

PATCH ROGERS – NEWSLETTER No 1

We would like to welcome you all to our first Newsletter.

Since opening the Studio in Brighton and Hove last November, we have been busy getting the new premises known in the local vicinity. Some good press has helped; firstly we had a mention in the local paper then a fantastic article in the January edition of **BBC Homes and Antiques**. We will be featured in this magazine in May following a photo-shoot revolved around a house in Wimbledon styled in the Arts & Crafts theme. We are also featured as 'shop of the month' in the April issue of **Period Living** and further press articles will follow shortly.

Being open Fridays and Saturdays is the first step to giving collectors, dealers and enthusiasts a chance to come and look around and see a varied selection of Arts & Crafts and Design to the present day. We are also open by appointment so if you are visiting the locality, just email us at patchrogers@acfc.co.uk and let us know your planned date and we can arrange to be open.

The **Brighton Festival**, second largest in the country to Edinburgh will soon be underway, occupying the whole of May. All aspects of the arts are covered, from theatre, ballet, music, comedy, exhibitions and street performance to the artists trail and the extremely popular 'open houses'. This is a great opportunity to see new designers exhibiting their art in their home environment as well as having a good old nose at their homes and gardens. For further information on this year's festival please visit <http://www.brightonfestival.org/>

The next big event on the calendar for us is the annual **Liberty Exhibition**, starting 4th June and running through till 28th June. We are currently putting together pieces for the show and hope to draw on the success of the previous year with pieces sourced from both collectors and dealers alike, culminating in a truly exceptional selling exhibition at the home of Arts and Crafts. **If you have any pieces you would like to offer for inclusion into this special event, please do not hesitate to contact us.**



Liberty Exhibition June 4th – June 28th

Further details to follow shortly.

We look forward to seeing you at the Liberty Exhibition in June but if you have the opportunity to visit our Studio beforehand, then we have detailed below a few other places of interest that you could include in your itinerary. If you don't have time, then a day trip to the coast is always a wonderful way of blowing out the cobwebs and breathing in the fresh air:-

The art critic Roger Fry knew a great deal about the Arts and Crafts philosophies and in setting up the **Omega Workshops** in 1913 alongside Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant he essentially helped create a job scheme for fine artists who liked to paint on objects, rather than creating them. The shop also sold works by others such as Ernest Gimson. In 1916 Bell and Grant moved to East Sussex, taking up residency at **Charleston Farm House**, nearby to Bells' beloved sister Virginia Woolfe who was also living in Sussex at **Monks House**, Rodmell.

For William Morris devotees, a visit to **Standen House**, East Grinstead is a must. With the interior decorated by Morris & Co and lighting by WAS Benson, the house designed by Philip Webb is now in the hands of the National Trust and is a showcase for the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Brighton Museum and Art Gallery houses one of the finest Decorative Art and Design collections in Britain, showcasing amongst others works by Ruhlman, Galle, Voysey, Majorelle, Follot, Robin Day, Mackintosh, Ernest Race and Philippe Starcke.

With each Newsletter we are going to feature a piece that we believe warrants a closer look and this month it's an oak buffet by **Shapland & Petter**, item No F141.



Shapland & Petter furniture was made in Barnstaple, North Devon and the company was highly successful during the twenty year period 1894-1914. Although there has been much debate surrounding their contribution to the Arts & Crafts Movement, it remains the same paradox as for many other Arts and Crafts protagonists, including William Morris. The contradiction between the principles of hand-crafted and the use of machinery will continue to raise issues but as the early ideologies were impossible to sustain and only the very rich could afford to pursue their principles, then companies such as Shapland & Petter had a niche market to fill. The company was seen as 'modern' and 'fashionable' and as such they were economically successful. They had a network of shops and produced a catalogue and by the turn of the twentieth century they were certainly amongst the great home furnishing manufacturers. For further reading on the history of Shapland & Petter please see Daryl Bennett's very interesting biography published by the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon.

The cabinet above is a perfect example of the balance between masculine and feminine, practicality and beauty within a well proportioned piece of furniture. On close inspection the curving top rail and protruding front columns with flattened caps, bears similarities to works by C.F.A.Voysey. The inclusion of the repousse copper panel depicting stylised

organic flowers adds the hand-crafted element into the furniture. The square tapering spindles at the sides and back are a unique feature to Shapland & Petter and special machinery was developed in order to cut them, giving this piece a light and open feel.



Shapland & Petter had a great ability in their choice of timber, predominantly using quarter sawn oak as against straight cut, which gives not only a decorative feature but is also far superior to the structure of the piece. The use of all these elements combine to make this piece of furniture Arts & Crafts in form, although the debate of 'purity' will continue to stimulate conversation.

Despite the downturn in the economy the market for great design is still going strong. The **Yves Saint Laurent** sale making £354,000,000 breaking records for twentieth century decorative arts with an Eileen Gray chair fetching close to £22 million , let's hope it's comfortable!! Closer to home, a Voysey cabinet made by Arthurs Simpson turned up at auction with an estimate of £5/6,000 and ended up making £85,000. The Arts & Crafts market is strong with a Benson lamp recently realising 50 times its initial estimate, always nice to know that you can trust an auctioneer to get their valuations right!!

On a personal note:

Jon Catleugh the designer, artist and collector of William De Morgan pottery has sadly died aged 88. Jon's extensive collection and expertise led him to become the leading authority on William De Morgan pottery, his book William De Morgan Tiles (1983) was one of the first books to catalogue De Morgan's designs. His passion for pottery in general led him to be appointed a trustee of the William De Morgan Foundation and later to become Chairman where he helped to open the De Morgan Centre in Wandsworth, South London.

I met Jon only once through a friend when I had my shop in Sheen and had just bought my first piece of De Morgan pottery, a twin footed bowl by Joe Juster. He was a lovely man and very generous with his knowledge. I only regret not taking him up with his invitation to look at his collection.

He was born on April 16 1920. He Died on January 7 2009

Following on from this sad news, I can only imagine what Jon would make of this.

The Minton Archive which contains original drawings by designers such as A.W.N. Pugin, Christopher Dresser and Walter Crane is under threat of being broken up and sold off. Since the confirmation that an American private equity group are to buy Waterford Wedgwood, there is the great possibility that this archive of designs and historic records could be lost, a value of £3 million has been given to the archive which doesn't seem a great deal even in these hard times (If only the person who rated the Eileen Grey chair with such high fiscal importance could be found). The Art Fund, which is in place to secure this kind of material for future historians, designers and the general public have started an appeal to secure the documents. Please, if you can add your support, I'm sure future generations will thank you. The web site is www.artfund.org/mintonarchive

TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR ALL THE LATEST ADDITIONS TO THE STOCK

www.acfc.co.uk

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO EMAIL US WITH INFORMATION ABOUT RELATED EVENTS AND APPEALS WE COULD INCLUDE IN OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER.