

Wardrobe

Summer issue 2021

£7.50: Free to members



www.wofecostumesociety.org

Calendar

Janet Arnold
Study Day

The Politics of
Fashion from
Cromwell to
Thatcher

Saturday 2 October 2021
■ Widcombe Social Club, Bath
BA2 6AA

Christmas meeting

The House of
Embroidered Paper

Saturday 20 November 2021
■ Bath and County Club,
Queens Parade, Bath, BA1 2NJ



Main image and background
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Suits you, Sir!
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Greetings to you all

We are so looking forward to seeing you again at our next study day. Always optimistic, we are now discussing events and outings well into 2022, and, of course, our Golden Jubilee year in 2023.

50 Years of WECS

Talking of which: as well as our usual events we plan an **anniversary tea party**, to be held at Bath's Royal Literary and Scientific Institution on 1st July 2023. We would welcome any suggestions for a theme for the afternoon: a high-profile speaker, or perhaps a workshop or fashion show. We need to start planning now.

Little and often

Plainly, the more activities we offer, the more help we will need, so, in order to make this a really special year we invite you to join an informal 'working party' to make sure that we attract as much interest as possible not only from our current members but also from costume and fashion aficionados who may not even know we exist! The aim would be to pool our talent and knowledge to arrange a spectacular year without overwhelming individuals with too much work.

Right now, however, in this digital era, **we need people with specific skills**: one with social media savvy, and time to use it; and another who would be interested in raising awareness of our work with organisations, magazines, museums and local media - in other words, marketing.

If you would be interested in helping us in any way, please get in touch with me at chair@wofecostumesociety.org.

In the meantime, enjoy this edition of *Wardrobe*, and have a happy summer.

With every good wish from all of us at WECS

Angela

Meetings for 2021

Janet Arnold Study Day The Politics of Fashion: from Cromwell to Thatcher

Saturday 2 October 2021

10.00 - 16.00

■ **Widcombe Social Club, Bath BA2 6AA**

Postponed from last October.

Is fashion political?

The ambivalence of fashion with not only political but also social, aesthetic and moral systems, has always caused much anxiety throughout the generations. The vicious attacks on MP Tracey Brabin for her off-the-shoulder ensemble in the House of Commons equated her appearance to perceived stereotypes. Women are regularly defined by their dress especially if they espouse to positions of authority or power. The study day will look at the part politics has played in the fashions of the day and perhaps how politics has influenced what we wear.

Pat Poppy - Pat is an independent costume historian with a special interest in pre-modern history and re-enactment. Many of you will know her as she has been a WECS member for many years.

Image and Reality: Politics, fashion and stereotypes of the Cavaliers and Roundheads

The talk will examine the stereotypes around Cavaliers and Roundheads, both male and female, and how each generation has re-interpreted them to reflect their own social and political situation. We will look at how film and television have depicted their clothing in the 20th and 21st century and similarly paintings from the 18th and 19th century. By looking at who was complaining about these fashions in the first half of the 17th century, we might find where these stereotypes originated.

Jonathan Faiers - Jonathan is Professor of Fashion Thinking at Winchester School of Art, University of Southampton, UK. His research examines the interface between popular culture, fashion and design. Jonathan is consultant curator for the forthcoming major exhibition based on his book *Tartan* opening at the V&A Dundee in Spring 2023.

Tartan: Parading power and displaying dissent

Tartan as a political statement from Jacobite coats to Nicola Sturgeon's face mask; how tartan endures as both a fashion statement and a political communication.

Jonathan's publications include *Tartan* (Berg 2008) and *Dressing Dangerously* (Yale University Press 2013), essays for *Alexander McQueen and London Couture* (both V&A 2015), *Developing Dress History* (Bloomsbury 2015), *Colours in Fashion* (Bloomsbury 2016). His most recent work, the monograph *Fur: A Sensitive History* was published by Yale University Press in 2020.



The Roundhead is by John Pettie and the cavalier is Prince Rupert of the Rhine from the studio of Sir Peter Lely.



Christmas meeting The House of Embroidered Paper

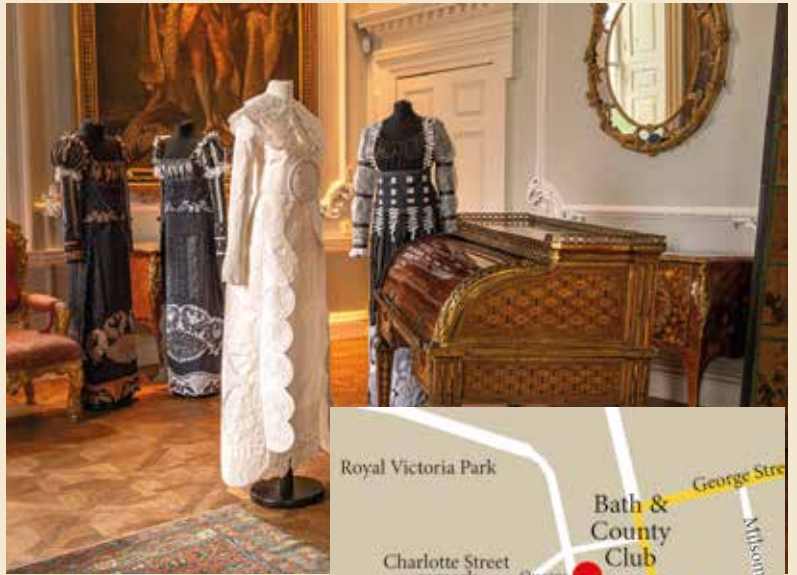
Saturday 20 November 2021

14.15-16.00

■ Bath and County Club,
Queens Parade (off Queen Square)
Bath BA1 2NJ

Speaker: Stephanie Smart

We have a new venue at the Bath & County Club situated just off Queen's Square in Bath for the Christmas meeting. As usual we will start with mulled wine and mince pies after which Stephanie Smart will talk about her work making garments from paper and thread. Stephanie established her uniquely combined fashion house and fine art studio, The House of Embroidered Paper, in 2017. Each garment produced is a work of paper textiles, created using only paper and thread; inspired by period and place, history and story. The ambition behind every piece is that it be simultaneously visually beautiful, technically ambitious and conceptually interesting. Stephanie will describe the original inspiration behind her work with paper textiles as well as showing images and talking in detail about specific pieces from her last two collections.



The Bath and County Club is on Queens Parade (up from BRLSI on Queen Square) and within the Central Residents Parking Zone. Spaces can be limited at busy times. Pay & Display on-street parking is available on the roads directly surrounding the Club, but should you struggle to find a space, or want parking for more than two hours, then we advise that you use Charlotte Street car park, BA1 2NE (a three to four minute walk from the Club). Be warned: two hours costs £4.50!

Viktoria Ivleva – Viktoria teaches at the School of Modern Languages and Cultures at the University of Durham.

'Out of the blue': What did Catherine II wear on the day of the coup and why does it matter? Uniform as a means of identification and allegiance has particular significance for royalty and after Catherine usurped her husband to become Empress of Russia, she understood the importance of her clothes. Viktoria will examine the origins of different attributions of Catherine's uniform on the day of the coup in 1762 and the importance of this episode in 18th century culture.

Viktoria has published her research areas of 18th-, early 19th- and early 20th century Russian literature and culture; Dress culture in Imperial Russia and Catherine II.



Daniel Conway – Daniel is a Senior Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at the University of Westminster.

From Margaret Thatcher to Tracy Brabin: Dress, Fashion and the Hyper-Visibility of Woman in British Public Life Daniel will explore the role of dress and fashion in the representations and construction of

women politicians in British parliamentary and broader political/public life; the complex roles of dress in gendered and political terms; dress can be an integral part of political action, identity and agency, but also a debilitating means for disciplining and one that a majority of women politicians resent.

Daniel published *Margaret Thatcher, Dress and the Politics of Fashion* (2016) in Behnke, A (ed) *The International Politics of Fashion: being Fab in a Dangerous World* (Routledge) and is writing with Professor Jutta Weldes (Bristol) a chapter on the role of the Queen's Dresses and British Public Diplomacy.

During the Study Day Jill and Annie will be in charge of the ever-popular sales tables and the raffle is back, so don't forget to bring your money.

*Sorry -
no credit cards!*

We're on the lookout for an

Out and About correspondent!

Do you keep an eye open for up and coming costume-related events? Is your attention caught by new fashion books and articles? Talk to our editor Vibeke Ormerod about how you can make good use of your inclinations and get involved with spreading the news in *Wardrobe*, three times a year.

Our readers love to know what is being planned by museums, other fashion societies, and salerooms.

Vibeke can be reached at editor@wofecostumesociety.org.

Fancy something a bit different?

The WECS committee is looking to broaden the input we get from members and would like to recruit a couple of willing bodies to come to meetings where ideas are originated and things arranged. There are no specific job titles or duties - just a willingness to join in discussion, bring a different opinion to proceedings and lend a hand if one of the officers is particularly busy.

Fancy giving it a go?

Contact Angela on chair@wofecostumesociety.org

Out and About comes with all the current caveats about masks, checking first and booking at the various venues and events.

Out & About



Fashion Museum Update

Hello everyone, Rosemary here, from the Fashion Museum. I do hope that you and yours are all keeping well in these different times?

Angela has asked me to update re the current situation at the museum:

Following a wonderful 60 years at the Assembly Rooms, the Fashion Museum will vacate the Assembly Rooms in 2022/23 and move to a new home.

The Council is now looking for a new home for the Fashion Museum in Bath and is currently considering several possible locations. Keep an eye on our website and social media channels for the latest information on our move and the announcement of our future location.

It is likely that the museum will need to close for a while before moving into our new location, however we do not yet know how long the closure will be for; but don't worry, while we are closed we'll be bringing you an exciting array of digital content to keep you up to date with all our activities and our world class collection.

The Assembly Rooms is owned by the National Trust, who will take on the care and management of the Assembly Rooms going forward.

Our team is currently busy preparing the collection for the move to a new home in October 2022. We are carefully packing up over 100,000 items in preparation for the move. Sadly, this means that for the foreseeable future we will not be able to offer our usual Study Facilities service, for those wishing to have a closer look at the collection. Rest assured that once we are settled into our new home, we will reinstate this service.

We have come up with a scheme to ask our supporters to play a part in our move by 'Buying a Bag'. 1,400 items need your help to become MOVE READY: by buying a Tyvek Archival Garment Bag, you will be helping us protect the collection for the move. Each bag will cost £12.50 and you can choose how many you would like to buy. We will be launching this scheme very soon; and if you would like to register your interest to find out more about how you can support 'Buying a Bag', please contact our Development Manager: rebecca.gibson@bathnes.gov.uk

In the meantime, the Fashion Museum is once again open, showing our exhibition *Shoephoria!* (see below) including some lovely new additions to the collection.

If you would like to be in touch with me, please do e-mail: fashion_enquiries@bathnes.gov.uk

Take care everyone!
Rosemary Harden.

Shoephoria!

until 2022

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



Showcasing 350 pairs of boots and shoes, many drawn from the Fashion Museum's world-class collection, alongside 'star' shoes borrowed for the exhibition, *Shoephoria!* traces the evolution of shoe style over the last 300 years. *Shoephoria!* will run into 2022.

The exhibition includes shoes worn by iconic figures from British cultural life, including actors Noel Coward and Margaret Lockwood, music hall star Fred Kitchin, ballerinas Margot Fonteyn and Alicia Markova, and Nicola Adams in *Strictly Come Dancing 2020*. *Shoephoria!* aims to present a new way of looking at footwear and its wearers in a show that demonstrates the creativity and style of shoemakers and wearers throughout history.

The Pleasure Boat. An English fan leaf from 1739; hand coloured etching of a river landscape and a boat with an awning, punted by a man to the shore. A gentleman advances towards the boat, inviting a lady followed by her dog, to embark.
By Francis Chassereau (1698 - c.1784) a member of a Huguenot family of fan makers.



The Fan Museum

■ Online
■ 12, Crooms Hill, Greenwich, London, SE10 8ER
The Museum will be closed until September 2021
www.thefanmuseum.org.uk

There is an online exhibition through The Fan Museum by Google Arts and Culture showing a vast array of fans. It is well worth a look!
<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/the-fan-museum>
The Fan Museum holds a world-renowned collection of fans and fan leaves which include the splendid Hélène Alexander Collection and further acquisitions, gifts and bequests which have been received since the museum opened to the public over twenty years ago.
The collection is comprehensive, with examples from all over the world from the 12th century to the present day. The collection is particularly strong in 18th and 19th century European fans.



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

Epic Iran
until 12 September 2021

Woman's jacket, blouse and skirt, 1800 – 50, Iran. Museum no. T.57&A-1979. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London



■ Chertsey Museum
The Cedars, 33 Windsor Street, Chertsey, Surrey KT16 8AT
www.chertseymuseum.org



Goddess evening gown by Paul Poiret, 1927.

The Roaring Twenties: Fashions of the Jazz Age
until 4 September 2021

It is 100 years since this fascinating and ground-breaking decade began and Chertsey Museum are celebrating with a glittering display of 1920s fashions. Dazzling evening dress, wedding clothes, underwear, sportswear and accessories are on show; all carefully selected from the Olive Matthews Collection of dress.

The Regency Wardrobe

29 August - 26 October 2021
Sunday - Tuesday 12.00-17.00

■ Firle Place, Firle, East Sussex
www.firle.com

The House of Embroidered Paper is delighted to be able to announce that The Regency Wardrobe will be shown at Firle Place, Firle, East Sussex. We apologise for the changes that have been made to the exhibition dates, these have been due to Covid-19 restrictions. Tickets can now be booked at: firle.com

Parts of the collection will then be shown at Chertsey museum from November 2021 - February 2022 (exact dates tbc) and at Worthing from 17th April - 1st August 2022.



Three of the Chintz exhibits shown against Palembang - Museum of Friesland, Leeuwarden



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

Chintz: Cotton in bloom until 12 September 2021

Chintz: Cotton in Bloom is a collection with an extraordinary story, spanning hundreds of years and thousands of miles. This exhibition showcases some 150 examples of this treasured textile, from mittens to wall hangings and from extravagant 18th-century sun hats to stylish mourning dresses.

Why no English National Dress? A personal musing

Tony Cooper

Remember *Miss World* on the telly? From 1959, and despite the efforts of Women's Lib, it was to be one of the most-watched programmes of the year with over 18 million viewers recorded at its peak in the late '70s and early '80s.

Statistics aside (at least those statistics) the pageant consisted of several rounds. As I remember it there was an evening dress round during which the poor girls felt compelled to hoick up their unfamiliar long skirts above their knees in a desperate attempt to avoid measuring their lengths on the steep steps of the set. Then, preceding the swimming costume round, when the detailed inspection took place, there was the so-called National Dress round.

For some countries it would be fairly predictable; Miss Germany in a dirndl, Miss Holland in a stripy skirt, lace cap with wings and clogs, Miss India in a flowing sari, Miss Spain in a dramatic, flamenco number and, without question, Miss Japan in a kimono. For her part Miss France might wear an interpretation of Liberté's dress from Delacroix's painting but, for decency's sake, with a bodice that stayed put. For many of us this was being viewed on foggy, 405-line, black and white TVs with the voice-over describing the colours*.

Miss Scotland would usually be turned out for highland dancing and Miss Ireland for a Feis**. Miss Wales would have to settle for the tall black hat in the shape of a chopped-off cone, red skirt, shawl and so on. Then there was poor Miss England - totally at sea in this round. Over the years the incumbent had appeared as Britannia, straight off the obverse of an old penny, a tavern wench (who can't be smitten by stylish mob cap), a pearly queen, a morris dancer, a Beefeater, a guardsman (complete with red tunic and bearskin) and even a businessman in a pinstripe suit with bowler hat, furled umbrella and a copy of the FT! Miss England wasn't alone, though. Miss Australia was usually stuck with a bush jacket, shorts and hat with corks, Miss Canada might appear as a lumberjack or a Mountie and Miss USA as Annie Oakley or Scarlett O'Hara.

One can understand those relatively new countries having no established national dress but England's been around for quite a while now (it was first unified into a single kingdom in the tenth century). So why doesn't England seem to have one? I have a theory, but I'll come to that later. Perhaps we should firstly consider the term "National Dress". Although there are undoubtedly some exquisite traditional costumes around the world, they often prove not to be "national" at all but regional and cultural. In some cases the style of dress is relatively localised and in others it can be widespread. So let's go to a few hotspots of traditional costume around the world for illustrations.

For some unaccountable reason, as I write this I have Frank Sinatra's song "Come Fly With Me" rattling round my brain so why not start in "Llamaland".

We often think of Peruvian costume as being characterised by bright (and maybe not always coordinated) colours but you would see a distinct difference between the female dress of, say, the Huilloc and Patacancha peoples from Ollantaytambo and that of

the Checaspampa in the Ausangate region. One feature they share is that the skirts tend to be relatively short and full - think of the 1950's rock and roll skirts and you get the idea. Hats (monteras) vary greatly throughout the communities in the Andes; the Huilloc and Patacancha wear what looks a bit like a fruit bowl - right way up - strapped at a jaunty angle on their heads [illustrated right]. From her taste for safety pins, this lady appears to be in her punk phase. In contrast the Checaspampa wear a broad disc-like hat with colourful fringing [illustrated top right]. It is said that it is possible to identify the village from which a woman comes just from by the style of hat she wears. (That statement puts me in mind of *Pygmalion* in which Professor Higgins claimed to be able to tell the street from which a person came by the way they spoke.)

France can lay claim to various folk costumes including the Breton, with its towering coiffe *bigoudène* and the outlandish *Schlupfkapp* (a gargantuan stylised bow - frequently black - worn on the head) worn in parts of Alsace. The very name of the latter illustrates the historic volatility and porosity of national boundaries. In fact one only has to look at a nineteenth-century map of Central Europe and the Near East to see that many of the national borders we know today simply didn't exist.

In broad brush terms, Brittany is a Celtic region. It was an autonomous Duchy with its own language until 1532. Much like Wales, it still has a strong individual identity and like Wales moves afoot to bring the Breton language back into use, at least on road signs. That said, a closer look reveals an even finer tapestry of communities, roughly indicated by the five Breton départements, each with its own folk costume characterised by spectacular lace headdresses.

On the other side of France, a detailed, nineteenth century dialectic map shows that at least six dialects were spoken in Alsace - four German and two French. Not surprisingly this would introduce internal divides within the region both linguistic and cultural and the folk costume reflects this.

Roman Kozakand, has a blog entitled "Folk Costume and Embroidery" that is extremely well researched and interesting. I thoroughly recommend you have a look.

In contrast to the sub-national, the *dirndl* is supranational, being traditionally worn in Bavaria, Austria, Liechtenstein, the German-speaking areas of Switzerland and the Alpine regions of Italy. Perhaps we can agree that "national"



From the top:: Checaspampa children in wide hats, Patacancha woman in cloak (photos courtesy of *Dreamstime*), Breton high lace bigoudène, and a Schlupfkapp from Alsace.

costume is generally a misnomer and better called "traditional folk" costume, bearing in mind that "folk" don't stick rigidly to political boundaries. What's more, it appears that distinct folk costume tends to be associated with self-sufficient and relatively prosperous rural communities rather than metropolitan. By some means a particular style of "best" dress of a particular time became the accepted mark of identity for all generations to bring out and wear with pride on high days and holidays. It would be interesting to know when that happened

but I suspect the nineteenth century preoccupation with codifying everything may have had a hand in it.

Svenska Nationaldräkten [shown left] is an exception to the above because it was originally designed by King Gustav III and introduced in the late 1770s. At the time there was great concern about the drain on the economy caused by the importation of luxury fashion fabrics and other goods. His costume was designed for the nobility and the



The original feminine version of the *Svenska Nationaldräkten* Engraving by Johan Snack

middle class with the intention of curbing the "urge to splurge" on court and other occasions. As we can see, the feminine form was very much of its time but the design

* During on line research for this article, I discovered that "French National Dress" included somewhat attenuated serving maid outfits!

** Feis is an Irish step dance competition.

Audrey's Archive 1974

By Angela Bailey

An extract from Reader's Digest where Hepworth is advertising the benefits of a made-to-measure suit.

If a Hepworth made-to-measure suit can satisfy this lot, think what it could do for you.

You won't be surprised to know that these five gentlemen are quite vocal when it comes to picking their clothes. They know what they want and they know why. By way of a demonstration we made them a suit each. A Hepworth made-to-measure suit. If you'd like to turn the page (*we've shown them below the main photo*) you'll see how we managed to give them suits that not only fitted, but also fitted in with their own fashion ideas. And that's what a Hepworth made-to-measure suit is all about.

Ed Stewart Ed is the tallest of our disc jockeys. He's about 6'2" and weighs 12 stone. At first he was a bit sceptical about the advantage of made-to-measure. *"I am a standard size, so why do I need it?"* As he got involved he began to see that made-to-measure is as much about fashion as fit.

"I want a beige material with small check." No problem.

"I hate baggy clothes. I like a waisted jacket." No problem.

"And 2.5" bottoms with turn ups." Again, no problem.

He asked for a centre vent in the jacket and only one back pocket in the trousers, wide lapels and big buttons. As he said later, *"Maybe it would have been a bit tricky finding all that in one off-the-peg suit."*

Pure new wool, about £40.

Terry Wogan Terry's about 6' and the first to admit that he's not been without a little excess weight in the past. *"It's all behind me now,"* he says, *"and don't bother with the jokes."*

In fact he's lost a lot of weight recently and he wanted a suit to accentuate his new slimmer self. *"I like a double-breasted style with two side vents in the jacket."* We agreed that this was a good choice for his build. Trousers shouldn't be too wide (22") and the absence of turn-ups makes his legs look longer and slimmer. When it came to colour and material he chose a light brown gabardine - besides being his favourite colour it shows up the patch pockets and styling of the jacket.

Trevira wool worsted, about £36.



Reader's Digest advertising the Hepworth made-to-measure suit on five DJs, from left to right: Terry Wogan, Noel Edmonds (seated), Emperor Roscoe, Tony Blackburn and Ed Stewart.



Tony Blackburn Tony wears suits quite often for store openings and personal appearances. He likes fashion but doesn't see himself as a fashion leader. *"I like to wear comfortable smart clothes but nothing outlandish."* He chose a checked blue wool cloth and especially wanted it in a 3-piece. *"I like the idea of a waistcoat."*

He chose wide lapels, big buttons and 24" flared bottoms with no turn-ups. One of the things that impressed him most was how simple the whole operation was. *"I thought it would be a real drag but it wasn't."*

Pure new wool, about £50.

Noel Edmonds started wearing a suit after he got married. *"Before that I hadn't worn a tie in five years."* Now he's a firm believer in looking smart. *"Whenever I appear in a suit I get more fan mail than when I don't."*

He chose a light grey checked cloth from the 900 or so materials we have in stock and plumped for a three-piece style. *"I like waistcoats because they make me look slimmer and therefore taller."* He wanted a centre vent in the jacket, wide lapels, 24" trouser bottoms, flared with turn-ups.

His verdict. The great thing about made-to-measure is you can take some of the fashion trends but you don't have to take them all.

Wool/polyester, about £40.

for the men had a distinctly military air and borrowed details from the renaissance including slashed shoulder roles in the tunic. It has to be said that national dress was a far cry from the folk dress of Sweden. Back to England again and just to prove everything I've said was wrong, probably one of the nearest things we have to a traditional folk dress in England is the Pearly King and Queen from the East End of London - metropolitan or what! So we come back to the main question, why do we not have a recognisable folk dress? The past two and a half centuries have seen England turn from a predominantly

rural country into an industrial, urban one. Enclosures destroyed the self-sufficiency and cohesion of villages, forcing many to join the massive migration from the countryside into industrial towns. Communication and transport also began to improve radically, making rural communities less isolated. Everything conspired against communities forming their own distinct identities.

*They hang the man, and flog the woman,
That steals the goose from off the common;
But let the greater villain loose,
That steals the common from the goose.*

English folk poem

I wonder whether religious affiliation also has a role to play. Catholic countries seem to celebrate events in the religious calendar with great brio whereas there still seems to be a bit of the puritan within the English even after three hundred years. It's all very quaint for "them" to do it but it's not "us". And then there's the climate. Continental weather tends to be somewhat less fickle than our maritime one. Beautiful folk costumes cry out to be seen en masse in the sun in the town square. Can you imagine the effects of a sudden Atlantic squall on

Continued on back page



Enquiry Detective work for members

Rachel Whitworth (née Boak) has asked for members' help in finding information about the label/firm which made her wedding dress. WECS' committee takes this opportunity to wish Rachel and Ben all the best on their marriage.

Rachel explains:

Some WECS members will know that I got engaged last year. Well, Ben and I finally got married in Helensburgh on 21st May! My dress came from an antique shop in Helensburgh. It is 1960s and has the label 'Romney Model' inside the neck. The dress was altered for me, with a large bow and tails added at the back to replace the strange fabric roses that were there. The bow and tails were inspired by a 1963 Jacques Heim dress included in the V&A's wedding dress exhibition in 2014. All I've been able to find out about the Romney Model label from my books and the internet is that it belonged to the company CR Welford of London, a family-run business dating from 1929. I wondered if any WECS members have encountered this label and know more about it?

Thank you!

Rachel Whitworth (née Boak)
rsboak@yahoo.co.uk



Why no English National Dress? Continued from page 7.

heavily starched headdresses? Although referring to another garment – the ruff - John Stubbs illustrated the sort of problem admirably: "But if Aeollus with his blasts, or Neptune with his stormes chaunce to hit upon the craftie bark of their brused ruffes, then they goe flip flap in the winde, like rags flying abroad, and lye upon their shoulders like the dishcloute of a slut."

Finally there's the English lust for the new and the individual. What self-respecting English rose would ever countenance dressing like her mother and grandmother? (That said, the 20-odd-year-old daughter of a friend of mine went into their loft and had a rummage through her mother's '60s and '70s clothing. Finding a mini skirt she quite liked she tried it on only to find it too small. "Oh, what a shame" said her mum, sympathetically, whilst secretly doing a "pull the chain" move and breathing a self-satisfied "Yesssss!!!"; she had been slimmer than her daughter!)

They say that every tradition had to start somewhere and sometime. So to heck with all I've said; why don't we have a project – at least in thought – and propose an English national costume or even regional costumes for male and female now?

The odd thing is that almost all the "characteristic" clothing I can think of is for the male; Somerset's smock and straw hat, Tyneside's bum-freezer jacket and wide flat hat, Skegness's heavy jumper and so'wester and the plus-fours and plus-twos on the game moors. Oh yes of course, for the ladies there is the robe à l'anglaise, but would it be right to have a national dress with a French name!?



Not in the Repair Shop

Helen Montague-Smith has taken Teddy apart..

A friend's teddy, Susie, was not in a good state, being nearly 60 years old but still much loved. Her head was loose, she had a broken leg and some very threadbare garments.

I was asked to make a dress but had to mend her first - which I did. She was a strange mixture of fabric stuffed body but with fur paws and head.

Her 'trousers' were sewn to her body as was her top. I made her some new trousers/pantaloons which covered the patch I had to do for her leg. The dress I decided had to be 50's style with puffed sleeves and a Peter Pan collar - very fiddly on a small scale but my friend was thrilled with the result.



Keep Wardrobe full!

What have you been doing, reading, discovered online?
Write and tell us so we can share.

**Copy for the next newsletter to Vibeke Ormerod by
30 October please**

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