

# The Friends of Osterley Park

A SUPPORTERS' GROUP FOR  THE NATIONAL TRUST

## NEWSLETTER

Issue 71 WINTER 2008 £1 (free to members)

### Useful contacts

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John James  
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#### Newsletter Editor

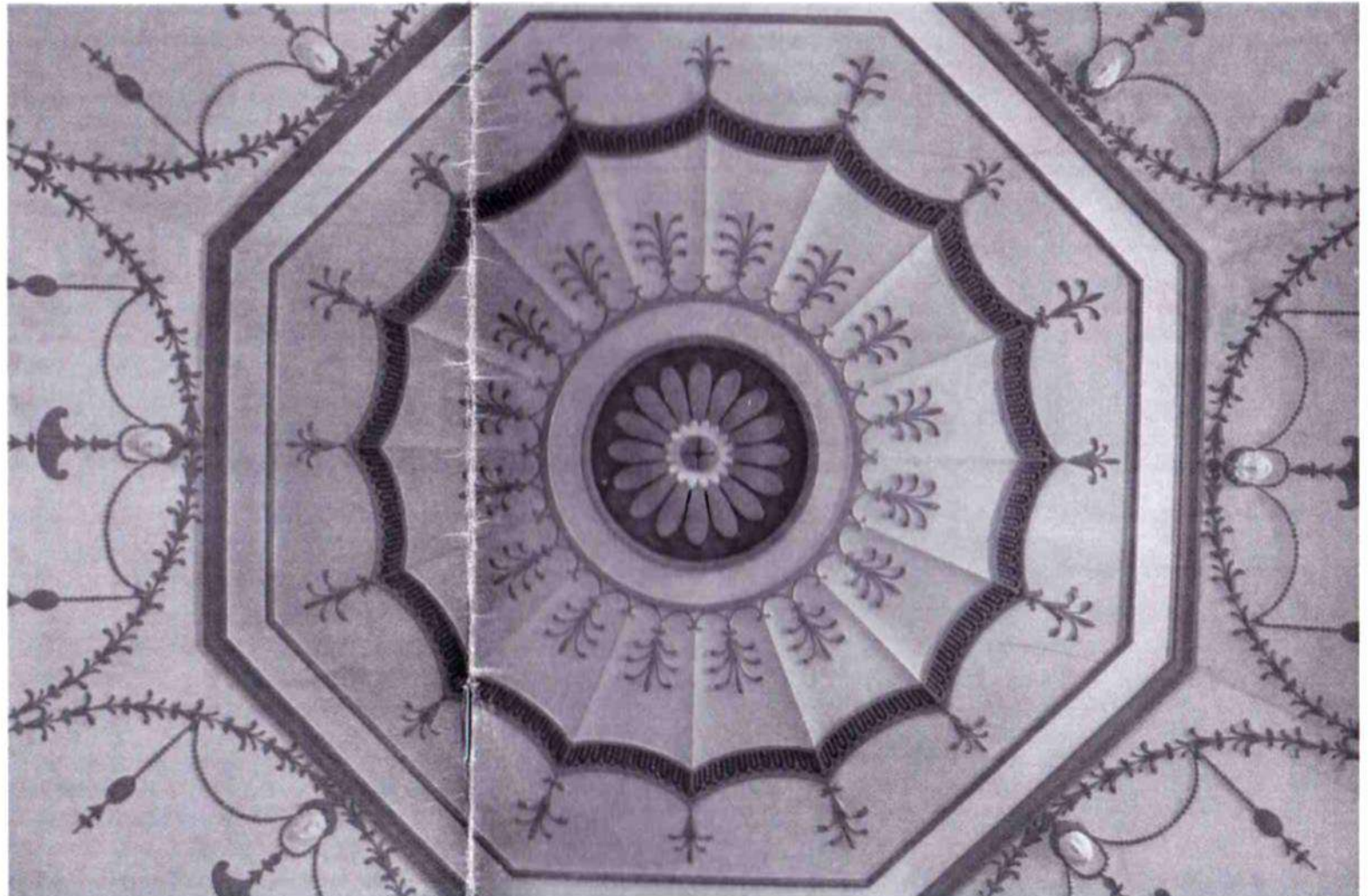
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Ceiling, Etruscan Garden Room  
Osterley Park

see article on page 14

Photo John Stacey

Printed by:  
Colormax (West Ealing)  
020 8566 1155




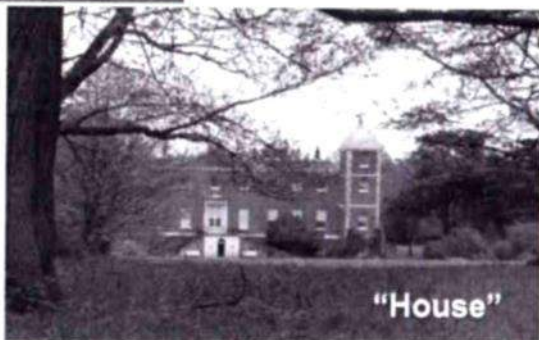
## John Stacey Photographs – Limited Edition

Following the many positive comments received about John's photographs in the Autumn 2008 issue of the Newsletter, John has kindly offered to give "Friends" an opportunity to purchase a limited edition print of either one or both of the photographs in aid of Friends of Osterley. Each print will be size approximately 12 inches by 10 inches and unmounted. Price: £12 each inc. p&p or £20 for two inc. p&p. If you wish to take advantage of this opportunity, please make an order before Saturday 31 January 2009 by sending a cheque payable to "Friends of Osterley Park" for the requisite amount with your name and address and advising which photograph(s) you want ("Tree" or "House" or both) to

Douglas Craik (020 8977 6449)

118 Fairfax Road, Teddington, Middlesex, TW11 9BS

A black & white reminder of the photographs is set out below – obviously, your prints will be in colour. 



from the Chairman Ian Conacher

Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year 

I hope that this issue will reach you before or during the Christmas Holiday, so that I can wish members a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year", in addition to looking back on our achievements in 2008 and forward to our proposals for 2009. Details of Jim Tickle's plans for touring the North East are given on another page.

The past year has been moderately successful; the full accounts will be prepared by our Hon. Treasurer, Douglas Craik (known to many as "Dougie the Buggy" for his service as a volunteer driver of the courtesy bus), but I can give some notes on our performance.

During 2008 we have continued our support for our permanent projects, so far: £736.56 for plants and seeds for Lesley Orton's team of volunteer gardeners growing



flowers (*see above*) for display in the House; £392.99 for repair and maintenance of the self-drive battery cars (much appreciated by less mobile visitors to the Gardens); £356.00 for the printing of the Trust's "Osterley Newsletter", and £195.00 to the education team for the "Craft Cart".

Our income came principally from Subscriptions, the "100 Club", and a small percentage profit on Jim Tickle's trips and tours and Wei Hei Kipling's "London Visits".

The takings at the "Osterley Day" event in the Park amounted to £472.50, much lower than in previous years, and the low attendance at our "Winter Events" in St Mary's Parish Hall


(Continued on page 4)

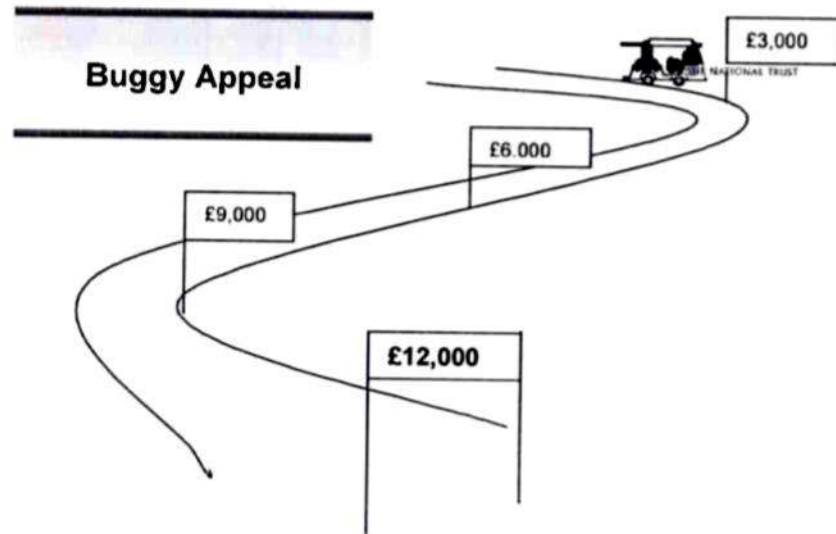
from the Chairman (Continued from page 3)

resulted in an excess of income over expenditure of only £29.00. The fees paid for excellent speakers resulted in a substantial loss on the talks; the harpsichord recital was well-supported and succeeded in bringing the series into profit.

Your Committee consider that the weekday evening events in the winter months are no longer viable, and that alternative fund-raising activities should be pursued, possibly including events at the House, and perhaps open to non-members.

We had hoped that committee member Jackie Marfleet would take responsibility for the detailed organisation for these: unfortunately, due to the demands of her job, she has had to resign. **We urgently need a member to come forward and take over this vital duty. Call me on (020) 8560 8523.**

Finally, I can report that donations to the Courtesy Bus Replacement Fund now total approximately £2,400. Our thanks to the generous donors – but we still need much more to reach our target of £12,000. 




## from the Property Staff Changes


Our very best wishes to **Emily Toettcher**, Audience and Community Development Manager, who will be going on maternity leave in January as her baby is expected in March. The stork is on call!



**Catherine Beazley** joined Osterley in November as the Property Administrator. Catherine looks after all the volunteer and staff admin and she is the person you are most likely to speak to if you call Osterley! A fine art graduate who most recently has been working in the advertising industry, Catherine grew up in Cornwall and loves nothing more than angling and foraging for wild foods. She is also a keen painter and illustrator being inspired by a love of flora and fauna.

**Claire Eaglesham** has just taken up a new post at Osterley of Assistant Visitor Services Manager. Claire will be responsible for all the group bookings along with the weddings and conference business. She recently graduated from the University of Kent and spent the last two summers working as an Events Assistant for the Kent County Show. Before this she trained as a Massage Therapist and has always been interested in natural health. She has lots of different hobbies which include photography and baking and loves getting out and about in the countryside. 

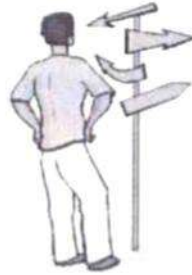


**The Cork Oak**, down by the lake on the edge of the Cedar Lawn (off to the left as you look at the front of the House and sitting in the border that divides the cedar lawn from the Garden) has been selected as one of the top twenty "Great Trees of London 2008". 

## from the House

What are your thoughts about the new interpretation and signage that has been tried out in the House over the summer?

At the end of the season, time was spent obtaining feedback from staff, volunteers and visitors about some of the changes. There was specific focus on the new multimedia guides as the resource likely to need the most "tweaking". As well as speaking to different visitors, there was a special day for volunteers to come in and try out the guides just after the end of the season. The feedback overall was very positive and the multimedia guides were really welcomed by visitors. Some changes will be made to the content, particularly to shorten the overall length of the tours. The technical issues that arose during testing will be rectified with company who produced the tours. The new multimedia guides will be in place for start of season March 2009. A tour for visually impaired people and a tour for hearing impaired people will also be available, and the content of the tours will be available to download online.



The new film in the stables has been popular – some adjustments will be made to the sound and the final version will also have subtitles. You may also have explored the new exhibition rooms and the projections in the Servants' Hall – did you recognise any of the servants!

Over the winter, the Step Change project will be finished with the completion of new signage for the Park, the construction of a bird hide for Middle Lake, and a few bits and pieces for the House. One of these is a final version of the route plan for the House, which will be printed on a material (like credit card material) similar to the one for the Garden.

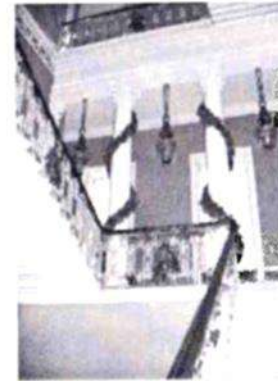


## Christmas at Osterley

Wei Hei Kipling  
Photos: Hannah Purcell

The House opened for Christmas on the first weekend of December and I visited on Sunday 7 December.

My elderly guests appreciated the availability of a buggy to take them from the car park to the Stable Tearooms where we enjoyed our lunch.



Familiar faces said "hello" as we made our way around the House. A kissing bough had been hung in the stairwell and there were garlands around the columns of the stairwell at the level of the principal floor (see left). The first floor was set up to show an 18th century Christmas: a table laid for Christmas was set out in the Eating Room (see above) and there was a lovely buffet of fruit and different sweetmeats in the Entrance Hall.

Below stairs, we entered a more austere world with a Second World War Christmas. Ration books and coupons were displayed in the kitchen and a cook was making a Christmas pudding (see below). The beer cellars were used as air raid shelters. Glyn Mills, who had bought Child & Co. after the First World War, located one of their branches at Osterley for the duration of the Second World War. There were over 500 visitors to the House !!



# British Museum celebrates 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Margaret Friday



Photo: wallyg (flickr)

On 15<sup>th</sup> January 2009 The British Museum (*see left*) will have been open for 250 years. But how did this first national museum in the world come to be? It all began with Hans Sloane and his collection. It was fashionable in the age of the Enlightenment (1680-1825) to collect things and attempt to use

them to help in understanding the world in a reasonable manner.

We know that the Child family collected things from China, Francis Child had a fabulous library which included 10 Caxtons and his brother Robert collected antique coins. The coins can still be seen in the silver vault along with the Child and Jersey family silver which was restored by Sarah Sophia. Perhaps the Child brothers aged 20 and 24 in 1759 visited The British Museum when it first opened. The portrait of Sir Isaac Newton in the Osterley entrance hall confirms that the Child family were active supporters of the Enlightenment ideal. To quote Alexander Pope "Nature and Nature's Laws lay hid in Night. God said *Let Newton be!*, and all was *Light*."

Hans Sloane (*see right*) was a contemporary of Francis Child, founder of Child's Bank and his sons Francis and Robert the younger, for he lived from 1660 – 1753. He was physician to George II, and President of the Royal Society. He kept a collection in his home which he called everything for everyone. In his will he asked the King to purchase his collection for £20,000 for he had two daughters and was concerned that they be well provided for when he died. His will



Photo: Maistora (flickr)

also asked that the collection be kept together "for the good of all". The king did not grant Sloane's wish, but MPs, FRSs and other important people in the nation agreed that Sloane's collection was so important that it ought to be kept together so Parliament set up a National Lottery to raise the funds and purchase the collection said to be worth at least £100,000.

The British Museum Act of 1753 confirmed Sloane's wish that the museum be open to all "for the advancement and improvement of knowledge". It was then necessary to find a place to display this incredible number of objects, books, paintings, fossils, instruments of natural philosophy, stuffed animals etc. When Sloane died there were 71,000 numbered things in his collection and some that he hadn't got around to numbering. The original intention was to house the collection in the City of London but no houses in the City were big enough. Montagu House and Buckingham House were for sale but Buckingham House was on the outskirts of London and it was felt people might not travel that far to see a collection of things. Montagu House, then set in fields and gardens was acquired and prepared and the collections installed including 3 stuffed giraffes in the entrance hall. The museum was overseen by a Principal librarian and there were three departments: Printed books and prints, Manuscripts with coins and drawings, and Natural and Artificial Products which included everything else.

When The British Museum opened its doors in Bloomsbury on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1759 it was free "to all persons desirous of seeing and viewing the collections...

satisfying the desire of the curious, ...for the improvement, knowledge and information of all persons".

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**for the improvement,  
knowledge and  
information of all persons**

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This palace of good things was in fact the first universal and national museum in the world and after 250 years it remains as Hans Sloane wished free of charge and offering "everything for everyone".

(Continued on page 10)

**British Museum** (Continued from page 9)

The Enlightenment Gallery (*see right*) was opened five years ago with the idea of displaying the museum as it would have looked in its early days. Many objects were borrowed from the other museums that the British Museum has spawned. In 1823 the paintings went to begin the National Gallery, later the stuffed animals, dinosaur bones and fossils went to The Natural History Museum, instruments of Natural Philosophy to the Science Museum and finally, in 1998 the British Library moved to new premises at St. Pancras leaving the British Museum with a large neoclassical style room designed by Robert Smirke to hold George III's library. The original pale yellow ceiling colours were recreated and the very fine parquet flooring restored. Some of the old display cases were refurbished and copies made of others so that examples from early collections including items which had belonged to Hans Sloane could be seen as they would have been displayed in the eighteenth century. There are free tours of this gallery at 12.30 on most days of the week and during 2009 there will be additional free tours and talks to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary.



Photo: Salerie (flickr)

If you haven't visited recently do come and satisfy your curiosity. Remember, The British Museum never stops collecting so there are dramatic pieces of modern sculpture and exciting new prints



Photo: Ruth Gregory  
[www.picturesofengland.com](http://www.picturesofengland.com)

as well as recent discoveries from the ancient past to be enjoyed. The Great Court with its spectacular roof of triangles (*see left*) has made the museum easier to move around and there are free tours going on all day as well as audio tours or just go and enjoy some of your favourite things once again. You may be surprised to

## from the 100 Club

Ron Piper

The second draw of the current competition was made at the Autumn Reception held on Wednesday 29 October 2008. The winners to be congratulated are:


- £100 Mr & Mrs McMichael
- £ 50 Miss N R Kelly
- £ 30 Mr K & Mrs A Stead
- £ 20 Mrs M E Leman
- £ 15 Miss R E Ford



The third draw of this competition took place at the Volunteers' preview morning before the Christmas opening of the House on Saturday 6 December 2008. Congratulations to the winners:

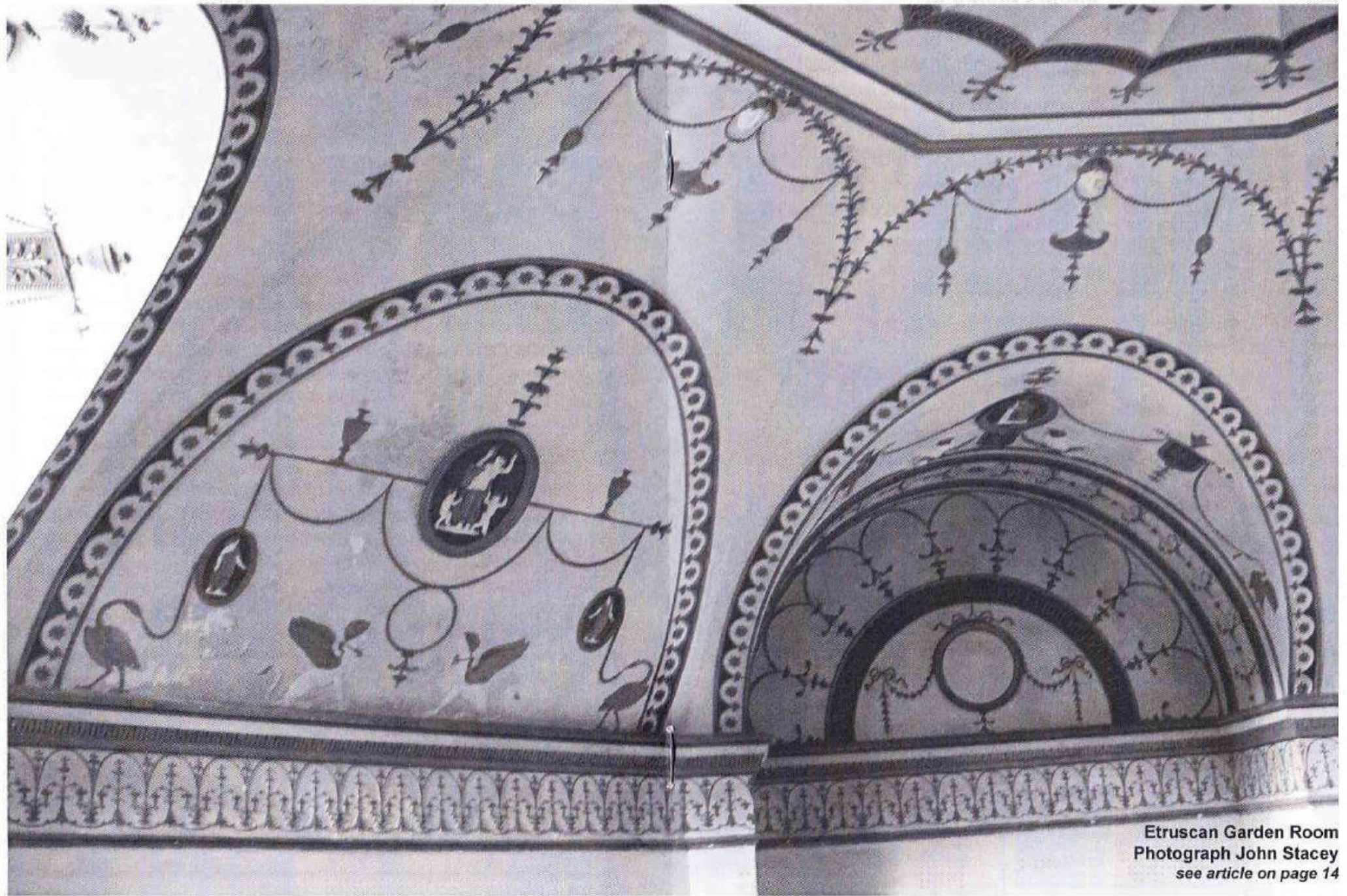
- £100 Mr Douglas Craik
- £ 50 Mrs Jean Smith
- £ 35 Mrs M E Leman
- £ 25 Mrs E Smith
- £ 15 Mrs J Mound

As no winter events have been organised for 2009, the final draw of the current competition will take place on the training day for Mobility Volunteers on a date to be advised, likely to be some time in February 2009.

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

**British Museum** (Continued from page 10)

see some familiar faces as several of the volunteers at Osterley are also volunteers at The British Museum. 



Etruscan Garden Room  
Photograph John Stacey  
see article on page 14

## Etruscan Garden Room at Osterley

(see photographs on cover and pages 12-13)

Margaret Friday

Having seen the beautiful photographs of our tiny garden room (*Ed's note: under the perron by the Long Gallery*) at Osterley taken by John Stacey I have been inspired to try and find out more about it.

At Osterley we have the only surviving Etruscan Rooms designed by Robert Adam. The Dressing Room was completed in 1776 and the Garden Room in 1779. Adam, James Wyatt and James (Athenian) Stuart were all inspired by the publication of William Hamilton's collection of Etruscan, Greek and Roman antiquities exquisitely illustrated by his friend d'Hancarville. Hamilton had invited the artist to draw these pictures from the hundreds of vases in his collection when he heard that d'Hancarville had fallen on hard times. These magnificent volumes, said to be the most beautiful books published in the eighteenth century, were issued between 1767 and 1776 and inspired the adoption of "Etruscan" style.

Wedgwood called his pottery Etruria and Adam created his first Etruscan room for the Countess of Derby's house in Grosvenor Square. They both believed initially that the vase pictures they were copying were Etruscan but it was William Hamilton who later revealed that the vases from Etruscan tombs were in fact

vases from Etruscan  
tombs were in fact Greek

Greek. The Greeks made the finest vases in ancient times and the Etruscans put only the best examples in their tombs.

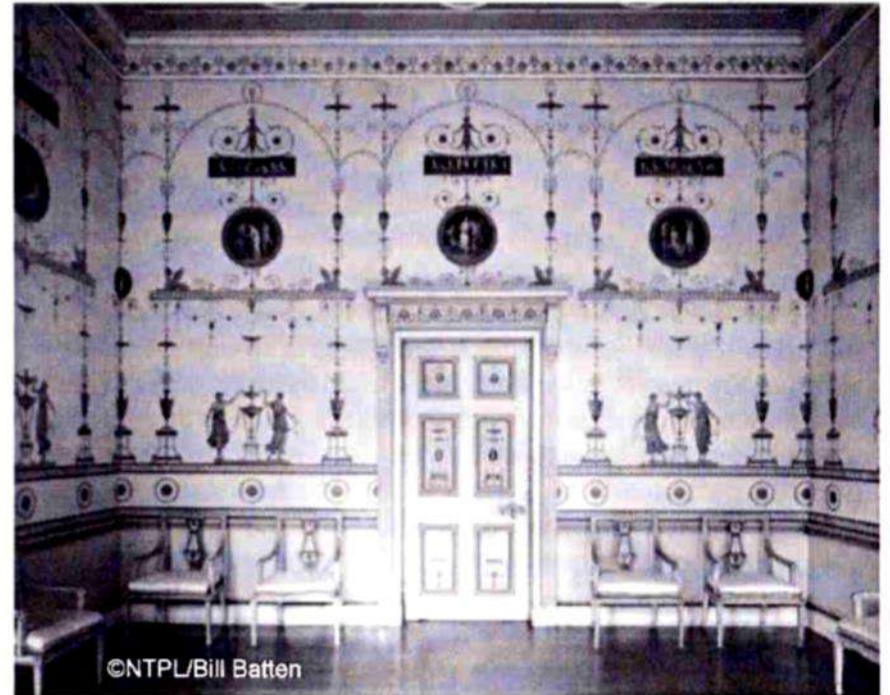
Adam described his use of this style in *The Works of Architecture of Robert and John Adam* published between 1773 and 1779 thus: "A mode of decoration has been attempted, which differs from anything hitherto practised in Europe, for although the style



Etruscan red figure vase  
©NTPL/John Hammond

of the ornament and the colouring are both evidently imitated from the vases and urns of the Etruscans, yet we have not been able to discover, either in our researches into antiquity, or the works of modern artists any idea of applying this taste to the decoration of apartments."

When Robert Child visited the Countess of Derby's House he saw the new but small Etruscan dressing room and according to Adam was so "struck and pleased with the taste" that he asked Robert Adam to design a larger room in the style for Osterley.



The Etruscan Dressing room made from the drawings finished by Adam in October 1775 is the result (*see above*).

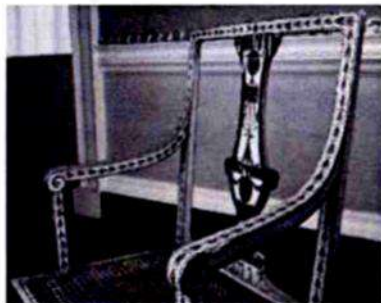
Not all visitors shared Robert Adam or Robert Child's admiration for the Etruscan style.

When Horace Walpole visited Osterley in 1778 to see the state

(Continued on page 16)



apartments he wrote a letter to his friend William Mason, dated 16<sup>th</sup> July, "Mr Nicholls and I went last week to see the new apartment at Osterley Park... The last chamber after these two proud rooms (the Tapestry Room and the State Bedroom) chills you: it is called the Etruscan, and is painted all over like Wedgwood's ware, with black and yellow small grotesques. Even the chairs are of painted wood (see right). It would be a pretty waiting room in a garden. I never saw such a profound tumble into the Bathos. It is going out of a palace and into a potter's field... There could be no excuse for such a cold termination, but its containing a cold bath next to the bed chamber: - and it is called taste to join these incongruities! I hope I have put you into a passion.'



©NTPL/Ian Shaw

Could it be that Walpole's immoderate diatribe inspired Robert Child to ask Robert Adam to decorate the vaulted garden room under the perron on the west front in the Etruscan style? In 1779, the year following Horace Walpole's visit the garden room was embellished in the Etruscan style. This room may have been used to view the garden and take tea when the summer weather was inclement. It may also have served as a pleasant retreat for those playing in the games room nearby.

Very little has been written about the garden room itself since it was not open to the public for many years. With the new emphasis on the pleasure gardens at Osterley many more visitors will have a chance to enjoy this little garden room, a unique survival of Robert Adam's Etruscan style, as part of their visit to the pleasure grounds. Now you have seen John's lovely pictures, go and enjoy this very special survival from the past at Osterley.



## London Visits

I was pleasantly surprised by the number of people who booked to join us for the "Friends" visit to the Geffrye Museum on 5 December 2008 – I had to limit the group size to 30 in view of the complications of escorting a large group on public transport in London and we had a waiting list as well. There was a very interesting talk about Christmas traditions (in earlier times, the emphasis was more on New Year or Twelfth Night than on Christmas Day itself) and a value-for-money two course Christmas meal. The Museum shows



Wei Hei Kipling

domestic interiors (see above here arranged for Christmas) for houses of the "middling sort" - not the poorest people but not the likes of the Child family with their grand houses.

Our first visit in 2009 will be to the Sir John Soane Museum on Tuesday 6 January. Details of that were set out in the Autumn 2008 Newsletter – there were still a few spaces at the beginning of December. If you would like to join us, please 'phone Wei Hei



Photo: English Heritage

(contact details on cover) to check availability.

The original Apsley House (interior view, see left) was designed by Robert Adam for Lord Apsley in 1771-8. There have been many modifications since then and the House is now most famous as the London home of the great Duke of Wellington. Close by is Wellington Arch, a landmark for Londoners and visitors.

On Monday 16 February, there will be an

## London Visits

(Continued from page 17)


exclusive 2 hour guided tour visiting the Wellington Arch (see right – with refreshments) and then Apsley House (normally closed on Mondays). Cost (including English Heritage charges and £1 donation to "Friends"): adult £13; concessions £11; English Heritage members (please bring card on day) £8. In view of the cost, please prebook by 30 January 2009 using the enclosed form.

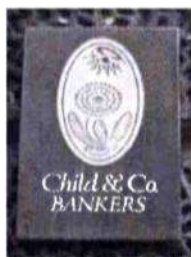


Photo: English Heritage

Meeting arrangements: 9.40am at Hyde Park Corner tube (by ticket barrier) to walk to Wellington Arch for 10am tour

Following on from Margaret's article in the Autumn 2008 Newsletter, I have arranged a tour of Child & Co. on Friday 6 March 2009. Our guide will be Philip Winterbottom, the archive manager of the Royal Bank of Scotland who own what used to be Child & Co.. We will visit the banking hall and museum room in the public space, and then three or four private meeting and dining rooms which are normally only accessible by bank staff and their guests. The tour will concentrate on the history of Child & Co. as the oldest continuous banking business in the UK, in the context of UK banking history and the history of London and also mention links with Osterley, King William III and Queen Mary, and Nell Gwyn. There are few significant 'objects' to see, but the attraction of the building is its intimate character 'behind the scenes'. Tours usually last between 75 and 90 minutes. About half of that time is spent in our 'base' room, then we move around the building. Cost £3 donation to "Friends". Please prebook using the enclosed form or phone Wei Hei after 30 January to check availability.

Meeting arrangements: 4.10pm at Temple tube station to walk to Child & Co. at 1 Fleet Street for 4.30pm 



## Excursions 2009

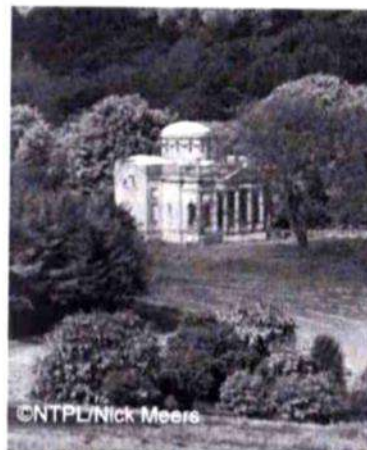
Jim Tickle

The weeks before Christmas are always a busy time and rehearsing and performing in Dickens' 'A Christmas Carol' has occupied me to the extent that I've had little time to devote to anything else. My apologies therefore for a much abbreviated report on plans for our extramural jaunts in the coming and hopefully happy New Year.

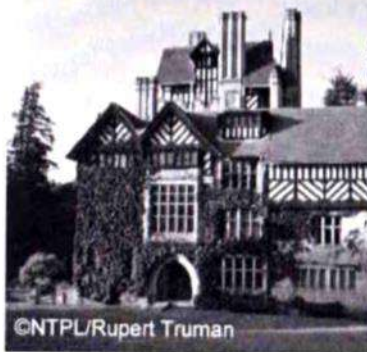
Of prime importance, our usual half-board accommodation for the six-day break is already reserved, based at the University of



Marley's Ghost –  
Source: charlesdickensp



©NTPL/Nick Meers



©NTPL/Rupert Truman

Newcastle upon Tyne from Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> of August (a Bank Holiday!) to Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> September. We'll be housed in Henderson Hall, with its fine 'Old Hall' – a Grade II Listed Building – situated in a picturesque, peaceful suburb, three miles from the city centre. Henderson Old Hall has been refurbished to provide 88 single en-suite bedrooms containing tea and coffee making facilities.

The city of Newcastle proves itself to be an excellent starting point for touring the North East, and both Northumberland and Tynemouth offer a multitude of exciting places to visit. The National Trust is well represented by properties like Gibside (see top left), Cragside (see bottom left), Washington Old Hall, Souter Lighthouse, Cherryburn and Wallington. English Heritage is not

(Continued on page 20)

to be outdone, sharing custodianship of much of Hadrian's Wall with the Trust, and proud guardians of Belsay Hall, Castle and Gardens (see top right), Prudhoe and Warkworth Castles, and Tynemouth (see right) and Brinkburn Priors.

If you are a member of the Trust and English Heritage, you have free entry to any of these properties.

There will be the odd occasions when an entry fee will need to be paid. Having been there last June, I couldn't dream of taking a group to Northumberland without organising a visit to Alnwick Castle Gardens (see below). This vast, multi-million enterprise by the Duchess of Northumberland is astonishing and almost beggars description.

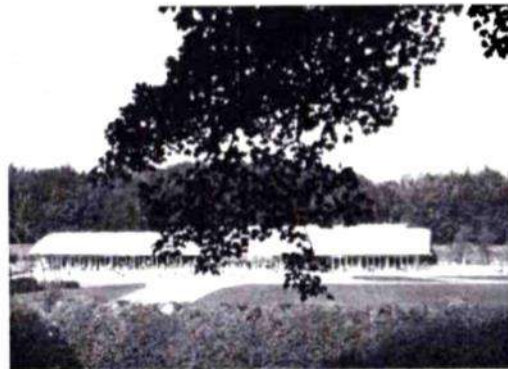
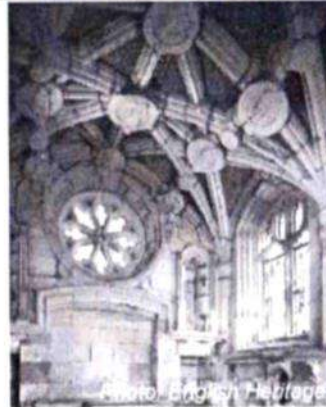
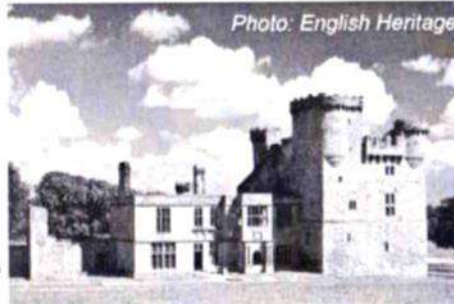


Photo: Roy Jackson www.picturesofengland.com

Flights of white, stone staircases flank an enormous, ever-changing Grand Cascade (see page 21 left), beside the foot of which is a unique serpentine garden of ingenious water features, fascinating to both young and old alike. Apart from the splendour of the many flower gardens and wooded walkways, take a

conducted tour of the garden of poisonous plants and learn what not to grow, unless your name happens to be Borgia! The simply named 'Tree House' (see below right) is of such a scale that it could easily accommodate several families, - 'Tree Hotel' would seem more appropriate!

The Beamish Open Air Museum of North Country Life is another nearby gem, well worth the entry fee and recommended as a 'must' by our old friend, Barrie. If you are familiar with 'living' museums like Ironbridge, St Fagans or Milestones, then Beamish tops the lot.


With only a slight rise in the cost of Graeme's coach hire and the accommodation, the price of this year's holiday will be just £375 - a mere £10 increase on last year. As usual, though, we need to fill the coach to make the trip viable and the closing date for bookings is Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January. If you are keen to join us, but may find it difficult to raise the deposit of £60 so soon after Christmas, please ring 020 8894 4174.



Photo: Roy Jackson  
www.picturesofengland.com




Photo: Anne Rothwell  
www.picturesofengland.com

For 2009 there'll be the regular monthly day trips, starting on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April, when I hope to arrange a visit to Burghley House and the pretty market town of Stamford in Lincolnshire. Booking Forms and full details of all the day trips will be given in the next issue of the Newsletter, to be published in March. 

## Donations to Osterley



For the year 2008, up to 2 December, £1680.55 had been given by "Friends" to the National Trust at Osterley. Over the last few months, there have simply been our regular donations for plants and seeds and other materials for the volunteer flower arrangers; repairs of the battery vehicles; and printing of the free Osterley Newsletter. Obviously, in the past few months, we have been focusing on the Courtesy Bus Appeal which, at 2 December, stood at £2,182.32 including gift aid. 



## from the Editor

There seem to be many significant anniversaries coming up in 2009. Margaret Friday has already mentioned the 250th anniversary of the British Museum (see pages 8 to 11). In addition, there are the 500th anniversary of the birth of Palladio (an Italian architect who influenced many British architects including Inigo Jones, Lord Burlington of Chiswick House and others); the 250th anniversary of the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew; and the 250th anniversary of the date when Josiah Wedgwood set up his own factory in Burslem. Wearing my London Visits Co-ordinator hat, are there places in London we would like to visit to celebrate these anniversaries?

As I mentioned in my report on page 17, I was surprised at the interest shown in the Geffrye Museum visit. The booking date I quote for London Visits is to enable me to sort out final numbers for the booking and does not necessarily mean that places will still be available up to the booking date. Unlike Jim Tickle who has a fixed capacity for the coach on his excursions, my limitation on number of places will depend on the location we are visiting. Some locations will set a maximum number and sometimes I may need to set a limit myself.

Thank you for the interest you have shown. 

## from the Diary

### "Friends" Events and Excursions

Tue 6 Jan 1.45pm at Holborn	London Visit to Sir John Soane Museum - "The Adam Brothers in Rome: Drawings from the Grand Tour"
Fri 23 Jan	Deadline for booking coach tour
Fri 30 Jan	Deadline for booking London Visit (Wellington Arch and Apsley House)
Sat 31 Jan	Deadline for ordering limited edition prints of John Stacey photographs (see page 2 for details)
Mon 16 Feb 9.40am at Hyde Park	London Visit to Wellington Arch and Apsley House
Fri 6 Mar 4.10pm at Temple	London Visit to Child & Co.
Mon 31 Aug to Sat 6 Sept	Coach tour of Northumberland and North England

For details of London Visits – see pages 17 and 18  
For details of Coach tour – see pages 19 to 21

### Advance Warning

April	We hope to organise a music event possibly in Osterley House itself
21 Apr	First Jim Tickle day excursion in 2009

## Osterley Park and House

Wed 4 Mar      New season starts

**Next newsletter** due to be published in March 2009.

Any contributions to the Editor by **1 March**.

The Editor may change or reduce contributions if necessary.