



The Basel

Newsletter of Rugby & District Art Society

Number 94 • September 2022

The World of Paper

Our July meeting welcomed John Watson from Frogmore Paper Mill, who gave us all sorts of fascinating information about papermaking. Frogmore is the world's oldest mechanical paper mill and still working near Hemel Hempstead, despite being gutted by fire earlier in the year. Former manager John took us on an illustrated tour and enthused over the huge range of different products available, including the development of digitally sensitive papers for signage and packaging. It was an enlightening and entertaining evening which took us way beyond the familiar paper we know as only a simple support to draw or paint on.

AGM

The AGM in September was a rather sombre affair as our president, Paul Torr, reported on a fractured year of cancelled meetings, illness and fears of future financial issues. (See later).

Our new treasurer, Gill Dakin, was introduced with praise for her predecessor, Madeleine Prager, who had performed the job with distinction.

In her overview of the Society accounts Gill too warned of future financial problems. (see later).

The present committee was unanimously re-elected as follows:

President: Paul Torr.

Vice-president: John Lines.

Secretary: Jan Watts.

Treasurer: Gillian Dakin.

Membership secretary: Leslie Read.

Exhibitions secretary: David Newell.
Ralph de la Croix, Margaret Linnett,
Sue Bond, Claire Pentlow.

FROM JOHN LINES...

First just to say thank you to the members for all of their support in recent times. Thank you again, it means a lot to me.
Now for the bit about the AGM that Paul asked me to do...

After the AGM what next, a nice cup of tea, and then something billed as the 'ART DETECTIVE'. What were we in for? Marion Richards then proceeded to tell us. This turns out to be a group of experts who track down paintings that are either wrongly attributed to a certain artist or find the originator of an unknown piece of art that they have been asked to investigate. This involves a lot of looking at, comparing techniques, and of course signatures, which all adds up to what seems a long and difficult process of pure detective work. Her talk was enlivened by some lovely pictures on screen so we could really see the difficulties of tracing some elusive artists down the ages.

Then came the sting in the tail when a picture was screened and Marion asked if anybody knew this artist, who she thought was based in the Rugby area. Of course **Roy Foster** and myself knew straight way that it was the work of **Arthur Burgess**, a well-known local artist and a former member of our society. He used to paint in many different styles, which had baffled the ART DETECTIVES!

A great evening and a worthwhile AGM.

John

(Go to www.artuk.org/artdetective for more info. Ed)

Society trip

Previous trips away have proved very popular and plans are afoot for a few days away in spring 2023. Jamesway Travel, the excellent local coach tour operative, have produced a special trip schedule for the Society:

Four days and five nights to Liverpool, with dinner and breakfast from 2nd April 2023.

Excursions would include Port Sunlight (Lady Lever Gallery); Crosby (Anthony Gormley statues); Tate Gallery; Museum of Liverpool and Chester.

Approx cost: £390 per person for double/twin room and £510 for a single room. We need about 40 people to make the trip viable.

Members + friends and relatives can register an interest direct with Margaret Linnett via email (margaret.linnett@ntlworld.com).

There will also be a sign-up sheet at the next meeting.

Watercolour Workshop

with Lea Nixon from Wigan.

Saturday 22 October 2022, 10am - 4pm

at Leamington Hastings Village Hall.

Bring Art kit (paper, brushes, paints) and picnic lunch. Tea & biscuits are provided.

Members £35 / non members (after 28

September) £40.

Bookings: janwatts1@me.com or leslie.read43@gmail.com

or phone 01788

813554.

Go to www.leanixon.co.uk to see Lea's

fabulous flowing watercolours.

Awards, Awards!

The 2022 Annual Awards Exhibition will be held at The Barn on the new Houlton village estate. It will be open to the public for two days on **Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th November 2022 from 10.00am to 4.00pm on both days.** All details and entry forms can be downloaded from the society website. Deadline for entries is 2nd November when paper entry forms will be available at the monthly meeting. (You'll need to fill them in quickly!)

Additional Exhibition

In a new venture the Floor One gallery will be available for members to hire individual space for a two-week period beginning 25th November.

- (i) Members may enter a maximum of 2 or 3 items (details later), for a fee of £10 per person.
- (ii) All work to be wall-hung with mirror plates. No cards, no browser bar, no moveable items. This will obviate the need for the Society to provide security or stewarding. The gallery staff will open & close the venue.
- (iii) Information will be provided (like the Arnold title cards) for members to fill in essential information to be placed beside the work.
- (vi) We will hang pictures on Friday as usual, completing on Saturday morning if necessary.
- (vi) A notice will inform visitors that if they are interested in purchasing work to leave a message by phone or email; this will then be followed up by contacting the artist concerned, and they can make their own arrangements for the payment and collection of the work at the end of the exhibition. The Society will not take a percentage.
- (vii) Leaflets, plus a notice about the Society's work will be on display.



Clip & Stick!

In August there was a big turnout for our ever-popular 'fun' evening. This month we were invited to go wild with collage, so armed with scissors, glue and numerous magazine pages we took up the challenge with gusto.

Some credible 'works of art' were even produced in the two hour time slot. Most of all it was successful social evening with a free flow of suggestions, advice and gentle banter.



*Didn't
we...
do
well!*



Sarais Crawshaw's magnificent collage of a tiger's face shows how an expert does it...

Rugby & District Art Society Programme 2022 - 2023

September 7 : Annual General Meeting – review of the year.
plus Marion Richards: Art Detective – tracing lost works of art.

October 5 : Sara Penrose – Artist & Engineer

An interactive evening in which noted local painter Sara describes and illustrates the links and influences between these two apparently different disciplines.

November 2 : Jody O'Reilly – All sorts of Printmaking

Jody doesn't need a studio for hand-printing – she often works on her kitchen table. Inspired by what she sees around her, the results are stunning.

December 7 : Annual Awards Presentations by an invited notable

followed by our Mystery Guest Speaker on an unusual topic, plus a festive feast.

January 4 : Adam Tucker - Painter and Composer

Musicians paint pictures on silence; artists paint pictures on canvas. Adam does both. He will concentrate on the colourful results of the latter this evening.

February 1 : Members' Advice Evening

Bring in your artworks for appraisal and comment from our helpful panel.

March 1 : Lucy Burton – Prepare to Paint.

Lucy's online workshop title is the starting point for tonight, looking at tonal values and tools, before showing the results of her very lively approach.

April 5 : Geoff Tristram – A Lifetime Watching Paint Dry

A man of many talents: wit, author, painter, illustrator, cartoonist; Geoff will showcase his considerable artistic skills, with a little April Fool's anarchy thrown in.

May 3 : Chris Pendleton – Delicate Nature

Beautiful birds and animals, mainly depicted in watercolour and linocut, stemming from a deep and thoughtful love of the South Northamptonshire countryside.

June 7 : Simon Allison – Lockbund Sculpture Foundry

Metal casting, giant woodturning & much more: from a thimble to half a tonne; from steel to silver, brass, pewter, resin, concrete & more. Clients include BPS, RA, RSBS.

July 5 : Jo Thomas – Black Cat Silversmiths

Beautiful silver jewellery, largely derived from nature. Handcrafted using traditional techniques in a small home studio in Warwickshire. Each piece has a story to tell.

August 2 : Communal Art – Members' Fun Evening. Details later.

September 6 : Annual General Meeting – review of the season.

plus Helena Verrill – Secrets of Origami – paper magic.

Welcome to you all. It has been another trying year for everybody, and so the first thing I would like to say is a big "Thank You" to all those members who have continued to support us throughout the season despite such difficult times. You have enabled us to maintain a membership level around the sixty to seventy mark, which is both commendable and much appreciated by the committee. Please continue to publicise us among your friends, as there are undoubtedly difficult times ahead.

That is not to say that everything ran easily during the past year. Two members of the committee, Colin Bywater and Bob Mitchell, had to resign due to health reasons, but we managed to temporarily fill the gaps, and during the year Sue Bond gradually recovered from severe Covid; we wish them all a full and lasting recovery. We tried to revive a sense of normality in our schedules, but because of the uncertain circumstances had to cancel a couple of meetings, and the original complement of workshops was disrupted. The Annual Awards Show went ahead in the Floor One gallery within Covid restrictions, but the prize-giving evening had to be abandoned, and awards were sent out by post instead. On the technical front some tests with Zoom were made in order to include disadvantaged members, but the results are still not fully satisfactory. Finally, although our finances are currently reasonably healthy, we did lose more than we gained, and there is no doubt that costs are about to rise sharply, and must be planned for if the Society is to continue.

All was not bad news however, as we had some excellent live speakers. Let me remind you of the highlights. Following the AGM we had a tableful of members' sketchbooks to look at, and then in October Yorkshireman John Harrison provided a virtuoso line and wash demonstration peppered with advice and anecdotes. Our November speaker was Shelly Perkins with a fascinating glimpse of life as artist-in-residence on an Antarctic icebreaker. The December meeting was called off when the mystery guest developed Covid and the national situation seemed to be worsening. January's live show was cancelled for similar reasons, but we managed at short notice to arrange an alternative Zoom demonstration by Peter Keegan, who produced an excellent portrait of a figure in a turban. The annual members' Critique Evening in February was attended by a hearteningly large audience to hear John Lines and Roy Foster dispensing artistic wisdom plus, of course, a few jokes.

In March we welcomed Penny German, who created a delightful oil painting from a small still-life that she brought with her, and in April we saw how Rob Braybrooks cut out the delicate birchwood silhouettes of his native Cornwall. In May local girl Gemma Whitford showed how she experiments and then produces sensitive drawings and watercolours, and June saw the amazing Adam Ogelsby and his large single-line architectural sketches, and detailed film-set model-making. The July presentation was by John Watson from the Frogmore Paper Mill, who gave us all sorts of fascinating information about papermaking, despite the mill being gutted by fire a short time before. The final meeting was the members' Communal Fun Evening, where around 40 members set to work with scissors and glue to produce a plethora of collaged artworks, and in which a good time was had by all, judging from the comments.

A season well worth the modest subscription fee, I think you will agree.

We arranged two main exhibitions of members' work during the year, and I must thank our exhibitions officer David Newell for master-minding the organisation of these. The Annual Awards Exhibition was held over two weeks in the central library's Floor One Gallery, with some Covid restrictions still in place. The judges were Sarah Holdaway from the Art Gallery & Museum, and local artists Louise Darby & Lee Burrows. Congratulations to all the well-deserved recipients. Following the cancellation of the December meeting due to Covid, prizes were distributed by hand or mail.

Attendance at the exhibition was down, despite a boost from "snowman seekers", although several paintings and cards were sold. Sadly the gallery seems understaffed, and members commented that the support for shows seemed rather sparse, so the committee decided to look at possible alternative venues. We managed to secure a weekend at the end of November in The Barn venue at Houlton, and will hold the Annual Awards Show and judging there. This will produce its own problems, not least because of the compressed time-span, but we hope it will attract new interest from this large residential development. The Floor One show will follow a week later, in a modified form, for those members who wish to participate, for a small fee.

The other exhibition was at Dunchurch, over a weekend timed to coincide with the Dunchurch Arts Week. The pre-show organisation ran smoothly, the show and venue looked great, the artists at work were a hit with visitors, and the members involved thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Unfortunately, due to the weather and/or lack of suitable publicity, there were very few visitors. Apparently the Arts Week also suffered, but it is clear that we need as many members as possible to help publicise such events in future, in order to keep the Society viable.

A number of members' pictures also went on display in the Rainbow Gallery at St. Cross hospital, and the hospital is happy for us to continue this arrangement. There are still a few difficulties with the venue, however, but if enough members are willing to supply small works every few months then we will organise this.

Various workshops and sketch days were planned, but some had to be cancelled due to lack of support and/or Covid worries. In future we hope to cover the costs of workshops, whilst still maintaining good value for members, mainly in nearby venues on Saturdays or Sundays. Other activities, such as communal working on personal pieces, or informal sketching sessions, will be arranged if there is sufficient demand.

A day visit to the International Watercolour exhibition in Lilleshall proved very successful, and a 4 or 5 day tour of places of artistic interest is being investigated for 2023.

The sound system now seems to be working well, but experiments with Zoom need some additional equipment. We have found that there is a definite demand for Zoom from potential members who are less mobile, or who lack transport, are weather restricted or indisposed etc. and we are considering a "Zoom only" membership to cater for these. Full members temporarily indisposed would be able to ask for a computer link in advance. Other new expenses during the year include a card reader for credit card payments, a monthly payment for chairs & tables to be put out and stored, and payment for a regular tea-person, all of which make life easier at meetings.

Some of the committee are, as usual, up for re-election, including Colin Bywater, whose health is much improved. I apologise for not congratulating them all. All committee members work hard, as I am sure you appreciate, but I would like to mention Clare Pentlow, who has brought a breath of fresh air and new media savvy to committee meetings, and John Lines, who is always there with a friendly word of wisdom when things get a bit intricate. I also wish to mention Madeleine Prager. Some years back Madeleine nobly offered to temporarily fill the post of Treasurer, and, despite her lack of experience, she has conscientiously and quietly fulfilled this duty and presented a clear report annually ever since. This year she indicated that she would like to relinquish this post, and, as our financial year ends in July, Gill Dakin has been acting in this capacity since then. I am sure that you would wish to thank Madeleine for her unstinting service, and confirm and welcome Gill as her successor in this key committee post.

Which, of course, brings us to finance.

The new, current subscription rates were set before the problems generated by the Ukraine war became clear, and it seems inevitable that they will have to be raised again soon. All costs are set to rise during the coming year, including venues, exhibitions and good quality speakers. Unavoidably and unfortunately our membership decreases through natural wastage, so we need to continually seek new recruits, and, if you value the Society, you can all play your part in this. Spread the word, encourage visitors, distribute information through leaflets and comments on new media; do whatever you can to maintain and enhance public awareness of our activities. We need your help.

Meanwhile, please pay your subscriptions and enjoy the results for another season.

Many thanks to you all.

Paul Torr

President. September 7th 2022

Overview of accounts for 2020/21 presented at AGM September 2022

I took over as treasurer in July 2022 (at the start of the RADAS 2022/23 financial year).

Thank you, Madeleine for a most helpful handover.

I have produced an overview accounts sheet for the period 2021/22. I will next year produce a full balance sheet.

We had nine hall meetings and one on zoom. We ended the year down by £315.15. This is however an excellent outcome during a pandemic.

Balances on 30th June 2022 (end of our financial year)

Petty cash	£57.13
Current account	£2,791.30
Savings account	£4,274.50
Total	£7,122.93

Liabilities outstanding £ 79.63 now paid from 2022/23 accounts

For information: Total balance at 30th June 2021 £7,358.45

Income for 2021/22

Membership income	£1,686.00
Visitors income	£120.00
Coach trip profit	£40.00
Raffle profit	£173.00 (was £250.00 in 2019/20)
Floor one exhibition	£25.27 (after awards and gallery hire)

Outgoings for 2021/22

Lecturers outgoings	£1,110.00
Hall hire for meetings	£499.50
Room set-up & teas	£258.58
Printing and posting	£189.39 (Newsletters, posters, photographs for posters, membership cards)
Insurance £ 177.00	
Bank charges	£59.37 (covers Jan 2022 to July 2022)
Dunchurch exhibition	£124.00

Equipment bought:

Sound system	£149.00
Card machine	£118.80 (for card payments)

The following should be noted – we are a thriving society but we have not set this year's membership fees high enough. A decision was taken some time ago to increase the subs this year to:

Adult single £30, concession £27; Couples non retired/retired £45/£40.

However, our outgoings are now going to be significantly above our income – even with the increased subs the current estimated loss for the 2022/23 year without changes is £1500. This is predominantly because of increased costs for meetings (including refreshments and room set-up) and increasing tutor travelling fees. This is compounded as we have reduced membership.

The forecasted financial losses have been discussed by the committee and we have taken the following actions:

Increase exhibition fees - £5 per exhibited item, browser bar £2 each item.

Re-introduce workshops open to members/non-members with a timed priority for members.

Gillian Dakin
Treasurer