



Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare Newsletter



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Looking back and looking ahead

Five years after its foundation, Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare Trust reviews its achievements and restates its objectives

Just over ten years ago, Garrick's Temple at Hampton and its garden were completely restored, and a permanent exhibition of Garrick's life and works mounted inside it. This major operation was directed by a body representing Richmond-upon-Thames Council, local societies, Conservation and Cultural Groups and the national Temple Trust. It was made possible by generous donations from leading Charities, and from the acting profession led by the late Sir John Gielgud.

Five years ago, Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare Trust was set up to concentrate entirely on the Temple. Since then, with much help from the Council, facilities have been greatly improved. Toilet facilities have been installed, along with a kitchen and an extra exhibition area. Fifty chairs and a small marquee are available. Disabled access has been provided, and the Temple is heated all the year round.

Conservation, education and cultural events

The Shakespeare Temple is now regularly used for concerts, annual general meetings and private events, and, in collaboration with Orleans House, a major educational programme has been introduced. Schools find that the Temple (which has been called "the most beautiful classroom in the Country") is ideally suited for teaching local history, art, theatre matters, maths etc. (see page 3). Its beautiful Thames-side setting makes it very attractive for visitors, who come from all over the world (normally 3-400

during London Open House Weekend alone). A dedicated band of Volunteers looks after the Temple and garden, and acts as guides to visitors (see page 4).

At this time, it is worth restating the Trust's three main objectives which are: conservation, education and cultural events.

As far as conservation is concerned, in February/March this year (2010), the

Trust paid for the complete redecoration of the inside of the Temple. The Council has been restoring the outside which has been damaged by vandals.

Looking ahead, the Trust intends to achieve far greater use of the Temple – not only for educational and cultural events but for private hire to suitable users (see page 4). ♪



David Garrick by Pompeo Batoni (1708-1781) Courtesy of Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Looking back and looking ahead

2010 will see a major Walpole exhibition at the V&A and the re-opening of Strawberry Hill

When, in 1754, David Garrick bought his estate on the Thames at Hampton, he moved into the area west of London which was much favoured by leading musicians, artists and writers (e.g. Sir Godfrey Kneller, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Alexander Pope and William Hogarth). A near neighbour was Horace Walpole, writer, art historian, connoisseur and one of the greatest collectors in 18th Century Britain, who had lived in Twickenham since 1747, and was building his "little Gothic Castle" at Strawberry Hill. Born the same year as Garrick (1717), the fourth son of Sir Robert Walpole (Prime Minister from 1721 to 1742), Walpole had been aware of Garrick as early as 1742, when he wrote of "the young wine merchant turned player", and, as a keen and regular theatre-goer, he followed Garrick's career with interest.

Along with the Duke of Grafton and other leading aristocrats, he attended the first major dinner which the Garricks gave after their move to Hampton. The following year he wrote "I have contacted a sort of intimacy with Garrick. He is building a grateful Temple to Shakespeare". Walpole was very fond of Violette (David's wife) of whom he wrote "I like



Horace Walpole by J. G. Eccardt
National Portrait Gallery, London

her exceedingly. Her behaviour is all sense and all sweetness". However, he and Garrick remained close acquaintances rather than friends for, while he was artistically sensitive and intellectually brilliant, Walpole could, at times, be catty, cynical and a snob. He wrote of Garrick "Be on your guard; he's an actor"; and "Garrick does not tempt me; I have no taste for his perpetual buffoonery and endless expectation of flattery". Of Garrick the playwright, he wrote "He is the best actor and worst author in the

world, as Shakespeare was just the contrary". In 1779, after Garrick's death, he wrote "The pomp of Garrick's funeral is perfectly ridiculous". In his turn, Garrick wrote "Even Horace Walpole will occasionally mince down from Strawberry Hill and take wine with us". Sadly, while these two neighbours were major leaders of the artistic and cultural life of their time, they were psychologically and emotionally entirely incompatible.

Whatever the underlying relationship between Garrick and Walpole, 2010 is Walpole's year. While Garrick's great house in Hampton is still in ruins from the disastrous fire of two years ago, work will shortly finish on the £8.2 million restoration of Walpole's Strawberry Hill (formal reopening scheduled for September 2010). A major exhibition on "Horace Walpole and Strawberry Hill" opened on 6th March at the V&A and continues until 4th July 2010. It features 200 objects from Walpole's incomparable collection including art, glass, porcelain, enamel, armour etc., many items of which featured in Walpole's manuscript list of his "89 principal curiosities". Whatever his secret opinion of Walpole, Garrick would surely have applauded this magnificent display of connoisseurship. ∞



South front of Strawberry Hill House



The Long Gallery ceiling



The Yellow Bedchamber

Behind the pictures in the Temple Exhibition NO.1

(detail) COURTESY OF WALKER ART GALLERY, LIVERPOOL

David Garrick as Richard III

by William Hogarth (1697-1764)

Of the over 60 prints and reproductions of paintings in the Temple Exhibition, by far the largest is that of Garrick as Richard III. This is appropriate because Shakespeare's Richard III was unquestionably Garrick's greatest and most successful role. It was the first role that he performed in London when, aged only 24, he appeared at the theatre at Goodman's Fields. A review said "I believe there was not one in the house who was not in raptures." Alexander Pope said "I am afraid the young man will be spoiled for he will have no competitor." The next

year, Garrick performed the part at Drury Lane, repeating it at a Royal Command Performance for George II. When George II died, Garrick in Richard III was George III's first command performance (1772). Fanny Burney wrote "How great he is in the character. The applause he met with exceeds all belief." In 1776, in his final stage season before his death in 1779, he yet again performed the role to rapturous applause. Hogarth's great painting brilliantly portrays the force and passion with which Garrick played the role of the wicked and doomed monarch. ∞

Education

The Temple Education group works with Orleans House to develop use of the Temple by local schools and colleges. Among other visits, Richmond-upon-Thames College presented dramatic pieces based on "The Tempest" and "Macbeth", which were performed by Italian Exchange students. For key Stage 2 pupils, training sessions called "Maths with Palladio" used and celebrated the architecture of the Temple, an octagonal building featuring many geometrical shapes. Sessions were enjoyed by the schools and will be repeated in 2010. ∞



Maths with Palladio

Success of first Children's Day

In August 2009, the first "Children's Day" was held at the Temple. The theme was "Theatrical Masks". There were masks and costumes in which the children much enjoyed dressing up, and a quiz in the Temple with David Garrick Chocolate medals for each child (thanks to The Garrick Club). The event was planned and directed by the well known actress, and member of the Temple Management Committee, Liz Crowther. ∞





Lisa Moore 1919-2009

Lisa Moore (the highly successful novelist Elizabeth Berridge) died suddenly in December, the day before a 90th birthday party planned in her honour in Garrick's Temple, and shortly after her Publishers (Faber) announced that they are reissuing four of her nine novels. A Fellow of the Royal Literary Society, Lisa was a staunch supporter of the Temple, serving on its Management Committee, preparing texts on Garrick for Temple Volunteer guides, working hard in the garden, and cycling to meetings in her late eighties. Her wisdom and kindness will be very sadly missed. In her memory, generous donations have been made by her friends and relatives to Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare Trust's funds. ☺

Charitable contributions needed

The Trust needs help towards the cost of Conservation, Education and Cultural events. Contributions to John Sheaf, Assistant Treasurer at 4, Thames St.,

Hiring the Temple

The Temple can accommodate groups of 40 to 50 for private events. For information and costs contact Scott Mclean.

email: scott.mclean3@btinternet.com

Tel. (020) 8977 8272 ☺

Public events at the Temple in 2009

Among the cultural events, audiences much enjoyed a performance about Shakespeare's kings by the Hampton Community College. This linked up with the highly successful exhibition at Orleans House Gallery on "The Face and Figure of Shakespeare." The Esher A capella Choir skilfully sang memorable sentimental songs from around the world. The Actors' Richmond Centre put on a delightful programme of prose, verse and song. Young musicians from Hampton Junior School Swing Band had audiences swaying in their seats. In August a highly successful Children's Day was held (see separate article on page 3). The Temple was used for the AGMs of Artsrichmond and the Hampton Riverside Trust. Among groups visiting the Temple were the Huguenot Society (Garrick was, of course, of Huguenot stock), and many participants in the annual Hampton Sailing Club regatta. ☺

Contribution of temple volunteers

As usual, the more than thirty Garrick's Temple volunteers, have been crucial to the overall success of the Trust. Roles vary from welcoming visitors, acting as guides to the exhibition, organising and running educational and cultural events, putting up displays, helping to keep the Temple gardens in good shape, and enjoying the end of season Volunteers' party. More volunteers are needed. If you would like to join this very pleasant social group, or to learn more about how you might help, please contact Aileen Dekker.

email: aileen.dekker@btinternet.com

Tel. (020) 8977 0992 ☺

Open House Weekend

*The temple will be open
on Saturday and Sunday
September 18th and 19th
from 11am - 5pm*

Restoration of Garrick's Villa

As reported in the 2009 newsletter, Garrick's great house at Hampton, in the riverside garden of which the Temple stands, was severely

damaged by fire in October 2008. Restoration, which has to await the building drying out, is due to start in the first half of 2010. It may take two years. ☺



Garrick's Temple to Shakespeare Trust

www.garrickstemple.org.uk ☺ Charity no. 1107200

