



FALL
2025

ROYAL OAK PROGRAMS



Primary underwriting provided by
Mark Pigott KBE

PROGRAMS INFORMATION

Royal Oak's Fall 2025 Programming will be a mix of online and in-person events. Please check the website for updates.

Support for Lectures

For the Fall 2025 season, primary underwriting provided by Mark Pigott KBE.

We are thankful to loyal Royal Oak members for generously providing critical funding for digital and in-person lectures this season, including: Thomas and Patricia Bain, Linda Pedro, Lynne R. Pickens, Stephen and Karen Tyler, In Memory of Graham Watkins, Roberta and Robert Young, and Anonymous donors. We also gratefully acknowledge the support of The Joseph and Robert Cornell Memorial Foundation; Marian Meaker Apteckar Foundation; and The Neilsen Family Trust.

Register for Zoom & In-Person Lectures & Tours

Some lectures & tours will be held via Zoom. After registering on our website, you will receive an email with a link to the Zoom webinar or meeting. A reminder with the same link will be sent two hours before the lecture. We strongly recommend joining the Zoom at least 10 minutes before the lecture to check for screen and sound issues. A virtual waiting room is open starting 30 minutes before the lecture.

Registration for Zoom Lecture & Tour Rentals

Most lectures & tours will be recorded and available to “rent”. The link to the recording will be emailed to you at 12 p.m. (ET) the day after the live lecture or tour and will expire at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on the date listed. **It will not be available after that date and time.** The video is available for streaming only, not for download. Copyright is held by the speaker.

In-Person Events

Royal Oak is not responsible for venue dress codes or such requirements. All in-person attendees will be emailed the link to watch the digital rental of their event (if recorded).

Fees & Refunds

Royal Oak members receive a discount on all lectures. You must be signed into the website to receive the discount. We are not able to give refunds if you can no longer attend the live lecture or view the rental in the allotted time, but we can turn your ticket into a tax deductible donation if you email us at least 48 hours before the lecture at zoom@royal-oak.org. **Royal Oak is not responsible for attendees' technology issues regarding viewing live or recorded lectures.**

How to Register

Please register online at www.royal-oak.org/events. If you have questions, please email us at zoom@royal-oak.org for the fastest response.

All programs are subject to change or cancellation. Visit our website for updates.

Cover: The west front of Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire Credit: ©National Trust Images/Robert Morris

Dear Royal Oak Members and Friends,

I hope you had a wonderful summer with family and friends and perhaps enjoyed a bit of travel. All of us at Royal Oak are delighted to present our Fall 2025 programming schedule.

Many of our programs will continue to be presented digitally, but we are excited to expand our in-person offerings to return to former lecture areas, such as California. Thank you for your patience as we are in the process of confirming dates and details.

I am delighted to introduce a few new speakers for our Fall 2025 season! First, noted historian and author Jeremy Black, who will speak about the experiences of the English gentlemen who undertook the Grand Tour during the 18th century—from their accommodations to the artworks brought back to fill great country houses. Expert gardener and author Claire Masset will illustrate and talk about the informal and “wild” style of much-loved English Cottage gardens.

Some of these gardens include kitchen gardens, historically to provide produce for the house's occupants. In likewise fashion, Royal Oak's National Trust Appeal is raising funds to restore the glasshouse at Tressilick, so peaches and plums once again can be grown for visitors to enjoy.

Dining and food seem to be an unintentional (but delicious!) theme during this upcoming season. Dr. Sarah Coffin will bring us into English dining rooms to examine the changing styles of the British table. The food theme continues with a look at English food factories where ubiquitous British foods, such as Lyle's Golden Syrup and Gordon's Gin, originated. Also, our in-person tour of New York Historical Society's exhibit *Dining in Transit* will no doubt further tempt our appetites!

Of course, our lecture season always includes country houses filled with paintings and decorative arts. Miranda Rock, will give Royal Oak members a digital tour of her home, Burghley, illustrating the extraordinary interiors, while sharing stories about its past. *Vanity Fair* writer James Reginato also will present some of his favorite private abodes owned by British aristocrats, and discuss with architectural historian George McNeely the new generation of stately homeowners.

As a benefit of your membership, current Royal Oak members will be able to watch a FREE lecture about the National Trust's dress and costume collection by Senior Curator Emma Slocumb. Her newly co-authored book *100 Things to Wear: Fashion from the National Trust Collections* will be published this autumn with all new photography. Links to our free-to-members lectures from previous seasons will be available on the Royal Oak member's webpage starting this fall.

Whether you join us digitally or in-person, I want to thank you for your continued support of The Royal Oak Foundation.

Ian Murray

Ian Murray, Executive Director



The Pagoda Room at Burghley House with mahogany desk attributed to Mayhew and Ince

©Ashley Hicks. From Burghley House, Rizzoli, 2025

AT-A-GLANCE Please check your local time zone.

SEPTEMBER

25	2:00 p.m. ET	<i>Tour: Gainsborough House, London</i>	Zoom Live Stream or Rent
29	5:00 p.m. ET	<i>Tour: London's Food & Drink Factories</i>	Zoom Live Stream or Rent

OCTOBER

7	2:00 p.m. ET	Jeremy Black MBE	Zoom Live Stream or Rent
9	3:00 p.m. ET	<i>Tour: All Aboard: Dining in Transit at NYHS</i>	NYC In-Person
16	6:00 p.m. ET	ROF BENEFIT GALA	NYC In-Person
22	6:15 p.m. ET	James Reginato	NYC In-Person or Rent
28	2:00 p.m. ET	Sinclair McKay	Zoom Live Stream or Rent
30	1:00 p.m. ET	<i>Tour: Lambeth's Lost Industry</i>	Zoom Live Stream or Rent

NOVEMBER

4	2:00 p.m. ET	Emma Slocombe	Zoom Live Stream or Rent
6	2:00 p.m. ET	Jessica Fahy	Zoom Live Stream or Rent
13	2:00 p.m. ET	<i>Tour: West Sussex</i>	Zoom Live Stream or Rent
17	6:15 p.m. ET	Dr. Sarah Coffin	NYC In-Person or Rent
18	2:00 p.m. ET	Miranda Rock	Zoom Live Stream or Rent
20	2:00 p.m. ET	Claire Masset	Zoom Live Stream or Rent

DECEMBER

3	6:15 p.m. ET	Carol Ann Lloyd	NYC In-Person or Rent
8	2:00 p.m. ET	<i>Tour: Gibbes Collection, Charleston SC</i>	Zoom Live Stream or Rent
9	5:00 p.m. ET	<i>Tour: Christmas in Georgian London</i>	Zoom Live Stream or Rent



© National Trust Images/Andrew Butler

Garden bench under a mullioned window on the East Front at Cotehele, near Saltash, Cornwall.

PUBLIC LECTURES

Please note start times vary. Please check your local time zone.
For full descriptions and speaker bios, please visit www.royal-oak.org/events

ZOOM LECTURES & IN-PERSON NEW YORK CITY

British Abroad: The Grand Tour

Jeremy Black MBE,
Historian and Author

**Tuesday, October 7
2:00 p.m. (ET)**

**Zoom Webinar
(Live or Rent)**

\$15 Members;
\$25 Non-Members
and Guests



Group Portrait of James Grant, John Mytton, Thomas Robinson and Thomas Wynne on their Grand Tour, 1760 by Nathaniel Dance-Holland

Modern Aristocrats: A Conversation About Ancestral Houses and Their Stories

James Reginato, Author
George McNeely,
Architectural Historian

**Wednesday, October 22
6:15 p.m. (ET) Reception following**

The General Society Library,
20 W. 44th Street, NYC (Bet. 5th and 6th)

In-Person: \$35 Members; \$45
Non-Members and Guests

Zoom Recording: \$20 Members;
\$30 Non-Members and Guests



© Jonathan Becker. From Great Houses, Modern Aristocrats, Rizzoli, 2016

Oak Room, Broughton Castle, Oxfordshire

ZOOM LECTURES & IN-PERSON NEW YORK CITY

Meeting Churchill: Personal Encounters

Sinclair McKay, Author and Features Writer

Tuesday, October 28 | 2:00 p.m. (ET)

Zoom Webinar (Live or Rent)

\$15 Members;

\$25 Non-Members and Guests



© National Trust Images/Anthony Lambert

The Churchills at breakfast in August 1927, at Chartwell, Kent, photographed by Donald Ferguson

ZOOM LECTURES & IN-PERSON NEW YORK CITY

Arts & Crafts Conversations: The Yeats and Morris Families

Jessica Fahy, Art Historian

Thursday, November 6 | 2:00 p.m. (ET)

Zoom Webinar (Live or Rent)

\$15 Members;

\$25 Non-Members and Guests



© National Trust Images/Chris Lacey

William Morris wallpaper at Wightwick Manor and Gardens, West Midlands



© National Trust Images/Andreas von Einsiedel

Corset for shop display, at Killerton, Devon

100 Things to Wear: Fashion from the Collections of the National Trust

Emma Slocombe,
Senior National Curator
(Dress & Textiles)

**Tuesday, November 4
2:00 p.m. (ET)**

Zoom Webinar (Live or Rent)

FREE TO ROYAL OAK MEMBERS;

\$15 Non-Members

Extravagant to Elegant: Dining at the English Table (1900-1938)

Dr. Sarah Coffin,
Curator, Consultant, and Author

**Monday, November 17
6:15 p.m. (ET) Reception following**

The General Society Library,
20 W. 44th Street, NYC (Bet. 5th and 6th)

In-Person: \$35 Members;
\$45 Non-Members and Guests

Zoom Recording: \$20 Members;
\$30 Non-Members and Guests



© National Trust Images/Andreas von Einsiedel

Silver sauce boat in the Dining Room at Killerton, Devon

ZOOM LECTURES & IN-PERSON NEW YORK CITY

Burghley House: 500 years of History, Art, & Family

Miranda Rock,
Executive Chair,
Burghley House
Preservation Trust

**Tuesday, November 18
2:00 p.m. (ET)**

Zoom Webinar (Live or Rent)

\$15 Members;
\$25 Non-Members and Guests



Credit Ashley Hicks. From *Burghley House*, Rizzoli, 2025

Enfilade at Burghley House

English Cottage Gardens

Claire Masset, NT Publisher and Gardens Journalist

Thursday, November 20 | 2:00 p.m. (ET)

Zoom Webinar (Live or Rent)

\$15 Members; \$25 Non-Members and Guests



©National Trust Images/Robert Morris

Hardy's Cottage, Dorchester, Dorset

ZOOM LECTURES & IN-PERSON NEW YORK CITY

Mistress of Hardwick: Elizabeth, Countess of Shrewsbury

Carol Anne Lloyd,
Noted Speaker and Author

**Wednesday, December 3
6:15 p.m. (ET)
Reception following**

The General Society Library,
20 W. 44th Street, NYC
(Bet. 5th and 6th)

In-Person: \$35 Members;
\$45 Non-Members and Guests

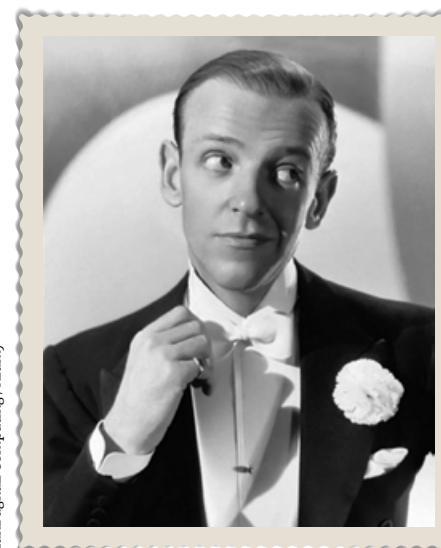
Zoom Recording: \$20 Members;
\$30 Non-Members and Guests



©National Trust Images/Andreas von Einsiedel

The Blue Room at Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire

LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA



Ian Dagnall Computing / Alamy

*Portrait of Fred Astaire, studio publicity shot
for You'll Never Get Rich, 1941*

Fred Astaire in London

Victoria Kastner,
Historian and Author

**La Jolla
TBA**

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Fred Astaire in London

Victoria Kastner,
Historian and Author

Los Angeles
TBA



©cineclassico / Alamy

*A still from The Gay Divorcee, 1934,
Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers*

THE ROYAL OAK FOUNDATION BENEFIT DINNER

WITH THE COUNTESS OF BURLINGTON



THURSDAY, THE 16TH OF OCTOBER, 2025
AT A PRIVATE CLUB IN NEW YORK CITY

For Information Contact Ian Murray at imurray@royal-oak.org

HELP US RESTORE TRELISSICK'S GLASSHOUSE

Royal Oak is raising \$300,000 to recreate the glasshouse in Trelissick's historic walled garden, reviving this once-thriving space. Your support will help restore the garden, bringing back the exquisite peaches and nectarines for which Trelissick was once famed, while showcasing sustainable gardening practices.

Join us in transforming this historic and important garden into a vibrant hub of horticulture for generations to come!

www.Royal-Oak.org/Trelissick | 212-480-2889 ext. 200



ROYAL OAK MEMBER TOURS

Digital tours are presented live and with guides giving an illustrated presentation with an accompanying talk. Some tours will be recorded and available for a limited period. In-Person Tours are not recorded. Please note start times vary and are listed in Eastern time.

ONLINE TOUR

Gainsborough House & Exhibition: Masterpieces from Kenwood

Zoom Webinar (Live or Rent)

Thursday, September 25 | 2:00 p.m. ET

Reopened in 2022 after a transformational refurbishment, Gainsborough House in Suffolk is the National Centre for the artist Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788). The house combines the artist's childhood home—a Grade I, 18th-century merchant brick town house—with new exhibition galleries and facilities. The house holds the world's largest single concentration of Gainsborough's work and presents the artist's life and legacy through dynamic exhibitions. Emma Boyd, the Keeper of Art and Place, will take us on a virtual tour, showing remaining parts of the old house including the hall and oak doorway dating back to the 16th century. She will describe the history of the house (which stayed in the artist's family until 1792) and illustrate the current exhibition, *Masterpieces from Kenwood: The Splendour of British and French Painting* (May 9–October 19, 2025). The show features 18th-century masterpieces by both British and French artists, including Sir Joshua Reynolds, George Romney,

Mary, Countess Howe,
Thomas Gainsborough, 1764

Angelica Kauffmann, and François Boucher. These masterpieces, on loan from Kenwood House and collected by Edward Cecil Guinness, 1st Earl of Iveagh (1847–1927), are displayed alongside the work by Gainsborough. Ms. Boyd will show these outstanding paintings and reveal how Gainsborough's art fits within the broader context of the artistic work created by his British and French contemporaries.

TICKETS: \$25 Members; \$35 Non-Members



Gainsborough House, Sudbury, Suffolk

Gainsborough's House

ONLINE WALKING TOUR

Feeding the City: London's Iconic Food and Drink Factories

Zoom Webinar (Live or Rent)

Monday, September 29 | 5:00 p.m. ET

London was the largest city in the world during the 19th century, with an appetite to match. As the city's population exploded, food and drink needed to be produced on an unprecedented industrial scale.

In response, sprawling factories sprang up across the capital, churning out everything from biscuits to gin. Some of these London historic food sites remain active today, while others have been repurposed, leaving behind only traces of their industrial legacy. Through this fascinating virtual tour, Rob Smith will take us back to London's flavorful past as he explores the food factories that helped feed the population of the metropolis. We will explore the story of the Lyle's Golden Syrup factory in Silvertown—founded in the 1880s and operating today—producing its famous syrup in the world's oldest branded packaging. We will learn about McVities in Harlesden, home to beloved British biscuits like the Digestive and Jaffa Cakes, and we will explore what became of Gordon's Gin distillery, once a powerhouse in Clerkenwell. We will also virtually visit the former Sarsons' vinegar works in Bermondsey, whose towering vats now house creative studios. Rob will reveal what life was like for the factory workers, the production innovations that shaped their industries, and the legacy left by these factories that shaped London's culinary and urban history.

TICKETS: \$30 Members; \$40 Non-Members



Green and gold 1 lb and 2lb tins
of Lyon's Golden Syrup

© National Trust / Lynda Alano

IN-PERSON PRIVATE TOUR

All Aboard!: Dining in Transit at NYHS

Thursday, October 9

3:00 p.m. ET

Join us for a guided tour of the Dining in Transit exhibition at the New York Historical Society as we explore the golden age of travel through the lens of food and menus. This docent-led tour will trace how ocean liners, luxury trains, and early commercial airlines used fine dining to elevate the passenger experience and also build early 20th-century brand loyalty. We will discover how French chefs, holiday menus, and elegant tableware helped define travel culture while viewing

continued



First class dining room from cover of the
November 22, 1938 dinner menu from the Normandie

Patricia D. Klingenstein Library, New York Historical Society

an array of objects—from fascinating souvenir menus and promotional recipe books to collectible dishware. Our tour also will shed light on complex labor histories, including the Pullman Company's recruitment of formerly enslaved Black men as cooks and waiters. We will also explore the strict physical criteria airlines previously considered when hiring female flight attendants. Tour highlights include a dazzling selection of vintage menus from the Patricia D. Klingenstein Library, mid-century railroad and airline recipe books, and insights into the evolving food trends that shaped meals at sea, on the rails, and in the air.

MEETING PLACE: The New York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West

TICKETS: \$35 Members;
\$45 Non-Members



Cunard Line, RMS Campania Menu, August 27, 1905

Patricia D. Klingenstein Library, New York Historical Society



Ceremonial punch bowl with cover, 1705. British Delftware, Lambeth, England.

ONLINE WALKING TOUR

Glassware, Stone and Beer: Lambeth's Lost Industry

Zoom Webinar (Live or Rent)

Thursday, October 30 | 1:00 p.m. ET

Delve into the rich but often overlooked industrial past of Lambeth, once a thriving hub of craftsmanship and production along the Thames. Guided by Richard Watkins, this virtual tour explores the legacy of the industries that once defined the South Bank—from the artistry of Coade Stone, a remarkable artificial stone used in architecture across London, to the decorative ceramics of Doulton's, and the bustling activity of the Lion Brewery, where barrels of beer once flowed toward Westminster. Using historical images, maps, and surviving landmarks, we'll trace how this stretch of riverfront evolved—from a landscape of workshops and kilns to one of cultural institutions and modern redevelopment.

TICKETS: \$30 Members; \$40 Non-Members

From the Metropolitan Museum of Art



©National Trust Images/Cary Cosham

View of the ruins through the garden at Nymans, West Sussex

with beautifully restored gardens nestled in the South Downs—formerly the home of poet and Surrealist artist Edward James. Throughout the tour, Stephen will highlight favorite National Trust sites including 17th-century Petworth House, containing a world-class art collection and a 700-acre park; and Uppark, a 17th-and 18th-century house remarkably restored after a 1989 devastating fire. We will also look at the atmospheric ruins and gardens at Nymans as well as the gardens at William Morris' Standen. Finally, we will explore the dramatic landscapes of Devil's Dyke and the rolling hills that provide West Sussex its timeless character.

TICKETS: \$30 Members; \$40 Non-Members

ONLINE WALKING TOUR

From Castles and Cathedrals to Chalk Downs: West Sussex

Zoom Webinar (Live or Rent)

Thursday, November 13 | 2:00 p.m. ET

West Sussex is a picturesque county, rich in historic towns, grand estates, and stunning National Trust properties. Stephen Benton will lead us on a captivating virtual journey through its varied landscapes and cultural landmarks. Our tour will include a "visit" to Chichester, a Roman cathedral city, and continue to Arundel, known for the magnificent castle, owned by the Dukes of Norfolk, and charming streets. We will also explore West Dean, a historic estate

ONLINE MUSEUM TOUR

British Connections in the Gibbes Collection, Charleston S.C.

Zoom Webinar (Live or Rent)

Monday, December 8 | 2:00 p.m. ET

The Gibbes Museum of Art, located in the heart of Charleston, South Carolina, contains a premier collection of over 10,000 art objects. While its works primarily focus on American Southern art connected to Charleston, many objects have British connections. Housed in a stunning Beaux Arts-style building, the museum offers a rich window into the region's history as a major British colony, where Charlestonians commissioned portraits and collected works painted by English artists. Becca Hiester, Gibbes Director of Education and Programs, will give a virtual tour exploring the museum's transatlantic connections, with a special look at British-American artist Benjamin West. West, born in Pennsylvania, rose to prominence while in 18th-century London. He earned the nickname "American Raphael" and attracted the attention of patrons such as King George III. In 1772, he was appointed Historical Painter to the King, and later became President of the Royal Academy. Becca will explore West's work and describe the artist's connections to wealthy Charlestonians. Finally, she will explain how British art found its home in the Gibbes Collection.

TICKETS: \$20 Members; \$30 Non-Members



Thomas Middleton of The Oaks, 1770 By Benjamin West (1738–1820)

Gibbes Museum



ONLINE WALKING TOUR

Christmas in Georgian London

Zoom Webinar (Live or Rent)

Tuesday, December 9 | 5:00 p.m. ET

At the start of the Georgian period, Christmas was a refined and relatively modest affair, especially among the upper classes. Gone were the Tudor boisterous revels. Instead, the holiday was marked by elegant entertainments, subdued gatherings, and traditional fares such as rosemary garlands, Christmas porridge, and the ever-popular buttock of beef. However, by the late Georgian period, shifting changes in custom led to a wave of nostalgia for the festive customs of “Old England.” This change brought renewed enthusiasm for traditional celebrations tied to St. Nicholas Day and Twelfth Night festivities, and the development of new foods and culinary treats. Accompanying the ascension of the new monarch in 1714, King George I, came the now popular custom of serving plum pudding as part of Christmas dinner. Join Rob Smith for a lively virtual tour of Christmas in Georgian London, as he unwraps the layers of tradition, transformation, and theatricality that shaped the holiday season. From candlelit masked balls and extravagant feasts, to bustling frost fairs on the Thames, and raucous pantomimes on Drury Lane, Along the way, Rob will share stories of seasonal indulgence and holiday tales, including a tale of a highwayman who funded his Christmas celebrations through robbery. Join us as we explore how Georgian London celebrated the season and historically peer through the city windows lit by candlelight and alive with holiday cheer.

TICKETS: \$30 Members; \$40 Non-Members



Baking ingredients, mince pies, and a Christmas pudding at Greys Court, Oxfordshire

©National Trust Images/Nadia Mackenzie



Christmas Day – 1800 Science Museum Group

© The Board of Trustees of the Science Museum



Jeremy Black MBE, is a renowned English historian and former Professor of History at the University of Exeter. He graduated from Cambridge and did postgraduate work at Oxford. A prolific author and lecturer, he has written over 100 books, with a particular focus on 18th-century British, European, and American political, diplomatic, and military history. He is currently a Senior Fellow at the Center for the Study of America and the West at the Foreign Policy Research Institute, Philadelphia.

BRITISH ABROAD: THE GRAND TOUR

For young men of the 18th-century English social elite, extended travel for pleasure on the Continent came to be seen as an essential component of a well-rounded education. The Grand Tour also served as an important social marker for noblemen and aristocratic gentlemen who had completed their English schooling but were not yet old enough to assume control of their estates. The conventional Grand Tour was generally limited to France and Italy, although some ventured further afield to Switzerland, Germany, or the Low Countries. In his lecture, historian Jeremy Black MBE will explore the experiences of those who undertook the Grand Tour. Using private diaries and personal letters, he will present a fresh perspective on how British aristocrats experienced their travels—from accommodations, transport, food, and souvenirs (such as artworks and sculptures brought back to fill country houses) to entertainment expenses, tipping, and gambling or drinking money. He will also address the hazards faced by travelers, including the dangers of war, illness (sometimes fatal), carriage accidents, and crime. Dr. Black will focus on the realities of the journey, moving beyond the idealized version often portrayed in literature and history. Finally, he will discuss how the Grand Tour shaped both its participants and broader British culture.



Dr. Sarah Coffin, is a decorative arts and design consultant, curator, and lecturer. She has extensively researched and explored the interaction of culinary design and history. From 2003-2018, Dr. Coffin was Senior Curator and Head of the Product Design and Decorative Arts Department, at Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Museum. Previously she worked at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, and the Metropolitan Museum, NYC prior to becoming a Vice President and Decorative Arts Representative at Sotheby's. Her tenure at Cooper Hewitt included her curation of the exhibition *Feeding Desire: Design and Tools of the Table, 1500-2005*, which explored the significant role of flatware and cutlery as design objects that impacted social mores and cuisine. Her other curated exhibitions (and authorship of exhibition catalogues) include *The Jazz Age: American Style in the 1920s*; *Set in Style: The Jewelry of Van Cleef & Arpels*; and *Rococo: The Continuing Curve, 1730-2008* among others. She has taught and/or lectured at NYU, George Washington University, Yale, Bard Graduate Center, and Parsons School of Design, as well as to numerous museum and private groups.

EXTRAVAGANT TO ELEGANT: DINING AT THE ENGLISH TABLE

King Edward VII was on the British throne as the 20th century swept into England. Already 59 years old, the new monarch continued the late Victorian fashion for considerable material consumption and fine dining. Faster modes of transport, along with the spread of the British Empire, gave rise to the availability of exotic foods served at the English table. Transatlantic marriages also brought American wealth into the dining rooms of aristocratic households. The result was a decade of lavish dining on a grand scale, with a complex series of courses using specialized tableware and expensive decorations. In this lecture, Dr. Sarah Coffin will explain how this elaborate dining method was expressed in the fashionable hotel restaurants in London, as well as in the country houses of the Edwardian elite. She will mark the transformation of British dining culture from the Edwardian era through the interwar years—when the table became both a canvas for creativity and a symbol of changing times. She will discuss how WWI brought about dining changes as well as the introduction

of new materials—such as stainless steel. She will illustrate how the increased use of the motor car led to fancy picnic baskets for fashionable feasting outside. Finally, she will discuss the changes in the 1930s that brought modern dining elegance outside the dining room.



Jessica Fahy, is a freelance art historian. She sits on lecturer and guide panels for the National Gallery of Ireland, the Hugh Lane Gallery and UCD School of Access and Lifelong Learning. She gives both private and public talks and tours across Ireland and abroad. She is active online covering all areas of Western Art from the 14th century to the present day. She is a regular contributor to RTÉ Radio 1 arts show Arena. She has a MLitt in Art History from UCD where she also received her undergraduate degree. She completed her MA in Italian Renaissance Art at the Courtauld Institute of Art in London in 2007.

ARTS & CRAFTS CONNECTIONS: THE YEATS & MORRIS FAMILIES

Two of the most influential artistic families of the late 19th and early 20th centuries—the Morris’ of England and the Yeats’ of Ireland have rich and fascinating connections. Their relationships offer a compelling window into the shared ideals of the Arts & Crafts movement. At one time the families were neighbours in London and their proximity created personal ties which helped shape Irish and British arts, design, and cultural identity. The earliest link between the families might have been when John Butler Yeats sketched William Morris during his lecture at Dublin’s Contemporary Club in 1886—a fleeting encounter that marked the beginning of deeper artistic and ideological connections. Lily Yeats learned embroidery under the tutelage of May Morris and went on to produce exquisite work for Morris & Co. The influence of Morris’ philosophy is especially evident in the founding of the Dun Emer Guild in 1902 by Elizabeth and Lily Yeats and Evelyn Gleeson. This women-led cooperative sought to revive traditional Irish handicrafts. The sisters’ later enterprise, Cuala Industries, further revived Irish culture through utilizing fine printing and embroidery. Jessica Fahy will trace this incredible creative legacy that bound the two families together. She will illustrate beautiful examples of the Yeats sisters’ works and examine how their collaboration with Morris’ ideals shaped an international vision of art that was both socially purposeful and aesthetically enduring.



Victoria Kastner, is the leading scholar and author about the architect Julia Morgan as well as about Hearst Castle, where she was historian for over 30 years. She is the author of *Hearst Castle: The Biography of a Country House*, with a foreword (2000); *Hearst’s San Simeon: The Gardens and the Land* (2009); and *Hearst Ranch: Family, Land and Legacy*. She coauthored *The Beverly Hills Hotel: The First 100 years with Robert Anderson*. In 2022, Victoria published; *Julia Morgan: An Intimate Biography of the Trailblazing Architect*. Ms. Kastner has lectured extensively on Julia Morgan, Hearst’s art collection, and the history of collecting for many museums and groups including at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the American Museum in Britain in Bath; and the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco. She has also written for *The London Telegraph*, the American Institute of Architects, Oxford University’s Journal of the History of Collections, and *The Magazine Antiques*.

FRED ASTAIRE IN LONDON

Though born in Omaha, Nebraska, and raised in New York City, dancer Fred Astaire spent a significant portion of his early career in the United Kingdom. From 1922 to 1932, he and his sister Adele captivated London audiences in three wildly popular West End musicals, sparking a sensation so intense that critics dubbed it “Astairia.” During his time in London, Astaire immersed himself in British culture; he studied music theory at London’s Guildhall School of Music alongside Noël Coward and he also socialized with the aristocracy. After a decade in London, Adele retired from the stage to marry Lord Charles Cavendish, the second son of the Duke of Devonshire, and moved to Lismore Castle in Ireland—introducing her brother to the upper echelons of English society. The

pair’s decade of dancing and performing in London also had a profound effect on Fred. With his new dance partner, Claire Luce, he expanded his repertoire, incorporating sweeping, romantic movements as well as adding an English sense of style with a “gentleman’s” wardrobe. Astaire’s impeccable fashion sense, effortless charm, and refined elegance—so central to his legendary dance films of the 1930s through the 1950s—continued to be deeply influenced by the customs and style he observed while mingling with British high society and even the royal family. (He taught Edward VIII the Charleston!). In her lecture, Victoria Kastner will explore the profound impact of Astaire’s years in the UK, revealing how his time on the London stage helped shape his character, and the dancer, actor, and icon the world came to adore.



Carol Ann Lloyd, is a popular speaker who shares the stories of Shakespeare and English history. She is the former Manager of Visitor Education at Folger Shakespeare Library, where she gave workshops and tours about Shakespeare and Early Modern England. Her podcast, *British History: Royals, Rebels, and Romantics*, explores the lives of famous and infamous characters in history. Her book *Tudors by the Numbers* was published in 2023, and her latest book is *Courting the Virgin Queen: Elizabeth I and Her Suitors*. Carol Ann has presented programs at the Smithsonian, Folger Shakespeare Library, Agcroft Hall, and TEDx, among other venues. Ms. Lloyd is a member of the National Speakers Association.

MISTRESS OF HARDWICK: ELIZABETH, COUNTESS OF SHREWSBURY

Born in the quiet hills of Derbyshire, Elizabeth Hardwick—known to history as “Bess of Hardwick”—rose to become one of the wealthiest and most influential women in Elizabethan England. Through four strategic marriages, keen business sense, and sharp political instincts, Bess secured power and status in a world dominated by men. After marrying Sir William Cavendish, Bess acquired the Chatsworth estate and began a lifelong passion for building and property. Her later marriage to George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, placed her at the heart of national politics. The couple orchestrated dynastic marriages between their children and became embroiled in the imprisonment of Mary, Queen of Scots—an assignment that ultimately fractured their marriage. Defiant and independent, Bess returned to Derbyshire and constructed her crowning achievement: the magnificent Hardwick Hall, “more glass than wall.” From there, she championed her granddaughter Arbella Stuart as a potential heir to the English throne, navigating the dangerous politics of succession with remarkable skill. Carol Ann Lloyd will explore Bess’s extraordinary rise, her role in Tudor court life, and her enduring legacy as a masterful strategist, builder, and matriarch of a powerful dynasty.



Claire Masset has degrees in art and architectural history from St. Andrews and Oxford. She is the publisher for the National Trust in charge of their gardening books and also writes for publications. Her journalism has appeared in *Country Life*, *BBC Homes & Antiques*, *Period Living*, *Historic Gardens Review*, *Gardens Illustrated*, *Art Quarterly*, and *The English Garden* magazine. Her books include the bestselling *Secret Gardens of the National Trust*, *Roses and Rose Gardens*, and *Cottage Gardens*. She recently won the Roger Deakin Award from the Society of Authors. She gardens in her spare time and lives in West Oxfordshire with her son and two cats.

THE ENGLISH COTTAGE GARDEN

Featuring an abundant yet modest jumble of colorful flowers, the cottage garden holds a special place in people’s hearts. The characteristic mix of flowers, vegetables, medicinal herbs, and fruit trees, has its roots in the medieval cottager’s plot. Over the centuries, however, the cottage garden evolved to represent a quintessentially English style. Gardener and author Claire Masset will explore the rich history of the British cottage garden, illustrating the evolution of this informal design style with its cheerful masses of flowers. She will showcase recreations of the 16th-century country housewife’s plot, the relaxed 18th-century writers’ gardens, the “picturesque” 18th-century cottages surrounded by old-fashioned blooms, and the romantic flower beds of the 19th-century Arts & Crafts movement. Even designed 20th-century gardens such as Hidcote and Sissinghurst incorporated informally

styled cottage garden “rooms.” Masset will describe the building blocks of this cottage style, from popular flowers and trees to design principles. She will also explain how cottage gardens can be created in small, contemporary spaces. Finally she will show how British cottage gardens came to embody a natural paradise still beloved by gardeners around the world.



Sinclair McKay writes for the *Daily Telegraph*, *The Mail on Sunday* and *The Spectator*. He is a literary critic for the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Spectator*. He has published extensively on Bletchley Park and codebreakers in his books, *The Secret Life of Bletchley Park*, *The Secret Listeners*, and *Bletchley Park Brainteasers*. Among his other books include *Dresden: The Fire and the Darkness* (2020) and *Meeting Churchill: A Life in 90 Encounters* (2023). His upcoming book *St. Petersburg: Sacrifice and Redemption in the City That Defied Hitler*, is due to be released in October 2025.

MEETING CHURCHILL: PERSONAL ENCOUNTERS

In his ninety years of life – an incredible span reaching from the autumn of Queen Victoria’s reign in 1874 to the rise of the Rolling Stones in 1965 – Winston Churchill had encounters with the most extraordinary range of people. From Gandhi to Albert Einstein; HG Wells to Charlie Chaplin; Ethel Barrymore to Maria Callas; Harry S Truman to Joseph Stalin to Queen Elizabeth II. Churchill is remembered best as an inspirational war leader and a young army adventurer. But his vividly rich life also encompassed friendships with – among many others – a Bolshevik ambassador, artists like Walter Sickert, actors like Laurence Olivier and poets like Rupert Brooke. Through the eyes and recollections of all these people, one starts to glimpse and understand new depths in Churchill: his character, his passions, his follies –not to mention his amazing propensity for bursting into tears at the slightest provocation!



James Reginato has been a writer-at-large for *Vanity Fair* since 2009. He has landed rare interviews with some of the world’s most elusive individuals in their extraordinary homes including Bunny Mellon, King Charles III (then Prince of Wales), Highness Prince Karim, the Aga Khan and others. A contributing editor of *Sotheby’s Magazine* he has also served as Editor-at-Large for *Architectural Digest*. His work appears in

WSJ, *Town & Country*, *The Financial Times* and *W Magazine* where he was previously the Features Director. Mr. Reginato received a B.A. from Columbia University. He is the author of *Growing up Getty: The Story of America’s Most Unconventional Dynasty*. His first book, *Great Houses, Modern Aristocrats*, on which his lecture is based, presents an intimate look at some of Great Britain’s stateliest houses and the families who live inside them. **George McNeely** is an architectural historian, editor, and charity auctioneer. He graduated from Princeton University and has an MBA from Columbia Business School. He was Vice President for Strategic & International Affairs at World Monuments Fund until 2016. Previously, he worked for 15 years at Christie’s Auction House as a Senior Vice President in Business Development. He regularly lectures about the history of art and architecture, the art and auction market, and cultural heritage preservation

MODERN ARISTOCRATS: ANCESTRAL HOUSES AND THEIR STORIES

The history of England and the British people is inextricably linked with the stories of its leading aristocratic dynasties, and the seats they have occupied for centuries. These houses have survived great wars, economic upheavals, and at times scandal and tragedy. James Reginato, writer-at-large for *Vanity Fair*, will showcase several of his favorite British stately homes, in England, Ireland, Italy, and the Caribbean. He will tell the behind-the-scenes stories and also illustrate their interiors—such as Broughton Castle, home of the 21st Baron Saye and Sele and The Grove in Oxfordshire, home of Countess Mountbatten of Burma and Lady Pamela Hicks. Mr. Reginato will then join architectural historian and editor George McNeely to discuss the history of these aristocratic families and their country houses. They will also answer questions about how these modern stewards and new generation of aristocrats keep these stately homes going in high style



Miranda Rock is a direct descendant of William Cecil. Her grandfather, the sixth Marquess, set up the Burghley House Preservation Trust. Her mother, Lady Victoria, was the first director of until 2007. Together with her husband, Orlando, and four young children, Miranda lives at Burghley House—something she considers both a privilege and a passion. She has said that she feels that Burghley is not a museum, but a home housing a historical collection, formed of items that the owners have collected over the years. “That is the value of this house, it’s a record of taste. It’s the sort of thing that sends a chill down your spine, knowing that the ninth Earl went to Naples, chose a picture, and you can see where he hung it.”

BURGHLEY HOUSE: 500 YEARS OF HISTORY, ART, AND FAMILY

Burghley House in Stamford, Lincolnshire, is one of England’s greatest country houses and a remarkable testament to the ambition and vision of William Cecil, Lord High Treasurer to Queen Elizabeth I. The most powerful courtier of the Elizabethan age, Cecil designed the house with Dutch Renaissance architect Hans Vredeman de Vries. Constructed between 1555 and 1587, Burghley’s exterior reflects a striking blend of 16th-century architectural influences, incorporating fashionable French and Italian styles. Inside, the opulent State Rooms house one of the finest privately owned collections of Old Master paintings in England. Over the centuries, the Cecil family also acquired an exceptional range of fine English and Continental furniture, rare 17th-century tapestries, English portrait miniatures, Chinese snuff bottles, over 800 pieces of Asian and European ceramics among other notable works of art. The interiors also showcase dramatic Baroque decorative painting, most famously the Heaven Room and the Hell Staircase, both painted by Antonio Verrio. Burghley has remained the seat of the Cecil family for over 16 generations and is currently home to Miranda Rock and her family. Join Royal Oak members and supporters for a special digital tour, presented by the guardian of Burghley. Ms. Rock will highlight the house’s extraordinary interiors, explore the family’s collections, and share stories about the family’s long history and their role as stewards. She will also discuss the ongoing work of preserving and maintaining Burghley House for future generations.



Emma Slocombe is the National Trust’s Senior National Curator for Dress and Textiles and has been a curator at the National Trust since 2006. Her principal interests lie in early modern textiles, furnished interiors, and histories of textile recycling and repurposing – subjects on which she has published widely. She is currently leading projects that explore the manufacture, exchange and repurposing of a broad range of dress and textiles. Recent publications include ‘Textile Transmissions: Repurposing church vestments in the Reformation’ (*National Trust Cultural Heritage Magazine*, Autumn 2023) with Professor James Clarke (Exeter University). She also co-leads research into ‘Histories of Childhood’ with Professor Sian Pooley (Oxford University), and authored ‘Fashion at Play: An 18th century doll at Dudmaston Hall’ (*National Trust Cultural Heritage Magazine*, Spring 2024).

WHAT TO WEAR?: COSTUME COLLECTION OF THE NATIONAL TRUST

The National Trust looks after more than 40,000 pieces of dress or costume, including objects of national significance. Some pieces belonged to people who lived or worked in the Trust’s historic houses, while others belonged to unknown individuals. From luxurious attire to practical everyday working clothes, the NT’s assemblage contains examples of women and men’s fashions, children’s clothing, and accessories. While the collection represents 500 years of fashion trends and innovation, it also offers something more intimate than just evidence of material survival; it is a repository of the life traces of tens of thousands of people. Emma Slocombe, Senior National Curator of Dress and Textiles at the National Trust, will introduce her new co-authored book *100 Things to Wear: Fashion from the National Trust Collections* (Fall 2025). Informed by new research and photography, she will share a selection of the most significant collection items—from the opulence of the Tudor period to the tailoring of the Windrush generation. She will explain how the way people dressed reflected their social power, political tastes, and personality. Finally, she will delve behind the scenes, illustrating the work of the Textile Conservation Studio team.



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Close-up of cabinet in the Lobby at Arlington Court

FALL 2025 PROGRAMS