

Furniture Surgery

John Boram opened the furniture surgery with an elm brander-back armchair brought along by Christopher Hartley. These chairs are so called because the row of vertical back rails resemble a brander, or gridiron. Often associated with Scotland, the design was, however, used in other regions. Although purchased in Edinburgh this example was thought to originate in East Anglia, possibly Lincolnshire. William Sergeant added the



Elm brander-back armchair, original rush drop-in seat, possibly Lincolnshire. *Photo Keith Pinn.*



William Sergeant talking about the yew, elm and ash Windsor side chair stamped: TAYLOR GRANTHAM. *Photo Keith Pinn.*

observation that the drop-in seat retaining its original fine rush was a particularly rare survivor.

A pair of finely carved mahogany terms were dated to the Regency period and would originally have been applied to the front of a piece of furniture such as a sideboard. A small seventeenth-century oak plank chest was examined by Chris Pickvance who decided that despite being original in all other respects the carved decoration to the front was added later.

Robert and Anna Holland's chair, one of a pair, was of local interest. It was a yew, elm and ash 'Windsor' single chair marked: 'TAYLOR GRANTHAM'. Not to be confused with William Taylor, who marked his products 'TAYLORS', with an 'S', these chairs were made in the workshop of Roger and Sophia Taylor. They are first recorded as chairmakers in 1800 but Roger died, aged only 38, in 1801. His wife Sophia continued the business until 1810 when she remarried. William Sergeant noted that yew wood versions of this type are scarce, as is the use of the crinoline stretcher.

The origin of another Windsor-type chair was more difficult to pin down. Roderick and Valentine Butler acquired this fine child's armchair, which retains much of its historical painted decoration, in Devon and some thought that it may originate in that part of the country. Others felt that the Thames Valley was a more likely origin. Another possibility was added to the discussion when Julian Parker noted that details of the piercing of



Painted comb back child's Windsor armchair, probably Thames Valley, late eighteenth century. *Photo Keith Pinn.*

the splat led him to wonder if the chair was made in Nottinghamshire. An interesting and covetable piece which will benefit from more research.

William and Julian went on to discuss Lincolnshire chairs with reference to some of the examples we had seen during the conference.

Keith and Gill Pinn