



# The Basel

Newsletter of Rugby & District Art Society

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## Welcome! Apologies!

After the dramatic shutdown occasioned by the pandemic it looked as if we might at last be able to return to something like normality, and we began developing various plans in consequence. Alas, at the time of writing uncertainty is again in the air, with a national delay in lockdown easing, and the committee have reluctantly decided that the proposed live demonstration on 7 July will be cancelled, and unfortunately there will be no Zoom replacement.

However, our speaker has agreed instead to appear live at Dunchurch on the alternative date of 4 August (replacing the fun evening). Let us hope that all is well by then.

## Woodchips with Everything

Our Zoom meeting for May was a demonstration of woodturning by David Walters (also known as Riverwood Workshop). This was by no means a crusty old-timer stuck in a timewarp, but an enthusiastic young self-taught craftsman, working in a workshop he had converted from a freight shipping container.

He explained the uses, figuring and characteristics of different woods, and



then demonstrated (all in close-up but without the noise and sawdust) how he could gauge the thickness of a bowl to a nicety. The final achievement of turning a most delicate, ultra-slim finial without accident was quite nail-biting, and drew admiring comments from the audience.

If you thought you were not interested this subject then you missed a treat. And he was another young artist you saw here first.

## The revised Post-Covid Plan

All arrangements are subject to Covid restrictions in force at the time.

**Thursday 8 July** – Dunchurch Village Hall Car Park @ 10.30am. Hand in Rainbow Gallery submissions (details overleaf).

**Wednesday 4 August** – Dunchurch Village Hall from 7pm

Live demonstration by professional artist & gallery owner Peter Barker RSMA, of Uppingham. Pastel or oils or watercolour – we have yet to decide!

Abbeycraft Artworld of Nuneaton will also be in attendance with their pop-up shop offering the usual discounts on art materials. Please note earlier start to allow post-Covid chat.

**Wednesday 1 September** – Dunchurch Village Hall 7.30pm – 9.30pm.

Gala Welcome & Annual General Meeting.

Sadly, and for the same reason, the exhibition of members' work planned for 10 & 11 July is also cancelled, but we may have an alternative venue at which to display some of your work (see below). You will be reimbursed for any fees already paid.

We anticipate that the AGM on 1 September will go ahead as usual and hope it will herald an unbroken year of meetings and activities, as we are all looking forward to catching up with old (and new) friends for a new season of arty activities and companionship.

Paul Torr  
President

This will be the first AGM for two years, with important reports and items to discuss, plus committee elections, so we would urge all members to attend. Any new nominations for the committee should be submitted to Paul Torr two weeks in advance.

The next year's programme of demonstrations and events will also be revealed.

We will have a display of members' sketchbooks on show after the official business is concluded, so please feel free to bring along your favourite to share with other members.

## Subscriptions

The committee has decided that the current annual subscription rates should remain in force for another year until September 2022. These are: Adult £27; Concession £24; Couple £45; Retired couple £40. Guest entry fee £4 per meeting.

## Alternative Exhibition Venue

The new Rainbow Gallery at Rugby St Cross Hospital is keen to have artworks on display, and the Society sees this as an opportunity that can extend into a long-standing arrangement in the future. Large windows give good lighting and there is a professional hanging system available. Rings attached to the back of the picture frame on each side engage with hooks which are then locked in place.

Since our Dunchurch exhibition has been cancelled some of you may be interested in exhibiting here instead, but please note that all work submitted must be sturdily framed and under glass or perspex to conform to fire and infection control regulations, with

D-rings or split rings securely fixed to the back for hanging. A label no larger than 2" x 3" (5cm x 7.5cm) should be temporarily blu-tacked to the back, containing artist name, title, medium and price (or nfs). This will be relocated later next to the artwork, so a computer print-out is recommended. Controversial subjects that may upset patients should be avoided, and the hospital reserves the right to adjudicate should the need arise. Max two entries per person. Any extra paintings will be safely stored until needed or collected.

John Lines & Paul Torr will collect submitted items in the Dunchurch Village Hall car park at 10.30am on Thursday 8th July, when you will be required to fill in a short form. They will then be taken to the hospital where staff will hang them for you.

Insurance is currently the responsibility of the artist, but we are looking into the possibility of communal cover in future. No entry fee is required, but a minimum 20% of any sales money is asked to be donated to the hospital's Healing Arts fund. At the time of writing we are not sure of the viewing policy, but will keep members informed. Contact Paul Torr – [mrpaultorr@googlemail.com](mailto:mrpaultorr@googlemail.com) or 01788 579982 with any queries.



## Splishy Splashy

Our final (we hope) Zoom demonstration for this year was executed by Barry (Baz) Herniman, alias Herr Flick on account of his favourite brushstroke. He took us step-by-step through the various stages of producing a watercolour of rocks being pounded by the sea, describing his well-honed techniques, unusual colour combinations and use of supporting hardware (including his own design 'clover-leaf' folding palette). He used vigorous and bold brushwork and colour, lots of wetness (and wet on wetness) and a tendency to 'put this on here and see what happens – oooh, that's lovely!'. He finished off, of course, with some trademark flickery that miraculously turned into a neat depiction of foaming waters.

How he didn't cover himself in little splatters of paint is beyond comprehension, but you don't need to worry about that on Zoom, do you? Thanks are also due to Ali who commentated and kept the technicals in order – from a hundred miles away!

## Changing Times by our Vice-President John Lines

When I first started in the world of art painting outside was actually called 'painting on the spot' wherever you went. We never thought of it in any other way. Not now, since some 'smart' person decided that it was proper to say, in French if you please, you are painting '*en plein air*'. Naturally, this baffled everybody, including all painters who had no knowledge of French, such as yours truly.

Despite this irritation, back then you could set up and paint almost anywhere. I have fond memories of painting in railway sheds, harbours all over Britain, steel works etc, without ever being bothered by any official whatsoever. I remember going right through the Liverpool dock system by just walking up to Mr Official and saying 'I'm just going fishing off the pier'

and I was in, wonderful!

Fast forward to the invention of health and safety laws and oh heck, that ruined everything! When I travelled to Southampton to paint for shipping line P&O, I was met by my 'minder' all dressed up in boots, goggles, flash jacket and hard hat! He never left my side all day and was very boring.

I now have full safety kit but still cannot get into many places. There's also more and more official signs, often obscuring the very view you want to paint! It all seems a bit daft to me.

Nevertheless, if you love to paint outside these things are a hinderance but they do not stop your love of 'painting on the spot'.

## A Note to Newcomers

In September the Society will start its 85th year, and we are understandably proud of this achievement. It has managed to adapt itself over the years and in its present form aims to provide links between artists and people interested in the arts, through regular demonstrations, art visits and social activities, members' exhibitions, and workshops. It is not exclusive - anyone can join - and it caters for all abilities, as well as non-practising art lovers. Guests are welcome at all monthly meetings on payment of a small guest fee – just turn up at the door, or join as a full member at any meeting. General information, copies of recent newsletters and contact details can be found on the website: [rugbyanddistrictartsociety.org.uk](http://rugbyanddistrictartsociety.org.uk)