



DRAGONS, SWORDS, PORTRAITS AND LACE: THE DUNIMARLE COLLECTION AT DUFF HOUSE

A Study Day at Duff House, Banff, AB45 3SX

TUESDAY 10TH OCTOBER 2017 and repeated on WEDNESDAY 11TH OCTOBER 2017

Duff House stands beside the River Deveron where it meets the sea on Aberdeenshire's Dolphin Coast. The magnificent building, designed by William Adam, once housed the collections and library of the Earls of Fife, but these were dispersed when the family finally left in 1906. The house was given to the people of Banff and Macduff, and had many different uses before a £2m restoration by Historic Scotland and a partnership with the National Galleries of Scotland and Banff and Buchan Council saw the house re-opened to the public in 1995. It was once again full of paintings, furniture, ceramics, silverware and a library, thanks to an exceptional loan from the Trustees of the Dunimarle Collection and other loans, including many from NGS.

The Dunimarle Collection was brought together by three brothers, their father, Sir William Erskine of Torrie, and their sister, Mrs Magdalene Sharpe Erskine, who died in 1872. In her will, she established the family collections as the Torrie Institute, open to the public for their interest and enjoyment. The Institute's third curator was James Walker Harper (1868 – 1938), Rector of St Margaret's Leven and Canon of St Ninian's Cathedral, Perth. Between 1910 and 1912, he catalogued the entire collection, covering 368 pages with descriptions and notes, including over 1,311 object drawings and watercolours. Comparing this catalogue with the original Duff House inventories shows many similarities between the two collections and the interests of the Fife and Erskine families. We no longer have the Fife collections at Duff House, but thanks to the Dunimarle Collection loan, similar objects and interests can still be brought to life at Duff House today.

This is what 'DRAGONS, SWORDS, PORTRAITS AND LACE' is all about

Canon Harper's fascinating catalogue is the inspiration for this second Study Day, following a very successful event at Duff House last October. At 'Dolphins, Tulips and Napoleon,' six experts discussed the Erskine family and their books; paintings; sculpture; furniture; ceramics; and links with India. This year, we will focus on some of the less familiar parts of the Dunimarle Collection, many of which are not normally on display, because they are light-sensitive or too fragile. Our experts will discuss the collection of prints, including a ticket for George IV's coronation and a fan printed with charades. Also the lace collection, which Canon Harper, writing in 1914, wished he had an expert to advise him on. A fascinating approach by an artist glazier will relate the 17c stained glass to modern practice, while another speaker, with years of experience as a collector, will bring the Oriental ceramics to life. We will discover how the Napoleonic furniture was conserved, including the detective work to track down the original pattern card for the silk, and there is still more to learn about the Erskine family by looking at the weapons which they used or collected, and which visitors might otherwise only glance at, high up on the walls at Duff House.

Numbers for each day are limited to 70, so our speakers will present the programme twice, on Tuesday 10th and again on Wednesday 11th October. Come and share the excitement of these six experts who, like our guest speakers last year, have studied the collection with Canon Harper's notes in hand. They will present their discoveries on the Dunimarle Painted Glass, Prints, Lace, Oriental Ceramics, Weapons and the Conservation of the Napoleonic Furniture. There will be time to meet the speakers and to ask questions, and to enjoy the Dunimarle Collection in every room of the House.

'DRAGONS, SWORDS, PORTRAITS AND LACE' is open to all, and all are welcome.

Tickets for either day are £15, to include admission to Duff House; six talks; sandwich lunch + cake + tea/coffee; morning and afternoon tea /coffee + cake. Catering will be suitable for vegetarians but if you have any specific dietary requirements, please do let the event organisers know, contact details below.

The first speaker is at 10.40 (coffee from 9.30 a.m.) and the Study Day ends at 4.45 p.m. B&B/hotel addresses are available on request, and we are keen to help with transport/sharing wherever possible. Please let the event organisers know if you have any mobility requirements.

Please book early and **before the closing date of 6th October**

For any questions or further information, please contact:

Anne Buddle (Canon Harper Project), National Galleries of Scotland, 75, Belford Road, Edinburgh EH4 3DR:

Mon, Tues, Thurs: abuddle@nationalgalleries.org Tel: 0131 624 6315

Weds, Fri & evenings: abn@dhorca.com Tel: 0131 337 2734