

The Friends of Osterley Park

In
support
of the
National Trust



NEWSLETTER

Issue 119 Winter 2020 £1 (free to members)



*Portrait of Mrs Child by Francis Cotes,
which hangs in Mr Child's Dressing Room at Osterley*



Dear Friends

Please refer to my report in the AGM papers which covers our present situation.

Wishing you all a safe and happy Christmas and better New Year for us all.

Best wishes

John

100 Club Draw (at last)

Douglas Craik

Due to the enforced cancellation of Coffee Mornings after March, there were no 100 Club draws until December.



Three members of the committee held a socially-distanced mass draw in the grounds of Osterley Park on a freezing Friday 4th December.

There were 7 prizes drawn: £50 for Joyce Bing, Susan Haisman and Peter Bush. (One of the committee had their number drawn but we had agreed in advance that if this happened we would decline the prize). £100 for Mrs Sebastian, Ed Whitaker and Sallie Mercer. This left £18 in the prize fund so a bonus prize was drawn for Sheila Royal. Cheques are somewhere in the post.

This year's prize pot was a bit less than 2019 so if you would like to purchase (more) shares at £12 just add it to your membership payment.





Many of you will know Ed Turnbull who was a long-time member of the team of Gardeners. He recently took voluntary redundancy as part of the restructuring of staff at Osterley.



The photos show Andy Eddy, Head Gardener, (socially-distanced) presenting Ed with a going away cake made by the café staff - a magnificent vegetarian (chocolate) offering.

Coach Trips

Vik Sharma

Hope this update finds everyone and their loved one's well. In the last update, I said that we will start planning coach trips from January 2021 with the first trip expected around Easter next year. However, given the current situation, it would be prudent to wait until at least the end of January, when further guidance is expected from the government along with the initial results from the Pfizer vaccine rollout, before making any firm plans.

Bearing everything in mind, as Covid-19 restrictions are gradually lifted from April 2021 onwards, I think the first trip we can realistically hope for is May 2021. Even that has to be a mini-trip to test the waters and sense check the logistics of planning trips in a post-Covid new normal. I'll be on the case as soon as it's safe to do so.

In the meantime, wish you all a very pleasant and relaxing Christmas and a great start to 2021! Take care and stay safe.

Happy New Year! Once again, we enter a new year which will be different. Accompanying this newsletter is the form for renewal of your membership of Friends of Osterley.

It is gratifying that 227 Friends renewed their membership this year in spite of a reduction of activities at Osterley. Regrettably 9 people resigned for good reasons and 5 are no longer with us.

The Committee realise that 2020 was different with Coffee Mornings 'disappearing'. We hope that these will resume soon and it is anticipated that these will be 'free' and that you all will come and enjoy the talks and company. When we know when things will happen you will be informed either by email or via the website.

We have only been able to contribute in a small way as Osterley – in common with all NT properties – has put things on hold. As soon as we are able, we will add our support to the house finances.

Many may choose to renew soon as in previous years. If you rightly choose not to renew until April please make a note in your diary. Again I will be calling any who have missed paying and it is always nice to chat anyway.

Finance update

Douglas Craik

In the AGM papers you will see my report on 2019. I thought you might like to know how things look this year. As you will imagine it was rather a year of non-events. There was no income from Coach Trips (despite Vik Sharma's valiant efforts in his first year), London Visits or the annual holiday - all were cancelled.

We did manage three Coffee Mornings before lockdown which brought in £130 and we got £343 from the buggy collection box before the service ceased. Although the buggy has run a bit in the autumn there is currently no way to take donations.

We had £270 of donations from Friends, mainly from refunds for trips and the 2019 holiday train refunds. We also had a net income from the 100 Club of £618 and Gift Aid of £593. The main income was membership subscriptions of £2,124. Overall net income was £4,085, quite a change from 2019's £12,145.

On the other side, our expenditure has been £339 for the Newsletter (down from £556 in 2019, well done to our new editor Kim Mamtora for finding a cheaper printer), and £593 for postage (over double last year's as I bought the 2021 stamps in December before the January price rise).

Thus our donations to the Trust have been rather subdued at £3,282. £317 for the flower growers and £2,916 to the NT Reserve account, bringing the Reserve total to £37,740 for use in the coming lean years. This compares to donations of £11,316 in 2019.

However with vaccines coming let's hope 2021 is better.

Lea House, Surrey

Douglas Craik



You may not be familiar with this Palladian mansion designed by Robert Adam. Perhaps this is because it was built in about 2008 and the Robert Adam is not the one we assume...



Professor Robert Adam trained at the University of Westminster. He has practised in the city of Winchester since 1977 and co-founded Winchester Design in 1986, which became known as Robert Adam Architects in 2000. He works with clients on a diverse range of projects including major private houses, extensions to historic buildings and public and commercial buildings.

Perhaps his parents foresaw his desire to be an architect when they named him in 1948.

Holiday 2021

Douglas Craik

Newcastle, 9-14th August 2021

£610 single / £465 in twin or double. Bed and Breakfast.

If at first you don't succeed, try again...

The cost for this holiday is a bit higher than the 2020 price. Although some entry fees have increased a little the main differences are that I anticipate fewer people will book this year but I have kept with a large coach to allow spacing (this increases coach cost per person). Also I will be booking train tickets later due to "lockdown" uncertainty, this increases ticket costs per person.

I already have 20 bookings. If numbers are higher or I can book train tickets earlier, then I will reduce the final cost (but don't count on it).

Optimistically, it looks like vaccines are coming soon to our age group.

Last year was one of lost holidays, and as overseas trips are still tricky, so why not join this staycation...

The holiday is essentially the same as the 2020 plan except I have dropped Durham Castle as it is part of the university and is likely to be closed to visitors; and the visit to the Holy Isle is now on Friday rather than Wednesday due to changed tides (we could still have done Wednesday but would have had to swim to the Island).



The following holiday detail is the same as last year. Following feedback after Aberdeen, we will be again staying in a Travelodge, this time on the riverfront with an adjacent Wetherspoons and Copthorne Hotel. For anyone who has been watching 'Vera' repeats on TV we will be next to the swing bridge.

Apart from the usual country house visits there are two special days. We will visit Hadrian's Wall built by the Romans on behalf of the Scots to keep the English out (or some variation of this) and the Holy Isle. There were suggestions to visit the Farne Islands but I consulted the local NT staff including an Island Ranger and their view was that there is little to see after mid-June.

I don't intend to have a day in Newcastle itself, there should be an open top bus tour running (currently locked down but hoping to restart in April) costing £6. If anyone would like to skip a day and do this then that is no problem. Also if it turns out that any planned visit is not possible I will substitute it with this tour. Details of the bus tour will be provided to those that book.

Programme

Monday 9th August

Meet at King's Cross Station by 10:00 (to be confirmed) for train to Newcastle.



On arrival go by coach to Arbeia Roman Fort in South Shields. This has a reconstruction of a fort gateway, a barracks block and the commander's villa which will make our visit on Tuesday to

Vindolanda more understandable. Transfer to the Travelodge to check in then eat at the adjacent Wetherspoons. Or try the culinary delights of the town. (*See end of article*).

Tuesday 10th August

Hadrian's Wall, with visits to the Roman Army Museum then the nearby famous Vindolanda fort.



The museum has a lot of information about the Roman Army in general and the deployment in Britain. It also features an excellent 3D film that is a good introduction to Hadrian's Wall.

At Vindolanda we will have a conducted tour of this archetypal Roman fort which lies just south of Hadrian's wall and actually slightly predates it.

Then the opportunity to see Vindolanda's greatest discovery. Delicate, wafer thin slivers of wood that are the oldest surviving handwritten documents in Britain.

On the way back we will stop at Housesteads, another Roman fort which actually lies on the wall with the wall spreading east and west.



Wednesday 11th August

North-westward to Cragside then Wallington Hall.

Cragside House was the home of Lord Armstrong - Victorian inventor, innovator and landscape genius. Free-flow tour of the first

house in the world to be lit by hydroelectricity. The gardens include one of the largest rock gardens in Europe. Early afternoon we will head off to Wallington Hall.



Sir William Blackett replaced the medieval pele tower on the site, but its ground floor remains as the cellars of the current house. The new house consisted of four ranges built around an open central courtyard (like Tudor Osterley was) but with a ground floor and attic.

Later his nephew, Sir Walter Calverley-Blackett, remodelled the house into two floors. Subsequently, the central courtyard was roofed creating a hall for remarkable huge pre-Raphaelite paintings. Amongst the many figures involved in the recreation of Wallington was Capability Brown.

Thursday 12th August

South from Newcastle, passing the Angel of the North then to Durham for guided tours of the Cathedral. Then on to a free-flow visit to Ormesby Hall.



The Community of St Cuthbert arrived in Durham from Lindisfarne in 995 and built an Anglo-Saxon cathedral. Construction of the Cathedral as we know it today was started in 1093 by Bishop William of St-Calais.

Ormesby Hall was once home to the Pennyman family. This classic Georgian mansion is surrounded by 250 acres of parkland with a colourful Victorian formal garden.

Friday 13th August

The Holy Isle and visit Lindisfarne Priory and Castle.



Lindisfarne is one of the most important centres of early English Christianity. Irish monks settled here in AD 635 and the monastery became the centre of a major saint's cult celebrating its bishop, Cuthbert. The ruins now visible are those of a 12th-century priory, which claimed direct descent from the early monastery.

A nearby old coastguard lookout tower has been transformed into a 360 degree glass observatory to provide a panoramic view of the island.

Lindisfarne Castle was built in the 16th century, for the next three hundred years the fort was home to temporary garrison of soldiers. Edward Hudson discovered it in 1901 and the architect Edwin Lutyens dramatically changed the building over the next few years, from a fort to a holiday home. Gertrude Jekyll designed the adjacent summer flower garden. The Castle and Priory are about a mile apart but a bus runs every 20 minutes. There is no onsite catering but several cafes in the village.

Saturday 14th August

Visit Washington Old Hall, then in the afternoon return to London by 17:00 (to be confirmed).



The ancestral home of George Washington, this small stone manor house reflects gentry life following the turbulence of the English Civil War. The building incorporates parts of the original medieval home of George Washington's direct ancestors, and it is from here that the family took their surname of 'Washington'.

Accommodation

The Travelodge lies on the banks of the Tyne, some rooms have great views of many of the 7 Tyne bridges. This is a 5 storey modern building with 30 rooms on each of the upper floors. Rooms have either a double bed or twin beds in “accessible” rooms. All have a step-in shower and sealed windows (for quietness) with air conditioning. The breakfast area has over 70 places.

Dinner

As last year the holiday is bed and breakfast. Again there is a Wetherspoons adjacent, however this does not allocate an area for groups so it means that you need to find a table. There are several other eating places along the quayside. The main streets of Newcastle are a few hundred yards away up a steep-ish hill where chains like Côte and Carluccio's exist.

Booking

Deposit of £100 and booking form by **1st April** to allow train ticket purchase. Those who have rolled-over their booking from last year and have already paid the deposit only need to send a booking form to confirm room arrangements. **Deposits after this cannot be refunded** as the tickets will have been bought.

Balance payment by **1st June** when rooms will be confirmed.

Cancellations after this cannot be fully refunded as we will be committed to the number of rooms. Any avoidable costs (e.g. entry fees), will be refunded. Replacements are possible up to the last week before trip. **It is essential that you have travel insurance to cover any risk of lost deposit or balance payment in the case that you have to cancel. Previously, Friends have claimed successfully.**

Francis Cotes Portrait artist at Osterley

Margaret Friday

Francis Cotes was one of the most popular English artists in the mid-eighteenth century. He was born in London on 20th May, 1726. His father, Robert Cotes, had supported Charles I moving to Ireland when Oliver Cromwell was in charge. When mayor of Galway, he refused to follow rules dis-allowing Catholics public positions. He was tried for this in both Ireland and London but released when evidence did not prove the case. After the trial he remained in London pursuing his career as an apothecary. His sons Francis and Samuel often helped dad grind up leaves and berries to make up various healing compounds. Francis became an artist originally specialising in works in crayon and pastel, taking up oil painting later. His younger brother Samuel painted miniatures. It is thought that Cotes' use of vivid colours came from his skill at making the crayons up himself based on the chemical knowledge acquired when helping his father.



Engraving of Francis Cotes

He was tutored by George Knapton, portrait artist who was a favourite of Frederick, Prince of Wales and his wife. As part of this circle he adopted the Rococo technique of painting portraits with small faces and large eyes. A French artist, Hubert Gravelot had popularised this style in England but Cotes was also influenced by the work of Allan Ramsay and Joshua Reynolds.

Francis Cotes set up his own studio at his father's place of business in Cork Street, Burlington Gardens, off Piccadilly. He developed a system of putting pastels on in layers so that background colours showed through deepening the effect of crayon and pastel. Cotes' portraits between 1747 and 1752 follow the Rococo look. Eyes and lips are usually brightly coloured and the sitters are portrayed wearing the very latest fashions. They are executed in crayon and pastel. The French female artist Rosalba Carriera who used these for her work had become a favourite with English collectors.

Horace Walpole noted that Cotes' pastels had "uncommon perfection" continuing "if they yield to Rosalba's in softness they excel hers in vivacity and invention." The crayon and pastel on paper is a method of picturing someone quite quickly. It does not require long sittings or the hours of drying time between sittings needed for oils, thus it is perfect for busy people, small children and animals.

In 1763, having become quite successful, Francis purchased a large house at 32 Cavendish Square, an upmarket fashionable London address. On 23rd August, 1764 he married Sarah Adderley at St. Clement Danes in The Strand. Sarah was eight years older than Francis. Francis suffered from gall stones and was operated on but the following year took a potion, created by himself to dissolve them, but succeeded in poisoning himself. On his death he left everything to his wife. When the house and contents were auctioned following his death the sale, in 1771, took four days and the description of the fine contents, furniture, silver, statuary, books and paintings shows that they lived in luxury. He also had a stable with five horses and a fine carriage.



Sarah Cotes, featured in the 'Dictionary of pastellists before 1800' by Neil Jeffares, published by Unicorn Press in 2006

Cotes, according to Ellis Waterhouse in *The Dictionary of British Eighteenth Century Painters*, charged quite high prices for his works. In 1768 a head in crayons cost 25 guineas, with the same in oil 20 guineas, a half-length portrait was 40 guineas and a full-length 80 guineas. After 1764 the clothes in the oil paintings were often done by Peter Toms who was very skilled at painting silk, satin and velvet draped fabrics; until 1763 Toms had worked with Sir Joshua Reynolds, so his skill was recognised. All of the crayon and pastel works are entirely by Francis Cotes' hand.

During 1766 Cotes painted a three-quarter oval portrait of Sarah Child in pastel on paper. She was facing left with her head resting on her right hand (*see image on the front cover of this newsletter, kindly taken for us by Ffion George when the house was partially closed*).

Sarah was wearing a green wrapped dress with a blue sash. This picture is on display at Osterley. He also executed a similar one in oil in which Sarah is facing right. This picture belonged to "Hon. Mrs James Innes of Chobham, Surrey, by direct descent from the sitter."



Sarah Anne Child

The picture of Sarah Anne in the mirror in Mrs. Child's dressing room must have been done about the same time so Sarah, born in August 1764 would have been between two and three years old. Even if done later she could not be more than six because Francis Cotes died in July 1770. In 1767 he painted his first royal portrait, Queen Charlotte and her baby daughter Charlotte, the Princess Royal, using pastel and crayon.

In that year he also painted in oil Agneta Yorke, a friend of Sarah Child and a regular visitor to Osterley. Horace Walpole saw Sarah's portrait in the annual exhibition of works by the Society of Artists of Great Britain which Cotes had helped found becoming Director in 1765. The child Sarah Anne's picture is framed by the mirror in her mother's dressing room at Osterley, so it never appeared in an exhibition and was not included in the book *Francis Cotes: complete edition with a critical essay and a catalogue* by Edward Mead Johnson published by Phaidon in 1976.

Johnson was in contact with the 9th Earl of Jersey and includes the portrait of Sarah which has now been returned to Osterley. The V&A were in charge of the house at that time and only the principle rooms could be viewed. Johnson does cite the portraits of William Chambers' daughters Cornelia and Selina in pastel on paper owned by the V&A but at Osterley in 1975 - they are listed in his book. The pastel portrait of their father William Chambers is in Edinburgh in the National Portrait Gallery of Scotland.



Cornelina Chambers, Selina Chambers with doll

Cotes was a member of the newly instituted Royal Academy from its opening in 1768.

One of the reasons Cotes' portraits are so well known is they were very popular with engravers, like Valentine Green. Many of his pictures of important people, including Agneta Yorke, Lady Hardwicke, were etched and printed out so people could purchase these inexpensively and use them to decorate their homes or places of work. Some of his portraits are only known through engravings as the original is either in a private collection, lost or its present location is unknown. A Valentine Green engraving of an Agneta Yorke portrait by Cotes features at the end of this article.

Cotes wrote an essay on crayon painting in which he listed what he felt were his best works - amongst these was his own father Robert Cotes, his tutor George Knapton, Queen Charlotte holding the sleeping Princess Royal and Mrs. Child. All of these are displayed in this article. He also said how crayon works on paper should be displayed "as crayon pictures are dry, and have of course a powdery surface, they should never be left uncovered." He says with a glass as dust cannot be removed by blowing or any other manner. "Crayon pictures when finely painted, are superlatively beautiful, and decorative in a very high degree in apartments that are not too large; for, having their surface dry, they partake in appearance of the effect of Fresco, and by candlelight are luminous and beautiful beyond all other pictures."



Robert Cotes



George Knapton

Sir Ellis Waterhouse in *The Oxford Dictionary of Art and Artists* says of Cotes, “he went all out for health and youth and fine clothes, a strong likeness and no nonsense.” Traits we believe Robert Child would have appreciated.

Sadly Francis Cotes died in July 1770, aged only 44, and thus did not fulfil the promise that he would become a rival of Reynolds and Gainsborough in his later years.

John Russell in his book *Elements of Painting with Crayons* published two years after Cotes’ death says, “with respect to Crayon Painting, the present age has produced an uncommon instance of excellence in one of our own countrymen. I mean the late Mr. Francis Cotes.”



Queen Charlotte and her baby daughter Charlotte, the Princess Royal



Engraving by Valentine Green of Agneta Yorke, friend of Sarah Child and frequent visitor to Osterley

Friends Events and Excursions

Please note: due to the coronavirus, all of our events and excursions have been cancelled, apart from the planned 2021 holiday from 9-14 August. We will continually review the situation and hope to advise of rescheduled and new events in the April newsletter.

Issue	Published in	Contents
Winter	January	Membership renewal, first three Coach Trips and first three London Visits
Spring	April	AGM papers, membership cards
Summer	July	Next three Coach Trips, next three London Visits
Autumn	October	Next Summer Holiday booking

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The 'Friends' website gives you all of the current news, meetings, events, publications, and membership information relating to the work of the Friends of Osterley Park in supporting Osterley House and Park. www.e-voice.org.uk/friendsofosterleypark

Next Newsletter

To be published in April 2021. Any contributions to the Newsletter Editor (editor.foop@gmail.com) by **14th March 2021**.

The Editor may edit contributions as necessary.