



THE WILLIAM SHIPLEY GROUP FOR RSA HISTORY

Bulletin 50: October 2016

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

23 February 2017 'The Undisputed Monarch of the English Stage'. Celebrating the Tercentenary of David Garrick's Birth at Lettsom House, 11 Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, London W1G 9EB. 9.30am to 5pm. Ticket price is £40 (£35 concession) - includes refreshments and lunch.

In a full programme this William Shipley Group symposium will consider the man and the actor, and his influence, both on stage and on artistic representation. Speakers include Iain Mackintosh, Robin Simon, Prof Michael Dobson, Prof Norma Clarke, Prof Gill Perry, Prof Michael Gaunt, Prof John Drew, Prof Trevor Griffiths, Moira Goff and Marcus Risdell. Full programme and booking from from Honorary Secretary, William Shipley Group (email: susan@bennett.as or phone 01895 677705)



17th March 2017 John Lockwood Kipling (1837-1911). Arts and Crafts in the Punjab: a new Victoria & Albert Museum exhibition

by Julius Bryant, Keeper of Word & Image, Victoria & Albert Museum. The Gallery, 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ 6pm-7pm. Ticket price: £5

This talk will introduce the exhibition on the designer and curator, John Lockwood Kipling, who worked in South Kensington, Bombay and Lahore (and had a famous son). Kipling was a key contributor to the campaign to preserve the village crafts of India, a subject of much debate at the RSA



Durbar Hall, Osborne
©English Heritage

30 May 2017 From Mr Pickwick to Tiny Tim - Charles Dickens and Medicine

by Dr Nicholas Cambridge, Honorary Chairman, William Shipley Group for RSA History. Gresham College lecture at the Museum of London, 150 London Wall, London EC2Y 5HN 6pm - 7pm. Free of charge.

<http://www.gresham.ac.uk/lectures-and-events/from-mr-pickwick-to-tiny-tim-charles-dickens-and-medicine>

EXHIBITIONS

Engineering the World: Ove Arup and the Philosophy of Total Design.

The Porter Gallery, V&A Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL. Ends 6 November 2016. Ticket price: £7, concessions available.

This exhibition focuses on the design philosophy of one of the most influential engineers of the 20th century Ove Nyquist Arup CBE (1895-1988). From some of his well known projects such as the Sydney Opera House to previously unseen archive materials, this exhibition will demonstrate his multidisciplinary approach to design. Elected FRSA in 1954 Arup gave the Alfred Bossom Lecture on 'Architects, Engineers and Builders' in 1970, and the then Director of Ove Arup & Partners, Peter Rice, presented RSA Fellows with 'A celebration of the life and work of Ove Arup' in 1989

Ardizzone: A Retrospective

House of Illustration, , 2 Granary Square, King's Cross, London NIC 4BH. 24 September 2016 to 22 January 2017. Tickets £7.50 or concession £5.00 <http://www.houseofillustration.org.uk/whats-on/current-future-events/ardizzone-a-retrospective>



The first major exhibition of Edward Ardizzone's work for forty years has been co-curated by Alan Powers and Olivia Ahmad. From his relatively unknown early commissions to rarely seen original illustrations, the exhibition features over 100 pieces from public and private collections that reflect the diversity of Ardizzone's career. He was appointed a Royal Designer for Industry in 1974.

Robert Welch: Early Years from a Cotswold Workshop

Gordon Russell Design Museum, 15 Russell Square, Broadway, Worcestershire WR12 7AP. 1 November to mid-December 2016.. Open Tuesdays to Sundays. Tickets £5

This exhibition will explore the first years of the career of designer Robert Welch, charting his progression from silversmithing at the Royal College of Art to his move into stainless steel production, and relocating to Chipping Campden. Welch was appointed an RDI in 1965.

Robert Welch (foreground) with some of his iconic designs, and a selection of other designer's work, with his wife Patricia and children, Alice and Rupert Welch in the background.

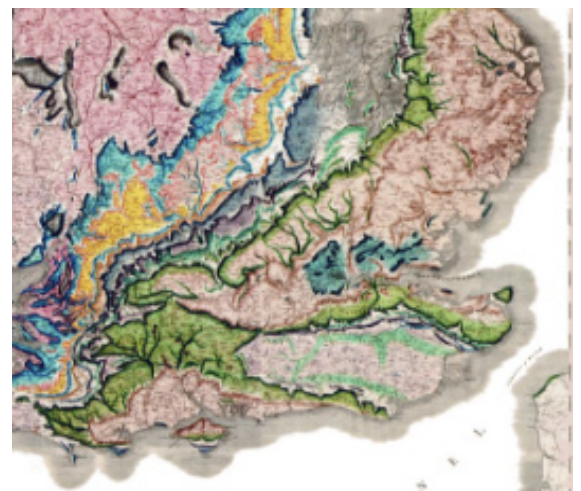
©Robert Welch Design Archive



CALL FOR PAPERS – The Society of Arts and the Encouragement of Mineralogy and Geology 1754-1900. A joint conference with the History of Geology Group of the Geological Society of London will be held on 9th November 2017.

Prizes awarded by the Society of Arts for chemistry, cartography and land reclamation encouraged the emerging science and field practice of mineralogy and geology. These awards set the scene for the exploitation of minerals, hydrological and coastal defence work and improved surveys of the land. Contact the Honorary Secretary for full details. To be considered please send 250-500 word abstracts to the convenors by 31st October 2016 for consideration.

Convenors: John Henry (john@geolmaps.com) of HOGG or Susan Bennett (susan@bennett.as) of the WSG. See Hugh Torrens, *The Practice of Geology 1750-1850* (Ashgate Variorum, 2002) for background information.



Detail from William Smith's geological map, 1815 Awarded 50gns by the Society of Arts for this first published geological map

ROYAL DESIGNERS FOR INDUSTRY AND THE BRITAIN CAN MAKE IT EXHIBITION, 1946

To mark the 70th anniversary of this exhibition the William Shipley Group and the University of Brighton Design Archives have created an online resource on the Royal Designers for Industry represented at the exhibition. <http://arts.brighton.ac.uk/collections/design-archives/resources/rdis-at-britain-can-make-it,-1946>



Image: Members of the public queue to gain entry to the "Britain Can Make It" Exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London in 1946. GB-1837-DES-DCA-30-2-26-EZ7

Report - Sewerage and Health symposium

Sixty delegates attended the meeting held to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the death of Sir Joseph Bazalgette at The Gallery on Thursday 22 September 2016. The Honorary Secretary opened the meeting with a message of welcome from the WSG Honorary President, Dr David G.C. Allan. The first paper, by Rachel Erickson FRSA, addressed the history of public conveniences. As the city grew and the River Thames became overwhelmed with sewage Dr Stephen Halliday spoke about Bazalgette's pioneering system of sewers taking the effluent away to the pumping stations at Abbey Mills and Crossness, and his other major works: embankments, roads and bridges. Dr Nicholas Cambridge spoke about the different methods of treating sewage, from the night soil men (and women) to the treatment beds at Croydon. Howard Bengé demonstrated how the supply of clean water, sourced from Seething Wells by the Lambeth Water Company, enabled John Snow to confirm his theory that cholera was transmitted via the water supply. The meeting concluded with a presentation by Mike Chrimes on the role played by Thomas Hawksley in the development of modern water engineering. The WSG is planning to publish the papers in due course. Thanks to all the speakers, The Gallery, and WSG member Dan Hayton for his help in locating the venue and managing technical matters.



Monument to Sir Joseph Bazalgette on the Embankment



Dennis Bailey RDI (1931–2016)

Dennis Bailey, who died in June aged 85, was one of the small band of great graphic designers and illustrators who were students together at the Royal College of Art in the 1950s. Amongst them were David Gentleman and Alan Fletcher, all three later elected by the RSA as Royal Designers for Industry [RDI].



Dennis Bailey RDI in his studio

Dennis was made an RDI in 1980, three years after my appointment as Secretary to the Society and ex officio Secretary to the Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry. He designed and illustrated many covers and editorial for books and magazines, for example Penguin Books, *The Economist*, *New Statesman* etc. He taught at Chelsea School of Art from 1971 to 1981. He was a wonderful illustrator with a magical sense of line - indeed he always knew exactly where to draw the line. He was a kind and gentle man, witty and calm to work with, fun to be with, quietly un-self-important. I tended to be long-winded with text and he somewhat ruefully taught me that one word was better than 10. Alan Fletcher did the same, more bluntly and persistently, always entertainingly. I did try. One of my greatest pleasures and most valuable learning experiences at the RSA was to be associated with RDIs in their many different disciplines - illustration and graphics, product design, fashion, engineering, ceramics, furniture, theatre etc - every one of them totally committed and influential at the very top of their game and ever mindful of giving practical ways to encourage the best young design talent.

We asked Dennis to re-design the front cover and content of the *RSA Journal* in 1987 and the effects of this appeared for the first time in the December 1987 issue. The change-over makes an interesting contrast and shows a determination to stop the emphasis, albeit unintentional, of Arts over Manufactures and Commerce. In 1989 Sarah Curtis took over the editorship of the *Journal* and proposed that front covers should display the work of RDIs. As it was the first time ever that the covers should be illustrated it was quite a revolutionary idea! They continued in this way up until 1996. For ten years Dennis's mastery of understated layout and restrained, elegantly disciplined typography was on show to the Fellowship.



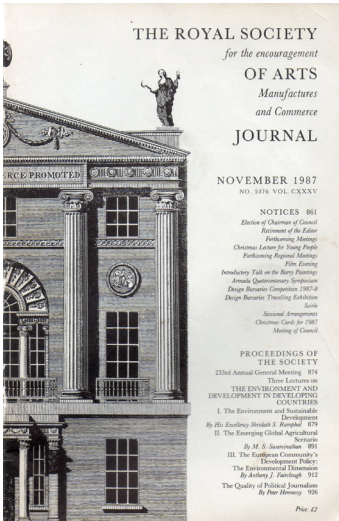
Dennis Bailey, Jacket as self portrait

In 1980, writing for *Designer*, the SIAD's magazine, Dennis reflected on being made an RDI: "What fascinates me about graphic design is its immediacy. The timespan between conception and realisation can be extremely short, a matter of hours. Going into a magazine office in the morning knowing that there are two pages that must be filled that day and having to send the finished artwork down by 6pm is very exciting".

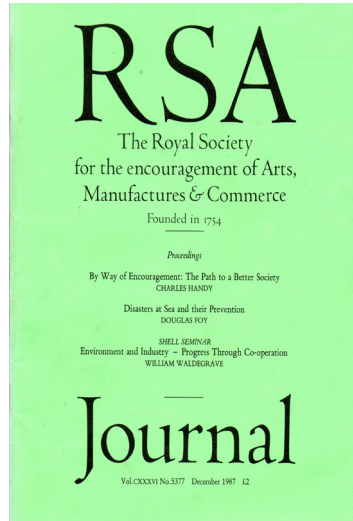
In 1996 (two years after my retirement as Director) Mike Dempsey RDI took over from Dennis and gave the RSA and the Faculty a new look, again immaculately and simply executed. In his blog Mike pays tribute to his old friend and colleague as: "Dennis Bailey's subtlety with typography was equalled by the beautiful sensitivity of his illustrations...stringent disciplinarian, unswerving in his commitment to his work...he never saw a reason why he would want to retire, so he never actually did".

Dennis leaves Nicola, his wife and working partner over 35 years, their two children Cathy and Peter, and three grandchildren.

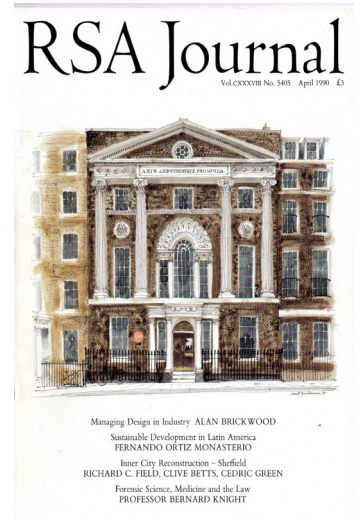
Christopher Lucas, Secretary/Director RSA 1977-94 and Secretary Faculty of RDI



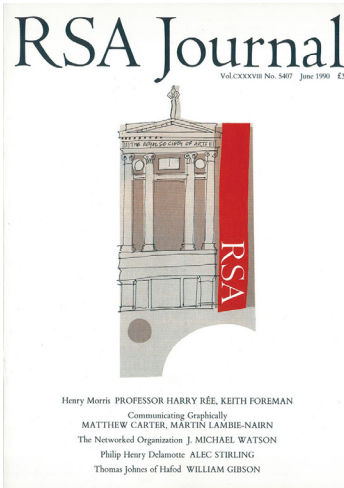
Old style cover, Nov 1987



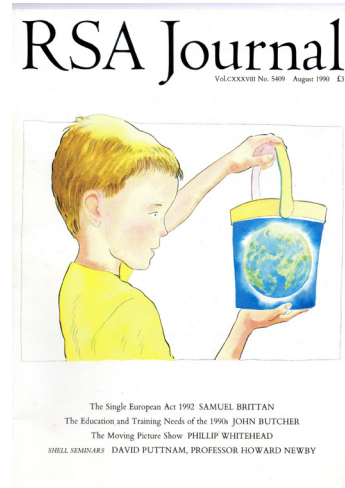
First cover in new style by Dennis Bailey RDI, Dec 1987



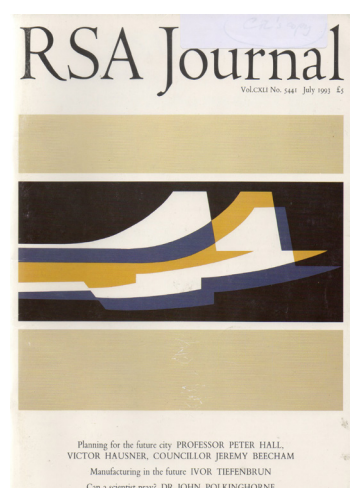
Drawing of facade of RSA House by David Gentleman RDI, April 1990



Drawing of Strand facade of RSA House by Dennis Bailey RDI, June 1990



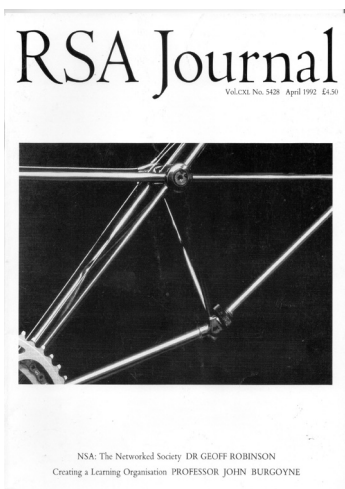
Sketch from picture book, 'One World', by Michael Foreman RDI, August 1990



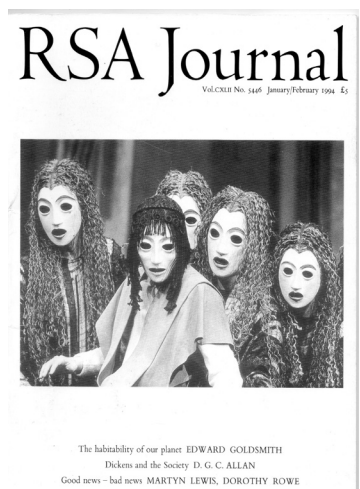
Poster for London Transport Heathrow underground station by Tom Eckersley OBE RDI, July 1991



Power car exterior for 125 High Speed Train by Kenneth Grange CBE RDI, Aug/Sept 1991



Part of stainless steel space frame of Grand Tour bicycle designed by Dr Alex Moulton, RDI April 1992



Masks by Jocelyn Herbert RDI for Orestes and the Furies, Jan/Feb 1994

Competitions for WAAF (Women's Auxiliary Air Force) and WRNS (Women's Royal Naval Service)

In response to a request from the Air Ministry Directorate of Education in 1945 the RSA organised a literary competition for all ranks of the WAAF. Sixteen subjects, in five different classes, were set with submissions to be no more than 2,000 words long. The Government of Ceylon generously provided the £50 for the prize fund. 260 entries had been received by the closing date, 31st January 1946.

Mr G.K. Menzies CBE, a former Secretary of the RSA and Occasional Examiner in English to the Civil Service, judged the entries. He reported that it was evident that the competitors had written with pleasure and enthusiasm. They had regarded the competition not as a task or the possibility of winning a prize, he said, but as an opportunity of expressing their views. From the educational angle the competition may be regarded as a success, though in view of the enormous numbers in the WAAF it had been disappointing that only fifty-seven candidates had been forthcoming.

Menzies said he had been rather surprised that a number of candidates had disapproved of *Equal pay for equal work*, with one of them emphatically starting off with 'No! No! No!'. Flight Officer R.I. Walker was awarded £5 for a thoughtful and well-informed essay submitted under the heading *Do you think illiteracy has held back the development of the British Colonial Empire?* Some very good work was submitted for *The layout of my Ideal Home* with some essays illustrated with neatly drawn architectural plans, and *The importance of colour in the home* had evidently been the subject of much thought on the part of all the candidates. *Shakespeare's reactions to the film version of Henry V, as disclosed in an imaginary letter to a close friend* proved too difficult for most of the candidates who attempted it.

As a result of the interest shown in this competition the WRNS Education Department approached the RSA and requested that a further competition, in Design and Art, should be organised. A total of 231 entries from 143 candidates were received and four Royal Designers for Industry, Laurence Irving, Keith Murray, Percy Delf Smith and Fred Taylor, served on the judging panel. The Welfare Department of the WRNS provided the prize fund of £94. 10s.

It was clear that some of competitors had been trained as designing textiles requires both artistic and technical skill. As a whole, the judge said, they were to be complimented on their submissions. However, an unduly large proportion of candidates who had made submissions for a bookplate, book jacket or naval calendar or Christmas card had failed to consider the suitability of their design for its purpose. Her costume design for Sir Andrew Aguecheek, submitted by Leading Wren Skjold, was considered 'extremely witty, and in colour and in pattern has full theatrical qualities' and she was awarded the first prize. Some of the entries submitted in the lettering section of the competition were beautifully executed and Leading Wren Gordon was commended for the delicacy and happy arrangement of her entry. The watercolour section of class E attracted 47 entries, the most for the whole competition, but the general level of work was felt to be of a mediocre to poor character, although a few drawings showed considerable merit.



1st prize to Wren K. Burns for her watercolour

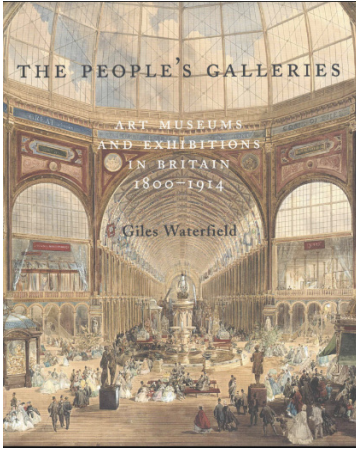


1st prize to Wren G.M. Watts for her design for a bookplate



2nd prize to Wren V. Fulford for her design of a naval Christmas card

BOOK REVIEWS



The People's Galleries: Art Museums and Exhibitions in Britain 1800-1914 by Giles Waterfield (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2015). ISBN 978-0-300-20984-6

Giles Waterfield here makes an important contribution to museological literature, which is still of limited extent. General histories of museums have tended to foreground collectors as heroic individuals (though, from the point of view of psychologists, collecting is sometimes seen as a perverse rather than a healthy pursuit). Early literature focussed on the “cabinets of curiosities” of the Renaissance and seventeenth century: although the contents of many of these subsided into the rubbish heap, they were recorded in documents which gave later scholars plenty to work on. A recent treatment of this topic, which relates

it to what came later, is Arthur MacGregor's *Curiosity and Enlightenment* (2007). This was beautifully produced by Yale University Press, which has made an equally good job of Mr Waterfield's book, with its array of fascinating illustrations.

The history of museums in more recent times has given prominence to the public museum, and Mr Waterfield's title indicates that he is concerned with this dimension of museum activity. A widespread view, deriving from Foucault, is that nineteenth-century museums were a means by which the rich and powerful impressed their superiority upon the lower orders. Mr Waterfield provides some evidence that reduces the force of this ideological formula.

The history of museums has often been conducted in studies of individual museums. This is an obvious and necessary approach, but one which can often be complacently restricted. Such histories often argue, in effect, that “what we did was self-evidently the right thing to do, and what we did next followed with inexorable logic”. In fact, fashion, luck, and inertia played large parts in museum history. The virtue of a wide-ranging account like Mr Waterfield's is that such varied factors can be weighed against each other.

So far as the history of English museums is concerned, general views have been sketched out, but only on a small scale, e.g. Geoffrey Lewis's “Collections, collectors and museums in Britain to 1920” in the *Manual of Curatorship* (1984), my own booklet published by the William Shipley Group, *The development of museums in Victorian Britain and the contribution of the Society of Arts* (2010), and Christine Garwood's Shire publication *Museums in Britain* (2014). Mr Waterfield's treatment is on a much bigger scale, and the more authoritative for the density of the material that is marshalled.

The book mentions many individual museums without getting entangled too deeply in any one of them. It follows a roughly chronological trajectory but includes many loops into important topics such as learned societies, urban development and parks, and international exhibitions (this last topic will be of special interest to WSG members).

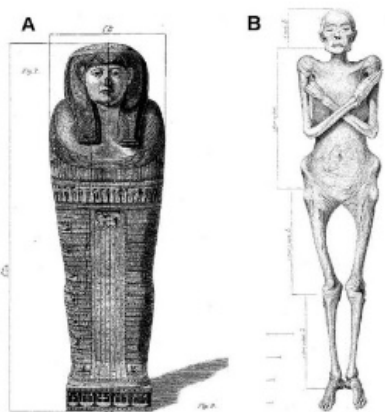
The book's focus is on “Fine Art” or “High Art”, but of course there are museums devoted to many other subjects besides Art. Mr Waterfield is well aware of this, and his account includes many side-glances at museum activity and curatorship in other fields. Although Mr Waterfield is at pains to show how Art reached “the people”, art collecting and exhibiting remained a privileged domain, if only because of the big money involved. It may be that natural history, geology and archaeology were more accessible to the people, and so museum activity in these fields may have been a significant chapter in the history of British popular education. To describe all that might have made Mr Waterfield's text (more than 300 pages) twice as long. He has, at any rate, given us a masterly and exhaustive account of art museums.

Anthony Burton
WSG Committee Member
Former Director of the V&A Museum of Childhood

ANNIVERSARIES

2016 marks the **160th** anniversary of the death of Francis Whishaw who, as the first professional Secretary of the Society of Arts succeeded in instilling 'new life into the then all but expiring body' through improving the character of the evening meetings, the conversazioni he established and the efforts he made to promote a national exhibition of Great Britain's industries. A civil engineer by training, Whishaw invented a velocimeter, a watch for timing railway trains and a gutta percha speaking trumpet, the Telakouphanon. On his retirement in 1845 the members made Whishaw an Honorary Life Member.

2016 marks the **140th** anniversary of the death of Samuel Thomas Davenport (1821-1876) who devoted his whole working life to the Society of Arts. Mainly self-educated, Davenport did receive some artistic training and could have become a capable engraver but instead, in 1844, he took on the role as a sort of clerk/assistant to the [R]SA's Secretary, Francis Whishaw. Four years later he was given the title of Assistant Secretary and then became the Society's Curator and Collector in 1850 and finally Financial Officer in 1853, a post he held until his death. Davenport acquired an extensive knowledge of the contents of the Society's records and gave a talk on the [R]SA's history in 1868.



Granville's original copperplate engravings, 1825
©Royal Society

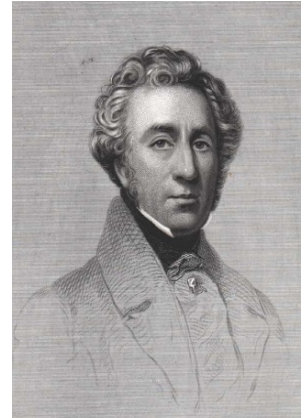
2016 marks the **200th** anniversary of the election of the physician, writer and Italian patriot Augustus Bozzi MD, FRS (1783-1872) as a member of the Society of Arts. To avoid being enlisted in Napoleon's army he left Italy and practised medicine in Greece, Turkey, Spain and Portugal before he joined the British Navy and sailed to the West Indies, where he married an Englishwoman. He later moved to London and is credited with carrying out the first medical autopsy on an ancient Egyptian mummy. Bozzi concluded, in his report to the Royal Society, that this fifty year old woman had died as the result of ovarian cancer. Modern techniques have now established that the tumour was, in fact, benign and that she actually died from TB.

2016 marks the **145th** anniversary of the setting up of a committee by the [Royal] Society of Arts to promote the better education of girls in all classes. Among those who consented to served on the committee were Dr Elizabeth Garrett-Anderson, Charles Darwin and his wife, Thomas Huxley and his wife. The eventual outcome of their proceedings was the establishment of the National Union for the Improvement of the Education of Girls (which later became the Girls' Public Day School Trust)



Chemistry lesson - Gateshead High School founded by Girls' Public Day School Trust

2016 marks the **140th** anniversary of the death of the engineer Robert Napier (1791-1876). He worked with Robert Stevenson, famed builder of lighthouses, before setting up on his own. Napier was known as the 'Father of Clyde Shipbuilding' because of his pioneering efforts, his noted insistence on quality and good workmanship, his technical innovation, and his encouragement of many of the leading shipbuilders and engineers of his day, and of the next generation. A juror for the Great Exhibition of 1851, he was awarded the great gold medal of honour at the 1855 Paris Exposition, and Emperor Napoleon III conferred the Legion of Honour on him for the vessels he fitted out for the Atlantic navigation. He was President of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and elected member of the Society of Arts in 1861.



George Mercer, OBE



2016 marks the **25th** anniversary of the death of former Secretary of the RSA, George Mercer OBE (d.1991). Following a career working for HM Colonial Service in West Africa he came to the RSA in 1961 and his careful husbandry of the Society's strained resources led to the successful purchase of the freeholds of the three Adam houses adjoining its headquarters building in John Adam Street. During his term of office the RSA witnessed a steady growth in the Society's work and Fellowship. The combination of quickness of mind and grasp of essentials and his mastery of all the business he presented to the RSA's Council inspired confidence. Mercer played a formative part in the campaign leading to the seminal conference on 'The Countryside in 1970'. His understanding of the importance of the Society's history led him to champion the safe-keeping of the archives, and additions of historical memorabilia to the collections. He also encouraged the formation of the RSA History Study Group and, after his retirement, in 1973, he made a special study of his important 18th century predecessor Samuel More. (see 'Mr More of the Adelphi', *Jnl RSA*, Vol.127 (1979), pp.96-103, 173-79, 237-244)

Tomorrow's Company new report - UK Business:What's Wrong? What;'s Next?

Folloiwnng the success of the RSA Tomorrow's Company Inquiry the Centre for Tomorrow's Company was founded in 1996. They have recently published this report on the outcome of the Futures Project set up to review progress in UK business over the last twenty years. The report can be be downloaded at <http://tomorrowscompany.com/publication/uk-business-whats-wrong-whats-next/>

Honorary President: Dr David Allan, FRSA; Honorary Vice-Presidents: Gerry Acher, CBE, LVO, FRSA; Sir Paul Judge, FRSA; Professor Franz Bosbach, Director, University of Duisburg-Essen. Committee: Dr Nicholas Cambridge FRSA (Chair); Dr David Allan FRSA (Director of Studies); Prof John Davis FRSA (Deputy Chair); Anthony Burton; Paul Leonard, FLS; Philip Emery, FRSA; Jonathan Rollason, FRSA; Susan Bennett, MA, FRSA (Honorary Secretary, Editor and Treasurer)