.

We welcomed 15,323 visitors to Kelmscott Manor between April and October 2010, just short of 2009's record total of 15,757 visitors. A new website was launched (www.kelmscottmanor.org.uk/home), whose contents include video interviews with curators, volunteers and regular visitors on Morris's philosophy, his textile designs, and their favourite rooms and objects. This year also saw the launch of the first all-new guidebook to Kelmscott Manor to be produced for several decades,

providing a room-by-room guide to the highlights of the house.

As in previous years, the Society opened its apartments to the public in September 2010 as part of the Open House London celebration of the buildings and places where Londoners live, work and play. Throughout the year, numerous individuals and special interest groups were given tours of the library and museum collections, including the Friends of Strawberry Hill, Courtauld Institute of Art alumni and Patrons and the Friends of Dulwich Picture Gallery. The library also hosted a workshop for students from the Camberwell College of Arts Conservation Centre.

Loans from our collections to other museums and galleries are an important part of the Society's outreach activities. This year we loaned the Carpio Album of seventeenth-century drawings to the Palacio Real de Madrid for its exhibition *Brillos en bronce* (*Brilliance in Bronze*), displaying the album's drawing of *Mercurio con Amorino* alongside the original sculpture. Printing blocks, stamping tools, books and examples of Morris's calligraphy were lent to the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow, for its exhibition



William Morris: Calligraphy and Illumination and to Blackwell, The Arts and Crafts House, Cumbria, for its exhibition *William Morris: A Sense of Place*.

A rolling programme for the repair and re-binding of the Society's early minute books was begun during the year.

'Making History' development campaign objectives

At Kelmscott, we aim to restore historic agricultural buildings to provide better information for visitors about the Manor's contents and the many people connected with the building – not least, William Morris, the radical thinker whose multiple interests represent in microcosm the aims and values of our Society. Converting these buildings will also enable the Society to mount an educational programme with an arts and crafts and conservation emphasis.

At Burlington House, our London base, we aim to provide modern facilities for all the students and scholars who want to make use of our library. We need better environmental conditions and more shelf space for the ever-growing collection of books and conservation facilities for the many books that have suffered from decades of sunlight and heat.

School pupils visiting Kelmscott Manor are given a tour of the house before embarking on bespoke morning and afternoon creative workshops, inspired by the house and garden, the collection and Morris's interests.

Four family workshops were held during 2010 (two in the Easter holiday, two in August) on the themes of Easter baskets, book making, book marks and the dragons of Morris's Old Norse sagas.



Fostering public understanding of the cultural heritage and engaging in public policy formulation

The Society's travelling exhibition – *Making History: 300 Years of Antiquaries in Britain* – has enabled 151,000 people to learn about the ways in which scholars have interpreted history over the last three centuries. The exhibition, building on the Society's Royal Academy of Arts tercentenary exhibition, was displayed at museums in Salisbury, Stoke-on-Trent, Gateshead and Lincoln over the period between October 2008 and January 2010. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the exhibition was redesigned for each venue to show rare and distinctive objects significant to the region from the Society's collections and from the collections of the host museum and local antiquarian societies.

From its position of independence from government, and based on the depth and breadth of knowledge and expertise among the Society's 2,800-strong Fellowship, we continue to lead and facilitate public debate on the management, conservation, presentation and public understanding of the cultural heritage. Over the course of 2009–10 the Society took an active part in public consultations and parliamentary inquiries into the lessons to be learned from the Iraq War about the protection of cultural heritage in times of conflict, on the protection of underwater heritage, on the National Heritage Protection Plan drafted by English Heritage, on a national heritage science strategy, and on the funding of the arts and heritage in England.

Reports in *Salon*, the Society's influential online newsletter, served as the forum for further debate by Fellows on the

Government's historic environment strategy and *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment*, published in April 2010, and on the future of the Portable Antiquities Scheme, the National Archives, the Warburg Institute and the Stonehenge Visitor Centre. *Salon* also helped to publicize the plight of libraries and archives destroyed or damaged by the Haiti earthquake of 12 January 2010 and to raise funds and volunteers to help with the rescue effort, and to publicize the successful campaign to raise funds for the purchase of the Staffordshire Hoard by Birmingham Museum.

The Society played a central role in the management of the British Archaeological Awards, the showcase for the best in UK archaeology, held at the British Museum on 19 July 2010, a key event within the UK-wide Festival

of British Archaeology. We continue to play a key role as advisers to the All-Party Parliamentary Groups concerned with culture and archaeology and as members of The Archaeology Forum (TAF), the body that

represents UK archaeology in the public policy sphere. Altogether we hosted 115 meetings and events over the course of the year, as host to 37 voluntary sector organizations and national agencies in the UK heritage.



This portrait (left) of Richard III (1452–85) from the Society's paintings collection was one of the highlights of its *Making History* travelling exhibition, the Lincoln stage of which is pictured below.



© Derrick Chivers FSA

Supporting research and communicating its results

This year we have awarded some £67,000 in grants to support research, student travel and church conservation work. The projects supported by the Society include excavations at Foxhole Cave, Gower Peninsula, and at L'Érée, Guernsey, studies of early Christianity and monasticism at Howmore, South Uist, in Anglo-Saxon Kent and in western Normandy and projects to compile a dendrochronology sequence for north-west Wales and to study gold-glass tesserae from Roman mosaics.

The Janet Arnold Award for the study of the history of Western dress went to assist Steven King with a study of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century pauper clothing, while the Headley Trust Research Bursary was awarded to Professor James Graham-Campbell to enable his work on the pagan Norse graves of Scotland to be prepared for publication.

The Society itself published two core reference books for the study of heraldry – *Heraldic Badges in England and Wales* by Michael Powell Siddons, and *The Dictionary of British Arms. Volume III* by Thomas Woodcock and Sarah Flower. Also published this year was a multi-author work on *Westminster Abbey Chapter House*, a comprehensive account of this masterpiece of Gothic architecture, home during Henry III's reign to meetings of the English parliament, whose

The Society's grant to Christopher Evans will lead to the writing up and publication of the excavation records from the outstanding multi-period site at Mucking, Essex.

launch in May 2010 coincided with the completion of a major programme of restoration at the Chapter House funded by English Heritage.

The first full year of the Society's partnership with Cambridge Journals Online saw the publication of Volumes 89 and 90 of the *Antiquaries Journal* in both online and print versions, helping to raise the *Journal's* international profile. It has long been the Society's aspiration to make its entire journal archive (stretching back to the eighteenth century) available internationally via the internet and the work of scanning some 300 volumes began during this year; when completed in 2011, access to these historic journals will provide scholars with a rich resource for the study of the history of the antiquarian disciplines.

As well as its programme of weekly meetings, at which papers are presented on current research for discussion by Fellows



Scholars from all over the world use the Society's library in Burlington House, which is now the subject of a major refurbishment project.

This drawing of the library was made by Toby Ward, the Society's Artist in Residence.

and guests, the Society hosted seminars on 'Silchester, the Society of Antiquaries and urbanism in Britain: Iron Age to early medieval' and 'The Herkenrode Glass: the revival of Lichfield Cathedral's Renaissance treasure'.

The Society's library is both an inspiration to researchers and writers and a vital resource, providing access to publications that are available nowhere else. A measure of the vital role that the library plays in international scholarship is the number of personal visits (2,245, two-thirds

Fellows, one-third non-Fellows) but also the number of email enquiries (1,340) on subjects as diverse as the history of maces in West Indian parliamentary institutions and the disputed site of the Battle of Towton. Heavy use is also made by the international research community of the Society's online catalogues, of remote access to online journals, of postal book loans and inter-library loans, and of requests for photocopies or photographs of material in the library (6,040 this year, 38 per cent Fellows; 62 per cent non-Fellows).

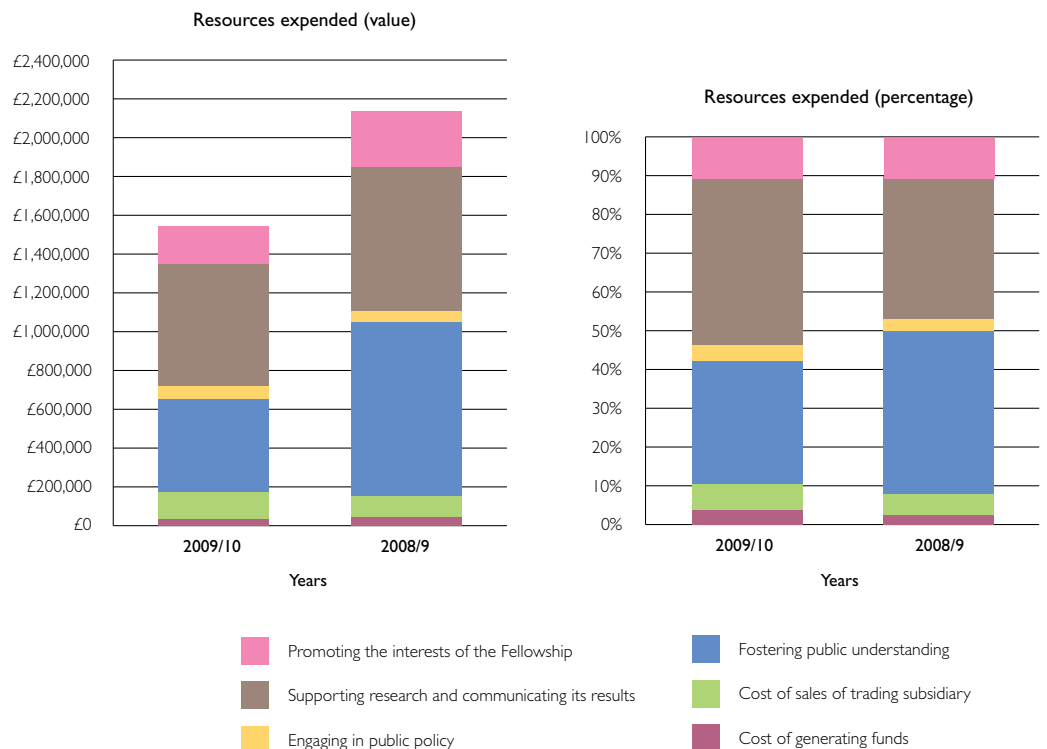


Use of funds

The income to support the Society's charitable activities comes mainly from the subscriptions paid by some 2,800 Fellows, supplemented by gifts, legacies and grants and the income we derive from the sale of publications and other trading activity, and from investment returns on our reserves. The Society receives no direct financial support from public funds.

The charts on the right are based on the figures published in the Society's independently audited accounts, which can be downloaded from our website (<www.sal.org.uk/history/reportandfinancial/>). They show the income and expenditure of the Society in actual and percentage terms.

Routine income and expenditure remain close to that of the preceding year when bequests and exceptional items are excluded. Gifts and legacies were substantially greater in 2008–9, when we were grateful to receive a substantial legacy from the estate of Marion Gilchrist Wilson FSA, some of which has been spent on digitizing the library subject index, in accordance with her will. This year we received a legacy from the estate of John Coales FSA that will be used to pay for conservation work on the paper collections, in accordance with his wishes. The greater expenditure in 2008–9 on 'Fostering public understanding' is largely accounted for by the costs of the *Making History* touring exhibition.



ABOUT THE SOCIETY

Founded in 1707, the Society of Antiquaries is charged by its Royal Charter of 1751 with 'the encouragement, advancement and furtherance of the study and knowledge of the antiquities and history of this and other countries'.

The Society is an elected college of some 2,800 Fellows, drawn from scholars and practitioners working in archaeology, architectural and art history, museum, library and archive curatorship, conservation and cultural resource management together with historical, ecclesiastical, heraldic, musical and linguistic study – the common theme being the focus on the material remains of the past.

Our premises at Burlington House are home to the UK's leading research library for the study of the material past and to important collections of antiquities, manuscripts and paintings, as well as housing meeting rooms and the administrative offices of the Society.

The Society has Accredited Museum status for its historic collections at Burlington House and for its collections at Kelmscott Manor in Oxfordshire, the former country home of William Morris, Fellow, pioneer conservationist and leader of the English Arts and Crafts movement.



**SOCIETY OF
ANTIQUARIES
OF LONDON**

Royal Patron

HRH The Duke of Gloucester

Royal Fellows

HM Queen Elizabeth II

HRH The Prince of Wales

HM The Queen of Denmark

Society of Antiquaries of London

Burlington House
Piccadilly, London W1J 0BE

Tel: 020 7479 7080

Fax: 020 7287 6967

Email: admin@sal.org.uk

Website: www.sal.org.uk

Charity Registration No: 207237

ISSN 2046-5440 (print)
ISSN 2046-5459 (online)
Designed by Michael Keates
Printed by Streamline Press Ltd, Leicester

