

WECS Wardrobe

Autumn issue 2019

£7.50: Free to members



www.
wofecostumesociety.org

Calendar

White Embroidery Accessories in the Victorian period and AGM

Saturday 8 February 2020
■ Bath Bowling Club

March Study Day: The Game's Afoot: The story of shoes

Saturday 21 March 2020
■ Gloucester Cricket Club,
Bristol

Janet Arnold Study Day: The Politics of Fashion

Saturday 3 October
2020
■ Widcombe Social
Club, Bath



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Bags of flavour
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Georgia bling
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We'll always have Paris
Dos à la mode Page 16

WECS events

2020 AGM and White Embroidery Accessories in the Victorian Period

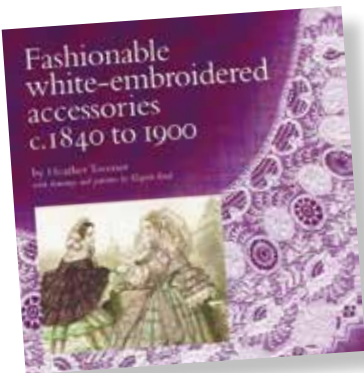
Saturday 8 February 2020
14.00 - 16.30

■ Bath Bowls Club, Pulteney Road, Bath BA2 4EZ

Speaker: Heather Toomer

Heather Toomer, a long-standing member of WECS, joins us to speak on the subject of her latest book, *Fashionable white-embroidered accessories: c.1840 to 1900*. A fuller introduction to the talk will be found in the Spring 2019 issue of *Wardrobe*.

If you'd like to learn more about lace before Heather's talk, dip in to her latest book.



Janet Arnold Study Day The Politics of Fashion

Saturday 3 October 2020
9.30 - 16.30

■ Widcombe Social Club, Bath BA2 6AA

One for the diary!

March Study Day The Game's Afoot: the story of shoes

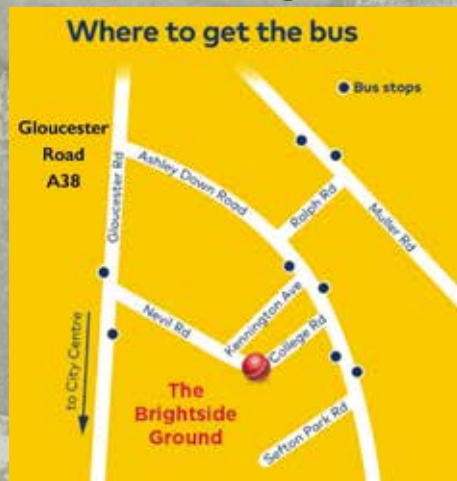
Saturday 21 March 2020

9.30 - 16.30

■ Gloucester Cricket Club, The Bristol County Ground, (also known as the Brightside Ground), Nevil Road, Bristol BS7 9EJ

A great opportunity to wear your favourites – most outrageous sparkly trainers, impossible heels, or charity shop moccasins!

To download map and a bus timetable go to: www.firstgroup.com/westofengland for service to the Gloucester cricket ground (also known as Brightside)



Service	Key destinations	Mon-Fri	Sat	Sun	Closest stop to cricket ground
15/17A	Northmead - Oldfield (15) - Longwood Green (17) - Northmead (15) - Kingswood - Parklands - Southmead	08 mins (15) 40 mins (17)	20 mins (15) 40 mins (17)	40 mins	Gloucester Rd at North Rd
70/71	Temple Meads - City Centre - Ashley Down (70) - Gloucester Road (71) - Pillbox Ave - LSW	10 to 15 mins (70) 15 mins (71) 10 mins (71) 10 mins (71)	10 mins (70) 15 mins (71) 10 mins (71) 10 mins (71)	15 mins	Ashley Down Rd at Northington Ave & Saffron Park Rd (70) Gloucester Rd at North Rd (71)
72	City Centre - City Centre - Redden - Gloucester Road - Lushington - UWE	10 mins (72)	10 mins (72)	no service	Gloucester Rd at North Rd
73	City Centre - Northmead - Gloucester Rd - Pillbox Ave - Bristol Parkway - Brinkley Station - Crick's Causeway	10 mins (73) 10 mins (73) 10 mins (73) 10 mins (73)	10 mins (73) 10 mins (73) 10 mins (73) 10 mins (73)	10 mins	Gloucester Rd at North Rd
75	Northmead - Southmead - City Centre - Westgate - Gloucester Rd - Parkhouse - Crick's Causeway	10 mins (75) 10 mins (75) 10 mins (75) 10 mins (75)	10 mins (75) 10 mins (75) 10 mins (75) 10 mins (75)	10 mins	Gloucester Rd at North Rd
76	Northmead - Southmead - City Centre - Westgate - Gloucester Rd - Southmead - Crick's Causeway	10 mins (76) 10 mins (76) 10 mins (76) 10 mins (76)	10 mins (76) 10 mins (76) 10 mins (76) 10 mins (76)	10 mins	Gloucester Rd at North Rd
78/79	Bristol Bus Station - Gloucester Rd - Pillbox - Crick's Causeway - Northmead	10 mins (78) 10 mins (79)	10 mins (78) 10 mins (79)	10 mins	Gloucester Rd at North Rd

Historically shoes have always been a signifier of status and wealth and the more decorative and difficult to walk in the less functional they become. Today our desire for comfort in shoes, as in clothes, helped along by advances in textile technology, has led to function and fashion becoming more closely aligned.

Who would have thought that today virtually everyone from children taking their first steps to octogenarians trying to stay mobile would be wearing the same type of shoe, the trainer, which started life as a sports shoe. This study day will look at the history of fashionable shoes from Roman times to present day.

Programme

- 9.30 Registration with coffee
- 10.15 **Hilary Freeman**
Edward Green Shoes: Bespoke shoemaker
- 11.15 Coffee
- 11.45 **Thomas Turner**
The Sports Shoe: from field to fashion
- 12.45 Lunch
- 14.00 **Rebecca Shawcross**
Followers of Shoe Fashions
- 15.00 Tea and Coffee
- 15.30 **Alison Fairhurst**
Shoes and Shoe Shopping in the Eighteenth Century
- 16.30 Close



Hilary Freeman will start the day with **'Edward Green Shoes'**. Worn by Ernest Hemmingway and Edward, the Duke of Windsor, their bespoke shoes, the company claims, embody the timeless elegance of

quintessentially English style. As Fred Astaire once wrote, "If you want to know if a fellow is well dressed, look down," Established in 1890 by the 12 year old Edward in Northampton 'Edward Green Shoes' is still thriving with sixty skilled artisans making around 350 pairs of shoes a week, many for export to the world's leading boutiques and department stores and to their own shops in London and Paris.



Thomas Turner is an historian and an expert in the histories of consumption, product design and popular culture. His latest publication **'The Sports Shoe: A History from Field to Fashion'** will be the basis of his presentation focusing on the invention of the Victorian Tennis shoe to the emergence of the desirable fashion trainer, or sneaker as the Americans call it. This is a story of social change, sport, fashion, industry and technology.

After lunch we go back further in time with **Rebecca Shawcross**, Senior Shoe Curator at Northampton Museum and Art Gallery. **Followers of Shoe Fashions** will look at shoe fashions from the Roman times to the present day. Encompassing the distinctly



lewd medieval *poulaine*, the delicate flats of the early nineteenth century and the 70s platform, this talk takes in all the highs and lows of shoe fashions. It is illustrated with images of shoes from the Designated Shoe Collection at Northampton Museum and Art Gallery.

Rebecca Shawcross has worked with the shoe collection since 1998 and is responsible for management, exhibitions, research and enquiries, talks and advising other museums and the media. She has published various articles on shoes and her book *Shoes: An Illustrated History* was published by Bloomsbury in 2014.

Alison Fairhurst, a freelance textile conservation consultant and researcher, will conclude the day with **Shoes and Shoe Shopping in the Eighteenth Century**. An examination of how women's shoe styles and production varied over the century, not only according to fashion but also to societal, economical and industrial changes. The process of buying shoes also changed with the introduction of shoe warehouses, off-the-shelf products and the ready availability of the second-hand market.

Alison lectures on textile conservation at the University of Lincoln. Her PhD thesis *"The Materials, Construction and Conservation of Eighteenth-century Women's Shoes"* shows how shoes can be used as an historical source and the important role the conservator has in the management of shoes as heritage assets.



Edward Green's 'Berkeley' shoe
The Sports shoe - an illustration from
Thomas Turner's book
An Ermine Street guard in his *Caligae*
footwear
1970s height of fashion
C18th 'must-haves'



Out & About

All items in 'Out and About' are published in good faith. WECS Wardrobe cannot be held responsible for errors or omissions. Please check details before making a special journey.



■ Fashion Museum,
Assembly Rooms,
Bennett Street,
Bath BA1 2QH
01225 477789
www.fashionmuseum.
co.uk

Glove Stories

until 1 March 2020

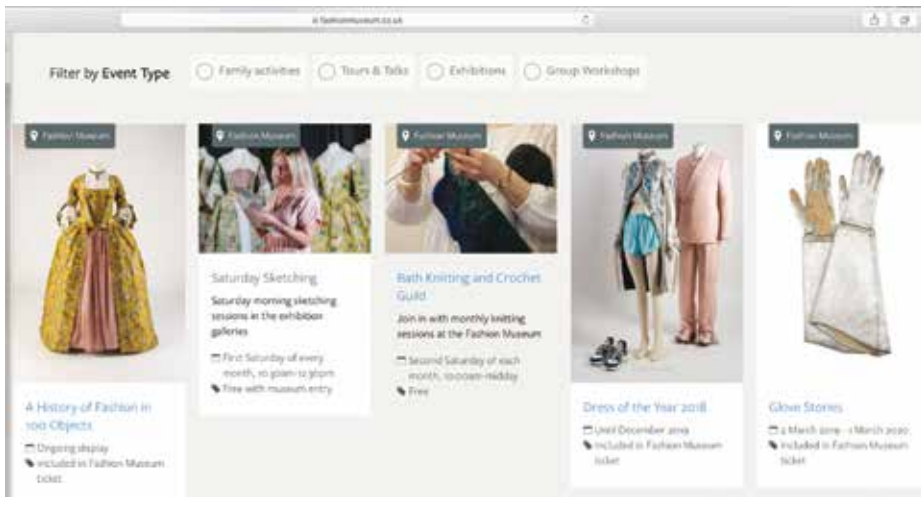
The splendid glove collection of the Worshipful Company of Glovers of London is now housed at the Fashion Museum. 400 years of glove history. Highlights include beautiful embroidered gauntlet gloves from the 1600s, a curious pair of gloves in a walnut shell from the 1830s, and the Duke of Edinburgh's carriage-driving gloves.



collection of antique dolls displayed alongside beautiful life size fashions from the same historical period.

Collection stories Little and Large

from May 2019
In the Collection Stories gallery will be *Little and Large*; a glimpse of the Fashion Museum's enchanting



Southern Counties Costume Society

www.sccostumesociety.org.uk

Saturday 29 February 2020

AGM and Spring Study Day

20/20 vision - a Miscellany of Fashion, Itchen Abbas and Avington Village Hall, Main Road, Itchen Abbas Nr Winchester SO21 1BQ

The Keynote speaker is Aileen Ribeiro, Professor Emerita of the Courtauld Institute talking on **Fashion and the Senses**. Also Angus Patterson on **Thirty years of Men's fashion** and album of **Armour** designs from the Royal Workshop Greenwich, 1557-87 and Dr Liz Tregenza independent fashion historian on **Not just copying**: Frederick Starke and London Wholesale couture 1933-1966.

Saturday 25 April 2020

Dress in the Age of Jane Austen

Chawton House, Chawton, Alton GU34 1SJ

Speaker Hilary Davidson, dress historian, curator, lecturer and broadcaster on her new book: *Dress in the Age of Jane Austen* (Yale University Press).



The Costume Society

www.costumesociety.org.uk

Thursday 19 March 2020 13.30

Behind the Scenes at the Fan Museum

The Fan Museum Greenwich,

London

We will be treated to a guided tour including a sneak behind the scenes to see some of the most beautiful fans in the museum collection. Afterwards there will be a delicious tea and time to see the museum. See website for fuller details and booking.



Pre-Raphaelite Sisters

from October 2019

■ National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London WC2H 0HE
020 7306 0055
www.npg.org.uk

National Portrait Gallery



Models, artists, makers, partners and poets. Discover the untold stories of the Pre-Raphaelite Sisters 170 years after the first pictures were exhibited by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in

1849. *Pre-Raphaelite Sisters* explores the overlooked contribution of twelve women to this iconic artistic movement. Featuring new discoveries and unseen works from public and private collections across the world, this show reveals the women behind the pictures and their creative roles in Pre-Raphaelite's successive phases between 1850 and 1900.



Featured:
Joanna Wells,
Fanny

Cornforth, Marie Spartali Stillman, Evelyn de Morgan, Christina Rossetti, Georgiana Burne-Jones, Effie Millais, Elizabeth Siddal, Maria Zambaco, Jane Morris, Annie Miller, Fanny Eaton

JOIN Costume Colloquium VI
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Creativity in Context

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V&A Cromwell Road,
London SW7 2RL
www.vam.ac.uk



Model holding a Bazaar bag c.1959 © Mary Quant Archive

Mary Quant
until 16 February 2020

Fashionable dress presented alongside natural history specimens.

Tim Walker
Wonderful Things
until 8 March 2020



@V&ATim Walker Wonderful Things Exhibition Installation View - 'Why Not Be Oneself'

Kimono: Kyoto to Catwalk
9 February -21 June 2020



KIMONO Times, Akira Times, 2017 ©AkiraTimes

Bags!
25 April 2020 - 30 January 2021



Anya Hindmarch. 'Walker Crisps' sequin and bead embroidered bag, London 2000 ©Victoria and Albert



Inspired by the East How the Islamic world influenced western art

until 26 January 2020

British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1R 3DG
www.britishmuseum.org

Artistic exchange between East and West has a long and intertwined history, and the exhibition picks these stories up from the 15th century, following cultural interactions that can still be felt today. Objects from Europe, North America, the Middle East and North Africa highlight a centuries-old tradition of influence and exchange from East to West. The diverse selection of objects includes ceramics, photography, glass, jewellery and CLOTHING, as well as contemporary art, showcasing how artistic exchange influenced a variety of visual and decorative arts.

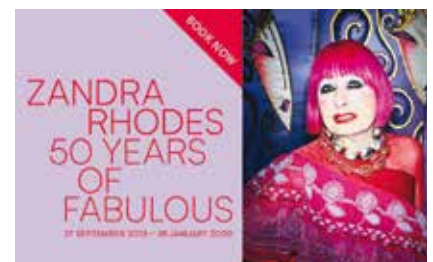


Fashion and Textile Museum,
83 Bermondsey Street,
London SE1 3XF
www.ftmlondon.org
Info@ftmlondon.org

Zandra Rhodes

until 26 January 2020

£9.90 adults, £8.80 concessions, £7.00 students. Children under 12 free.



Bowes Museum

Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, Co. Durham DL12 8NP
www.thebowesmuseum.org.uk
A bit further afield, but if you're planning a visit, we'd love to hear about it.



The Vintage Bazaar at Christmas
30 November 2019
9.00-15.00

The Corn Exchange, Market Place, Devizes
SN10 1HS

Thevintagebazaar.blogspot.com
Quality vintage stands, decorative homewares and textiles, costume and accessories. Admission £2.00





Visit to Dents Glove factory

17 April 2019

■ Dents Glove Factory

Report by Liz Booty

We were warmly welcomed by John Roberts - the now retired ex Managing Director who had joined the company back in 1990. He proceeded to take us through the history of the company and then all aspects of glove making with numerous items for us to handle - it was fascinating!

The firm is still privately owned and was started by John Dent in 1777 in Worcester but it was his two sons who laid the foundations for global growth leading to the building of factories in Grenoble, Naples, Leipzig and Brussels and opening sales offices and warehouses in Paris, New York, Montreal and Sydney during the C19 and C20. By the 1970s they were manufacturing two million gloves per annum with few changes in the making process apart from the introduction of electrically powered sewing machines. Today, as in the past, the gloves are still made in the traditional way by highly skilled craftspeople.

In 2011 Dents moved from their old factory in the centre of Warminster to the new award winning factory and distribution centre where the design team work with a small group of highly skilled glove makers still making some of the world's best quality gloves and 'specials' for the stage and screen, royalty and celebrities though the majority of manufacture has now moved to the Philippines.

As with clothing, up until 1880 there was no set sizing for gloves until Xavier Jouvin from Grenoble, having studied the human hand for five years, came up with today's universal glove sizing. This is determined by the measurement of the hand around its widest part, just below the knuckles - the measurement was known as the 'Pied de Roi'.

The fit is greatly affected by the selection, quality and preparation of the skins and the cutting skills as well as the making expertise that really makes a glove fit well - this combined with Dents' 'secret fit' of lining the gloves with a 'second glove' inner glove fitted into the outer shell.

We were shown and handled the range of different leathers and linings used. The most popular leather for dress gloves come from Hair Sheep that grow hair not wool and are found mainly in Ethiopia and Nigeria, where they are expertly tanned locally. The aristocrat of leathers comes from the Peccary and is very expensive being mainly sourced in South America - and is referred to as the king of leathers. Gloves made

from this can cost anything from £200-£4.500 and are hand stitched with a cashmere lining. The best deerskin comes from the white tailed deer found in North America and has a more rugged appearance and is used most often for





Photos: Liz Booty. *Opposite page from the top:* Various examples of 30s point decoration, John Roberts' introduction, a still life of history and packaging items, Queen Elizabeth II's coronation glove in replica.
This page: A glove design with samples, peccary gloves, a fabric glove from the 70s, a selection of samples, display showcase, early stitching machinery, Walter Raleigh's gloves and early marketing.
Background and front cover: Samples of glove embroidery

GLOVES FROM THE 1920S
 In the early Victorian days gloves were often
 especially worn in the individual requirements
 of ladies of fashion. The selection of colors,
 fabrics and embroideries were based from specimens
 exhibited in glove shows.

men's driving gloves. Top quality sheepskin from New Zealand are more bulky to wear than 'slink' lambskin with some of the finest coming from still born lambs. They are equally popular for men's and women's gloves. Chamois is now mainly reserved for ceremonial gloves and linings of mens gloves.

The top quality gloves have linings of cashmere or silk. Soft cashmere is made from the best quality Tibetan goat and spun in Scotland, or 'milanese' silk that is knitted by a highly skilled process that ensures the lining does not ladder or run and is very stretchy. The finest lambswool is widely used and is knitted for Dents in Scotland. Chamois leather is only used in the highest quality gloves (mainly men's driving gloves), and is tanned exclusively by an English tannery that has supplied Dents since the early 1900s.

Every pair of gloves is cut individually and can have up to 52 different components requiring 32 different and highly skilled cutting, stretching and sewing operations. A hand sewn glove takes a minimum of four hours. There is a curious little triangular part called a 'quirk' that is only used on the most expensive Peccary gloves and is stitched into the base of the finger. 'Fourchettes' form the sides of the fingers and 'points' are stitched on the back. Surely these terms would be good for a quiz!

Apart from hand stitching, there are different seam types - external seams are called 'prix' or PMX seams, inseams are when the seam is inside the glove and was used when making the gloves worn by Daniel Craig in his role of Commander James Bond in Skyfall, piqué seams are overlapping with one edge showing and whipstitching is a more decorative seam all achieving subtle differences.

A visit to the small museum - assembled over the years - revealed wonderful treasures ranging from minuscule dolls' gloves to treasures such as gloves worn by Lord Nelson. Among the treasures there was a turn of the century sample book of 'points' I had no idea how decorative they could be - and drawers full of gloves from every C20 decade reflecting the fashion changes.

It was a lovely visit and we were all sent home with a well illustrated magazine about Dents and glove making before visiting the factory shop. When I now look at my attempt at glove making I realise why it takes 4-5 years to fully train a glove cutter or hand sewer.



Breaking the Mould? Freedom and restraint in Victorian dress

Saturday 5 October 2019

■ Widcombe Social Club, Widcombe Hill, Bath

Top The day's speakers, from left to right: Edwina Ehrman, Sophia Wilson, Susanna Corder and Dr Kat Jungnickel
Centre Carolyn Cooper in full 1861 rig
Patterns to make your own cycling outfits available from bikesandbloomers.com



Left 1852 daydress and all its layers
Right mystery object on the sales table. Answer on the back page.

Simply Stunning The art of Pre-Raphaelite dressing

Speaker Sophia Wilson
Report by Patricia Cooke

Sophia Wilson, our first speaker opened by saying that the objective of Pre-Raphaelite dressing was driven by a growing reaction to the restriction of conventional Victorian dress.

The latter was primarily governed by the fashionable elite who used dress as a status symbol and this was increasingly viewed as unbecoming and absurd given the way in which both sexes, but particularly women were distorting their bodies in order to appear at the height of fashion. Expensive fabrics, at times needing 35 yards for a dress, the need for voluminous petticoats, (sometimes seven in total), the boning and lacing in order to achieve an 18 – 20" waist circumference was regarded by the Pre-Raphaelite devotees as unhealthy, unsuitable and unnecessary.

Given the move at this time towards more industrialisation, a general lack of knowledge in the teaching of the arts and increasingly unhealthy lifestyles, the Pre-Raphaelites led a reaction towards living a simpler, more artistic and healthier lifestyle. This movement was founded initially in 1848 by a group of young artists, William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais and Dante Gabriel Rossetti who were later joined by poets, members of the Socialist League and the more bohemian members of society.

Devotees of the movement started to express their individuality by wearing less restricted dress based on Grecian and Roman styles using lighter fabrics such as cambric, muslins, tussorees and wool. These were dyed with natural dyes in pale, subdued colours of amber, stone, green and bronze, again prompted as a reaction against the brighter, more strident shades dyed with aniline dyes such as Perkins Mauvine.

This move towards more natural and informal way of dressing was aided by *Liberty's* store which opened in 1885 and actively promoted healthy dress. The store also had strong connections with Pre-Raphaelite artists, the leaders of the Art Nouveau and the Arts and Crafts movements inspired by figures such as William Morris and John Ruskin. Along with the development and promotion of physical activity and the appreciation and promotion of craftwork, the desire for natural forms of dressing decorated with smocking and embroidery gathered pace.

Some years later in the 1890s and 1900s couturiers such as Paul Poirot and Mariano Fortuny popularised the fashion for aesthetic dress.



From the top:
Proserpina by Dante Gabriel Rossetti Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery
John R Parsons, Mrs William Morris posed by Rossetti 1865 ©V&A
Thomas Armstrong, *The Hayfield* 1869 ©V&A
Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Mariana* 1870 © Aberdeen Art Gallery



Fitting the Female Form

A brief history of underwear in Victorian England

Speaker Susanna Cordner (Senior Research Fellow, London College of Fashion)

Report by Helen Montague-Smith

It was good to hear that Susanna wants to make objects more accessible. Having worked on the Victorian underwear exhibition, *Breaking the Mould*, which ran from April 2016 to March 2017 at the V&A, her talk was based on this enormous subject. She sees underwear as having the ultimate relationship with fashion.

Susanna spoke to several headings explaining the purpose of underwear. Firstly, to protect not only the wearer but more importantly, the clothing. The traditional chemise, or shift, provided a hygienic barrier between the skin and outer garments. Made of linen and then cotton, it was an adjustable garment which formed the basis of all subsequent layers. Drawers, first worn in the early C19, were seen as risqué and an elite item. Regency



continued on next page

muslin gowns needed something to protect the wearer's modesty.

Secondly, to shape and support. The corset had evolved to do this but was now seen as socially respectable. It affected the way the wearer moved, breathed, talked and changed the whole look of the body. Newer innovations included boning (baleen) and the 1829 patent for front fastening stays – these were still laced at the back but could be put on by the wearer without help. Another patent from 1848 used studs to give a better fit. The introduction of the sewing machine in the 1850s and steam pressing a decade later, greatly affected the shape and production of corsets. The speaker looked back to the early days of bodies and stays made of twilled cotton with a canvas lining, wool padding and reeded or boned supports from 1760. The back of such garments was often higher than the front and provided support for working women. It was not a fashionable garment. During the early C19, lower necklines led to shorter stays which defined and divided the bust and also the waist, even under muslin gowns. Thus corsets were designed to re-distribute body weight, a feature which peaked in the 1890s with the 'S' bend corset producing the extreme 'kangaroo stance' and the distinctive outline of Gibson girls.

Susanna went on to speak of crinolines and their construction. She felt that this totally different look was a power

statement as women would literally take up more space. This fashion aimed to build beyond the body and as she emphasized, became excessive – we saw an amazing inflatable crinoline! Designed to liberate the user with fewer petticoats and the ability to float along, in fact, it was still limiting and dangerous and was described as a passion killer as it kept lovers at bay and drawers were needed to protect one's modesty.

Originally circular, the cage shape gradually changed during the middle of the century becoming flatter at the front and then evolving into the bustle. Styles were named after celebrities as in the *Princess Louise* and *The Phantom*. This impractical shape was ridiculed in a *Punch* Cartoon of 1857.

Petticoats were our speaker's next subject and we saw a slide of a beautiful paisley patterned garment, padded with goose down. This must have provided wonderful warmth and volume without weight.

Under the heading *Shaping Lines* (Corsets), Susanna introduced cycling as an important changer of lifestyles and thus of fashion and underwear. Adverts, exploiting commercial markets, often using famous names, claimed free movement and style. Specialist corsets were also made for all sports to enable and shape the female experience.

A beautiful bright pink corset with black lace decoration, 1890-95 had been on display in the V&A exhibition. This exotic garment was probably not a custom made piece, but was produced for the commercial market.

Silhouettes were changing. Nowadays, the body is altered with exercise, probably in the gym. The Victorian woman changed her shape by the corset she wore which re-distributed her body weight. The fashionable 18inch waist was probably achieved by tight lacing only for special occasions.

We saw a woven corset, dated to between 1879-85, which could be worn all day and when riding. The bones were inserted

after manufacture and the corset was pliable but washable and still gave support. Such items have not survived. Corset shields were sold to protect the waist and give ease of movement. We also saw an image of a white cotton bust bodice from 1820 -30. This item was often made at home. The corset was an everyday garment which could not be given up during pregnancy, hence the availability of maternity corsets.

Our speaker did a side step to show us a few items of men's wear. The padded stocking to enhance the shapely calf where breeches were still being worn. A male corset, or waist belt, for sport of course! Made from cotton webbing, cotton sateen and with silk embroidery this item was quite similar to a woman's corset. Male stay workers traditionally did boning but the introduction of baleen saw the increase in female corsetiers using this lighter material.

Under the heading *Female Innovators*, Susanna spoke of Roxey Ann Caplin who exhibited at the 1851 Great Exhibition promoting her hygienic corsets, providing support with movement. She believed in physical exercise as part of a healthy, modern lifestyle. Her later book, *Health and Beauty*, 1856 emphasised that women had different needs and followed different activities – her book included illustrations of various helpful exercises. Women understood their own body's needs, men did not and thus her corsets were advertised as improving posture, had an easy front fastening and *'the elasticated front would answer all stages of pregnancy'*. Women continued to wear petticoats but Mrs Caplin understood that no lady was properly dressed without a corset.

Madame Dowding made corsets for women and for men, *The Marlborough*, named after the battle, looked remarkably similar in shape to a female corset.

Mary Bliss was an American innovator who also sold her corsets in this country. *The Stesroc*, (it took a few moments to work this out) also



provided free movement and the ability to lift the arms.

The lovely example we saw from The Hopkins Collection, had broad shoulder straps to support the bust and the body but smaller boning to allow for more movement. Dating from 1896-1900 the garment was made of cotton, silk, baleen boning with a metal busk and machine made lace.

These innovations provided more respectable employment for women, not only as corsetiers with a business of their own, but also as the makers or fitters of garments. Decoration – from embroidery to lacemaking to trimming; factory production; shop girls – the presenting and selling of underwear in the growing retail arena, including department stores; mending and maintaining; different kinds of maintenance – whether that's caring for clothes as a lady's maid, sewing initials into garments or working in the booming laundry industry.

The speaker concluded - *Women's underwear in the Victorian era can be seen as a sign of restraint, a signifier of the gender ideals of the time and a space for commodifying both those ideals and new technologies and innovations of the time. It can also, however, be used to explore and highlight some hidden – or lesser-remembered – aspects of the ways in which women lived in the era, and their understanding of what support their bodies needed to complete the tasks and activities of their lives. The underwear industry also provided a source of respectable employment for women across the board – from sewing initials into laundry items to launching new inventions at the Great Exhibition.*



Specially designed to meet the ever-growing taste for longer and longer corsets. *Punch* 1912.

One wants nerves of iron Bikes and Bloomers – Cycling. Convertible Cyclewear and Courage in late Victorian Britain

Speaker Dr Kat Jungnickel
Sociologist, Goldsmiths,
University of London

Report by Caroline Levett

“One Wants Nerves of Iron” wrote an American lady cyclist cycling in London in 1897. Apparently it was not so much the traffic conditions that required courage, as much as the abuse and ridicule hurled by by-standers.



The huge growth in cycling in the 1890s gave men another opportunity to expose their muscular bodies, as the photograph of a male cyclist clad in little but his jersey combinations demonstrated. He was clearly the Middle Aged Man In Lycra of his day.

For women cycling offered an opportunity for unchaperoned personal life and independence, but what should they wear? The *‘Lady Cyclist’* article spoke of the *‘neat, charming, feminine, graceful, dignified and modest’* rider of a bicycle. You could have your photograph taken riding a bicycle – in a studio, with your eyes firmly on the photographer. But actual cycling put women in peril, and newspapers dwelt on death attributable to clothing. One lady-cyclist died when she was blown off her bike and under a milk van, another who missed her pedals was described as *‘lingering for a week’*.

Dress reform gained more attention in the 1890s, and bloomers were advocated for cycling, but women who put safety before convention and wore bloomers were mocked. *‘Rational Dress Gazette 1894’* reported that rubbish had been thrown at cyclists who *‘dared to reveal that she had two legs’*. A mother in a *Punch* cartoon was against her daughter taking up cycling as she was quite fast enough already.

What could one do? One could cope with the peril of skirts. One could don breeches. One could wear skirts in town and breeches in the country, or one could invent a solution. Kat Jungnickel has researched patents taken out by women in the 1890s to try to remedy the situation. The patents provided a clear description of the perceived problems and the proposed solutions. There were five approaches:

- Stop the skirt flapping around – generally a man’s approach - involving impracticable cages
- Making the skirt fit the bike, with ingenious pleats to fit the saddle, and adding a skirt and chain guard.
- Divided skirts, with a built in bifurcation;
- Really, really big bloomers, like wearing a giant tulip, but you could pack a picnic in them
- A convertible skirt.

Kat Jungnickel tried to find examples of the ingenious convertible garments in museums, but failed, although she did find a rubberised sailing skirt. So she recruited a pattern cutter, a weaver and an artist, and they followed the patterns set out in the patents, creating their own fabric, five outfits and 27 garments. When colleagues complained of pins in the lift she was transferred from the Sociology Department to the Theatre and Performance Department at Goldsmiths. Kat revealed that the simple A line tweed skirt that she was wearing was in fact modelled on Louise Bygrave’s pulley skirt.

The skirt has a weighted centre back and front seam, with stitched channels



Bygrave pulley system detail and what lies beneath



containing strings. The ends of the strings are concealed in a waistband panel. When they are pulled, the skirt shortens to reveal the bloomers, and creates a festoon at the hips on either side. When the strings are released from the buttons in the waistband the weights return the skirt to its former shape. Bygrave was the daughter of a clock and watch maker in Chelsea. Her sister, Rosina Lane, and brother-in-law were professional cyclists. The skirt was demonstrated all-round the UK, patents were taken out in the US, Canada and Switzerland, and it made its way to Sydney and Melbourne. Bygrave did deals – and the skirt was taken up by Jaeger, but there is no evidence as to whether she received a negotiated £5,000, and she did not end her life wealthy.



The second outfit, demonstrated by Jean, was patented by May and Sarah Peace. A wrap around skirt was worn over breeches. To convert to cycling mode the wearer untied the waistband and retied it at the neck to create a cycling cape. Kat's team created a silk twill fabric for the lining and breeches that was printed with images of the lady cyclists and their stories.

The third outfit, demonstrated by Margaret, was patented by Julia Gill. It was a tweed skirt worn with a matching jacket with a longish peplum and toning leggings ruched to conceal the leg profile. The skirt had a deep tuck six inches above the hem which concealed a set of curtain rings and draw string. The conversion involved drawing up the curtain rings and tying the string at the waist, creating a bubble skirt of the lining fabric, bulging out from below the deep second peplum formed by the bottom six inches of the skirt.

Descriptions of these outfits, the stories of their inventors, and much more are contained in Kat's book: *Bikes and Bloomers – Victorian Women Inventors and their Extraordinary Cycle Wear*. Pictures are available on the project website, <http://bikesandbloomers.com/> and patterns for five of the garments are also available.

Above is the wrap around skirt revealing the custom-designed lining in a fetching blue colourway. Below a selection of cycling costumes laid for inspection.



Lady cyclist (touring in North Holland): "What a ridiculous Costume!". *Punch* 1898.



Rubber seed sent by Henry Wickham from Brazil to Kew in 1876

Rubber: From Forest to fashion

Speaker Edwina Ehrman

Report by Tony Cooper

Edwina Ehrman described rubber as the miracle substance of the 19th century and so it would prove but not without more than its share of blood, sweat and tears – literally.

Now put that deceased “rubber plant” of the 1970s out of your mind, that was *ficus elastica* from the fig family. The real rubber tree, *hevea brasiliensis*, as its Latin name might suggest, is indigenous to the forests of South America and I was intrigued to discover it is actually a spurge. Then again perhaps it shouldn’t have been such a surprise because both the rubber tree and the garden *euphorbia* have a milky-white sap called latex. The aboriginal peoples knew all about these trees, how to “tap” them to harvest the latex without harming the tree. They also knew various ways of processing the latex according to its intended purpose – as an adhesive, for a ball, for footwear etc.

One method used by them was to take some latex on the end of a stick and heat it over a very smoky fire. After a while more latex would be gathered and smoked until a substantial ball was made.

When some of the Spanish conquistadors first encountered these people and saw the bouncy rubber balls they thought the toys were bewitched. However, with their feet more on the ground, the colonialists did record the use of rubber soles on the natives’ feet.

But how come we call it “rubber”? It is said that Dr Joseph Priestley, theologian, natural philosopher, discoverer of oxygen and tutor to the Marquess of Lansdowne’s sons at Bowood, wrote: “I have seen a substance excellently adapted to the purpose of wiping from paper the mark of black lead pencil.” He called the substance “rubber”. However, English engineer Edward Nairne was credited in the same year (1770) with developing a marketable rubber eraser. This is said to be the first practical application of rubber in Britain but costing a staggering three shillings for a half-inch cube!

We have to thank Charles Goodyear, an American chemist, for changing what was almost a novelty material into the useful types of rubber we are familiar with today. Raw rubber is prone to rot and is also very sensitive to temperature changes, being quite hard at low temperatures and becoming almost sticky at high. Goodyear’s

passion was to find a way of making rubber more stable and after extensive experimentation found the solution to be to incorporate sulphur in the rubber. On this side of the pond in 1843, Thomas Hancock took out a UK patent for a process he called “vulcanisation”. This was just a few weeks before Goodyear took out a US patent for the same process.

Now does Mackintosh ring a bell with regard to waterproofs?

For many years Charles Macintosh & Company (no “k”) had been making waterproof fabrics – basically a sandwich of a layer of a solution of rubber in naphtha between two layers of cotton or similar. The problem was that the garment manufacturers treated it like any other material and the stitched seams leaked. In 1830 Macintosh merged with the clothing company Thomas Hancock and began to make their own range of garments with bonded seams and careful consideration given to ventilation. Waterproof they may have been but they stank, went stiff in cold weather and melted in hot. It was only with the advent of vulcanisation that things improved, their garments being sold to the police, the military and civilians throughout the Empire and beyond.

Whilst the boundaries of the British Empire were being set ever



Macintoshes in a Chicago store’s catalogue

wider, Britain itself was a country characterised by the importation of raw materials from around the globe and exporting finished goods. After a fairly pedestrian start rubber became an increasingly important commodity, the quantity imported rising from under 25 tons in 1830 to over 7500 tons in 1879. However, all this came from the Amazon basin, a region that Britain didn’t control. For strategic reasons that would have to change but it would take time.

Enter Henry Morton Stanley (yes, he of the “*Doctor Livingstone, I presume*” quotation). Stanley’s book *Through The Dark Continent*, describing his exploits in the Congo basin, was read by King Leopold II of Belgium, who had ambitions of establishing African colonies for himself. While not perhaps claiming *dei gratia*, Leopold had much of the ancien régime approach to monarchy of his father, frequently at odds with parliament and riding roughshod over the constitution. After Stanley had tried without success to persuade the British authorities to commission him to bring the region under British control, he was approached by Leopold. Under the cynical guise of civilising the region and dismantling the slave trade, Leopold gained international support for his takeover of the region.

For his part, Stanley established the

continued on next page

"Congo Free State" around 1885, building up the infrastructure needed to exploit the region's riches – mainly rubber. In truth the "Free State" was nothing of the sort; it was essentially a slave state in which a deliberate policy of terror and atrocity prevailed for some two decades.

For many years there were reports alleging abuses and eventually in 1903 the British consul in the Congo, the Irishman Roger Casement, was instructed to investigate. His report, published the next year, confirmed the accusations and had a considerable impact on public opinion, leading to many prosecutions of the perpetrators. Despite all this Leopold retained personal control of his fiefdom until 1908.

Meanwhile in South America the boom in the exploitation of rubber went hand in hand with the greed of "entrepreneurs" and the exploitation of the local indigenous population. One pair of "rubber barons" was Julio César Arana del Águila, general manager of the Peruvian Amazon Company and his brother Lizardo who acquired vast plantations and brought in large numbers of overseers who were well-versed in working with slaves in British sugar plantations. In a move that would make present-day drug lords seem positively benevolent they enslaved the indians and treated them with wanton and sickening cruelty.

In 1906 Casement became consul in Brazil where he joined a commission into PAC's abuses. His subsequent report greatly embarrassed the company's British Board of Directors and ultimately led to the demise of the company.

Epilogue: For all this work, Casement was awarded a CMG (Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George). It is a bitter irony, however, that on his return to the British Isles he looked at the plight of his own people, becoming involved in the Irish Republican movement. He was

ultimately stripped of his title and executed for treason after the Easter Rising in 1916.

To Kew

In 1876 Henry Wickham exported 70,000 seeds from Brazil to Kew Gardens, where only around 4% successfully germinated. The plants were then sent out to regions of the Empire with suitable climates - Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Singapore in particular. Rubber plantations would subsequently be set up in the Far East and West Africa.

The rubber industry has to thank Henry Ridley, director of Singapore's Botanic Gardens, for his enthusiastic research into the commercial possibilities of rubber and ways of "tapping" without causing permanent harm to the trees. In 1895 he came up with the distinctive herringbone pattern which has been almost universally adopted for harvesting latex. He also encouraged landowners in the region to establish rubber plantations. His single-minded zeal earned him the nickname "Rubber" Ridley and, for those who did not share his aims, the less generous epithet "Mad" Ridley.

With his encouragement the first plantation was started in Malaya in 1898 with seven million seeds from the gardens. Malaya would become the pre-eminent global producer of rubber by 1910 and Ridley's dream would be fulfilled.

After all that, apart from macintoshes, what did they do with all that rubber on the apparel front?

Vulcanite

One of the sad things about the Victorian era was that death was never far away and a strict etiquette emerged about all aspects of death including what the bereaved should wear. Bling was frowned upon but jewellery of some sort was obligatory. This is where Whitby jet came into its own but at a price. The etiquette filtered down through the classes and to ignore it displayed disrespect for the deceased. There was a market for a cheaper substitute.

Fortunately the rubber industry were on the case and vulcanite or ebonite (a heavily vulcanised rubber) was available for less expensive mourning jewellery. An advantage of vulcanite is that it can be steam moulded to avoid costly carving. On the down side

it may turn brownish over time but hopefully not before the mourning period is over.

At the other end of the pliancy scale, Pope & Plante were making surgical stockings with a rubber warp and cotton weft.

Their adverts said that "they are light and pervious, yield elastic and equable pressure, forming the best relief for varicose enlargement".

John Charles Cording established JC Cording & Co in 1839, which was another significant player in the waterproof clothing market. Cording recognised that such garments would be useful for the huntin', shootin' and



Postscript: As you might expect, when I have to write a report I jot down copious notes, usually in the dark, during the talk. The trouble is that when I sit at the keyboard a few days later I can barely read my scribblings let alone make coherent sense of them. However, after further research it all seems to come together. Vibeke usually gives me a choice of which talk to report on but this time she said "You're doing rubber"; no arguments. I had a sneaking suspicion that she imagined me squirming when I had to write in depth about rubber fetish wear. I have to admit to being relieved when Edwina neatly skirted round the that aspect of rubber attire. TC

fishin' set, not to mention the odd explorer such as H M Stanley (yes, him again). A further outlet came later with the burgeoning motoring market. Not that they stopped there, they even made rubber dinghies.

There was a wonderful Cordings advertisement in *The Yachtsman* in 1895 (opposite page) with an illustration of a lady and a man on board a gale-buffed boat. She is immaculately made up and casually leaning on the rail, heedless of the wind whipping open her natty cape. The man seems less sanguine. Shrouded head to boot in waterproofs and sitting on a life raft, he is desperately trying to keep his pipe alight. You can almost see the dew drop forming on poor bloke's nose.

It is unfortunate to note that even despite vulcanisation, rubber goods can deteriorate badly and, as with so many things, they tend to get discarded when no longer serviceable. As a result relatively few examples of everyday garments are in museums. Nevertheless we were shown a slide of some rather fetching braces and garters dating from around 1847-8. I wonder if these had survived by being put away 'for best'.

Wardrobe essentials

I seem to recollect seeing an article in my mother's *Woman* magazine (even then I was in touch with my feminine side), which gave advice to, say, a young woman in a bedsit as to essentials for her wardrobe with the emphasis on the economy and flexibility and, of course, the many different circumstances in which one has to look one's best. This sort of advice was nothing new; in the late 1800s the advice included having a "good waterproof coat". The problem was that at the time they cost around £2 – around £250 in today's money! Fortunately the costs came down quite rapidly.

In an era of unprecedented invention there were even inflatable crinolines and bustles. It's not certain how successful these were because if they



Lily Cole wearing Vivienne Westwood's 'wild rubber dress'.

sprung a leak one's silhouette would become rapidly less elegant. What's more the "topping up" process may well have been, shall we say, "indelicate".

Rubber footwear, then as now, had a ready market. Galoshes – rubber overshoes – were seen as essential to protect one's expensive shoes. (Incidentally did you know that the word "galosh" comes from the French word for cordwainer's wooden last?) Rubber boots that were modelled on the leather riding boot or hessian also found favour within a certain set. However, it was the "wellie" that had universal appeal, worn by queens and commoners (and Compo) alike.

Then there is the elastic. Used almost everywhere, it is something we wouldn't dream of being without but still not without its failings.

My mum, in a rash moment, admitted to owning a pretty swish pair of French knickers in the 1930s. Now I'm not saying she had

a big bum but apparently the garment was quite voluminous with some weight to it. Anyway she wore them out one day and felt the bees' knees. That was until she felt them slither down her legs and land round her ankles. The elastic had failed. Barely breaking her stride (her account) she snatched them up, shoved them into her handbag and walked on. Small wonder that during the war spivs had ladies queuing up for "knicker elastic". It just goes to show that there could still be a fortune to be had for somebody who can develop an elastic that can survive repeated washings and doesn't go limp and baggy.

Sky Rainforest Rescue is a partnership between WWF and Sky, who are working together to help keep a billion trees standing. One way they're doing this is through helping create better market conditions for rubber tappers in Acre, Brazil. Sky and WWF are equipping rubber tappers to produce a higher quality rubber that can be sold direct to manufacturers. The Wild Rubber movement that arose from the campaign encourages the use of wild rubber.

For her part in 2013, Vivienne Westwood and her partner Andreas Kronthaler designed a dress with a wild rubber bodice and a tulle skirt. It was worn by Lily Cole for American Vogue's Punk-themed MET Ball that year.

And finally... the crinoline did not die. This 1950s version was for sale in a Vintage fair in October 2019!





1

Alexander McQueen's silver bodice



2

3 and 4 The train: the function of the train is to show power and distinction. It creates space for the wearer and of course impedes her passage so that she needs assistance to travel anywhere. A magnificent sack dress from 1780 is shown, but amongst my photos, Balenciaga and Rick Owens are my favourites.

3



Backside: Dos à la mode

At Palais Galleria chez Musée Bourdelle, Paris Montparnasse

Report by Angela Bailey

We were so fortunate to be in Paris while this exhibition was showing at the Musée Bourdelle in Montparnasse, home of the studio and gallery of the turn of the (20th) century sculptor Antoine Bourdelle, whose positively monumental pieces fill the spaces and gardens inside.

The theme of the show is 'seen from the back' rather than views of people's backsides, and it interweaves the sculptures with clothing from many eras - all indeed displayed from the back.

All the spaces follow the theme: the first, a huge hall, containing several massive statues (for example one of the Argentinian General Alvarez, astride his horse, possibly twice life size) introduces us to the show with several spectacular long dresses - my favourite, from The Row (no 1).

In Bourdelle's work studio we find Alexander McQueen's silver bodice (no 2) with sculpted roses welded to the back: upstairs on the terrace, a film showing short clips from films showing actors viewed from the back. You approach this from the lift or stairs by way of serried rows of head and shoulders 'busts' all of which have their backs to you.

The basement holds the main exhibit. You enter via a corridor that has Polaroids of the 2019 summer fashion shows on the walls. Not one shows a back view, making the point that all too frequently the three dimensional aspect of clothing is ignored by the magazines. A plaster case of Bourdelle's own back introduces us to the various physical and fashionable functions of the back and introduces eight themes for the main exhibition. Here they are, with some pictures of some of the wonderful items shown.



11

10 The message: including of course the logo'd back, with MBappes World Cup shirt, THAT message from Mrs Trump on her Zara Jacket for her trip to the border earlier this year, personal decorations on an outfit (no 11 Poiret's evening dress) and for me, it's poignant, the prisoner of war overcoat (British again) brown tweed with a diamond shaped appliqué darker diamond to the back.



10



7 The burden: including the obvious *Prada* rucksack, but also an intriguing double-coat design by Rick Owens



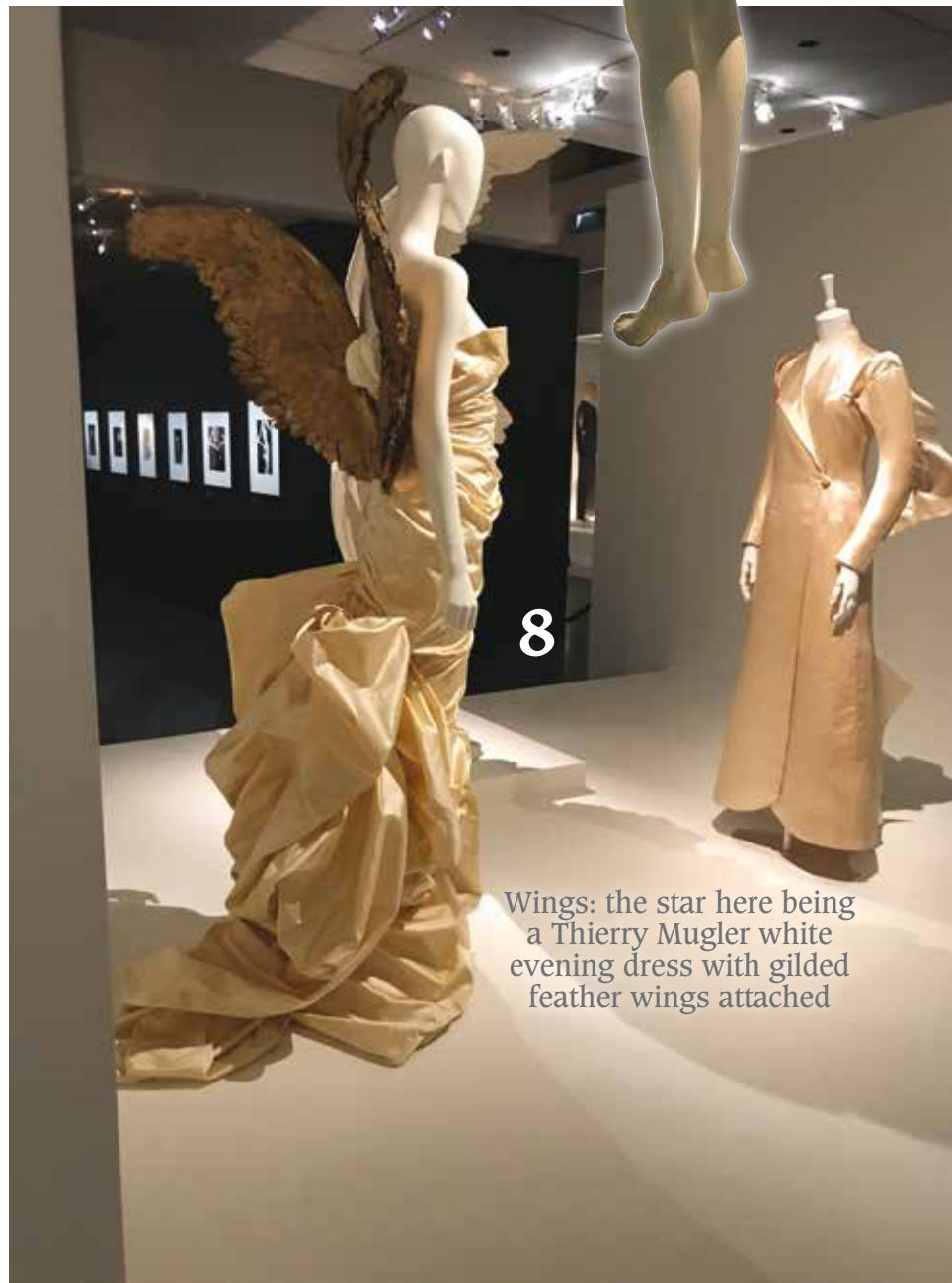
6 The forgotten back: showing items decorated only at the front, this included 18th century waistcoats beautifully embroidered at the front with only cheap cotton at the back .



Finally I must tell you about a dance video featuring Trisha Brown. *'If you couldn't see me'* is preformed completely with her back to the camera. Stunning.

9 Fastenings: since the 1500s, in Western society, it seems that only women have clothes that fasten at the back. Despite the impossibility of touching one's back oneself, laces, hooks, buttons and zips have been at the back, making it impossible for women to dress themselves. This disturbing section showed how back fastenings were also used to constrain movement: strait-jackets (an English invention apparently), corsets, and complicated buttons (no 9, Galliano).

You'll have gathered by now that I found this show wonderful. Every item beautifully displayed, and, unusually, the accompanying book with articles and photos, and a complete catalogue of all the items in the exhibition. Bliss.



8 Wings: the star here being a Thierry Mugler white evening dress with gilded feather wings attached

Friedberger Zeit

Report by Ruzena Buchanan

In 1257 a castle was built in Friedberg as a border fortification. It was rebuilt following a fire in 1559 in the Renaissance style. In 1568 Duchess Christina of Lothringen chose it as her Dower house which led Friedberg to become the centre of courtly life in Bavaria. Tumblers from Italy, jugglers, musicians, dancers and other forms of entertainment were introduced to the court. The town grew and was famed for its clock and watch making, gold and silver work. The peak time of the town's wealth was in the years 1670-1790.



In 1989 it was decided to hold a Historic festival with the years of 1670-1790 as the time frame.

Research into garments, food, crafts, entertainment has been made. The fabric room sells fabrics, buttons, braids and lace, shoes and hats. There are historical advisors who can assist you with your choice of costume and dressmakers and "hood" makers are available if you are unable to make your own costume.

The streets of the old town are lined with stalls selling food and drink, trestle tables and benches to sit at and enjoy the refreshments, map sellers, pharmacists, a variety of artisans clock and watch makers, gold and silver smiths, stone masons, bakers, woodworkers and papermaking. You are able to have a go turning a wooden candle stick or try carving a block of stone.

Throughout the town were different entertainments dancers, tumblers and musicians. Shooting clubs have an important role in Bavaria and the Archery club marched through the streets dressed in their uniforms of green and black carrying a snowy owl and an eagle. My favourite was the merry go round for adults and children. It was pushed round by about six strong men and those on the merry go round shouted "Faster" before the correct speed was reached.

About half the visitors to the festival were in costume, small children were pulled along in "dog" carts and babies slept on very comfortable pillows.

The styles of clothes worn by adults and children ranged from the Renaissance period to the 1770s. My friends and I chose dress suitable for citizens, I saw one person with a "hood" the same design as mine and another in the museum in Augsburg so perhaps they were not of the town. Most of the women wore the style of Friedberg.

Study Afternoon: Tartan

4 October 2019 at the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh
 Report by Marian Banks



Exploring Highland Revival fashion

Rosie Waine, William Grant Foundation research fellow

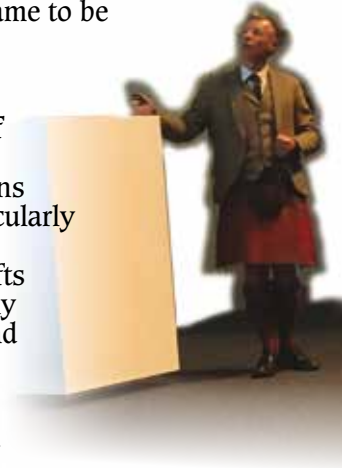
Rosie looked at costume in the collection from the early C19 which was worn during the Highland Revival (1780 to 1830). The company William Wilson & Sons of Bannockburn, tartan weavers, was the main company responsible for the tartan woven for the highland regiments. She illustrated how there had been a U-turn in highland dress in the late C18 and how the Highland Revival costume came to be regarded as part of the romantic view of Scotland.



Tartan as a Jacobite Symbol

Peter MacDonald, Tartan Historian and Head of research at the Scottish Tartans Authority

Peter explored why tartan was associated with Clans and Highland dress; its links to the Jacobites particularly during 1746 and how men and women used it differently e.g. Bonnie Prince Charlie giving out gifts of tartan and notable Jacobite women such as Jenny Cameron and Flora MacDonald using it in dress and decoration.



Tartan's Translation

Jonathan Faiers, Professor of Fashion Thinking

Jonathan looked at tartan in the guise of "tradition and rebellion, uniformity and dissent" and used many illustrations to support his talk.

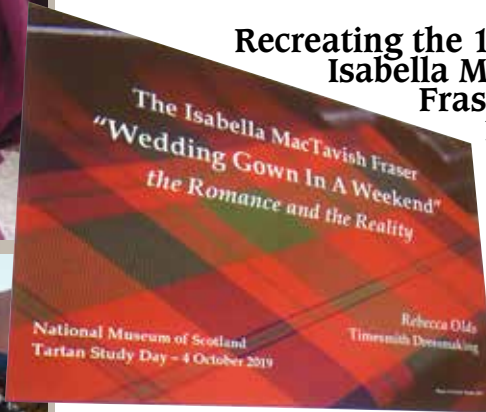


Recreating the 18th century wedding dress of Isabella MacTavish Fraser

Rebecca Olds, Timesmith Dressmaking
 Rebecca talked about the wedding dress of Isabella MacTavish Fraser. Isabella was married in

1785 in a tartan English gown, which is still used by the family today and has never been altered.

Rebecca had been leading the *Wedding Gown in a weekend* public event at the NMS where the wedding dress was recreated and highlighted aspects of construction.



Up close and very personal



Report by Fiona Starkey

Salisbury Museum, The King's House, 65 The Close, Salisbury SP1 2E

01722 332151

www.salisburymuseum.org.uk

When Salisbury Museum was asked if they had any Georgian/Regency waistcoats we could have a look at in advance of a making project, Megan Berrisford, Collections Manager looked out three items for Terri Bell and me. So with very grateful thanks to her, here is a synopsis of an absorbing couple of hours.



Left: This was probably a man's waistcoat which we think has been cut down for a lady. Darts have been added for shaping at the waist and look at the pinked edges on the inside where the fabric's been cut to reduce bulk. There is a row of stitched loops down both sides on the front to attach to a gown or jacket and the pockets and neckline have been cut to fit the new shape. Embroidery looks to be silk on silk and the buttons are very dinky (technical term).

Above: a lady's padded waistcoat, embroidered where it would show. The colour's run not through washing, but from having been folded and damp at some period. Hand quilted in very precise sections, there are nice details at the shoulder and the original colour can be seen inside the back flap.

Right: While not strictly a waistcoat, the dress was very much in period. Colourful lightweight printed cotton, there would still have been enough fabric to make it a warmish wear in summer. It too has been altered as evidenced by two very different standards of stitching, particularly at the neckline and at the hemline and the inside shows how fabric was left uncut, making it easier to alter at a later date. The pleats at the back were a bit sad when flat, but a gloved hand underneath showed how plump they would have been in wear.



Also in the Cathedral Close, in Mompesson House, there's an exhibition: Standing by my darling's side: A Victorian experience of life, love and loss which tells the story of former resident Jinny Townsend's life in the Close and her courtship and eventual marriage to Willie Hammick, which includes her silk wedding dress and elements of her trousseau.

Georgia state of mind

Report by Liz Booty

On a recent visit to Georgia I was fascinated by an exhibition of Georgian Costume and Weaponry that runs until 29th December 2019 in the Georgian National Museum in Tbilisi. The exhibition displays the national costumes for men and women from the different regions of Georgia and the weaponry from C18-C20.

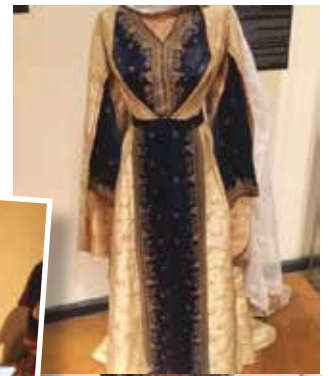
Women's dress varied from region to region - showing the wide range of influences brought to this country by the traders from the silk roads, particularly from Turkey and Iran. They were made from rich textiles that were beautifully embellished, and mainly worn with belts that were often very elaborate and beautiful.



My eye was taken however by the folds formed on the chest of the mens attire - the Chokha (wool coat) that was worn by men, typically with cartridge holders on the chest. These fabric folds were to hold gunpowder kept in intricately worked silver or gilt cases or

bullets. A very practical detail that I have not seen before. The cut is tight at the waist and wide at the bottom. It is said that every man was a warrior, a shepherd and a farmer at the same time.

These days the traditional costume is worn for special celebrations and weddings. We came across a family of three children who were off to be blessed in the monastery wearing traditional costume that had obviously been hired for the occasion.



Photos by Liz Booty show mid C18th-early C20th examples from different areas of Georgia.



returntonow.net

Things you spot when browsing...

A Scottish woman named Anne Eunson was so passionate about lace knitting she decided take it to the next level and make a fence for her garden.

The big job required big knitting needles fashioned from curtain rods and strong twine, the same kind used for making fishing nets.

It took her about three weeks to knit a blanket of lace large enough to surround her front garden.

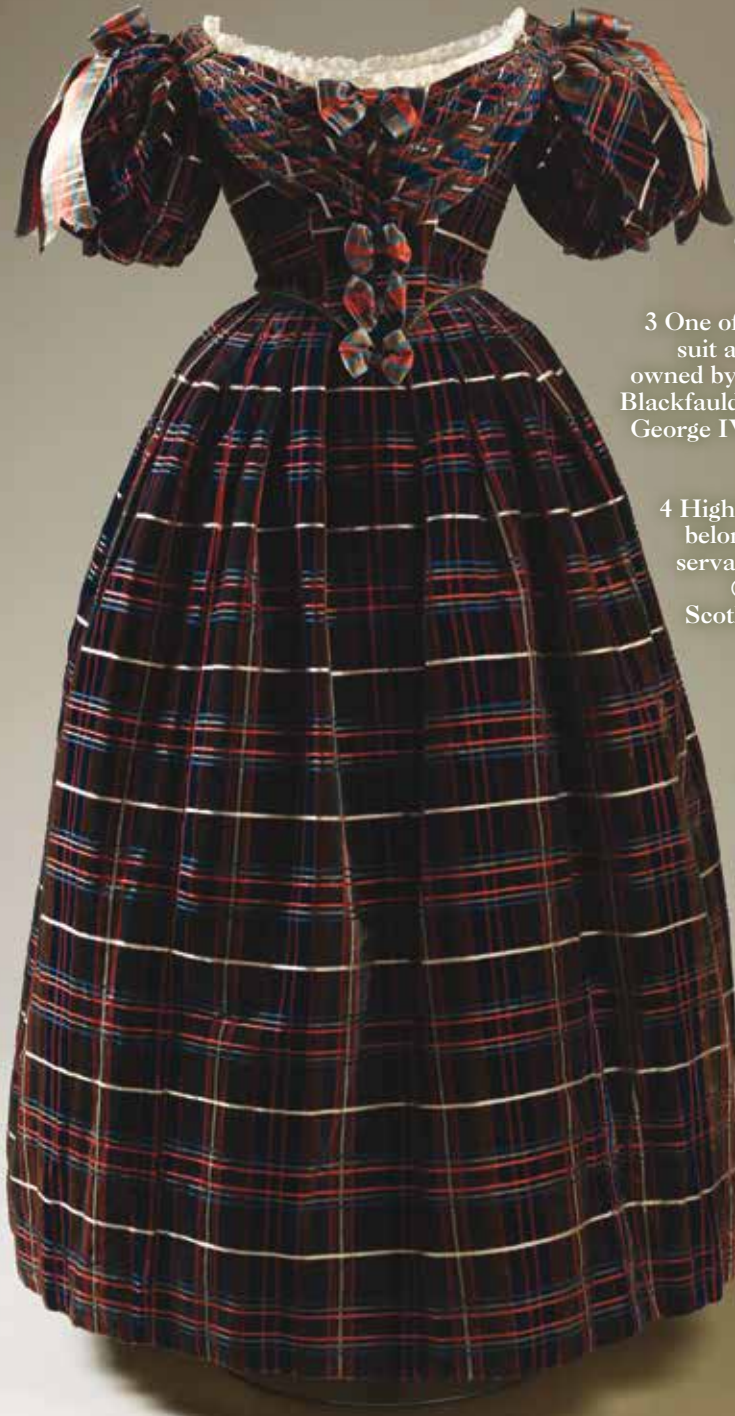
She used a 23-stitch Shetland lace pattern.



Fencing



1



1 Velvet plaid dress worn by Princess Victoria, 1835-7, Royal Collection Trust © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

2 Assistant textile conservator Rosie Nuttall with a man's jacket of dark green and blue tartan part of the uniform of a member of the Royal Company of Archers c1820.

3 One of five parts of a tartan suit and plaid with bonnet, owned by William Blackhall of Blackfaulds, and made for King George IV's visit to Edinburgh in 1822.

4 Highland dress outfit once belonging to John Brown, servant to Queen Victoria. © National Museums Scotland, courtesy of The Scottish Tartans Authority.

All images courtesy of the National Museum of Scotland.

National Museums of Scotland Tour of **Wild and Majestic** with Rosie Waine, William Grant Research Fellow
Report by Marian Banks

2



3



4



The exhibition has closed now, but you can take in a lot more information from the accompanying book.

Opposite page, from the top:

- 5 Earl of Heydon Hall's mid C18th suit.
- 6 Ancient Caledonian Society's jacket incorporating the rebellious Jacobite white rose in the weave (note the challenging pattern matching).
- 7 Boy's kilt dress with military style buttons at the bodice.
- 8 Wm Wilson & Son tartan order.
- 9 Raeburn's portrait of Glengarry in full romantic rig.

These photographs taken by Marian Banks and reproduced here by courtesy of the National Museum of Scotland.

shop.nms.ac.uk

Wild and Majestic

Published by NMS Enterprises Ltd £9.99 96pp 259 x 208, 87 colour photographs, paperback
By authors Dr Patrick Watt, curator for modern history and military collections and Rosie Waine, the William Grant Research Fellow in the Department of Scottish History and Archaeology, both at National Museums Scotland this charts Scotland's journey into the global imagination and invites you to think again about the meaning and relevance of ideas that continue to define Scotland.



An excellent exhibition showing a huge range of historic Highland dress and tartan fashion which was worn before and during the Highland revival (circa 1780 -1830). Tartan became associated with the Jacobite rebellion and since an expression of Romantic Scotland. It was a privilege to be given a guided tour by the curator Rosie Waine and to gain some insight into the work involved in putting together a major exhibition.

The exhibition was about much more than costume and dress and had some splendid paintings and artefacts, the first wall panel set the scene with the quote from Byron *"Oh for the crags that are wild and majestic, the steep, frowning glories of Loch na Gaar"* Lord Byron 1807.

Our costume themed tour started with 'Scotland After Culloden' and the fact that the British government targeted features of traditional Gaelic society, which had been adopted by the Jacobite army such as tartan clothing and Highland weaponry.

A quote indicates what was going on: *"The Highland garb is a dress fit only for war, theft and idleness"* Comment on draft of the Disarming Act 1746.

I particularly liked the array of tartan clothing, for example the suit¹ brought home by Augustine, Earle of Heydon Hall, Norfolk –a very trendy tartan jacket (mid C18) with velvet collars and cuffs and some very fetching trews (with only a little wear on the velvet and heels of the trews).

The Dress Act of 1747-48 meant that men couldn't wear plaid, kilts or trews. Women though could wear plaid, and uniforms were allowed, so rebellion was turned into service! The Act was enforced for about 40 years but a number of outfits and illustrations show that plaid continued to be worn.

Inspired by the romantic movement aristocrats, gentlemen and military officers from the Highlands formed societies in order to preserve Gaelic culture. The Highland Society was one such and was formed in 1778 and the Ancient Caledonian Society another. They were actively promoting their homeland and the clubs also performed social functions so Highlanders could come together and celebrate their heritage.

A splendid Ancient Caledonian Society tartan jacket c1786² was a perfect example of Highland dress continuing the symbols of rebellion being on display with white roses incorporated into the weave.

The Highland regiments, who had been instrumental in winning a famous victory over Napoleon in Egypt, now inspired the military look.

I liked the child's kilt dress³, what a shame that this was for boys... it was from 1820 and made in Prince Charles Edward tartan with military style buttoning at the top. It reflects the increasing interest in the lost cause of the Jacobites three quarters of a century earlier.

The archives from William Wilson and Son⁴ had some splendid letters not only from Scotland, but England and New York, indicating that tartan was popular and that tartans seen on the militia were in demand for fashionable dress.

My impression was the next complete stage around costume was the Highland Revival fashion crystallising around the royal visit in 1822 and perhaps reflects more familiar views of highland dress. There was however a huge variation in what was worn from clothing harking back to medieval garb (particularly the archers); traditional court dress; military uniforms and the full-on Highland Revival look which was embodied in Raeburn's portrait of Glengarry⁵.

However, I think he was against Walter Scott's take on Highland Revival fashion, and today might have denounced it as theme park Highlands...

The Tartan Uniform of the Royal Company of Archers⁶, ca 1822, the RCA was appointed King George IV's bodyguard during his visit in 1822, and it was redesigned to suit the romantic tastes.

William Blackhall, a lowlander, adopted the Highland style recommended by Sir Walter Scott and he had a splendid kilt suit⁷ cut in accordance with the sophisticated style of the day.

The Royal family took to tartan as well, Princess Victoria was also being influenced by the fashionable Romantic culture⁸.

Lots of new tartans were emerging and at the beginning of the C18 many families adopted a pattern. Tartan was entering into mainstream during the 1820-1830s and in 1822 new designs were in short supply.

Photographs by Fiona Starkey, reproduced here by kind permission of National Museums Scotland

National Museums of Scotland

Behind the scenes Report by Fiona Starkey

Emily Taylor, Assistant Curator of European Decorative Arts met a small group of WECS members at the Collections Centre for the National Museums of Scotland on West Granton Road (an interesting half hour No8 bus ride from the city centre if you're going).

It's an unprepossessing set of warehouses tucked behind a long hedge, but the welcome was warm.

Our request had been to look at Georgian/Regency outfits in the collection and she had laid out three:

A muslin dress from around 1800, a walking outfit of about the same time and a full outfit belonging to Mr Coutts - he of the scattered wardrobe. The muslin dress looked printed at first, but the delicate little motifs were all tambour work in three colours, probably Indian done at source and definitely before the garment was made up. The assembly was standard for the period and the stitching, as ever, finger-bogglingly small. There were small signs of mending and some interesting little details on the gathering at the waist and

neck, with drawstrings meaning that the fit was very flexible. The shoulders had a lot of gathering too, which suggested a fuller bust than usual. Long slits in the side seams probably overlapped in wear if you were to keep the front flat, but would also have accommodated an expanding waistline (see bust comments above) and at the back there was a lot of gathering to get any bulk at all as the muslin was so fine. The walking outfit dress was similar to the hunting outfit in Salisbury Museum (Janet Arnold's *Patterns of Fashion 1*) in that the

bodice was unembellished linen, minimal fabric, purely functional and obviously not meant to be seen. The pleats at the back were deep and simple giving fullness but keeping smooth lines. The spenser was nicely worked in military style silk braiding at front, back, neck and cuffs and a very 'come hither' fringe at centre back with hem length jaunty cords. The small aiglets at the back of the buttons would have gone through the buttonholes leaving a clean line on the front: buttons were purely decorative. The wool fabric had aged well, but the lining was in poor condition and was probably a replacement. There were obvious variations in stitch standard and rows of holes which looked like it may have



From the top, left to right
The long walk past the archives, 1800s embroidered muslin, walking outfit from the same period with inset showing back of the buttons, Mr Coutts' suit with below, his shirt, stock, breeches waistcoat... and wig.
Inset left shows Fiona Starkey, Vibeke Ormerod, Emily Taylor and Molly. Marian Banks and Richard Ormerod just out of shot.



been unpicked from something else to use as lining. With a straightforward centre front fastening (ie not double breasted), it would have been light in wear which is why along with the floor length (no train to drape over your side-saddled limb) the outfit was classified as walking, not hunting. Mr Coutts had a full outfit - breeches, shirt, stock, woolly

waistcoat, coat and, heaven help us, a wig in improbable brown. A previous speaker to WECS (Mr David Wilcox) had mentioned that Mr Coutts' wardrobe had been scattered around the country as nobody at the time of offering had wanted the whole collection. This outfit fits in with the story of his being an austere man with no frills and being an ill man with the need for warmth. There was a sense of familiarity with the whole ensemble and the thing which stood out was

again the quality. The stock was made with a linen so fine you just can't get it today. Looking at the pleating at the neck and cuffs is awe-inspiring if you've ever tried to get that much fabric into so constricted a space. Our hour just sped by and grateful thanks go to Emily and Molly for letting us in to look at some refreshingly different items from the period.



From Edinburgh to Bordeaux - and back again!

Vibeke Ormerod

Visiting the *Musée des Arts Décoratifs et du Design* in the Rue Bouffard, Bordeaux I came across a cabinet filled with tartan items and images of Edinburgh!

I was intrigued at finding these highland revival images here and found out why.

Charles X, King of France, abdicated in August 1830 after the July Revolution in Paris. His son, the Duke of Angoulême, (the King who reigned for 15 mins) was meant to be King but abdicated in favour of the grandson of Charles X, the nine year old Henri d'Artois, Duke of Bordeaux.

A week later the dethroned Charles X and the royal French family fled to England. The Young Duke of Bordeaux, Henri, and his sister Louise had no idea what was going on. Little Henri, who had been very warmly welcomed at birth and was expected to rule and had represented such great hopes for the Bourbons, never became king but lived all his life in exile. The

regent, the Duke of Orléans, who was meant to declare him King was persuaded to take on the role himself.

In the autumn of 1830 King George IV invited

the exiled Bourbons to reside at Holyrood Palace in Edinburgh,



Duc de Bordeaux depicted on a snuff box and below as a child

The fleeing Royal French Family say their good byes.

Henri and Louise, "*Les Petits Ecosais*" depicted in paint, pottery and pillboxes

Inset, left: Holyrood Palace



which they gladly accepted. They were warmly welcomed by the Scottish people and Charles X and his family spent two years in Edinburgh in relative comfort. The young Duke of Bordeaux could be seen riding about the city in a chaise driven by postilions with white cockades. In 1832, in response to reform agitation in Britain, the family moved to Prague.

Henri and his sister Louise were depicted on most of the artefacts in the cabinet and they were called "*Les Petits Ecosais*". They were depicted on pill boxes, plates, gloves and also in little earthenware statues.

There was a lot of support for Henri, the Duke of Bordeaux to return as the rightful Bourbon King. He did get the chance many years later but did not take it.



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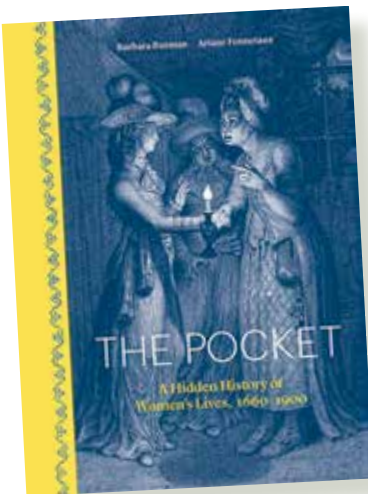
Encyclopedia of Embroidery from Central Asia, the Iranian Plateau and the Indian subcontinent

Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood and Willem Vogelsang
New Book from Bloomsbury Visual Arts November 2019 £180.00
ISBN 9781350017245, 512pp, 465 colour and 36 bw illus

Discover a rich history of embroidery.

For millenia, the peoples of Central Asia, the Iranian Plateau and the Indian Subcontinent have migrated and traded along the multiple strands of the Silk Road. This history has found expression within the arts and crafts of the region, and particularly embroidery.

With 500 images (465 in colour) of clothes, accessories and examples of soft furnishings like cushions, bed linen, curtains, floor coverings and wall hangings, this is the definitive guide to all the major embroidery traditions of the region, examining the material, technical, artistic and design dimensions of the subject, including its use by today's fashion designers.



The Pocket: A Hidden History of Women's Lives, 1660–1900

by Barbara Burman and Ariane Fennetaux.
Yale University Press, 2019, £35.00 ISBN 9780300239072
264 pages, 200 colour illustrations.

Review by Pat Poppy

Back in 2006 Barbara Burman and Seth Denbo published a little 40 page pamphlet entitled *Pockets of History: the secret life of an everyday object*, this was to accompany an exhibition at the Bath Museum, and was the result of a research project which examined 300 surviving pockets. The online resource resulting from that project is still available at <https://vads.ac.uk/collections/POCKETS.html>. This book starts with the work done then and expands it.

This book by Barbara Burman and Ariane Fennetaux looks beyond the object itself to who owned pockets, what they put in them, and how they regarded them. They have gathered information given in trials, mainly at the Old Bailey for the theft of pockets, in letters, diaries, and wide range of other written sources. As well as photographs of originals, there

are satirical prints, and paintings of pockets being worn, and the array of items they contained.

In the chapter "*work'd pockets to my intire satisfaction*" the authors examine who made pockets, what materials they used, and how they decorated them. Several other chapters examine what was kept in the pockets, and how they might reflect the owner's interests and work. Examples of this include Dorothy Wordsworth who loved to go on "botanical walks" and in 1800 purchased two botanical pocket microscopes, while lower down the social scale a farmer's wife who traded in cheese and butter at Bristol market was knocked from her horse in 1736 and her pocket containing the 9s 8d she had earned was cut off.

The book is full of titbits, and has pages and pages of references at the back for those who would like to explore further.



Making Victorian Costumes for Men

Sil Devilly
£25 ISBN: 9781785005756
A4 Paperback, 160 pages 232 colour photographs and patterns inside

During Queen Victoria's long reign there were constant, often subtle, changes to men's clothing in the large, diverse and growing population. This practical book guides you through the male fashions of the time and includes eighteen garments typical of the era. Each project is carefully grounded in historical research, while traditional tailoring techniques are simplified for the modern costume maker.

The book

- Describes essential fabrics and tools for pattern drafting, tailoring and costume construction, and explains how to get the best results from each.
- Covers a wide variety of gentleman's attire adaptable for different occupations and social status, including assorted shirts, trousers, breeches, a tailcoat, a jacket, a frockcoat and several waistcoats.
- Gives a full set of patterns for each outfit, along with clear, full colour, construction photographs showing straightforward methods and helpful tricks and tips.
- Suggests how outfits can be adapted to fit different sizes and characters, and gives practical insights into the making process.

Responsive design Ethiopia

Report by Ruzena Buchanan

Weaving in architecture, design and fashion Textile Museum Augsburg

This was a small exhibition at the museum in Augsburg.

Nicola Borgmann, curator and architect of the Architecture gallery Munich and Juliane Kahl of the Responsive Fashion Institute, initiated a project in Addis Ababa dedicated to the techniques of weaving. Ethiopian and German designers, architects and students took part in experimental workshops developing applications and designs for weaving.

Materials were woven on hand looms and then developed into art, fashion and architectural projects.



Above: Plastic coat

Left: Childs garment Black Lion hospital, Addis Ababa



One of the projects to improve peoples lives took place on the children's oncology ward at the Black Lion Hospital, Addis Ababa. To reduce infection a new wing was developed designed with lighting, paints and painting. Local weavers used hand looms to weave curtain material designed to keep out the strong sunlight. Materials for blankets and clothing were also woven. The children created the designs and family and staff embroidered the designs onto the finished items.



Spotted on the back staircase of Jolly's in Bath. They don't write 'em like that anymore.

Copy for the next newsletter to Vibeke Ormerod by 28 March please

With this Autumn issue of the magazine you should have:

- Booking forms for February AGM and Lace March Study Day: *Shoes*
- 2020 Membership renewal form
- Minutes from the 2019 AGM
- Finance statement for the AGM
 - Nomination forms for Chair, Secretary, Programme Manager and co-opted members
- Membership Questionnaire



Sales table mystery object is a powder puff. bellows for your wig.

Gladstone's Land



While working assiduously on WECS' behalf (various reports in the magazine, earlier), there was a bit of time to go exploring Edinburgh as well. Gladstone's Land is a National Trust for Scotland property

very close to the castle on the Lawnmarket at one end of the Royal Mile. It was originally owned by merchant Thomas Gladstone, who extended and remodelled the building to create opulently decorated apartments. With hand-painted Renaissance interiors, Gladstone attracted wealthy tenants including William Struther, Minister of Saint Giles' Cathedral, and Lord Crichton as well as the high-end grocer John Riddoch, who traded from the ground floor. A fascinating visit in itself as you wind in and out of 500 year old rooms, but more to the point, a costume opportunity up in the top room. They had grown-up sizes, too ... of course we did!



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