

Heritage Volunteers



Kay Anderson receives her Heritage Volunteers Award

Our group has been involved with the conservation of various local projects and our archive of photographs continues to grow. The replacement Burse and Veil made for St. Lawrence Church, Mickleton was completed last summer, and the Vicar was delighted with the restoration, which can be enjoyed by future generations. We have begun conserving the beautiful golden Ecclesiastical embroideries in an Alcester church.



Volunteer working on embroidery

These panels on the altar frontal are badly damaged, but we feel can be saved. The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust is delighted with my book "Dressing Shakespeare's Family" which is now displayed with the costumes at Hall's Croft.

Young Arts



Anne Maguire

Our contribution to Young Arts has continued in various ways. Both the bereaved children at The Hospice and the Young Carers have undertaken creative work, able assisted by Escape Arts. Their results are inspiring! Stratford's Primary School children decided that they would arrange a concert to raise money for Young Minds (£ 314) and our local food bank, and the standard of their performance was extremely high.

A "Welcome Home" day was organised to commemorate the return of soldiers after World War One, and artwork for banners and flags was made. Teachers at Welcombe Hills School have provided sensory resources to assist with story-telling for severely autistic children, and Salford Priors Primary School are also working on a project. We are hoping to extend our projects to include community arts in the near future.



Everything that flies

Church Recorders



Jean Vaudeau

In March the Church Recorders started the task of documenting the entire contents of the Church of St Lawrence of Mickleton, Gloucestershire. The group has ten members and hopes to harness the expertise of more people as work progresses. The record will list the contents under the following headings: Memorials, Stonework, Woodwork, Metalwork, Textiles, Library, Windows, Paintings etc, and Miscellaneous.

St Lawrence is a Grade I listed building. The Nave was started in the 12th century during the reign of Henry II and his image along with that of Eleanor of Aquitaine can be seen carved in stone on two of the columns. Over the centuries, building continued and the church now houses a considerable collection of memorials and hatchments of local families, woodwork that includes a Jacobean pulpit and 17th century altar rails, an important collection of stained glass, and the stone font which combines a 15th century pedestal with a 17th century bowl. These, plus the bells, organ, floors, clock and even the fire extinguishers will be described, measured and dated by the recorders.



Sundial over door

The church is open daily and is well worth visiting.



St Lawrence Church

Funds, Administration and our Membership



Bryan Knight

All the changes and upheavals mentioned in the Chair's Report have had major effects on the finances of STRADFAS. The new tariffs from the Playhouse, for example, result in a 21% increase in hire costs. The affiliation cost from London has risen as well - by 6.4% per person. The resilience of our members has mitigated the worst of these changes through taking on extra duties such as the technical management at

lectures (financially a most important contribution) and our coffee service. These are in addition to the benefits yielded by the monthly raffles. Our thanks to all our valiant and cheerful volunteers!

As a result of all these valuable contributions, we have been able to maintain viability and restrict the 2019 subscription to £45 - still below the national average.



Lynne Reekes

Membership stands at around 524. Anno Domini and leaving the area have continued the recent downward trend, but the Committee is encouraged by the first signs that their leafleting and recruitment campaign is having a positive outcome. Your individual help through bringing a new friend will be invaluable to the Society as there is an inescapable correlation between membership numbers and membership fees.

Gift Aid is making another valuable contribution, but with only a 46% uptake in 2018, there is much more room for getting the Government to contribute. Other Societies manage over 60%! It all means much more work for our Membership Secretary, but success will make it worthwhile.



Ruth Bartlett

If you would like more information about the Stratford-upon-Avon Decorative and Fine Art Society, please contact Ruth Bartlett at membership@stradfas.org.uk

Editor: Judith Dorricott



Newsletter and Programme 2019-2020

Chairman's Report

This is my last report to members as my three years as Chair of STRADFAS ends in June - years in which, probably, more activity has taken place than ever before, and only some of it planned!



Ursula Russell and David Triggs

We survived The Arts Society rebranding with our logo and name intact and lectures continued as usual when the ArtsHouse, the only building capable of holding us all, closed abruptly but, commendably, we have achieved charitable status, have rationalised the STRADFAS year and celebrated The Arts Society Golden Jubilee.

Despite being temporarily of no fixed abode, we enjoyed outstanding lectures on a wide variety of topics, including in-depth Days of Special Interest - something for everyone; we visited gardens, exhibitions, historic houses (including an unforgettable Christmas tour of Baddesley Clinton) and Annie Giles, multi-lingual and multi-tasking, has enabled us to take two stunning Art Tours a year (three in 2017) to mainland Europe. Sadly, the demands of her day job mean that she leaves us after we visit Romania.

Heritage and conservation work has flourished with Kay Anderson's book published, Claverdon Church recorded in detail, and young people's creativity encouraged.

I will miss the support and camaraderie of an enthusiastic, dedicated committee and of STRADFAS members who have coped cheerfully in darker times, and are now volunteering crucial help on lecture days, enabling us to keep fee rises to the minimum and are using our flyers to spread the word and introduce new members.

I am confident that we will continue, under the leadership of David Triggs, to meet set-backs with customary energy and capability and that we have a bright future sharing our love of the Arts in Stratford.

Visit to Italy in October 2018



Basilica of St Francis, Assisi

We were promised ancient hill-top towns and stunning scenery on our trip to Umbria and we were never disappointed! Our home for the tour was Spoleto, where our first discovery was the steep steps needed to reach the breathtaking views. In the piazza, we admired the 12th century Duomo, the hill-top fort and the perfectly-preserved 13th century aqueduct.

In Gubbio, we wondered at the beauty of the 14th century Palazzo dei Consoli, with its panoramic views across the valleys. Montefalco, our next stop, had a 'circular square' surrounded by tempting trattorias, while Todi boasted not only an outdoor elevator to take us into the town, but also Roman cisterns underneath its foundations.

For many, the highlight was Perugia, where escalators took us up through the old Roman streets to reach the newer city built on top. The Palazzo dei Priori and the Duomo were beautiful, while the streets bustled with University students and tourists admiring the squares and fountains.

More escalators took us to the centre of Assisi, famous for Giotto's splendid frescos in the Basilica of St. Francis, where the narrow streets were tightly packed with tourists and pilgrims. It was a delight to visit the house of Raphael's birth in Urbino, and to have the bonus of an unaccompanied choir singing in the courtyard of his home.

The enormous cathedral at Orvieto, was unforgettable, with its black and white travertine marble stripes on the outer walls. Just as unforgettable was the camaraderie with friends, old and new, over delicious Italian food and wine.



Statue of the Madonna, Gubbio

Day Visits in 2018-2019



Terracotta Warrior

Our visit to Liverpool for China's First Emperor and the Terracotta Army Exhibition took place last September. As well as artefacts from 13 archaeological institutes in Shaanxi Province, we admired life-sized terracotta figures with individual facial features and exquisite objects in gold, silver and jade.

In December we enjoyed an evening visit to Baddesley Clinton. The 16th century house looked most inviting with its lights twinkling in the darkness. Inside, Christmas trees were hung with attractive dried flower decorations and, after a candlelit tour of the house, we enjoyed a festive meal and glass of wine.

In February we visited Tate Britain to see the works of the artist Edward Burne-Jones, who designed the stunning stained glass in Birmingham's Cathedral. Burne-Jones brought a unique approach to a scene, and his portraiture was unconventional, capturing the feelings of his family and friends with the minimum of accessories. The final room revealed a tapestry of the Nativity, with vibrant colours and flowers redolent of a country garden - an uplifting finale to a superb exhibition.



A Painting by Edward Burne-Jones

Programme of our Activities in 2019-2020

Lectures in 2019-2020



Lynne Hurst

Programme Organiser:

Lynne Hurst
lectures@stradfas.org.uk

Location and Times:

Lectures are held at:
Stratford Playhouse
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

June



Thursday 20 June

AGM 10.45, followed
by a single lecture

Gaye Blake-Roberts

*Josiah Wedgwood and
the 18th century*

The Age of
Enlightenment
opened up areas of
the arts and sciences
which led to a
dramatic
improvement in new
knowledge available
to entrepreneurs. This
lecture shows how
Josiah Wedgwood
combined his
experiments on
pottery manufacture
with an exceptional
insight. His association
with the most
influential men of the
era gave him a unique
position.

September



Thursday 19 September

Toby Faber

*Faber and Faber - 90
years of Excellence in
Cover and Design.*

Since its foundation in
1925, Faber and Faber
has built a reputation
as one of London's
most important
literary publishing
houses. Part of this is
due to its editorial
team but some is
because of the firm's
insistence on good
design and illustration.
This lecture covers its
history through
illustrations, covers
and designs which
have resulted from
collaborations with
artists such as Rex
Whistler, Peter Blake
and Damien Hirst.

October



Thursday 17 October

Denise Heywood

*Shimmering
Splendour: Silk in
Southeast Asia*

This lecture shows the
origins of silk and how
it became so valuable
in China that it was a
source of currency. It
reveals its
transformation from
silkworm cocoons to
dyed and woven
fabrics in glorious
colours and complex
patterns. Silk conjures
up images of sartorial
splendour, glamorising
handsome film stars
and monarchs at royal
courts. Its origins were
sacred, a gift from the
gods to protect
wearers with silken
symbols.

November



Thursday 21 November

Jacqueline Cockburn

*Following in the Steps
of Delacroix in North
Africa.*

Perhaps the greatest
French Romantic artist,
Delacroix broke the
boundaries of art with
his exploration of
colour and his
approach to subject
matter. This lecture
follows him to North
Africa, where he
produced over 100
pictures of scenes in
Morocco and Algeria,
and we read his
diaries in order to
understand the
experience for an
artist in 1830. The
lecture concludes by
exploring other artists
who followed his trail.

December



Thursday 12 December

Bertie Pearce

*"A Dickens of a
Christmas and God
Bless us Everyone."*

Bertie Pearce reveals a
Dickensian Christmas
with readings,
biographical details
and conjuring tricks.
Dickens revived the
Christmas traditions
with his portrayal of
Christmas in the
domestic setting with
plum pudding, games
and family cheer by
the hearth. His
masterpiece, "A
Christmas Carol"
immortalises the spirit
of Christmas. Dickens
was a literary genius,
reformer, public
speaker, actor and
amateur magician.

January 2020



Thursday 16 January

Tom Flynn

*Damnatio Memoriae:
Punishing Statues.*

The relationship
between sculptures of
the human body and
the natural human
body is something we
overlook. We like
statues of famous
people in public places
to resemble the figures
they represent because
we want to recognise
them but there must
be a distance between
the reality of the
person and their
representation. During
times of political
upheaval, rage or
disquiet can be
expressed in statuary.
Tom finds humour in
this otherwise serious
talk.

February



Thursday 20 February

Susan Kay-Williams

*Embroidery from Opus
Anglicanum to the
18th Century.*

Embroidery has been
used to embellish
garments and
decorative pieces from
time immemorial to
the present. This
lecture explores
embroidery across
eight centuries from
work that was made
for the Church and
royalty to work that
was made for the man
about town and pieces
made for interior
decoration. The
lecture also examines
some of the stitches,
patterns and colour
changes from one
period to the next.

March



Thursday 19 March

Sian Walters

*Raphael: A Master in
the Making*

Raphael is often
referred to as one of
the three giants of the
High Renaissance in
Italy alongside
Michelangelo and
Leonardo da Vinci,
despite dying
tragically young at 37.
This lecture explores
how Raphael achieved
an extraordinary rise
from a modest artist
who took initial
commissions in his
home town of Urbino
to one of the leading
artists at the court of
Pope Julius II. 2020 is
an important year as it
marks the 500th
anniversary of
Raphael's death.

April



Thursday 23 April

Sandy Burnett.

*Misshapen Pearl- an
overview of music of
The Baroque Era.*

The Baroque Era
produced music of
great brilliance and
emotional depth.
Starting in 1607 with
Monteverdi's opera
called Orfeo and
ending in 1759 with
the death of George
Frideric Handel, Sandy
draws on his
experience as a
broadcaster, conductor
and musician to
explore in depth this
fascinating period. He
uses handpicked
images, autograph
scores and recorded
musical illustrations
with a special focus on
Johann Sebastian Bach.

May



Thursday 21 May

Oliver Everett

*The Taj Mahal: its
architecture, origins,
construction, interiors
and surroundings.*

The Taj Mahal was
built in the 1630s by
the Mughal Emperor,
Shah Jahan as a
mausoleum for his
favourite wife called
Mumtaz Mahal. It is
now a UNESCO World
Heritage Site
acclaimed as a jewel
of Muslim art in India.
The lecture traces the
origins of its design, its
site in Agra, how it
was built, the
craftsmanship, the
interiors and the
surrounding buildings
and gardens, with
their avenues and
pools.

June



Thursday 18 June

AGM 10.45 followed
by a single lecture

Mary Alexander

Dazzling Dufy

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 textiles,
fashion and ceramics -
cut across all
conventional
boundaries. He defies
categorisation as he
constantly innovated
and experimented. His
wit and curiosity
about the world was
infectious.

Special Interest Days



Caroline Newey

THE RIVER OF LIGHT

Our first Day of Special Interest on
Thursday 5 November 2019 will be led by
Carole Petipher, who has worked as a guide
and lecturer around Paris, using a
converted barge as her home.

The River Seine was a great influence on the 19th century
artists and the development of Impressionism. The first
lecture captures the imagination of many young artists
including Turner, Manet and Monet who flocked to
Honfleur and its surrounding coasting to portray the
emerging seaside resorts.



"The Bridge at Argenteuil" by
Monet

Then the personalities of
the individual artists will be
in the spotlight as they
struggled for recognition.
The afternoon lecture will
show how the artists
followed the course of the
Seine and other rivers
south of Paris.

FEISTY LADIES

We welcome Roger Mitchell on **Thursday 2 April 2020**.
Roger will show the evolution in travel and tourism in the
Victorian period when many and women took advantage
of travel on railways and steamships, as Queen Victoria did
with her frequent train journeys to Balmoral. Roger will
demonstrate the differences between Mary Elizabeth
Lucy's tour of Europe in 1840 and Marianne Brocklehurst's
visits to Egypt in the 1870's and 1880's.

Among the transatlantic travellers towards the end of the
century were young rich American girls looking for
aristocratic husbands, who were the very embodiment of
feistiness. Roger will continue by featuring a wide range of
Victorian women travellers and writers, including Lady
Mary Duff Hardy, Annie
Taylor and Mary Kingsley in
West Africa.

In the afternoon, we will
hear about two of Roger's
heroines: Marianne North
and Isabella Bird.



Women Mountaineers in 1870

Day Visits



Charlotte Triggs

On **Thursday 27 June** we visit
Cambridge, starting with
Kettle's Yard. Originally four
dilapidated 19th century
cottages, it houses an
extraordinary collection of
pictures, glass and sculpture
which have been enjoyed by generations.
The late owner, and one-time Tate curator,
Jim Ede, explained "it is not an art gallery or
museum, nor a collection of works of art. It is
a continuing way of life...".

In the afternoon, after lunch, we re-convene
for a guided tour of
Kings College Chapel,
famous for its annual
Christmas Eve radio
broadcast of the
Service of Nine
Lessons and Carols.



Kettle's Yard

We will visit London on **Thursday 26
September**, firstly exploring the Chelsea
Physic Garden. Members can enjoy a picnic,
or lunch in the Physic Cafe. In the afternoon
there will be a tour of the exceptional Crosby
Hall conducted by its owner. Overlooking the
River Thames, it has undergone extensive
development by specialist craftsmen, and the
great hall, long gallery and dining chamber
are furnished with Tudor furniture and
paintings and play host to grand entertaining,
including members of the Royal Family.

Crosby Hall is a
private residence,
not normally open to
the public



Crosby Hall

Extended Tour to Romania



Annie Giles

On our trip to Romania from **6 to 11 July 2019**, our first
two nights will be spent in the centre of Bucharest,
where we explore the National Art Museum, the open-
air Village Museum and the fine pre-World War 1
buildings dotted along the Parisian style boulevards.
We also hope to enjoy a guided tour of the
monumental Palace of Parliament, built by the
Communist dictator Ceacescu. We will travel to our next destination,
Sinai, via The Conical din Captura vineyard for lunch and a wine-tasting
session.

At Sinai, we take the cable car in order to enjoy the magnificent
Transylvanian scenery and visit Peles Castle, built to resemble an
ornate Bavarian Schloss, and Sinai Monastery. We then travel to
Brasov with its Saxon churches and townhouses and where we enjoy a
farewell dinner in the Bella Muzica
Restaurant. Finally we visit Sibiu, also
known as Hermannstadt, well-known
for its Germanic architecture and
Transylvania's finest Bruckenthal Art
Museum.



Peles Castle