

To former glazing glory



The Downing College Dining Hall in full splendour



Robert Johnston, Painting & Decorating Contractor and Richard Monument, Senior Site Agent at Downing College



The impressive sash window doorway

The Grade I listed Dining Hall at Downing College, Cambridge, first built in the early 1800's has been transformed. A yearlong project enabled much needed repair and an opportunity to restore the Greek style and colourful paintwork inspired by the college's original architect William Wilkins. A complete refurbishment has taken place, with new acoustic ceiling, stone floor, chandeliers and stunning Scagliola plasters with gold leaf finish. Painstaking work that has been complemented by the attention lavished upon nine grand sash windows standing proud around the room.

The most extraordinary window in the Dining Hall is thought to be one of the largest double hung sash windows in the country at 3.7 metres high and 1.9 metres wide. It functions as a doorway entrance with the unusual feature upon rising of disappearing into a false head above. The bottom sash can open to a height of just over 2 metres. Mighton traditional sash window hardware products were carefully selected to replace the majority of the worn window parts, ensuring the smooth movement and balance of this impressive set of windows.

The skilled work to achieve the successful full restoration of the windows to perfect working order was the responsibility and pleasure of Downing College Senior Site agent, Richard Monument and Painting & Decorating Contractor, Robert Johnston, who

led and took part in the hard work from beginning to end. Working day and night to allow the Dining Hall to continue to function, they removed each window in turn, preserving as much of the original glass as possible, and began the onerous task of stripping the frames back to raw timber. A bespoke metal tank was made just for the job, large enough to immerse each entire frame in 375 gallons of paint stripper removing all previous layers of lead paint. This process alone took several weeks to complete, a remarkable feat demonstrating determination and experience.

Richard and Robert chose Mighton Products to provide the much needed heavy duty brass linked chain, roller bearing brass pulleys and a staggering 140lb of lead weight for each side of each window. All were styled with the traditional brass Brighton fasteners and brass lifts, aesthetically sympathetic to the original window furniture.

You can see pride in the eyes of Richard and Robert when they look around the finished room. Their skills in using traditional materials and love of restoration have seen all the elements come together in a beautiful result.

For more information about Mighton traditional sash hardware products please visit www.mightonproducts.com or call on 0800 056 0471.

Enq No. 000



One of the largest double hung sash windows in the country