



STRADFAS

A member society of The Arts Society



Newsletter and Programme 2018-2019

Chairman's Report

It would be unusual for STRADFAS not to have a busy year but 2017 has been exceptionally so.



Ursula Russell

NADFAS rebranding included a name change. Nationally 'The Arts Society' was a popular choice but with a flourishing Art Society in Stratford already, we could foresee potential for mix up. The compromise was to retain the acronym, STRADFAS adding, 'A Member of The Arts Society', and our swan logo.

We have been unique within the top rank of Societies affiliated to The Arts Society in that we are not a charitable institution in our own right. Ensuring that our Constitution and Byelaws will satisfy the Charity Commission and HMRC has been time consuming, especially for our Treasurer Bryan Knight whose attention to detail has been much appreciated.

In addition to the financial advantages, we hope that while still enjoying the benefits of association with The Arts Society, we will enhance our own local identity.

Unlike most other Arts Society Affiliates, STRADFAS starts the lecture season in March and then takes a summer break. From 2019 there will be a tidier procedure with the AGM in June and lectures running continuously from September to June. Further details will be given at the AGM in February 2018.

As always this Newsletter reminds us of fascinating talks, visits, heritage activities and, for the first time, no fewer than three Art Tours, to Vienna and Sicily with more exciting destinations planned.

I have been supported throughout the year by our indefatigable Vice Chair, Nick Lister of whose computer skills I am in awe. Sadly for us, he has decided to take a break from the STRADFAS committee. But STRADFAS Officers rarely fade away completely and we continue to be grateful to Rosie Langman at the Raffle desk and Judith Dorricott, Press and Publicity Officer.

I am delighted that David Triggs, who runs Day Visits with his wife Charlotte, has agreed to be Vice Chair for 2018-19.

Do continue to join us whenever you can and bring your friends!

Day Visits in 2017

Our February visit took us to London and Tate Britain for a celebration of the achievements of David Hockney in painting, drawing, print, photography and video. This was enhanced by our Tate lecturer, who provided an invaluable insight into Hockney's life and work across six decades. Passing through the rooms of the exhibition (curated by Hockney himself) we experienced a range of emotions as we shared an extraordinary life in art.

In June, we again visited London for a private tour of the stylish Ham House and admired a fine collection of paintings, textiles and furniture. Outside, the formal flower gardens provided a place to wander before further exploration revealed the more romantic 'wilderness' hidden behind verdant hedges.



Ham House

Across the Thames lies Strawberry Hill House. This brilliant white



Strawberry Hill House

Gothic revival villa, built by Horace Walpole in the 18th century, provided a distinct contrast to Ham House. Our guides pointed out magnificent architectural details such as stained glass, fanned ceilings and Robert Adam fireplaces.

Our September visit to Buckingham Palace started with the Queen's Gallery to see 'Canaletto and the Art of Venice', which told the story of Canaletto's paintings, drawings and prints of Venice, now in the Royal Collection. For many of us, the highlights were Canaletto's sketches, filled with precise architectural details as well as charming depictions of contemporary life. An optional visit to the Royal Mews took in the horses and the extraordinary carriages which they pull on ceremonial occasions.



Carriage at the Royal Mews

We concluded with a tour of the State Rooms of Buckingham Palace and the special exhibition telling the story of the Queen's reign through a display of official gifts presented over the past 65 years. The variety of gifts was mind-boggling!

The Arts Society Golden Jubilee

We are planning two events to mark the Golden Jubilee: The Arts Society Chief Executive, Florian Schweizer, will undertake a ten mile run round Shakespeare's Stratford stopping to admire the work of the Heritage Volunteers, and he will also attend our special lecture entitled **As Good as Gold** on **September 20**.



Florian Schweizer

New Members Coffee Morning

We had an excellent turnout from our new members at our coffee morning last May. With coffee and cakes provided, the new members enjoyed meeting the committee as well as finding out about individual roles. Procedures for booking Day Visits, Extended Tours and Days of Special Interest were highlighted, and the work of Church Recorders and Heritage Volunteers was explained. Our New Members Coffee Morning this year will be held at the Artshouse on **Tuesday 20 March 2018** when newcomers to the Society are welcome.

Programme of our

Lectures in 2018-2019



Lynne Hurst

Programme Organiser: Thursday 15 February
Lynne Hurst
lectures@stradfas.org.uk

Location and Times:

Lectures are held at:
Stratford Artshouse
14 Rother Street,
Stratford-upon-Avon
CV37 6LU

Mornings at 10.45 am
Afternoons at 1.30 pm

For latest information
visit the website:
www.stradfas.org.uk

February



AGM 10.45 am followed
by a lecture

Optical Entertainments before the Movies

Andrew Gill

There were many inventions, dances and discoveries that led to the first showing of the movies in 1895. This lecture explores "cave art", "peep shows", "transforming pictures" and "persistence of vision machines" together with the forgotten world of artists, showmen and early scientists who attempted to capture and reproduce real life imagery long before the coming of cinema.

March



Thursday 15 March
Titian's Colour and the Transformation of European Painting

Nicholas Watkins

Prior to Titian nobody took Venetian painting seriously. This lecture suggests that Titian's legacy was more profound than all three of his great contemporaries: Leonardo, Raphael and Michelangelo. During his long life his artistic style changed greatly. He evolved a completely novel approach to colour and, through his vivid luminous tints, transformed not only Venetian painting but also the whole course of European art.

April



Thursday 19 April
Let the Games Begin!

Dominic Giles

We all know that the Olympic Games originated in Greece, but Robert Dover was credited with inventing the modern Olympic Games in England in 1612. The games are still held annually in June on Dover's Hill in Chipping Campden organised by the Robert Dover Society.

Dominic Giles tells the story of the Olympics and shows how, in 2013, he restored a copy of the book *Annalia Dubrensia* which contains tributes from Dover's admirers such as Ben Jonson.

May



Thursday 17 May 2018
King George III: the most cultured monarch

Oliver Everett

George III has been unjustly remembered as mad and as responsible for losing the American colonies. This lecture corrects this impression by displaying him as a discerning art collector, patron of the arts and artists, friend of America and Americans and a committed family man. As an architect he added the future Buckingham Palace to the Royal residences and re-inhabited Windsor Castle.

June



Thursday 21 June
Let There Be Light!

Alexandra Drysdale

For artists, light can express emotions, from El Greco's light of spiritual ecstasy to the dangerous darkness of Caravaggio and from Turner's sublime sunlight to Samuel Palmer's melancholy moonlight.

Stonehenge was built to worship the sun, and today James Turrell makes light temples in art galleries while Dan Flavin makes altarpieces from fluorescent tubes. This lecture will show how artists use light to paint temporal and spiritual art through the ages.

Special Interest Days

Our first date is **Tuesday 6 March**, when Frank Woodgate will talk about **The Art and Scandalous Lives of the Bloomsbury Group**.

The three main artists, Duncan Grant, Vanessa Bell and Roger Fry, together with their literary and intellectual companions, formed this movement in the early 20th century and it is difficult to separate their art from their astonishing lives.



Vanessa Bell Studland Beach c.1912 (Tate)

The study day will review the multi-faceted relationships between the creators, and will also cover the important contribution of the group to the visual arts in Great Britain, when Roger Fry mounted the *Manet and the Post-Impressionists* Exhibition in London.

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On **Tuesday 4 October**, we will learn about the famous American photographer **Lee Miller**, who was a fashion model before becoming an acclaimed war photographer. Travelling to England at the outbreak of World War II, she documented the magnificent work of women and the treatment of refugees in Europe.

Lee worked with Man Ray in Paris after the war, where she also met her husband, the Surrealist artist, Roland Penrose. We will see images from 'Backstage at the Lee Miller Archives' from their private museum at Farley House.



Caroline Newey



Roger Fry Studland Bay 1911 (Swindon)

Day Visits in 2018



David & Charlotte Triggs

In 2018 the Arts Society celebrates its Golden Jubilee. The celebrations include the exhibition *The Age of Jazz* at Two Temple Place, which we will see on **Thursday 22 March**. This intriguing building is an architectural gem built by John Loughborough for William Waldorf Astor and we shall also have a tour of the building. We have arranged lunch at Middle Temple (the centre of legal life) which will be served in the Elizabethan Great Hall with its spectacular double hammer beam roof and elaborately carved screen.

A visit to Oxfordshire on **Thursday 7 June** will include two contrasting private gardens. The



Appleton Manor

Activities in 2018-2019

September



Thursday 20 September

As Good as Gold

Alexander Epps

In celebration of the golden anniversary of The Arts Society this lecture explores the story of gold and the significance and symbolism of gold within the history of art. Gold was first discovered in the rivers of the eastern Mediterranean between the 6th and the 4th century BC. It is the colour of the sun, the colour of divinity and the colour of love. From creations ancient and contemporary, sacred and profane - all that glitters is certainly gold!

October



Thursday 18 October

Alchemy and Adventure

Lynne Gibson

In our modern world it is easy to take colour for granted, yet before organic chemistry the most desirable pigments were often exotic or poisonous. This lecture explores how colours used in our most beautiful and valuable paintings were often derived from alchemy and through adventure. Alchemists prepared deadly "King's Yellow" and "Ruby of Arsenic" while "Moorish Gold" was concocted from basilisk powder ground with blood!

November



Thursday November 15

Leonardo's Women

Shirley Smith

This lecture celebrates the 500th anniversary of Leonardo's death next year and explores his revolutionary rendering of the female figure. His images of women, whether Madonna or mistresses are among the most renowned works of art of the Italian Renaissance. Leonardo harnessed the interplay of light and shadow to produce images that combine the spiritual with the sensual and the mystical with the mysterious.

December



Thursday 13 December

The Art of Political Intrigue in 13th century English Cathedrals

Jonathan Foyle

In 2015, England celebrated 800 years of Magna Carta. Little has been said about the consequences of 1215 in designs of great early Gothic cathedrals. Jonathan examines what these changes represented as he explores the politics of church and state and their expression in the arts of major cathedrals such as Canterbury, Salisbury and Lichfield as well as the royal palace and abbey complex at Westminster.

January 2019



Thursday 17 January 2019

Dazzling Dufy

Mary Alexander

Raoul Dufy was a key player in early twentieth century avant garde art, design and literary/theatrical circles in Paris. His imagination and technical virtuosity - across a wide variety of media, from painting to fashion to ceramics - cut across all conventional boundaries. He defies categorisation as he constantly innovates and experiments. The wit and curiosity about the world of this charismatic character was infectious.

February 2019



Thursday 28 February 2019

The Queen of Instruments: the Lute

Adam Busiakiewicz

The lute holds a special place in the history of art: Renaissance artists depicted it as evoking celestial harmony, Holbein showed it as a pastime of courtiers and Frans Hals used it to emphasise debauchery and pleasures. Live performance of the lute and other instruments will show how they expressed various aspects of the human character through the ages.

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Terracotta Warrior

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A visit to Oxfordshire on **Thursday 7 June** will include two contrasting private gardens. The first is the beautiful contemporary garden surrounding Appleton Manor. Said to be the oldest inhabited private house in the country, the garden was designed by Arne Maynard,

Extended Tours to Berlin and Dresden, and to Umbria

Our trip to Berlin and Dresden starts on **20 May**. We will witness the regeneration of this exciting city since the Fall of the Wall, including the Reichstag and parts of East Berlin, where we will visit the Berlin Wall East Side Gallery. Berlin has a wealth of museums including Museum Island where we will visit the Pergamon and Neues Museums, and after our tour of the splendid Charlottenburg Palace, we will be able to visit the Jewish Museum Berlin. In Potsdam we will see the delightful Sanssouci Palace created by Frederick the Great and the Cecilienhof Palace, venue for the Potsdam Conference between the victorious allies in 1945.

Our trip then takes us to Dresden, where we will see the architectural delights of the Semper Opera House, the Cathedral and



Brandenburger Gate

the perfectly reconstructed Frauenkirche. We will also visit the Royal Palace and the New Green Vault, which will include a viewing of the celebrated Dresden Green Diamond. Our last morning will be spent at the Meissen Porcelain Gallery and Museum.

We are planning a trip to Umbria for six days starting on **1 October** and staying in Spoleto.

Among other towns, we will visit Perugia, Gubbio and Assisi, and will be able to admire the frescoes by Giotto and his contemporaries.



Potsdam Sanssouci Palace



The Duomo in Orvieto

Visits Abroad in 2017



Annie Giles

This year saw two groups visit Vienna, and both were accompanied by a guide who combined history with contemporary political comment and humour. After a coach trip around central Vienna, we admired the vast Gothic St. Stephen's Cathedral and saw Empress Maria Theresa's extravagantly golden Schonbrunn Palace, surrounded by its formal gardens. We drove up the River Danube to the Benedictine Melk Abbey, which houses a fascinating medieval library and a vast marble and gold leaf Baroque chapel. The Hofburg Imperial Apartments gave us an insight into the life of Empress Elizabeth (Sisi) and we explored the many treasures of the Kunsthistorisches Museum amongst which are the Saliera by Cellini and an excellent collection of European paintings. Our final day was spent in the Belvedere Palace which houses Austrian fine art,



Floor in Kunsthistorisches Museum



Viennese Men in Costume

including Klimt's 'The Kiss'. In between admiring the treasures of Vienna, we all managed to enjoy at least one Weiner Schnitzel and some delicious Apfelstrudel, and the group was grateful for such a memorable trip.

Our wonderful trip to Sicily in October was accompanied by wall-to-wall sunshine, stunning coastal and countryside scenery, warm seas for swimming and some superb



Temple at Valle dei Templi

local Sicilian food and wine. The arts and archaeology were equally stunning, and we travelled far and wide visiting Palermo, Monreale and the Palatine Chapel, the pretty medieval seaside town of Cefalu, and even Mount Etna. On our first day we marvelled at the beautifully preserved mosaics at Piazza Armerina and then our charming arqueo-anthropologist guide brought both the whole Valley of the Temples and the 4th century BC Greek amphitheatre in Taormina to life. Our final day was spent in Syracuse, a powerful Greek city from the 3rd to the 5th century and home to the Temple of Apollo, a Teatro Romano and the spectacular Teatro Greco. The centre of the town featured charming Baroque buildings, an impressive Duomo, and many elegant cafes and fish restaurants.

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Fountain with animal heads, Palermo



Our Group in Syracuse

We ate a final lunch at a nearby farmhouse where we even met the owner, "Il Barone" - who nonchalantly mentioned that he was also the owner of the Palace in the Piazza Duomo! Another memorable trip that left us wanting to return to this magnificent island.

Funds, Administration and our Membership



Bryan Knight

STRADFAS is embarking on exciting times as we take steps to make better use of our financial resources and to enhance our profile as a charitable benefactor. At the same time we intend to shield our members from the worst of the cost pressures which are to be with us in the near future.

The size of our membership is crucial in maintaining a two session lecture day and in spreading our fixed costs, and so the Committee is encouraged that we have recruited 44 new members and some fresh administrative talent over the past 12 months.

On the expenditure side, we have managed to defer the increases of up to 58% in Artshouse hire charges since we had already contracted for 2017 at earlier tariffs. The higher rates will now apply from January 2018 and would logically compel us to raise subscription rates by a sizeable amount.

For this reason, the Committee has resolved that STRADFAS should apply without delay for charitable status so that we can benefit from Gift Aid and possibly other tax rebates and not lose these sources of income to either The Arts Society or to HMRC. In our approach, we have been able to draw on the experience of other Societies, who have been Charities for some years. We are most grateful to them.



Lynne Reekes

Timing is uncertain, but we hope to obtain this tax relief during the coming year. Consequently we have decided to limit the increase in the 2018 subscription to £2. This means that the annual membership will be £43 as we hinted in last year's Newsletter.

This still keeps STRADFAS amongst the best value-for-money Societies, so please continue to give us your support especially in the recruitment of new members.

As a Charity we will have to give evidence of our philanthropic deeds and in the coming years, we will seek to increase our donations to worthy causes. This means that our supplementary income from raffles and surpluses from other events will remain a valuable buffer to the benefit of all our members.

Looking further ahead, the Artshouse are applying a further 20% + Cost of Living increase in 2019 and so we will continue to show imagination to protect our members as much as possible.

We are certain that there will be tangible benefits in being a Charity. The Committee is prepared to take up the challenge of getting us over the initial hump and to accepting the added administration thereafter. We look forward to receiving your support, especially as we feel that our status in Stratford will also be much enhanced.



Ruth Bartlett



Volunteering with STRADFAS

Volunteers Lunch

In January a New Year buffet lunch was held in the meeting room of the Artshouse to say Thank You to all of our volunteers who have contributed their time and talents over the last eighteen months. The volunteering groups include our Heritage Volunteers who are all talented sewers and embroiderers, working mainly on projects in churches and historic houses, our Church Recorders, who painstakingly research and record a local place of worship, and our Church Trail group who provide activities for children in churches. We are also proud to be able to donate funds to help children through our Young Arts projects. We now have an extra group who are lending a hand during our increasingly busy Lecture Days. The lunch provided an opportunity for us all to come together and exchange news about our specialisms and our future plans, and for our new volunteers to meet our longstanding members for a warm, relaxed and convivial few hours.



Young Arts



Anne Maguire

It is a constant complaint that young people spend far too much time on their various electronic gadgets to the detriment of everything else. A life lived through Facebook, for example, may seem preferable to contact with family and friends around them. To counteract this, branches of the Arts Society, particularly large ones like STRADFAS, are able to offer funding to schools and groups to develop projects which might not otherwise be available to them. It is well-known that the arts develop creativity and team-work, discover talents and provide enjoyment and relaxation away from the confines of the curriculum.



Butterfly by a primary school child

materials. Many of the pieces of work focused on making people and characters, and this encouraged the participants to express parts of themselves through their art - in their last session, the children even made short films. It was decided to produce a book of comments describing the children's feelings at different times as well as models of people of

importance in their lives. Working together helps them in so many ways.



Reach for the Stars

There is a thriving society in Warwickshire, called 'Savers', which highlights the dangers being faced by the Natural World. This year it was decided to hold an Art Competition to bring to the public eye the dangers confronting polar bears. The previous sponsors were unable to donate prize-money this year so our society stepped in. Southam

College won the senior section while the junior prize went to Lady Katherine Leveson Primary School in Balsall Common. The exhibition of work was on display in St. Mary's, Broadgate in Coventry.

The Arts Intervention Project is a partnership between the Shakespeare Hospice, Warwickshire Young Carers and Escape Arts. These three organisations aim to identify young people aged between 9-16 who would benefit from some help to increase their confidence and self-esteem, whilst being engaged in creative activities.



Wooden painted dolls

The Shakespeare Hospice has again been in receipt of funding to help bereaved children through the grieving process. The children worked collaboratively, both in decision-making and in the work they undertook, and the group chose a number of projects, using different methods and a range of

Another group of young people helped by us is The Young Carers, who gather at The Shakespeare Hospice for their local meetings. A visit to the headquarters of this Society in Ryton-on-

Dunsmore shows the extent of caring undertaken by children from as young as eight years old. The responsibilities they have means that they have little or no time for themselves, so a donation from a society such as ours enables them to spend time and develop some of their artistic skills. Mosaics created by them were of such a high standard that they must have felt a great sense of pride, enjoyment and achievement. Fortunately funding comes from a variety of sources for their various activities.

Two local schools have received grants this year, and both The Willows and Woverton Primary School are working on their art projects at the moment. Claverdon Primary School, which received funding from us in the last

financial year, brought in artists to work with every child in the school. The entrance hall was decorated with its values: "Reach for the Stars and achieve the three R's". Through this motto, the children are encouraged to be respectful, responsible, resilient and to recognise success. The end result of their artistic work is eye-catching,



Mosaic by a Young Carer



Clay figures by a Young Carer



Savers – Senior Winners

Volunteering with STRADFAS

Heritage Volunteers



Kay Anderson

STRADFAS Heritage Volunteers have once again been busy conserving many different and varied projects in historic houses, churches and museums around Warwickshire and will continue to do so - our archive of photographs of our work continues to grow.

The large project undertaken with Ladbroke church by the expert textile conservationist team, is now complete. This project, restoring and conserving two Victorian processional banners, a chasuble, lectern drops and also working on



Processional banner at Ladbroke Church

the exquisitely embroidered red and white stoles, was started in 2008. In September this year Ladbroke Church organised a four day exhibition, open to the public, to display the beautiful work of the STRADFAS team, and their work was greatly admired by the numerous visitors from both Warwickshire and abroad. We were also fortunate to have this lovely work on display at the Artshouse for our September meeting.

The Anne Hathaway cottage project to replace both the bed hangings and the coverlet is also complete. The bed hangings have been made in an olive green wool style fabric which is guaranteed not to attract moths! The Hathaway Bed now looks resplendent with its beautifully restored and embroidered coverlet consisting of 35 hand embroidered panels featuring the various flowers reminiscent of the late 16th-century. We are sure Anne Hathaway would have been delighted with the finished result.

This summer, restoration work was completed on four vestments for Mickleton Church. A new veil and burse



Aerial view of the cushions at Holy Trinity Church

are also required for the church, and this project of gold ecclesiastic embroidery is in hand but will take time to complete.

The choir cushions made to mark 800 years of worship at Holy Trinity Church, were designed by talented local architect, Will Hawkes. Will's inspiration for the designs are based on the theme of the ministry: Baptism, Holy Communion, Word of Life, together with an image of an open Bible, and the Coventry Cross of Nails.

Will's design inspiration also came from the DNA Molecule which he used to great effect to encompass the images. In September, the



Coverlet for Anne Hathaway's bed

Revd Patrick Taylor dedicated the completed choir cushions to the church and thanked the team for all their hard work. The finished cushions look beautiful in place in the choir stalls and are greatly appreciated by everyone using them.

November found us once again working with Warwickshire Market Hall Museum with a similar theme to last year, "Making Traditional Christmas Crafts". The venue this year was in the Museum, in the

centre of Warwick, which was a lovely setting for our workshop. Our team once again came up with original ideas for Christmas tables, trees or special occasion cards. This Christmas event has proved to be very popular for the last few years.

STRADFAS is very fortunate to have enthusiastic members who are willing to share their skills and talents and give their time volunteering for the various projects, which we, under our charitable status, are encouraged to do. If you would like to be involved and volunteer in any way with one of the projects, please do let us know.



Stole at Ladbroke Church

Church Recorders

The record of the Church of St Michael and All Angels, Claverdon was completed in the autumn of



Millennium window

2017. During the two years of recording, we have researched the entire furnishings of the church, seen the inner workings of the tower clock and received expert knowledge in situ about the impressive peal of six bells. We learnt that Claverdon



Jean Vaudeau

villagers used their own designs to create a set of embroidered kneelers, and that many items have been given in memory of past congregation members. A particularly intriguing find was the quote taken from a ceremony of the Ancient Order of Druids. Our thanks go to the recording team for their dedication and to members of the Church for their invaluable help.



Benediction Board

Church Trails

Wine, oil and vinegar were some of the surprising answers to the question "What is poured into the font for baptisms?" when thirty children from The Willows School came to Holy Trinity Church. As William Shakespeare is buried there, some questions were about his life and his grave, while others asked about family coats of arms, stained glass windows and the 13th century Sanctuary Knocker. The students were the first to try out the new Children's



Children working on the church trail



Looking at the Clopton Chapel

Church Trail created by our volunteers, and the final verdict was "it was quite hard as it made us look closely at things, but it was great fun at the same time". The Trail is available in the church for visitors and also on the website for schools to use.



Judith Dorricot