



Shelagh with Valerie and David Bryant at Gosford House, 2013

Lady Wemyss (1938–2019)

The Society was saddened to hear of the death of Shelagh, Dowager Countess of Wemyss and March. Shelagh was a keen supporter and a well-known member who enjoyed attending RFS Conferences.

Shelagh was born and brought up in Vancouver. After a varied career she settled in Edinburgh and was appointed the first administrator of the National Trust for Scotland's newly restored and opened property in the Old Town of Edinburgh – Gladstone's Land, a seventeenth-century merchant's house. This complemented the Trust's very successful 'Georgian House' in the New Town, opened some years earlier. With her lively manner, knowledge of history and the decorative arts and her ability to inspire others, she built up a keen, loyal and knowledgeable group of volunteer guides. She organised lectures and staff outings. She later transferred to the Georgian House as property manager. She ensured the popularity of the Trust's 'Tale of Two

Cities' and the mutual support and cooperation of the Trust's two Edinburgh properties.

In 1995 she married the Earl of Wemyss and March, president of the National Trust for Scotland. It was a second marriage for both of them. She devoted her enthusiasm and skills in helping to restore and care for the outstanding contents of Gosford House and gained a thorough knowledge of the family's history. In 2013 she helped organize the RFS Edinburgh Conference and invited the group to a sun-soaked visit to Gosford, where a memorable group photograph was taken on the imperial staircase of the Marble Hall.

Shelagh was an incurable collector and haunted auction rooms and dealers' premises. She had an extensive collection of treen, country chairs and flat ware and had a marvellous eye for old fabrics.

Latterly she suffered from a debilitating neurological condition which she bore uncomplainingly and died in February aged eighty. She will be greatly missed at future RFS Conferences.

Christopher Hartley