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## William Morris Society in the United States Newsletter January 2000

### REPORT ON 1999 ACTIVITIES

The last year of the century (yes, we know, the millennium doesn't in fact begin until 2001) saw the William Morris Society in the United States participate in what was, up to now, our most public and ambitious event. "[The Arts of the British 1890s](#)" conference, held 10&dash;12 September in Washington, DC was&dash;as one of the organizers put it&dash;quite a "kick." Organized by the Society in collaboration with the Freer Gallery of Art, the Georgetown University Department of English, and the National Gallery of Art, in association with the Eighteen Nineties Society, the weekend of talks and exhibitions exceeded all expectations. Merlin Holland, Oscar Wilde's grandson, gave a splendid keynote address, beautifully delivered (he brought some in the audience to tears, and others to say, "It was just like having Oscar Wilde himself!"). He was also an enormous draw, so much so that the Freer Gallery had to set up another room with closed-circuit television for the overflow audience and had to turn people away. (The Freer even managed a last-minute champagne reception when it realized Holland's lecture was going to be hugely successful.). More than a hundred came to hear the papers delivered at Georgetown the next day, and over 250 attended Linda Zatlin's Sunday lecture on Beardsley at the National Gallery of Art. The two related exhibitions, "Useful & Beautiful: British Books of the 1890s" and "British Prints of the 1890s," elicited enthusiasm from those who tracked them down in the hidden recesses of the National Gallery of Art and at Georgetown University's Lauinger Library. Overall we had an impressive turnout, with people coming from as far away as Boston and California to hear and see what was offered. Many who attended&dash;including our distinguished and lively speakers&dash;said that this was one of the best conferences ever, rather a compliment. Part of the success of "The Arts of the British 1890s" was due to good publicity. The conference garnered a paragraph in the Arts section of the New York Times; the Washington Times published a full-page interview with Merlin Holland; there were multiple listings on the web site of the Washington Post and in the Post's weekly Book World; it was featured in the Washington Blade and in the City Paper; and, perhaps most remarkable of all, Zatlin's lecture was announced in the weekend "Funformation" feature broadcast on the local "all-news" radio station. Such success was due to the enormous efforts of members and the staffs of the participating institutions. Special thanks go to Margaret D. Stetz, associate professor of English and Women's Studies at Georgetown University (co-organizer of the conference and co-curator of the "Useful & Beautiful" exhibition); to Father Joseph Haller, S.J., of Georgetown (who curated the print show); to Neal Turtell, executive librarian at the National Gallery of Art; to Michael Wilpers, of the Freer Gallery's education department; and last, but not least, to Josephine Sherfy, whose assistance with PR and other matters important and mundane went beyond the call of duty.

Of the Society's events at the Modern Language Association annual convention in Chicago (27&dash;30 December) it is impossible to report, because I am writing this newsletter prior to the event. For the record, here is what is supposed to have happened: The Society sponsored two panels of papers. "William Morris at the Turns of the Centuries," scheduled for Wednesday evening, 29 December and chaired by Hartley Spatt (Maritime College-SUNY) comprised the following speakers and papers: Cynthia Drake (Georgetown University), "A Late 20th Century Reading of a Late 19th Century Revolutionary"; Norman Kelvin (City College, CUNY, and Graduate Center, CUNY), "H.D.'s 'White Rose and the Red': Morris as Hero, the Hero as Palimpsest"; and Andrew John Miller (Whitman College), "Millennial Beauty: Yeats, Morris, and the Politics of Perfection." The morning of the following day, Chicago "local" Sandi Wisenberg (Northwestern University) moderated "The Pre-Raphaelites in Other Media" with Mary W. Blanchard (Rutgers Institute for Historical Analysis), "Pre-Raphaelites in Other Media: American Aesthetic Dress"; Alicia Faxon (Simmons College, emeritus), "D.G. Rossetti and the

Art of Elocution: Sister Helen as a Primer for Artistic Recitations"; Thomas J. Tobin (Duquesne University), "Egypt and Pre-Raphaelite Furniture"; and Sharon Aronofsky Weltman (Louisiana State University), "Giving Voice to Modern Painters: Gender Performance in the Ruskin Opera." The Society also arranged for a special visit to the Glessner House, one of the gems of Chicago, indeed, of American 19th century architecture. Designed by H.H. Richardson in the 1880s, this Romanesque dwelling is furnished with Aesthetic Movement and Arts and Crafts furniture and decorative arts including, prominently, the work of Morris and Co. After the tour, Sandi Wisenberg (now wearing her host hat) cordially invited us to come to her home for a special gathering.

**The William Morris Home Page** continued to flourish during 1999. Although not updated as frequently as one might wish, the site now includes hundreds of pictures, texts, and links, along with calendars of events of Morris/Pre-Raphaelite/Arts and Crafts/Victorian interest in the U.S., the U.K., and Canada. According to the primitive counter attached to the opening screen, about 120 to 150 people "visit" each day, a quite respectable number for a specialized website which lacks the advertising muscle and appeal of, say, Amazon.com or Disney.com. The Morris Home Page will, incidentally, be featured in a new book, *Free Stuff for Collectors on the Internet*, by Judy Helm and Gloria Hansen (C & T Publishing), which should bring additional "traffic" to the site and, potentially, new members for the Society.

Speaking of membership, thanks to the conference and to the Home Page our roll has increased—modestly. About 440 individuals now belong, together with 35 libraries and institutions. This is an increase of about 40—but still represents a fall-off from the all-time high of over nearly 700 achieved during the centenary year 1996 (and before a large number of members were dropped for nonpayment of dues). Do please tell friends and colleagues about the William Morris Society. Pass on the word that the dues, which bring two issues of the *Journal* and four *Newsletters*, also the occasional free meeting, remain at \$20.00, truly a great bargain in comparison with other groups which publish and organize less and charge more.

#### PLANS FOR 2000 (i): A LECTURE

The first Society event for 2000 is a lecture by one distinguished Morrisian in honor of another distinguished Morrisian (no names circulated in public yet, but let us just say that the proposed speaker has an interest in a particular section of London and that the honoree is universally known for his multi-volume edition). The time Spring, the place New York, the location (probably) the Pierpont Morgan Library. Details will be placed on the William Morris Home Page and announced in an invitation sent to all U.S. members.

#### PLANS FOR 2000 (ii): THE MLA ANNUAL CONVENTION, WASHINGTON, DC

This year's Modern Language Association annual convention is scheduled for Washington, DC over the customary period, 27-30 December. In a departure from previous practice, the Society will sponsor only one session of papers (see next section of *Newsletter* for the reason). The topic, "Victorian Writing/Victorian Art," can be interpreted to encompass Victorian writers who wrote art criticism or included "art" as a theme in their verse, drama, or fiction, also Victorian artists (and architects and designers) who wrote critically, theoretically, or imaginatively. William Morris is, of course, the primary figure who comes to mind here, but papers dealing with John Ruskin (remember, 2000 marks the centenary of his death), Walter Pater, various Rossettis, A.W.N. Pugin, Mary Haweis, Emilia Dilke, Walter Crane, William Burges, Arthur Mackmurdo, W.R. Lethaby, William Bell Scott, James McNeill Whistler, Julia Cartwright, Vernon Lee, and others who fit into these rubrics are also welcome.

Proposals go to Mark Samuels Lasner (address and e-mail at end of *Newsletter*) no later than 15 March. Participation by independent scholars and non-academics is especially desired, but please be aware that to take part in the convention and to be listed in the program speakers must be members of the Modern Language Association by 1 April unless not engaged in the teaching of literature or language. Papers are strictly limited to 15 minutes; as per MLA regulations, session chairs can stop those who go on too long.

#### PLANS FOR 2000 (iii): IMPORTANT BUSINESS MEETING AT THE MLA

In place of the second session of papers at the MLA the Society will hold an extraordinary special business meeting. The purpose of the meeting, which is open to all members, is to put the William Morris Society in the U.S. on a proper organizational basis as we enter the next century. This will be

done by ratifying a new set of by-laws and the simultaneous election of a Governing Committee. (People reading this in Britain, Canada, or elsewhere, may skip the following and go on to the next section of this Newsletter.)

Some background: As long-time members may dimly recall, the William Morris Society in the United States in 1983 adopted a set of by-laws. The Society did this in part to secure allied organization status with the Modern Language Association, status which, in turn, allows the Society to host events at the MLA annual convention. These by-laws provided—after a transition period—for a Governing Committee of four members, elected by the membership for four-year terms (starting on 24 March, Morris's birthday), and for a single officer, a Corresponding Secretary. It is clear from our records that while the membership approved the by-laws, no elections have taken place since the mid-1980s. During the last decade, the Society has been administered on an ad hoc basis by whoever served as Newsletter editor (later called president), first Gary Aho, then Mark Samuels Lasner, assisted by a Secretary-Treasurer, Hartley Spatt, and by a few others, some of whom served on the original Governing Committee.

In 1994 the Society applied for, and received, a renewal of allied organization status from the MLA. At the time, the MLA requested that we run the Society on a more formal basis and alter our by-laws to conform more closely with those of other affiliated groups. The next renewal occurs in 2001, so if we want to put a workable structure into place, one which will satisfy the MLA and, more important, ensure the future of the Society, the time to do so is now. This is also the appropriate moment for the current "president," Mark Samuels Lasner, to announce that he will be stepping down on 1 January 2001. His successor—if there is even to be the position of "president"—will be an elected member of the new Governing Committee, and his duties should probably be divided among several officers and/or members.

Under the old by-laws, proposed amendments to the by-laws are to be announced in the Newsletter and then approved by two-thirds of the membership within a month of the Newsletter's appearance. We propose to follow this procedure by publishing the new by-laws and a slate of candidates for the Governing Committee in a special issue of the Newsletter sent to members of the William Morris Society in the U.S. on 1 December 2000. Members will then vote for both approval of the by-laws and the election of the Governing Committee by whatever means they prefer—mail, fax, or e-mail—with the result tallied at the special business meeting to take place at the MLA convention.

What are needed now are suggestions for the by-laws and nominations for the Governing Committee. In making nominations (yes, you may nominate yourself), please keep in mind the following language found in the 1983 by-laws: "It shall be the purpose of the Society to encourage younger members holding untenured academic appointments or nonacademic appointments to stand for membership on the Governing Committee. Ideally, the Committee should also represent something of the range of Morris' social, artistic and literary interest." Please help with ideas and names. The deadline for suggestions and nominations is 1 November, one month prior to the mailing of the special Newsletter. (Copies of the 1983 by-laws are available from Mark Samuels Lasner.)

"THE HUNTINGTON TO BE HOME TO THE SANFORD AND HELEN BERGER COLLECTION OF WILLIAM MORRIS AND MORRIS & CO. MATERIALS"

So reads the headline on the press release just received from the Huntington Library. As most readers know, Sanford and Helen Berger have assembled, over the past 35 years, the most comprehensive Morris collection in private (or even public) hands, a collection which they have time and again made available to scholars and others interested in Morris and his works. In December 1991, the Society honored their achievement and devotion to Morris with a presentation and reception held at the Book Club of California in San Francisco. Now another California institution has, in essence, paid them an even greater tribute, by acquiring their collection en bloc. Sandy and Helen Berger, who (to use Churchill's phrase) "have much to be modest about," rightly believed that their books, manuscripts, textiles, designs for stained glass windows, stained glass windows themselves, and so much more (including the surviving Morris and Co. records) form a whole greater than the parts. They were looking for the right home and, rather surprisingly, the right home was not too far away. The Huntington, which already had a large group of Morris's literary and political manuscripts, excellent Kelmscott materials, and holdings in the work of Morris's contemporaries, the Pre-Raphaelites, saw the opportunity and,

atypical of such an institution, took decisive action in just a few short months. The happy result is that a large part of Morris's legacy, so carefully and lovingly gathered by the Bergers, will now be preserved for posterity. (One thing that is hard to imagine is how the Bergers will feel when their collection no longer fills every nook and cranny in their house. Sending the collection to San Marino will create "a major void," Sandy told a reporter from the Los Angeles Times. "I like to joke that I've already reserved a bed in the depression ward of the hospital. I expect it will be like having an amputation. But I'll recover.")

For the record, and for those who want to know more about the Bergers and their collection, here is the text&mdash;lightly modified&mdash;of the Huntington Library's announcement:

The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens is acquiring the Sanford and Helen Berger collection of William Morris, the British designer, artist, poet, illuminator, printer, multifaceted craftsman, and utopian socialist....

A preeminent figure in Victorian England, Morris is today considered one of the most influential designers, craftsmen, and printers in English history. The Berger collection, assembled by architects Sanford and Helen Berger, of Carmel, California, is the most extensive private collection of Morris in the United States and also contains the most comprehensive archive of Morris and Co. materials. It is rich in examples of embroidery, stained glass, textiles, drawings, and ceramics, and the library numbers over 2,000 volumes. The Bergers started their collection in 1965, according to Sanford Berger, "With the modest goal of acquiring one 'real' Kelmscott Press book, an idea stimulated by our having bought a used copy of the 1958 facsimile edition of the Kelmscott Chaucer." Their first purchase was a large quarto inscribed "to Edward Burne-Jones from W.M., June 30th 1895." Soon after they purchased another 52 volumes of the Kelmscott Press from a San Francisco bookseller and their collecting began in earnest. Over the past 34 years the couple have amassed many more books, in addition to fine examples of carpets, embroidery, stained glass, tapestry, woven and printed textiles, wallpaper, drawings, sketches, and ceramics from Morris's business enterprises&mdash;Morris and Co, (established as Morris, Marshall, Faulkner, & Co. in 1861), the Kelmscott Press, and autograph letters by Morris and his circle. One of the treasures of the collection is an 18-by-11-foot stained glass window containing 10 three-quarter-sized figures. Another is a collection of socialist pamphlets by Morris and other party members. "There was great interest in our collection from other institutions and private collectors," said Berger, "However, it was important to us to keep the collection whole and at an organization where it would be used by scholars. After the 1996&endash;97 exhibition of our collection at the Huntington, we knew it to be just such a place. Its own collections so complement ours that there was no doubt that this was where we most hoped the collection would find its final home." Berger continued, "This is the second time that the archive of Morris and Co. has been in jeopardy of being dispersed at auction. The first occasion was in 1969, when the then owner intended to empty her attic by auction. Only the persuasiveness of a London dealer saved it en bloc for scholarly use. This time it was the Huntington who rescued the archive intact." The acquisition of the collection by the Huntington was facilitated by John Windle Antiquarian Bookseller, San Francisco. The Ahmanson Foundation made the lead contribution, enabling the Huntington to move forward with the acquisition....

"The Bergers' rich collection of Morris materials will beautifully complement our holdings in both the British and the American Art Collections," said Edward Nygren, Director of the Huntington Art Collections. "As the father of the Arts and Crafts movement, Morris is the preeminent figure linking our holdings in British art of the Victorian era and the works by the Greene brothers in the American collection. We are thrilled that the Berger collection will add so much to the study of the Arts and Crafts movement on both continents." The Bergers' collection contains business records from Morris and Co. and full-size designs used by the company in creating tapestries and stained glass windows. The library includes books by Morris, books from the library of Morris and Co., and special dedication and proof copies of Kelmscott books showing Morris's genius as a typographer, illustrator, and graphic designer.

"From the Library's perspective, I am particularly excited by the prospect of getting the archive of Morris and Co., association copies of the Kelmscott books, and the vast holdings of secondary source books that make up the library portion of the collection," said David Zeidberg, Avery Director of the Library, "The Huntington will become the essential American center for the study of the Pre-Raphaelites and the Arts and Crafts movement in England and America, each driven by different social forces, but both arriving at the same desire to return to beauty in design, and to re-elevate form to an equal status with function or content. The Huntington is the logical final home for the Berger Collection." Henry Huntington had great interest in the book production of William Morris, acquired copies of all of

Morris's books, and purchased many of his manuscripts. The Huntington's collection is the largest holding of Morris's literary writings in autograph. Since Huntington's death, both the Library and Art Collections have added materials related to Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites, acquiring drawings, watercolors, letters, scrapbooks, and the binding designs of Cobden-Sanderson, Morris's friend and associate.

In addition to the exhibition at the Huntington, works from the Berger collection have been the focus of exhibitions at Stanford University, the Monterey Peninsula Art Museum, and the Bancroft Library and the University Art Museum, University of California, Berkeley. The Bergers lent thirty-three pieces to the 1996 Morris retrospective at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

According to Edward R. Bosley, Director of the Gamble House, "The Bergers' William Morris collection is indeed a rare treasure of visual and scholarly material. Nearly single-handedly, William Morris brought the Arts and Crafts movement from the realm of theory into practice during the second half of the nineteenth century. The Berger collection shows this progress better than any other collection outside of the William Morris Gallery in Walthamstow. Anyone with a serious interest in this period of art and design will make it a priority to consult this collection. Further, the public is increasingly interested in the Arts and Crafts movement and exhibitions that deal with various aspects of it. With the Greene and Greene exhibit and archives already in the Scott Gallery, the Berger collection will make the Huntington a primary locus worldwide for the study and appreciation of the highest forms of the Arts and Crafts movement." Margaretta M. Lovell, Associate Professor of the History of Art at the University of California, Berkeley, who curated the Huntington's exhibition drawn from the Berger collection in 1996<sup>97</sup>, responded to the news by saying, "I'm absolutely delighted that these important drawings, books, fabrics, stained glass windows, and other materials so carefully and lovingly assembled by Helen and Sandy Berger are going to stay in California and be available to scholars and museum visitors at the Huntington, the most appropriate institution in the country for this collection. These two insightful people—both trained in design under Gropius at Harvard—have spent years tracking down and studying the work of Morris and his associates. They have been unusually generous in sharing their findings with scholars, and now that knowledge and generosity will expand to an even larger community. The idealism of the Arts and Crafts movement, the roots of its forms and color in nature, and the extraordinary quality of its design have struck resonant chords in California for a century. Having these materials available at the Huntington will enrich our future while they illuminate the past."

#### FELLOWSHIP

For 2000 the William Morris Society in the United States has made two fellowship awards (the Committee found it hard to decide and chose to split the annual \$1,000 grant evenly):

Peter Hoffenberg, Assistant Professor of History, University of Hawaii: \$500 to help defray airfare and other expenses for the upcoming "Morris 2000" conference in Toronto, where he will deliver a paper, "Socialist? Orientalist? Imperialist? William Morris and the 'Eastern' Question of Indian Art."

April Oettinger, Ph.D. candidate in art history, University of Virginia: \$500 for research on the impact of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499) on Morris and Burne-Jones, specifically to underwrite travel to the Houghton Library, Harvard University, to examine Morris's own copy of the book.

A reminder: the Society's fellowships offer support (up to \$1,000 per year) for projects on the life and work of William Morris. Grants are made to individuals, who must be citizens of the United States or permanent residents. Projects may deal with any aspect—biographical, literary, historical, social, artistic, political, typographical—relating to Morris, and may be scholarly or creative in nature. Younger members of the Society and those at the beginning of their careers are encouraged to apply. Applicants are asked to submit a resumé and a one-page proposal (to the address at the end of this Newsletter); two letters of recommendation should be sent separately. The deadline is 1 December 2000 for awards tenable in the year 2001. Please note that materials sent via e-mail are not acceptable.

#### RUSKIN 2000

It used to be that centenaries of births were celebrated, but never centenaries of deaths. Not so anymore. Just think of D.G. Rossetti in 1982, Morris in 1996, or Beardsley in 1998. Now comes 2000 and, yes,

Wilde, but also—John Ruskin. Ruskin? It is hard to imagine that he died in 1900, for he seems so completely the Victorian (but, one forgets, the Victorian age did not end until 1901, when the Queen herself departed). The curious thing about all this is that Ruskin is apparently to receive more attention than Rossetti, Morris, Beardsley, and Wilde combined. A "Ruskin Programme" leaflet lists no fewer than six exhibitions in the U. K. amid a long roster of conferences and talks in London, Cambridge, Leicester, Coniston, Sheffield, Oxford, Manchester, and elsewhere. And there is a major exhibition in Tokyo, another in France, and a conference in Italy.

So far, three exhibitions have been announced for the U.S. Of these, we have the most details regarding "Celebrating John Ruskin, 1810–1900," at the **Grolier Club**, New York, from 20 February through 29 April. Drawn from two of the world's most significant Ruskin collections, those of Harvard University's Houghton Library and of private collector R. Dyke Benjamin, the Grolier exhibition aims to underscore Ruskin's creative genius, humanity, and lasting contributions to social and cultural evolution. A highlight will be material illustrating Ruskin's friendships with two Americans, the artist Francesca Alexander (who soothed the aging Ruskin's anguished spirit through her beautiful drawings and sensitive letters) and the Harvard professor and critic, Charles Eliot Norton. The artworks displayed will include several Ruskin drawings, Ruskin's copies after Cruikshank, and a self-portrait, and Lewis Carroll's 1875 photograph of Ruskin. Other important items to be exhibited are an autograph notebook containing Ruskin's Greek exercises; Ruskin's and Norton's annotated copies of *Modern Painters*; books from Ruskin's library (one signed by J.M.W. Turner); a notebook of Francesca Alexander's drawings; and Norton's copy of Ruskin's last will and testament.

Many of the books will be enhanced by original woodblocks for illustrations of Ruskin's books, letters of instruction to his publisher, manuscript materials, prints and plates. An accompanying catalogue, written by R. Dyke Benjamin and Peter Accardo, and containing restrikes of selected original woodblocks and copper plates by the designer, Jerry Kelly, will be available through The Veatchs Arts of the Book, P.O. Box 328, Northampton, MA 01060; Tel. (413) 584-1867, fax (413) 584-2751, [Veatchs@veatchs.com](mailto:Veatchs@veatchs.com).

"Ruskin: Past: Present: Future" is the curious title for the display of Ruskin's works from the Yale Center for British Art and other collections at Yale University. The dates are 20 January to 27 February, and there is a symposium scheduled for 22 January. Contact: Gillian Forrester, Yale Center for British Art, 1080 Chapel Street, Box 208280, New Haven, CT 06520; Tel. (203) 432-2842, fax (203) 432-0613, [gillian.forrester@yale.edu](mailto:gillian.forrester@yale.edu).

The Pierpont Morgan Library will also have a major Ruskin exhibition, September 2000 to January 2001. This will include the autograph manuscripts of *Modern Painters* and *The Stones of Venice*, and selections from the large mass of Ruskin correspondence in the PML collection. Contact: Robert Parks, Pierpont Morgan Library, 29 East 36th Street, New York, NY 10016; Tel. (212) 685-0008, fax (212) 685-4740, [rparks@morganlibrary.org](mailto:rparks@morganlibrary.org).

#### MORE EXHIBITONS OF NOTE

Those who go to the Grolier for Ruskin may wish to go uptown to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where "A Century of Design, Part I: 1900–1925" is on until 26 March. This is the first in a four-part series of exhibitions surveying design in the 20th century through the presentation of significant objects from the Met's collection. No Morris or Ruskin, of course, given the start-off date of 1900, but plenty of items which show their philosophical influence—Arts and Crafts, Art Nouveau, and Art Deco—displaying furniture, metalwork, glass, ceramics, textiles, jewelry, and drawings that trace the evolution of design through the first quarter of the century. Contact: Tel. (212) 535-7710, [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org).

"The Lamps of Tiffany: Highlights from the Egon and Hildegard Neustadt Collection" at the Delaware Art Museum (till 5 March) offers a chance to see the legendary beauty and craftsmanship long associated with Tiffany glass in this exhibition from the Neustadt Museum of Tiffany Art in New York City. The incomparable achievements of Tiffany Studios can be explored through 43 examples: desk, table, and floor lamps as well as chandeliers and two leaded glass windows. Contact: Tel. (302) 571-9590, [www.delart.mus.de.us](http://www.delart.mus.de.us).

"The Tile Club and the Aesthetic Movement in America (1877–1887)" is also worth seeing, if you can catch it at one of its three venues along the East Coast. Organized by the Museums of Stony Brook,

Stony Brook, NY (on view there until 23 January) this exhibition studies the contributions of this little-known fraternity of major American arts personalities to the development of American decorative and fine art during the decade of their association. A group of 31 notable New York painters, sculptors, and architects whose ranks included Winslow Homer, William Merritt Chase, J. Alden Weir, John Henry Twachtman, Elihu Vedder, Edwin Austin Abbey, Arthur Burdett Frost, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, and Stanford White, the Tile Club met together between 1877 and 1887. The club was formed for purpose of camaraderie, painting on ceramic tiles and traveling together on group excursions and sketching trips. They banded together to promote, in America, issues and concepts about aesthetics and the fine and decorative arts that were prevalent within the British Aesthetic Movement. But the club also championed American art in general and did much to popularize plein air painting and the Impressionist style. The exhibition features over one hundred items including hand-painted tiles, illustrations and related works based on the club's summer trips, a selection of period portraits of the most active members, and paintings that were reproduced in *A Book of the Tile Club*, their final professional group endeavor. After Stony Brook, the show moves to the Lyman Allen Art Museum (New London, CT) and The Frick Museum of Art (Pittsburgh, PA). Contact: Tel. (516) 751-0066, [www.museumsatstonybrook.org](http://www.museumsatstonybrook.org).

- There is a reason to go to Miami. At least until 1 August. The Wolfsonian has put up a major exhibition, entirely from its own holdings, of just the items you want to see. "Leading 'The Simple Life': The Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain, 1880&endash;1910" has heaps of objects by William Morris and his associates, contemporaries, and followers (Ashbee, Lethaby, Liberty's, etc.). Lectures and related programs are mentioned in the Wolfsonian's calendar but not on its (inactive?) website. Contact: The Wolfsonian, Florida International University, 1001 Washington Avenue, Miami, FL 33139; Tel. (305) 531-1001, [www.fiu.edu/~wolfson](http://www.fiu.edu/~wolfson).

#### ADVANCE NOTICE: ARDEN AND VICTORIANS AT DELAWARE

The Delaware Art Museum, not content to rest on its laurels with Tiffany, has two other interesting exhibitions in store for later this year. "Centennial Celebration of Arden: Delaware's Arts and Crafts Community," 22 June&endash;4 September, will be the first devoted to the Arts and Crafts community of Arden, Delaware. The show traces Arden's history from its founding in 1900 to the 1935 death of its visionary leader, Frank Stephens. An advocate of the single-tax and much influenced by the ideas of William Morris and John Ruskin, Stephens started a deliberately "artistic" village in which the residents produced art, crafts, literary, musical, and theatrical works for the community and to market to a broad audience. Included in the show are examples of the painting, sculpture, ceramics, prints, and drawings, plus metal, furniture, textiles, stained glass, and book arts created in Arden.

"The Defining Moment: Victorian Narrative Paintings from the Forbes Magazine Collection," which follows (6 October 2000&endash;3 January 2001), consists of fifty paintings from the Forbes Magazine collection, assembled by Christopher Forbes in the landmark Old Battersea House, London. These pictures, many of which were shown at the Royal Academy, explore the 19th century British predilection for narrative paintings. This skilled group of Victorian artists includes the Pre-Raphaelite John Everett Millais and Royal Academicians William Powell Frith and James J. Tissot.

And also still "on view" at the Delaware Art Museum, the Rossetti-Morris (or Morris-Rossetti, or just plain Morris) pair of Pre-Raphaelite decorated chairs.

#### "ELGANCE AND OPULENCE" IN CONNECTICUT

We missed this, and probably you did, too, but nonetheless it seems worth reporting that "Elegance and Opulence: Art of the Gilded Age" was at the Bruce Museum, Greenwich, CT, last fall. Publicly displayed for the first time were approximately seventy European paintings, drawings, works on paper, and sculpture from the 19th century drawn from a private collection in Greenwich that is considered one of the finest in the United States.

The show was, in direct contrast to most exhibitions of 19th century art, truly multinational in scope. It included works by Sargent, Bouguereau, Gérôme, Tissot, Leighton, Alma-Tadema, and D.G. Rossetti, among others. Several of the paintings were not just Gilded Age but had belonged to Gilded Age families of fortune, including *Le Salon du Peintre* (The Salon of the Painter) by Alfred Stevens, formerly owned by William H. Vanderbilt, and *Voltaire's Last Visit to Paris* by Maurice Leloir, from the collection of William B. Astor. Some idea of how large and all-encompassing "Elegance and Opulence: Art of the

"Gilded Age" was indicated by its organization into six sections, each dealing with a "theme that prevailed in the second half of the 19th century": "Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and Victorian Life," "The Antique," "Orientalism," "Allegory, Mythology and Religion," "Peasant Scenes and Country Life," and "Contemporary Fashion and Society." One friend who saw the exhibition says that all in all the show was a heady mix of beauty and kitsch, very much what many 19th century art exhibitions must have looked like. It made her wonder who owns this collection (the catalogue gives no clue), who would want it all, never mind afford it. One thing is certain: the show included one wonderful picture, Dante Gabriel Rossetti's watercolor, *The Wedding of St. George*, which dates from 1864 and is therefore not really "Gilded Age." For the illustrated catalogue contact: The Bruce Museum of Arts and Science, Museum Drive, Greenwich, CT 06830; Tel. (203) 869-0376, [www.brucemuseum.org](http://www.brucemuseum.org).

#### E. W. GODWIN AT BARD GRADUATE CENTER

The Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts in New York has organized "E. W. Godwin, Aesthetic Movement Architect and Designer," the first exhibition in this country to examine the prolific career of this leading figure in the Aesthetic Movement in Britain. It is curated by Susan Weber Soros, founder and director of the Bard Graduate Center, and is on through 27 February.

Edward William Godwin (1833–1886) was an architect, designer, interior decorator, antiquary, theatrical producer, and prominent writer and critic, who embodied the aesthetic conscience of Britain between 1865 and 1885. As one of Britain's leading design reformers of the 19th century, he was dedicated to addressing design issues related to the growing mass market for furniture, furnishings, and interior design. Godwin, an acknowledged leader of Britain's cultural elite, shared with his colleagues the desire to elevate the taste of the public. His reputation abroad led to commissions from clients ranging from James Goodwin in Hartford, CT, to Prince Esterhazy in Vienna, but his main work was carried out in Britain, where his clients represented a wide spectrum of society. It is no wonder that Oscar Wilde referred to him as "one of the most artistic spirits of this century in England." Godwin first came to prominence as an architect with his design of the Northampton Town Hall (1861–64), a project that encompassed all aspects of the interior and furnishings. Other major public and private commissions in the 1860s contributed to his national recognition. Godwin's belief in the principle of utility combined with beauty translated to a distinctive design aesthetic that combined Gothic, Oriental, and vernacular details and constructional elements. As early as the 1860s, Godwin was one of the first architects of his generation to incorporate Oriental design details and principles in his work. Always striving for simplicity and economy of means, he was by the 1870s designing radically simple and functional house-studios in Chelsea for such painters as James McNeill Whistler; these creations led to his recognition as a leader of the Aesthetic Movement. He also was one of the architects responsible for Bedford Park, designing the first houses for this planned community.

The exhibition consists of more than 150 examples of Godwin's drawings, designs for the decorative arts, and interiors, furniture, ceramics, tiles, metalwork, wallpaper, and textiles. The objects have been loaned from major museums in this country and abroad, including the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Musée d'Orsay, and the Metropolitan Museum. Major loans also are forthcoming from private collections in the United States, England, and Germany. The exhibition will be accompanied by a variety of public programs and an illustrated catalogue with essays by leading scholars of the Aesthetic Movement. Contact: Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, 18 West 86th St., New York, NY 10024; Tel. (212) 501-3000, [www.bgc.bard.edu](http://www.bgc.bard.edu).

#### FACING WEST: THE ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT IN AMERICA

Last year's Arts and Crafts conference at New York University was so successful that the organizers have decided to hold another one, this time on the West Coast. "Facing West: The Arts and Crafts Movement in America" will take place in Pasadena, CA, from Wednesday, 14 June, to Saturday, 17 June. The focus is on the "regionalism" of the Arts and Crafts movement as it took hold in Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and other American locales. Although these regional expressions have been the focus of important publications and exhibitions, a comparative approach to the similarities, differences, and interrelationships among the regions has not previously been undertaken. Seeking to address these issues, this conference considers the movement's progression from east to west, exploring and comparing works produced in various regional centers, covering architecture and interiors, furniture, ceramics, metalwork, photography, and block prints. Holding the conference in Pasadena provides a unique opportunity for participants to see firsthand some of the most

important arts and architecture of the Arts and Crafts produced in California, the movement's final outgrowth in America.

Formal sessions will be complemented by receptions, walking tours, visits to museums (such as the Huntington Library and Gardens), book signings, special events at the Blacker House and the Gamble House (both designed by Greene and Greene), and a visit to the furniture studio of master craftsman, James Ipekjian. Among the speakers are Dianne Ayres (author of a forthcoming study on Arts and Crafts textiles), Susan Baizerman (Oakland Museum), Edward Bosley (Gamble House), Beverly Brandt (University of Arizona), W. Scott Braznell (independent scholar and specialist in modern American design), David M. Cathers (independent scholar and specialist in the furniture of the Arts and Crafts movement), Cheryl Robertson (Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities), Kenneth Trapp (Renwick Gallery, Smithsonian Institution), Richard Guy Wilson (University of Virginia), and Robert Winter (independent scholar and author). The conference directors are Lisa Koenigsberg, director, Programs in the Arts, NYU School of Continuing and Professional Studies, and Bruce Smith, author of works on Greene and Greene and the Arts and Crafts movement and founder, The Arts and Crafts Press. The fee for the conference is \$375.00, and there is a \$20.00 registration fee. For additional information contact: Programs in the Arts, New York University School of Continuing and Professional Studies, 48 Cooper Square, Room 108, New York, New York 10003; Tel: (212) 998-7130, fax: (212) 995-4293.

### THREE MORE CONFERENCES

The 24th Annual Meeting of the Midwest Victorian Studies Association will be held 31 March to 2 April at the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. The planners of MVSA 2000 have once again selected a general theme, "Victorian Realities/Victorian Dreams," a title chosen to allude to a special feature of the conference, a centenary performance of Elgar's oratorio, *The Dream of Gerontius*, by University of Illinois musicians. Inquiries about this meeting or MVSA membership should be directed to: Robert Koeppe, MVSA Executive Secretary, English Department, Illinois College, Jacksonville, IL 62650; rkoeppe@hilltop.ic.edu, www2.ic.edu/mvsa.

"Victorian Breakdowns" is the theme of the 2000 Annual Meeting of the Northeast Victorian Studies Association, 14&ndash;16 April, at CUNY Graduate School, New York, NY. At its 26th annual conference, NVSA will consider the crucial mental and institutional breakings-down of reality by which the Victorians organized their world, and the many forms of malfunctioning that may have forced or encouraged them to rethink their paradigms. Contact: Robert Jacklosky, Department of English, College of Mount Saint Vincent, 6301 Riverdale Avenue, Riverdale, NY 10471; Tel. (718) 405-3301, fax (attn: Robert Jacklosky) (718) 405-3747, rjacklos@cmsv.edu. Visit the NVSA website at: <http://fmc.utm.edu/nvsa>.

This year's Nineteenth Century Studies Association annual conference, titled "Visions, Dreams, and Nightmares," will be held at Marymount University, Arlington, VA (a suburb of Washington DC) on 23&ndash;25 March 2000. For further information, contact the Program Director: Professor Phyllis Floyd, Tel. (517) 353-9105, floyd@msu.edu.

### THE EARTHLY PARADISE: A NEW EDITION

A new scholarly edition of *The Earthly Paradise*, the first part of member Florence Boos's long-awaited new edition of Morris's collected poetry, is about to be published by Garland. This annotated critical edition is the first attempt to make Morris's 42,000 word verse sequence accessible to a modern audience.

The edition, in two volumes totalling ca. 1,500 pages, features a wealth of scholarly apparatus aimed at explaining Morris's text. All extant manuscripts are located and there are full collations of changes made in Morris's text during his lifetime. An introduction clarifies the work's publication history and literary and biographical content, its historical antecedents in traditional "earthly paradise" narratives, and Morris's decision to cast it as a seasonal cycle of monthly "classical" and "medieval" tales. Morris's famous opening Prologue records the struggles of 12 Scandinavian seafarers who have fled the Bubonic Plague to a landfall in 14th-century Greece, and he arranged the 24 monthly tales to explore the collective memories of these wanderers and their choral audience of Greek elders. Additional headnotes comment on Morris's historicism, reflected in the extended manuscripts' many revisions of his classical, medieval, Germanic, Scandinavian, Arabic, and Persian sources. References are provided to relevant

aspects of art, history, and politics and to Morris's practical knowledge, passion for travel, and radical-democratic convictions which prompted him to explore areas of life not commonly associated with Victorian poetry. Further footnotes gloss allusions to bird and animal lore, the practices of ancient and medieval agriculture, and the details of Viking ships and medieval seafaring. Morris also wove many new imaginative details into his redactions of these legends, and the headnotes assess whether he followed his sources, drew on roughly analogous characters encountered elsewhere, or completely reinvented familiar characters. They also comment on Morris's deeper authorial decisions—;to portray women more favorably, for example; or focus on particular aspects of the Bubonic Plague; or insert pointed glosses of "heroic" events by wary peasant bystanders—and examine them in the light of Morris's views on art, history, politics, and human relations.

Ample illustrations (Morris and Burne-Jones projected an elaborate illustrated version) and Kelmscott Press initials, finally, provide a sense of *The Earthly Paradise's* original appearance and design. The edition has one overriding aim: to encourage the reader to explore the text and texture of one of the most beautiful verbal tapestries any English poet ever wrought.

With a price of \$250, few individuals are likely to purchase this new edition of *The Earthly Paradise*. But we encourage you to ask your local library—;university or public—;to take the plunge and acquire this important and welcome addition to Morris literature. Details: ISBN 0 8153 2104 X, Garland stock no. H1939. Orders for North America go to: Garland Publishing c/o Taylor & Francis, Inc., 47 Runway Road, Levittown, PA 19057; Tel. (215) 269-0400 or (800) 821-8312, fax (215) 269-0363, [bkorders@taylorandfrancis.com](mailto:bkorders@taylorandfrancis.com). In the U.K. contact: ITPS Ltd., Cheriton House, North Way, Andover, Hampshire SP10 5BE; Tel. 1264-343-071, fax 1264-343-005, [book.orders@tandf.co.uk](mailto:book.orders@tandf.co.uk). The Taylor and Francis website address is: [www.taylorandfrancis.com](http://www.taylorandfrancis.com).

#### THE STORY OF THE UNKNOWN CHURCH

The Hill Press, known for its fine letterpress printing, wishes to announce its next book, *The Story of the Unknown Church*. Written by William Morris as a young adult, this story (first published in *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* in 1856) describes a love triangle through the eyes of a stonemason. It evokes the most wonderfully colorful story of a place and its people, now obliterated by time.

This handsome new edition is, like many of Morris's own enterprises, a collaborative venture. Theo Rehak, typefounder, scholar, and life member of the William Morris Society, has written the introduction. Simon Brett, the noted British wood engraver, is responsible for the frontispiece and for a historiated initial at the text opening. The title-page lettering is the work of Sheila Waters, English-born and residing in the U.S. since 1969, one of the leading calligraphers of our time. To be set in 16 point on 36 point Cloister Old Style No. 2 [Morris might not have approved of the typeface or the leading—;Ed.], the book will be decorated with touches of vermilion and gold leaf. The printing will be done on an 1865 Albion demi-royal hand press.

*The Story of the Unknown Church* is offered in two versions. Copies on paper (\$490) will be printed on dampened four-deckle edged paper handmade by Twinrocker specially for this title, bound in quarter leather with stamped design and patterned paper, and housed in a matching slipcase. Those in parchment will be printed on sheepskins prepared by William Cowley and Co.; the binding, by the Florentine Bookbindery in Chantilly, VA, is limp vellum, blind-stamped, with cloth ties, again enclosed in an appropriate slipcase. Due to the cost of materials, this version is available only by advance reservation; the cost is \$1,350. Inquiries: Stephen Heaver, Jr., The Hill Press, 500 Woodlawn Road, Baltimore, MD 21210; Tel. (410) 235-6144, [sgheaver@aol.com](mailto:sgheaver@aol.com).

#### MORE NEW BOOKS BY MEMBERS: THE 1890s

The Rivendale Press in the U.K. recently published two books on the British 1890s written by U.S. Society members:

*A Checklist of Bodley Head Books, 1889—;1894* by James G. Nelson. In 1971, Nelson, now Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Wisconsin, published the first of three books intended to form a history of British publishing in the 1890s. The inaugural work, *The Early Nineties: A View from the Bodley Head*, from Harvard University Press, met with acclaim from both the academic world and from the antiquarian book trade. Included in the volume was an appendix—;which has become a standard reference—;listing the books and periodicals issued by Elkin Mathews and

John Lane up until the dissolution of their partnership in 1894. Now updated, enlarged, and revised, this list is being issued as a separate volume entitled *A Checklist of Bodley Head Books, 1889-1894*. In making the checklist anew, the author has made use of recent studies, bibliographies, and exhibition catalogues along with archival sources and copies of the actual Bodley Head publications held by public and private collections in the U.S. and U.K. Bound in cloth with dust jacket, and containing reproductions of Bodley Head title-pages, *A Checklist of Bodley Head Books* comes in an ordinary edition, ISBN 0 953503 37 2 (£25/\$40) and in a special edition, ISBN 0 953503 36 4 (50 copies numbered and signed by the author, with additional illustration, £30/\$50).

*A Bibliography of Enoch Soames (1862&endash;1897)* by Mark Samuels Lasner, with an Afterword by Margaret D. Stetz. Enoch Soames, quintessential Decadent poet of the 1890s and an early Modernist, was born in 1862 in Preston, the son of an unsuccessful bookseller. Few facts of his youth are recorded, but by 1892 he moved to London, speedily entering the circle later associated with the famous *Yellow Book*. Henry Harland and Aubrey Beardsley were among his friends, as were William Rothenstein and Max Beerbohm. A "dim" personality, a religious conversion, and a fear of future neglect all led Soames to keep aloof from the major movements of the day and shun social life to concentrate on literature. In the few years remaining to him, he issued three remarkable volumes and kept a detailed diary. *Negations* (1893) was prefaced by the shocking announcement of his belief in "Catholic diabolism." This was followed, in 1894, by the extraordinary *Fungoids*, his magnum opus. Neither book brought fame or fortune in the climate following the arrest of Oscar Wilde and the dismissal of Beardsley from *The Yellow Book*. Soames mysteriously vanished after a visit to the British Museum in June 1897. This bibliography is the first to be devoted to the fascinating Enoch Soames&endash;now recognized as a key figure in the British fin de siècle, but about whom so little is known that it almost seems that he did not exist. It records Soames's writings and has a section devoted to secondary literature and an iconography. The four illustrations include the seldom-seen title-page of *Fungoids* and a Beerbohm caricature sketch. Margaret D. Stetz, associate professor of English and Women's Studies, Georgetown University, contributes an informative "After-word." Mark Samuels Lasner, president of the William Morris Society in the U.S., is the author of *The Yellow Book: A Checklist and Index*. Like Nelson's Checklist, the *Bibliography of Enoch Soames* is published in two varieties, an ordinary edition, ISBN 0 953503 34 8 (£20/ \$30) and a special edition, ISBN 0 953503 35 6 (50 copies signed by the author, in slipcase, £40/\$60).

Orders for both books go to: for the U.K.&endash;The Rivendale Press, Rivendale, Constables Croft, Arncott, nr. Bicester, Oxon OX6 0PG; Sales@rivendalepress.freemove.co.uk; for the U.S.&endash;Oak Knoll Books, 310 Delaware Street, New Castle, DE 19720; Tel. (800) 996-2556, fax (302) 328-7274, oakknoll@oakknoll.com.

#### FROM WILLIAM MORRIS TO SERGEANT PEPPER

*From William Morris to Sergeant Pepper: Studie in the Radical Domestic* is the somewhat unlikely title of a new book by member Peter Stansky. For almost fifty years, Peter Stansky, Frances and Charles Field Professor of History at Stanford and the author of numerous books and articles, many of them connected with William Morris, has devoted himself to studying the English world. This volume brings together into an outstanding collection his selected essays and reviews&endash;some not previously published&endash;on English society and culture from the late 19th century through the 1960s. There are six parts to the book: "Biography as History"; "William Morris"; "Bloomsbury"; "The 1930s and After"; "George Orwell"; "The Other": "The Jew"; and "Sergeant Pepper." Throughout, Stansky discusses the tension between the forces of change and the forces of tradition, focusing especially on the nature of change and the interplay between radicalism and domesticity. This highly readable collection of essays will appeal to anyone interested in English biography and English culture in the last 150 years. Distributed by The University of Washington Press for the Society for the Promotion of Science and Scholarship, *From William Morris to Sergeant Pepper* is published in cloth (ISBN 0 930664 20 5, \$49.50) and in paper (ISBN 0 930664 19 1, \$22.50). For further information and orders contact: University of Washington Press, Marketing Department, P.O. Box 50096, Seattle, WA 98145; Tel. (800) 441-4115, fax (800) 669-7993, foreign Tel. (206) 543-8870, foreign fax (206) 685-3460, uwpord@u.washington.edu.

OUTSIDE THE BUNGALOW

Those who live in bungalows, also those who are keen on the American Arts and Crafts movement, will welcome *Outside the Bungalow: America's Arts & Crafts Garden* by Paul Duchscherer and Valerie Easton. This follow-up volume to Duchscherer's *Inside the Bungalow: America's Arts and Crafts Interior* (again with photographs by Douglas Keister) shows the characteristic brick, tile, and wood, wide-porch exteriors of the bungalow style half-buried beneath wisteria vines, arbors, flowers, and foliage. The bungalows that the gardens surround range from the archetypal dark, timbered wood and stone to the rustic, grand, and even Southwestern, offering a visual feast of gardens to match. The authors emphasize not specific plants, but the architectural elements and style of such gardens: tiled fountains, pergolas, pathways, and the use of stone, timbers, and courtyards to tie house and garden together. Both text and photographs focus on details such as outdoor light fixtures, mailboxes, birdhouses, fences, and lattice as part of the characteristic Arts and Crafts aesthetic. A "Garden Portraits" chapter includes plans as well as illustrations of bungalow exteriors from Seattle to southern California, emphasizing that it is not the plants themselves but how they are grouped to emphasize the architecture and the landscaping that creates an Arts and Crafts garden. The chapter on potting sheds and tree houses, as well as the exuberant and colorful plantings throughout, go a long way toward explaining why people have been so captivated by "bungalowmania" for more than three decades. Published by Penguin USA in hardcover, ISBN 0 670883 55 7, \$32.95.

#### A SHOPPING GUIDE TO WILLIAM MORRIS

##### Past Times

(800) 621-5020

Morris rose lap tray, #7932, \$39.95. · Morris silver scarf ring, #1765, \$29.95. · Morris trellis wool shawl, #6470, \$79.50. · Kelmscott handbag, leather, #7292, \$55. · Kelmscott bed cover (inspired by May Morris design), #1383, \$199. · William Morris chainstitch runner, rug, #1270, \$225. · Morris sunflower umbrella stand, brass, #4153, \$45.

##### Good Catalogue

(800) 225-3870

Arts and Crafts design Sarrouk wool rug, in six sizes ranging from 3 × 5 ft. to 9 × 12 ft., also a runner, priced \$249–1,699.

##### The Smithsonian Catalogue

(800) 322-0344

William Morris silk tie, green and red on a navy background, #2016, \$30.

##### Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

(800) 225-5592

William Morris rug, large, 3 × 9 ft., #70184, \$148; small, 2 × 3 ft., #70183, \$88; runner, 2 × 6 ft., #70208, \$128. · William Morris neckties, #41789-405 burgundy, #41789-425 navy, \$25. · Windrush pattern William Morris scarf, #41529-446, \$69.50.

 This newsletter was written and edited by Mark Samuels Lasner, with the assistance of Margaret D. Stetz. Items for inclusion, books for review, news, comments, go to: William Morris Society, P.O. Box 53263, Washington, DC 20009, [Biblio@aol.com](mailto:Biblio@aol.com). For updates on Morris (and associated) events see the [William Morris Home Page](#) on the internet, <http://www.cuny.cuny.edu/wmorris/morris.html>.

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