

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.

The church is open daily and is well worth visiting.



Sundial over door



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 Baddeley 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 Baddeley 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