

Understanding British Portraits

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Georgian Faces seminar

Thursday 3 February 2011 | 11.00-15.50

Dorset County Museum, Dorchester

Biographies of speakers and chairperson

Pippa Brindley is a fully qualified and experienced teacher working in the fields of both history and sailing. Having also worked as historical re-enactor and storyteller, she worked as a LEA Advisory Teacher for Museums in Poole until 1996. Since 2001 she has worked in museum learning and outreach for both Dorset County Museum and Dorset History Centre on a freelance basis.

Penelope Byrd studied the history of dress for her MA at the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London. She was Curator of the Assembly Rooms, Museum of Costume & Fashion Research Centre in Bath until she retired to Dorset in 2002. She now co-edits the dress studies journal, *Costume*, and is also an Associate Lecturer at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts, London. She has a special interest in dress in eighteenth and nineteenth century literature. She has written several books, the most recent of which was *Jane Austen Fashion* (Moonrise Press, 2008).

Dr Jon Murden grew up in Nottingham before reading History at the University of Birmingham and undertaking postgraduate research on industrial relations in post-war British motor manufacturing. During these studies he first became involved in museums, as a volunteer oral historian at the Museum of British Road Transport in Coventry. In 2002 he moved to the University of Liverpool to co-edit the new 'official' history of Liverpool. Recruited by National Museums Liverpool (NML) for the position of Curator of Liverpool History, he worked on the Museum of Liverpool project before becoming NML's first ever Head of Research. In 2009 he moved to Dorchester to become Director of Dorset County Museum.

Susan Sloman was for ten years Keeper of Collections at the Victoria Art Gallery in Bath. At the same time she researched for and wrote a doctoral dissertation on Thomas Gainsborough's career in Bath, a study that was subsequently turned into a book published by Yale University Press (2002). Since that time she has worked as a researcher for Agnew's, the London art dealers, and is now at WS Fine Art Ltd. in London. She is writing a new book *Gainsborough in London* as a companion to the Bath publication, and her exhibition on Gainsborough's landscapes opens at the Holburne Museum in Bath this September (24 September 2011 to 4 January 2012).

Ann Smith qualified as an Archivist in 1976, and has held the posts of Assistant Archivist (1976-81) and Research Assistant (1988-2006) at Dorset Record Office. She has been Curator and Archivist at Sherborne Castle since 1987, and Archivist at another Digby family property, Minterne Estate, Dorset, between 1999 and 2009. She has been closely involved in many other archival organisations in Dorset, such as Secretary of the Dorset Local History Group (1991-2004), Secretary of the Dorset Record Society (2004+), and board member of the Dorset Archives Trust (2009+). Ann's publications include 'Sherborne Castle in the eighteenth century', and 'The furnishings and garden buildings at Sherborne Castle in the eighteenth century', *Country Life*, 10 & 17 August 2000. Please see the *Further reading & references* sheet in your delegate folder for more publication details.

Richard Stephens completed an MA in philosophy and history of art at Cambridge in 1994. He pursued a career in marketing before his PhD, which focused on the eighteenth century Exeter landscape painter Francis Towne. Richard was research curator for the exhibition 'Sir Joshua Reynolds: The Acquisition of Genius' at Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery (2009/10). He is currently a post-doctoral research assistant on the three-year AHRC-funded project 'Court, Country, City: British Art 1660-1735' at Tate/University of York. The first stage of the website 'The London Art World, 1660-1735' will go online in the autumn of 2011.

Gwen Yarker. With a Master degree in nineteenth-century British art from the Courtauld Institute, Gwen has been an art curator in national and provincial museums. As an independent art historian Gwen has worked on museum collections and HLF bids for museums, is an experienced exhibition curator, lecturer and writer and was Dorset coordinator for the recently published Dorset edition of the Public Catalogue Foundation. She is the curator of *Georgian Faces: Portrait of a County* and author of the accompanying exhibition catalogue, funded by The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art. Gwen was recently awarded a Caird Fellowship for a research project at the National Maritime Museum.