

THE IVEAGH BEQUEST

KENWOOD

Standing in splendid grounds on the edge of Hampstead Heath, Kenwood contains the most important private collection of paintings ever given to the nation. The house itself was remodelled by Robert Adam.

Historical Description

Kenwood, built around 1616 as a large farmhouse, was remodelled by Robert Adam in 1764, for its new owner the first Earl of Mansfield. Adam clad the house in stucco, added an extra storey to the main block and to provide a balance with the orangery on the west side he added a library on the east side to make the south front symmetrical. He was also responsible for the interior decoration and furniture of the house.

The Earl's nephew, who inherited Kenwood in 1793, planned to convert the building from a villa into a first class country house. He added the two white brick wings, containing the music room, dining room, service block, stables and farm buildings. It was at this time that the Hampstead-Highgate road was diverted to give the house its present complete seclusion.

An eventual decision of a later Earl to sell the house led to a battle for preservation, and Edward Guinness, 1st Earl of Iveagh saved the house from demolition by buying the house. The house was opened to the public by the 2nd Earl of Iveagh in 1928.

The interior has been carefully preserved in Adam's original style and the series of rooms to be seen includes the magnificent library, Dining Room, Music Room, Lord Mansfield's Dressing Room, Lady Mansfield's Dressing Room, the Housekeeper's Room and Orangery.

The art collection is an impressive collection of English and European masters. However, the collection is also interesting in that it includes portraits of many famous people of the eighteenth century - poets, scientists, writers, politicians and actresses.

The landscaping of the gardens was begun by the 1st Earl of Mansfield. The 2nd Earl, who consulted Humphry compass work or other **geographical** studies. There is already an orienteering course on Hampstead Heath.

Repton, a famous landscape gardener, introduced the serpentine drives.

Learning Opportunities

Kenwood is of obvious importance to those interested in architecture, art history or biographical studies, but could also support cross curricular studies for younger pupils.

As part of a **mathematical** study, the symmetry of the building could be a starting point, and the size and shape of the rooms, windows, doors, pediments etc, would lead to an investigation of shape and proportion. Finding the area of the rooms **on site**, through measurement could lead to scale drawings and making a plan of the building.

Pupils studying the **history** of the house and its inhabitants could focus on their lifestyle after noting the functions of different rooms and the evidence seen in their furnishings. The names of the rooms and some of their contents give clues to their former functions but further research could be carried out, such as what sort of foods were eaten in the dining room, which sort of music would have been played in the music room and what people did in the Orangery. The drawing of pieces of furniture may become more interesting to pupils if there is a special reason for doing it, such as to describe and sketch items for a eighteenth century furniture catalogue. **Art and English** will also be used in this activity. **Follow up** work for this would involve the production of the actual catalogue, promoting the designs, and advertising to prospective customers.

Younger pupils could learn new vocabulary by making an architectural frieze combining drawing with language work. On site each child takes a letter, eg P for portico or S for stucco and underneath these headings makes a detailed drawing of the portico at Kenwood, or the stucco decoration. The pictures are later joined together making a wall display.

The surrounding grounds are particularly suitable for

Location

Hampstead Lane, London NW3 adjacent to Hampstead Heath.

How to get there

Train: Golders Green or Archway underground (Northern line) - then catch a 210 bus.

Bus: Number 210 runs between the Golders Green and Finsbury Park underground stations and stops in Hampstead Lane.

Opening Hours

For current opening hours visit www.english-heritage.org.uk or contact Customer Services 0870 333 1181.

Facilities

Access for the disabled: to ground floor and gardens. There is a disabled person's toilet

Education Centre: available for up to 40 pupils. Please enquire when making your booking.

Parking: there is a large car park close to the house. Coaches are not allowed to park in the grounds.

Refreshments: light refreshments are available in the restaurant in the Coach House. Packed lunches may be eaten in the grounds where there is some cover.

Toilets: on site next to restaurant.

Free Educational Visits

Educational visits to English Heritage Historic Properties are free if prebooked at least fourteen days in advance via the Regional Office.

Limit on party number: 40 max.

Required staff-pupil ratio: at least 1 to 15.

Contacts

Booking and site information: Education Bookings, English Heritage, London, 23 Savile Row W1S 2ET Tel: 0207-973-3564.

Education Officer: Alice Moore

Nearby and related sites

Other houses in London with Adam Interiors and furnishings are **Osterley Park House** and **Syon House** - both in Brentford. Syon House also has 'Capability' Brown landscaped gardens. Tel: 0181-560 3918 (Osterley Park) and 0208-560 0881/3 (Syon House).

A Guide to Resources

Bryant J. The Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood, Souvenir Guide, English Heritage, 1990, ISBN 1-85074-278-2

Bryant J & Colson C. The Landscape of Kenwood, Handbook, English Heritage, 1990, ISBN 1-85074-306-1

Bryant J. London's Country House Collections, English

Heritage, 1993, ISBN 1-85074-306-1

Durbin G. A Teacher's Guide to Using Historic Houses, English Heritage, 1993, ISBN 1-85074-390-8

Morris S. A Teacher's Guide to Using Portraits, English Heritage, 1989, ISBN 1-85074-260-6

Stead J. Food and Cooking in Eighteenth Century Britain, English Heritage 1985, ISBN 1-85074-0844

All English Heritage resources are available by post from English Heritage, c/o Gillards, Temple Cloud, Bristol BS39 5AZ. Tel: 01761 452966.

Ellenby J. The Georgian Household, Cambridge Dinosaur, 1980, ISBN 0521-271-835

Sichel M. Costume Reference 4: The Eighteenth Century, Batsford, 1977, ISBN 07134-0340-3

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English Heritage Education

Freepost 22 (WD214)

London W1E 2EZ

Tel: 0207-973 3385 Fax: 0207-973 3443

Email: education@english-heritage.org.uk

www.english-heritage.org.uk

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