

EVENING STANDARD

August 14, 1998 *Barbara Chandler*

The best 24 picture restorers to brush up your Old Masters

Picture restoration is not just reserved for fine gallery and museum pieces. Anyone can have an heirloom, junk-shop find or auction acquisition put to rights, provided they know where to go. And not only will your picture shine again in its true colours, but you'll be preventing future deterioration and you could be increasing its value. Remember, you'll be dealing with experts with years of experience so listen carefully, take their advice, prepare to pay up and wait your turn. Broadly speaking, restorers fall into two groups: those dealing with paintings on board, canvas, etc, and those dealing with works on paper. **BARBARA CHANDLER**

Simon R Gillespie Fine Art Restoration Studio.
16 Albemarle Street, W1

Background After training as a chemist Mr Gillespie did two lengthy hand-on apprenticeships and now has 20 years' experience and a studio with five restorers and two admin staff. It's a friendly place where all are welcome. Open days/evenings provide insight into techniques and a chance for informal chats.

Services Restoration of oil paintings on panel or canvas, especially early-English pictures, Old Masters and portraits. Insurance, probate. Advice on framing, lighting and hanging. 'No job too small – or too large.'

Prices Removing nicotine stains, discoloured varnish and inexpert retouching from a small 19th century seascape 1-ft square costs £150. Restoring a huge 12 ft by 10 ft 18th-century family portrait (relining, removing old varnish, retouching, cleaning, etc) cost £35,000.