



The Medieval Dress and Textile Society

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In memoriam: Claude Blair wearing an armour made for Henry VIII.

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Editorial

Apology: with the last newsletter some of you had the aggravation of having your newsletter withheld pending a demand for additional postage. Although to my knowledge it was only about ten percent of the mailing, and seems to have been the result of a few overly officious postal workers, I never-the-less offer my fullest apologies to those who suffered this irritation. I will ensure there is no repetition.

This newsletter is a month earlier than usual, as you doubtless noticed. The reason for this is that places for the **Autumn meeting** at Hampton Court Palace on October 9th must be booked by **September 11th**. See page 7 for more.

The **Annual General Meeting** this year is of particular importance. As foreshadowed last year, we are to vote upon a motion to increase the membership fees to £15 for individuals within Europe, £20 for households, and £30 for institutions and individuals outside the Europe. MEDATS' subscriptions have been static for over five years and increases in costs have potentially put the viability of the Society at risk. As many of you will doubtless know, even at the increased rates, MEDATS' subscriptions are modestly priced compared to many such organisations.

To receive the newsletter as a colour PDF file electronically, e-mail me via medatseditor@hotmail.co.uk.

Otherwise, information about MEDATS, and membership forms, may be had from the Membership Secretary, Carole Thompson, P.O. Box 65458, London SE7 9AR, or from the society website: www.medats.org.uk

TIMOTHY DAWSON

EXHIBITIONS

The Mediaeval Wedding

Dick Institute, Kilmarnock

11th September 2010 to 10th December 2010

This exhibition relates to the work of the Dean Castle Textile Team, Kilmarnock, who are creating a set of costume (working with a fashion student) replicating those portrayed on one of the museum's tapestries of c.1500, which depicts a mediaeval betrothal scene. They are also creating coats-of-arms cushions to be used along

with the costumes for display and education, and re-storing our collection of Ayrshire Needlework baby robes. In addition, there are a range of smaller projects, such as making banners for community use. This project is supported by Maggie Dobbie, Textile Conservator who worked at the V&A for many years.

Fashion in the Middle Ages

Getty Centre, Los Angeles, USA

May 31st to August 21st 2011

The figures that inhabited the illuminated pages of medieval manuscripts could be recognised at a glance by the clothing they wore. Artists used costumes to identify people by profession or to place them in a social hierarchy. Yet, as this exhibition demonstrates, illuminations did not provide accurate depiction of dress. Wealthy patrons commissioned images of a perfect world, filled with glamorous versions of themselves and rather too-well-dressed peasants, while biblical figures were given a "historical" wardrobe that mixed ancient and contemporary elements.

Further Information

<http://www.getty.edu/visit/exhibitions/future.html>

CONFERENCES PAST

MEDATS Summer Meeting,

15th May 2010

Stiffening, Stuffing & quilting: the extra dimension

A particularly interesting meeting, with much lively discussion and fine examples of applied research on show. The need to bring the deadline for this newsletter forward has forestalled a full set of abstracts for this meeting. They ought to be in the next edition.

Timothy Dawson, *Soft Cargo: garments & accessories in the enduring Roman Empire*

Records of padded garments in the Roman Empire begin with the army in the early imperial era. There is doubt as to whether the earliest garments were actually *quilted*, being probably made of felt, perhaps faced with woven cloth. By the beginning of the tenth century, the large scale cultivation of cotton had created quilted padded items in the modern sense, along with a specific terminology for the technique. Tenth century records show that padded clothing was by no means confined to military use, nor to main garments, but also included head- and leg-wear. From the twelfth century Near Eastern padded clothing exerted a significant influence on Western fashion.

CONFERENCES FORTHCOMING

Early Textiles Study Group Conference - COLOURS

Friday 19 November and Saturday 20 November 2010

Franks Room, Wellcome Collection Conference Centre
183 Euston Road,
London NW1 2BE

From status statements to mourning dress, colours have played a crucial part in textiles through time and across cultures. Colours can be dramatically combined or worn separately. Specific colours can identify the owner, his or her allegiances, state of mind and state of purse.

This conference aims to explore the wide variety of symbolic, cultural and technical aspects of colours in textiles, from all geographical areas and all time periods up to 1600. Speakers include academics, museum curators and textile conservators and promise to offer two days of absorbing papers and lively discussions.

Summary of paper titles

Friday 19th

- Recent Advances in Knowledge of Colour in Textiles up to AD1600.
- Analysis of natural colorants at the British Museum.
- Colour in late Antiquity and Spanish Muslim textiles
- Medieval Colour Terminology.
- Seeing Things in Colour: Dyes in Danish Early Iron Age Textiles.
- New Colours for the Norwegian Migration Period.
- The Colours of Hallstatt textiles.
- Role of colour in costume of peoples of the Northern Caucasus.

Saturday 20th

- Analysis of Dyes in Ancient textiles.
- Languages of Color in Ancient Japan.
- Colours in early Chinese textiles.
- Pre-Columbian Red.
- Cochineal: A precious source of red.
- Romans are Red.

The Early Textiles Study Group (ETSG) came into being in 1981 after a small group of people working with or researching into archaeological textiles started to meet together on a semiregular basis to discuss their work and problems, to share knowledge and experience, and to advance their knowledge by visiting collections and exhibitions together.

Please address all enquiries to:

Helen Persson

Conference organiser,

Victoria & Albert Museum

Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL, UK

Email: h.persson@vam.ac.uk

www.earlytextilesstudygroup.org

COSTUME COLLOQUIUM II: Dress for Dance

Florence, Italy

4th – 7th November 2010

The topics of **Dress for Dance** will include the following themes:

- History of dance costume for professional performance;
- Dress for traditional and ceremonial dance: costume as expressions of culture;

- Fashion and popular dance: relationship between popular music, new styles of dance and fashionable dress, past and present;
- Creating dance costume: designers, artists, artisans, stylists, tailors, seamstresses using traditional, experimental and/or contemporary materials and techniques;
- Historical dance re-enactment: getting the steps and the clothing right;
- Dance costume in museums and archives: collecting designs and surviving costume, conservation, display techniques;
- Documenting dance dress: dress as documents and documents of dress;
- Dance costume and artistic expression: their reciprocal relationship.

Promoters:

Romualdo Del Bianco Foundation; Friends of the Galleria Del Costume.

For further information:

E-mail: dressfordance@costume-textiles.com.

<http://www.costume-textiles.com/pages/page.asp?idcontent=80>

NEW AND FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

Baldry, Francesca ; Helen Spande (eds). *Tapestries in the Acton Collection at Villa La Pietra / Gli arazzi della Collezione Acton a Villa La Pietra.*

Florence: edifir, 2010.

Pbk. 29cm, 215pp. illus., most in colour. Italian-English text.

ISBN: 9788879703086

Stuart Peachey, ed. *Clothes of the Common People 1580 - 1660*

Oxbow Books 2010

ISBN-13: 978-1-84217-408-1 ISBN-10: 1-84217-408-8

Owen-Crocker, Gale R (ed). *Encyclopaedia of Medieval Dress and Textiles of the British Isles c. 450-1450.*

Leiden: Brill, 2011.

ISBN: 9789004124356

Publisher's Summary: The single volume *Encyclopaedia of Medieval Dress and Textiles of the British Isles c. 450-1450* is a unique work that intends to bring together the latest research from across the range of disciplines which contribute to our knowledge of medieval dress and textiles. There has been a long-standing interest in the subject, which has recently manifested itself in a flowering of research and publications, including activities by the editors of the *Encyclopaedia*: the foundation of DISTAFF (Discussion, Interpretation and Study of Textile Arts, Fabrics and Fashion) as an umbrella organisation for the presentation of papers at the major medieval congresses in Kalamazoo and Leeds (Netherton and Owen-Crocker); the establishment of the annual journal *Medieval Clothing and Textiles* (Netherton and Owen-Crocker); the Manchester *Medieval Textiles Project* (Coatsworth and Owen-Crocker); and the AHRC *Lexis of Cloth and Clothing Project* (Owen-Crocker and Sylvester). There is a clear need for an interdisciplinary reference work which will introduce readers to sources of evidence, and give clear information about the most recent discoveries and interpretations and bibliographical guidance to readers.

<http://www.brill.nl/default.aspx?partid=227&pid=10302>

Katrin Kania, *Kleidung im Mittelalter: Materialien – Konstruktion – Nähtechnik, Ein Handbuch.*

Böhlau, May 2010.

Hardcover. 529 pages, with 357 b/w and 51 colour illustrations. 170 x 240 mm.

ISBN 978-3-412-20482-2

List price: € 67.90

Based on Kania's phd thesis "Konstruktion und Nähtechnik mittelalterlicher weltlicher Kleidung" (2008). The thesis is a comprehensive survey of extant medieval garments with analysis of cutting, construction development and sewing techniques. English Summary pp 482-504. www.pallia.net/buchprojekt.html

<http://www.boehrlau.de/978-3-412-20482-2.html>

Michael Franes (Francis?), Milton Sunday, Rahul Jain, Mary McWilliam, Walter Denny, Layla Diba, Elena Tsareva, Marielle Martiniani-Reber, Georgette Cornu, Marie-France Vivier, *Textiles, Carpets and Costumes, from the Islamic Lands*

Oxbow Books & Khalili Collection, forthcoming, date TBA

hardback, 2 parts, fully illustrated in colour, 35.5 x 25.5 cm

Part 1- isbn 1874780781 isbn13: 9781874780786)

£89 \$180

The Khalili Collection includes some 200 carpets, textiles and costumes. The earliest textiles date from the 7th-11th centuries. They are rare examples of Abbasid and Fatimid textile arts, and are of great importance. The most outstanding from an artistic point of view, however, are the gold brocades and velvets of the Safavid and Ottoman periods. Equally beautiful and of particular importance is the group of 22 woven Indian silks of the Sultanate and Mughal periods.

Further information

<http://www.khalili.org/research-ic-vol-xiv.html>

MEDATS Future MEETINGS

2011

Spring Meeting: *Medieval Textile Technology*

Date: February 12th or March 5th.

Probable venue: Museum of London.

Summer Meeting: *Coronations and Investitures*

Date TBC, possibly May 14th.

Venue: TBC.

Autumn Meeting: *Reconstruction, Living History, Re-enactment*

Date: mid- / late-October,

Future topics

Underwear / linens against the skin

Dyes

MEDATS Autumn Meeting, 9th October 2010

Annual General Meeting and Tapestry Study Day

Clare Learning Centre, Hampton Court Palace,
East Molesey, Surrey KT8 9AU

Tickets must be pre-booked

Draft programme

10.00 am	Annual General Meeting (members only)
10.30 am	Study Day welcome and coffee
11.00 – 12.30	Session 1
12.30 – 2.30pm	Lunch, with time to visit the Palace and grounds
2.30 – 5.00pm	Session 2

Speakers are to include members of Historic Royal Palace's conservation staff, and the day will incorporate a guided tour of the Palace's spectacular tapestry collection.

Since this meeting is being held at Hampton Court Palace, the Society must pay in full in advance. Therefore the Ticketing Secretary must receive all bookings and monies by **Saturday 11th September**, and it will unfortunately not be possible to pay on the day.

The ticket cost includes admission to the Palace, which is usually £14 per adult.

Tickets costs:

£20 for members,
£30 for non-members and
£10 for students.

Please remember to enclose a SAE, and please remember the stamp!

Travel

Trains run from Waterloo directly to Hampton Court every half hour, at 06 and 36 minutes past the hour, and the journey takes 36 minutes. This is the stopping service, calling at Vauxhall and Clapham Junction. However, it would be advisable to check with South West Trains nearer the time, in case of disruption.

Buses include: 111 - From Heathrow Airport Central, Cranford, Hounslow, Hampton and Kingston; 216 - From Staines, Ashford, Sunbury, Hampton and Kingston; 411 - From West Molesey and Kingston; 451 - From Staines, Chertsey, Byfleet, Weybridge, Walton, West Molesey and Kingston - no evening or Sunday service; R68 - From Kew, Richmond, Twickenham; 513 - has a very limited service, about three times a day on Mondays to Saturdays.

Parking is somewhat limited. Charges are £0.60 per hour for the Green and £3.50 for three hours and then £0.50 per hour for the Palace car park.

Further information: <http://www.hrp.org.uk/HamptonCourtPalace/>