 **The Friends of Osterley Park**

A Supporter's Group for the National Trust

NEWSLETTER

Issue 64 SPRING 2007

Useful Contacts

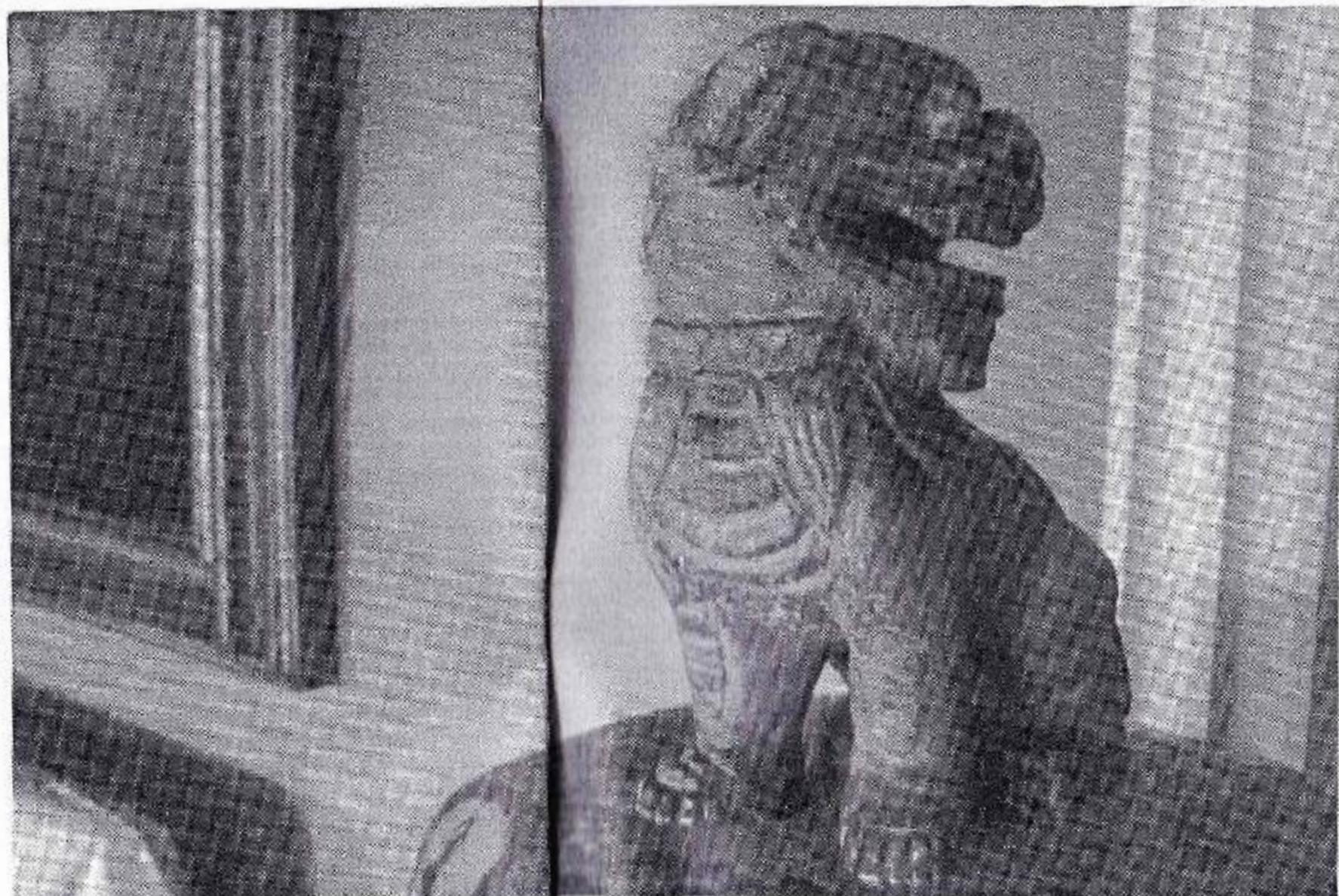
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Period covered
Early reign Chinese Emperor
Qianlong (1736-95)
Osterley Park House
since 1795

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MAY 16th, OLD BREWHOUSE, 7pm for 7.45.

Agenda & details enclosed.

JULY 15th - OSTERLEY DAY

Details on Page 4.

EXCURSIONS 2007

Monday, 16 th April	Ely & Oxburgh Hall
Monday, 14 th May	Bodiam Castle & Bateman's
Friday, 15 th June	Caughton Court & Kinwarton Dovecot
Tuesday, 17 th July	Kirby Hall & Gardens
Wednesday, 15 th August	Highclere Castle & Sudham Memorial Chapel.
Monday, 8 th October	Upton House.

Details on pages 10-13. The 6-day holiday in September in South Wales advertised in our last issue is fully booked.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 31.12.06. IAN CONACHER

2006 was a year of mixed fortunes for the "Friends". One of the high spots was Jim Tickle's programme of trips and tours; his 4 day holiday in Cornwall was fully booked within days of publication, and the programme of day trips was well supported, with few empty seats on the coach. Our thanks are due to Jim for all the time and effort he has put into organising these over the past 15 years. Careful planning allowed a small profit to be made.

Another source of income has been the "100 Club", which has provided £800 for the Trust and a similar sum given as prizes to members. Our thanks are due to Ron Piper, who has been organising the quarterly draws for many years, keeping records up-to-date, and making sure that the numbers in the bag correspond to those on the membership list.

Our stalls on "Osterley Day" were well supported, and made a useful contribution to our funds. Thanks are due to all those who contributed goods to the stalls, and particularly to those erecting and staffing the stalls during the heat of the day.

"Winter Lectures" in 2006 were reasonably well attended, although numbers have been fewer this year, and we may need to examine the format and publicity for future years.

During the year, we made no major donations to the Trust; however, we continued support for our regular items, paying for materials for the Garden Volunteers growing flowers for the displays in the House. We also paid the printing costs of the Trust's Newsletter, and for maintenance of the self-drive battery vehicles for the use of the less-mobile visitor.

We were sorry to lose Paul Lucas as Hon Treasurer in July. This has left a difficult gap to fill. I have had an offer of temporary help with the book-keeping, but I am still searching for a permanent replacement for Paul. I have also had a most welcome offer of help with newsletter production which I am further exploring. However, I still need a Speaker Secretary!

My thanks are due to the Committee for their support during the year.

OSTERLEY DAY, SUNDAY, JULY 15TH.

This is the day for the display of "Art in the Park", when local artists display their works for sale on the Park railings around the front lawn, from the causeway round to the Stable Block.

On the lawn, local community groups and societies will set up their stalls, with displays of their activities and achievements. There will be displays by children's dance schools, a jazz group, and theatrical performances for children.

The "Friends" will as usual be setting up their stalls to raise funds to continue our financial support for the National Trust. The success of these will depend on you, the Members, donating goods to stock the stalls:-

Bric-a-Brac - Ornaments, fine china, glasses, collectables, costume jewellery, etc, all in new condition.

Books - Nearly new Hardbacks and Paperbacks.

Tombola We give a prize every time and need about 500 prizes ranging from cans of soft drinks, a few bottles of wine, unwanted gifts, etc. Please - no chocolate or goods which cannot stand the heat of high summer!

These stalls have in past years generated around £1,000; please help us to better this target!

Arrangements for collection or delivery of gifts will be given in our Summer issue. Meanwhile, start putting aside suitable items ready for the day!

THIS IS OUR MAJOR FUND-RAISING DAY - WE

DEPEND ON THE SUPPORT OF THE MEMBERSHIP!

I am sure that most of you know that Brownssea Island, in Poole Harbour, is owned and managed by the National Trust. Many of you will also know that this year sees the centenary of Scouting and its links with Brownssea.

Robert Baden-Powell was the Army Colonel in charge of the British Forces at the siege of Mafeking, in the Boer War (October 1899 - May 1900). The soldiers were so occupied with the defence of the town that a cadet force of young boys was formed to run messages between the various units. B-P (as he was always known) was very impressed with the way the boys worked together and used their initiative. Following his Army career, he decided to see if this camaraderie could be replicated in civilian life.

So he organised a camp for 20 boys from differing backgrounds, choosing Brownssea as the location. This took place on 1st August, 1907, and proved very successful. Thus "Scouting" was born. More camps followed, and in 1908 B-P produced the Scouting Manual - "Scouting for Boys", first published in fortnightly parts, and later combined into book form. This became a best seller.

The aims of Scouting as laid down by B-P are still the same today - to promote the development of young people, enabling them to achieve their full potential as individuals and responsible citizens. All members promise to do their duty to God and the Queen, and to help other people at all times.

The organisation was originally for boys only; girls were not admitted. So many girls were interested that the Girl Guides were formed in 1910, with B-P's sister Agnes in charge at first. After their marriage, B-P's wife Olave took over as Chief Guide.

Over the next few years, Scouting expanded rapidly, both in Britain and overseas, and in 1920 the first International Jamboree was held, at which B-P was named as the first "World Chief Scout".

Many changes have taken place in Scouting since 1907. Cubs were introduced for 8 to 11-year olds in 1916, Senior Scouts aged 16+ in 1917, and Beavers for 6-7 year olds in 1966. "Sea Scout Groups" were formed where there was access to water.

Beavers, Cubs, and Scouts are still the section titles in use today; "Senior Scouts" became "Venture Scouts", and have recently been renamed as "Explorers". Girls were admitted to Venture Units in 1976, and to all other sections in 1981.

In the last hundred years, Scouting has grown from a group of 20 boys in England to an international organisation with millions of members in more than 100 countries. World Jamborees have been held regularly, in different countries; this year the 21st such event will be held in Essex from 26th July to 4th August. It is expected that 40,000 Scouts will attend!

Needless to say there will be celebrations at Brownsea during this period; the island will be closed to all visitors on 1st August but will be open on other days. Brownsea Castle is not open to the public; it is let to a well-known High Street store, but there are plenty of other attractions there. This is one of the few locations in England where you can see our native red squirrels. The National Trust Handbook gives details of opening times and ferries.

THE "FRIENDS" 100 CLUB - RON PIPER.

The final draws of the 06/07 series were made at the lecture in St Mary's Parish Hall on Thursday, 30th March. Winners were:-

£100.00	Ticket No 164	Mrs K. V. Blackett
£50.00	Ticket No 13	Dr & Mrs P & M Bush.
£30.00	Ticket No 42	Miss W. H. Thorpe.
£15.00	Ticket No 83	Mrs S. Halsman
£11.00	Ticket No 64	Miss L.G. Newman

This brings the total of prizes awarded during the Membership year to £801.00, with the same amount being available for National Trust projects.

A new series of quarterly draws will take place during the new membership year, the first being held at our A.G.M. on 16th May

Your Membership renewal form for the "Friends", included with this Newsletter, also allows Members to join the "100 Club" Each share costs £12.00, giving entry to the four draws, and Members may purchase as many shares as they wish. The income from share purchases is divided equally between the Prize Fund and the "Friends" fund for National Trust Projects.

RECEPTION AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

This will be held on Wednesday, 16th May, at 7.45 pm. in the Brewhouse Restaurant at Osterley Park. Doors will open at 7 p.m., and a glass of wine will be served before the start of formal business at 7.45 pm. There are a number of important matters to discuss at this meeting; so we hope that a good number will attend. The Agenda is enclosed.

Following the meeting, which hopefully will last no longer than 20 minutes, the Property Manager, Sean Harrington, will be able to give a short talk before the close of the evening at about 9 - 9.30 pm.

NEWS FROM THE PROPERTY

A number of new members of staff have joined the team at Osterley. EMILY MEALEY has come to Osterley from Hughenden as Audience and Community Development Manager, NATASHA NELSON is Arts Officer with responsibility for the Jersey Gallery, VICTORIA GEORGE is House and Weddings assistant, LUKE TREHEARN has joined as Warden,

The house opened to visitors on 14th March. Unfortunately, the ravages of time mean that the number of "Founder Members" of the volunteer Room Stewarding team has been reduced, and there are vacancies for new faces, particularly at weekends.

More Volunteers are also needed as "Courtesy Bus Drivers", a pleasurable duty as it brings one into contact with a variety of visitors. The Self-Drive Battery vehicle team also need new recruits to assist in enabling visitors with restricted mobility to enjoy the Park

OUR PICTURES.

John Stacey's cover picture shows the Dragon on the cover of one of the Parade Jars in the Long Gallery. The centre spread shows a fallen tree, resembling a Dragon's Head.



Excursions 2007

Jim Tickle

As in previous years, our annual 'exploratory tour' of properties and places of interest in a specific Region of the Britain has been keenly supported, and this September's six-day Tour of South Wales was soon fully booked. The lucky participants, I'm sure, can look forward to a thoroughly enjoyable stay at the University of Cardiff and an exciting programme of visits including the castles of Caerphilly and Castell Coch, the Roman fortress town of Caerleon, Aberdulais Falls, Dolaucothi Gold Mines and much, much more. For those taking part, full details will be sent to you well before our departure date.

Dates and destinations for this year's day-trips have now been agreed with our ubiquitous and friendly coach driver, - the genial Mr Barrie Pyle - and they are as follows:-

Monday, 16th April Oxburgh Hall

Since a separate booking form for this visit was issued with the January Newsletter, it is already fully booked. Built in 1482 by Sir Edmund Bedingfield by a grant of Edward IV, Oxburgh still retains much of its Tudor character, but it is also highly influenced by the Catholic High Victorian taste of the 19th century Bedingfields. The family suffered religious persecution during the 16th and 17th centuries, as witnessed by the priest's hole in the garderobe off the King's Room where Henry VII slept in 1487. Oxburgh's most prized possession is a display of embroidered panels worked by Mary Queen of Scots and the Countess

of Shrewsbury (Queen Elizabeth's friend, Bess of Hardwick) whilst Mary was in the custody of the Earl of Shrewsbury awaiting her sad fate after her flight from Scotland into England.



Monday, 14th May Bodiam Castle & Bateman's



It's ten years ago that we made our previous day-trip to Bodiam Castle, a solid, moated stronghold built in 1385 by Sir Edward Dalyngrigge to protect the Sussex marshes from devastating French raids like those which destroyed Winchelsea and Rye only a few years earlier. The exterior is remarkably intact, but the interior is largely in ruin, though much evidence survives to give an

adequate impression of Dalyngrigge's concern for comparatively comfortable domestic accommodation. This included a traditional Great Hall with pantry and kitchen, personal chambers for the lord and his lady and separate quarters for members of the household, each suite with its own fireplaces and garderobe. There was also a chapel and provision for a military garrison.

In sharp contrast to Bodiam, Bateman's is a modest Jacobean house built of the local sandstone in 1634. Its claim to fame is that from 1902 to his death in 1936 the author Rudyard Kipling and his wife made it their cosy and much loved home. The Trust has maintained the house almost exactly as it would have appeared in Kipling's days. The tools of the author's trade are still scattered on the study table where he left them, and in the parlour, corridors and elsewhere you will find many oriental rugs, artefacts and china, which reflect Kipling's unyielding love of India and the East. Kipling and his wife laid out the peaceful little garden with lawns, hedges, a shallow pond and a rose garden. Beyond it over a river which Kipling used to harness electricity for the house, is a mill which the National Trust restored to working order and is now regularly used for grinding flour.



Friday, 15th June Coughton Court & Kinwarton Dovecot



Like the Bedingfields at Oxburgh, the Throckmorton Family have for centuries and through troublesome times preserved their family home here at Coughton. Built in 1409 by Sir George Throckmorton, the house is still occupied by his descendants. Strict Catholics, they often suffered in times of religious persecution, but were still prepared to shelter Catholic priests. One of the more comfortable priest-holes even has the comfort of a bed and

a folding leather altar. Again, as at Oxburgh, there is poignant souvenir of Mary Queen of Scots, for at Coughton Court is displayed the chemise which she wore at her execution. And for his friendship with the Scottish Queen, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton was imprisoned and his nephew executed. In 1605, another nephew lent the house to the conspirators in the Gunpowder Plot whilst they awaited news of their attempt on the King's life. In 1643, during the Civil War,

Coughton Court was besieged by Parliamentary troops as a result of the family's staunch Royalist sympathies.

Tuesday, 17th July Kirby Hall & Gardens

Built of the local Weldon stone, Kirby Hall has a delightful mixture of architectural styles. Begun by Sir Humphrey Stafford in 1570, it was completed in 1575 by one of Elizabeth's talented courtiers, Sir Christopher Hatton. Royalty was entertained in lavish style at Kirby; Queen Elizabeth I, Anna of Denmark and James I. Between 1638-40, the third Sir Christopher made important alterations to the



house. Naturally, during the Civil War he had taken the Royalist side and as a reward, in 1643 he was created Baron Hatton of Kirby, Controller of the King's Household. When Oxford surrendered in 1646, he took refuge in Calais, but he returned in 1655, spending freely to create his 'Great Garden'. His interest in the gardens was inherited by his son, but when Christopher IV died in 1706, his heirs preferred to live in London and Kirby Hall fell into disrepair. Though many parts of the house became roofless, in 1984 Kirby Hall was taken in hand by English Heritage and the Elizabethan decorative schemes extensively restored in the Great Hall, Billiard Room, Library and Beet Bedchamber. In the restored 'Great Garden', peacocks now roam freely again.

Wednesday, 15th August ... Highclere Castle & Sandham Memorial Chapel

Once the seat of the Bishops of Winchester, Highclere became the family seat of the Earls of Carnarvon who had it rebuilt in 1842 by Sir Charles Barry, the architect of the Houses of Parliament. The extravagant interiors range from church Gothic through Moorish flamboyance and rococo revival to the solid masculinity in the long Library. Old master paintings mix with portraits by Van Dyck and 18th Century painters. Napoleon's desk and chair rescued from St Helena sits with other 18th and 19th Century furniture. The 5th Earl of Carnarvon discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun with Howard Carter and the Castle houses a unique exhibition of some of his discoveries. In the course of



the excavations, an inscription cursing any disturbers of the tomb was found, and the death of Carnarvon during the excavation gave rise to superstitious fears of the wrath of the dead King. The 5th Earl lies buried on the 850 ft summit of Beacon Hill, two miles south-west of Highclere village.

The magnificent parkland with its massive cedars was designed by Capability Brown and the walled gardens also date from an earlier house at Highclere. The glass Orangery and Fernery add an exotic flavour and the Secret Garden has a romance of its own with a beautiful curving lawn surrounded by densely planted herbaceous borders.



A short drive away from Highclere is one of the National Trust's more unusual properties, the Sandham Memorial Chapel, whose walls are covered with the 1914-18 War paintings of the artist Stanley Spencer. But the scenes are not of battle, rather of Spencer's impressions of the humdrum routine that makes up a soldier's life, observed whilst he served as a medical orderly in Bristol and on the front in Macedonia in 1916. From the everyday picture of 'Kit Inspection' (left), to 'Tea in the Hospital Ward', 'Game of Housey-Housey' and the altar scene, 'Resurrection' the paintings still manage to evoke feelings of sympathy and

the futility of war. Stanley Spencer worked on the paintings between 1927-1932 at his Hampstead studio, in the Chapel itself, and finally in his beloved Cookham.

Monday, 8th October Upton House

Built in local Hornton stone in 1695 Upton really came into its own as recently as 1927 when it was bought by Viscount Bearstead and remodelled to house his outstanding collection of paintings, tapestries, china



and 18th Century furniture. Son of the founder of Shell, Viscount Bearstead held the post of Chairman of the Company from 1921 to 1946, bequeathing Upton House to the National Trust at his death in 1948. The paintings include works by Hogarth, Stubbs, Canaletto, Brueghel and El Greco and the porcelain collection features Sèvres tableware and an unrivalled display of Chelsea and Derby figures. An interesting distant connection with Osterley is that in 1757 Upton House was bought as a hunting lodge by Francis Child and later, by the marriage of his great-granddaughter, Sarah Sophia, it was inherited by the Earls of Jersey.

Members who took part in our previous visit to Upton in 1994 will recall that the gardens here are exceptional; terraces, ornamental pools and water garden, herbaceous borders, kitchen garden and the National Collection of Asters.

CHINESE DRAGONS AT OSTERLEY *Margaret Friday*

We have several representations of dragons at Osterley as John Stacey illustrates with his fascinating photographs in this newsletter. These mythical beasts have a long and interesting history.

Our word "Dragon" comes from the Greek "drakon" which means serpent. The Chinese word for this mythical beast is "Lung", also meaning serpent. In some of the earliest poetry written more than 4500 years ago in Sumer Usumgal, a serpentine monster is described and used as a metaphor for a king or a god and as a term of praise. From these ancient times at the beginnings of history the dragon has royal links. It does not as in the West represent things that are unpleasant or evil.

One of the earliest known depictions of a dragon-like creature appears on a cylinder seal from Susa in Iran. It has the head and wings of an eagle but the hind quarters resemble a lion. Later dragon-like images from Babylon are linked with water and show a sea-goat with horns, scales and a fish or serpent tail. This type of dragon was the symbol of the Babylonian deity Marduk and was used along with bulls and lions to decorate the magnificent Ishtar Gate which can now be seen in the Pergamon Museum in Berlin. It is thought that Chinese traders visited Babylon in the 6th Century BC and took models of the dragon home with them. Today the star sign for Capricorn resembles this ancient goat-fish image.

The Chinese see the Dragon as a supernatural representation of natural forces having nine characteristics. It is pictured with deer horns, a camel head, hare's eyes, eagle's claws, carp fish scales, bull's ears, an iguana's neck and the paws of a tiger. It has 81 scales and breathes out either clouds or fire. Since the Dragon has the ability to change shape it may appear in a variety of these forms.

In Chinese mythology there were four kinds of dragon. – Celestial, Spiritual, Earthly and Hidden.

The celestial or heavenly dragon lived in the sky and guarded the mansions of the gods just as the sphinx did in Greek mythology. At Osterley we have fine expressions of the sphinx in the State bedroom on the chairs and the bed and in the fine plaster-work of the Library ceiling.

The Spiritual Dragon was the people's dragon worshipped at the family altar and linked to respect for ancestors and the success of the family. This dragon caused wind and rain for the benefit of mankind and when these failed was asked through prayer to supply them.

The Earth Dragon was also linked to water because it was responsible for looking after the sea and marking out the courses of rivers and streams. This dragon is traditionally coloured yellow and has a lion's body and a human-like head. It resembles the dragon depicted on the Ishtar Gate in ancient Babylon.

The fourth Dragon was the Hidden Dragon who lived under the earth. Its large body moving underground was thought to cause earthquakes and landslides; however these sometimes revealed the treasures hidden in the earth – gold, silver and precious gems. This dragon also looked after lost treasures, things hidden and forgotten or lost in shipwrecks and buried under the sea.

rest store, but there are plenty of other attractions there. In Chinese lore the Celestial Dragon is intimately linked to the emperor. All representations of Dragons made for the emperor in his porcelain factory or designed to be seen in the emperors' palaces from Ming Dynasty times have five toes or claws. These may be full models like those on the parade jar lids in the Long Gallery or they may appear on textiles, embroidered on the royal robes, painted on porcelain or in lacquered panels. Less important Dragons, those not made for the emperor traditionally only have three toes. Early examples may have four toes.

At Osterley we have examples of five, four, and three toed dragons. The one with three toes has been repaired so that it does not match its companion with five toes. The beauty and quality of the designs on these two jars just inside the double doors to the Long Gallery from the Roman entrance hall tell us that they must be Imperial Dragons created for the pleasure of the Emperor of China.

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The Dragon appears as one of the twelve signs of the Chinese year and is particularly associated with good luck fertility and prosperity. The year of the Dragon is always considered to be the most propitious for everyone. Next time you are in the Long Gallery have a look at the splendid pairs of Parade Jars some made for the emperor of China and bearing his special symbol – the 5-toed dragon.