



UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
VISITORS OF THE
ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM
2000—2001



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Plate references throughout this Report relate to the accompanying colour illustrations of new acquisitions which can be viewed on the Museum's web site: www.ashmol.ox.ac.uk



VISITORS OF THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM

as at 31 July 2001

The Senior Proctor (David John Womersley, MA, DPhil)

The Junior Proctor (Professor Geoffrey Watford, MA, MPhil)

The Assessor (Bryan Roe Ward-Perkins, MA)

Professor A.K. Bowman, MA, PhD Toronto, FBA

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Professor M.J. Kemp, MA, FBA, FRSA

Dr R.C. Repp, MA, DPhil (Chairman)

Lady Heseltine (co-opted)

The Rt Hon. Sir Timothy Sainsbury (co-opted)

Professor A.G. Hopwood, MA (co-opted)

Professor J Rawson, CBE, MA, DLitt., FBA (co-opted)



DIRECTOR'S FOREWORD

This year the Ashmolean's Annual Report is appearing in a new format. The short report that follows outlines the principal events of the year, including work on the building, exhibitions, acquisitions, educational activities, research and publications, and is published with illustrations as an extra issue of *The Ashmolean*. This report will also appear in the *University Gazette*. A fully detailed report on the activities of the Museum – the report of record – will be published in January on the Museum's web site and will be available in hard copy by request to the Publications Officer.

In last year's report I celebrated the opening of the Khoan and Michael Sullivan Gallery of Chinese Painting, the first custom-built gallery for Chinese painting in this country. This year we opened the Sands Gallery, a new gallery which enables the Ashmolean to show its important collection of 20th-century paintings, sculpture and graphic art. The building of the Sands Gallery was made possible by a generous grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. During the year, we have also reinstalled the Eric North Room, the gallery in which temporary displays from the enormous, rarely seen collections of the Department of Eastern Art are shown. All these initiatives are part of a continuing drive to present the rich collections of the Ashmolean to our public in an attractive, accessible and informative manner. A great opportunity is presented by the move of the libraries of classical archaeology, Western and Eastern art into the University's new Sackler Library in St John Street. The area on the ground floor formerly occupied by the Classics Library will be used for temporary exhibitions; the Western Art Library for new galleries and a paper conservation studio; and the Eastern Art Library will provide a new, environmentally controlled store for the Oriental textile collections, which will in turn liberate space in the north-east corner of the building.

In order to develop further our ambitious plans for the Museum, we have been continuing to work on a coherent Master Plan for the building with Rick Mather Architects and this has taken up a great deal of time this year. I asked Rick Mather to look at what seem to me the key problems of the Museum: lack of space for collections and staff; the difficulty the visitor experiences in finding his way round the building; the present confusing layout of the collections (in which 18th-century English teapots are cheek by jowl with pre-Dynastic Egyptian mace heads); the lack of any significant environmental controls; and the fact that wheelchair users cannot reach certain parts of the building. In the course of a series of discussions between staff and architects a real understanding developed of the problems confronting the Museum and this has resulted in a bold and exciting blueprint for the future. The discussions will continue during this year, but the basic outlines of the plan have emerged and it is a plan which builds on the Forecourt and Sunken Court developments of my predecessor and comes to terms with all the pressing problems of the Museum.

Last year I concluded my foreword by mentioning the groundswell of support for new initiatives for the funding of non-national museums. This culminated in the appointment of a Regional Museum Task Force, led by Lord Evans, Chairman of Resource. It has recently reported to the Minister of Culture and a response is awaited. It proposes a new structure for the support of municipal, regional and university museums by central government funding, and we can only hope that this forward-thinking document will receive the warm endorsement that it deserves. If its recommendations are implemented, it will entirely transform these museums and ensure that they play a key role in the educational and cultural provision of the English regions.



IN MEMORIAM

As will be very clear from what follows, the Ashmolean owes a very special debt to Brian Miller, Fellow of Brasenose, who died this year, having appointed the Ashmolean his residuary legatee. His immensely generous benefaction has enabled us to bring new staff and new works of art to the Ashmolean. He loved the Museum and we remember with great affection his frequent, unassuming presence here over many years.

It is with deep regret that we also record the death of Mr Samir Shamma. As an outstanding benefactor to the University of Oxford, to St Cross College, and to the Ashmolean Museum, Mr Shamma has commanded our greatest respect and gratitude. His personal scholarship and great generosity have transformed Islamic numismatics, allowing it to develop as a major branch of historical study.



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

ACCESS

In 2001 we continued with summer evening opening in June, July and August on Thursday evenings until 7 p.m. We have now built up a significant audience for these late openings and the concerts, lectures and other activities which take place then. The Museum has also opened at 12 noon on Sundays during the summer months, an experiment we plan to repeat next year.

We are not only extending physical access to the Museum. Thanks to grants from the Designation Challenge Fund, the Ashmolean web site will soon have a complete catalogue of all the French drawings in the collection with images and basic information. This is part of a scheme to make images of all the remarkable collection of European drawings available electronically. The illustrated databases of antiquities and our Eastern art and coin collections have also been rapidly expanded.

STAFF

Brian Miller's generous bequest has enabled us to create a new post of Print Room Assistant, to which Katia Pisvin has been appointed. Dr Shailendra Bhandare has been appointed Assistant Keeper of South Asian coins with effect from 1 January 2002; the costs of the first year of this appointment have been generously donated by a charitable foundation. Julia Lenaghan resumed work in the Cast Gallery as sculpture researcher from October 2000 until August 2001. Thorsten Opper succeeded her in September; he will continue to work on the database projects in the Cast Gallery, which form the core of a future electronic catalogue. Julie Summers has joined the staff as Exhibitions Officer, which reflects the increasing pace and professionalism of exhibition organization in the Museum.

THE BUILDING

On 20 June 2001 the Sands Gallery was opened by Sir Howard Hodgkin. It was built as part of the project for the University's new Sackler Library for art and archaeology designed by Robert Adam and largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. It has been named in honour of Morton Sands, who formed a remarkable collection of paintings by Walter Sickert and his contemporaries, and of Jean and Christopher Sands, whose generosity ensured that his wish that the collection should come to the Ashmolean was carried through. The gift of eight paintings and two drawings by Sickert to the Museum has meant that the representation of Sickert and the Camden Town School is now amongst the best anywhere. The installation of the gallery, which involved a major programme of conservation of paintings and frames, was carried out by Katharine Eustace, whom we were sorry to lose when she left the Museum in September to take up a post at the National Portrait Gallery.

The renovation of the Eric North Room was carried out with the support of an anonymous benefactor. Improved and more versatile humidified display cases and lighting were designed for the room by Ivor Heal Design Ltd and manufactured by Click Systems. The work began in mid-February and the Room was opened to the public on 27 April. This is a huge step forward and means that our Eastern Art collections, so many of which are not on display, can now be presented to the public on a rotational basis in an elegant and well lit space.



In September 2000, a major reinstallation of the Egyptian Dynastic collections in the Sackler Gallery of Egyptian Antiquities, generously funded by the Dr Mortimer and Theresa Sackler Foundation, began. It is now almost forty years since the initial displays were completed in what was then a recent extension to the building; since then only small changes have been made to incorporate additions to the collections or revise the labels. The reinstallation, which is being carried out under the supervision of the curator of the Egyptian collections, Dr Helen Whitehouse, involves thousands of objects, many small and fragile, and will probably not be completed until early in 2003. Arrangements have been made to minimize disruption to the educational service provided by this extremely popular part of the collections.

The John Evans Gallery, which houses the collection of European Prehistory, is also being reinstalled. It contains objects from the British and European Iron Age, including spectacular local finds and objects from the cemetery at Hallstatt in Austria, in the excavation of which Sir John Evans was involved in 1866. The reinstallation is being done in four sections in order to lessen the disruption to visitors. The lower sections of the cases have been glazed to provide special displays at child's eye level with presentations aimed at stimulating the imaginations of schoolchildren.

At the same time as the public displays are gradually being improved, there has been modernization and upgrading of the storerooms. One of the basement rooms, primarily used as a store for excavated material from local sites, has recently been painted, completing one of the major aspects of the programme. The special storerooms for the reserve collections of classical inscriptions and sculptures and customized small special stores for ancient glass, ceramics and metals have also been upgraded. These objects, many on special racking, are at last installed in clean, well lit areas with nearby study facilities.

During the summer of 2001 the books from the Classics and Western Art Libraries within the Ashmolean were moved into the new Sackler Library. The ex-Library spaces present important opportunities for the Museum and funding for their conversion into galleries for special exhibitions and for the display of European drawings and ceramics as well as a studio for the conservation of works on paper is being actively pursued. We hope that these fine and much needed spaces will not lie fallow for long. In the short term, the move of the Western Art Library will provide an area for visitors who wish to look at prints and drawings but are not able to use the stairs to the Print Room.

ACQUISITIONS AND DONATIONS

The gift of paintings and drawings by Sickert from the Christopher Sands Trust has transformed the Museum's representation of early 20th-century British art (Plate 24). The gift has been complemented by the loan of the family collection of drawings by Sickert and Augustus John. The naming of the new Sands Gallery recognizes the immense importance of the generosity of the Sands family to the Museum.

The late Miss Alice Lascelles presented a group of miniatures including an outstanding portrait of Sir Everard Fawkener by Jean-Etienne Liotard (Plate 20). Mrs Diane Bacon and Mrs Helen Smyth presented an exquisite pair of late 17th-century English silver-gilt cups with lively engraving in memory of their grandfather A.H. Whiteley (Plate 19); and grants from the National Art Collections Fund, the Resource/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, and the Friends of the Ashmolean made possible the purchase from the same collection of a robustly sculptural silver tankard of about 1670 attributed to Jacob Bodendick. A magnificent maiolica basin, made in Urbino around 1570



with designs by the Zuccaro brothers and Jacques Androuet Ducerceau, was acquired with help from the same sources, together with a substantial private donation (Plate 17).

The generosity of the late Brian Miller has enabled us to purchase a delightful sketch of the Nile at Luxor by Jean-Léon Gérôme (Plate 23). Together with the gift from Alice Goldet (in memory of her husband Michel) of a scene in the Roman Campagna by Giovanni Battista Camuccini this means that we are substantially expanding the group of plein-air oil sketches already in the collection (Plate 22).

The munificent bequest from Christopher Vaughan of funds for the purchase of 20th-century drawings and prints made possible the acquisition of a fine early drawing by Paul Nash of Wittenham Clumps (Plate 25) and a group of prints by Victor Pasmore. Following the Edward Ardizzone exhibition, Geoffrey Cumberlege presented a water-colour showing characters from the artist's Little Tim books paying homage to the donor's father, his publisher at the Oxford University Press (Plate 26). The Contemporary Art Society, which the Museum has recently rejoined, has presented a set of screenprints by Rachel Whiteread.

The Museum's collection of 20th-century studio pottery was dramatically enriched by the bequest of pieces from the collection of Vera Daniel and the family of Mrs Ethel Fasal, a founder-director of the Oxford Gallery. Our collection now has important works by many of the leading master potters at work in this country in the last fifty years, including Bernard Leach, Lucie Rie, Michael Cardew and Alan Caiger-Smith: we hope to develop this area of the collection in the years to come. The small collection of contemporary silver was augmented by the arrival of a silver jug commissioned from a young Birmingham silversmith, Tara Coomber, the winner of last year's millennium competition funded by Mrs Rosa Edwards (Plates 27 & 28).

The renewed participation of the Ashmolean in excavations abroad has not only brought representative selections of finds to the Museum, as from the dig in Georgia, but also the revival of a practice favoured by Arthur Evans. Replicas of some of the most important objects excavated at Pichvnari, such as a pair of granulated gold earrings, have been commissioned from local craftsmen (Plate 3).

Interesting numismatic acquisitions this year include, for example, a silver didrachm of Antoninus Pius, AD 138, struck at Caesarea in Cappadocia (Plate 16). Mr J.E. Ferrell has generously presented an outstanding group of 122 ancient and medieval coins from his own collection to the Museum.

The Cast Gallery was able to strengthen its collection with a number of key acquisitions during the past year. Through close collaboration with the Cast Gallery in Munich, we were able to purchase a fine cast of the Old Fisherman in the Louvre. Together with its own unique cast of the Aphrodisias Fisherman, the Gallery is now able to illuminate one particular aspect of Hellenistic genre sculpture in unrivalled detail (Plate 4). The collection of Greek and Roman portrait sculpture was expanded by thirteen new heads and busts that illustrate important periods and styles. Among these is the famous portrait-herm of the 5th-century BC Athenian statesman Themistokles from Ostia, as well as a number of imperial portraits (Plate 5). Generous support from the Friends of the Museum and the Craven Committee has made these acquisitions possible. We are also grateful to Hildegard Wiegel, who generously donated a fine plaster copy of the Polykleitan Diskophoros head in Berlin to the Cast Gallery.

The Museum is indebted to a donor for making possible the acquisition of a number of Indian, South-East Asian and Tibetan works of art, including the Cambodian stone



torso of Vishnu, a purchase which was also supported by the National Art Collections Fund (Plate 6). Another benefactor helped us to make a number of important additions to the Japanese collections, which include three outstanding porcelain vessels, a screen by Gyokuho (Plate 10) and four prehistoric earthenware pieces. These acquisitions were also supported by the Friends of the Ashmolean.

BENEFACTIONS

This year we have received an exceptional benefaction: the Ashmolean Museum is the residuary legatee of Brian Miller, an English Fellow at Brasenose College and a long-time friend of the Museum. He served for many years on the Council of the Friends of the Museum. A number of interesting works on paper, both European and Oriental, came directly to the Museum and the sale of his property will produce a benefaction in excess of £1m. This has already been used in part to provide a Print Room Assistant in the Western Art Print Room and to make a number of acquisitions, including the Nile view by Gérôme, discussed above, which has been purchased in his name.

We have also received a generous benefaction from the estate of Mrs Tait, another long-time friend and supporter of the Museum.

It is a pleasure to record the continuing support of the Carl and Eileen Subak Family Foundation which has enabled the Coin Room to invite scholars from central and eastern Europe for a period of study in Oxford. The Subak Foundation has also funded medieval coin purchases and the research of Dr Cathy King on Roman quinarii.

SPONSORSHIP

The Museum has benefited greatly from a varied range of sponsors this year. The exhibitions programme has welcomed collaboration with the Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College as well as the Arts and Humanities Research Board on Jules Flandrin: *The Other Fin de Siècle*; and with the Oxfordshire County Museum Service and South Eastern Museums Service on *About Time*. We also received generous sponsorship from Phillips for the reception for the opening of the Sands Gallery.

The Education Department has enjoyed sponsorship of various kinds from a variety of sources – ranging from the generous gift of materials from the Broad Canvas art shop for National Drawing Day activities, to the financial support of the Teachers' Resource Pack on Early 20th-Century European Painting from the Hulme University Fund and the David Cohen Trust. Southern Arts contributed towards the Artist in Residence scheme, when we welcomed Helen Ganly to work in the Museum, as well as sponsoring three textile artists, Dawn Dupree, Karina Thompson and Carole Waller, to take part in a study day called 'Old for New Textiles'. The Oxford Gallery also supported this project.

Finally, the Design Studio received a welcome and extremely useful gift of a colour photocopier/printer from the manufacturers, Océ.

DESIGNATION CHALLENGE FUND

Having been awarded a grant from the Designation Challenge Fund in 2000, the Museum successfully applied for a second year of funding from the DCF, which will begin in April 2002. This has allowed the continuation of projects for the electronic documentation of the drawings collection of the Western Art Department, the



Chinese collections of the Eastern Art Department, and the collection of the Cast Gallery. This second year of DCF funding will enable the Ancient Cypriot collection of the Antiquities Department to be electronically documented, following on from the successful Ancient Near East collections project. Similarly, in the Heberden Coin Room, having completed the collection of Carausius and Allectus coins from Roman Britain and Gaul, the department has begun documenting the collection of Valerian and Gallienus.

The DCF grant has also allowed the Museum to retain the services of Mrs Catherine Hills as an assistant to Dr Moffett, in IT support. An important aspect of the DCF projects is the creation of a searchable resource based on the Museum's web site, which plays a major role in our determination to make the collections more accessible to the public.

CONSERVATION

Staffing in the Conservation Department has now reached its full complement of seven, and it is playing a pivotal role in the work of the Museum through involvement in most of the Ashmolean's activities. These centre on preventive and interventional conservation, but also include research, exhibitions, and loans support. During the year, the Department produced the Museum's first comprehensive disaster preparedness plan to be written since the Second World War and, as part of its preventive conservation strategy, further extended its installation of telemetric environmental monitoring throughout the Museum. It also completed the evaluation of the environmental problems in a number of galleries. This project was supported by a grant from the Department of the Environment and coordinated by the Conservation Department, with research and data measurement and processing being undertaken by a consultant with the support of Oxford Brookes University. It has produced a series of recommendations designed to improve the environmental control in these areas which are now being evaluated.

The Department has also provided interventional conservation support (though not including paintings) for all the Museum's curatorial departments, some of which had not hitherto had access to the range of conservation specialisms now available to them. In this, the Department has tried to deliver a balanced service but its activities have necessarily been influenced by the Museum's extensive loan and gallery refurbishment programmes. It also co-curated, with the Oxfordshire County Museum Service, the Museum's millennium exhibition *About Time*, which proved extremely popular and was successful in attracting new audiences to the Ashmolean with its novel displays and opportunities for visitor interaction. This exhibition is touring the county during 2001-2 and ably demonstrates the Ashmolean's commitment to outreach to the local community of Oxfordshire in an unusual way.

EXHIBITIONS

During this period we closed the exhibition *Turner's Oxford*, one of the most successful ever staged by the museum. The paintings and illustrations of Edward Ardizzone, shown in the Eldon Gallery last autumn, and Ana Maria Pacheco's remarkable sculptural installation *Dark Night of the Soul* brought new audiences into the Museum. Ana Maria Pacheco's exhibition also included a group of new prints, seen in Oxford for the first time: it had over 20,000 visitors and strengthens us in our determination to show the work of more contemporary artists in the Ashmolean. *About Time*, an exhibition which explored problems in conservation in an engaging and effective manner, was a



collaboration with the Oxfordshire County Museum Service and was also shown at the County Museum in Woodstock and the River and Rowing Museum in Henley. Such collaboration with other museums in the region is another new development on which we intend to build. Jules Flandrin, an exhibition based on the research of Dr Juliet Simpson of Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College, presented the work of an interesting contemporary of Matisse and Picasso to the British public for the first time.

The exhibition *Reconstructing a Masterpiece of Ancient Sculpture: The Aphrodisias Fisherman* in Oxford, including text panels and the full plaster reconstruction of the fisherman statue, was taken successfully to Munich's Museum für Abgüsse Klassischer Bildwerke. Due to great public demand the Munich show had to be extended beyond the date originally envisaged. The Cast Gallery's loans finally returned to Oxford in late May (Plate 4).

EDUCATION

The Education Service marked its twentieth anniversary with a party to honour the thirty-two voluntary guides who work closely with an office staff of six to develop and provide a rich range of tours, workshops, and materials for the Museum's public. Museum curatorial staff and outside specialists also contributed lectures and gallery sessions. This year's offerings have included study days on Ruskin, modern Chinese painting, and silver; studio workshops on Indian miniature painting and sculptors' drawings; behind-the-scenes sessions on Asian Ikats; and lectures on 'Women's Eyes', Caravaggio, and 'Arthur Evans and the Frescoes of Knossos'.

The Museum's first Artist in Residence, Helen Ganly, worked in the galleries and offered workshops for local children, providing a lively focus for artistic enthusiasm among staff and visitors. Another innovation was the nine hands-on exhibits in the *About Time* exhibition, which also featured a family gallery trail and hands-on information panels on conservation in the Museum. The Education Service won a runner-up award for their part in National Drawing Day. Other initiatives which have helped to attract new visitors included the new Saturday Drop-In sessions for families and the monthly highlighted object with information available on the web and in the galleries. Children's holiday activities featured artists and re-enactors. David Odwar, a Ugandan sculptor, led a successful workshop on Egyptian sculpture and Anglo-Saxon re-enactors allowed children to try on a weighty shirt of chain mail.

PUBLICATIONS

The seventh volume in the sequence of catalogues of British and European Drawings was published by the University Press. This volume by Jon Whiteley covers the French School, spanning French art from the 16th to the early 20th century, and is a magisterial distillation of many years of scholarly study of the Museum's collection. The Press also published Susan Sherratt's two-volume *Catalogue of the Cycladic Antiquities in the Ashmolean Museum*, as part of the continuing series of catalogues of the permanent collections. The Ashmolean's collection of Bronze Age Cycladic art is one of the most representative outside Greece; Dr Sherratt was the first Sackler Fellow and publication was made possible through the continuing generosity of the Dr Mortimer and Theresa Sackler Foundation.

The first volume of the *Manuscript Catalogues of the Early Museum Collections 1683–1886*, edited by Arthur MacGregor, was published as *British Archaeological Reports, International Series 907*. This volume includes 'The Book of Benefactors' (1683–1766), the 'Catalogue Borlase' (1758) and the 'Anthropological Catalogue' (1886) listing the objects transferred from the Ashmolean to the Pitt Rivers Museum in the course of that year.



One of the major exhibition catalogues produced during the year was Jules Flandrin (1871–1947): *The Other Fin de Siècle*, published in association with Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College. This catalogue was produced with generous sponsorship, as were the catalogue of Chinese Paintings illustrating more than two hundred works from the 17th century to the present day, published to coincide with the opening of the Khoan and Michael Sullivan Gallery of Chinese Painting, and *Continuity and Change: Twentieth-Century Sculpture* in the Ashmolean Museum. Publication of the latter and of the Teacher Resource Pack – *Early 20th-Century European Painting* – coincided with the opening of the Sands Gallery on 20 June. It introduces to a wider public an aspect of the Museum's collection which is virtually unknown. Sponsors included the Henry Moore Foundation, the Hulme University Fund and the David Cohen Trust. The Barakat Trust provided generous sponsorship towards publication of Marianne Ellis's *Embroideries and Samplers from Islamic Egypt*, which illustrates a selection of medieval Islamic embroideries from the Newberry Collection in the Department of Eastern Art. The major numismatic publication was Dr Luke Treadwell's *Die Corpus of Buyid Coinage* cataloguing Iraqi and Iranian coinage struck under the Buyid dynasty in the 10th and 11th centuries AD.

ELIAS ASHMOLE GROUP

Of the 73 Elias Ashmole Group members, 28 have joined since the Patrons' Dinner in October 2000, and of those 25 joined as a result of a mailing in January. The majority of the 1999/2000 members renewed their subscriptions in 2000/2001.

The Elias Ashmole Charitable Trust is now fully established to take advantage of the new Gift Aid regulations and administer membership more efficiently. Professor Sir Christopher White has been elected Chairman of the Trustees. Lady Heseltine, Sir Ewen Ferguson and the Director are also Trustees. Pat Frankland is Treasurer, and Roy Sully Secretary. At their annual meeting, the Trustees decided that since the Friends of the Ashmolean primarily give grants for acquisitions, the Trust would concentrate its efforts in other areas of need, such as the Education Service, exhibitions, publications which are worthwhile but not entirely economic, and other areas for which funding from other sources might be difficult to obtain. A small contribution to major acquisitions should also be available. The Trust made grants totalling £42,000 to the Museum to assist the work of the Education Department, the preparation of the Master Plan and publication of *Continuity and Change: Twentieth-Century Sculpture* in the Ashmolean Museum.

THE FRIENDS

The Friends have lost three valued members of their Council in the course of the year: Mr Brian Miller, who died in March, had been a member for twelve years; Mrs Poppy Anderson, who resigned on moving away from Oxford, had been a member for five years; and Dr Kenneth Garlick retired from the Council in July after serving since the foundation of the Friends in 1970 (and as Keeper of Western Art from 1968 to 1984). They have been replaced by Mr John Ashdown, Mrs Valerie Stewart, and Dr Oliver Impey (who was one of the two original Secretaries of the Friends in their early years).

The purchase grants the Friends made to the Museum during the year were dominated by the grant made in 2000 towards the purchase of the Titian Portrait of Giacomo Doria (£25,000 given in that year, £15,000 in 2001, and £10,000 to be paid at the beginning of 2002 to bring the total up to £50,000, the largest grant ever made by the Friends). As a result of this, fewer other grants than usual were made in the course of



the year. They included: £2,500 towards the purchase of a mid-19th-century Japanese screen which is the pair to one already in the collection (Plate 10); £5,000 towards a partly gilt silver tankard attributed to Jacob Bodendick; £5,000 towards a Ming table of the 16th–17th century, the first important piece of Chinese furniture to come into the Museum's collection; £1,250 (£250 of which was contributed by the Young Friends) to purchase outright a Roman bronze arm purse found many years ago on Hadrian's Wall (Plate 1); £2,000 towards the purchase of four prehistoric Japanese terracotta pots; and £5,000 towards the purchase of a large 16th-century maiolica basin from Urbino (Plate 17).

The activities organized for the Friends have continued to be very popular with members, and are generally oversubscribed. They made a modest profit, which contributed a worthwhile sum to this year's purchase grants.

It has been very gratifying to see how the Young Friends continue to flourish. The enthusiastic commitment of the members of their committee, some of them young members of the Museum staff and others undergraduate and postgraduate students in Oxford, is rewarded by the great pleasure the events they organize bring to their growing body of members. Last year they were able to make a contribution to the purchase of the Titian portrait, and this year they are delighted to have been able to make a grant towards the purchase of the Roman arm purse.

Dr Christopher Brown
Director
October 2001