

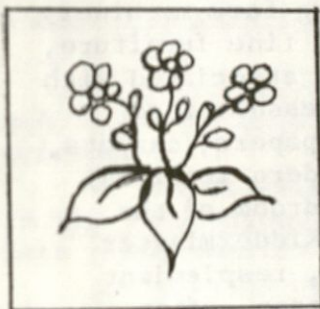
William Morris Society) promised to maintain club rooms, a cafe, a library, and a museum. In 1905 the Society published a Bulletin, edited by Martin Schutze, and evidently running to 71 pages, which I have been unable to locate. If anyone has any more precise information on this Chicago-based Morris Society, I would appreciate hearing from them.

Yours in fellowship,

Gary L. Aho

Gary L. Aho, for the
Governing Committee

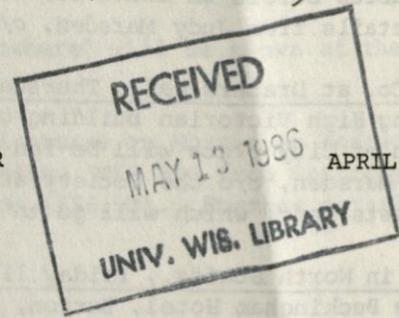
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WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY
President Lord Briggs of Lewes
Honorary Secretary R. S. Smith
Kelmescott House, 26 Upper Mall,
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PR

NEWSLETTER



APRIL 1986

Dear Member,

1. KELMSCOTT HOUSE

Building work for the Society's HQ in the basement of Kelmescott House has still to start, but in response to the appeal in the January Newsletter for donations in cash or kind towards furnishing, we have had two intriguing offers. One is from Elizabeth Phillips: a small framed colour print which, her letter says, "shows two children and a lamb in a spring landscape and I think it's by Walter Crane". The other is from Freda Levson of the George MacDonald Society who offers "a set of curtains (known as the 'Beulah curtains') made by the MacDonald family as part of the scenery for Mrs. George MacDonald's dramatisation of Pilgrim's Progress". Both these generous offers are most welcome. Are there any others, please?

2. BOOKCASE APPEAL

Again, the appeal in the January Newsletter for donations towards a new bookcase to house the Society's collection in proper style has produced a generous response. So far we have been taken two-thirds of the way towards our target with substantial grants from two trusts and individual contributions from the following members: Ursula Bruck, C. Devereux, John and Ann Kay, Elizabeth Phillips, Eleanor Pritchard, Carroll Bishop (Canada) and Irrma Strauss (USA). We hope to commission the bookcase by the end of April and members are invited to help the Society and sponsor craftsmanship today by sending their contributions, large and small, to the Hon. Treasurer directly.

John Kay

3. THE SOCIETY'S PROGRAMME

Annual General Meeting, Saturday 10 May 2.00 p.m. This year's AGM will be held at the Diorama Arts Centre, 14 Peter Place, London NW1. The meeting will be followed by tea, and a talk by Dr. Nicholas Falk on Morris and the Wandle museum project. Admission free. We hope that members from far and wide will be able to attend, and make known their views on the Society's policy and programmes.

Visit to the Crafts Study Centre, Bath, Tuesday 27 May. A day visit to the Holburne Museum, Great Pulteney Street, Bath, with a lunch-time lecture by our member Robin Tanner, and visits to craft workshops and to Morris and Co. stained glass. Tickets £2.50 and further details from Judy Marsden, c/o the Society at Kelmescott House (SAE). Please note that the date of this visit has had to be changed from that given in the printed programme.

Midsummer at Kelmscott Manor, Saturday 21 June. Our biennial visit to the house which meant so much to Morris. A picnic lunch, followed by a guided tour, and visits to the nearby Great Coxwell Barn and Inglesham Church. Supper in the stables before we leave for home. Tickets £7 (coach fare £3 extra) and further details from Judy Marsden, c/o the Society at Kelmscott House (SAE).

Morris & Co. at Drapers Hall, Thursday 3 July, 2.00 pm. This visit to an interesting High Victorian building containing two Merton carpets and a fine collection of City plate will be led by Barbara Morris. Admission by ticket from Judy Marsden, c/o the Society at Kelmscott House (SAE). There are only a few tickets left, which will go to the first applicants.

The Goths in North Staffs., Friday 11 July to Sunday 13 July. This study week-end at the Buckingham Hotel, Buxton, is being organised jointly with the Victorian Society, and will be led by our member Jim Pilbeam. An attractive programme of visits and lectures has been arranged, which will take in important buildings of the Gothic Revival, as well as Morris's connections with Thomas Wardle and the textile industry in North Staffordshire and S.E. Cheshire. (Further particulars in the last Newsletter.) Costs, including hotel accommodation, all meals and local transport will be about £60. Application form and programme (large SAE please) from Judy Marsden, c/o the Society at Kelmscott House.

An Expedition to Iceland, Friday 1 to Friday 15 August. There are still a few places left on what promises to be a memorable excursion. A special itinerary has been worked out by an Icelandic travel agent to cover almost the exact route followed by Morris in 1871, when he visited many places associated with the Sagas. The price of £560 includes everything except insurance, covering return flight Heathrow to Keflavik, airport taxes, accommodation in farmhouses (staying three nights in each of four districts, with two final nights in Keflavik), all meals, and coach with English-speaking guide and driver. Please send in your applications quickly to Julia Stapleton at the Society's headquarters (SAE), as we must soon give the agent our final numbers. This is an opportunity which is not likely to be repeated.

'Love is Enough', Saturday 15 November, 2.30 pm. (Venue to be announced.) We are planning an afternoon studying this little-known poetic masque by William Morris, which will end with a produced reading. A shortened version is being prepared, and we would like to hear from those wishing to join the reading, who must be able to spare some time for rehearsals either during evenings or at weekends from early October onwards. Please get in touch with Dorothy Coles at the Society's headquarters, giving some idea of any experience in acting or lecturing, and times available. We should also like to hear from a typist who would be willing to type the shortened version for reproduction.

4. OTHER MEETINGS AND COURSES

An exhibition of the work of Heywood Sumner, 1853-1940, a founder member of the Arts and Craft Exhibition Society and an early Master of the Art Workers Guild, is being shown at Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum from 26 April until 14 June.

Oxford Polytechnic is running a one-day short course on Morris at Kelmscott Manor on Thursday 1 May. Course members will travel to Kelmscott by narrow boat, leaving Radcot Bridge at 10.15 am and returning at 4.30pm. Speakers will include Prof. Anita Bach, Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen, Weimar, on 'William Morris, Henry van de Velde and the Weimar Bauhaus'. Fee £15, including lunch, tea and a tour of the Manor. Bookings and enquiries to Carolin Tidbury, Faculty Short Course Unit, c/o Dept. of Town Planning, Oxford Polytechnic, Headington, Oxford. OX3 0BP

Our member, Edwin Walters, will be giving a lecture 'William Morris: His Relevance to Modern Politics' at the Duke of York pub, York Way (opposite King's Cross Station), for the S.P.G.B., on Sunday, 11 May, at 7.30 pm. Admission free.

The video 'William Morris: News from Nowhere' will be shown at the British Museum on Monday, 12 May, at 11.00 am.

The WEA is running a week's residential course on Morris at Wedgwood Memorial College, Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs. ST12 9DG from Saturday 2 August to Friday 8 August. Fees will be £95.00 (£86.50). Further details and a booking form from the Warden.

5. PROGRAMME REPORT

Visit to Sanderson's Hand-Print Factory, Perivale, 14 January. We regret that this visit, which had proved to enjoyable and instructive for earlier parties, had to be cancelled at the last minute as a result of a takeover by an American firm, which has left the future of the Perivale factory uncertain. We hope to be able to keep members informed of developments.

Anti-scrape in Spitalfields, 1 February. Twenty hardy members braved the cold, rainswept streets of Spitalfields on 1 February to visit the Philip Webb buildings in Worship Street, just north of Liverpool Street station. They found a well-knit short terrace of houses over shops, in red brick with a steep pitched roof in red tiles - a handsome piece of street architecture but now in a poor state of repair. We returned to the headquarters of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (founded by Morris in 1877) which is in a handsome 18th century house in Spital Square. With our host, Philip Venning, secretary of the SPAB, we sat down to a welcome cup of tea and discussed what might be done to encourage the owners of the Worship Street buildings to put them in better order. We were fortunate in having with us Peter Blundell Jones, architectural historian and author of a most interesting and beautifully illustrated article in the Architects' Journal for 15 January 1986 which describes both the Red House and the Worship Street buildings designed shortly afterwards (back numbers are available from 9 Queen Anne's Gate, SW1 for £1 including postage). After tea we looked over the SPAB's well-appointed offices - which just made us realise how much we need our own.

John Kay

'How We Live and How We Might Live', Friends of the Earth, London Ecology Centre WC2, 8 March. The small auditorium at the London Ecology Centre was almost filled to capacity for the Symposium arranged with the Friends of the Earth at their London Ecology Centre. Ian Tod speaking on behalf of the Society opened the proceedings, emphasising Morris's intense love of nature, and his concern at the damage being done to the environment by industrial capitalism. With a series of slides he illustrated Kelmscott Manor as a non-exploitative way of building, an organic moulding of the face of the earth. The nearby Great Coxwell Barn, which Morris greatly admired, showed the same approach, with the limestone and trees used in its construction all coming from the immediate neighbourhood. By contrast, an industrial shed near Hull had drawn its materials from enormous distances, had a big power input, and a life span of probably no more than 60 years. Morris's S.P.A.B. was the first radical campaigning body for the protection of the environment, and his work had a great influence on the Garden City movement. Jean Lambert, speaking on behalf of the Friends of the Earth, disclaimed a detailed knowledge of Morris, despite the fact that she lives in Walthamstow, but then went on to show a considerable understanding of his ideas. He had been opposed to making nature our slave, but today a predatory,

materialist view predominated. We should follow his plea to keep life simple, and be willing to sacrifice some gains for the future of the planet, and aim at a renewable economy, asking always "Production of what, and for what?" Morris had campaigned against shoddy, and we should build in long life and practise re-cycling. Work needed to be re-evaluated, with machines firmly under our control. David Baldock, a researcher of the Institute for European Environmental Policy, traced the growing concern in the 19th century at the despoliation of the countryside, which led to the founding of the Selwyn Society and the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, but the agricultural revolution aimed at getting the maximum output from the land and from animals was still very much in progress. Farmland should be subject to planning controls, and protective legislation studied to see what can and cannot be done. It is very difficult to alter CAP, but some progress was being made, and we must hope that farmers will change their attitudes. He drew attention to the impact which informed public opinion could make. It was now very difficult to get consent to push motorways through the countryside. Discussion continued until time ran out, with John Kay appealing for help on the Society's Morris Exhibition being planned, which will deal with many of the issues raised.

Morris Birthday Party, House of Commons, 22 March. Those fortunate enough to obtain a ticket for this popular event enjoyed a memorable afternoon. A full report will appear in the next Newsletter.

Programme Report Correction. We apologise for an unfortunate error which crept into the report on the Christmas Party in the last Newsletter, where it was stated that the generous donation of a hundred dollars sent to help us enjoy ourselves had come from Carole Silver, a North American member. The gift was not in fact from Carole, though it was from a North American member, who wishes to remain mysterious! Our warm thanks to the mysterious donor.

6. WANDLE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM

The Wandle Industrial Museum is now in occupation of premises in Wimbledon Town Centre, 1-7 Hertfield Crescent, Wimbledon SW19, which have been acquired by the London Borough of Merton as part of a proposed redevelopment scheme. The building, which extends over 2 floors, has been leased to the Museum in order to open a Heritage Centre to the public as the first phase of the development of the Museum. The inaugural exhibition, which will contain material on Morris's works on the Wandle, will be formally opened on Monday 5 May, and thereafter will be open to the public Tuesday - Friday 10.00 - 4.00.

7. OBITUARIES

We deeply regret to record the deaths of the following members:

Associate Professor Jessie Kocmanova. Dr. Jessie Kocmanova of Brno University, who died on 19 December 1985 at the age of 71, was an outstanding Morris scholar, and a life member of the Society, which she joined in 1956. An obituary and a bibliography will appear in the next issue of The Journal.

Frank D. Matthews, B.A. Frank Matthews, who died in May 1985 at the age of 48, was a Lecturer in History at the University of Stirling. Prof. D. A. E. Waddell has kindly contributed the following obituary: "His main academic interests were in the fields of labour history and the history of art, and

reflected a deep personal commitment to humane and aesthetic values. The work of William Morris figured prominently in the advanced course he gave for honours students on Social and Aesthetic Responses to Industrialism in 19th century Britain. His publications included contributions on aspects of Guild Socialism to Essays on Labour History (ed. Briggs and Saville, 1971) and Ideology and the Labour Movement (ed. Martin and Rubinstein, 1979); and a few months before his death, which followed several years of recurring ill-health, he researched and mounted an exhibition of paintings and ceramics on 'Majel Davidson (1885-1969) - an artist's life and influences'. He left uncompleted an oral history project on the workers and community of Northumberland Dock some of the results of which his family and friends hope eventually to prepare for publication."

Walter Southgate. Walter Southgate, who died on 14 February 1986 at the age of 95, had been a member of the Society since 1967. Mr. McCarthy, Director of the National Museum of Labour History, has kindly contributed the following obituary: "Walter Southgate joined the Labour Party at the age of 14 - it was originally the Labour Representation Committee before the name changed - and was a founder member of the local Social Democratic Federation and a leading member of the Clarion movement. He knew all the pioneers and was a real pioneer himself. He was one of the backroom boys, and a great organiser, who never really got the credit he deserved. During his lifetime he amassed a huge collection of Labour history and memorabilia, which he gave to the Museum, and there on 4 May national Labour Party figures will attend a Labour History Conference in his memory. His death came as a shock to us all, and he will be very much missed."

8. THE JOURNAL

Members are reminded that the 1986 issues of The Journal will be brought out as a double number in October, and thereafter it will appear in April and October, and not January and July as heretofore. Articles or proposals for articles are welcome, and should be addressed to the Editor at 35 Over Street, Brighton, Sussex. BN1 4EE.

9. GUSTAV HOLST, CONRAD NOEL AND WILLIAM MORRIS

In a recent issue of the Canadian Society's Newsletter, the editor, Douglas Brown, contributed a most interesting item suggesting that Holst, who had been director of the Hammersmith Socialist Choir, may have been instrumental in introducing Morris's work and ideas to Conrad Noel, the Socialist vicar from 1912 to his death in 1942 of the beautiful village of Thaxted in Essex with its fine medieval church: "During the 1914 war, Gustav Holst, with his wife Isobel and daughter Imogen, leased a cottage in Thaxted. After attending mass one Sunday at the parish church and listening to the choir, Holst asked if he might be allowed to help train the singers. For several years after he served as music master at Thaxted church, despite the fact that he was not really a Christian but was drawn to eastern mysticism. He composed much of his best known music whilst at Thaxted, including part of 'The Planets'. Holst and the vicar became good friends during this period, and there must have been much interchange of ideas between two such active minds."

In her pamphlet Gustav Holst and Thaxted, on sale in the church, Imogen Holst notes that the family in fact settled there in 1913. There was some problem after war broke out, perhaps because Gustav was then 'von Holst', but this was soon overcome. Reg Groves in his biography Conrad Noel and the Thaxted Movement, 1967, records that at the end of the Requiem Mass before Noel's burial in July 1942 in the churchyard below the great east window of the church, the singers and the congregation joined in singing verses from Morris's 'All for the Cause' to the choral tune from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

10. THAXTED AND JOHN BALL

Douglas Brown's notice prompted me to revisit Thaxted, which I had frequently visited in the '30s, attracted by Noel's celebration of that other Essex priest, John Ball, in the handsome Perpendicular church, though Reformation vandalism has left its windows filled with plain glass and all the walls whitewashed. It was a great relief to find that very little has changed inside or outside the church. Above the porch is the Chapel of John Ball, Priest and Martyr, 1381, with the message on the door leading to it, "Good people", cried John Ball, "things will never go well in England so long as goods be not in common." Noel would have been delighted to know that according to recent research, the men of Thaxted did in fact take part in the Rising of 1381. A note to one of the contributions in R. H. Hilton and T. H. Ashton eds. The English Rising of 1381, C.U.P. 1984, pp.186-87, n.90, records "The men of Ware and Thaxted in Essex joined together to attack the duke of Lancaster's castle at Hertford, and then marched to London to join the sack of the palace of Savoy."

11. MISCELLANY

Mark Annand has sent a brochure outlining the camping skiff hire service available on the Thames from Constable's Boathouse, 15 Thames Street, Hampton, Middx. TW12 2EW. "Constable's is a small boatyard specialising in the restoration and building of unpowered Thames boats, and also for promoting the use of these craft for long distance travelling At least five of the craft are contemporary with Morris's tenancy of Kelmscott and his consequent journeyings on the river."

12. PUBLICATIONS

William Morris in French. Our member Adam Buick writes: "Last year a French translation of some of Morris's political writings on art and socialism was published by Hermann's under the title Contre l'art d'élite. The works translated are The Lesser Arts, Art Under Plutocracy, Useful Work versus Useless Toil, Art and Socialism, How We Live and How We Might Live, Gothic Architecture, and How I Became a Socialist, as well as extracts from the letter Morris wrote to Andreas Scheu on 5 September 1883 and from Ruskin's The Nature of Gothic. French-only readers now have access to a wider range of Morris's writings than News from Nowhere in two translations, which was all that was available up till now. Also translated into French but still awaiting publication are The Manifesto of the Socialist League and The Society of the Future."

Philip Henderson's William Morris: His Life, Work and Friends is being re-issued by André Deutsch as a £7.95 trade paperback on 17 April.

Following the special exhibition of Birmingham Museum's Holy Grail Tapestries last year, the Museum has put on sale a set of five large format postcards of the tapestries and an illustrated booklet which describes how they were created. The booklet and five cards cost £2.50, including p&p, and can be obtained from The Publications Unit, City Museums and Art Gallery, Birmingham B3 3DH.

Our member Dr. Charles Monell has sent a copy of California State Library Foundation Bulletin, no.14, Jan. 1986 containing his address (pp.9-13) 'Edward Burne-Jones, William Morris, Dante Rossetti, and Sir Thomas Malory's "Morte d'Arthur"', on the occasion of the opening of the exhibit "Five Hundred Years of King Arthur" at the California State Library celebrating the quincentennial of the first printing of Morte d'Arthur by William Caxton at Westminster, London, 31 July 1485.

Yours sincerely

Richard S. Smith Hon. Secretary



WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY
in the UNITED STATES

NEWSLETTER,

April, 1986

A. ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the January Newsletter it was announced that Marilyn Ibach had completed a new Directory of Members of the William Morris Society in North America and that those interested in receiving a copy should send Gary Aho the sum of \$1.50. It was subsequently decided that the Society would pick up the costs of printing and mailing, and directories have thus been sent to all those members and institutions listed in the Directory (just over 300). An enclosed request for "needed corrections" has already elicited a dozen responses, and this new information will be incorporated into the next Directory. In it, we hope to list all Canadian members as well, and I am therefore now requesting colleagues from that flourishing Northern branch of the Society to send me their names, addresses, occupations, and a list of their specific interests in William Morris; the present Directory includes a "Key to Interests" with the following categories: 1) Craftwork (i.e., wallpaper, stained glass windows, furniture), 2) Book Design, 3) Political Activity, 4) Poetry, 5) Prose Romances, 6) Essays (socialist, art), 7) Journalism, 8) S.P.A.B., 9) Translations 10) Other.

Several directories from that first mailing have been returned with the postal stamp, "Not Deliverable as Addressed." If anyone knows the whereabouts of any of the following, we would appreciate receiving their current addresses: Mrs. Janet Robbins, Jack Golden, Dona Ruby Bachman, Bonnie Barnett, Donna Belser.

Further information has been received about the planned trip to Iceland this coming August. Florence Boos reports that "Air Icelandic flies each evening except Wednesday from Chicago, arriving in Iceland around 8AM, at a price of \$649. round trip. From NY flights are daily for \$589. round trip; planes leave at 8:45 PM, and arrive around 6AM. Alternately, People's Air and Frontier both fly NY to London for \$199. each way. One could meet the British members there and fly to Reykjavik." [actually to Keflavik; regular busses take travellers the last few miles down the peninsula to Reykjavik]. Any American members planning to fly from Britain should contact Dorothy Coles immediately at 35 Kensington Hall Gardens, Beaumont Avenue, London, W14 9LS. Since she has booked 15 seats and so far (as of 27 March) received only nine deposits, she is likely to have room for a few more. Americans travelling from Chicago or NY should make their own arrangements, planning to depart on July 31; we shall thus arrive at Keflavik on the morning of August 1 and meet the British contingent, who'll be arriving in the afternoon, later that day in Reykjavik. Kjartan Helgason of Istravel Ltd. informs me that there'll be no problems getting the two groups together and onto the bus. He has sketched in a provisional itinerary for the two-week stay: two days

in Reykjavik and three days in each of four different areas through which Morris travelled; these areas are also rich in saga lore and associations. These include the South (Njals Saga), the West near Snaefellsnes (Eyrbyggja Saga), the West in the Borgarfjorthur district (Egils Saga and Gunnlaugs Saga) and the Northwest (Vatnsdæla Saga). Accommodations will be in farm houses in each of these four areas and will include full board: breakfast, lunch, dinner, and "snacks if programme demands." There will be a comfortable bus and an English-speaking guide who will point out changes in each area since saga times and since Morris visited them in the 1870's. Cost for accommodations, food, and the bus will be between \$400. and \$500. Helgason will write to me by mid-April, and I should then have more information for those members who wish to spend two weeks travelling across Iceland, delightful at any time, but particularly pleasant - even warm - in August. So far it appears that about 10 Americans will join at least that many members from Britain. Helgason has assured me that 20 to 30 people can be accommodated in comfortable farm homes, and on the bus, but he needs to have precise numbers so that he can make reservations within the next few weeks, so write to me immediately if you'd like to join this Icelandic jaunt.

All of the sagas mentioned above are available in good English translations (the Penguin Classics editions are best), and I would be happy to provide an off-print of a short article describing my experiences retracing a section of Morris's 1871 track, "Following in the Footsteps of William Morris," Iceland Review, 21 (Winter, 1982): 93-99.

Norman Kelvin, who will be chairing the William Morris session at next December's MLA meetings in New York City, has received several interesting proposals for papers, and from among them the following four have been selected: 1) George Landow, "Morris and Ruskin," 2) Jeffray Spears, "The Incarnate Muse: An Essay in the Psychology of Inspiration," Helene Roberts, "Morris's Art Seen Against its Religious Background," and Fred Kirchhoff, "Terrors of the Third Dimension: Morris's Incomplete Artists." We hope to have a reception immediately following this session, "William Morris and Art," and there will also be a business meeting of the Governing Board of the William Morris Society in America.

At the Seventh Medieval Forum, to be held April 11-12 at Plymouth State College in New Hampshire, there will be two sessions devoted to "Medievalism and the Pre-Raphaelites." The following papers might be of interest to Morris Society members: 1) "A Contest of Heroes: 'The Judgment of Paris' in Antique and Medieval Art and Literature" by Patricia Manley of Simmons College, 2) "Medieval Genesis of Holman Hunt's Lady Shallot" by Alicia Faxon of Simmons College, 3) "The Two Gardens of Sacred and Profane Love in Chaucer, the Roman de la Rose, and Pre-Raphaelite Poetry" by Roger Wiehe of the University of Lowell, 4) "Medieval Equals Roman Catholic: Victorian Equation and its Reflections in Pre-Raphaelite Art" by Helene Roberts of Harvard, 5) "John Ruskin: New Visions and Revisions" by Alice Hauck of Providence College, and 6) "Visions in William Morris's Earthly Paradise" by Barbara Miliars of the University of Lowell.

As announced in the last Newsletter, there will be a conference at Yale on April 18-20 on "Victorian Work and Workers." On the opening day there will be a tour of the Victorian Collection at the Yale Center for British Arts and a session on "Representations of Work and Workers." In that session George Landow will read a paper on "The Art of Labor and

the Labor of Art." On the following two days over a dozen papers will be presented; judging from their titles, the following should be of direct interest to Morris Society members: 1) "Ruskin's Doctrine of Work and the Nature of Building" by Michael Brooks of West Chester University, 2) "Women's Hands and Handiwork in the Victorian Imagination" by Elisabeth G. Gitter of John Jay College, CUNY, and 3) "Workers Against War: Trade Unions and the Peace Movement in the Late Victorian Era" by Claire Hirshfield of Pennsylvania State University.

In Toronto, on April 9, 8 p.m., at University College, Room 179, Andrew Tomick of York University will lecture on "William Morris's Hands: Does William Morris Have Any Influence in Arts and Crafts Today?"

The Cooper-Hewitt Museum has announced a tour for Saturday, May 3, 9 AM to 4 PM, that might be of interest to Society members in the New York City area. It is titled "Gustav Stickley's Craftsman Farms." Stickley's journal, The Craftsman, was perhaps as influential as his designs; its first issue, in 1901, had several articles on William Morris, and in that issue Stickley promised "to promote and to extend the principles established by Morris, in both the artistic and socialistic sense." The tour to the Stickley farms costs \$70; one should contact the Cooper-Hewitt Programs Office (212-860-6868) for further information. What follows is the brochure description of this particular tour:

Gustav Stickley, a major force in the American Arts and Crafts movement at the turn of the century, is best known for his craftsman homes and mission-style furniture. Like other designers of his time, Stickley sought to create a utopian environment in which to work. Craftsman Farms in Parsippany, New Jersey, was conceived of as such an environment, and became Stickley's own home. A tour of the main house will introduce the visitor to his style of construction and design. Following lunch at the Bretton Woods Inn, which was built in 1894 as a replica of the Ford Mansion in Morristown, there will be a visit to the Parker House, a privately-owned residence designed by Stickley, the interior of which is still in its original condition.

B. SOME IMPRESSIONS OF ICELAND, FROM FLORENCE BOOS

I am a student of William Morris, a nineteenth-century British poet, designer, and pioneer of British socialism, who also helped translate Icelandic sagas, wrote poetry on Norse themes, and visited Iceland twice, in 1871 and 1873. To gain some knowledge of Iceland and its language, I've spent the fall as a Fulbright lecturer in American literature at the University of Iceland, and enrolled with my husband Bill in the university's full-time introduction to Icelandic (fifteen-weekly class-hours), which is conducted largely in Icelandic. Icelandic has preserved most of its medieval inflexions, but changes have occurred in the pronunciation--there is lots of elision, for example--and these make it still harder to learn.

The university's very existence is a brave act for this country of 240,000 inhabitants (Luxembourg has none for its 350,000). Unfortunately, the current government beggars its public employees, and much university teaching is actually done by an underclass of stundakennarar (section-teachers). A high-school teacher will earn about \$7,000 a year (in a country whose cost of living is higher than that of the U. S.), and a

university lecturer about \$9,000. A Cambridge graduate stundakennari who teaches phonetics in the English Department makes ends meet with 43 weekly class hours of laboratory and conversation, and consults on the side as well. It is not uncommon to meet a married couple who hold between them four jobs.

An English Department per se hardly exists. It is a subdivision of the Faculty of Arts, and located in a residential house. There is one professor (in the British sense of this word), one dosent (reader), two lektorar (tenured lecturers), and several hard-working stundakennarar; and student advisement is informal and ad hoc. The department teaches courses in Old English (not as hard for Icelanders as for anglophones), Medieval English, History of the Language, Grammar, and several surveys in British Literature. My Icelandic students of American literature were eager and diligent, and responded with quiet enthusiasm to works by Native American, black, and women writers. Of the novels we read, they liked best Alice Walker's The Color Purple. Driven by the pay-differential, many students say with fatalistic shrugs that they will become secretaries rather than teachers; I urge them to consider graduate school in the U. S., where they can support themselves rather better for a few years as teaching assistants, and learn as well.

A token women's strike in 1975 and a symbolic commemoration of it this past fall have not improved the lot of academic women. One of 83 professors is a woman, 9 of 83 dosentar, and 13 of 59 lektorar. One of the nine dosents teaches two courses on women and literature, and a section teacher offers one in women's history. A recent strike by Flugleidðir stewardesses was outlawed by Parliament on Women's Day itself, and the woman forseti (president, an honorific office in Iceland) was constrained to sign the bill. The Reykjavik battered women's clinic, founded in 1983, reports that 1,000 women (of a local population of about 100,000) seek shelter there each year.

The weather is surprisingly 'English' (wet, not cold, with light snow and ice, not the foot-high snow we are used to in Iowa). Winter temperatures are often in fact above freezing. The name "Iceland" derives from the island's vast central joklar (glaciers), but "Windland" might be more appropriate. Arctic air masses usually yield to warm ocean-borne currents, but major gales sometimes arise from the clash of the two. In early November we experienced a "stormur," a strong gale which lasted many hours, and gusted up to 90 miles an hour. En route from my class, I was blown twice into a tree, and saw the contents of my shoulder bag scatter at high speed to the winds--glasses, books, teaching notes, student papers. In an open field I saw several others struggle desperately to reach the next building; one, a woman in a red coat, was knocked to the ground and flailed for some time before she could stagger away. One can only respect the stoic farmers and shepherders who faced such winds.

The latitude (66° N.) and oblique light affect the sky in many striking ways. November brought a subtle array of rose, turquoise, and lavender skies, and a bright moon is often prominent in the daytime sky. On "Skammadegi," ("shortest day," December 21st), the sun rose shortly before noon, and set soon after three. An understandable response to the gloom is the very elaborate Icelandic celebration of "jolin," ("Christmas," a two-day holiday), which involves much caroling and bell-ringing, placement of small flames on the graves of relatives, great arrays of traditional foods, and convivial drinking of jolaglogg and brennevin.

Iceland is a nominally Lutheran country, but according to one rather notorious poll, more Icelanders believe in alfar than in their official

Lutheran God. Alfar are not our "elves," but dignified, larger-than-life beings who inhabit stones or other natural objects, and who are endowed with assorted magical powers.

Even if one lives here only a short while and learns only a modicum of its complex language, one cannot fail to sense how massive were Iceland's problems of survival, much less 'cultural survival.' For centuries, there was no wood with which to build or burn, and much of the tiny population (perhaps 50,000 when Morris visited the island in 1871 and 1873) huddled in turf dwellings and burned cow- and sheep-manure. Only in the 20th century did mechanized fish freezing provide a cash industry for what had been an island of shepherders and farmers (the latter confined to the arable one percent of its landsurface). At the outdoor museum "Arbaer" ("river-farm"), now surrounded by the suburbs of Reykjavik, one can visit a turf hovel, semi-sunk beneath the surface, in which one must crawl from one room to the other on one's hands and knees. In such conditions, the population's fierce pride in its traditional literacy becomes moving and appropriate.

C. PAPERS AT THE WILLIAM MORRIS SESSION AT NEMLA

The 1986 Northeast Modern Language Association meetings were hosted this year by Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey in New Brunswick. This was the fourth consecutive year that a session on William Morris appeared on the program, and it was voted to have yet another session next year, this one on William Morris and his Icelandic interests. Anyone interested in giving a 15-20 minute presentation on this topic--the convention will be in Boston--should send an abstract to the newly-elected secretary of the session, Carolyn Collette, English Department, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Mass., 01075. Professor Collette will then confer with the session's chairperson, Yvette Grimes (I do not at this time have her address).

Elisa K. Campbell of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, chaired the 1986 session, on Friday, April 4; here are summaries of the four papers presented then:

1) In "William Morris as a Translator of Scandinavian Ballads," Karl O.E. Anderson of Clark University discussed these lesser-known proofs of Morris's admiration for Scandinavian literature; Anderson concisely fulfilled his four-fold aim "to show (1) that Morris translated not only the four Danish and two Icelandic ballads he published in Poems by the Way, but at least two other Danish and also two Swedish folk songs--the Swedish ballad translations being Morris's only extant work with Swedish material; (2) that external and internal evidence indicates that, contrary to previous assumptions and contrary to his usual procedure in the saga renderings, Morris very likely prepared the ballad translations without help; (3) that his English renderings, in their faithfulness to the originals in matter and form, reflect a deep appreciation and understanding of the spirit of the Scandinavian ballads; and (4) that Morris's demonstrated first-hand knowledge of the Scandinavian languages can be used to rebut the frequent criticism that his translations of Norse literature are stilted and artificial and thus show that he did not understand the spirit and tone of the originals, a criticism grounded on the assumption that he merely reworked translations prepared by others in order to give them an archaic, romantic tone."

2) In "Morris's Oxford Friendships," Florence Boos of the University of Iowa began by surveying what we know--and via what sources (mainly Mackail, May Morris, and Georgiana Burne-Jones)--of Morris's early life, the interpretation of which is "more than usually relevant to an understanding of

his later artistic and political energies." The next section of her paper dealt with the Oxford years and the friendships "swiftly and deeply formed" and maintained with "tenacity" throughout Morris's life, with Edward Burne-Jones, Charles Faulkner, and Cormell Price. Each of these friends was discussed in detail. Her conclusion stressed that Morris and his Oxford friends formed "a network of several highly gifted individuals, rather than [as some biographers have implied] two 'geniuses' and some peripheral satellites." Boos suggested that these individuals prefigure the "collective narrators, 'Wanderers,' 'Elders,' and audience of The Earthly Paradise," and that Morris throughout his life remained "deeply grateful to his gifted friends."

3) In "Some Speculation on the Phases of William Morris's Romanticism; or Why Morris Became a Socialist and Rossetti Didn't," Dana Brand of Rutgers University pointed out that widely-received critical notions that both Morris's early poetry and late prose romances are "escapist" do not square with his socialist convictions and achievements. Brand contrasted Rossetti's use of themes which embody an intense search for a unity beyond nature to Morris's use of "interacting particulars," which somehow prefigured and were then capable of being translated into socialist realities. He also pointed out how personal, natural, and communal harmonies present everywhere in the late prose romances should be regarded as antidotes to fragmented and exploitative relationships that prevail in bourgeois capitalism.

4) In "Pieces of Men in Not-So-Shining Armor" Frederick Kirchoff of Indiana University-Purdue University offered a comprehensive interpretation of several poems in the Defence of Guenevere volume, poems that have puzzled and confounded generations of readers and critics. Kirchoff suggested that the five poems of the "Blue Closet group" reflect Morris's own fears of female fragility and his own inabilities at "self-structuration." Powerless male figures, often unable to live up to heroic (medieval) ideals, are prominent in these poems. Some of these figures and certain recurring images associated with them were discussed, as was "Rapunzel." Previous explanations of this poem have gone awry, Kirchoff argued, because critics have not linked the prince to Morris himself, to his adolescent problems with his own sexuality and to his continuing fear of women.

D. OTHER NEWS

Sarah B. Sherrill, an editor of the magazine Antiques, recently sent us four copies of her sumptuous magazine; in the July 1985 issue appeared an article "Living with Antiques: A Collectin in Upstate New York," concerning a house that John S. Leake (1819-1892) built in 1880 and 1881. Accompanying it are seven fine photographs of interiors decorated with Morris and Company papers, including Jasmine wallpaper in the entrance hall, Pomegranate in the parlor, and Willow in one bedroom; a Hammersmith rug designed by Dearle is in the living room, which is also graced by a circular mahogany table designed by Philip Webb. The dining room has an oak table, made ca. 1905, in Gustav Stickley's Craftsman Workshop; around it are Sussex chairs from Morris and Company and atop it a luster bowl by de Morgan. Future issues of Antiques will have articles on Morris and Company stained glass and on medieval designs in Morris and Company artifacts.

Karen Aho, a student at N.Y.U. and a long-time admirer of William Morris, sent along a clipping from The New Common Ground, a Brooklyn-based radical

weekly now entering its second year of publication. A recent issue had two pieces on Morris: "William Morris - Romantic to Revolutionary" and "Joseph Beuys and William Morris" The first borrows more than its title from E.P. Thompson; half-way through occurs this sentence: "William Morris was the first creative artist of major status in the world to take his stand, consciously and without shadow of compromise, with the revolutionary working class: to participate in the day-to-day work of building a political movement and to put his brain and his genius at its disposal." This is lifted, without attribution, from Thompson's William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary, 2nd ed., London, 1977, p. 727. But the author's enthusiasm for Morris is genuine. The second piece seems actually to be a review-notice of a book by Suzi Gablik, Has Modernism Failed?; in it William Morris is compared to Joseph Beuys, a revolutionary artist who died recently in Dusseldorf, Germany.

Michael Wolff, whose lovely home in Amherst, Massachusetts is graced by Morris and Company wallpapers made at Sandersons, thought that a recent article in Victorian Homes (Spring, 1986) might be of interest to Society members. This article, "William Morris: His Place in American Design," by John Burrows, suggests that middle-class Americans have recently "begun to experience a revival of honestly expressed romanticism in home decorations." A corollary of this is a "revival of interest in William Morris wallpapers" which began in the late 1970s, when they could only be purchased in England, but which gained momentum because of Bruce Bradbury's recent "revivals" of Morris patterns in California and since "the famous fabric house of Scalamandré issued its William Morris collection five years ago." Now Sandersons has opened a New York showroom, and "happily we have a selection of William Morris papers available today that could barely be conceived of a decade ago." Several illustrations accompany the article as well as a list of firms which sell Victorian wallpapers.

This same issue of Victorian Homes has another illustrated article, "The Linley Sambourne House in London" that Society members are likely to enjoy. The Morris Pomegranate wallpaper was used in two of the rooms in this lavishly decorated home.

Marilyn Ibach has learned from Trudy Ramsey, on the staff of Christ Church Cathedral in Vancouver, B.C., that the three Morris and Company windows (two by Burne-Jones and one by Morris - they were mentioned in last October's Newsletter) are now in place in the entrance hall of the Cathedral.

Susan Attwood turned up an article in the last issue of Architectural Digest titled "Antiques: Utopian Inspirations: Rare Furniture from the Arts and Crafts Era." In it author James S. Wamsley speaks of ways that Elbert Hubbard and Gustav Stickley were influenced and inspired by William Morris's ideas about the decorative arts, his achievements at Morris and Company. Unfortunately, the article has as its head-piece the most oft-quoted lines from The Earthly Paradise: "Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time / Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?" For much of his life Morris of course did "strive" to set things "straight" and, as Peter Stansky has recently proven in Redesigning the World, with some success.

The December 1985 issue of Victorian Studies Bulletin has a long summary of the 1985 Southeastern Nineteenth-Century Studies Association (SENCOSA) Conference which was hosted by the College of Architecture at

The Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, a conference whose theme was "Utopian Idealism in the Nineteenth Century: Visions of the Better Life." One of the sessions was on News from Nowhere, and in it the following three papers were presented: 1) "William Morris's News from Nowhere: The Geography of Desire," by John Pfordresher of Georgetown University, 2) "William Morris's Ideal Architecture," by Robert Craig of Georgia Tech, and 3) "News from Nowhere: William Morris's Dystopia?" by Barbara Gribble of Memphis State. In a later session on "Architectural Utopia," Beverly Taylor of Chapel Hill, in "The Victorian Camelot as Utopia," contrasted the descriptions of Camelot by Morris and Rossetti with those by Tennyson.

Joseph R. Dunlap sent a clipping from a speech Jesse L. Jackson gave on January 12, 1985. Dunlap noted that certain passages in the speech, "A Challenge to Protect the Integrity of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Legacy," bore a remarkable resemblance to "what has been said of Morris to defuse his real message." Here are a few examples: "In life he projected himself as 'drum major for justice.' In death he is being projected by the media as a non-threatening 'dreamer.'" . . . "Why is it that so many politicians today emphasize that Dr. King was a dreamer and add, almost by accident that, oh yeah, his dreams became reality?"

I submit that they want to project him as a dreamer because they wish us to remember this great leader as an idealist without substance, not as the concrete reality he was. Dr. King was a realist with ideals, he was not an idealist without reality. The only way to honor him is to make his memory a continuing concrete reality and be driven by his spirit."

John DePol recently sent us two wonderful wood engravings of William Morris, one in lilac and one in blue. The one in blue, of Morris in three-quarter profile, is particularly impressive. I'm not certain that other copies are available, but interested members can write to Mr. DePol at 280 Spring Valley Road, Park Ridge, New Jersey, 07656.

It occurs to me that a list of all the paintings, sketches, engravings --perhaps the caricatures of Morris as well--would be interesting and useful, and probably rather lengthy. Has any such list ever been compiled?

One such engraving, done by Barry Moser, is the frontispiece to the miniature which Jack Walsdorf edited in 1981. That book, Printers on Morris, published by Beaverdam Press and bound in leather, is now available at reduced prices to members of the William Morris Society. Inquiries should be sent to Walsdorf at 6024 S.W. Jean Rd., Lake Oswego, Oregon, 97034.

Walsdorf's book, William Morris in Private Press and Limited Edition: A Descriptive Bibliography of Books by and about William Morris, 1891-1981, published by the Oryx Press, has been reduced in price from \$95. to \$30; if prepaid, that includes postage. Write to Oryx Press, 2214 N. Central at Encanto, Phoenix, Arizona, 85004.

In the last Newsletter, under the heading "William Morris and Chicago," I commented upon the importance of the Glessner House, with its Morris artifacts, and The Second Presbyterian Church with its Burne-Jones windows. This past month I was in Chicago again and was able to see, and ponder once more, the decorated interiors, beautifully and painstakingly restored, of the Glessner mansion. And this time I visited The Second Presbyterian Church and saw the Burne-Jones windows. St. Cecilia and St. Margaret are placed only a few feet off the floor on

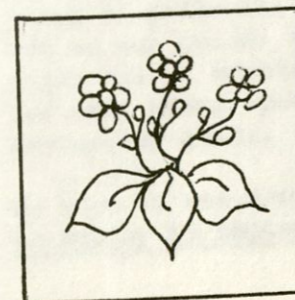
either side of the front door and one can thus get very close to them. It was a wonderful experience to stand there and feel myself suffused in their brilliant colors. The Church also has several splendid Tiffany windows.

Following up on a tip from Elaine Harrington, curator of the Glessner House and a most gracious host to visiting speakers, I visited the Records office at International Harvester, the farm machinery company responsible for Mr. Glessner's fortune. The opening page of one of their advertising brochures, from 1895, is quite interesting, not because of the copy ("The success of the New Champion Binder and Mower in the past year has been unprecedented. . . .") but because of the way the copy block is decorated. It is set within floriated margins and graced with a large decorated initial "T," done in red and black. It is, in short, an imitation of a Kelmscott Press page. Glessner's high regard for Morris and Company decorations is apparent in nearly every room of his mansion. Though there are no Kelmscott Press volumes in the mansion's present library, Glessner might have owned some; he would certainly have been aware of Morris's venture into book-making, and he apparently talked someone in his Firm's advertising branch to brighten up the pages of their otherwise pedestrian booklets. It must not have helped sales because this was the only one, of several dozen booklets I examined, with such decorations.

Obviously a substantial monograph could be written on William Morris and Chicago. Morris and Company artifacts and Morris's ideas on design and social change were influential enough in the windy city at the turn of the century to encourage a few University of Chicago professors to start a William Morris Society. I mentioned this short-lived Society, one somehow connected with the Tobey Furniture Company, in the last Newsletter, and I asked if any members had more precise information about this. Jack Walsdorf sent a xerox of an ad for Bas-Reliefs of subjects, "including Tolstoy, Paderewski, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris." They sold for \$10. apiece and were put out under the auspices of "The Bohemia Guild of the Industrial Art League" which had its headquarters on Michigan Avenue. Leo Young also responded with xeroxes of two issues of The Bulletin of The Morris Society, these for November and December of 1904. Moreover, he sent a copy of The Poetry and Fiction of William Morris: A Syllabus of Private Study or to Accompany Lectures by Richard G. Moulton, Professor of Literary Theory and Interpretation. This 30 page pamphlet, a study-guide for Morris's Sigurd, was published in 1904 by the University of Chicago for its Extension Division.

Morris's epic poem studied in night classes, his wallpapers and rugs gracing mansions on Prairie Avenue -- obviously he was well-known in Chicago, and more needs to be written on his influence there. In a future Newsletter I shall return to this topic, and I would be very pleased to receive more precise information or ideas anyone has on Morris and Chicago.

Hartley Spatt has informed me that as a result of an ambiguous statement in the last Newsletter he has been receiving dues payments. Dues, all renewal payments, should be sent instead to Leo Young in England. Hartley Spatt is to receive only payments for new memberships.



Yours in fellowship,

Gary L. Aho
Gary L. Aho, for the
Governing Committee

Department of English
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003

Gore, London SW7. For those who cannot be there, look out for an account of the trip in the next Newsletter.

Dorothy Coles

Garden Party at Standen, Saturday 20 September, 11.00 a.m. By kind permission of the National Trust, we are arranging a Garden Party this year in the grounds of Standen, Philip Webb's beautiful house (1892) at East Grinstead, Sussex. As there is no public transport from East Grinstead Station, the train from London arriving at 10.35 a.m. will be met by members' cars offering transport to Standen. A tour of the house will be led by our member, Sheila Kirk, a leading authority on the work of Philip Webb. Tickets for admission and lunch £5 from Judy Marsden at the Society's headquarters (SAE). National Trust members should bring their membership cards in order to get a rebate on their tickets. This should be a most interesting and attractive event, and is strongly recommended.

John Dreyfus. 'Morris and the Printed Book', Art Workers' Guild, 6 Queen Square, London WC1, Wednesday 8 October, 6.30 p.m. John Dreyfus, the distinguished typographer and historian of the book will deliver this year's Kelmscott Lecture at the Art Workers' Guild. Admission £2 including coffee and biscuits. There will also be a buffet supper at the Guild after the lecture; tickets £4.50 from Judy Marsden at the Society's headquarters (SAE).

'Love is Enough', Lecture Theatre, Royal College of Art, Kensington Gore, London SW7, Saturday 15 November, 2.30 p.m. A produced reading and study session on Morris's poetic masque which has not had the attention it deserves. Tickets £2 from Judy Marsden at the Society's headquarters (SAE). We should still like to hear from members willing to help with the reading; names to Dorothy Coles, please.

4. OTHER EVENTS

William Morris Woven Textiles, an Exhibition at the William Morris Gallery, 21 June - 5 October 1986. "Today William Morris is popularly remembered for his chintz and wallpaper designs, yet he considered woven fabrics one of the most noble kinds of textile, often preferable to wallpaper as a wall covering. The exhibition illustrates the success of his woven textiles as furnishing fabrics, with photographs of contemporary interiors, among them commissions for interior designs executed by Morris, and his own rooms at Kelmscott House." The Gallery is open Tuesday-Saturday 10-1 and 2-5; first Sunday of each month 10-12 and 2-5.

There will be two lectures in connection with the Exhibition, commencing at 7.00 p.m., doors open 6.30, admission free:

Morris & Co. Woven Textiles, Wednesday 10 September. Lecturer, Linda Parry, from the Department of Textiles at the V & A, and author of 'William Morris Textiles'.

Hand-Loom Jacquard Weaving Today, Thursday 25 September. Lecturer, Richard John Humphries, from Humphries Weaving Co.

5. PROGRAMME REPORT

'The Stones of Wiltshire', 18-20 April. To the disappointment of all involved, and particularly of Ray Watkinson who had put in so much work,

the proposed study week-end at Marlborough College unaccountably failed to attract sufficient support, and had to be cancelled. Apologies to the insufficient number who applied.

Birthday Party, Houses of Parliament, 22 March. Black Rod's rigid restrictions on the size of groups touring the House meant that many applicants had to be refused tickets, but the lucky ones gathered in a pleasant, panelled room overlooking the river, whence parties set out at intervals through richly decorated corridors. In the House of Lords we noted murals depicting, at one end allegorical figures of Religion etc., at the other episodes prompted by the same virtues. From there a wide and lofty corridor, lined with statues of statesmen, brought us to the Robing Room, where Hilary Morgan explained to each group the history and meanings of the murals. Barry's designs, in the Perpendicular style, won the competition for new Parliament buildings after an extensive fire in 1834. Ten years later, with rebuilding well under way another competition was held for mural decorations, with requirements that designs should depict and allegorise the functions of government, and be related to British History. William Dyce won, receiving the commission in 1847. Other artists, notably Maclise carried out some of the frescoes, but Dyce painted a number himself and was in charge. The Robing Room, depicting episodes in the Arthurian legend under such titles as 'Chivalry: Sir Lancelot spares King Arthur unhorsed', was entirely the work of Dyce. But work is slow and anxious when painting must be carried out on damp, freshly-applied plaster in pigments using no medium, and with no corrections possible, and he had completed only 4 of the projected 6 paintings when he died in 1864. Portraits of Victoria and Albert fill the spaces at one end of the room. The project and some of the problems are reminiscent of the Pre-Raphaelite painters at work on the Oxford Union murals at the same time, though very different in design. From the Robing Room we went to Westminster Hall, rebuilt in 1383 after a fire, and spanned by Herland's wonderful wooden roof. Here John Kay explained the functions of king posts, collars and hammerbeams in the construction, so that the carved angels seemingly flying towards each across the breadth of the hall are the terminals of essential parts of the structure, which help bear the weight of hundreds of tons of wood, stone and slate composing the roof. Below the hall we visited the crypt, a small, richly-decorated medieval chapel. When all groups had re-assembled tea was served and the birthday marked by cutting of a handsome and delicious cake, shaped as 'W.M.' with Morris's triple-flowered plant and his motto 'If I can' in decorative icing. In his speech before cutting the cake Eric Heffer M.P. welcomed the Society and quoted from a speech made by William Morris in Liverpool in 1888, when he pointed out that peoples' lives are intolerable unless they are occupied with creative work; that Art, and Life and Work should be synonymous, and this state can only be achieved under socialism; so make socialists! We are very grateful to Eric and Mrs. Heffer for inviting us to the House and giving so much time to showing it to us, the catering staff there, to John Kay and everyone concerned with the arrangements, and to Julia Stapleton for the splendid cake.

Dorothy Coles

The Craft Study Centre, Bath, 27 May. Robin Tanner's lecture was a part of the Bath Festival, and the lovely city was in festive garb as we made our way to the Holburne Museum. After lunch there we joined a capacity

audience of over 100. Now 82 but as vigorous as ever, Robin Tanner described himself as an ecological socialist; a lifelong Quaker early convinced of the futility of war; a teacher and an artist. Morris has long been one of his mentors and he spoke with indignation of the many trends which would have outraged him today - pollution and acid rain, the change from traditional agriculture to agro-business, the irony of an International Year of Peace marked by increasing numbers of nuclear weapons and nuclear submarines. Were he alive today Morris would undoubtedly be supporting CND, Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth and the Woodland Trust. He then outlined Morris's life and the many aspects of his work, emphasising always the happiness he found in work and his belief that life could become simple, uncluttered, courageous and full of hope. History will never overtake Morris but we must learn the socialist lessons he taught, because commercial competition is war and the pursuit of one's own advantage at the cost of someone else's loss. Morris did not win his fight; we must continue it. Robin had brought with him many delightful examples of Morris's work: a reproduction of the Kelmscott Chaucer, pieces of Blackthorn wallpaper and Strawberry Thief cotton; his wife Heather modelled for us a blouse made of fine indigo-dyed woollen cloth and exquisitely embroidered by May Morris, while on a stand was a dress of Powdered cotton print with the bill dated 1936. He invited us to examine all these items and share his pleasure in their beauty and craftsmanship. After this Barley Roscoe, who is in charge of the Crafts Study Centre told the Society group about the foundation and aims of the Centre and showed us some of the collection. Here again Robin Tanner seemed present in all things, having been among those who saw the need for an archive and collection of 20th century British crafts and laboured to set it up. He is now one of the Trustees and his practical involvement was shown in an enormous volume showing pieces of hand-printed textiles by Phyllis Barron and Dorothy Larcher, each sample named and detailed with types of yarn and dyes used in Robin's beautiful script. In his beliefs and works he is an inspiration.

Dorothy Coles

Midsummer at Kelmscott Manor, Saturday 21 June. The summer solstice opened with a cover of cloud for our biennial visit to Kelmscott, but as the morning wore on and members began to arrive this slowly burned off, leaving us with a cloudless summer's day tempered by a fresh breeze. A record number of over ninety members and friends had come by road on this occasion, and after a picnic lunch, the party set off for Great Coxwell Barn, the 13th century tithe barn which Mackail tells us was always upheld by Morris as one of the finest buildings in England or in the world, "unapproachable in its dignity, as beautiful as a cathedral, yet with no ostentation." After inspecting this superb example of the functional art of the medieval mason, the party made its way to another of Morris's favourite buildings in the area, Inglesham Church. Writing to Georgie Burne-Jones after returning from Kelmscott to London, "this beastly congregation of smoke-dried swindlers and their slaves," Morris described Inglesham as "a lovely little building, about like Kelmscott in size and style, but handsomer and with more old things left in." To describe those old things, John Kay mounted the pulpit and read the entry from Pevsner's Wiltshire.

And so back to Kelmscott, where we sat on the grass in the sunshine around Helen White, a member of staff of the V & A, who provided us with a comprehensive introduction to the Manor and its significance for Morris before we broke up into small groups to take turns visiting the manor and the Church. Earlier visits to Kelmscott have left one with the satisfied feeling that the whole village is being handled sympathetically. This

time there was some disquiet at the rough workmanship displayed in the repairs to the stone walling along the fields opposite the manor. But much worse was to follow. Beyond Manor Farm, and again along a field on the other side of the road, was the appalling spectacle of the mangled stumps of around two dozen willow trees lining a ditch. What, one wonders was their offence? Astonishingly, the fields in question are owned by the National Trust. It is difficult to imagine that such drastic action can be justified, but we must seek an explanation before deciding that the Thames Conservancy, which so roused Morris's ire, has a worthy successor in the area. Indignation was somewhat soothed by supper and conversation in the evening sun to the accompaniment of a serenade on a flute played for us by Paul Bellisario before we took our departure. Kelmscott had again worked its charm, and we are grateful to Dick Dufty and Mrs. Wells for again making us so welcome.

Other Events

Peter McAllister writes from Llanfairfechan that he has given several talks on Morris and his social and political philosophy to the Conwy Constituency Labour Party, its branch of the Young Socialists, and to the Society of Labour Students at the University College, North Wales. The talks were well received and generated considerable interest.

6. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 10 MAY 1986

This year's Annual General Meeting was held on a Saturday afternoon to make it easier for members outside London to attend. The change was successful, and several members from the provinces were present. Introducing the Annual Report, the Hon. Secretary said that although the verdict on Kelmscott House had finally gone against us, the Society had every reason to be proud of its principled struggle against the privatisation of the House, and for its preservation as a Morris Centre. In all other respects, 1985 had been a very successful year, and membership worldwide had now exceeded 1500 for the first time. We were greatly indebted to John Kay and the Programme Sub-Committee for another excellent series of events, details of which had been distributed in a printed programme at the beginning of the year for the first time. After the adoption of the Hon. Treasurer's Accounts for 1985, which are appended to this Newsletter, the Officers and Committee members for 1986/87 were elected unanimously as follows:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Hans Brill (Chairperson) | Nicholas Friend |
| Richard Smith (Hon. Secretary) | Norah Gillow |
| Lionel Young (Hon. Treasurer) | Jackie Kennedy-Davies |
| John Kay (Hon. Programme Secretary) | Judy Marsden |
| Daphne Jennings (Hon. Membership Secretary) | Linda Parry |
| Ray Watkinson (Hon. Editor) | Peter Preston |
| Dorothy Coles | Harold Smith |
| Peter Faulkner | Ian Tod |

Ray Watkinson will bring out the next issue of The Journal, after which Peter Faulkner will take over as Hon. Editor.

The Chairperson thanked the retiring Committee members, Anthony Eyre, Feriha Grant and Barbara Morris, and also Elsie Gollan, retiring as Secretary to the Committee, for all their hard work.