

Newsletter

Spring 2020

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

lead you through our fascinating collections. Discover the weird and the wonderful!

Will you be brave enough to ride our racehorse simulator? Are you like a horse? Come and find out!

SCIENCE WEEK

13th March 2020 10:00am - 3:00pm
FREE community drop-in event for adults

No scientific knowledge required just a sense of curiosity! Take home some fascinating facts and talking points. Come for five minutes or stay till 3pm.

ROYAL COLLECTION STUDY DAY GEORGE IV—THE MONARCH AND THE MYTH

3rd April 10am-5:00pm

An exciting chance to hear from leading experts on George IV as Prince of Wales, Prince Regent and monarch. Speakers to include:

Kate Heard: Senior Curator of Prints and Drawings, Royal Collection Trust. Co-curator of the exhibition George IV: Art & Spectacle

Sally Goodsir: Curator of Decorative Arts, Royal Collection Trust

Kathryn Jones: Senior Curator of Decorative Arts, Royal Collection Trust. Co-curator of the exhibition George IV: Art & Spectacle

Tim Cox : Chairman of the BSAT Executive Committee and horse racing historian

Dr Steven Parissien : CEO of Palace House, biographer of George IV Tickets @ £55 include: - Welcome tea/coffee in The Tack Room - 2 course lunch - 10% off The Tack Room for dinner that evening

SIR MARK PRESCOTT : TOUR OF PALACE HOUSE

6th May: 3:30-5:00pm

Fundraising Tour with Sir Mark Prescott - renowned trainer & collector of sporting art. Tickets are strictly limited, with only 25 available Tickets @ £50 include

- Afternoon tea + cake with Sir Mark
- An hour's guided tour by Sir Mark of the Palace House Sporting Art Galleries

ARENA EVENTS

23rd August :**SUFFOLK PUNCH DAY**

6th Sept : **THE KNIGHT AND HIS HORSE**

Join us for an exciting tour through the development of the Medieval Knight from the origins of horse riding through Roman cavalry and up to the age of chivalry.

Enjoy the thrills of skill at arms against targets and the grand finale, a mounted combat between knights from the age of Richard the Lionheart! After the show there will be a chance to take a selfie with a Norman Knight or a Roman Cavalryman... who will be your favourite?



Good Companions

The Many Roles of our Canine Friends

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Front Cover

Mrs Philip de László and her pet Pekingese 1928

Philip de László (1869-1937)

Courtesy of the de Lazlo archive © The Phillip Trust

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The New Year is always time for reflection and thinking and this year is especially significant being the start of a new decade. The Friends Committee have started the year committed to maximising the support The Friends can give to Palace House.

The opening of Palace House has seen great improvements to the displays at the museum. The Friends have supported these displays through the purchase of many acquisitions. We will continue to support in this way. We will also expand the range of projects that we support to reflect developments at the museum.

We have recently changed banks to Weatherby's and we can now accept Direct Debit payments. We have registered with HMRC and are now able to claim Gift Aid on membership subscriptions and donations. We have a new membership leaflet to reflect these changes. We have also changed the format of the Newsletter to reduce the cost of postage.

How you can help

- If you are a UK tax payer please return the enclosed gift aid declaration. This will allow us to claim 25% tax back on your annual subscription.
- Consider signing up for Direct Debits.
- Pass on a Friends of NHRM Membership form to someone who would enjoy being a member of The Friends.

We thank you once again for all the support that you have given us to date and to thank you in advance for your continued help in the months and years ahead. Here's to an exciting new decade!

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

FRIENDS' VISITS AND EVENTS

18th March 11:00am

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friends of National Horseracing Museum

6th April

9:30 am (Subject to timings on the Gallops)

YARD VISIT : ROGER VARIAN

£25 person

Carlburg Stables has been home to Varian Stable since Roger purchased the yard in January 2017. This historic stable boasts state of the art facilities and is situated in the heart of Newmarket just a stones throw from the world-renowned Limekilns grass gallops.

May 21st

6:30– 8:30pm

EXHIBITION PREVIEW

Good Companions : The Many Roles of our Canine Friends

May 26th

11.00am

CHEVELEY PARK STUD

£25 per person

In 1975 Cheveley Park Stud was purchased by Patricia and David Thompson In a rather delapidated condition. They have built up Newmarket's oldest stud farm, into a flourishing stud. which some 60 are stakes winners and/or stakes

producers, consign quality drafts at the sales, and race one of the biggest strings in Britain and Ireland with more than 130 horses in training with 19 trainers. Recent years have proved special for Cheveley Park Stud with homebred filly QUEEN'S TRUST winning the Grade 1 Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Turf at Santa Anita in 2016, followed by PERSUASIVE winning the prestigious Queen Elizabeth II Stakes at Ascot on Champion's Day in 2017.

June 2nd

10:00am

AUDLEY END

£25 PER PERSON

Morning visit with an exclusive tour of the house by Peter Moore Curator.

8th August

FRIENDS PICNIC AT THE RACECOURSE

Building on the success of last year, The Friends will once again will hold a picnic on British Legion Day at Newmarket Racecourse.

PALACE HOUSE EVENTS

More details can be found on the Palace House Website

6th - 15th March 2020

BRITISH SCIENCE WEEK

The theme of this year's British Science Week is 'Our Diverse Planet'. You can explore the interesting world of the horse at Palace House with our special family science trails which will

MY FAVOURITE OBJECT cont'd

Pollard has lovingly portrayed the full cast of this sporting occasion. Mary, Countess of Salisbury, the landowner's wife, leads the field, in her sky-blue habit with black velvet collar. Now, very elderly and short sighted, she looks through a binocular glass embedded in the handle of her specially made riding whip.

The official Judge, whose job it is to award points for the speed and agility of the dogs behind the hare, canters ahead, to be in the right position should a hare jump up from its form. He can then follow closely the course that ensues and signal his verdict to the following spectators.

The other official is the slipper, who can be seen with a brace of greyhounds in hand, walking briskly behind the judge. His task is to release / slip the dogs behind the hare, allowing it the requisite law and giving each dog an equal chance to reach the quarry first and force it to turn. These dogs, not wearing blinds, are alert, and full of anticipation.

Next follow the boys ('the finders') eyes peeled to spot a sitting hare and draws it to the attention of the slipper – although one child has already lost concentration and is doing up his shoe laces!

The dog owners, mounted, follow on. Behind them come the trainers walking in the rear, leading the dogs programmed to run later in the day. All these dogs are blindfolded, so they don't become upset at the sight of hares getting up or a course coming by. Some dogs are stripped, most of the later runners are still rugged up.

The mounted spectators are in various states of disarray and many of their horses, early on a sharp morning, are far too fresh. A gentleman on a rearing grey has lost his hat and will shortly be losing his seat (top, background), whilst another is having to re-saddle his piebald mount, whose saddle has already slipped back, the rider's head holding up the saddle flap, so that the girth straps can be reached (top background right).

Finally, a small King Charles Spaniel (bottom right), a pet from the big house, has evidently, sneaked out for a day of unauthorised sport, but has been sent packing for home with a good whack from the hunting crop of the man in black on a smart grey cob!

In short, all the fun of the fair!

Pollard, a coursing man, knew them all, loved the scene and the company and has left us an indelible image of the fun and camaraderie engendered by a shared love of country sports. A pleasure denied to subsequent generations since the pernicious Hunting Act 2005.

EXHIBITION

GEORGE IV

ROYALTY, RACING AND REPUTATION

Until 19th April.



George IV is one of British history's most fascinating and misunderstood figures. The current exhibition at Palace House explores George's legacy, as not only a great patron and collector of art, but also as prominent and at times controversial patron of horse racing. All but one of the forty-two artworks featured including portraiture, comical etchings and historic trophies are lent by Her Majesty The Queen from the Royal Collection.

Good Companions

The Many Roles of our Canine Friends

21st May –1st November 2020

Palace House is pleased to announce their next loan exhibition will be The Good Companions: The Many Roles of our Canine Friends. It will open 21 May 2020 and continue until 1st November 2020.

The shared history of humans and dogs stretches back to pre-history. They are the first animal domesticated by man and their importance to our lives is reflected in our art. They are recorded in cave paintings of the Palaeolithic period tens of thousands of years ago, they populate Egyptian hieroglyphics, the pottery of ancient Greece and Babylonian wall reliefs.

Initially domesticated for hunting and survival, their role has evolved as human civilisation developed. This exhibition will use art and objects from the collection of the British Sporting Art Trust and public and private collections to



Water Dogs William Ward after Ben Marshal ©BSAT

look at the different roles dogs have, and continue to play in our lives from the 18th to the 21st century.

Three main themes will be explored: sporting and working dogs, the rise in popularity of dogs as pets and companions and the ways dogs have acted heroically, particularly in theatres of war. Loans include an early Thomas Gainsborough of a *Gentleman with a Dog in a Wood*, important works by Sir Alfred Munnings of his wife *Violet Munnings Riding on Exmoor* and *Captain Sutherland* and works by Robert Bevan and Elizabeth Frink.



Where can we find it in the Museum?

It is upstairs, across the road from the museum, in Palace House.

Why do you like this object?

Because of the detail and the light it throws on country life, country sports and social history.

Is there a particular feature that attracts you?

It is still in first class condition and amazingly vivid and fresh for a work completed almost 200 years ago. Hatfield House is little changed, and one can stand, to this day on the site of the artist's vantage point.

What can you tell me about the object and any stories associated with it?

My love of art was schooled into me by my mother who, at various times, was theatre critic and art critic for the London magazine, *Punch*. She drilled into me that no landscape was any good, unless you could feel the temperature and know the time of day.

She would have passed this painting on those grounds alone- this is a chilly autumn morning (background trees are still in leaf) but there is rain in the air. Portrayed, is a walked up coursing meeting, in the days before the hares were driven past the slipper, by beaters, in a more formal manner. Everybody walked out together across the land and coursed the hares as they got up in front of them.

NEW ACQUISITIONS cont'd

mastery of their signals became part of his on-screen persona. He began his career in journalism at 'The Sporting Life' and then went onto work for the Daily Star in 1984. McCririck joined ITV Sport as a member of the horse racing coverage team which later moved to Channel 4 in 1984, working there until 2012. In December 2018 he joined 'The Racing Paper' as a weekly columnist. In 1971 he married his life-long partner Jenny, who made a touching tribute after his death, "John put on a pantomime act. We all know that. He made a living out of it and people liked it, but deep down he was a very private person and he cared about people. He was such a kind man but he never shouted about all that he did." John sadly passed away on the 5th July after battling with a short illness.

This project only happened because of the support of Jenny McCririck who very kindly donated the clothing and accessories on display to the museum's collection. The items are wonderful pieces of both social and horseracing history. A fitting memorial to a legend. These new acquisitions have now found a permanent home in the Kings Yard Galleries at Palace House.

Charlie Davis and Alana Edgeworth

MY FAVOURITE OBJECT

Sir Mark Prescott

One of the delights of going around museums and galleries is to see how visitors respond to an object or picture on display. For many a glance is all they are prepared to give before passing on. But others, particularly those who are deeply involved in a sport, see the detail and can explain what is going on in the picture. They can explain the moment and the thoughts that it evokes. We want to capture that enthusiasm in My Favourite Object. This month we have invited Sir Mark Prescott to give his personal views on his favourite painting currently on display in Palace House.

What is your favourite object?

I suppose being a coursing man, through and through, I would have to select Pollard's "Coursers Taking the Field at Hatfield Park" the engraving of which was published on February 6th 1824.

NEW DISPLAY



The Last Race at Datchet Ferry... After a print by Francis Barlow (c. 1626 – 1704)
Royal Collection Trust/ © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Picture in Focus

From late spring the top floor of Palace House will be dedicated to a diverse, lively and at times controversial programme of 'Picture in Focus' displays, each of which will concentrate on a key issue. The first painting will be *The Last Race at Datchet...* after Francis Barlow formerly thought to be of c.1687 but now revealed as a 20th-century work overpainted onto a 17th-century seascape. This display will examine the issues of authenticity and expectation, and how the market shapes and distorts the way we view history.

The picture shows Charles II and his court viewing a horse race at Datchet Ferry from the royal box, protected by Yeomen of the Guard. In front of the box is a set of weighing scales to measure the weight of the jockeys. There is a view of the river and Windsor Castle in the background.

Picture In focus is supported by The British Sporting Art Trust.

Taking Stock



One of the joys of moving from the old museum to Palace House is the additional space we have and the opportunities this opens up to increase accessibility to our collections.

It is not generally known that Palace House has a purpose built library that houses both the National Horseracing Museum and British Sporting Art Trust's extensive collection of books. At the old museum we did not have space to shelve the NHRM library consequently many of the books were stored in boxes. There wasn't the room or the opportunity to have an accessible working library suitable for research.

Last year an appeal went out for volunteers to support the Curatorial Team in organising the Library at Palace House. We now have a strong team that has spent the last six months unpacking, getting to know the collection and organising the books in subject areas. The next challenge will be to catalogue and audit the collection. When this work has been completed we will look at ways of making the collection accessible to researchers either by appointment and through regular opening hours.

John McCririck

Palace House is one of five museums that participates in a Suffolk Museums Initiative. 'Transforming People to Transform Museums' programme, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund Skills for the Future, 2018-2022. This year Palace House is hosting two trainees, Alana and Charlie. They are almost half way through their placement with us. They reflect on one of the projects they have been working on.

A month into our traineeship we were given the opportunity to create a pop-up



exhibition about the late racing pundit John McCririck. This was a great privilege. We were involved from the very beginning right up to the opening of the exhibition and beyond. It was an honour to be a part of a project surrounding someone who was so recognised within the racing community. In fact, when the clothing arrived to be documented, it was instantly recognisable as the outfits belonging to the flamboyant personality we had grown up watching on Channel 4.

Former racing colleague and friend Tanya Stevenson, described him as a "confident, flamboyantly dressed character with a personality to match." John McCririck was a widely known horse racing pundit and journalist, born on the 17th April 1940 in Surbiton, Surrey, England. He was educated at Harrow, his school jacket and boater being two of the items of clothing on display within the exhibition. After McCririck left school he went on to work for a bookmaker, eventually becoming one himself. He then went on to be a tic-tac man, his

PAST VISITS

went, so the court and grandees of the day were sure to follow.

On the death of his father George III, one of his first acts as new King was to send for Richard. "Tattersall" he said, "you know all the men I have known. Whenever any of them are in trouble, let me know"

Soon after the Ascot Meeting of 1830 Richard went into mourning for the death of the Monarch, or 'that nobody' as Thackeray described him. But Thackeray admitted that "with all his faults, his vanity and selfishness, he was not a bad friend to racing. At least he loved the Turf and at least he had been a good friend to Richard and to his father before him".

Fast forward now to 1865, and the termination of the 99 year lease of land at Hyde Park Corner, and the move to 5 acres of land at Knightsbridge. To mark the occasion, a fine banquet was given by members of The Jockey Club and Subscription Rooms for 300 people, where the toast of the evening was proposed by Admiral Rous, 'prosperity to the house of Tattersalls'. In reply, Richard Tattersall (1812 - 1870) pointed out "It is now a hundred years, bar one (much laughter) since our great-grandfather leased from the Earl of Grosvenor the piece of ground on which he established our place of business. He was best known to his

contemporaries by the name of 'Old Tatt' and by his honesty and uprightness he acquired the goodwill and respect of all who knew him. The Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV, then a young man, was a constant patron of the establishment ... The Prince was also a frequent visitor to my great-grandfather's seat, Highflyer Hall and many strange stories have been told of the Prince and his companions there. Among other things, I have heard of a post- chaise galloping into the town of Newmarket, with his Royal Highness riding the leaders and Charles Fox the wheelers..... was succeeded by my grandfather, also with the reputation of an honourable and honest man. He was joint proprietor with The Prince of Wales of The Morning Post newspaper which was carried on successfully for 50 years.

Lavinia Lynam

RETRAINING OF RACEHORSES

Life in the Rothschild Yard

Life in the Rothschild Yard is always busy for our Retraining of Racehorses team. With a 3 month rotation of horses, there is always a four legged friend for visitors to meet. We are going to look back at one of our previous horses, one horse currently stabled in the Rothschild Yard and one coming soon.

Big Orange

After a successful career as a long distance flat racehorse Big Orange came to Palace House in April 2019 after sustaining an injury. During his racing career he won a total of 9 times, including the 2017 Gold Cup, earning over £1.2 million in prize money.

Being a real local horse, born and bred at Stetchworth Park Stud and trained in Newmarket by Michael Bell, it was wonderful to have him here at Palace House for visitors to meet. He was not ridden at Palace House due to his injury but he was a real favourite. After his stay in the Rothschild Yard he returned to the Gredley's stud.

God's Own

God's Own arrived in the Rothschild Yard at the start of January after retiring from racing in November 2019. The 12-year-old, who was trained by Tom George, enjoyed a very successful racing career over fences. He won eight races including the Grade One JLT Melling Chase at

Aintree, the Boylesports Champion Chase at the Punchestown Festival and the Ryanair Novice Chase at Punchestown, earning over £625,000 in prize money. He is here for a holiday until the end of the Cheltenham Festival to meet his fans before going on to his forever home.

Breton Rock

A new face arriving in the Rothschild Yard soon is multiple Group winner, Breton Rock. Trained by David Simcock, Breton Rock had a very successful career, winning 4 group races including the Group 2 Lennox Stakes at Goodwood. He has had 3 months off being a 'horse' and getting muddy after being retired in October 2019, and is now going to begin re-training ready for a loving, long term home in the future. **Robin McEntee**



British Racing School



The Friends tour of The British Racing School coincided with the first major storm of autumn. However, a little rain did not dampen the spirits of those attending. The visit was led by the enthusiastic Grant Harris the CEO of the school whose verve and love of his job was evident. After an informative tour of the site we

were lucky to see a group of trainees being put through their paces. We were warned that we would probably see a fall and the inevitable happened. It was impressive to see safety procedures implemented and the rider quickly remounted even managing a wry smile. This class, the first of the academic year, was mainly girls. The balance between girls and boys being redressed as the academic year progresses. The “nine weekers” as Grant referred to them are straight out of school and usually keen riders. The students train six days a week with the day starting at 5am and finishing early evening around 8 o’clock after fitness training. Trainees ride between two and four times a day on thoroughbreds. These horses are generally loaned to the school by owners. Many horses finishing their careers help train these young riders. This makes the school one of the largest re-homers of retired thoroughbreds.

Life at the school is a tough transition for the students coming straight from home. The school, however, really cares for its young pupils not only giving them the basics they need for their future horseracing careers but looking after the whole person. They leave the school able to ride in control, ready to start their apprenticeships and undergo follow-on training. They are also taught life skills. Over 10% of students come from low income families, some directly from the care system. The school gives them routine and self-discipline with subjects such as cooking, basic housekeeping and driving forming part of the curriculum. English and maths lessons are compulsory with the school demanding at least a 2 level progression in these subjects. This training enables the school to successfully place 85% of graduates into horse related jobs.

A chat over coffee at the end of the tour inevitably led to reminiscences from some of the Friends who had begun life in the industry over 50 years ago. Horror stories were told about their first days in a yard. It became evident that young people starting life in the industry today benefit greatly from their time at the British Racing School, especially when comparing it with the school of hard knocks.

Tattersalls

In November Lavinia Lynam led an informative tour of Tattersalls in Newmarket, the leading Bloodstock auctioneers in Europe.

With Palace House currently showing George IV: Royalty, Racing and Reputation in the Moller Gallery, Lavinia reviews the monarch’s impact on Tattersalls, who celebrated their 200th anniversary in 2016.

In an extract from a recent talk given to The Friends of NHRM reference was made of the importance to the newly

founded firm of Tattersalls by the patronage of The Prince of Wales, later Prince Regent, George IV. Indeed, the Fox Rotunda, which was first commissioned in 1780 to stand at Tattersalls, Hyde Park Corner, subsequently moved to Newmarket and its present position in the Lower Sales Paddock, has, mounted atop the stone cupola, a bust of George IV. It is debated whether the King himself, in his vanity, requested his bust, or whether Richard Tattersall, with a typical piece of business acumen, had it placed there. However it is certainly symbolic of the prestige in which the newly founded firm was held, in addition to the friendship between the two men. Also where the Prince

