



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT JULY 2018

This has been a busy year for the “new look” Arts Society; it set out to raise its profile with 50 year anniversary celebrations, and a quarterly magazine in all the new colours with more focus on music, dance, drama, and heritage projects. Locally we also branched out, engaging more with High Storrs and collaborating with other northern societies in exhibitions, and other activities. Our new Sheffield/Hallamshire Church Recording project and the joint trip to Harrogate for a special Andrew Graham-Dixon lecture pointed to the benefits of sharing opportunities. However the year was not without its hiccups: High Storrs lecture hall still had occasional sound problems, the quality of some of the lecturers supplied to us was disappointing and some of the organised outings had low takeup. More on these stories below.

Support to local artistic endeavours: Members will recollect that we have in the past supported Hallam University students on the silver course, and more recently contributed to picture conservation for Sheffield art galleries. A painting in oil on canvas by the early 20th century artist and teacher, Charles (Cyril) Mahoney has been fully restored and is now hanging in the Graves Gallery with an acknowledgment to our society. I hope our members will call to see it and enjoy it. This year we looked to the future and have worked closely with High Storrs School, our lecture venue and a Performing Arts Secondary School. A small group of members visited the art, music and dance departments in May 2018 and saw some stunning work. Some members attended the Arts Exhibitions for GCSE and A- level students in May and June, and, at the time of writing this, are looking forward to a performance of Guys and Dolls, and a Dance exhibition. A £200 Young Arts award will now help the immensely talented dance team to appear at the One Dance UK National Festival 2018 which showcases the best youth dance groups from all over the country. Our Sheffield dancers have done tremendously well to get through the highly competitive selection process. They perform on 15 July.

Lecture programme 2017/2018: We always aim to provide enjoyable, indeed inspiring, Wednesday evenings. This year the topics were fascinating but delivery by some of the Arts Society approved lecturers did not always live up to expectations: some pretty trenchant reviews have been fed back to the centre on which we rely for our accredited speakers. The varied programme featured music, the heritage of other cultures, and some very modern artistic endeavours. We learned about the 18th century Chinese collector Emperor Qianlong, German remembrance art after WWII, 3000 years of artistic development in Ancient Egypt, quirky Venetian glass, contemporary art exemplified by Antony Gormley and Anish Kapoor, the music for ballet of Stravinsky, Burmese Buddhist-inspired art, the depiction of diseases through the centuries, flowers in European art.

Cultural Visits: Outings have been very enjoyable this year as colleagues report more fully below but it would be good to hear members' wishes for tours in late 2018/2019 and beyond. Lack of interest in the proposed (and then cancelled) South Yorkshire Sculpture Park outing suggested the timing and choice were just not suitable. More visits are being planned now and we will coordinate with neighbouring Arts Societies when we have spare places. Some of us joined Sheffield Society's immensely enjoyable trip to Berlin in May and that was a useful cooperative model. Ideas so far include Glasgow, the National Arboretum and Lichfield, Southwell Minster and Workhouse, Ruskin Centenary events, and the Potteries (see attachment). We can look forward to Burghley House next May and for late April 2020 I am exploring options for Southern Tuscany with Ciceroni.

Society Lunches: The social lunches are always fun. Lars Tharp did us proud last year at Hassop Hall. Do apply early for the 1 November 2018 lunch because places look limited. And watch out for the autumn 2019 lunch which falls to Hallamshire to organize. We have already secured Emma Paragreen from Sheffield Assay Office as our speaker and she will be bringing silver items for us to view.

Admin matters: There was no escaping the General Data Protection Regulation but I hope members were pleased that we took a pragmatic approach. We did not deluge you with paper or emails. The policy is on our website and we will only use your information for legitimate business purposes, keep it secure, and destroy it once it has no further purpose.

The Future: We hope to see many of you at next year's events. The lecture programme looks excellent: High Storrs is very anxious to provide a good service, there will be a greater variety of visits and events, and our updated Constitution will be presented to members shortly. *Ann
le Sage*

THE FINAL YEARS OF CARAVAGGIO by ANDREW GRAHAM DIXON HARROGATE, 28TH SEPTEMBER 2017

A jolly group of 30 people from both The Hallamshire and Sheffield Arts Societies boarded one of Mrs Martin's coaches with the excellent Ray in the driving seat on September 28th 2018. The weather was wonderful and Harrogate looked its best. We had a couple of hours to wander before the lecture at 2pm, so Betty's beckoned. Andrew was introduced by the Chair of Harrogate Decorative and Fine Arts Group (HDFAG) and so far their name has remained thus, individual!

Caravaggio lived from 1571-1610 and influenced Baroque painting hugely. He painted very realistic observations of the human form. He had a very colourful life, was considered a womaniser and was prone to violent outbursts. The talk was colourful and Andrew became so engrossed in his topic, of which he was clearly a master, that he ran well over time. We felt the ladies of Harrogate had certainly wined and dined him well at lunchtime as sometimes the language may have rivalled Caravaggio's own!

Sally Craig

WALSALL NEW ART GALLERY, 13TH OCTOBER 2017

In October 2017 a group of us visited Walsall New Art Gallery and Wightwick Manor on the outskirts of Wolverhampton. On entering the New Walsall Gallery one became aware that it is a lively responsive gallery, home to many exhibitions and events. When we visited it was holding an exhibition called 'Legacies – J.M.W. Turner and contemporary practice'. There was also a selection of book illustrations by Quentin

Blake and other illustrators in the family room. Both very interesting, but the collection we came to see was the Garmen Ryan collection, one of the most exciting and eclectic selections of art works in the country.

Kathleen Garmen was Jacob Epstein's second wife and after his death she and her friend, Sally Ryan, donated these works to Walsall. At first they were housed on the first floor of Walsall reference library and opened to the public in 1974 but then moved to their purpose built home in the New Gallery, an impressive modern building designed by Caruso St. John. Kathleen was born in Wednesbury and perhaps wanted to give something back to the area in which she was born.



Unsurprisingly the collection includes several busts of family members, in fact it contains the largest selection of Epstein's work in the country; we can see bronzes, portraits, as well as earrings and busts. Interestingly it

also contains studies for key works, most obviously 'Study for Rock Drill'. As well as some startlingly beautiful works by Epstein there are examples of work by practically every significant artist in the late 19th and early 20th century – Vincent Van Gogh's 'Sorrow', Cezanne's 'Baigneurs (Grande planche)', Modigliani's 'Caryatid', and works by Monet, Corot, Edward Burne-Jones and so many more. Sculptures, vessels and votive objects from cultures in Africa, Asia and South America are also featured; as I suggested earlier – a most eclectic collection of over 300 pieces.

Two pieces which I found most appealing were the painting of Kitty, Kathleen and Jacob's eldest daughter, by Lucien Freud, her then husband, and the triptych of the same Kitty, a much older woman. The triptych was painted by Andrew Tift and was inspired by a TV programme consisting of a series of interviews called 'Face to Face', which set out to reveal the character of the interviewee, a person we would now call a celebrity. The face of the young Kitty, full of liveliness and hope compared with her older self I found very touching.

The New Walsall Gallery is certainly a place which demands another more leisurely visit. The exhibits, the helpful and knowledgeable staff, and the gallery itself, all combined to make a most fascinating, informative morning – an enjoyable learning experience.

Colette Connolly

WIGHTWICK MANOR, 13TH OCTOBER 2017

Following our visit to Walsall New Art Gallery the afternoon was spent at Wightwick Manor and, after such a stimulating morning, the Manor and its environs had a great deal to live up to. It did not disappoint.

The first rooms we encountered were part of the original Victorian manor built in 1887 by Theodore Mander, a paint manufacturer. These rooms formed part of the family home and they still retained a feeling of comfort and leisure. They are decorated in the style of the period. There are ceramics by the De Morgans, at that time considered the foremost creative couple of the Pre-Raphaelite and Arts and Crafts Movement. Morris and Co was an important company at the time and many of these rooms were

decorated by them. Most interestingly the wall fabric in the drawing room was of silk and wool. Kempe glass added further interest in this area

The Mander family joined with the National Trust in 1937 to begin a collection of Pre-Raphaelite works. In the drawing room and hall we see two examples from this collection. There is a picture of Jane Morris in the drawing room; notable because Rossetti painted her face but Ford Maddox Ford later added her vivid red hair. The picture of Effie Ruskin in the hall was painted by Millais shortly before her marriage to Ruskin was annulled and she was then able to marry Millais.

The house was extended in 1895 when the Great Parlour was added. It was used largely for entertainment – musical evenings and parties could be held here. The easy, informal arrangement of the furniture and the size of the room, lent themselves to such activities. At the same time a large billiard room was added. They also added a dining room, a room sited far from the kitchen, which seems counterintuitive to modern ideas, but served its purpose by cutting out all cooking smells. The food was kept warm on hotplates in the servery before being taken to the table. These rooms were very large and built to impress but I found the original rooms more interesting and with a more comfortable feel. I was however impressed by their Turkish bath though it was to be used solely by the men.

The upper rooms of the extension were guest bedrooms. Morris and Co fabrics and some from other designers were used throughout. The elegant decorations of each dictated the name of the room, which was painted on the door. Hence we got the Acanthus room, the Honeysuckle room and the Bird room. In the 1920s some of Geoffrey Mander's (son of Theodore) favourite poems were painted on the walls of one room and in the Honeysuckle room a selection of sketches by the teenage Dante Gabriel Rossetti can be examined. It was thought that they had belonged to Alexander Monroe, the only sculptor of the Pre-Raphaelite movement. I also found the drawings by Simeon Solomon fascinating; I didn't know his work previously.

The service wing must have been considered very modern and up to date. A house as commodious as this inevitably needed a large body of servants and they must have thought themselves well cared for because they had electric lighting, hot and cold running water, a bath, and central heating. It was very unusual for servants to have such facilities in the 1890s.

The house was so full of treasures that sadly I stayed too long and the result was that I was unable to visit the art gallery which is situated in the malt house, part of the original farm buildings and displays both paintings and ceramics by William and Evelyn De Morgan.



Having begun our adventure in the Walsall New Art Gallery and ending in this remarkable house it was a day full of riches for which we owe our sincere thanks to Jack and Menna.

Colette Connolly

FOUR SOCIETIES' LUNCH, 2ND NOVEMBER 2017

The four Arts Societies of Hallamshire, Sheffield, Cavendish and Dove Valley met as usual in the first week of November for a shared lunch at Hassop Hall. As expected the food was excellent but the highlight of the event was unquestionably the after dinner speech, or should I say entertainment, by Lars Tharp. He is known to most of us through his TV appearances as a ceramics expert on the Antiques Road Show. One tale he told was of an accident that befell his former distinguished mentor who, unable to find a suitable pin to feel for evidence of a barely visible repair to a Meissen figure, made use of his teeth instead. He found his evidence but sadly in the process swallowed its head! Enough said. But perhaps the most moving story was of examining the contents of the shopping bag of an elderly lady waiting patiently in the queue. He wondered why she had brought in a very modest pair of bowls that had clearly been fused together as the result of a mistake in the firing process. 'My husband was in the army and got them in Japan in 1945', she said, 'in Hiroshima'.

Grenville Turner

SPRING LUNCH, 14TH MARCH 2018

We had the best turnout for this event for many years, 43 came to the "last lunch" at Baldwin's Omega before it closes in July 2018 for good. As this is the year of The Arts Society Golden Anniversary we decided to make this our special commemorative event. The food was delicious as ever and the decoration on the tables was suitably golden with daffodils and gold coloured napkins.

We were very lucky that Emma Paragreen, Curator, Librarian and Archivist from Sheffield Assay Office was able to come and give us a fascinating talk illustrated by three objects which she obtained special permission to bring along - one being an umbrella by James Dixon & Sons with a gold handle, (fitting for our golden anniversary!) and an interesting sea anemone in silver, which was rather large and sculpture-like and in which ALL the pieces of silver and all the solder had to be individually tested! The third was a candlestick. She used these to illustrate very different objects in the collection.

An Act in 1773 allowed Sheffield to use a Crown for its town mark. In 1903 Sheffield was allowed to assay and mark gold as well as silver and we had two town marks - the Crown for silver and the Rose for gold. Now mixed metals are allowed and used. After the Hallmarking Act was passed in 1973, and as pieces from Sheffield silversmiths declined, the work of the Assay office has increasingly become international – 90% of the work now comes from abroad. The punches used for Hallmarking are tightly controlled and kept in a locked cage to minimise the risk of forgery

Since its opening the Assay office site at Hillsborough has had 10,000 visitors. It is one of only four Assay offices in the UK. There are 1000 pieces in the collection and 6000 books in the library.

Sally

Craig

CHURCH RECORDING GROUP

The Sheffield and Hallamshire Church Recording Group is coming to the end of the first recording year at St Mary the Virgin, Handsworth. We have been warmly welcomed to this large, historic church by all we have come in contact with and we commend them for keeping the church in such a beautiful condition with wonderful flower arrangements present at all times. All our Recorders have taken on this enormous task with enthusiasm and thankfully some have a wealth of knowledge and experience.

Here are some observations: The church has 'Crusading' links but has gone through many developments, some sympathetic but some 'botched'. Discovered behind a picture in the base of the bell tower was a small cupboard; behind this door was an even older door with ferramenta strapwork, opening this door revealed a very old safe inside with marigold gloves and cleaning materials! In 1729 the window from the south wall was moved to the east end of the new south aisle reusing the brickwork. Outside, beneath the window is a clear 'mason's mark'. On a lead plaque dated 1832 are the names of a Mr Weldon and a Mr Fisher, Churchwardens, and a Mr Woodward, Plumber. Why? The Tudor roof in the Nave is wooden with the shields of families, connected with the church, at all the intersections. Although the windows are all 19th and 20th century those in St Katherine's Chapel are by the artist and designer Christopher Webb and one is signed.

If you would like to join our Group we meet on alternate Mondays and will be starting again in September, we lunch at a local hostelry that offers a fantastic 'senior' lunch from £3.95. Contact: Elizabeth Barton eliz.tizi@virginmedia.com *Elizabeth Barton*

VISIT TO BOUGHTON HOUSE, THURSDAY 12TH JULY 2018

We all met at Ranmoor Church at around 8 a.m. for the visit and as the M1 was relatively kind to us we arrived on time at the house at 11 a.m. where we were divided into 2 groups for our tour of the house.



Boughton House revels in the nickname of "The English Versailles". Although somewhat smaller than the palace in France it still has 12 entrances, 52 chimney stacks and 365 windows. The house was originally begun around 1500 on an estate owned by the Abbey of St. Edmundsbury which was extended in the 16th century and then transformed into the ornate residence we see today by Ralph Montagu who became 1st Duke of Montagu in the late 17th century. He was ambassador to Louis XIV and this inspired his vision. The problem was he did not have enough money. This problem was solved by his marriage to the wealthy Duchess of Albemarle. When you see the mansion it is difficult to understand that it was never finished since his heir was more interested in the garden rather than the house. When Ralph's son died in 1759 with no heir the estate passed to the Duke of Buccleuch and since he had sufficient grand houses Boughton was left alone not to decay but as a time capsule untouched.

The group that I was with had a brilliant guide who had an intimate knowledge of the house. If I could only remember 10% of the facts we were given I believe I would make a good fist on Mastermind. The highlights that I remember, besides the opulence of the

place, are the portraits by Lely, Van Dyke and others of the family, the Sevres porcelain, a wonderful early El Greco, the Egyptian Hall, in the Tudor part of the house, (so called after a club of antiquaries who used it for their meetings) and a most beautiful courtyard garden in which all the flowers were white.

In addition there were magnificent tapestries, largely from Mortlake, which had retained their colours due to the house going into hibernation for over 150 years and a number of Persian carpets dating back to 1600 which were also in pristine condition.

The last rooms we went into before a well-earned lunch were the armoury where there was the oldest machine gun invented in 1718 and the sword of Oudenarde used by the Duke of Marlborough whose second daughter married into the Montagu clan.

Lunch was an excellent buffet of meats, fish and salads. Once we had finished that and done with shopping we returned to the bus for a tour of the estate.

The estate runs to 11,500 acres and there are 6 estate villages where most of the houses belong to the estate but some have been sold to private buyers. Looking at the tranquillity of the English countryside it was difficult to believe that this was a major airbase during the 2nd World War where B17's flew to bomb Germany. We got out of the coach to visit the parish church of Warkton, a grade 1 listed church, where a Georgian Apse had been added to enable four memorials to the Dukes and their wives to be erected. Two of these were amazing sculptures by Roubilliac, the foremost 18th century sculptor working in England. Our final port of call was Geddington to see one of only three surviving Eleanor crosses which were built on the command of Edward 1 to commemorate the places where her body rested on her way to London following her death in Lincolnshire in 1290.

Everybody seemed to enjoy the day and we arrived back in Sheffield on time at 6-30 p.m. tired but satisfied.

Ratcliffe

David

EVENTS TO TAKE NOTE OF FOR THE COMING YEAR

STUDY DAY ON JOHAN SEBASTIAN BACH, 4TH OCTOBER 2018 - Music lovers generally regard J S Bach as the greatest of early 18th Century composers. He is so important in the history of music that the Baroque period closed with his death in 1750. Bach is one of the most challenging of composers and rarely reveals the subtleties of his music on early hearings. The study day by Peter Medhurst with musical illustration goes beneath the surface of Bach's music to decode some musical symbolism and to reveal some of his working methods. **There is still time to book using the enclosed form.** *Sally Craig*

FOUR SOCIETIES LUNCH, 1ST NOVEMBER 2018 - The next Four Societies Lunch will be hosted this year by The Arts Society Dove Valley at Hassop Hall on Thursday November 1st at 12.00 for 12.30pm. Tickets will be £38pp and **an application form and details of the menu are included with this newsletter** and are also available for download in the June electronic newsletter.

Helen Lloyd

VISIT TO MOORCROFT FACTORY, EMMA BRIDGEWATER AND ST. GILES CATHOLIC CHURCH, 23RD NOVEMBER 2018 - We have planned a visit to two leading ceramics manufacturers in the Stoke area. William Moorcroft, founded in 1897, is well known as a leader in the world of Art pottery. Emma Bridgewater is a more recent entry into the ceramics field and since its foundation in 1985 has become one of

the leading manufacturers in the UK. On our return journey to Sheffield we will visit St Giles Roman Catholic Church in Cheadle, a Gothic gem by Augustus Pugin and reputedly one of his favourites. **An application form and further details are included with this newsletter. Book now to avoid disappointment.**

Jack Yarwood

SPRING LUNCH, 13TH MARCH 2019 - The atmosphere of the 2018 lunch was so convivial it was decided to book the Spring lunch for 2019 at Abbeydale Sports Club, where some of the long term staff from Baldwin's are setting up a new eating venue. **Make a note of the date in your diary.**

Sally Craig

VISIT TO BURGHLEY HOUSE, THURSDAY 16TH MAY 2019 - Burghley House is a magnificent Elizabethan mansion built between 1555 and 1587 for William Cecil, Queen Elizabeth's Lord High Treasurer and 'spymaster'. The house, with 18 State Rooms, is surrounded by extensive gardens and a deer park and has a major collection of Fine Art. It is situated by the A1 south of Stamford, an hour and 40 minutes from Sheffield. Further details of the visit and a booking form will be circulated to members in early 2019. **Meanwhile please make a note in your diary.**

Grenville Turner

See the Newsletter in colour on our web site: www.artssocietyhallamshire.org.uk

PROGRAMME OF LECTURES FOR 2018 TO 2019

'The Day Parliament Burned Down' - September 19th 2018 (AGM)

Caroline Shenton's acclaimed lecture illustrates the disastrous conflagration that destroyed the Houses of Parliament in 1834, using contemporary depictions by Turner, William Heath and others.

'The Magnificent Maya -Fact and Fantasy' - October 17th 2018

Diane Davies will introduce us to one of the most remarkable culture groups in the Pre-Columbian Americas and will discuss their major achievements as well as noting the common misunderstandings we have of this ancient civilisation.

'Ravilious, Piper and English Romantic Modernism' - November 21st 2018

Born in the years between the Wars, Romantic Modernism continues to inspire 21st century designers and painters. Suzanne Fagence Cooper offers a vibrant alternative vision of Modernist art, from an English perspective.

'Lawrence of Arabia - Tortured Hero of Troubled Times' - January 16th 2019

Neil Faulkner is an archaeologist, historian and writer and will contrast the legend of Lawrence of Arabia with the true story of the man and the part he played on the Arab Revolt of 1916 to 1918.

'Turbulent times: Russian history as depicted by its 19th century realist painters' - February 20th 2019.

Tony Brenton (former British Ambassador in Moscow) looks at some great 19th century Russian representational paintings and explores the world they set out to illuminate.

'How to read the English Country Church (Part one –The Romans to the Tudors)' - March 20th 2019.'

Parish priest Nicholas Henderson offers a guide to help us to look at church architecture, outside and inside, also church furniture and those mysterious nooks and crannies high and low, unravelling English history before our eyes.

'The Bayeux Tapestry - the World's Oldest Comic Strip' - April 17th 2019

Eveline Eaton will present in detail the historical, cultural and artistic aspects of this unique masterpiece, which provides posterity a startling testimonial of life in the late Viking age.

'Secrets and Symbols in Paintings – unlocking hidden meanings in Art' - May 15th 2019

Stella Grace Lyons will help to arm us with the necessary skills to approach a painting in a gallery or museum and examine it in detail, delving beneath the surface of the work.

'Tantrums and Tiaras' - June 19th 2019

Nigel Bates, who is currently Music Administrator for the Royal Ballet and also a percussionist with major London orchestras will give us an insight into life backstage at the Royal Opera House and the tribulations and triumphs of working with the Royal Opera and the Royal Ballet companies.

'The Bauhaus 1919 - 1933 A Hundred Years of Modern Design' - September 18th 2019

Anne Anderson, who is currently Hon. Associate Professor at Exeter University, will outline the influence of this radical design ethos on architecture and on the manufacture of furniture and other domestic items during the 100 years since its inception.