

# ANGLO-NETHERLANDS SOCIETY



## NEWSLETTER

c/o Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, 38 Hyde Park Gate, London SW7 5DP Tel: 07401 660 615 (Wednesdays 11 – 3 pm) administrator@anglo-netherlands.org.uk Winter 2018-2019

President: Sir Michael Perry GBE

Vice-President: The Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Hon. Newsletter Editor: Mr Hans Neher

Chairman: Mr Dick van den Broek

Administrator: Mrs Carine Williams



### Forthcoming Events

**Reminder: "Russia: Royalty & the Romanovs"**  
Private talk and visit, followed by optional lunch  
Thursday 31 January at 11.00am, The Queen's  
Gallery, Buckingham Palace Please note: waiting list

**Reminder: Hand & Lock Atelier, guided tour**  
London's premier embroidery house.  
Wednesday 6 February at 11.00am, 86 Margaret  
Street, London W1W 8TE Please note: waiting list,  
but another tour on that day is under development

**Unilever Lecture 2019:**  
**"The Antiques Rogue Show – An  
Examination of Dutch Art in Crime"**  
Guest speaker will be Mr Richard Ellis, founder  
of Scotland Yard's Art and Antiques Squad.  
Tuesday 12 March, 6 for 6.30pm, 100Victoria Embankment

**Dutch Masters Flower Arranging and Lecture**  
Art historian Andrew Taylor will lecture on the  
Dutch Masters and their famous floral still  
lives, followed by a demonstration and practice.  
Judith Blacklock Flower School, Knightsbridge  
Friday 29 March at 2.00pm

**Van Gogh and Britain exhibition**  
45 of Van Gogh's paintings, private lecture  
followed by a self-guided tour.  
Friday 10 May at 11.00am, Tate Britain

"La Musicienne" by Tamara Lempicka (1898-1980) Paris  
1929, stolen from the Scheringa Museum of Realist Art  
in Spanbroek, May 2009, recovered and returned to the  
insurance company in 2016. In November 2018 it  
appeared in the Christie's New York sale and was sold  
for over \$9 million.

### New Members

We welcome:

Mrs V.A. E L-B  
Mr Simon O and  
Mrs Anneliet O-W  
Mr Tim S  
Mrs Anneke C S  
Mr Philippe S-R  
Mrs Annet T  
Mr Jacob T and  
Mrs Sally M  
Mr David T and  
Mrs Marijtje T-B

# Chairman's Message

incorporating main points from the Annual Report at our recent AGM

Hopefully you have enjoyed some more peaceful days towards the end of 2018. Notwithstanding these somewhat turbulent times, our Society has continued with its many activities with an increasing number of participants, so allow me to make some observations.

First of all I would like to thank our Honorary Editor, Hans Neher, for all his dedication and efforts to make our quarterly newsletter such a success. It is much appreciated by our members (and beyond) for its quality and content. Every quarter he has the challenging task of bringing it all together, inputs from a wide range of sources and that against strict deadlines. He does this with considerable skill and professionalism and I can only hope that he will continue in this masterful role for many years to come. He is also keeping a close eye on our website where you can find old newsletters, details of future activities, and various application forms. Just use the Username and Password you will usually find on page 8 of the newsletter. Any suggestions to improve our website are most welcome!

Secondly, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the members of our Events Committee, led by Connie Sangster. All volunteers who are working hard to put together a programme of events which will hopefully offer a wide choice to our increasingly diversified membership, both in terms of age groups and location. They continue to make tremendous contributions in organising events, arranging reports on these, and being on stand-by for any last minute applications and cancellations. At our AGM they were all present, so a well-deserved photo could be taken and is shown here.



The people who organise the Society's highly regarded events seldom stand in the limelight: here members of the Events Committee are pictured at the recent AGM, holding their Hema (UK) chocolate letters; from left to right: Carine Williams (administrator), Adrienne Monteath - van Dok, Marietta Freeman, Marianne Denney, Connie Sangster, Chantal Tjon and Evelien Hurst.

Thirdly, our Advisory Committee met twice during 2018, providing much appreciated advice and input to Council's deliberations. This Committee represents various "streams" within the Society, both Patrons and individual members.

Last but not least I would like to express my great thanks to our Administrator, Carine Williams, who diligently and with much enthusiasm worked her way through all the administrative "burdens" which come with a very active Society.

We organised more (14) events for our members during 2018 with more (450) participants. Quite often over-subscribed and some attracted large numbers such as our annual Unilever Lecture (generously supported again by our Patron Unilever) and our now well-established annual Members' dinner at the Reform Club. An extensive schedule of events is planned for 2019, some of which you will find in this newsletter. Mention should be made here of our Centenary celebrations which will soon be upon us. It is hard to believe that a Society formally established early in 1920 is still so active and actually growing in membership. Our Spring newsletter will provide you with more information.

The Anglo-Netherlands Awards to undergraduates in Dutch studies at Sheffield University, and during 2018 again at UCL, were successfully continued. This initiative is greatly appreciated by both students and faculties. Under the chairmanship of our Hon Secretary Paul Dimond the essays were judged by our Panel (all volunteers). Winning essays were published in our Summer and Autumn newsletters.

A fair number of our members attended the AGM on December 4, but I would like to provide you all with some information which was

reported to members present as part of the formal discussions:

1. The financial health of the Society remains strong. There was again a surplus for the year with a slightly increased subscription income and costs being kept under control. This surplus is being added to our Reserves. A special Reserve had already been set up for our Centenary and this is being increased.

2. Council has decided to keep subscription fees unchanged for the twelfth year running. These fees are for covering our basic expenses, including those for the Administrator, newsletters and Awards. Events are being charged separately and should cover our additional costs and make a small contribution to overheads.

3. Individual membership numbers showed a healthy net increase of about 30 during 2018. I am pleased to report that a fair number of younger members have found their way to the Society. Our existing Patrons continue their substantial support in various ways. I am pleased to mention that Rabobank decided to join our impressive list of Patrons again. A special thanks to the Netherlands embassy again who provided us with much appreciated hospitality.

4. I reported on a "governance review" which Council had undertaken during this past year. As the present legal status was formally established in 2003, Council considered it appropriate to review the Aims and Object(ive)s of the Society (see back page newsletter) and the organisational structure to achieve these. It was felt that there is no obvious need to change our Aims and Object(ive)s nor our organisational structure. Some "refinements" may be required here and there and these will now be pursued.

## Some challenges:

1. We continue to enjoy the hospitality of the Netherlands Embassy, providing the Society with an office. Long may this last and we remain hugely grateful to H.E. the Ambassador for the Embassy's hospitality.

2. New members will keep the Society vibrant, as it is now. There is always a natural falling off in membership, for various reasons. Many "potential" members are around, including family members and friends with interests in Anglo-Netherlands matters. Please do not hesitate to extol our virtues when meeting them. We shall be happy to send a sample newsletter. There is also the possibility of a Gift membership, already being used by some members.

Lastly, not being a challenge, I would like to thank colleagues in Council for their great support and many contributions. We are meeting in Council, on average, every two months, but individually more often. All in high spirits with plenty of ideas.

On behalf of Council I would like to wish all members the best possible year ahead in health, safety and fulfilment, whilst thanking them for their on-going support for the Society.

Dick van den Broek, Chairman

## Subscriptions 2019

As mentioned in our autumn Newsletter, we are keeping our subscriptions for 2019 unchanged, for the twelfth year running. Members who are not paying by standing order are requested to pay their subscription at their earliest convenience, if they have not done so already.

We prefer the standing order method as it simplifies our office procedures. If you would like to change to that system, please download the form from the website or ask the administrator to forward a copy to you. For easy reference the subscription rates are:

| Subscription rates: | Greater London | Country* |
|---------------------|----------------|----------|
| Joint membership ** | £30            | £25      |
| Single membership   | £23            | £20      |

\* A Country rebate is available for members whose address is outside a radius of 50 miles from Hyde Park Corner

\*\* Two members at a single address, receiving one copy of each mailing.

David Glassman, Hon. Treasurer

## The Antiques Rogue Show – An Examination of Dutch Art in Crime

Unilever Lecture by Mr Richard Ellis on Tuesday 12 March at 6pm for lecture at 6.30pm, 100 Victoria Embankment

The Netherlands and Dutch art have a special place in art history straddling a period from the 1400's to the twentieth century, incorporating many of the acknowledged great masters such as Jan van Eyck, Brueghel, Rembrandt, Vermeer and van Gogh who between them have created many of the most iconic works of art in the world.

It is hardly surprising that such great works of art have attracted the attention of many of the world's great institutions and private collectors often paying world record prices for these paintings. Why then, if they are so well known and unique, do the works of such artists attract equal attention from the criminal fraternity?

The lecture will examine the place of Dutch Art in "Art Crime" and will explain the motives behind the criminals involved in what is today a global problem. It will explore the methods used to expose these crimes and recover the stolen art from the criminal underworld.

Richard Ellis is an internationally recognised art crime investigator with over 30 years'

experience. A career detective with the Metropolitan Police, he served in Special Operations at New Scotland Yard where he founded and ran the Art & Antiques Squad until 1999 when he left to become General Manager of Christie's Fine Art Security Services. In 2000 he returned to the investigation and recovery of stolen art as Managing Director of Trace recovery services and in 2005 established his own company, the Art Management Group. His many recoveries include Munch's "The Scream", over 7,000 antiquities looted from China and Egypt and most recently paintings by Lempicka and Dali stolen and recovered in The Netherlands. Since 2008 he has been an Expert Advisor to the UK Government on International Loans to Museums and has attended UNESCO workshops as an expert on the protection and recovery of cultural property. He is a founding trustee of the Association for Research into Crimes Against Art (ARCA) and lectures extensively on art crime.



Guest speaker Richard Ellis with "La Musicienne", recovered and returned in 2016 in Amsterdam.

## Dutch Masters Flower Arranging and Lecture

Judith Blacklock Flower School, Knightsbridge on Friday 29 March at 2.00pm

Come and join a glorious afternoon at the famous Judith Blacklock Flower School in Knightsbridge, London. Located in a flower filled mews this school is an icon for English floristry. Whilst enjoying tea and coffee, the art historian Andrew Taylor will lecture on the Dutch Masters and their famous floral still lives. Starting with a general overview of why Dutch paintings from the Golden age are so important, how it arose out of Dutch history, commerce, wealth and travel and how it says so much about Dutch society at the time. This is followed by a talk about flower paintings specifically and how these fit into this background and what they tell us about The Netherlands.



The lecture will be followed by a flower demonstration by the renowned Judith Blacklock on how to recreate one of these floral master

pieces, whilst sharing her in-depth knowledge of flowers, how to care for them and where best to buy your flowers. At the end of the afternoon you will all be given the opportunity to create a small flower arrangement to take home.

Judith Blacklock is the author of 16 bestselling floristry books and the owner and founder of the Judith Blacklock Flower School in Knightsbridge, London.

After many years as a lawyer, Andrew Taylor changed direction, took an MA in Art History and now works as a freelance lecturer. He leads art and cultural tours in the UK, Continental Europe and New York, giving lectures and gallery talks on a wide

range of subjects. He is also involved with lecturing to private art groups and a small arts education charity. Website: [www.judithblacklock.com](http://www.judithblacklock.com)

## Van Gogh and Britain : major exhibition of 45 works

Lecture and self-guided visit on Friday 10 May from 11.00am, Tate Britain

Tate Britain's Van Gogh and Britain exhibition will present the largest collection of Van Gogh's paintings in the UK for nearly a decade. Some of his most famous works will be brought together from around the world - including *Shoes*, *Starry Night on the Rhône*, *L'Arlésienne*, and two works he made while a patient at Saint-Paul Asylum, *At Eternity's Gate* and *Prisoners Exercising*. These will be joined by the very rarely lent *Sunflowers* from London's National Gallery.

Van Gogh lived in England as a young man for several crucial years. After completing his training in 1873 at the art dealers Goupil & Cie in The Hague, Van Gogh, at the age of 20, was



Vincent van Gogh (1853 –1890)  
L'Arlésienne 1890  
Oil paint on canvas 650 x 540 mm  
Collection MASP (São Paulo Museum of Art) Photo credit: João Musa

transferred to the London branch at Southampton Street. He took lodgings in Stockwell and was happy for a while. He sketched but not so much as he read and walked the streets alone, dreaming of the future. He fell "in love with London" as he wrote in a letter to his brother Theo.

Van Gogh also visited many art galleries, like the Royal Academy and Dulwich Picture Gallery, and was inspired by the art he saw there, including paintings by Constable and Millais, which also will be featured in this exhibition. In addition, his favourite place to observe

London was the once fashionable Rotten Row in Hyde Park, where Victorians went to be seen

in fine clothes and on horseback. (See also book by Groenhart and Verlinden *Hoe ik van Londen houd: wandelen door het Londen van Vincent van Gogh*, 2013).

In 1875 he was transferred to the Paris branch, but became resentful of issues such as the degree to which the firm 'commodified' art and was dismissed a year later. In April of 1876 he returned to England to take unpaid work as supply teacher in a small boarding school in Ramsgate, but at the end of that same year he moved back to the Netherlands. Still those three years in England had a great influence on his early works.

This exhibition will also look at the British artists who were inspired by Van Gogh, including Francis Bacon, David Bomberg, and the young Camden Town painters. It will show how his vision set British artists on the road to modern art. Please join us for an exhibition lecture by a Tate Lecturer and self-guided visit to learn more about this unique exhibition.

## Sandycombe Lodge and Orleans House

Report by Ann McMellan on the guided tour on Wednesday 3 October

Were J. M. W. Turner still with us he would have been pleased - though not surprised - that his Fighting Temeraire had been voted the U.K.'s favourite painting and is to feature on the new £20 note to be issued in 2020. These significant testaments to his talent might suggest that Turner's Twickenham house would be comparable to Horace Walpole's "little gothic castle" at Strawberry Hill. In fact Sandycombe Lodge is a modest retreat which enabled Turner to sketch rural scenery, fish and entertain male

friends for Meetings of the Pic-Nic-Academical Club. After living briefly in Isleworth and Hammersmith, Turner bought land in the cultural vicinity of 3 individuals whom he revered, Joshua Reynolds and the poets James Thomson

and Alexander Pope, and with the intention of designing his own home. Before gaining admission to the Royal Academy Schools in 1789, Turner had trained as a draughtsman in several architects' offices but the site he chose was not suitable for a grand design. From the garden at Sandycombe Lodge, members of ANS gazed uphill at the house which is perched on a narrow ledge. Returned to the artist's design, the building is a central two-storey block with single storey wings and a basement. Though W. Havell's 1814 drawing appears to depict plastered white walls, thorough examination for the restoration of the lodge revealed the



original basic brickwork with a band of triglyphs. Following the garden path round towards the road, ANS members were led via a small vestibule into a cross-corridor with a series of narrow roll-mounded arches. It may be that this elegant feature was inspired by 13, Lincoln's Inn Fields - the home of Turner's old friend, Sir John Soane. Above the basement kitchen is a small dining-room and on the other side of the central drawing-room is the second wing room where Turner probably kept his books.

Ascending the elegant staircase, lit by the original laylight, led members to one large bedroom and a smaller one for his father, 'Old William'.

After an excellent lunch at the historic Crown Inn, ANS members walked on to the splendid Octagonal banqueting room attached to Orleans House Gallery. Commissioned by James Johnston, James Gibbs built the Octagon Room (1716 - 1720) to impress Queen Caroline, the wife of George II, when she dined there on 13 August 1729. Though J.M.W. Turner missed out on the chicken with peaches which Queen Caroline enjoyed, he did meet the Duc d'Orleans, later Louis Philippe, King of the French, both in Twickenham and later in Picardy when Louis Philippe summoned him to Treport and Eu where the king had a vast chateau. ANS members viewed the Richmond Borough Art Collection, an exhibition of curiosities including Sir



'Photo by Anne Purkiss © Turner's House Trust 2017'  
Richard Burton's 'human bone' necklace and toured the Stables Courtyard.

Both Sandycombe Lodge and Orleans House Gallery left ANS members grateful, respectively, to Professor Harold and Ann Livermore and Mrs Nellie Ionides for donating these buildings to the public.



## Rembrandt & the Dutch Golden Age 2019

2019 sees the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rembrandt's death. Which is an excellent reason to celebrate the famous painter's life and the Golden Age in which he lived and worked. Major exhibitions will be held at the Mauritshuis in The Hague, the Rembrandthuis and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, but also at the Fries Museum in Leeuwarden, Museum de Lakenhal in Leiden and Museum Het Prinsenhof in Delft.

Your most up to date resource is likely to be the Holland.com website, in particular <https://www.holland.com/global/tourism/discover-holland/rembrandt-and-the-golden-age.htm>.

In the UK, exhibitions are announced by the British Museum and Dulwich Picture Gallery, both in London, and at the Ashmolean in Oxford (Young Rembrandt will also be at de Lakenhal prior to the UK presence).

Highlights in the United Kingdom and in the Netherlands include:

**Rembrandt: Thinking on Paper**  
7 February – 4 August 2019, British Museum, London

**Rembrandt's Light**  
2 October 2019 – 2 February 2020, Dulwich Picture Gallery, London

**Young Rembrandt**  
27 February – 7 June 2020, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (also in Leiden)



**Rembrandt and Saskia. Love and Marriage in the Dutch Golden Age**  
24 November 2018 – 24 March 2019, Fries Museum, Leeuwarden

**Rembrandt Privé**  
7 December 2018 – 7 April 2019, Amsterdam City Archives

**Rembrandt and the Mauritshuis**  
31 January – 15 September 2019, Mauritshuis, The Hague

**Rembrandt's Social Network. Family, Friends and Acquaintances**  
1 February – 19 May 2019, Rembrandt House Museum, Amsterdam

**All the Rembrandts (from their collection)**  
15 February – 10 June 2019, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

**Inspired by Rembrandt: 100 Years of Collecting by The Rembrandthuis**  
7 June – 1 September 2019, Rembrandt House Museum, Amsterdam

**Rembrandt Laboratory: Rembrandt's Technique Unravelling**  
21 September 2019 – 16 February 2020, Rembrandt House Museum

**Young Rembrandt 1624 - 1634**  
3 November 2019 - 9 February 2020, Museum De Lakenhal, Leiden

# Members' Dinner with Guest Speaker the Hon. Peter Wilson CMG

Report by Christiaan Weiland on the Society's Annual Dinner, Friday evening 16 November

One of the highlights on the calendar of the Anglo-Netherlands Society (ANS) is the Annual Members' Dinner. This year it took place on November 16 in one of London's finest examples of Victorian architecture, the Reform Club on Pall Mall. The evening began with a reception in the Strangers room of the Club, perhaps somewhat inappropriately named for our gathering, as many of our members, including those who have recently joined the Society, were rapidly involved in lively discussions, resulting in a convivial atmosphere. This was further enhanced by the regular arrival of plates filled with "bitterballen", perfectly cooked by the Club.

We were subsequently invited to go up to the beautiful Library of the Club where the eighty members and guests of honour were formally welcomed by ANS Chairman Dick van den Broek. Simon Smits, the Netherlands Ambassador to the Court of St James's, attended with his wife Astrid.

Following a delightful dinner of guinea fowl, tarte tatin - the French interpretation of the Dutch 'appeltaart' - and coffee accompanied by Dutch-themed chocolates, our Chairman introduced the keynote speaker, the Honourable Peter Wilson CMG, British Ambassador to the Netherlands since September 2017. After studying at Oxford University and Harvard University, Peter Wilson entered the FCO and after an assignment at Beijing joined the Cabinet of the European Commission's Vice President Sir Leon Brittan, followed by diplomatic postings at the UK's Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels, at Islamabad and again Beijing, as Director Asia Pacific at the FCO, then Deputy at the UK Permanent Mission to the United Nations at New York.

In his address entitled "The Netherlands and the United Kingdom: the bilateral relationship and our common interests", Ambassador Wilson focused on Brexit, trade, and the transatlantic relationship. The expectation was that after the UK's leaving the EU, the bonds between Britain



and the Netherlands would remain strong, because of their shared history, values, and concerns. Historically, both nations are free traders and it is in their common interest for example to expand trade with the US and China. In a renewed European constellation, the Netherlands might play a leading role. The Netherlands and Britain have traditionally held strong transatlantic economic and political ties. Both countries are close allies in international organisations

such as the UN, while each country sent three Secretary-Generals to NATO.

Ambassador Wilson's other role in the Netherlands, as Britain's Permanent Representative to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), was highlighted following the first chemical attack on British soil and Russia's subsequent cyber-attack on the OPCW offices at The Hague, foiled by the Dutch security services, with support from the UK. Earlier, both countries suffered the loss of lives following the downing of flight MH17 and they cooperated closely in the ensuing investigation. The recent State Visit of Their Majesties King Willem-Alexander and Queen Máxima underlined and marked just how strong, close, and warm the relationship is between the Netherlands and Britain. In establishing a new relationship between the two countries post-Brexit, organisations such as the ANS could also play an important role. A lively Q&A session followed, all under the Chatham House Rule, covering a wide range of subjects which Ambassador Wilson responded to in a very open way.

ANS President Sir Michael Perry thanked Ambassador Wilson for his reassuring and encouraging words. He underlined that in these challenging political times, it is positive that the Netherlands and the UK have such excellent civil servants, including Ambassador Wilson and the Ambassador of the Netherlands. As a token of the Society's appreciation, Chairman Dick van den Broek presented Ambassador Wilson with a book on how the Dutch came to the help of the Duke of Wellington in the Battle of Waterloo. Meanwhile, Society members could again look forward to a year full of events, leading up to our Centenary celebrations towards the end of 2019, beginning of 2020, for which the planning is in full swing.

## ANS-award at UCL

Paul Dimond was invited by Christine Sas to UCL to hand the Certificate to Selena Geerts, as the winner was unfortunately unable to attend the ceremony at ING bank a few days earlier. The photograph was taken in front of the Auto-Icon of Jeremy Bentham, the philosopher and spiritual founder of UCL. Among Bentham's work was the concept of the panopticon, allegedly influencing Johan Metzelaar's design of the *Koepelgevangenis* (Arnhem, Breda and Haarlem). Uli Tiedau took the photograph.



## Chandos House

Report by John Boldero on the visit preceding the AGM on 4 December

As you enter Cavendish Square in London's West End, you are only a few metres from Harley Street and you expect to see a lot of brass plates, as outward signs of the predominant activity of the area, the provision of medical services. At the far corner of another road running from the square, Chandos Street, is the home of one such provider, the Royal Society of Medicine (RSM), housed in an imposing structure that reminds one of Edinburgh, with its tall yellow-brown columns. This will come as no surprise when you learn, as a visiting group from ANS did recently, that the stone used, Craigleith, came from a quarry near Edinburgh leased by the pre-eminent Georgian architect, Scotsman Robert Adam, the designer of this building, Chandos House.

It has stood here since the time when much of the surrounding area was countryside and duck-shooting was a typical past-time. In the period of the 1730's -1790's, rivalling Ranelagh and (familiar to aficionados of 'Vanity Fair') Vauxhall Gardens, the Marylebone Pleasure Gardens were sited nearby. They were hugely popular, helped by the services of George Frideric Handel as both composer and conductor of music performed there. The building itself was constructed between 1769 and 1771 as a prototype, or in modern parlance, a show house, for wealthy Londoners aspiring, as ever, to move into the countryside but not too far into it.

This house was subsequently seen to have been the first of a series of large London Town Houses which included Derby House. There were, at the time, however, no buyers for it, despite it being "A most capital and elegant..mansion..with a grand staircase... and water closets to the different Apartments". The house was, after some time, sold to the Duke of Chandos and there followed a varied stream of owners over the years, including the Government of Austria and Viscount Kemsley,

the newspaper tycoon. Finally, after a period in the 1980's when the building was deserted, boarded up and looking very sad, it was acquired by its present owners and our hosts, the RSM.

Beginning our tour, Janice, our excellent and amusing guide, pointed out that such tours of the whole house have rarely been given to-date. Before describing the various features of the building, Janice gave us some insights into the pleasing continuity of the activities of its owners. While a successor in time to the original Medical Society of London, established in 1713, the RSM differs from other Colleges involved in aspects of medicine in that they are largely regulatory in function, e.g the Royal College of Surgeons. The RSM, located in Chandos House and its nearby quarters in Wimpole Street, has a mainly postgraduate training and educational role in a wide variety of healthcare areas including physiotherapy, midwifery and nursing, through internal and public lectures and houses one of the largest medical libraries in the world.



One of the roles of Chandos House today is to provide venues for functions, both for the Society and for public use. Brought back by restoration in 2005 from its near-terminal state



of dereliction, the Grade 1 listed building demonstrates the particular skills of Robert Adam in its internal rooms, in terms of their dimensions and proportions. Sadly, of the decorative fireplaces that adorned most of the rooms, only one is original, the others being stolen by opportunist 'developers' during the period of unoccupancy. Adam's love of proportion is demonstrated in what is now the main dining room for events, which features four separate doors and doorways, one in each corner, two of which are dummies. Another particularly striking architectural feature is the staircase, which, suitably adorned with images of past PM's, has played the role of the famous staircase of 10 Downing Street.

Other decorative highlights include a fine series of ceiling paintings by Antonio Zucchi, some marvellous and sizeable wall mirrors by Mewes and Davis, the designers of the Ritz Hotel, and various paintings of Dutch provenance. In more recent times, the house has retained, or recovered, its feeling of quiet opulence and played roles such as providing Edward VIII and Mrs Simpson with the opportunity for some privacy and featuring in Ang Lee's 'Sense and Sensibility.'

Thus Chandos House, with its fine painted features, imposing dimensions, crystal chandeliers and meticulous craftsmanship is one of the finest examples of Georgian Town Houses in London. Many thanks to Marianne Denney and the Events Committee for arranging this most interesting visit.

## Postal Museum and Mail Rail ride

Report by Evelien Hurst-Buist on the visit on Tuesday 6 November - the visit was postponed in February

It can safely be said that most of the ANS members attending the visit to the Postal Museum signed on because they could not resist the temptation of a ride on the postal train right under the centre of London. But we were all in for a surprise: although the train-ride was fun, the excellent museum about the history of the postal service proved at least as interesting. We had no idea that the services' history was so long and fascinating.

First of all its age: the very first postal system was instituted by Henry VIII, who appointed a Master of the Posts to deal with his correspondence in 1512. In the 1600s and 1700s, mail was carried by postboys, some as

young as 11, others well over 40. It was no fun being a postboy: you were likely to be attacked by thieves, and travelled on horseback or on foot in all weathers, one of them even freezing to death on his horse!

Over the years a system was created of riders in relay between Posts or Stages. Each stage was around 20 miles in length: the distance a horse could comfortably travel at speed before needing to be changed. Postboys had to blow their horn at least every four miles to warn approaching travellers to make way and gatekeepers to open

the gate so the postboy would not need to stop, thereby minimizing the chance of a robbery whilst slowing down. As this system was expensive to run, in 1635 Charles I opened the postal service to the general public, for a fee. In 1653 clever Oliver Cromwell appointed his spymaster

John Thurloe as his Postmaster General, enabling Thurloe to intercept post at home and abroad.

The first postmark was introduced in 1661, after many complaints about late deliveries. This mark was put on the post on the day it was delivered at the office, so no letter bearer could detain the



letter. Stamps show that by the early 18<sup>th</sup> century there was a transatlantic service by boat; a permanent service by packet ship was established by 1763. The journey by ship was hazardous, endangered by piracy and storms. Quite a few letters must have got lost on the way. Meanwhile at home theatre owner John Palmer suggested that the mail would be delivered a lot faster by coach than by postboy; authorised by William Pitt the younger, he proved this in 1784 by running an experimental coach between Bristol and London, and delivering the post a whole day faster, in only 16 hours! Soon mail coaches were running all over Britain, run by private contractors, with as only Post Office employee the guards, who dressed in scarlet coats with blue lapels and black hats, carried blunderbusses, and were expected to protect the mail with their lives! By the 1830's however, the railways started to replace the mail coaches, and the last mail coach was run in 1846.

The Victorian times were a time of many changes: maybe one of the most famous of them is the introduction of the stamp, which enabled the sender to pay for the service rather than the recipient, with the price based on the weight of the postage, and no longer on the number of pages or the distance. A letter up to 15 ounces cost a standard one penny, which resulted in the first stamp, the famous Penny Black: they were only issued for 9 months, but 46 million were printed, with a staggering 6 million surviving today!

The Industrial Revolution saw a growing and moving population and an explosion in literacy, so that by 1875 a billion letters were sent a year. A certain enterprising Surveyor's Clerk, the author Anthony Trollope (!), suggested the use of roadside letter boxes, the first of which were installed by 1853. The Postal Museum holds 200

examples of the various post boxes that have been in use over the centuries. The earliest ones were green, rather than red, but all bore the name of the reigning King or Queen on their front. In 1883 the Parcel Post was introduced. A remarkable fact: in

Dickens's time a letter posted in Gad's Hill would be delivered in London on the same day, and there were several deliveries a day, so the sender might well have had a reply back on the same day!

Over the history of the Post Office, mail has been transported not only by horse, coach, ship and train, but also by cycle, motorbike, motor vehicle, plane and even by pigeon, during both world wars. The postal service was all-important during these wars, and not only in allowing the soldiers to stay in touch with their loved ones. During WWI 75,000 men left their jobs at the Post Office to fight in the war. There was even a postal regiment: the Post Office Rifles. 2000 were killed, and 4,500 wounded. During WWII, postal worker Frederick Gurr set up the GPO Rescue and Salvage Squad, to try and rescue as much of the post as possible from bombed post offices.

The first electronic mail, telegrams, began to appear in 1830, and by 1900 more telegrams were sent in Britain than anywhere else in the world. During WWI telegrams became much feared, as they were used to inform families of the loss of their loved ones. Examples were on display.

From 1912 till 1981 - when British Telecom became an independent body - the Post Office also ran the telephone services, with the street kiosk being introduced in 1920. Its design changed over the years, and several of them are on display at the museum. It was also the first postal service to introduce post codes, originally for London only, as early as Victorian times. Other interesting displays are the wonderful posters designed over the years to entice the public to use the Post Office, whether for their Christmas letters or

their airmail, and the display on the history of stamp design.

As you can see from this extensive report of the history of the Post Office, the postal train service only formed a tiny part of its long and rich history. The Post Office Railway had been thought about since Victorian time, and finally became reality in 1925. It was a separate entity, and designed to improve the mail service of the London



Postal Region. After visiting the USA where both pneumatic and electric rail systems were used for delivery, Sir Robert Bruce, Controller of the LPR concluded in 1911 that the best solution for London would be a driverless underground electric system, linking Paddington to the Eastern District Office

in Whitechapel, with several stops en route. Work began in 1915, but was not completed till 1925. During WWI the empty tunnels were used to keep valuable artefacts of the British Museum, National Portrait Gallery and the Royal Academy. Despite the advice of the first Post Office Railway Manager, Evan Evans, to use wagons with bogies - swivelled wheels - the train wagons originally had four wheels, but these did indeed cause the excessive wear to wheels and tracks Evans had predicted, so were soon replaced by bogies after all. The Postal Railway had its own engineering team, and postal, cleaning and operating staff on duty 24 hours a day. By 2003 the running costs had become too high and the railway was closed. This must at least partly have been due to the introduction of electronic mail, and the subsequent reduction in postal mail.

So what was our short Rail Mail trip like? Well, it filled us with admiration for the people who had worked there, underground, 24 hours a day. It also made us realise we are not mail, and human beings are not the ideal shape to be squeezed into the tiny compartments meant for post. We were all quite pleased when the journey came to an end, as our joints were complaining mightily. The railway is probably best suited to children, of whom there were many!

We all left full of admiration for the magnificent work of the postal services over the centuries, and regret that the invention of the computer has led to the demise not only of the mail, but also largely of the hand-written letter. I still have the letters my mother sent me during our various postings in the eighties, but my own daughter will only have e-mails, and will they still be available to her in thirty years time?

A visit to the Postal Museum is an eye-opener, and greatly recommended. There is a good cafe there as well, when you feel there is so much to take in that you need a rest. A big thank-you to Marietta for organizing the outing, and to Chantal for leading it.

*(paid advertisement)*

## Dutch Care At Home

Dutch Care At Home would like to offer Dutch senior citizens in and around London company and day-to-day support. This could be practical help around the house (e.g. organising, cooking, shopping) or the sharing of social activities (e.g. conversation, museum or restaurant visit). The support, at a reasonable hourly rate, can be on an occasional or on a regular basis. For information - and to arrange a free introductory visit - please contact Juliette Bogaers.

Telephone: 020-7435 3200 Mobile: 07968 129 490  
[www.dutchcareathome.com](http://www.dutchcareathome.com) [info@dutchcareathome.com](mailto:info@dutchcareathome.com)

## SIGNPOSTS

### Eva Maria Westbroek in The Queen of Spades

13 January-1 February, Royal Opera House  
[www.roh.org.uk](http://www.roh.org.uk)

Dutch soprano Eva-Maria Westbroek made her Royal Opera debut in 2006. In the 2018/19 Season she sings Liza in Tchaikovsky's most ambitious opera The Queen of Spades.



### Van Gogh & Japan: The Provence Years, by Martin Bailey

30 January, Asia House, 63 New Cavendish Street, London W1G

For Van Gogh, Japan held great appeal, particularly its woodblock prints. Van Gogh specialist Martin Bailey, author and co-curator of Tate's forthcoming Van Gogh exhibition (27 March-11 August 2019), will talk about his discoveries about the artist's period in Provence. The event is organised with The Courtauld Institute of Art and Japan Foundation.

### Prized Possessions - Dutch Paintings from National Trust Houses

26 January-24 March, [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/petworth-house-and-park](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/petworth-house-and-park)  
Petworth House and Park will celebrate Dutch art and design when it hosts the final stage of this major National Trust exhibition.

'Prized Possessions' brings together Dutch 17<sup>th</sup>-century paintings by some of the finest masters of the 'Golden Age' from National Trust collections around the country and examines how and why this style of art was desired, commissioned and displayed in Britain.

At Petworth House, the exhibition can be seen for the first time in a country house context, having previously been exhibited in galleries at the Holburne Museum in Bath and The Mauritshuis in The Hague.

The exhibition includes nearly two dozen works from Trust houses around the country by celebrated artists such as Rembrandt van Rijn, Peter Lely, Gabriel Metsu, and Cornelis de Heem.

### Haitink at 90: Birthday Concert

10, 14 and 21 March, Barbican

[www.barbican.org.uk](http://www.barbican.org.uk)

The London Symphony Orchestra celebrates Bernard Haitink's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, a career spanning over 60 years, with the great ensembles and opera houses – the Concertgebouw Orchestra, Glyndebourne, the Royal Opera, the Staatskapelle Dresden and many others.

A week after his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, the London Symphony Orchestra celebrates this milestone with the conductor himself. Soloist Till Fellner plays Mozart before Haitink turns to Bruckner, a composer whose majestic symphonies have been at the centre of his career.



### Introdans, Dutch Masters at Linbury Theatre

15-17 March, [www.roh.org.uk](http://www.roh.org.uk)

Dutch ballet company Introdans performs a programme of neoclassical dance works from its award-winning repertoire.

Introdans, one of Europe's leading touring companies, visits the Linbury Theatre to perform an amazing programme of neoclassical dance works from its award-winning repertoire. Dutch Masters presents a captivating mix of pieces from choreographers Hans van Manen, Nils Christie and Jiri Kylián.



### Koningsdag & Vrijmarkt

27 April 11.00am, Austin Friars, Dutch Church



### Netherlands' Government website :

Find information for Dutch nationals on travelling, living, working and doing business in the United Kingdom at:  
[www.netherlandsworldwide.nl/countries/united-kingdom](http://www.netherlandsworldwide.nl/countries/united-kingdom)

## Anglo-Netherlands Society

Established 1920, incorporated 2002

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### AIMS and OBJECTS

The Anglo-Netherlands Society exists to promote the social, artistic, literary, educational, scientific, and other non party-political interests in common to the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. Apart from publishing this Newsletter, the Society reaches its members by organising social functions (including dinners, lectures and recitals) and by arranging visits to exhibitions, concerts, and places of interest. The Society relies on voluntary workers.

### MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Any person or organisation desirous of promoting the objectives of the Society is eligible to apply for membership, subject to acceptance by the Society's Council. More information is available from the Administrator.

#### PRESIDENT

Sir Michael Perry, GBE

#### VICE-PRESIDENT

H.E. the Netherlands Ambassador

#### COUNCIL

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#### CORPORATE PATRONS

The Society has for years been fortunate in having the help of several organisations. To recognise this support, which has often been sustained for decades, the following organisations are termed Corporate Patrons:

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#### CORPORATE MEMBERS

Carpenters' Company

This form of membership can be tailored to your requirements.

**Members' Page at [www.anglo-netherlands.org.uk](http://www.anglo-netherlands.org.uk)**

**username: removed password: also removed**

Members can download duplicate event registration forms and various other papers via links on the Members' Page.

Alternatively, please request a paper copy from the Administrator.

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