



National Trust

House Matters

Monthly Newsletter—Conservation at Hardwick Hall

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Editorial Here we are in June, halfway through the season already! We have some conservation updates to pass on to you from the Textile Conservation Studio. Attic visiting is still available all this month and our special exhibition on the life of Bess's granddaughter Arbella is continuing throughout the hall and gardens. Visitors often remark on how they need to visit Hardwick again, to take it all in - so do make that return visit, we'd love to show you more of our wonderful property and the stories it tells!

Nigel Wright - House & Collections Manager

Books Hardwick is not really known for its book collection. We don't have a library and most of our books are stored on low shelves in the Long Gallery. Little is known of the books which Bess and Arbella would have owned, though as very learned and wealthy women they would certainly have owned many volumes. Most of Hardwick's books date from the 19th century, but we do have three 16th century books, bound in vellum, which belonged to Thomas Hobbes, Philosopher and Tutor to the 2nd Earl of Devonshire.



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Did you know ... ? Visitors often ask how we clean the many tapestries at Hardwick. We have a rolling programme of care for each set of tapestries where we inspect them for damage and remove surface dust. We use a special museum vacuum with a variable suction, and a very soft goat's hair brush. Each tapestry is marked off with cotton tape so that we clean each section at a time and don't lose our place!



Update from the Textile Conservation Studio

Set in the NT Blickling Estate in Norfolk, the Studio has been working on two huge items from our collection at Hardwick. They



Cleaning the back of the Great Hanging

are conserving one of the *Gideon* tapestries from the Long Gallery and also one of our Great Hangings. The Great Hanging depicts *Lucretia* and is an embroidery and appliqué work made from fabric from Church vestments - some of which date back to medieval times. The work is complex and meticulous. The Studio will be working for about two years to conserve each item. It takes a lot of resources to fund such work, so if you can help us with a donation, we would be so very grateful!



Mounting our Gideon tapestry on rollers

Middle Floor Deep Clean ... is completed! The

house team have very much enjoyed having the opportunity over the last couple of months to show visitors how we deep clean a room and its contents. The last room to be completed this year was the Drawing Room which includes a Dutch marquetry cabinet



which contains our collection of blue and white Chinese porcelain. Each piece is removed from the shelf, checked for damage, dusted and replaced. Information about each object is recorded as a paper record and also digitally so we can monitor the condition of each item.

Meet a Volunteer ...

This is Judy, she has been a volunteer at Hardwick for almost 20 years. Judy has many volunteer roles, but the one she relishes the most is when she dons her beautiful hand-made costume and becomes Bess of Hardwick herself!

You will often see her around, giving a talk or chatting to visitors. Do say hello and find out more about Bess from Judy's depth of knowledge.



If you have any questions about Conservation work at Hardwick Hall, please do not hesitate to ask.

If you would like to volunteer to help, we would love to hear from you!

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/hardwick/join-in/



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