



STRADFAS

THE ARTS SOCIETY STRATFORD UPON AVON



Newsletter and Programme 2021-2022

STRADFAS looks confidently to the future

We plan to be back in the Playhouse from September to see our friends and familiar faces on lecture days. To contact past and potential new members and inform them of future plans, at the same time raising our profile as the outstanding Arts Society in the locality, we will be using all forms of publicity – including social media! We have already joined up with the West Midlands Facebook page to find out what other societies have been up to and to advertise our own events. Look out for this!

It is our Golden Anniversary Year and this will give us the opportunity to celebrate, with long-standing and new members alike, all our happy experiences together.



Ann Langton

We are The Arts Society Stratford-upon-Avon, known as STRADFAS, a member of a global network that encourages a love of the arts in all its forms. Through our programme of talks, visits and special interest days, our members can explore subjects as diverse as music, gardens and architecture as well as the fine arts. We are a charity and support volunteer arts projects to enhance community life in and around Stratford-upon-Avon

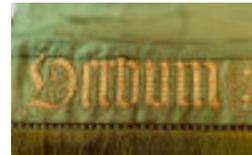
Volunteering with STRADFAS

Heritage Volunteers



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

STRADFAS Heritage Volunteers were lucky to complete the conservation of the beautiful Ecclesiastical embroideries on the Altar Pelmet for Claverdon Church, just before the second lockdown at Christmas. The PCC of St. Michael's Church was delighted with the high standard of work. The redesigning of the Altar Frontal for this church has been put on hold. The much awaited Tudor project, due to get underway in May at Hall's Croft, is still awaiting the go-ahead. When this educational project gets underway more volunteers will be needed to complete the project in situ.



Conserved Altar Pelmet, Claverdon

Church Recorders



View of the south facade

Recording work at St Lawrence's Church, Mickleton has continued over this last year albeit at a distance and reliant on our copious photographs and notes. The church is at the heart of the village in an idyllic setting and there are many things to study on a walk around the exterior. The south wall is decorated by layers of



Sundial over south door

graffiti, some made by "poor boys" at the school built in 1665, now the vestry. There is a black and gold sundial and a memorial about to succumb to erosion. So far we have found two possible candidates for the carefully carved name John Keck on a stone in the west wall. Look out for the owl in a window.



Jean Vaudeau

Chairman's Introduction

I am looking forward to a future where we can meet and enjoy our shared interest in art. The new programme is packed with fascinating talks and volunteering will resume with interesting projects for our Heritage Volunteers and Church Recorders. We will be working hard to rebuild an inclusive membership, hoping that many who dropped out in 2020 will renew when live events resume, and attracting new members. Please tell your friends about STRADFAS, especially as 2022 is our Golden Anniversary year which we plan to celebrate in style.

Looking back we have accomplished a huge amount despite the heavy restrictions, even presenting additional Zoom lectures to entertain and inform our loyal members. The committee has been working hard updating our Website, Policies and Publicity material. The extra work around Zoom has inevitably fallen to a few. I want to acknowledge Lynne Hurst who has negotiated frequent changes to deliver a superb schedule of lectures, Nick Lister who has hosted our Zoom events with technical know-how and aplomb, and Tony Hughes who has responded with speed and good humour to repeated requests for yet more bulletins and Zoom links.



David Triggs

The Trustees and Committee wish to express their appreciation and thanks to the Chairman for the amount of work he has undertaken in order to facilitate zoom lectures and other online events, not only for Stradfas members, but for those of smaller societies in the area. In addition he has given generously of his time to train other societies in the technical skills required to present their own online programmes.

WHY NOT TRY A NEW ACTIVITY THIS YEAR?

Community Arts (Arts Volunteering)



Anne Maguire

After a year of virtual paralysis in The Arts, the only grant made was to The Young Carers to provide materials to be used at home. The Hospice was offered money for The Bereaved Children but no courses were possible.

Now to the future! We are in the fortunate position of being able to make a number of donations each year and have already offered to fund artwork in The Fred Winter Centre, which is being developed to help ease the problem of homelessness in the town. Bereaved Children and The Young Carers will continue to benefit, as will the schools in the district, but if you know of any group/society which would appreciate some financial help for Arts-related projects, we may be able to assist. Just let us know!



Flowers, by carers

Membership, Administration and Funds



Brian Douglas

Last financial year required a complete re-appraisal of our budget. Online lectures required re-negotiations with speakers and the Playhouse, and there were many possible scenarios that could play out. The result was a reduced membership (down from 530 to almost 400) and almost £6000 less in our budget. However this was offset by a lack of speakers' travel and accommodation, and only one lecture. This resulted in our accounts breaking even at the end of our financial year. We could only distribute a fraction of our normal grants as the usual recipients were not contactable. Online Special Interest Days and Visits broke even, thanks to the voluntary contributions our members made.

The team that oversaw these issues were Brian Douglas and Nick Lister as Treasurers, Lynne Hurst (renegotiating our contracts with Speakers), and Jan Dawson and Sue Horne as Membership Secretaries.

The current state of financial break-even is unlikely to be repeated in 2021-22. 400 members will not cover our programme of events back in the Playhouse and thus we need to recruit more members, bringing us back near to the 500 level of 18 months ago. Members will hear about recruitment drives for 2021-22, and we need help from each member to do this. In the circumstances, and recognising the loyalty of the members that stayed with us, we are recommending we keep our subscription at £45.00.



Jan Dawson

Nick Lister

An Extended Tour

Adventures, at Home and Away, travelling in comfortable coaches; all inclusive visits to museums, galleries, castles, beautiful gardens and, on a trip to Germany, a visit to the Meissen porcelain factory. With time to get to know other members, make new friends over dinner, and for relaxing. Staying at good hotels in convenient locations; an enjoyable time away with happy memories! Supported with excellent, knowledgeable, English-speaking guides.

Jane Fitton Williams and Susan Scanlan

Volunteering

Being a heritage volunteer for 20 years, as part of a dedicated team, has been a huge privilege and pleasure. From historic house textiles to beautiful church vestments, a wide variety of rewarding projects have come our way. It's fantastic not only to have fed my lifelong passion for needlework but also to develop new skills and friends along the way. I wholeheartedly recommend the enjoyment that comes from restoring these wonderful textiles for posterity.

Julie Helps

Committee Member

Joining the committee is interesting and rewarding. We were new to STRADFAS when David and I became day visits organisers, attending ten committee meetings per year. Constrained only by distances and coach travel times, we enjoyed three years researching and arranging visits, mixing special places, such as Kettle's Yard in Cambridge, with world class exhibitions, including Liverpool's World Museum for China's First Emperor and the Terracotta Warriors. Why not give it a go?

Charlotte Triggs

Fifty Hidden Treasures

STRADFAS is pleased to have had four of its suggestions accepted for the Arts Society West Midlands' compilation, "Fifty Hidden Treasures". Shakespeare associations were out, since these are hardly "hidden"!



Scott Windows

What have been hidden, though, are the brightly coloured images of saints, heaven and hell etc that conservation is now revealing on the interior walls of the Guild Chapel. These were painted in the 15th/16th centuries but lime-washed over after the Reformation.

Also magnificent is the Sheldon Tapestry of Warwickshire in the Market Hall Museum in Warwick. This was woven locally in 1558 when tapestries were the height of fashion.

Who knows that Binton Church has four superb stained-glass windows dedicated to the memory of Scott of the Antarctic? He regularly visited Binton as brother-in-law of the rector.

Finally, there is the contemporary Peony Pavilion, donated to Stratford in 2019 by Fuzhou in China. Stratford and Fuzhou are the respective homes of playwrights Shakespeare and Tang Xianzu who both died in 1616.

Publication date is late May. Copies available to purchase through STRADFAS, £5.

Ann Langton



Peony Pavilion

Programme of our Activities in 2021-2022

Lectures in 2021-2022

| | September | October | November | December | January 2022 | February | March | April | May | June | September |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lynne Hurst | Vivaldi in Venice <i>Peter Medhurst</i> | Behind the Wall: Creativity, Visions and Horrors in Renaissance Italian Convents. <i>Sarah Dunant</i> | Dazzling Dufy: Invitation to a Luminous Feast with Raoul Dufy <i>Mary Alexander</i> | Who is Santa Claus? <i>Christopher Bradley</i> | The Dancing Faun <i>Bertie Pearce</i> | Lost and Found: The Story of the Missing Caravaggio <i>Siân Walters</i> | Sir Anthony Van Dyck: Prince of Painters <i>Adam Busiakiewicz</i> | Atkinson Grimshaw - Master of Moonlight. <i>Alexandra Epps</i> | The Story of Indian Modern Art <i>Georgina Bexon</i> | The Genius and Legacy of Rene Lalique, <i>Eric Knowles</i> | Shaken by an Earthquake <i>Sandy Burnett</i> |
| | Thursday 16 September | Thursday 21 October | Thursday 18 November | Thursday 9 December | Thursday 20 January | Thursday 17 February | Thursday 17 March | Thursday 28 April | Thursday 19 May | Thursday 16 June | Thursday 15 September |
| | This lecture explores the world of Vivaldi's music which is a direct reflection of 18th century Venice where it was composed. The Baroque composer's music automatically transports us to the heart of Venice. There are many reasons for this: his passion for colour, display and spectacle in his music, the unusual way in which Venice solved its problems with the homeless and the poor, Vivaldi's own health problems and his eccentricities as both a man and a priest | Dowries in Italy in the middle of the 16th century were so expensive that most respectable families could not afford to marry off all of their daughters. The rest became nuns. Unsurprisingly, many did not want to go and there are stories of horror with enforced incarceration. However, there are also stories of creativity through the arts and fulfilment through the union with Jesus Christ. Behind the walls a lot was going on. | Raoul Dufy was a key player in early twentieth century avant-garde art, design, literary and theatrical circles in Paris. He was a widely travelled polymath who had a charismatic personality, wit and curiosity about the world. His imagination and technical virtuosity can be seen across a wide range of media including painting, lithographs, posters, book illustration, theatrical design, textiles, fashion, ceramics and large murals. He analyses the world in a sophisticated and joyous way. | This lecture follows the story through art of Saint Nicholas the Greek Bishop of Myra a fourth century port in Anatolia. He was generous and became known as the gift-giving saint. It traces how his image changed constantly over the centuries until the Dutch re-invented him as Sinterklass. Taking him to colonies in America, he transformed into kindly Santa Claus and later was re-imported to Britain without his Catholic persona as Father Christmas. | Bertie recounts an extraordinary story of how he found a small bronze statue which had been in his grandfather's garden for 40 years. He traces its journey after it was declared a masterpiece by Adriaen De Vries and ended up in the Getty Museum in California. This sculptor had created spectacular bronzes for patrons such as the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf 11 of Prague. His work showed fine modelling and bronze casting and he became the most famous European Sculptor of his time | This lecture explores the fascinating trail of clues which led to the re-discovery of Caravaggio's "Taking of Christ". It had been attributed to Gerard von Honthorst and was displayed at The National Gallery as part of a private collection but disappeared for 200 years under mysterious circumstances. Brilliant detective work and good fortune resulted in the painting re-emerging in 1990. Siân also looks at a number of other Caravaggios which have been lost and found recently. | This focuses on the life, travels and key works of British artist Antony Van Dyck. He loved the paintings of artists such as Titian and developed a fluid and colourful Baroque style at odds with the stiff painting of Elizabethan and Jacobean England. He transformed British portraiture and his works at times outstripped those achieved by his master. With the aid of a lute, Adam focuses on Van Dyck's life, travel, key works and his influence on British Art. | This Victorian artist created some of the most beautiful and atmospheric paintings. This lecture explores his depiction of rain, mist, moonlight, gaslight, city streets, winding lanes, grimy docks and the River Thames. He seems to clothe them in poetry and mystery. His unique vision earned him the title of the "Master of Moonlight" as he repeatedly transformed the humdrum of everyday Victorian life into a magical "Grimshaw." | After Indian Independence in 1947 a group of talented artists, who formed the Bombay Progressives Artists' Group, created a new art for a new country. The paintings show a country in turmoil and relate the fascinating story of the transition and growth of the new India. We explore how Indian art threw off the colonial influence and developed modern masterpieces and a thriving global business. | to celebrate our Golden Anniversary, following the A.G.M <i>Eric Knowles</i> With a lively narrative and stunning images this lecture covers the life of Rene Lalique who was born in 1860 and became one of the most important designers of the 20th century. By 1885 he had established his own workshop for designing and making beautiful, original jewellery. He later became famous for creating glass sculptures, vases, clocks mascots and much more. | In analyzing the build up to the Rite of Spring's premiere in Paris in 1913, Sandy examines one of the greatest collaborations of all between Igor Stravinsky and Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. The dancers, choreographers, costume and set designers transformed what a night in the theatre could be. Sandy studies the build up to the Rite of Spring premiere, plays excerpts from the inventive score and explores reasons for divided opinions which led to a riot. |

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 10.45am
Afternoons at 1.30pm

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

Special Interest Days


Capturing Real People doing Real Things
1900 – 1950s Britain through film, photographs and advertising.
For our Tues 2 November Study Day Howard Smith will explore the period between 1900 and the lead up to the 1951 Festival of Britain through the medium of photojournalism. He will examine developments in creativity and societal behaviour and their influences. As well as the nostalgia of Picture Post, newsreels and contemporary advertising, Howard will include film clips from Edwardian, Soviet and 1930s documentaries including Night Mail featuring the poetry of WH Auden and music by Benjamin Britten.



Feisty Ladies
On Tuesday 5 April Roger Mitchell will talk about the Victorian evolution in travel and tourism when many took advantage of railways and steamships including Victoria herself on frequent train journeys to Balmoral. Mary Elizabeth's tour of Europe in 1840 and Marianne Brocklehurst's visits to Egypt from the 1870s will be contrasted. Amongst transatlantic travellers towards the end of the century were young, rich American girls seeking aristocratic husbands, the very embodiment of feistiness. In the 2nd and 3rd sessions Roger will introduce us to several intrepid Victorian women travellers and writers including his personal heroines.



Day Visits


Sue Skidmore
For obvious reasons day visits have not been possible this year, so moved 'on-line'. The first virtual tour was a visit to the East End of London with Blue Badge guide, Pepe Martinez. Through a variety of photographs, maps, aerial and street views we experienced the sights of the East End and learnt much about its history. Our second visit in March was to the West Country with guides Maeve Hamilton Hercock and Nick Gane. Nick took us on a very informative tour of Bristol and then Maeve took us via Cheddar Gorge to the beautiful cathedral city of Wells.


SS Great Britain


Janet Smith
The planned tour of Shropshire churches with Tim Bridges on July 6th has now been postponed until 2022. Many of you will have accompanied Tim on one of his tours and will know that he is a very good, knowledgeable guide. We look forward to his much re-arranged tour next year. Hopefully on September 21st there will be the re-arranged trip to the Cotswolds with a stop at Selsley Church to see the stained glass designed by Morris and Co and then on to Rodmarton Manor for lunch and a guided tour. Plans for next year include day visits to Belvoir Castle and Bath.


Flower borders at Rodmarton Manor

Extended Tours - Holidays with Stradfas


Stevie Shakesheff

Diana Hill
Due to the government restrictions, our planned tour to Northumbria had to be postponed and will now take place from 16th to 20th August 2021. Amongst other venues, we are looking forward to visiting Durham, Alnwick Castle, Lindisfarne and Bamburgh, expertly guided by our Blue Badge Guide. In 2022, we are anticipating that we will be able to go further afield and a trip to Barcelona is being planned for the autumn. Our trip will include guided tours of the city


La Sagrada Familia

and we will see many of Gaudi's unique designs. We will also visit the area around Barcelona including Figueres, the home town of Salvador Dali.


Gaudi Buildings

No access to the internet but might like to become a member?
Come along to a lecture (see above for details of where and when). At the Membership Desk obtain a complimentary ticket to attend the lecture and an application form to join.

