2012: A YEAR TO CELEBRATE
The Museum has much to commemorate and celebrate this year. For example, on 20 January 2012, we commemorated the 175th anniversary of Soane’s death by garlanding Chantrey’s bust of the great architect with a wreath of bays. Soane gets this ‘leaf treatment’ twice a year – on the anniversary of his birth (10 September 1753) and his death (20 January 1837). This year, however, there were additional celebrations and two days later, on 23 January, a curious gathering took place by the Soane Family tomb in St Pancras Gardens, the former burial ground of St Giles-in-the-Fields. Organised by Rachel Floyd, Churchwarden of St Pancras Old Church, it was attended by about 100 Soane admirers, architectural enthusiasts, local residents and members of the congregation, as well as the Deputy Mayor of Camden (who look after the park and the tomb). A nosegay of bitter herbs was laid on the tomb, and I gave two short talks on Sir John and the Soane Family Tomb – a surprisingly complex architectural masterpiece with a delightful twist to its story (the domed tomb was the inspiration for Sir Giles Gilbert Scott’s famous K2 telephone box of 1924–26). Our thanks to St Pancras Old Church for organising such an enjoyable day, and to the London Borough of Camden for looking after the tomb so well.

OUR FIRST ANNUAL REVIEW
While we are on the subject of celebrations, another cause to celebrate was the publication in January of the Museum’s very first Annual Review. This well-illustrated booklet records the principal achievements and activities in the Museum in 2011 and was entirely sponsored by our generous patron and staunch supporter Basil Postan. It has been well received – indeed, we were quite overwhelmed by the hymn of praise which the Review generated. It has already generated a number of new Patrons and generous donations, so has more than earned its keep. The good news is that the Review will now be an annual publication and funding has already been secured for the 2012 edition. If you want to get a copy of the 2011 Annual Review they can be bought from the Museum Shop at £5 a copy or ordered via www.soane.org/shop/Sir-John-Soane’s-Museum-Annual-Review-2011

INTRODUCING SOME NEW FACES . . .
One of the things people like about the Review is the way it acknowledges the people who work in the Museum, and this year we were pleased to welcome three new members of staff. In January, Olly Perry began work as our new Retail Manager, the first time we have had someone at the Museum dedicated to managing the Museum Shop – a position funded by the Fidelity UK Foundation. Olly has a wide experience in retail and has proved to be a dab hand at e-commerce – making instant improvements to our online Shop. Two other new staff members, Andrew Davis and Vashti Sime, joined the Museum in February and both these new roles are being funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of our Opening up the Soane project (OUTS). Andrew Davis is the Museum’s Website Editor and Collections Information Officer – again a first for the Museum. He will overhaul and run the Museum’s website and set up and maintain the new Collections Management System that is being funded by OUTS. The plan is for all 54,000 objects in the Museum’s collection – from the sarcophagus of Seti I to the tiniest engraved gem or ephemeral pamphlet – to be catalogued on this new system and made freely available online. Andrew was the Documentation Officer at the Royal Engineers Museum in Chatham, so brings a wealth of experience to the post. Vashti Sime is our first Volunteer Coordinator. She comes to us from the National Trust at Polesden Lacy.
where she managed an army of some 500 volunteers! The plan is for Vashti to recruit a rather more manageable team of about 80 volunteers at the Museum, who will work alongside our Warders and other staff. The improvements and restorations achieved by the Opening up the Soane project will substantially increase the area of the Museum that is open to the public and we can only do that with the help of volunteers, most of which will be drawn from the local community, strengthening the Museum’s links with a particularly diverse and lively brace of London boroughs!

**WORKS TO COMPLETE NO.12 CONTINUE Apace**

With the refurbishments in No.12 Lincoln’s Inn Fields nearing completion, there is a decided buzz about the Museum at the moment. The building site is a veritable hive of activity as our contractors, Fairhurst Ward Abbots, are putting the finishing touches to the repaired ‘geometric’ staircase, specialist decorators from Hare and Humphreys are busily graining historic paint finishes, and conservators from Taylor Pearce are poulticing the marble chimneypieces – all under the watchful eye of our architects Julian Harrap, Lyall Thow and Caroline Wilson.

Just as exciting has been the arrival of the first elements of the cases for the new exhibitions gallery, imported from Goppion’s laboratorio outside Milan together with a small team of expert technicians to install them. Although made by Goppion S.p.A, the cases have been designed by the architects Caruso St John, with Bernd Schmutz as project architect.

Everything has to be ready for the opening of No.12 in late June 2012, when the first phase of Opening up the Soane will finally be completed. Meanwhile, on a scaffold at the rear of the building Fairhurst Ward Abbot’s bricklayers are laying the final courses of brickwork that will see the recreation of Soane’s Shakespeare and Tivoli Recesses to exactly how they were in 1837. In a studio in York, the great Reynolds Charity window that once hung in the Tivoli Recess is being painstakingly recreated by Keith Barley and Jonathan Cooke, while in their workshops near Brighton, England’s Ornamental Plasterwork Ltd are modelling the lost sunburst ceiling and the unusual spandrels incorporating eagles grasping serpents for the Tivoli Recess. Original plaster models by John Flaxman, Thomas Banks and Francis Chantrey are being cleaned and consolidated for their return to their original places in both Recesses – all in time for their unveiling in October 2012 – just one more thing to look forward to seeing during a future visit to the Soane Museum.

**Solar Power Comes to the Soane**

And finally, as part of the Phase 1 works for Opening up Soane, solar panels were installed on the top roof of No.13 Lincoln’s Inn Fields and, as of 2 February, have been feeding electricity into our system. The timing of our installation was fortuitous, as we got them installed just before the abolition of the Government Feed-In Tariff.

We did consider placing solar panels on the roof of No. 12 as well, but that is a much more fragile historic mansard structure and installation would have required considerable modifications which we felt to be unacceptable. We are delighted to say that the panels have been fitted to the much more robust roof of No. 13 using a ballast system which means that they are not fixed to the lead or to the roof structure. This has been certified by our structural engineer as strong enough to withstand ‘once in a century’ extreme weather events! They are not visible from street level and can be easily removed at any time.

Tim Knox FSA
March 2012
On 20 February the paintings which hang on a large recessed panel between the first and second floors of the No.13 staircase (adjoining the entrance to the South Drawing Room) were re-hung after months of research and conservation work. Visitors to the Museum are now seeing Soane’s original arrangement here for the first time since 1918.

The hang has been reconstructed based on the evidence of early inventories and guidebooks which list the works of art as they appeared on the staircase in sequence. In the centre is a large and elaborate compo (‘composition’ – a plaster material) on timber frame which was discovered some years ago empty, in store, with no glass and only its inscription to identify it. Fortunately its four large inner corner ornaments were also discovered unmarked amongst some frame fragments that had been carefully stored in a drawer. These corner ornaments have been put back on to the frame, while Joseph McCarthy of McCarthy frames, Tunbridge Wells, supplied new outer corners of an appropriate design cast from boxwood moulds from the Binnings Collection. Conservators Jane Wilkinson and Clare Kooy-Lister pressed and installed new compo from moulds made by Gary Lyons of Wiggins Ltd for the rest of the missing decoration. Eight months after conservation work began the frame is now beautifully restored.

The collage of drawings originally in the frame – a selection of views of Soane’s design for a Triumphal Bridge – was probably taken out in 1918–19 when this work was replaced on the staircase by George Jones’s, *Opening of London Bridge*. The drawings were removed from the backing paper and added to the drawings collection. Sadly, the originals were found to be in too poor a condition to be put back in the frame, which is why facsimile drawings have been made, cut out and then mounted in exactly the same way as the originals on a sheet of high quality rag paper, matched to the colour of Soane’s original mount.

Above the central picture is a series of engravings of Shakespearean characters by John Hamilton Mortimer – the top row being Ophelia, Shylock and a self-portrait of Mortimer as Jacques. Just below, either side of the large painting are King Lear and Caliban, above a pair of white plaster portrait roundels of Soane’s friends, the sculptor John Flaxman and his wife Ann (‘Nancy’). Below are engravings of the celebrated society portrait painter Sir Thomas Lawrence (left) and John Flaxman, flanking an engraving of Lawrence’s drawing of King George IV.

The arrangement places Soane’s own work in a place of honour on the stairs, with his own youthful sketches framed in the manner of the grandest oil paintings, surrounded by a beautifully orchestrated arrangement of portraits: a sequence of alternating pairs looking inwards and outwards. These link Soane not only with royalty, but with the leading artists of his day – who were also his close friends – as well as with one of the greatest of all English literary figures, Shakespeare.

As with so many of his arrangements, the juxtaposition of this wide-ranging cast of characters links Architecture with painting, sculpture and poetry, to represent the ‘Union of the Arts’ which Soane wished his Museum to embody.

Helen Dorey
Deputy Director
Soane’s oil paintings now available online

Sir John Soane’s Museum is proud to be participating in a ground-breaking new project to reveal the nation’s entire oil painting collection to the public. For the first time, the riches of all Britain’s public buildings, from schools to town halls to Government offices to Museums, are being brought together and will provide an unparalleled resource for everyone. The project has been carried out by the Public Catalogue Foundation (PCF), in partnership with the BBC, and aims to create a complete online catalogue of every oil painting in the national collection, which can be viewed at: www.bbc.co.uk/yourpaintings.

The Museum’s collection of oil paintings, which can still be viewed in their original setting, are amongst the first 2,000 oil paintings from public collections in the London Borough of Camden to have been added to the ‘Your Paintings’ website. This will allow Soane’s personal collection of paintings – such as Hogarth’s A Rake’s Progress and An Election series, Reynolds’ Snake in the Grass and Watteau’s Les Noces – as well as some little known stars, for example James Ward’s charming little panel depicting Mrs Soane’s pet terrier ‘Fanny’ to become better known (see Helen Dorey’s article on Fanny to find out more about this painting).

Soane’s pictures can be viewed on the ‘Your Paintings’ website alongside works of art drawn from 10 diverse collections across the borough and by artists including Benjamin West, William Orpen, Duncan Grant, Terry Frost and Raqib Shaw. The other Camden collections going online include the Wellcome Library, which offers an insight into the history of health and wellbeing, and the School of Oriental and African Studies. The work of aspiring students – some now well-established artists – can be seen in the Central Saint Martins collection whilst Camden Council’s paintings bring to light mid-20th century works by well-known artists who lived in the borough. The Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre and Burgh House further illuminate the history and artistic legacy of the area, particularly Hampstead. Hospital art collections are represented by University College London and the Royal Free Hospitals. Another 2,000 paintings from a further 25 Camden collections will be added to the site later this year.

To help the BBC and PCF identify and catalogue what can be seen in each painting, the public is being invited to ‘tag’ the nation’s paintings. The results will allow future users of the ‘Your Paintings’ website to find paintings of subjects that interest them. The ‘Your Paintings Tagger’ is at http://tagger.thepcf.org.uk.

Helen Dorey
Deputy Director

Under the Volcano: the prince of Biscari’s Museum at Palazzo Biscari in Catania – a prototype for Soane’s Museum?

In 1780, as part of his excursion to Naples, Sicily and Malta, Soane visited the Palazzo Biscari in the Sicilian city of Catania – an unusual and adventurous destination even then for Grand Tourists. Following in Soane’s footsteps during a holiday in Sicily last summer, Director Tim Knox discovered that the Palazzo Biscari may well have been the inspiration behind Soane’s Museum in London. Tim Knox describes what he discovered below:

The gritty Baroque city of Catania lies on the east coast of Sicily, under the brooding shadow of the gently smouldering Mount Etna. It is a dramatic place, filled with imposing buildings constructed out of the local black volcanic stone, charmingly combined with richly carved mouldings in a contrasting white Siracusan stone. Battered by Allied bombing during World War II and boasting an unenviable reputation for crime and corruption, a holiday in Catania is not for the fainthearted! However, those who persevere are rewarded by one of the great Baroque cities of Europe, the second-largest convent in Europe – the monster ex-monasterio di San Nicolò l’Arena – and an amazing fish market.

The sights the young John Soane and his group of English companions encountered during their visit to Sicily are recorded in a series of letters written by one of the fellow-travellers, John Patteson, now preserved in the Norfolk Record Office. The principal attraction of Catania was, of course, the ascent of Mount Etna, which took them two days, but there was
also an interesting aqueduct-cum-bridge designed by the Prince of Biscari, an unusually enlightened Sicilian nobleman. Soane drew the bridge and subsequently illustrated it in his lectures (although it collapsed soon afterwards). They also visited the Prince of Biscari's Museum, which had been described in terms of the warmest admiration in the guidebook the tourists used, Patrick Brydone’s *A Tour Through Sicily and Malta* (1775). I was keen to see the rooms in the palace where the Museo Biscari had been displayed, which remains the private residence of Don Ruggero Moncada Paternò-Castello and other members of his family. I obtained permission to do so via the kind offices of Stefano Aluffi-Pentini, whose travel company, *A Private Tour of Italy*, organises tours for the New York-based Sir John Soane’s Museum Foundation. I am particularly grateful to Don Ruggero for taking the time and trouble to show me the palace, and the former setting of the museum, which is now the comfortable private apartment which he occupies.

The Museo Biscari was housed in what is still the most impressive private palace in Catania, Palazzo Biscari, a huge and ornate complex built into the city walls overlooking the harbour, not far from the Cathedral and Piazza Duomo. The palace was built from 1695 by Vincenzo Paternò Castello, IV Prince of Biscari, after the disastrous earthquake that destroyed most of Catania. The palace was faced with the characteristic Catanese combination of black lava stone relieved with contrasting ornamental carvings of astonishing vigour. Richard Payne Knight described it as ‘in the barbarous taste of the Sicilians, charged with monstrous figures and unnatural ornaments’. Inside are a sequence of state rooms of great magnificence, culminating in one of the most spectacular of all Sicilian Rococo interiors, the vast, frescoed Gran Salone whose painted vault is pierced by a glazed cupola containing a stuccoed gallery for hidden musicians – itself quite possibly an inspiration for Soane’s top-lit domed tribune at the National Debt Redemption Office, or the Staircase at Wotton.

The Museo Biscari was the creation of Ignazio Paternò Castello, V Prince of Biscari, and occupied an extension to the palace built and altered by Girolamo Palazzotto between 1751 and 1757. At first it comprised a separate entrance, a courtyard and two vaulted rooms for the display of the princely collection of antiquities, *naturalia* and *artificialia*. The Museum was opened in May 1758 under the auspices of the *Accademia degli Enei*, the local learned society founded by the prince in 1744. A medal struck to commemorate the occasion proclaimed the museum’s mission: ‘*Publicae Utilitati, Paterna Decori, Studiosorum Commodo Museum Contruxit Catanae*.

Further additions to the accommodation of the museum were made in 1764 and 1774 by the architect Francesco Battaglia, and it eventually comprised 10 rooms, three galleries and a covered atrium. There were also two linked courtyards where numerous antique marbles – statues, architectural fragments and inscriptions rescued by prince Ignazio from the rebuilding of the Catania and the surrounding area were displayed. The prince was a keen amateur archaeologist and obtained much material from his excavation of the Amphitheatre at Catania, and his digs at the Val Demone and Val di Noto in eastern Sicily. The piled-up arrangements of column drums, capitals and statues were highly theatrical, and its principal treasures included the so-called *Torso Biscari*, a colossal trunk of a male member of the Julio-Claudian dynasty personified as Zeus, dating from the 1st century BC and a fine 2nd century BC statue of Hercules dug up in the via Crociferi, Catania, in 1736. There was also a good collection of Roman mosaics, painted vases, inscriptions, coins, medals and bronzes. Scientific instruments from the *Accademia degli Enei*, armour, costumes and toys illustrating Sicilian history, natural history specimens (including an interesting vulcanological section entitled the ‘fruits of Etna’) and medieval and oriental curiosities completed what must have been a highly impressive ensemble. The Museo Biscari was ‘always open for the use of the studious’, the prince regularly conducting them round the collections himself. Distinguished visitors included Patrick Brydone, J.W. Goethe (who left an evocative account of his visit in 1787 in *Italienische Reise* (1816–17)), and, of course, in June 1779, John Soane, who would have seen the Museo Biscari at its apogee. We do not know if John Soane and his party met the prince, but if they had, they probably would have mentioned it.

The creator of the Museum, Prince Ignazio, died in 1786, and his sons, Vincenzo Paternò Castello, VI Prince of Biscari, and Giovan Francesco added to the coin collection and natural history sections respectively. Thereafter it declined, depleted by the sale of the arms and armour, and the theft of a coin cabinet, in the early years of the nineteenth century. However, most of the collection, particularly the marbles, remained in their original setting well into the era of photography. It is not difficult to see how the displays, particularly in the courtyards of the palace, might have influenced Soane over thirty years after his visit, when he was devising the arrangements in the courts behind Nos 13 and 14 Lincoln’s Inn Fields, particularly the Monument Court, with its *Pasticcio* and columned screen.

The Museo Biscari was preserved more or less intact until the early years of the twentieth century. There had been talk of selling the collection for years, but the complex family and legal
situation prevented any dispersal. In 1929, however, the various branches of the Biscari family agreed to donate most of the collection to the municipality of Catania as the nucleus of the city museum. It was moved to the Castello Ursino and opened as the new Museo Civico on 20 October 1934. Since then the history of the Biscari collection has been less happy. After the Second World War much of it remained in store and a number of important pieces were stolen or alienated from the collection. Incredibly, in 1961, an important 5th century Attic vase from the collection was presented by the city fathers of Catania to their twin city of Grenoble – who have since refused to return it! In more recent years the Castello Ursino has been thoroughly refurbished and most of the collection is now on display – although sadly not in the astonishing arrangements that inspired John Soane that memorable summer in 1779!

Tim Knox
Director

Below, series of nineteenth-century photographic views of the Museo Biscari showing the collection in its original setting, which is probably what Soane would have encountered during his visit to the Palazzo in 1779. It may well have been the source of inspiration for Soane’s Monument Court as depicted (right) in this detail from J. M. Gandy’s composite view of Lincoln’s Inn Fields from 1822, which includes a view of this small courtyard looking north. The Monument Court was used by Soane as an external room for displaying sculpture, vases and even ammonite fossils. In the centre of the courtyard is the architectural Pasticcio, a column of fragments, intended to act as a symbolic pivot for the Museum, representing the history of architecture and very similar to the centrepiece of architectural fragments that was the focus of the Museo Biscari
‘The delight, the solace of his leisure hours’: Sir John and Eliza Soane’s Manchester Terrier, Fanny

The cover image for this issue of the Newsletter, which usually hangs in the Picture Room, is the charming portrait of Mrs Soane with her dog Fanny on her lap by John Jackson. The painting is currently on loan to the Kennel Club Gallery for an exhibition celebrating the history of the Manchester Terrier breed in the 75th anniversary year of the British Manchester Terrier Club. Deputy Director, Helen Dorey, reveals the story of the Soanes’ little Manchester Terrier, Fanny, who was a much loved member of their household:

Looking out the window of Soane’s mock-medieval ‘Parloir of Padre Giovanni’ (or ‘Monk’s Parlour’) visitors can glimpse a column of architectural fragments inscribed ‘Alas, Poor Fanny!’ This is the tomb of Eliza Soane’s Manchester terrier, ‘Fanny’, placed here at the heart of the Museum almost 200 years ago.

Although the Soane family always owned dogs, the dearest of all was ‘Fanny’, Mrs Soane’s beloved lap dog. The first glimpse of a family pet dog, which might be Fanny, is in a charming watercolour of Eliza with her two sons John and George, drawn by Antonio van Assen, an artist more usually employed by Soane to add figures to perspective views of his architectural schemes. The dog sits with its back to the viewer, wearing a rather fetching pink scarf tied in a bow as a collar and being petted by the young George Soane.

Fanny is said to have been 16 or 17 when she died in 1820 and so she must have joined the family in 1803-1804. Although the Van Assen portrait is dated in written records ‘about 1800’, it shows Mrs Soane and her sons in the landscaped park at Pitzhanger Manor, Ealing, into which the family did not move until April 1804 after four years of construction work. Perhaps it shows them in their new grounds with their new puppy? However, the dog does seem to be black and white rather than black and tan and so perhaps, reluctantly, we have to relinquish the idea that this is Fanny – perhaps it is the little ‘Lion’ who was buried in the plantation at Pitzhanger in September 1806. In the last year that the Soanes occupied Pitzhanger before it was sold in 1810, there were two dogs recorded there for tax purposes and one (presumably Fanny) at Lincoln’s Inn Fields. The two Pitzhanger dogs must have had to move to Lincoln’s Inn Fields in 1810. However, from 1812 onwards Fanny is the only dog recorded until her death in 1820.

We know that at some point Van Assen certainly did draw Fanny, as the artist made a portrait of her (undated), sitting on a hearth rug.

His beautifully detailed drawing shows her as a typical small black and tan Manchester terrier type, with fine limbs and happily without the cropped ears that were fashionable in the early 19th century! Some years ago a vet who was visiting the Museum suggested that her head was a little unusual and that she might have been Brachygnathic ‘overshot’, a common dog jaw deformity in which the upper jaw is longer than the lower jaw. However, others disagree and say she is perfect! She is relatively small (in James Ward’s 1822 portrait she is lying on a Corinthian capital) and it has also been suggested that she might be an early example of an English Toy Terrier as it was evolving from the Manchester terrier.
She was very much a family pet. No outside kennel for her – the Soane Archive contains references to the purchase of ticking and flannel material for her bedding and of biscuits for her. She went everywhere with Mrs Soane, travelling with her in the carriage when she went on holiday. When she was writing home to her husband, Mrs Soane usually sent love from ‘little Fan’ and at least once attempted to dip Fanny’s paw into the ink so that she could sign the letter too. The signature appears on the final page of a letter to her husband of June 1812, very wobbly, above the postscript ‘I have been trying to make Fanny send you a line – but [she] is so obstinate & I must say, better fed than taught, that she will not hold the pen.’ In August 1809, as a postscript to a rather faint letter from Margate, Eliza wrote ‘Do excuse this which I fear you cannot read, as Fanny has spilt the Ink & being Sunday we cannot get more.’

Upon arriving at Brighton in 1811 Mrs Soane reported to her husband on 23 April that ‘There has been an Order for no dogs to be suffered out without being led in a string (on account of mad dogs) so poor Fan runs about with me with a Black Ribbon round her neck – leading me like a blind beggar – which she very much dislikes.’ This is a reminder that leads were not in common use in the early 19th century and that rabies was a real threat to domestic dogs. From her next letter, written the following day, 24 April, it appears that the presence of Fanny at their lodgings is causing a problem: ‘I feel myself very uncomfortably situated in this house, for we pay so extravagantly for everything & are under such restrain [sic] that they will not suffer her to shew her dear little head – tho’ she is as quiet & as good, as if they understood all they say of her, and was determined to put them to the blush to belying her. I will thank you to spare me the cook & suffer her to leave Town on Saturday morn[ing] …’

In August 1815, Mrs Soane wrote from Cheltenham the morning after her arrival to reassure her husband that she was comfortably settled in good lodgings. However, by the end of the month she wrote: ‘Perhaps you may think me very whimsical, but we have changed our lodgings and I think much for the better – for tho’ we were in a gay part, yet on better acquaintance there were many objections – both for little Fan & ourselves.’

After Eliza’s death in 1815, Soane lived on at No. 13 Lincoln’s Inn Fields, escaping regularly to his other house, in the grounds of the Royal Hospital at Chelsea (which came with the job of Clerk of Works which he held from 1807 until his death). Fanny remained his companion, occasionally referred to by close friends as when, in 1817, Nora Brickenden ended a letter to Soane accompanying a gift of a book with ‘Peace to your pillow. How is dear little Fanny?’

By the time her mistress died in 1815 Fanny was about 12 years old but she outlived her by five years. Towards the end of her life she was obviously ailing and was treated by a pioneer of the treatment of dogs by vets, William Youatt (1776–1847). He was one of the first in the country to practice as a small animal vet, going into partnership with the veterinary surgeon Delabere Blaine in 1812 or 1813 in Wells Street off Oxford Street after a first career as a non-conformist minister. Much later in life he published celebrated treatises on ‘The Dog’ (1846) and on canine madness, and set up a school of veterinary medicine in Nassau Street.

On 21 December 1818 Youatt invoiced Soane for ‘Examining terrier bitch and cutting her nails’ at a cost of £2 6s (between £60 and £70 at today’s prices). Throughout the following year he had to administer injections, powders and aperient balls (laxatives). The total bill for her treatment in 1819 was 125 6d. In September 1820 she endured an operation carried out by Mr Youatt at a cost of 105 6d plus 3s for ‘Tincture – ointment – lint bandages etc.’ However, she died later in the year, at midnight on Christmas day. Soane recorded in his diary ‘My dear little Fanny died this evening at 12 o’clock – faithful animal farewell!’ The entry in his Office Journal for 25 Dec 1820 reads ‘Poor Fanny died this day aged abt 16 or 17.’

Soane’s response to her death was a practical and a professional one. Two days later he noted ‘Fanny buried in a Lead Coffin in the morning at 7 o’clock in the stone monument erected for her in the front Court Yard … Alas poor Fanny! Faithful, affectionate, disinterested friend, long, very long will thou live in my recollection – Farewell!’ Just one view of Soane’s house made in 1822 shows this monument. It was a column of architectural fragments, erected apparently in just two days, featuring elements from Soane’s own architecture as well as a capital based on those of the ancient Roman Temple of Vesta at Tivoli – perhaps one rejected for use at the Bank of England where Soane used the ‘Tivoli’ Order on the façade. By this monument, Fanny was commemorated publicly as the beloved pet of the Architect to the Bank of England.

In 1822 Soane acquired a posthumous portrait of Fanny painted by the celebrated animal painter James Ward (1769–1859), whom he knew well through the Royal Academy. Ward had been described by the Sporting Magazine as early as 1811,
the year he was elected an Academician, as ‘the first of English animal painters now living’, famed for his dramatic and powerful images of animals, often set against landscape backgrounds and with rich colouring and superb anatomical detail.

It appears from a letter from James Ward to Soane dated 6 February 1822 that Ward volunteered to paint this portrait of Fanny, based on the Van Assen drawing of her, and that Soane then insisted that he should be paid for it. Soane was obviously shocked by the price, however, noting on 5 February 1822 in his diary ‘Called on Mr Ward. Pd him his charge for the Portrait of Fanny, which he requested permission to make from a drawing of that dear animal £42!!!’

Ward wrote to Soane the following day, sending the portrait and referring to it as ‘a trifling specimen in my way’. He added ‘I cannot promise myself that it will afford you any interest further than that I have endeavoured to express a quiet stillness and sublimity in a Land of Tyers. Further comments I leave to your own imagination, who are in some degree acquainted with the nature of mortal existence with its various perplexities.’ It is a charming work, in which the artist, perhaps uniquely in the history of pet portraiture, gives the dog the attributes of her master, showing her seated on the capital of a column with another behind her, gazing out across Elysian fields littered with column fragments towards a temple which appears to be the Erechtheion, one of the ancient temples on the Acropolis at Athens.

In 1823, at more than 70 years old, Soane had the opportunity to acquire No. 14 Lincoln’s Inn Fields, the house next door to his own at No. 13. The small courtyard of No. 14 was then transformed during 1824–25 into the romantic Monk’s Yard. Medieval fragments brought from the Palace of Westminster were re-erected in a picturesque manner to create the ruins of the ‘noble’ monastery of the fictitious Monk ‘Padre Giovanni’ (Father John). The yard was paved with pebbles into which patterns of glass bottle-tops and bottle-bottoms were laid. Into the midst of this Yard was introduced the tomb of Fanny, moved from the front courtyard and installed on axis with another column of architectural fragments which Soane called the Pasticcio in the adjacent ‘Monument Court’ of No. 13. At the
foot of Fanny's tomb he created the 'Monk's Grave' for his fictional alter ego.

In his 1835 Description of his house Soane wrote what is almost like a mini Gothick novel to describe the Monk's Parlour and Yard.

'The Tomb of the monk adds to the gloomy scenery of this hallowed place, wherein attention has been given to every minute circumstance. The Pavement, composed of the tops and bottoms of broken bottles, and pebbles found amongst the gravel dug out for the foundation of the monastery, and disposed in symmetry of design, furnishes an admirable lesson of simplicity and economy, and shews the unremitting assiduity of the pious monk. The stone structure, at the head of the monk's grave, contains the remains of Fanny, the faithful companion, the delight, the solace of his leisure hours. ALAS, POOR FANNY!' He continued on a note of bathos 'Amongst these ruins is placed the furnace' and ended with a quotation from Horace 'Dulce est desipere in loco' which roughly translated means 'it is pleasant to be nonsensical in due place'. To his own text he added additional poetic words by his close friend, the novelist Barbara Holland, who, after speculating on the holy Monk's drinking habits as reflected by the paving of the yard, continues with her own tribute to Fanny, 'we cannot leave this hallowed ground without remarking .... the burial-place of pretty Fanny (once no shadow, but a good and true little dog, well worthy, for her intelligence and affection, to be tenderly recollected').

Soane's grief for Fanny was undoubtedly linked to his profound sorrow at the loss of his wife and as late as 1831 he commissioned a portrait of his long-dead Eliza with the long-dead 'Fanny' sitting on her lap (see cover image).

Of all the dogs recorded as owned by the Soane family, only Fanny, his own 'faithful companion' after Eliza's death is enshrined in his Museum, where her portraits hang in place of honour in the Breakfast Parlour close to those of famous men such as Napoleon, the artist Henry Howard and the poet Robert Haydon.

Soane's 1835 Description was dedicated to Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex, the favourite uncle of Queen Victoria, who gave her away at her marriage to Prince Albert in 1840. It is tempting to wonder whether the young Princess Victoria named her own Manchester terrier 'Fanny' after hearing of Mrs Soane's beloved pet or seeing her monument when driving as a child in the early 1820s through Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Helen Dorey
Deputy Director

‘Fanny’ by James Ward, 1822

A Terrier’s Tale: The Manchester Terrier through history is on show at the Kennel Club Gallery until 29 June. Opening hours by appointment only: Monday to Friday 9.30am – 4.30pm. Please telephone: 020 7518 1064
In the Spring Term, Schools and Families Education Officer Lucy Grace Trotman and Education Freelancer Caroline Dorset visited the Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) classroom to deliver some exciting new outreach sessions to the Key Stage 3 pupils there.

The ten children who are currently resident at the hospital participated in sessions that introduced them to both Soane and Hogarth. Facsimiles of William Hogarth’s *Election* series were taken to the classroom for the children to learn about Georgian politics, which then inspired them to take part in a debate and a series of activities that focused on contemporary politics. For example, the pupils created their own political party, designed party posters and wrote and produced their own party political broadcast including some fun and unusual ‘pledges’. The ten children who are currently resident at the hospital participated in sessions that introduced them to both Soane and Hogarth. Facsimiles of William Hogarth’s *Election* series were taken to the classroom for the children to learn about Georgian politics, which then inspired them to take part in a debate and a series of activities that focused on contemporary politics. For example, the pupils created their own political party, designed party posters and wrote and produced their own party political broadcast including some fun and unusual ‘pledges’. The ten children who are currently resident at the hospital participated in sessions that introduced them to both Soane and Hogarth. Facsimiles of William Hogarth’s *Election* series were taken to the classroom for the children to learn about Georgian politics, which then inspired them to take part in a debate and a series of activities that focused on contemporary politics. For example, the pupils created their own political party, designed party posters and wrote and produced their own party political broadcast including some fun and unusual ‘pledges’.
Head of Education, Beth Walker and Education Freelancer and Artist James Willis were following in the footsteps of Sir John Soane's Grand Tour when they took a group of fifteen adults to Rome on a tutored painting and sketching tour in September 2011. Soane considered his Grand Tour to be the happiest and most influential time of his life. The itinerary of the 2011 trip was shaped by Soane’s own experiences in Rome, although there wasn’t enough time in our busy schedule to climb up precariously tall ladders to measure some of the ancient buildings we visited! During the week-long visit, the group explored and painted some of Rome’s greatest sights, from the Forum to the Vatican. An expedition to Soane’s favourite building, the Temple of Vesta at Tivoli, was an important element of the trip. The group stayed at the British School at Rome, whose accommodation and leafy courtyard made for the perfect setting. The group was even treated to a visit to the School’s impressive library to see some of the very rare editions held within the collection.

Following the success of the 2011 visit, a second week-long visit has been arranged for September 2012. This year, the itinerary has been arranged to include a visit to the Via Appia and Ostia Antica, in addition to some of the favourite places visited last year. The group will be hosted again by the British School at Rome.

Soane Artists Visit Rome

The travel company Art Safari (ATOL reg. no. 9916) is working with the Museum to arrange the visit and take bookings. Please see the Soane website, www.soane.org, or contact Beth Walker on 020 7440 4254 / bwalker@soane.org.uk for more information.

Beth Walker
Head of Education

Adam online

Regular visitors to the Soane Museum’s online drawings catalogue will have noticed that the first tranche of drawing entries for the drawings from the office of Robert and James Adam went live in December 2011. Thus far the earliest projects from the Adam office are available for inspection, including the early country houses: unexecuted alterations for Castle Ashby, Northamptonshire, for the 7th Earl of Northampton; executed alterations and additions for Gordon House, Middlesex, for Lieutenant General Humphrey Bland; unexecuted cottages for Hackwood Park, Hampshire, for the 6th Duke of Bolton; an executed interior for Hatchlands, Surrey, for the Rt Hon. Admiral Edward Boscawen; executed alterations and additions for Shardeloes, Buckinghamshire, for William Drake; and executed alterations and additions for Weald Hall, Essex, for Christopher Tower. There is also an executed interior for Bolton’s London town house; the Admiralty Screen in Whitehall; and Adam’s three earliest funerary monuments: for Boscawen in St Michael Penkevil Church, Cornwall; Lieutenant-Colonel Roger Townshend in Westminster Abbey; and an unexecuted competition design for the monument to Major-General James Wolfe, also in Westminster Abbey.

Of these first 177 drawings now online, 27 had been previously unattributed. One of the most rewarding facets of my job has been the opportunity to peruse both the original drawings, and the digital photographs, in an effort to disentangle the Adam brothers’ various commissions. These newly attributed drawings are almost exclusively preliminary designs in Robert Adam’s own hand, produced at the earliest phase of the design process, infrequently inscribed, small in scale, and generally grouped into folios of sketches. These 27 include unexecuted designs for the hall and drawing room ceilings at
The Soane Museum has a detailed archive of the architect’s practice, with daybooks, ledgers, bill books and journals documenting an entire career of commissions. Despite this wealth of documentation, however, some buildings have left few traces in the archives and have therefore never been acknowledged as Soane works. One such example is a wall monument in the local parish church of Cricket St Thomas, Somerset, which can now be attributed to Soane.

While cataloguing drawings for Soane’s work at Cricket Lodge, Cricket St Thomas, I compared notes with our library visitor Julian Orbach, who was also researching the building’s cluttered history. Among Soane’s journal entries for Cricket, we noticed a vague account dated 22 May 1788: ‘Drawing monument’. Julian later visited the parish church of St Thomas and noticed the monument to Mary Hood mounted in its south transept. He suggested it could be a Soane commission and sent me a photograph. Mary was the wife of Alexander Hood, Soane’s client at Cricket Lodge. This tablet’s design is characteristic of Soane, having the same strigillated urn and ouroboros (snake) motif as his 1786 monument to Claude Bosanquet.

The executed monument is composed of a rectangular, bow-fronted pedestal, containing an inscription panel, flanked by wreaths enclosing a corona muralis and a corona navalis – Roman symbols of military and naval achievement – supporting a bust on a socle, behind which are naval trophies, and a pyramid in relief ornamented with swags. Adam’s design for the monument went through five different preliminary schemes, before the final arrangement was executed in accordance with his finished drawing.

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Discovery of a Soane Monument

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Referring to Julian’s photograph, I was able find a closely-matching, yet undated, design drawing in Soane’s collection. I continued to research for more concrete evidence of the architect’s involvement until a drawing by draughtsman J.M. Gandy provided just that, displaying the monument within a fantastical capriccio of Soane works. The 1820 drawing, ‘Public and Private Buildings’, includes the monument in the bottom right-hand corner, nestled behind a painting of the Bank of England Consols Transfer Office and at the base of Tyningham House, thus proudly confirming its place among the works of Sir John Soane.

**Adventures in Cataloguing**

One of the great pleasures of cataloguing Soane’s Library is the opportunity to work with the extraordinary range of bookbindings in the collection, from the cheapest schoolbooks inscribed with schoolboys’ names to the finest gold-tooled morocco stamped with the coats of arms of previous owners. Although Soane took an interest in the appearance of his books and had many of them rebound towards the end of his life, from the evidence in the Museum archive the bindings he commissioned were plain and unassuming, and he was usually content to leave books in the bindings in which he bought them. As with so many other areas of his collecting, however, he had a good eye, and there are several examples of very fine bindings in the collection, often chosen for their associations with previous owners such as Empress Josephine Bonaparte or the actor David Garrick. Some of these are by named bookbinders, such as the Napoleonic binding on the copy of Charles Percier and P.F.L. Fontaine’s *Description des cérémonies et des fêtes … pour le mariage de l’empereur Napoléon* (1815) with the label of Tessier of Paris, or the striking neo-classical binding adorning Sir William Hamilton’s *Campi Phlegræi* (1776–9), by the London firm of Staggemeier and Welcher. But for most of them the names of the binders remain unknown.

In January I was working on the books in the pier bookcases in Soane’s Library-Dining Room, which mostly contain small-format books in French. Most are in fairly unadorned sheep and calf bindings, and a French edition of Livy in eight small duodecimo volumes printed in 1694–96 did not immediately stand out from the other books on the shelf. But as soon as I picked up the first volume, the sheer quality of the dark green goatskin binding was obvious: apart from some slight fading of the spines, it looked and felt as if it had just left the binder’s studio.

Although the decoration of the covers was fairly plain, the lining inside or ‘doubles’ was in red goatskin and decorated with delicate gold-tooled dentelles (lace work borders), and the gilt edges of the pages shifted to reveal marbling when the book was opened. I was also intrigued by the gilt-tooled device on the covers reading ‘IVIL / LET / 1695’ [July 1695] within a decorated shield. This was an unusual feature, possibly an ownership stamp or binder’s mark, and there was something about these eight small volumes, so I decided on a little detective work to see if I could find anything similar and possibly identify their provenance.

Preliminary investigations on the research library’s small reference shelf and the British Library’s online database of bookbindings took me no further, so I turned to the Internet in hopes of tracking down images of similar bindings to give me a lead, and struck gold in the shape of the personal website of a collector of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French bindings (based in Tahiti!), who had very considerately scanned pages from reference works identifying the decorative tools known to be used by particular binders and placed them on his website. Bindings were only rarely signed in this early period, so attribution is often a matter of educated guesswork, but individual workshops can be traced by the tools used for gilding. From the scans on the website I was able to match two of the tools used on Soane’s Livy to ones found on books bound by Luc-Antoine Boyet, royal bookbinder to King Louis XIV from 1698 to 1733 and known for his striking perfection of workmanship and materials. In France the binder’s work was usually divided between relieurs who made the physical structure of the binding and *doreurs* who gold-tooled the covers. Boyet did not sign his bindings, but he seems to have worked closely with a *doreur* known only as the ‘doreur

Mary Hood, known as Molly, was the first wife of Admiral Hood, later 1st Viscount Bridport (1726–1814). Born Mary West c.1706, she died in September 1786, only four months after Soane began making designs for Cricket Lodge. Soane recorded journeys to the Somerset house throughout the year, including one trip on 26 September, only ten days after Mary’s death. Perhaps it was on this visit that Soane designed the ‘humble monument’ for his bereaved client.

Madeleine Helmer
Soane Drawings Cataloguer

Les décades de
Tite-Live, avec les supplements de I.
Freinshemius; …
mises en français par
P. Du-Ryer, Lyon
[i.e. Amsterdam?],
1694–95. Photograph:
Stephie Coane
New ‘Soane Tea’ Now Available!

Sir John Soane’s Museum is proud to introduce its new, specially developed ‘Soane tea’! Created by master tea blender, Alex Probyn, it’s a delicious blend produced exclusively for the Museum using a selection of teas known to have been enjoyed by John and Eliza Soane. The tea is available only in the Museum Shop or online via: www.soane.org/shop

75% of the catalogue of Soane’s Library is now online and the entries can be viewed on the Museum’s website at www.soane.org/library. To make a donation to the Eileen Harris Book Conservation Fund to help preserve the nearly 7,000 volumes in Soane’s Library for the future, please visit www.soane.org/research_library/book_conservation/

Stephie Coane
Librarian

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, black and green teas were imported to England from China. Regency tea drinkers preferred it weak, often with the addition of sugar. It was the main non-alcoholic beverage enjoyed by John and Eliza Soane and a study of their surviving household bills reveals that their favourite tea was ‘Souchong’ although ‘Congou’ and ‘Hyson’ – a green tea – appear quite frequently in the archive bills too. The Soanes purchased their tea from a variety of sources, but most frequently from Jordan & Day (see below).

Tea was an expensive commodity, and was kept under lock and key by the mistress of the house or the Housekeeper. The drinking of tea was a social occasion with supporting rituals. The mistress of the house presided over the tea table, taking the tea from a locked wooden caddy and making it in a teapot with boiling water heated in an urn or a kettle heated by a spirit lamp.

If you would like to know more about the Soanes’ domestic arrangements, Archivist Susan Palmer’s book, The Soanes at Home is a highly informative and enjoyable read about this subject, which is also available through the online shop: www.soane.org/shop/books.

Olly Perry,
Retail Manager

Bill for 8lbs of loaf sugar purchased from Jordan and Day, 302 High Holborn