

Cobbett's Wey DFAS Visit to Goodwood House

It rained! We got very wet but it didn't dampen our enjoyment one bit!

We had a marvellous morning at Goodwood House. Two wonderful guides Hilary and Beryl put all the treasures into context, by giving their commentaries in the form of the story of the Earl's of March. The title secured, the Earls collected on the grand tour, or were able to purchase whilst being ambassadors abroad, or commissioned the pieces for their collection.

They built the rooms in Goodwood to house their collection. When the second duke acquired, whilst over in Brussels in 1765/6, three Gobelins tapestries completed for Louis XV, an existing room had to be enlarged to hang them and they have never been taken down since. The card room, built for that purpose also houses vast display cabinets full of unique Sevres porcelain commissioned by the second duke, with some pretty Meissen displayed for good measure. Spaces in the Long Hall were designed for the two Canaletto's. The 2nd Duke of Richmond was one of the first English patrons of Antonio Canale (Canaletto). Each room seemed to be a tribute to another Duke and a different era, right up to the present. We saw and appreciated so much, including the amazing shell house recently restored and decorated internally with millions of shells from the West Indies.

As the morning dawned so wet, we thought we had no chance of actually visiting the Cass Sculpture Foundation set amongst acres of rolling Sussex downland. However, the rain cleared and the group voted to proceed. There was generally a feeling of surprise as we started to walk the trail and the odd scornful comment was heard. As we progressed the sculptures, contributed by Britain's finest young sculptors, attracted intense interest, conversation and debate. It was a stimulating and enjoyable afternoon.

If you haven't been to either Goodwood House or the Cass Sculpture Foundation both virtually in our back garden, (one hour away), then you are missing two jewels.

See www.goodwood.co.uk/ and www.sculpture.org.uk/