

# The Friends of Osterley Park

A Supporters' Group for the National Trust

## NEWSLETTER

Issue 66 AUTUMN 2007 £1 (free to members)

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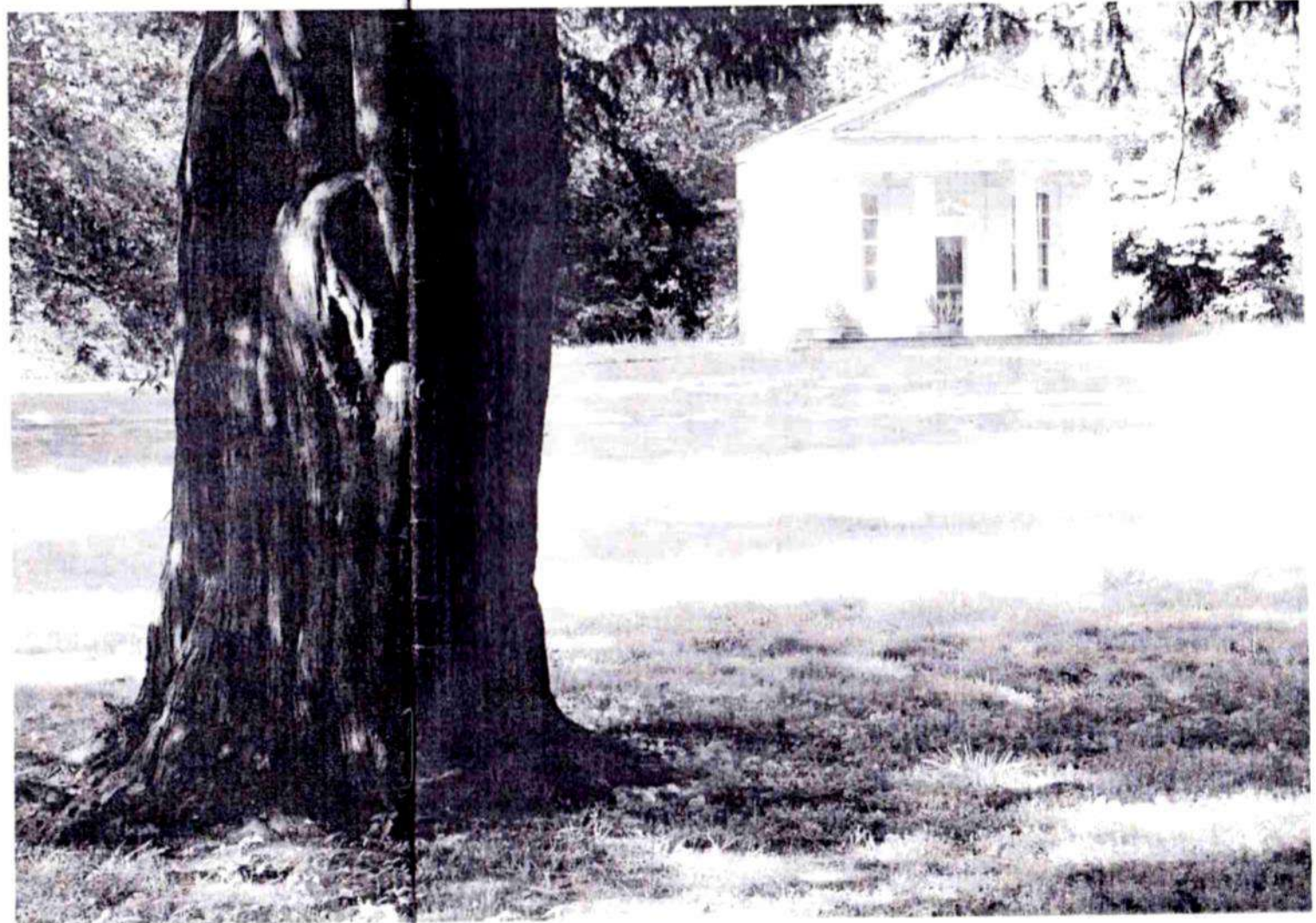
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Temple to Pan  
Osterley Park  
18th century

see article on page 14

Photo and cover design  
John Stacey



# Friends of Osterley Park Autumn Reception

Old Brewhouse, Osterley Park

Wednesday 24 October 2007

7 for 7.30pm



a talk on

## London Voices at Osterley



**Wine will  
be served**



**2nd draw  
of "100 club"**

**Car Parking in the Stable-Yard**

Please come early  
Park Gates will be closed  
from 7.30pm  
until after the Reception



from the Chairman Ian Conacher

We are coming to the end of a summer which has brought extremes of weather: scorching sun, heavy rain and strong wind. Nevertheless, the Trust's venture in starting the restoration of the gardens behind the House, and charging for admission, seems to have been a great success.

"Friends" events have not been so successful financially. We had a variety of speakers at our "Winter Lectures", but attendance was reduced. At Osterley Day, our stalls collected only £350. In past years we raised more than twice this sum for the "Friends" and ultimately for the Trust. In spite of the publicity in our Newsletter, not many members visited our stalls.

The good news is that Jim Tickle's programme of day trips have been well supported and his six day tour of South Wales was sold out within days of publication.

We have been pleading for some months for members to fill vacancies on the Committee. The situation is now critical.

With advancing years and health problems, my wife, Audrey, and I are actively looking for a smaller property; the maintenance of our house and garden is beyond our physical capabilities. We hope to find a property within easy reach of Osterley but we cannot guarantee this. I may be unable to continue as Chairman.

We are already without an Hon. Treasurer. I do not wish to continue as Chairman and Acting Hon. Treasurer beyond the end of our Financial Year on 31<sup>st</sup> December; if no help is forthcoming then I shall resign as Chairman.

According to our Constitution, we should also have a Vice Chairman/Chairman Elect and members to deal with Publicity, Events, and Recruitment. "Friends" need to have Committee members dedicated to these areas for the Group to continue to flourish.

I hope that by the time of the Autumn Reception in October, members will have come forward to fill some of these posts.

from where?



Following this year's theme of "Myths, Secrets and Legends" from London Voices, where did these beasts come from? The beast on the left was seen on one of Jim Tickle's day trips while the beast on the right can be seen somewhere in Osterley.



Answers: beast on the left see page 17; beast on the right see page 10.

The Soane Museum are holding a free exhibition

### VAULTING AMBITION

#### The Adam Brothers, Contractors to the Metropolis in the Reign of George III

Soane Museum, 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3BP (nearest tube Holborn) 14 September 2007 to 12 January 2008 (Tuesday to Saturday 10-5; closed Sunday, Monday, Bank holidays and Christmas Eve. To avoid queuing – waiting times can be up to 1 hour - the Museum suggests you make your visit as early as possible. Group booking required for 6 or more.)

In the 18th century Robert Adam and his brothers embarked on a stunning regeneration scheme for a huge brownfield site in the centre of London to be known as the Adelphi. This exhibition will tell the story of this architecturally ambitious project and of the men behind it, the uncertain nature of their grand venture; the devastating bank crashes of 1772 and their recourse to a Lottery to escape financial disaster. Exquisite drawings from the Adam collection in the Soane Museum will be displayed alongside impressive paintings of the Adelphi, along with documents, drawings, paintings and family portraits lent by public and private collections - many never seen before.

For more information, please contact William Palin, 020 7440 4246. [wpalin@soane.org.uk](mailto:wpalin@soane.org.uk)

## Adam Houses from the archives of Country Life



The Georgian Group are holding a free exhibition Adam Houses from the archives of Country Life 6 Fitzroy Square, London W1 (nearest tube Warren Street) Monday 5th to Friday 16th November 2007 (Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-1pm).

Apart from being one of the greatest British architects of the later eighteenth century, Robert Adam has the distinction of being the only architect whose name appears in the Oxford English Dictionary to describe a style of architecture, furniture and design. The study of Adam's work was pioneered by Country Life with the publication of articles by Arthur T. Bolton in 1913, culminating in 1922 in his magisterial monograph *The Works of Robert and James Adam*. From that time to the present, hardly a year has passed without Country Life articles on Adam houses. This exhibition, coinciding with the publication of a book on the same subject by leading Adam expert Eileen Harris, plunders the Country Life archives to provide a pictorial survey of Adam's country houses and town houses, arranged chronologically to show the development of his style. There has been no visual survey of the development of the Adam style of domestic architecture and decoration for a wider audience for over thirty years, so the exhibition is not to be missed.

For more information, please phone 087 1750 2936 or email [kirsten@georgiangroup.org.uk](mailto:kirsten@georgiangroup.org.uk)



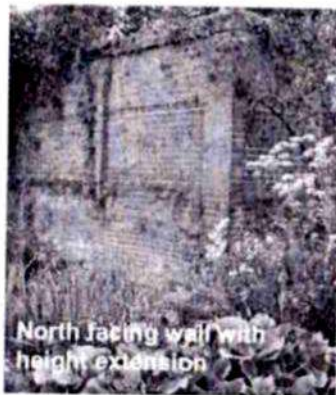
"Friends" are organising a group visit on Friday 9 November: meet at Warren Street tube at 10.30am; refreshments from 10.45am and going into the exhibition 11am to 12 noon. If you would like to join us, the cost will be £4: £1 to cover refreshments and £3 donation to the "Friends". Wei Hei Kipling (contact details on cover) will be taking 'phone and email bookings from 9 October.

## American Plants at Osterley Mike Buffin

At a Gardens Study Day on 7 June, run by Osterley in partnership with the London Parks and Gardens Trust, Mike Buffin, NT gardens' adviser, gave a talk on the 18<sup>th</sup> century fashion for American Gardens. The following are extracts from his talk edited by Wei Hei Kipling.

Between 1730 and 1760 numerous new and rare plants arrived from America via the American Botanist and Naturalist, John Bartram (1699-1777) who collected extensively along the Eastern Seaboard. His new introductions were distributed by Peter Collinson (1694-1764). Not every shipment arrived in good condition and plants were often stolen or just simply washed overboard during the arduous sea journey. Collinson went to quite extreme lengths to ensure their safe passage; he would insist that shipments were placed in the captain's cabin for safe keeping, with the most prized plants being stored under the captain's bed. By 1780, American plants were becoming more widely planted and they were included in shrubberies and in the wider landscape: indeed in 1788, Mrs Sarah Child placed a sizeable order of plants from Gordon, Dermer and Thomson, London nursery, which contained a large quantity of American plants.

However, the temperature was far colder than today and there were many failures, as many plants could not survive the damp London winters. Unusual microclimates were set up using a north facing wall where the plants were protected from the heat of the mid-day sun by the shade cast by the wall, and thus the perfect situation for those woodland plants which were difficult to cultivate. In fact, the existing American border at Osterley is planted in such a location, and the height of the wall has even been extended to shade



North facing wall with height extension

the width of the border.

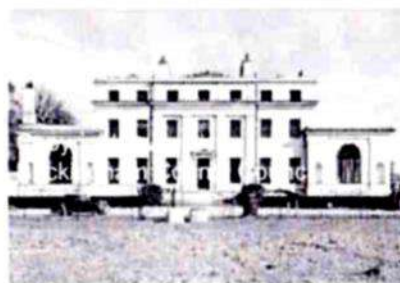
(Continued on page 7)

## Hughenden and Disraeli

At the lecture on "Hughenden and Disraeli" on 15 March 2007, the speaker, Anne Savage, took some questions which she was not able to answer at the time. Her comments are set out below.

Benjamin Disraeli became Viscount Hughenden, Earl of Beaconsfield in 1876. Beaconsfield was his constituency when he was Prime Minister in 1868 and again in 1874-80.

Ormskirk erected a statue to Disraeli in 1884 to commemorate him becoming Earl of Beaconsfield. The Earl of Derby, who had



been Foreign Secretary under Disraeli supported the construction of the statue. It was removed to its present position in 1993.

Wilton Park (see left), known as the White House, was a three-storey Palladian Mansion built in 1779 for the Capel family and sold to Josias Du Pre, the former

governor of Madras who was Conservative MP for Bucks 1839-1871. In World War 2, Wilton Park was the Combined Services Interrogation Centre and was visited by Rudolph Hess, Von Runstedt and Bunsch.

**American Plants** (Continued from page 6)

In 1788, a newspaper noted "The whole of the park, gardens, and grounds, are arranged with that beautiful order and regularity that are the distinguished marks of everything at Osterley. Much of this is to be ascribed to Mrs Child's own good taste - and much to the skill and attention of her steward (Head Gardener), Mr Bunce"

Further research is ongoing into the layout of the garden. However, one thing is clear, Mrs Child had more than a passing interest in American plants, and as such, her prized possessions were widely displayed in the garden areas, and this is something that we intend to recreate in the pleasure garden at Osterley Park.

## from the Property

### 'Step change'

Osterley Park is one of only four NT properties selected to be part of the NT's new 'step change' project. This project aims to pilot new ways of working at properties, regions, countries and central office - looking at systems, processes and capacity - to ensure that Property Managers and their teams can deliver the Trust's new strategy. Osterley will be concentrating on one area of the NT strategy: Engaging with Supporters. Improvements will include items such as park signage, house and park information and interpretation, and a decent spend on marketing and advertising in order to attract more people in. They are currently doing the research work in these areas and expect to be able to make some improvements over the winter, with the remainder of the work being completed for July/August 2008.



### Sonic Art

Osterley has been trying to identify volunteering opportunities for students from West Thames College. A link was set up with the arts department, with the music department in particular. Students visited the House and Garden twice before developing their soundscapes and were fascinated by the House's grandeur and its stories. They were thrilled that their pieces of music were available for visitors to listen to, either at the Property, or via a link on the National Trust Web site. Osterley hopes to continue the link with West Thames College and to work with them again. Whilst the soundscapes may not be everyone's musical tastes, they are evidence of the students responding to Osterley in their way. Wei Hei found the weblink <http://www.electrica.com/osterley07/> more comprehensible as that was accompanied by graphics which changed with the music.

## The Family Entrance



The family entrance (see left) is located on the north side of Osterley quite close to the entrance to the gardens (see below) and so it does make some sense to use it as a public entrance to the house. In particular, the family entrance was very popular during the exhibition by Isleworth

& District Embroiderers when the more frail visitors did not want to climb to the main entrance at the first floor only to come back down to the Jersey Galleries.

Current feedback shows that the family entrance is more popular with paying visitors (perhaps because it is nearer the places where tickets are sold) and the main entrance is more popular with NT members (who do not need to buy tickets and so enjoy the magnificent entrance through the transparent portico). There is also feedback that some people are put off coming in the family entrance because they think it is for families only (presumably, the original distinction was between family and guests or servants rather than the present distinction between families and people without children). With the present arrangement, the family entrance is less popular as a duty for room stewards as it is relatively quiet.

Osterley will be using the family entrance again next season (probably having both entrances open), but the plan is to have more maps/plans and visitor orientation to help people find their way around better.



Congratulations to Alan Rideout, House Steward, who completed the London to Brighton cycle ride in June and raised over £550 for the British Heart Foundation. Has he already started preparing for next year's event? (see left)

## More from the Property

### London Voices

4 July saw the opening of the Footman's Room, an interactive space for children to enjoy. Staff and volunteers were able to preview the Room at a coffee morning with "Courageous Cake" (did you know you could use rhubarb to make cake?) In the early evening, there was a celebration event, with a lovely buffet, for families from Berkeley Primary School who had taken part in workshops at Osterley earlier in the year.



The activities in the Footman's Room are based on the theme for this year's London Voices project "Myths, Secrets and Legends" with: dressing up in costumes of magical creatures (see left); listening to recordings of mythical stories by our storyteller Diana (see below); and creating a legendary bird with the giant jigsaw (see far below). In addition, there is a reading corner where children can find out more about mythical creatures and a place where visitors can do some drawing.

The Footman's Room is located on the ground floor and is a good place to direct visitors with young children who may want a rest from "don't touch". Osterley Research Forum continued their research over the summer and their findings are with researcher Sally Stafford to put together something for room stewards.

The beast in the right picture on page 4 is the Child's eagle at the top of the mirror in the corridor of the Childs' suite. The picture is a detail from the London Voices "I-Spy" activity for children in the House.



## from the 100 Club

Ron Piper

The first draw for the current competition was made on Osterley Day in July and the winners were as follows:

£100	42	Miss W H Thorne
£ 40	103	Ms A Kesselaar
£ 20	3	Mr J & Mrs A Dekker
£ 10	83	Mrs S Haisman
£ 5	138	Mrs J Nimz



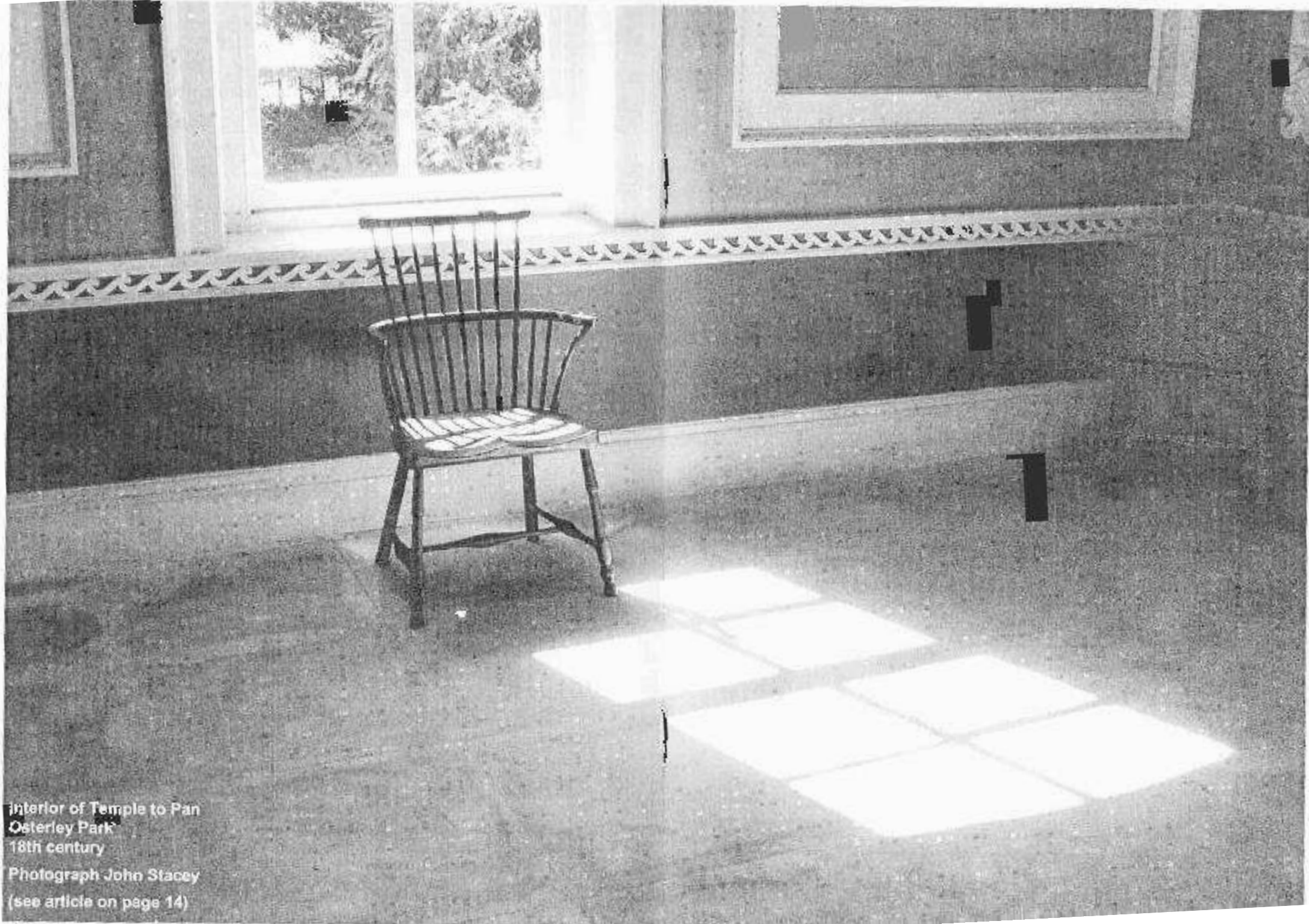
The second draw will be held on 24 October 2007.

The 100 Club was started in January 1989. The basis of the Club is that members purchase shares at £12 per annum each. A number is allocated to each share which goes into a draw four times a year. Half the subscriptions form the prize fund and the other half is used by the "Friends" to fund projects which benefit Osterley. Since its inception, the Club has paid out £7120 in prizes with a similar amount available for Osterley projects.

At the start of the new competition in April, the number of shares purchased had dropped. Although I was pleased to receive several new members, 40 shares were not renewed and the overall total has dropped from the expected 150 to 120. With this figure, there will only be about £700 available for prizes (plus a similar amount for the Trust) instead of the £800 plus expected.

The situation can of course be improved. There are still three draws to come and I can offer membership for £9 per share for the rest of this competition. If you would like to belatedly renew your membership, increase your holding or join for the first time, please send your cheque made payable to "Friends of Osterley" to me (Ron Piper) at 44 Killowen Avenue, Northolt, UB5 4QT with your name, address and telephone number and an SAE for your membership card and the rules of the competition.

Please note that the 100 Club is a private lottery and shares can only be allocated to paid up members of the "Friends".



Interior of Temple to Pan  
Osterley Park  
18th century  
Photograph John Stacey  
(see article on page 14)

## The Temple to Pan at Osterley Park

(see photographs on cover and page 8)

Margaret Friday

The Doric Temple in the Gardens at Osterley is something of a mystery: who built it and when was it constructed?

Was it James or Chambers ... or someone else? Tradition says the Greenwich architect John James built it in about 1720. This would have been in the days when Sir Francis Child the younger (1684-1740) was in residence. It is

thought that the formal gardens surrounding the house in the 1730s, including the temple, were designed for him. (Richard Bradley dedicated his book "The Fruit Garden Displayed" to Sir Francis Child.) Francis and his brother Samuel (1693-1752) may have been inspired by the formal Royal Gardens at Hampton Court Palace. Samuel Child is thought to have asked the royal gardeners Henry Wise and George London for advice when planning the Osterley gardens.

The formal gardens, as portrayed in Rocque's map of 1741, have long regimented avenues of trees running from the East and West fronts of the house but no Temple to Pan is depicted in the grounds. This suggests that it was built for Samuel Child at a later date. William Chambers may have been responsible for the rococo style interior decorations at that time: guidebooks in the 1970s suggest that Chambers was the architect.

The gardens were completely changed when Samuel's sons Francis and then Robert engaged Robert Adam to remodel their old-fashioned Elizabethan mansion making it into a prestigious neo-classical villa with a natural looking park. "Capability" Brown had designed such a park for Lord Holderness at Syon Hill.

The well-proportioned Doric columned exterior of the temple is



Doric columned exterior

(Continued on page 15)

## from the Property: The Gardens today

The gardeners have been quite pleased with the amount of rain this summer (!). The last few years have been very dry (summer and winter) but the mature trees and shrubs have had a good top up this summer and have put on a lot of new extension growth. As we are on a free-draining soil at Osterley it has not affected the working regime too badly - apart from the mowing!



In the "Friends" newsletter of September 2006, we reported that horse chestnut trees in the park have been seriously affected by the activities of the Camirerer moth. Fortunately, due to the amount of rain this year, the trees have fared much better - the Camirerer moth (and the virus it allows in) cause much less damage when the trees have enough water.

## Temple to Pan

(Continued from page 14)

embellished with rococo interior decorations. Facing the door are portraits of Isaac Newton and Alexander Pope representing the sciences and the arts. (There is also a portrait of Newton opposite the main door as you enter Osterley House.) The four remaining heads represent the four seasons and the designs in the frames refer to the four elements, air, fire, earth and water - themes repeated in the Gobelin Tapestries in the house.



One of the elements

By 1782, when the inventory was taken, the Temple to Pan sat in a "natural" park with curving waterways, lawns, grazing areas for deer, ornamental trees and shrubs and a shaded gravel walk complemented flowers. At that time the Temple contained a dining table and chairs and was probably used to serve that new and fashionable repast - afternoon tea. Next time you are in the Pleasure Gardens take a closer look at this mysterious little gem



## Excursions

Wei Hei Kipling

The past few months have seen "Friends" and volunteers enjoy three day trips organised by Jim Tickle. The advance planning, consideration and care shown by Jim, and by our driver Barrie, in each of the trips was much appreciated.

Our visit to Coughton Court in June took place in rain and sun. As the motorway services that Barrie had intended to use were flooded, he took us on a lovely detour through the Cotswold countryside including a lunch stop at Broadway, Worcs., "often referred to as the Jewel of the Cotswolds". Our first visit was meant to be to Kinwarton Dovecote (see left) but we could not get close enough to be able to walk there in the rain.



Photo: Peter Cock

Those who followed David Dimbleby's "How we built Britain" may

have seen views of Rushton Triangular Lodge in Northamptonshire. Jim therefore made the effort to arrange for us to go to the Lodge (see right) as part of our trip to Kirby Hall and Gardens in July even though the Lodge would not normally have been open on that day. This was an extra that was enjoyed by everyone in the party.



The August trip went to Sandham Memorial Chapel and Highclere Castle with an additional stop at Newbury for lunch. Those of you who have been to the Chapel before will wonder how a coach-load of visitors managed to squeeze in. Jim split the party in two and also arranged for each group to have refreshments at the local pub while they were waiting.

The beast in the left photograph on page 4 is a wyvern, a winged dragon with only two legs and a scaly tail and the heraldic beast of the Carnaevons of Highclere Castle. It forms the decorative part of a boot scraper at the entrance to the castle.

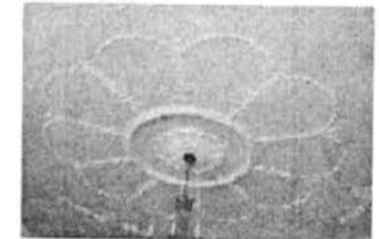
## The Old Farmhouse

Wei Hei Kipling



The Old Farmhouse at Osterley is an 18th century brick house with a two-storey bow at the rear (see left). The drawing room on the ground floor in the bow is reputed to be designed by Robert Adam and the ceiling (see below) was made using Adam moulds

The frieze in the drawing room, however, is not by Adam while the original fireplace was removed to Middleton Park when the 9th Earl of Jersey married his first wife.



At the "Friends" AGM in May, the Howards kindly issued an invitation to members to visit the Old Farmhouse. Accordingly, one fine Sunday afternoon in June, a group of us enjoyed drinks on the lawn, a wander around the one acre formal garden and a view of the drawing room.

Many thanks to the Howards for their hospitality and we hope to repeat this enjoyable event next year.



### from our driver

Barrie got his coach driving licence in the Forces in 1957 and then drove trucks for a few years. In 1964, he established his own company European Heritage Tours, although he now hires coaches from Westbus ( the "west" referred to Western Australia, not west

London). He has driven for the "Friends" since our inception and there are several customers for whom he has worked for over 30 years. He has enjoyed his work but, in his 70th year, feels that he needs to stop some time and this may be the year. Even so, he may still join us as a passenger!

## A Welcome in the Hillside

Jim Tickle & Hazel Collison



The "Friends" with driver Barrie Pyle at Castell Coch. Photo: John Stacey

On the morning of Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September, forty-seven Friends of Osterley joined the coach for our annual break, staying this year at the University of Cardiff's Talybont Halls of Residence. En route our first stop was a welcome coffee break at the charming old Fox Inn beside the River Windrush at Great Barrington in Oxfordshire. We continued our journey through Gloucestershire to admire the beautiful views of the River Wye from the high vantage point of Symonds Yat and then on to the lofty Goodrich Castle, where we were joined by Tony and Hazel Collison who had motored down from their home in Lincolnshire. Later, on arrival at Cardiff, we met a third London emigrant, Olive Marke, who had driven over from her home in Bath. All three of these are still keen Friends of Osterley and join us each year for our annual holiday. I am indebted to Hazel who kindly agreed to contribute the following report. She writes.....

(Continued on page 19)

Welcome in the Hillside (Continued from page 18)

"The visit to Hay-on-Wye on Tuesday was enhanced with a wonderful drive over the Black Mountains by our indispensable coach driver, Barrie. Some of us were lucky enough to witness the remaining members of the Temperance Seven Jazz Band giving an impromptu concert processing through the streets in a tribute to a deceased group member. Browsing the book-stalls in Hay was followed by an afternoon visit to Abbey Dore Gardens, deep in the countryside of the Golden Valley.



Photo: John Stacey

"On Wednesday, moated Caerphilly Castle (see left), with one of its towers leaning more grotesquely than that of Pisa, was a surprise to most of us. The Castle, covering thirty acres, was much larger than we expected and offered magnificent views over a wide area.

Sadly, none of us came away with any Caerphilly cheese! Next we went to Caerleon, one of the best preserved Roman legionary sites in Britain, complete with its barracks, amphitheatre and a most impressive baths complex.

"We encountered our first National Trust properties in South Wales on Thursday when we visited Dinefwr Park and Castle with its eight hundred acres of park encompassing an Iron Age fort, two Roman forts, a medieval castle, an 18<sup>th</sup> century farm and 17<sup>th</sup> century mansion. It really needed two or three days to do it justice! Amazingly, inside the mansion we were invited to sit on antique chairs and even handle the artefacts. Jim gave a tinkle on the ivories of their grand piano, which delighted the room stewards.



"The afternoon trip to Dolaucothi Gold Mines (NT) was a great success, with the more stout-hearted of us donning our hard hats and miners' lamps and venturing into the side of the mountain – sadly returning without any gold! However, some of the party

(Continued on page 20)

**Welcome in the Hillside** (Continued from page 19)

came away with jewellery purchased in the shop.

"Friday, and for many of us the highlight of the tour was a visit to the amazing Castell Coch (see right) – an absolute gem. From the outside, half-hidden on a wooded hillside, it looks like a fairy tale castle. Built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by the Marquess of Bute and designer William Burges, Castell Coch is described as 'a remarkable blend of High Victorian Gothic Fantasy on solid medieval masonry'. Inside, it is richly decorated from floor to ceiling in the most glorious colours and designs and you can only gaze at it in wonder, - a very much under-publicised



Photo: John Stacey

attraction. Then we went on to Aberdulais Falls which, due to the dry weather, were not at their most spectacular, but the information given by our guides on the history of the site and on the Trust's hydroelectric involvement proved very interesting. Finally on this very busy day we had a 'taster' of the Museum of Welsh Life, - Saint Fagan's, the most visited attraction in South Wales – and no wonder. The open air section contains over forty original buildings moved from various parts of Wales and re-erected to show how people lived in past centuries – fascinating! Another area contained a large so-called 'castle', but really a very grand manor house surrounded by fabulous gardens.

"Really one of the most enjoyable and, it must be said, gruelling trips, especially for Jim and Barrie whom we cannot thank enough for their dedication. Certainly a holiday to remember."

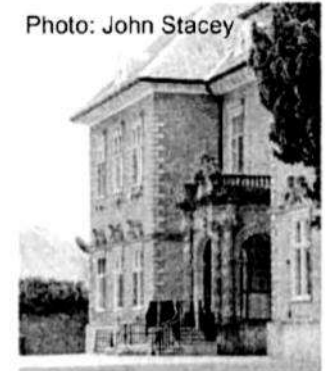
On Saturday morning, Hazel and Tony left on their long return journey to Lincolnshire, leaving me to describe our final journey home. But the tour hadn't finished. Firstly, we explored the amazing parts of Cardiff Castle, another fantastic Victorian Gothic extravaganza by Lord Bute and his friend William Burges. We gazed in awe at the riot of colour and decorative schemes which

(Continued on page 21)

**Welcome in the Hillside** (Continued from page 20)

outshone even those of Castell Coch. And before crossing the 'new' Severn bridge into home territory, we stopped just before Newport where I couldn't resist introducing the Friends to one of my personal favourite properties in South Wales, - Tredegar House (see right), for over five hundred years the ancestral home of one of the most prominent Welsh dynasties – the Morgans, later the Lords Tredegar. Parts of the House date back to medieval times, but most of the building that we see today was built between 1664 and 1672 and was recently beautifully restored and refurbished by Newport City Council. If you ever find yourself near Newport, do pay Tredegar House a visit.

Photo: John Stacey



On the rest of the journey home, the coach was strangely quieter than usual. Were they all sleeping? Had we completely worn them all out? Ah well, sweet dreams, I hope!

Sadly, this was the tenth and final university based holiday when we've had the excellent services of our great friend and coach driver, Barrie Pyle, who is retiring from the driving seat at the end of this year. I feel sure that we all wish him a very fond farewell and I for one have been most grateful for his help and advice

since we embarked on our first "Friends" day trip in 1993. Our last trip on October 8<sup>th</sup> to Upton House will be our 92<sup>nd</sup> day excursion, taking in some 137 destinations. I'm afraid it's quite impossible to calculate the number of miles driven, but many thanks Barrie.



Barrie and Jim