

SPECIAL EDITION
APRIL 2020

QUARTO

Lakeland Arts

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The first QUARTO was published and distributed to members not long after Abbot Hall Art Gallery first opened to the public in 1962. It opened with a letter from the first director, Helen Kapp, who expressed her aspiration for Abbot Hall:

...ideas that will
reverberate in all
our lives...

Helen Kapp

“We hope that Abbot Hall will give much delight to the eye, but also we want to see it as a stimulating and vibrating place - a place where clashes of ideas and feeling will generate new thoughts and ideas

that will reverberate in all our lives, enriching and stretching our minds.”

These aspirations are ones we echo in the next phase of Abbot Hall’s future. However, as we are meant to be decanting Abbot Hall and readying it for the contractors to take over for an exciting next phase, we find ourselves halted by COVID-19. Windermere Jetty was closed to the public just days before its one-year anniversary, and Blackwell was closed as we were preparing for a busy Easter.

With the doors to all four of our museums closed we are finding new ways to reach our audience, becoming, in effect, a museum without walls. We are exploring new ways to reach out to you digitally, while in the confines of your own home. So it seems apt that we would deliver a special digital version of QUARTO. It is no longer a ‘Quarterly Bulletin’, but a reflection of what we have done, are doing and will do, despite and in spite of this global crisis.

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Rhian Harris
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Hello,

I hope this finds you and your loved ones staying safe and well.

Thank you for your ongoing support of Lakeland Arts. We are very fortunate to have such a loyal group of Benefactors, Patrons and Friends and in this extraordinary time, your support means more than ever.

Exclusively for members

Our venues may be closed but we are still here for you and are working hard on finding ways of bringing our collections, exhibitions and talks to you, as a Lakeland Arts member. I'm delighted to be able to share with you today this special edition of QUARTO magazine which we have produced exclusively for our members. Inside you'll find articles from our expert team and insights into our collections, building and exhibitions. I hope you enjoy the digital look behind the scenes at our new exhibition *Swallows and Amazons For Ever!* - which we hope to extend until April 2021 so that you can see it in person.

We're also working to postpone our *House of the Setting Sun* season at Blackwell until next spring and summer. In the meantime, we bring you a close look at one of the objects from the exhibition, an intricately embroidered kimono (c. 1750 - 1868) dating from Japan's late Edo period.

I hope you will enjoy reading about the difference your support makes in articles about our boat conservation work on *MV Penelope II*, and FOLDED, a collaborate project with people from many areas of Cumbria.

Lakeland Arts could not function without the contribution of volunteers, as you will see when you read the piece from Mel Winstanley who, through her volunteering, has uncovered intriguing connections and stories.

If you're reading this, you'll have visited the new Members' Room on our website, created just for you. We'll be adding more content here and will alert you in your member newsletter when there's something new to view.

We miss you and look forward to welcoming you back to our venues when we can. In the meantime, we hope you keep well and stay in touch.

A huge thank you for your support, from all of us at Lakeland Arts.

Rhian Harris
CEO

SWALLOWS
AND AMAZONS
FOR EVER!

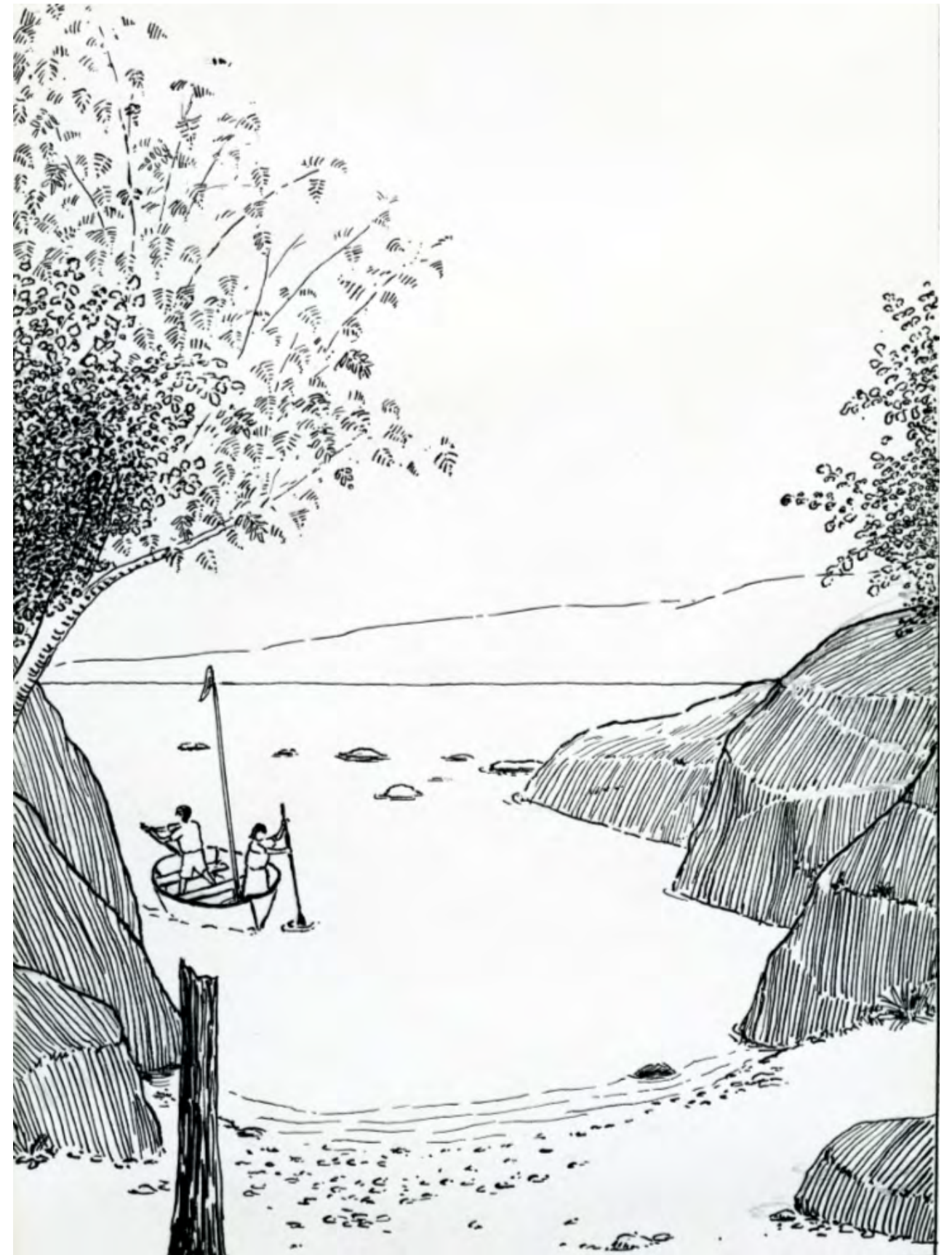


Days of Travel

by Nick Rogers

Before the advent of cheap air travel opened the world up to the masses, and well before a pandemic closed it down again, a series of books was published recounting the holiday adventures of the Walker children and their friends.

The first story in the series of 12, *Swallows and Amazons*, is 90 this year and to celebrate this milestone Windermere Jetty is staging an exhibition dedicated to Ransome and his much-loved works of children's fiction.



ARTHUR RANSOME, *FEELING THEIR WAY IN*
PEN AND INK ILLUSTRATION, P.53 OF *SWALLOWS AND AMAZONS*
LAKELAND ARTS COLLECTION
© THE ARTHUR RANSOME LITERARY ESTATE

OPPOSITE: RANSOME SUMMED UP THE PLEASURES AND APPEAL OF THE BOOK IN AN ARTICLE WRITTEN SHORTLY AFTER THE STORY'S PUBLICATION:

The key to the book's enduring popularity - it has never been out of print and has been translated into more than 20 languages - lies in this fluidity between adult and child worlds, between the everyday and the extraordinary. A short hop across a lake in a sailing dinghy can be an epic voyage of discovery.

Before embarking on *Swallows and Amazons*, Ransome had already enjoyed a full and colourful career as an essayist, novelist and journalist. It was as a correspondent for *The Daily News* and *The Manchester Guardian* that he travelled to Russia to cover the Bolshevik revolution, while possibly reporting back to British intelligence. He met Leon Trotsky and Vladimir Lenin, as well as his future wife, Evgenia Shelepina, with whom he sailed in the Baltic in his boat *Racundra* before returning to Britain.

However, it was the Lake District that exerted a magnetic pull on Ransome throughout his life. It was where Evgenia and Arthur first settled on their return to England, and where they ended their days: Arthur in 1967 and Evgenia in 1975. In the exhibition is a pierced stone from the Old Man of Coniston, small enough to be held comfortably in Ransome's hand, a talisman to remind him of childhood adventures in the fells and on the meres. *Swallows and Amazons* presented an opportunity to amalgamate any number of his life experiences and passions into one story: his love of sailing, fishing, his bushcraft, his no-nonsense journalistic writing style, and above all, his friendship with the Altounyans.

Ernest Altounyan was an American doctor who married Dora Collingwood, daughter of celebrated Lakeland chronicler, artist and Ruskin biographer, WG Collingwood. As a young man, Ransome had been close friends with the Collingwoods (to the point of proposing, unsuccessfully, to both Dora and her sister, Barbara) and spent several happy summers staying with them in the lakes. The Altounyans lived in Syria but travelled to the Lake District every few years. It was during the summer of 1928 that Ransome and Ernest taught the Altounyan children to sail in the dinghies *Swallow* and *Mavis* (later rechristened *Amazon*) and the foundations for *Swallows and Amazons* were laid.

The Altounyans were a clear inspiration for the fictional Walker children, three of whom share their names with their non-fiction counterparts, although Ransome played down this connection later in life. While *Swallows and Amazons* will always be considered a quintessentially English tale, it has an impressively international backstory: the worldly Ransome's travels in Russia, China and Europe, and the Armenian Altounyan children transplanted from Syria to Cumbria. In the novel the Walker children's father is in the Navy, stationed in Malta but bound for Hong Kong, while Captain Flint's treasure chest



‘It was just this, the way in which the children in it have no firm dividing line between make-believe and reality, but slip in and out of one and the other again and again and backwards and forwards, exactly as I had done when I was a child and, as I rather fancy, we all of us do in grown-up life. Everything was possible for me, just as it was for them, and yet there we all were with our feet hitting the earth quite firmly when we ran about.’

is plastered with labels from San Francisco, Buenos Ayres, Rangoon, Colombo, New York, Moscow, Khartoum and Peking. The events logged in *Swallows and Amazons* may be confined to an area of just a few miles but the seeds of these adventures are truly global in scope.

Lakeland Arts is fortunate to own a treasure-trove of Arthur Ransome material, much of it donated by his widow, Evgenia in the 1970s. Whittling down a selection to show at Windermere Jetty was not an easy task, although, thankfully, much of this work had already been done by the former curators at the Museum of Lakeland Life & Industry where there has been an area dedicated to Arthur Ransome for many years.

Our exhibition starts with a section that partly replicates the Museum of Lakeland Life's display but adds a picture-postcard view out to the lake which was part-inspiration for the setting of *Swallows and Amazons*. Cumbrian animator, Lou Kneath at +3K Animation Studios has provided a beautiful, short film responding to the book, while the exhibition also includes props, posters and stills relating to the 1974 and 2016 film adaptations.

Ransome only lived to see one screen adaptation, a six-part BBC

“...like the young heroes of *Swallows and Amazons* we can picture ourselves exploring desert islands, uncharted oceans and undiscovered territories...”



BELOW AND OPPOSITE: IMAGES FROM THE *SWALLOWS AND AMAZONS FOR EVER!* EXHIBITION AT WINDERMERE JETTY



series in 1963, which he was singularly unimpressed with: he described the child actors as ‘ugly’ and the script a ‘travesty’ of his book.

The lasting popularity of the novels is demonstrated by the number of different editions and translations worldwide of the *Swallows and Amazons* series. Each of the 30 book covers on display in the exhibition say a great deal about the way each nation or era interprets Ransome’s timeless stories.

At the time of writing, the exhibition is closed to visitors due to the global Covid-19 pandemic but that doesn’t mean we can’t still travel in our imaginations. Like the young heroes of *Swallows and Amazons* we can picture ourselves exploring desert islands, uncharted oceans and undiscovered territories. Ransome taught us that even the view from our window, however mundane, beautiful or familiar, can be the start of our own glorious adventures.

Nick Rogers, Curator ◆



Object in Focus:

Edo Period Kimono

by Naomi Gariff

Offering a sneak peek into next year's *House of the Setting Sun* exhibition at Blackwell, The Arts & Crafts House (opening 26 March 2021), this object in focus explores an intricately embroidered Kimono in Lakeland Arts' Japanese collection.

Made from traditional chirimen silk, this elaborately embroidered kimono dates from Japan's late Edo Period (1603 - 1868). It features the family crest of the Uesugi clan on its shoulders, one of the most prestigious samurai families in the history of Japan. It is likely to have been made for a female member of the family to wear on special occasions, with the high level of detail reflecting their wealth and social status.

...broken arrows and samurai helmets set amongst flowing streams and blossoming cherry trees...

The design of the kimono often tells a story, with different wildlife and flora holding their own significant meanings. This kimono tells the story of Uesugi Kenshin (1530 - 1578), an ancestor of the Uesugi clan and a famous samurai warrior. It features broken arrows and samurai helmets, set amongst flowing streams and blossoming cherry trees. The imagery represents the death of Kenshin, who died in the month of April when cherry blossoms in Japan are nearing the end of their bloom.

The timing of Kenshin's death was thought to be poetic, as cherry blossoms and samurai have been linked in Japanese folklore for hundreds of years. The short and fragile life of the cherry blossom, which can fall at the slightest breath of wind, is thought to represent the harsh reality of samurai life, in which many men died in the prime of their lives.

Naomi Gariff,
Curatorial & Programme Assistant ♦



Unknown Maker
Kimono (Edo Period)
c. 1750 - 1868
Lakeland Arts
Donated by Miss Everall of Edinburgh,
1999

*More than the cherry blossoms,
Inviting a wind to blow them away,
I am wondering what to do,
With the remaining springtime.*

Asano Naganori, 1701

Making Connections



by Mel Winstanley

It's been a joy to have been a Friend and volunteer at Lakeland Arts since 2001.

My volunteering roles have covered all venues and have been many and varied. The conservation cleaning of objects for Windermere Jetty was completed in early 2018 which opened up an opportunity to begin a new volunteering role at Abbot Hall- typing up the beautifully handwritten transcribed letters of W.G. Collingwood in the Lakeland Arts collection. The letters were transcribed 25 years ago by Philip Dalziel, then a member of staff and elder brother of a friend of ours who became the Curator of Windermere Steamboat Museum in the 1980s.

The transcribed foolscap letters fill a box file and begin with letter one dated 23 February 1865 which was written at 13 Bedford Street, North Liverpool where W.G. Collingwood, known to his family as Gershom, lived with his father, the artist William Collingwood, his mother, Marie Elizabeth Imhoff, his brother and sister. As I began to type the first letter by the eleven year old Gershom, I had only a sketchy awareness that he had functioned as Ruskin's secretary, been President

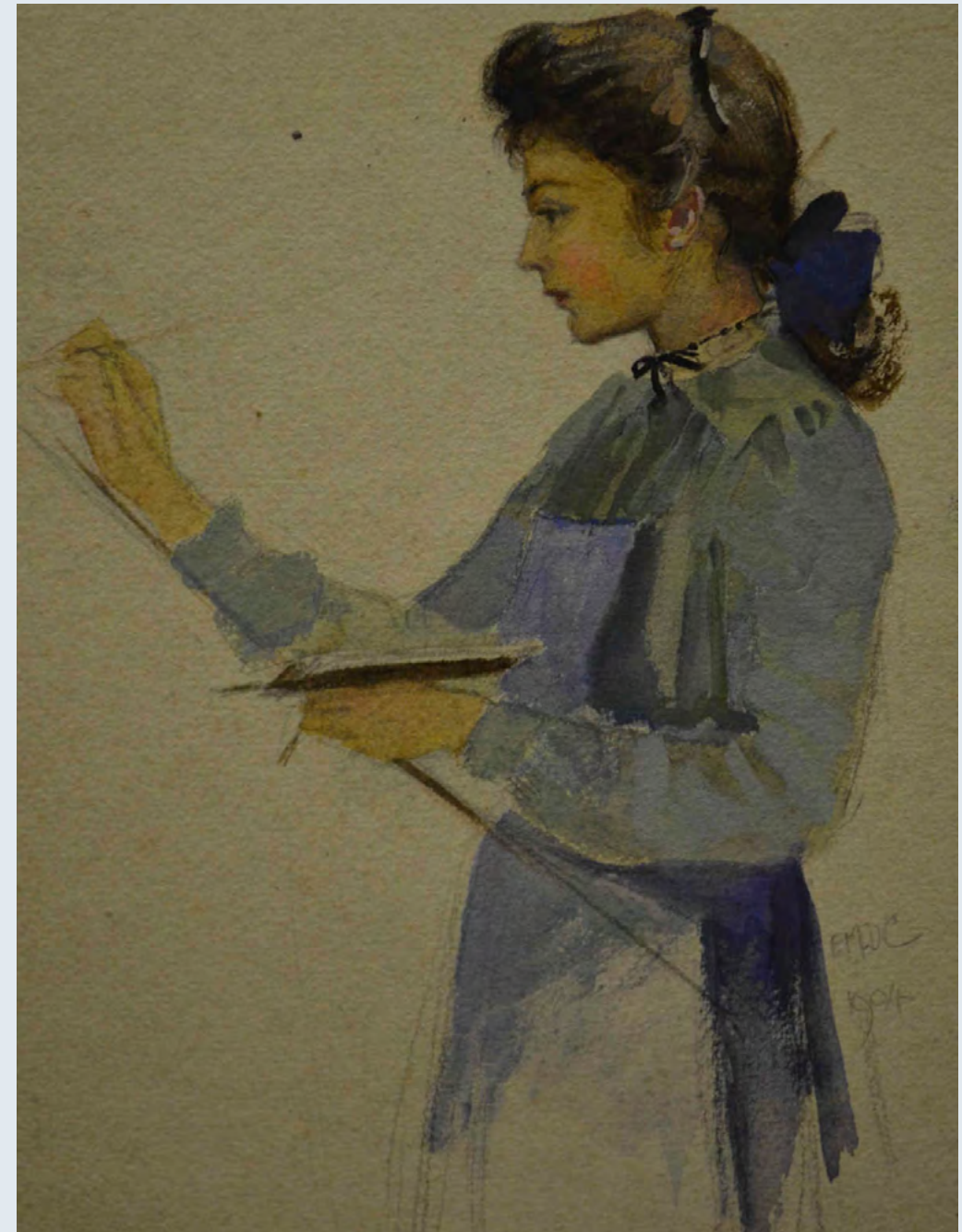
of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society and that Lakeland Arts had some of his paintings in their collection.

Neither the eleven-year-old boy, nor I, had any idea that he would become the talented polymath held in great affection by all who knew him or that his youngest daughter had a connection to Blackwell when it was a school during and after the second world war.

After searching the internet for information, I read The Armitt entry for him including his children - Robin, Barbara, Dorothy and Ursula. The final entry for Ursula reads 'Ursula Collingwood was married to Reggie Luard-Selby, at times Vicar of Ambleside and Troutbeck. Ursula was also an artist concentrating on flowers and miniatures as her mother had. Trained as a midwife, she worked in the Lakes and London before returning to teach art at Blackwell'. As a Blackwell volunteer giving talks to groups, this was unknown to me and opened up a completely different path. Her husband's name was also known to me as I have been a National Trust volunteer for 20 years and for the last six at Townend. Townend had been the home of the Browne family for 400 years. When the last George Brown died in 1914, his surviving daughter, Clara, inherited the property and lived there until her death in 1943. Her cousin, Richard, inherited and returned from New Zealand with his wife to take possession in 1944. After living there briefly they decided to sell the property. Oswald Hedley, a coal proprietor and local landowner purchased the property. Hedley wanted to preserve the house and contents and to let it to his friend Canon Luard-Selby, Vicar of Jesus Church, Troutbeck when he retired.

Hedley died suddenly in 1945 aged 61 and his third wife passed on the house and land in lieu of death duties to the Treasury who then gave the property to the National Trust. The contents were purchased separately by the National Trust. The house was opened to the public in March 1948. Luard-Selby remained vicar of Troutbeck church until his death in 1951. Ursula Luard-Selby became a farmer in Underbarrow in 1954 until her death in 1962.

Reading the Lakeland Arts Newsletter in 2018, I noticed a short write-up of a former pupil at Blackwell returning to celebrate her birthday by visiting Blackwell. With staff approval I got in touch with her and asked if she remembered an art teacher called Mrs Luard-Selby.



She did remember her teaching there, talking about living in Troutbeck and that she knew the children Ransome had used as models for the children in *Swallows and Amazons*.

Kendal Archives hold a folder of Ursula's letters including a family tree compiled by Janet Gnosspeilus in which Ursula's entry states she taught art at Blackwell School from c. 1945 - 1954.

In my talks at Blackwell I use an image of Townend to illustrate the point that the Arts & Crafts architects used the vernacular of an area as inspiration for their buildings. As yet I haven't found a better example of a vernacular building than Townend and, of course, it links to Blackwell through Ursula.

I look forward to returning to Lakeland Arts when this crisis is over and continuing with my volunteering roles and I hope this will add a small amount of information to the story of Blackwell.

Mel Winstanley, Volunteer ♦

Urgent conservation of the fine art collection

Each year we work with accredited conservators to examine and conserve the works in our collection that most need care. The Abbot Hall collection comprises 6,000 works of art. Many have not been conserved since they were created, with some between 200 and 400 years old. It takes an average of 100 years for an oil painting to dry out and cracking can appear over time. Sometimes the stretchers of canvases are homemade or have been altered by the artist. This can cause the canvas to move, or even contract due to changes in temperature and humidity.



With your support...

By being a member of Lakeland Arts you are helping us to care for our permanent collection, look after our Grade I Listed buildings and fund our work with our local communities. Your support helps us to undertake a huge variety of work.

Did you know?

Frames are often the most vulnerable part of a painting.

Over time the joins of frames can open up, the delicate gesso (fine plaster) moulding can deteriorate, and the gilding can wear away. Every year we invest in conserving historic frames in our collection, sometimes adding glazing to preserve paintings in their own sealed microclimate. We also invest in small modern frames and acid-free mounts for our works on paper collection. These works are stored flat in their mounts, in between layers of acid-free tissue paper in acid-free archival boxes. They are put in stock frames when they are displayed to ensure that we can recycle them, but these wear out over time, so need replacing every few years.

Social History collection audit

The curatorial team and volunteers have carried out an audit of our social history collection, which ranges from household objects, particularly kitchenware, to mining and farming equipment. The team have catalogued each object against existing records, wrapping and boxing every piece and documenting its location and details on our collections database. This means that the collection is now stored to museum standards and more space has been created for future collecting.





Sheltered Spaces at Abbot Hall

A new installation went on display at Abbot Hall last year, created by some of Kendal's young carers. Sheltered Spaces showcased the creativity of the town's young caregivers and saw them join forces with our participation team and architect duo MATT+FIONA.

The idea was to take over the Romney Room in the gallery -

home to the collection of artworks from Kendal portrait painter George Romney - and transform it into a space they would find friendly and familiar.

Conserving the Liberty Chair

In 2017 we were generously gifted an Arts & Crafts chair for Blackwell. It is one of only a few surviving examples of this style of chair, produced by Liberty & Co. Unusually, it has some intact original fabric as well as the original hidden structure of coil springs and straw padding.

In 2019 we worked with conservator, Kate Gill, to conserve the Liberty Chair, with visitors able to see conservation demonstrations live at Blackwell while Kate finished the last stages of the work.



**These are just a few examples of
how your support makes a difference...**

If you want to know more about how your support helps Lakeland Arts, read Boat Conservation expert, Nick Paull's article about the Penelope Project at Windermere Jetty, [visit our website](#) or drop us a line.

memberships@lakelandarts.org.uk

...thank you.



Labour of Love: Penelope II

by Nick Paull

Windermere Jetty aims to be a dynamic and sustainable museum, a site for conservation, interpretation and exploration. Visitors can witness live restoration of the collection to the highest quality display condition. Key vessels are restored to the water, carrying passengers and expanding the visitor experience into the spectacular surrounding landscape. Through our exhibition, learning and skills development programme and our Conservation Workshop we bring science, engineering and ecology together with the arts and culture, reflecting the inspiration of our world-class collection and location. A major new tourist attraction, we contribute to the economic and social wellbeing of Cumbria and the North.

Nick Paull, Conservation Assistant, discusses the work he has undertaken with the Boat Conservation team on *Motor Vessel Penelope II* over the past year.

As a boat conservator at Windermere Jetty I have been asked to put together a few words on *MV Penelope II* as we approach the end of an extensive period of restoration and prepare to launch the boat onto the water. I will endeavour to stick to my brief of not making it too technical!

Penelope is a Brazilian Mahogany carvel planked vessel built in 1930 by Borwicks Ltd of Bowness. It was originally built for the Bentley family, who owned the boat for many years before donating it to the Windermere Nautical Trust in 1986. They used the boat mainly to follow the Royal Windermere Yacht Club races.

With a straight bow and cruiser stern, *Penelope* looks like a traditional Windermere steam launch but has always run on a motor engine. The launch was built between the two World Wars, in the style of a traditional launch but with the convenience of a modern motor engine. This was more easily maintained than the steam powered boiler.

The varnished hull and cabin, with white roof, is very reminiscent of the steam launches in the museum's collection, although Penelope has never been powered by steam, originally having a tractor vaporising oil (TVO) engine.

Restoration work began in 2018 when the conservation team were working in the temporary workshop, now the location of the museum car park. However, the bulk of the work has been carried out in our shiny new workshop since March 2019. So what work was needed to have *Penelope* ready to launch and be able to carry passengers?

A review of an earlier independent survey, which aided the vessel's conservation management plan (CMP), helped us identify some of the major issues that needed addressing. It highlighted obvious problems such as the keel and planking below the waterline. Our own in-house inspection allowed us to build on this and figure out the sequence of tasks. However, it is often the case that problems only manifest themselves once the work begins.



It soon became clear that Penelope was a lightly constructed vessel. With the mechanical items, internal fittings and cabin removed it was obvious that this little boat lacked torsional strength - I describe it in my Conservation Conversation talks as 'wibbly'. A number of factors contributed to this 'wibbliness'.

Firstly, Borwicks had originally used only steam bent timbers. There were no larger sectioned frames, possibly to speed up the build and keep down costs. In fairness, the boat was built for Windermere and not the rigors of the sea. Secondly, the keel was in a poor condition and constructed from softwood timber. Thirdly, having spent many years off the water, the mahogany planks had shrunk width-wise and opened up the seams between planks. Leaks were the most obvious issue here, but also loss of structural strength.

Finally, there was evidence of plank movement in the rear cockpit area where the hull is flat to the water and clues that leaks had been an issue before.

It might be a good point to mention the workshop's general conservation and restoration philosophy. Primarily we attempt to retain as much of the original fabric of a boat as possible. This usually means repairing, rather than replacing, and often takes more time and effort.



The materials we use are those used in traditional boat building, specific timber species for example, and linseed oil putty for bedding in joints and fairing seams. We endeavour to repair with like-for-like materials. Additionally, to be true to the vessel, we avoid implementing modifications. However, on occasions there are overriding factors for a modification, notably structural integrity, safety and maintainability.

So, have we been true to our philosophical approach during Penelope's restoration? I'll outline some of the key work the team have undertaken, highlight some of the dilemmas we faced and the reasons for some of the decisions we have made.

The independent survey noted the keel had been fitted with softwood which had deteriorated in condition and subsequently wasn't fitted correctly. Penelope was then tested on water and the keel visibly deteriorated during the process.

A new complete oak keel was the obvious answer in terms of strength, but was there any historical

evidence to support taking this route? We considered that, as the stem and stern were oak, it would have been odd for Borwicks to have used softwood keel in 1930. Furthermore, *Steam Launch Winander*, 1930 (not part of the museum's collection) is a very similar craft to *Penelope* and built by Borwicks in the same year. It is listed as being 'mahogany on oak', denoting an oak skeleton with mahogany planking. This helped inform our decision to replace the keel with oak, fulfilling the need to strengthen the structure, but also supported by the oak keel found on *Winander*.

The next area we tackled was the rear cockpit area, a notoriously leaky part of the boat, as it has a flat bottom. The planking here had numerous repairs, suggesting a long-term problem and the original survey had identified that significant repairs were required to the canoe stern. We assessed that both issues were likely to be caused by the lack of substantial structure in the area. If we simply repaired planking and timbers here, there was a good chance we would have to revisit the problem in future. So, the decision was made to modify the boat.

By replacing every fourth steam bent timber in this area with a substantial frame we could improve structural integrity and hopefully reduce longer-term maintenance requirements. In addition, a number of steam-bent timbers had to be replaced in this area, which helped add overall strength.

Another modification was implemented to stiffen the hull further forward. By introducing stringers - wide, but thin, long lengths of oak - down both sides of the inside of the hull, significant gains in 'anti-wibbliness' were made.





Stringers are very common on traditionally built boats and seemed an obvious addition. Again, hull strength, especially in terms of safety for a passenger carrying vessel, was the driving factor to modify *Penelope*.

It's worth noting that both modifications detailed above have a written record, supported with photographs and are easily reversible if required in the future.

Finally, was the small matter of the open plank seams and their obvious implications for the boat to be water-tight. In making our assessment and referring to the original survey, that stated that a large percentage of planking below the water required attention, it was decided to remove and repair all the planks with sections below the waterline.

The repairs were very labour intensive; each plank had its lower edge planed back to sound timber; then new timber glued to the other edge to restore the original width.

A caulking bevel was planed into one edge ready to receive the seam sealing cotton. Furthermore, as all the old nail holes on each plank were plugged, as there is no guarantee that they would line up with the corresponding holes in the internal timbers when refitted. All the planking work was carried out with the hull upside down to make our lives a little easier. To ensure the boat's shape was retained during this phase of work, four temporary bulkheads were fitted inside the hull prior to it being inverted.

With all the planks repaired and refitted, it was time

for caulking the seams. This involves twisting several cotton strands together to suit the size of the seam. Then with a caulking iron and mallet, the cotton was firmly driven into the seam. As this process neared completion, we could hear a change in tone of our hammering, an indication that we had restored much of the hull's lost strength, which was a very satisfying sound!

I estimate that the planking is now about 96 per cent original - barring the glued-on edge, engraving pieces, plugs and two new 4 foot plank sections. This is pretty good original material retention in my opinion, especially as the independent survey thought 60 - 80 per cent of the planking below the waterline would need renewing.

Before re-righting the hull, the planking was faired, to take off any edges and lumps, and then painted. This included the initial coats of varnish on the hull above the waterline. With the boat upright, the pace of restoration seemed to accelerate rapidly. The cabin



A note from the editor:

Penelope II was due to be put back on the water on 20th March 2020. This milestone event was planned as part of the museum's first birthday celebrations. Once the hull had taken up (stopped leaking due to moisture content change in the wood), the boat was to be outfitted, engine commissioned and sea trialled before being put back into service as part of our heritage boat trip offer. We will complete the final few weeks of work on *Penelope* when we can re-open the workshop and we are looking forward to welcoming you aboard *Penelope* as soon as we are able!



was reassembled after extensive repairs to areas of previous water ingress.

Engineering pieces, such as keel band, propshaft bracket, support bracket and rudder, were made on site and sent for galvanizing, then fitted when back on site. The new diesel engine was positioned to allow the propshaft and rudder to be aligned. A modern steering system has been installed. This modification will enhance safety, reliability and maintainability on a boat set to carry passengers. Electrical looms have been routed ready for a new instrument console and ancillary items. The previous steering gear and electrical items are now in storage.

Nick Paull, Conservation Assistant ♦





FOLDED

In the build up to the closure of Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Lakeland Arts, supported by Arts Council England, has been working with children, young people, adults and families from across Cumbria to create work for a final installation once the gallery closes for redevelopment.

FOLDED is primarily a community project which brings together work made by people from across our county, including community groups, schools, emerging artists at Kendal College and the University of Cumbria and work by local artist Hannah Fox.

This project began as a way for Lakeland Arts to mobilise communities through a new way of working. Those that are most underrepresented in our audiences and those who are likely to benefit most from a creative project like this.

This way of working - to co-produce with people - is one that will unfold across Kendal and the wider county as we work through the redevelopment phase of Abbot Hall Art Gallery. This will bring people and



communities closer to creativity and closer to the ambitions of the organisation.

The groups engaged in this process range in their connection to creativity. Whilst some have chosen to study for a degree in Art & Design, others have come to this project through the accessing of food banks. For others, it has provided a necessary break from caring responsibilities and for some it is how they make a living. The project truly democratises culture through the choice of material and workshops.

Everybody involved has made work using paper; a material which is accessible and understood by all. A material that is both democratic and rich in use. A material that has shaped the collection and the landscape. FOLDED will be the final exhibition taking place in Abbot Hall



before the redevelopment work begins, giving the community the final opportunity to close the gallery, temporarily.

FOLDED explores ideas of closure of a space and the traces left behind. The exhibition will be an immersive experience and a celebration of the creativity in our community.

FOLDED builds on the work started in 2019 through the WHO CARES? commission and the A Centre of Attention space. Whilst this work symbolises the closing down of the gallery, it more ambitiously marks a moment in time where we look to our immediate neighbours for inspiration and creativity. FOLDED will be part of a wider commission happening in and around Kirkland as we mark the start of the ambitious reimagining of a treasured gallery for the community of Cumbria and beyond.

Emma Robertson,
Producer (Communities) ♦



Lakeland Arts

www.lakelandarts.org.uk



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