



The Medieval Dress and Textile Society

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Editorial

The Society's straitened circumstances this year have not ended with Summer. Karen Watts valiantly added to her workload by stepping into the breach left by our lack of a Programme Secretary for the sake of the Autumn meeting. Alas, despite her efforts, our plan to compensate for the lack of a Winter meeting by making this one two days has proven to be unattainable, and so we are back to a single day. It is a great shame, as Karen had some brilliant things in the offing. Much of the problem in realising them was due to the short lead time that circumstances imposed. This illustrates our desperate need for a dedicated Programme Secretary who will find the task much easier in being able to have the benefit of longer planning cycles. So, please, if you have considered helping your fellow medieval dress and textile aficionados, do think some more. The Society will find it increasingly difficult the longer the position of Programme Secretary remains unfilled.

If a committee position is too much, you can still help in ensuring that future newsletters are a richer resource. In addition to the various categories you will find in this newsletter I shall be happy to see notices for other historical textile or dress-related events, notices of research planned or in process, forthcoming publications, lectures and anything else that may be relevant. Send them to the Editor, medatseditor@hotmail.co.uk, or by post to 45 Bismarck Drive, Leeds LS11 6TB.

TIMOTHY DAWSON

COVER PICTURE: A child's *qaba* of that late thirteenth century held in the University of Leeds International Textile Archive. This collection is one of the subjects in the MEDATS Autumn meeting. Photo © ULITA.

COLLECTIONS

Recommendations and suggestions of institutions in Britain and abroad can be sent to the Editor, medatseditor@hotmail.co.uk, or by post to 45 Bismarck Drive, Leeds LS11 6TB.

University of Leeds International Textile Archive

Leeds, UK.

As its name suggests, ULITA is more of an ethnographical collection than a historical one, but it does have a outstanding and important custer of medieval garments from Egypt. ULITA is also more of a study resource than a display collection, but does have occasional exhibitions. Otherwise, much of its collection is virtually accessible on www.ulita.leeds.ac.uk.

EXHIBITIONS

Byzantium 330–1453

Royal Academy, London

25th Oct 2008 to 22nd March 2009

Highlighting the splendours of the Enduring Roman Empire, the exhibition **Byzantium 330–1453** will comprise around 300 objects including icons, detached wall paintings, micro-mosaics, ivories, enamels plus gold and silver metalwork. Some of the works have never been displayed in public before.

Byzantium 330–1453 will include great works from the San Marco Treasury in Venice and rare items from collections across Europe, the U.S.A., Russia, Ukraine and Egypt. The exhibition begins with the foundation of Constantinople in 330 AD by the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great and concludes with the capture of the city by the Ottoman forces of Mehmed II in 1453. This will be the first major exhibition on Byzantine Art in the United Kingdom for 50 years.

This epic exhibition has been made possible through a collaboration between the Royal Academy of Arts and the Benaki Museum, Athens.

Tickets

Adults £12, Concessions (seniors, disabled, NADFAS etc) £10, Students £8, Corporate Guests £8, Income support, unwaged £4, Children 12-18 years old £4, Children 8-11, £3, Under 7 years old free.

Tickets may be purchased in person at the RA Ticket Desk, on the day or in advance of the visit. Advance tickets are also available by telephone on +44(0)870 8488484.

Exhibition opening times

Open to public – 10am–6pm daily (last admission 5.30pm)

Late night openings – Fridays until 10pm (last admission 9.30pm)

Charles the Bold (1433–1477)

Groeningemuseum, Brugge. www.museabrugge.be

27th March 2009 – 21st July 2009

Two of our members who visited this exhibition when it was held at Bern in Switzerland described it as "one of the best exhibitions ever". So it is a good thing for those of us who missed it the first time, that we have a second chance!

Further details can be found on

http://www.bhm.ch/en/ausstellungen_sonder_uebersicht.cfm

Bourgeois Pride and Princely Splendour: Costumes C16th to C18th

Abegg-Stiftung, Riggisberg, Switzerland.

20th April – 2nd November 2008, Daily 14.00 - 17.30

The Abegg-Stiftung is planning an exhibition of important historic costumes from the collections of the Hessisches Landesmuseum Darmstadt and the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden in Germany. The exhibition will show a group of around twenty bourgeois costumes from the seventeenth century, which originally belonged to families in Cologne and later came to Darmstadt with the collection of Baron von Hüpsch. A smaller number of women's costumes from the late eighteenth century complements this group. The second part of the exhibition presents a costume of the Elector Moritz of Saxony, datable to the first half of the sixteenth century, from the collection of the Dresden Rüstkammer. All of the costumes were examined and conserved in the conservation workshop of the Abegg-Stiftung over the last few years. The results of this research will be presented in a richly illustrated catalogue.

Accompanying Publication

Kölner Patrizier- und Bürgerkleidung des 17. Jahrhunderts: Die Kostümsammlung Hüpsch im Hessischen Landesmuseum Darmstadt

(Riggisberger Berichte 15)

Johannes Pietsch and Karen Stolleis, with Nadine Piechatschek.

c. 300 pages, with numerous illustrations and drawings; German text with an

English translation of the main chapters
ISBN 978-3-905014-35~8
Price: CHF 85.- + postage; CHF 50.-- at the exhibition

Address

Werner Abegg-Strasse 67

CH-3132

Riggisberg

Kanton Bern, Switzerland

Tel (+41) 031808 1201 Fax (+41) 031808 1200 www.abegg-stiftung.ch

CONFERENCES FORTHCOMING

Early Textiles Study Group, 12th biannual conference: *Textiles in Art: from the Bronze Age to the Renaissance*

London, 5th and 6th December 2008

Seminar-style papers by specialist textile historians based on new research and focusing on the representation of textiles in works of art.

Papers to include:

Sophie Desrosiers, *Textiles represented in the Dame à la Licorne tapestries and some other late 15th century hangings in the Cluny Museum, Paris.*

Zhao Feng, *The Two Systems of Textiles in the Mongol period and their reflection in the art of the time (13th-14th centuries CE).*

Paola Frattaroli, *I decori tessili di Giotto e della sua scuola, e di Simone Martini.*

Jane Bridgeman, *Textiles, dress and the artist in Renaissance Italy.*

Elena Phipps, *Aymara traditions: striped textiles, their origins and significance in the Southern Andes.*

Stephanie Bunn, *Representations of nomadic felt in different media through history.*

Jon Thompson, *Carpets and Felts in Persian Painting: Problems of interpretation.*

Hero Granger-Taylor, *Textiles in early Mesopotamian art – finds from other areas (Egypt and the Levant) as a guide to their technique and original appearance.*

Marie-Louise Nosch, *References to textiles in Mycenaean Linear B texts and the evidence of contemporary wall-paintings.*

Lauren McGhee, *The representation of wool and linen textiles in Roman-period mummy portraits from Antinoopolis in Middle Egypt.*

Rosemary Crill, *Textiles in the wall paintings at Ajanta, India, late 5th century CE.*

Ulla Mannering, *Gold Sheet Figures from Migration-period Scandinavia as a record of textiles used in clothing.*

Lisa Monnas, *Problems in the chronology of 14th century Italian textiles with reference to paintings.*

Rembrandt Duits, *The monetary value of textiles represented in Renaissance painting.*

Maria Hayward, *Fact or fiction? An analysis of two portraits of Elizabeth I at Jesus College, Oxford.*

For **full programme** and **booking form** please see home page <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/Textilesinart/>

For **other enquiries** please e-mail: textilesinart-owner@yahoogroups.co.uk, or

write to **Textiles in Art, 22 Park Village East, London NW1 7PZ UK**

Conference fee: £85 for two days (£50 for a single day) We are hoping to be able to offer concessionary places to a number of students. Fee includes sandwich lunches and teas/coffees. Please note, accommodation will not be part of conference package.

Venue: 5th December – British Academy, Carlton House Terrace, SW1Y 5AH

Venue: 6th December – Courtauld Institute of Art, Somerset House, WC2 0RN

Organisers: Hero Granger-Taylor, Rosalind Janssen and Lisa Monnas

The conference is supported by the **Pasold Research Fund**

Costume Colloquium: A tribute to Janet Arnold

Florence, Italy 5th – 9th November 2008

To commemorate the tenth anniversary of the death of Janet Arnold, the Romualdo del Bianco Foundation and the Friends of the Costume Gallery of the Pitti Palace is organising four days of study, lectures, site tours and visits.

Tentative program:

Wednesday November 5th -

- Arrival and registration.

Thursday November 6th -

- Participant Welcome and Opening.
- Presentations and Study Sessions.
- Specialised site visits (Palazzo Vecchio).
- Reception and cocktails

Friday November 7th -

- Presentations and Study Sessions.
- Specialised site visits (Palazzo Vecchio).
- Social events.

Saturday November 8th -

- Optional Excursion to Pisa (Palazzo Reale and Cerratelli Foundation).
- Presentations and Study Sessions.
- Specialised site visits (Palazzo Vecchio).
- Social events

Sunday November 9th -

- Presentations and Study Sessions.
- Specialised site visits

Registration for such a prestigious event in such a location will not be cheap (estimated £300 – £400) and is not yet open at going to press. Pre-registration expressions of interest may be made via www.costume-textiles.com

The 44th International Congress on Medieval Studies.

Kalamazoo, U.S.A. May 7th - May 10th 2009

DISTAFF (Discussion, Interpretation and Study of Textile Arts, Fabrics and Fashion) will be sponsoring four sessions:

- 1) Techniques with Thread;
- 2) Heroes, Ladies and Fools;
- 3) Inside and Outside the Church;
- 4) Long Ago and Far Away.

Further details from Robin@netherton.net or www.distaff.org

International Medieval Congress

Leeds, UK, 13th - 16th July, 2009,

The theme for 2009 is "Heresy and Orthodoxy".

Future dates are 12th - 15th July, 2010 and 11th - 14th July, 2011.

CONFERENCE REPORT

The 43rd International Congress on Medieval Studies.

Kalamazoo, U.S.A. 8th - 11th MAY, 2008.

A surprising number of people think that the annual Kalamazoo congress is devoted solely to textile subjects – not so. There were 602 two-hour sessions of three to four papers, only one paper to be presented by each of some 2160 participants, with five pages of sponsors. 'Distaff' (*Discussion, Interpretation and Study of Textile Arts, Fabrics and Fashion*) sponsored just four sessions on the third and fourth days, with a small reception on Saturday evening. There were plenary lectures at 8.30 am, films at 7.30 pm and a Saturday dance from 10 pm -1.30 am. There were prize givings and concerts, rooms full of booksellers and exhibitors. Some additional, hard to find, sessions on Sunday, 12th, included some good talks from Swansea University.

It was exhausting, confusing, and very cliquey. The Western Michigan University, a huge campus spread over steep hills with meals taken at the highest point, was poorly mapped so, once one sorted through the inch-thick programme and decided what to hear and where to go, it was a long tough walk to get there. There were sporadic shuttle buses, but a fit young acquaintance who works for the U.S. Airforce in Anchorage, Alaska, told me she had walked nine miles on the first day!

The lectures ranged widely from Moses to Harry Potter, Chaucer to the Da Vinci Code, There was much about religion and mysticism, feminism and "gender issues". Numbers of priests and nuns attended in floor length habits, and long hair seemed preferred, one man had a ponytail reaching to his ankles. For the first forty-eight hours I wandered alone and decided to follow the Cistercian experts as we farm the earliest grange farm for Tintern Abbey (1131) finding prehistoric flints and Roman pottery in most fields. However, their sessions dealt with a single German vineyard, and a single coppiced woodland in southern France. I quickly learned not to ask a question or make a suggestion based on experience (the Amish were farming with medieval methods a very few miles south of Kalamazoo) but a kind lady answered my basic question when we met in the lavatory.

No one could give any information about 'Distaff', the textile organisers, until I found them at 3.30 on the third day and introduced myself to the Presider (I was in their first session, ready with notes in hand, slides prepared), and was greeted with "*Glad you got here!*". So was I, and lucky to be staying off campus. as descriptions of student accommodation were depressing. Their four sessions covered 'Makers & Methods'; 'Clothing & the Church'; 'Clothing , Critics & Class'; 'Extant Garments & Furnishings' (far the most interesting, it showed a collection of Sir Flinders Petrie's excavated Egyptian garments found in Philadelphia). I met people from all over the USA - Arizona, Arkansas, Alaska - so Kalamazoo is hardly a central location for anyone. Many left after their sessions and few attended the Distaff reception at which I had hoped to get to know and speak with them and distribute our leaflets, but one at least got

through to Anchorage with encouraging response as the Knitting History Forum was featured in a long article in their local paper.

It is obviously a popular gathering and a great event for the hundreds of regulars who meet and flatter each other every year but, while everyone was kind and friendly, they are inevitably interested in themselves and their own specialities. It was nice to find John Cherry, speaking on seals for the British Museum, with a warm welcome and interesting news about MEDATS. I also joined up with another first-timer, a lady from Hampstead whose husband is a Head of Department and we agreed that some lectures were mediocre, giving an overall impression of narrow interests, narrow fields (many speakers were floored by simple questions) poor presentation and preparation, but the British ones were vastly better than others. So I am afraid we stuck patriotically together and both followed the Brits who had some excellent topics and sessions.

On leaving Kalamazoo we drove first to Dover, Delaware, for a splendid day with the archaeological director of the 'de Braak' shipwreck, an 18th century equivalent of the 'Mary Rose', which sank in 1798 with her contents largely intact, including clothing. A lucky chance found us in Berkeley Springs where the States' quilters were holding their annual exhibition weekend when all exhibits are sold for charity. Then to Washington to visit the famous Textile Museum which was showing an exhibition called "Blue" which was reminiscent of that shown at the Whitworth in 2007, but featuring examples from their own extensive collection. The Curator had kindly left me photocopied details of their well-known Islamic knitted socks, twenty-one items considered to be 12th century. I have passed this information on to Jennifer Scarce for her comments and hope we may start some discussion about them.

I am grateful to the Pasold Research Fund for their support.

Kirstie Buckland
The Knitting History Forum

RESEARCH GRANTS

Janet Arnold Fund

Applications for the Janet Arnold Fund of the Society of Antiquaries which gives grants for research into the history of Western dress should be made before December 31st, 2008.

Further information can be found on <http://www.sal.org.uk/grants/janetarnold>.

MEDATS FUTURE MEETINGS

Call for Papers

The committee would welcome proposals for papers or themes for future MEDATS meetings. Proposed papers may be for the projected themes below, but need not be restricted to them.

The committee has been discussing widening the range of venues for future meetings, including the possibility of meetings in the North. Again, we would very much welcome suggestions as to locations and venues for such meetings.

As noted in the last editorial, a re-organisation has been forced upon us by the present lack of a Program Secretary. At present, therefore, we envisage that like this year, 2009 will only have two meetings, although, again, one may be two days, hopefully with the previous custom of three one day meetings resuming in 2010.

Provisional topics 2009:

Summer 2009 Meeting: May

Annual General Meeting and *Henry VIII: Textiles and Clothing for a Renaissance Monarch*

Autumn 2009 Meeting: October

Aspects of Jewellery & Clothing

Including Elizabeth Heckett, 'The Limerick Mitre'.

Future topics

Reconstruction, Re-enactment, Living History

Dyes

Tapestries: Design & Production

Dress and Textiles for Coronations

MEDATS SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual subscriptions (payable in pounds sterling only) run from 1st January – 31st December

£10 Individuals in Britain and Europe

£15 Households in Britain and Europe (2 members)

£15 Individuals outside Europe and Institutions

Student membership (with proof of status) is as Individual, however all meetings in the first year of membership are free to attend.

MEDATS COMMITTEE ADDRESSES

President - Claude Blair OBE, 90 Links Road, Ashstead, Surrey KT21 2HW.

Chairman - John Cherry, 58 Lancaster Road, London N4 4PT

Hon. Secretary - Karen Watts, Royal Armouries, Armouries Drive, Leeds LS10 1LT

Treasurer - Jenny Tiramani, 47 Charles Square, London N1 6HT

Membership Secretary – Dr. Carol Chattaway, Bow Cottage, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 4BE

Ticket Secretary, John Edmonds, 89 Chessfield Park, Little Chalfont, Bucks, HP6 6RX

Programme Secretary – *Vacant. Could this be you?*

Newsletter Editor - Dr. Timothy Dawson, 45 Bismarck Drive, Leeds LS11 6TB,
e-mail: medatseditor@hotmail.co.uk

Publicity Secretary - Hilary Davidson, 72 Flaxman Road, London SE5 9DH

Non-Executive Committee Members

Dr. Geoff Egan, Museum of London (SS), 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London, N1 7ED

Philip Harris, 32 Trinity Rise, London, SW2 2QR

MEDATS 2008 AGM Officers for re-election

The following committee posts are due for election. Each nomination must have a proposer and a seconder who are both members of the Society.

We warmly welcome any new members to the committee in any capacity and would be particularly pleased to receive any nominations for Programme Secretary.

Chairman

Non Executive Officer

Programme Secretary

Publicity Secretary

Sponsorship Secretary

Each nomination must be submitted to Karen Watts, Hon. Sec., before the AGM:

Karen Watts
Senior Curator of Armour and Art
Royal Armouries
Armouries Drive
Leeds
LS10 1LT
Tel/voicemail: 0113 220 1852
Fax: 0113 220 1871
E-mail: kwatts@armouries.org.uk

Medats Autumn Meeting, Saturday 4th October 2008

Kenneth Clark Lecture Theatre, Courtauld Institute of Art, Somerset House,
Strand, London WC2R 0RN

Saturday 4th October 2008

Annual General Meeting and Museum and private collections of dress and textiles pre 1600

09.30 Doors open

10.00-11.00 **Annual General Meeting (Members of MEDATS only)**

11.00-11.30 Coffee. Seminar Room 1

11.30-12.00 **Hilary Davidson, Museum of London**
The Collections of the Museum of London

12.00-12.30 **Frances Pritchard, Whitworth Art Gallery**
*The Collections of the Whitworth Museum & Art Gallery, Manchester
University*

12.30-12.45 Discussion

12.45-14.00 Lunch (not provided)

14.00-14.30 **Eva Hansson, Royal School of Needlework, Hampton Court
Palace.**
The Collections of the Royal School of Needlework

14.30-15.00 **Linda Woolley, Independent Scholar**
The Collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum

15.00 -15.15 Discussion.

15.15-15.45 Tea Seminar room 1

15.45-16.15 **Timothy Dawson, Leeds Museums Service**
The Collections of the University of Leeds

16.15-16.30 **Karen Watts, Royal Armouries**
The Cloth of Gold Brigandine of Henry VIII at the Royal Armouries

16.30-17.00 Discussion

17.00 End of meeting.

Medats Autumn Meeting, Saturday 4th October 2008

Kenneth Clark Lecture Theatre, Courtauld Institute of Art, Somerset House,
Strand, London WC2R 0RN

Saturday 4th October 2008

Annual General Meeting and Museum and private collections of dress and textiles pre 1600

Booking Form

This meeting is free and includes morning and afternoon tea, coffee and biscuits.

I wish to attend the meeting and request:..... ticket(s)

Name

Address

.....

.....

Email/Telephone

Please return form to:

MEDATS Ticket Secretary

John Edmonds

89 Chessfield Park

Little Chalfont

Bucks

HP6 6RX

For further information contact kwatts@armouries.org.uk

PLEASE PROPOSE AND NOMINATE THE POSTS BELOW FOR THE NEXT MEETING.

Chairman: John Cherry
Proposed by ; seconded by

Non executive officer : Geoff Egan
Proposed by ; seconded by

Programme Secretary
Proposed by ; seconded by

Publicity Secretary.....
Proposed by ; seconded by

Sponsorship Secretary.....
Proposed by ; seconded by