



The Basel

Newsletter of Rugby & District Art Society

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Important news from the President...

What's Going On?

Hello everyone. I hope you are well.

What a frustrating year! From springtime onwards we had to keep revising our deadlines and cancelling speakers while still trying to keep members updated. The committee, forced by attendance limits and social distancing rules, convened via video using Zoom, to discuss what new arrangements could be made, as we all felt something positive had to happen.

We initially hoped to restart operations in September with our Annual General Meeting, but that eventually proved impractical. The next plan was to have a limited access workshop evening in place of a normal meeting on October 7th, but that too is now cancelled following the rule change to a maximum of 6 people in meetings.

Nevertheless we have made certain provisional arrangements for activities over the next few months, although details will almost certainly have to vary as the situation demands, but we will try to keep you all informed. Please note that we are aware that some members do not have easy access to social media or email, so please pass on information and publicity to others wherever possible.

Official Changes

The committee decided that due to inherent difficulties in the present situation, this season's AGM should be replaced by the circulation of a President's Report for 2019/20 and the 2019/20 Financial Report. The election of new officers and/or committee members will therefore be deferred until next September's AGM, the existing committee remaining in place as an emergency measure.

It was also agreed that since almost 6 month's worth of meetings and activities had been lost, no new subscriptions for existing members would be necessary before September 2021. Any already paid will be held over until then (unless repayment is requested).

The Annual Floor One Awards Show has been postponed, probably until mid-2021. The end of 2021 show should not be affected.

Use of Dunchurch Village Hall

Dunchurch Village Hall is available within certain restrictions, and we have provisionally booked it for a number of monthly meetings into next year, in the expectation that the allowable numbers will soon revert again to at least 30, and hopefully more after Christmas.

It should be quite safe as long as certain precautions are taken, which all attendees must observe as long as national guidelines remain in force, although the decision whether to attend or not is obviously a personal one. Hand and surface sanitising, social distancing and mask-wearing will be expected with different access to some facilities. Exit routes may also be revised. Members will be advised of these changes on arrival.

November 4:

Sea & landscape painter Mark Warner has already been booked to give a live demonstration of acrylic painting by Zoom. This means that he will not attend in person but will give a video'd demonstration that can be relayed direct to a personal computer or phone. The system is relatively simple and should not require any special equipment, you will simply reply to an emailed invitation.

We do not wish to exclude those members without the necessary technology, and so also hope to be able to project the live painting demonstration onto a large screen at Dunchurch for those who have limited technical access or wish to watch in (socially distanced) company with others. This would be at 7.30pm as in a normal meeting, subject to any coronavirus restrictions and changes in circumstances.

We would like your views on the Dunchurch arrangement; please let Paul Torr (01788 579982 or mrpaultorr@googlemail.com) know if this is your preference, plus/or any comments. At the time of writing we cannot guarantee that it will be allowed, so please keep an eye open for further information.

Details will follow later but we need your up-to-date member email addresses in order to send out invitations to all who wish to access the Zoom presentation at home. Please send these to Leslie Read: leslie.read43@gmail.com

December 2:

A mystery speaker has been long booked, but we can postpone them if, as seems likely, circumstances are still restrictive. We have discussed a possible activity evening instead, but it may be that members would prefer not to congregate together just before Christmas if social distancing is still in force. Comments please to Paul Torr or any committee member.

More from Paul on page 2...



Our resident cartoonist Roy Foster climbs to new heights!

'I've climbed and climbed to paint the best view but now I'm there I'm fair dunin, and that's the truth'

More from Paul...

Next Year

We anticipate some easing of the rules by the New Year, and so hope to offer the following Dunchurch meetings on the first Wednesday evening of each month:

January 6: Lockdown Special with comment and advice. Bring in your work done during the isolation for a Society viewing.

February 3: John Harrison is a fine watercolourist from Yorkshire who specialises in pen & wash. He will demonstrate this with plenty of skill and Yorkshire determination.

March 3: Katherine Baxter is a mapmaker and illustrator who produces the most detailed and intricate (and accurate) topographical designs, quite beautifully.

April 7: Geoff Tristram is transferred from his last year's April Fool slot that was cancelled. He is a very versatile artist and is also a witty writer. Smile!

May 5: Frogmore Paper Mill houses the oldest mechanical paper mill in the world. It is still working and we will be introduced to its function and products by one of the key staff.

June 2: Peter Barker is a well known local oil and watercolourist. He will demonstrate by painting a landscape and talking about his work and career.

Art Society Facebook Page

Apart from this newsletter we have a members Facebook page to keep everyone up to date and hopefully inspire to paint or draw while we are unable to meet up.

For those who have not yet joined Facebook we have had some fun recently doing self portraits – not easy looking in the mirror then at your paper or canvas! We also tried doing something arty using our non-dominant hand. It's surprising how good some people are at these little games.

Other suggestions are always welcome – please keep it clean and friendly! You can also ask questions of members or show off some of your work and tell us what inspired it.

Without your input we don't know what you are up to so join in and let's keep in touch!

Leslie Read

How to join Facebook...

1. Request the Facebook page using Google or another search engine.
2. Type in 'Rugby & District Art Society'.
3. When the Society page appears, click on the box at the top right corner that says 'join'.

Your request will go to Jenny Clark, our Facebook controller, who will send you an email to welcome you into the group. You can then receive up to the minute news, post work, comment, and publicise events or exhibitions etc.

From John Lines...

Is it Tuesday or is it Friday? My days all seem to merge into one. Quite honestly it still feels as though it's April! The year has slid by and I don't seem to have noticed. I now feel amazed that the leaves are changing colour – it can't be the end of summer already!

My painting has seemed to come in bursts. When you have time on your hands (no gallery dates to worry about) getting motivated to bash the canvas takes some doing. The garden is immaculate, grass like a bald head, flowers neatly in line and standing to attention.

Eventually, back to the easel, with big ideas, sketch books out, paint ready, off we go! All thoughts of viruses go and the enjoyment floods back in. Super! But my thoughts turn to all the other art society members, wondering what they are up to. Time will tell when we all meet again.

We managed a week away in South Wales, which was exciting mainly due to the weather. Lots of sunshine, gales, and curly hair rain, but we sneaked up into the valleys to some favourite painting spots. There weren't many people about, but those that were always asked the same question, 'Do you sell'um, Boyo?'. All good fun. If painting tells you anything, it's about life in general – absolutely wonderful! Keep painting, John

From Sarais Crawshaw...

Over the last few months, to keep us entertained, Leslie Read has been setting various painting challenges on the R&DAS Facebook page.

I hadn't tried any of them until this week, when she asked for suggestions for a new challenge, and I thought it might be fun to challenge ourselves to paint or draw with our non-dominant hand for a change – in my case that meant working right-handed.

I remember reading about Basil Ede, who after a stroke, taught himself to paint with his other hand, and within a couple of years was able to do so very proficiently, so with determination, it is obviously possible. Presumably you still have your artist's sense of composition and colour, even if the drawing is a bit wonky!

Having suggested the challenge, of course, I had to give it a go. So I drew a tiger's face – a bit of a cheat really, as the symmetry definitely helped. Still, it was certainly very difficult to do, and I had to keep my left hand firmly in my pocket all the time to avoid automatically using it. Working quite slowly and carefully, I did find it possible, though.

It was interesting to find out that making strokes left/right or right/left, seemed to be awkward in reverse, and fine manipulation is certainly something you learn to do with practice – I am definitely not ambidextrous!

I worked in colour pencil, with some acrylic paint for the final whiskers.

The result wasn't too displeasing - not something I hope to do regularly, but it certainly gave me an absorbing afternoon.



An artist quiz from Colin Bywater..

Answers below

1. Who painted the famous painting 'Guernica' – now in Madrid?

- a) George Braque b) Paul Cezanne
c) Pablo Picasso d) Georges Seurat.

2. Where is Seurat's important painting 'Bathers at Asnieres'?

- a) Art Institute of Chicago
b) National Gallery c) Walker Art Gallery
d) Prado Museum.

3. Which artist, famous for society portraits was much more interested in painting rural landscapes in the countryside?

- a) Constable b) Gainsborough
c) Turner d) Stubbs.

4. Which artist, a notorious brawler, fled from Rome to Naples because he was sentenced for murder?

- a) Caravaggio b) Michelangelo
c) Titian d) Leonardo da Vinci.

5. Which Welsh artist, was known for palette knife impasto oils of the countryside and mountains?

- a) Kyffin Williams b) Augustus John
c) Clough Williams Ellis
d) Richard Wilson.

6. Which female artist, married to Eugene Manet was a member of the French Impressionists?

- a) Mary Cassatt b) Simone de Beauvoir
c) George Sand
d) Berthe Morisot.



From Jenny Clark...

My mixed media painting Marsaxlokk, Malta (16" x 16") is currently on display at Woburn Art Gallery until mid October. This year the South Northants Art Trail is running from 3rd to 11th October and I will be taking part, not at my usual venue in Farthingstone with Gisele but at Vitreous Art, Bell Plantation, Towcester NN12 6GX (where Social distancing is possible) along with five other artists.

I will be on site (subject to COVID regulations) on the first Saturday, Wednesday, Friday and the final day Sunday. Please check the website www.arts-sn.org.uk for opening hours. I hope to see some of you there.

Jenny



An early lockdown contribution from Anna Phillips

Lockdown has been something of a revelation to me as it has shown me how I want to live, which is very different from how I was living. I now get up and go in the studio and then go my daily walk. That's about it apart from the usual chores and hobbies – jigsaws and family history research.

I am lucky to live in a house in a village looking out over fields and with a garden of flowers all providing ready made inspiration. My daily walk takes me along the lane and up the footpath to the top of the hill towards Bretford where there are views of two favourite hills providing further inspiration. The sky is blue with no vapour trails & the only sound is the breeze in the trees and the birdsong – magic.

Rather to my surprise I have not missed the shops – my weekly visit to Morrisons has provided all my needs. What I do miss, of course, like everyone else, is seeing my friends, but we keep in touch by phone and email. There's one other thing I miss, though – my hairdresser. The old English sheepdog look is not a good one!
Anna

From Roger Griffiths...

Recently I've done a few paintings that reflect a mood of optimism and sunshine – don't we need it! Although they are semi abstract they are all based on landscapes I've experienced and visited over the past few months and are composite interpretations of a landscape. They are acrylics on canvas.

Answers: to artist quiz
1.c 2.b 3.b 4.a 5.a 6.d