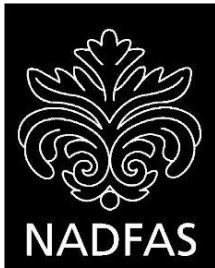




WALTON AND HERSHAM
DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY



Newsletter 2008

Thoughts of your New Chairman

To succeed, every Chairman needs a good Committee and I am delighted to say that I inherit just such a Committee! I look forward to next year with great enthusiasm. At the same time I would like to welcome two new members, Lindy Wilson and Val Woolford. For those who arrive, some depart and so it is with great sadness - but enormous gratitude - that we say goodbye to Pam Scott, a wonderful Chairman, and Barry Wilkinson, a brilliant Treasurer, without both of whom WHDFAS would not be the success that it is.

Where have I been these last few years? Well, I'm a retired public company director who spent most of his life in manufacturing for the plastic and packaging industries and finished as CEO of the Institute of Packaging, an educational charity. If you are curious put my name into Google!

I've been a member for 4 years and am married to Clare - also WHDFAS member. I do of course, have interests beyond NADFAS, including jazz, golf, bridge and travelling.

John Webb-Jenkins

Musings from the Membership Secretary

You all know what I do - keep the membership records, send out renewals, maintain a waiting list and welcome you at reception for members' meetings. But what motivates me? It's the involvement with members - let me explain.

Societies like ours have to keep members interested or they will slowly disappear. We have started under two enthusiastic chairmen who have recruited a constantly renewed committee - the foundations are in place. Above all, we have fantastic Programmes, Visits and Special Interest Days.

My job includes contact with members which gives it the personal feel. I am 'phoned about meetings; is it OK to bring a guest?; tell me about the society; how do I join?; I am moving north and can I transfer and a host of other questions. One that I never answer is "How many on the waiting list" - my response is that the list is about a year long and much less so in November after renewals.

In November we hold a coffee morning for those still waiting; this tells people that they are not forgotten and reminds them of what is to come. We send them all the information that full members receive except the NADFAS Review. Early in the New Year we hold another meeting over coffee with new members to answer their queries on how the society and NADFAS work. A crucial way for all members to help is to speak well of WHDFAS and spread the word to friends. Our excellent website is also a valuable way for members and non-members alike to see the breadth of our activities.

I have now become your Treasurer - so, please remember to sign your cheques!

David Taylor

Special Interest Days 2008



In November last year, Tom Duncan came to talk to us on "The History and Contents of Windsor Castle". An entertaining speaker with wonderful slides of the Art Treasures and fascinating information on the fire, how it started and the restoration work carried out since.

Our Christmas event at Riverhouse started with a glass of mulled wine before supper. Then an excellent talk from Anne Clements - "In the Bleak Mid-Winter: Artists' Responses to Snow". I had no idea there were so many different kinds of snow! Fascinating !

In preparation for the visit to St Petersburg, we had a wonderful day with Rosamund Bartlett who talked about the buildings of the city and the writers, artists and musicians who lived there. Lovely musical extracts too!

Jennie Dockerill

Visits 2008

We have enjoyed two visits so far in 2008. The First Emperor exhibition was very popular - a chance in a lifetime for some of us to see these remarkable terracotta warriors, musicians and acrobats. The preceding guided tour of the permanent China Exhibition was of great interest - the exquisite porcelain made using a technique not achieved by other societies until many centuries later.



A total contrast was Waddesdon Manor - the 19th century French Renaissance-style chateau built for Baron Ferdinand Rothschild to house his superb collection of 18th century art treasures. The elegant house is complemented by attractive parkland and wonderfully vibrant parterres in one of the finest Victorian gardens in Britain.

For our autumn visit, at the time of writing we are looking forward to a verger-guided tour of Westminster Abbey and a visit to the historic Cabinet War Rooms and the fascinating recently opened Churchill Museum.

Catherine Carter

Young Arts Project 2008

The Headteacher and Staff of Burhill Infant School in Hersham were delighted to receive a £300 grant from Walton and Hersham Decorative and Fine Arts Society which enabled them to commission Donagh Curwen, a local sculptor, to work with the children on a Relief Panel. The Theme - Celebration of Childhood - was selected to demonstrate the school's commitment to preserving and protecting childhood as an important phase in life.

Donagh Curwen visited the school to meet the children and introduce the project. The age range of the children at Burhill School is from 3 years to 7 years and it was decided that Donagh would work with the ninety Year 2 children (aged 6 - 7 years). The children produced ideas and sketches which were used by Donagh as a basis for the design. She returned for a three-day residency during which all the children in Year 2 had the chance to work on the design and raise it in tissue and glue from a flat sketch to a 3D relief panel. An unveiling ceremony was held in July and a plaque has been placed near the Panel indicating the support of WHDFAS.

Dorothy Clark

Church Recorders' Outing in August 2008

It's not only the Committee who have a summer jaunt, we the Church Recorders did also. Led by Diane Phillips, a Claremont member who is concentrating on Woodwork, we explored 5 Surrey churches, all of which feature in Simon Jenkins' book 'England's Thousand Best Churches'.

We visited Shere with its Norman tower and anchorite cell. As Jenkins remarks "The Church was proud enough of its history to withstand too much Victorian restoration."



sfold

The same cannot be said of Albury Park; despite the 15th century porch, and the Saxon and Norman crossing tower, the South transept was designed by Pugin in the mid-19th century. It seems quite gaudy in comparison.

Similarly at Hascombe, Canon Vernon Musgrave, was a wealthy Victorian clergyman who devoted his life and his fortune to rebuilding and completely re-decorating the church. The nave walls consist almost entirely of a painted version of the Miraculous draught of fishes while all the woodwork is decorated in bright colours.

St Nicholas, Compton is interesting for its two-storey sanctuary while Dunsfold has interesting benches. Bearing in mind that seating was uncommon in churches until the 15th century, Jenkins suggests that these benches must be as old as any in England. The bench ends are particularly graceful with holes for carrying lighted tapers.

Fortunately we all have photos to remind us which Church is which.

Pamela Scott

Church Recording 2008

We are now into our third year recording the Church of St. Mary Magdalene in Littleton. A lot of the work in the Church has been completed, so now we are at the checking and re-checking stage. It is surprising how fresh eyes will see things that one missed or will make a positive suggestion for improvement. The last stage will be the compilation, binding and presentation to the Church - hopefully in 2009.

Perhaps you went to the lecture in February by Tim Porter on 'New Ways to look at Old Churches'. Pamela mentioned in her Introduction that we were recording in Littleton and from the platform, Tim said he thought his great uncle, Samuel Porter had been the incumbent there; as I had been recording the list of incumbents I remembered the name. It transpired that Samuel Porter was Tim's great uncle and was vicar from 1936 to 1944, an eventful period in the life of the Church. Tim sent us a copy of part of Samuel's unpublished book which we have thoroughly enjoyed reading as it gave us a fascinating snapshot of life during World War Two.

Val Goodhart-Riley

Tour to Tuscany and Florence May 2008

Twenty four members enjoyed a tour to Tuscany where they stayed in the spa town of Montecatini near Florence. They visited Arezzo, Fiesole, Vinci and Lucca on the coast, as well as the wonderful Pitti Palace and the Uffizi in Florence. Highlights included the Boboli Gardens and the pretty town of Arezzo. Indeed, one Member was heard to say that she was astonished at how many euros she returned with; 'We were obviously expected to enjoy the art, not go shopping!'

Thanks go to Doreen Macaulay, our former Vice Chairman and former Visits Secretary for liaising with the Travel company.



Palazzo Pitti

Tour to St Petersburg September 2008

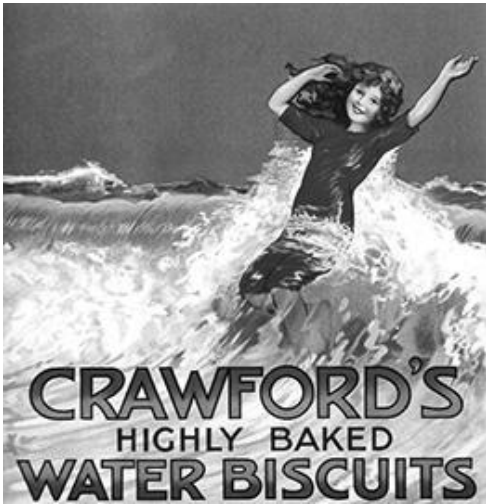


On 3 September eighteen members and friends of WHDFAS set out for a five day trip to St.Petersburg arranged by Saville Tours. We were based at the Hotel St Petersburg in rooms which gave everyone a magnificent view of the Neva river, the palatial buildings on the opposite bank and the cruiser Aurora which allegedly fired the shot that started the October Revolution. Our tour included both the buildings within the city - the Hermitage, the Peter and Paul Fortress, the Russian Museum and St Isaac's Cathedral - and the nearby palaces of Peterhof, Catherine Palace at Tsarsloe Selo and the great Palace of Pavlovsk.

The size and opulence of the buildings and the range and quality of the works in the Hermitage impressed us, particularly in view of the devastation inflicted on the city and the surrounding area during the 900 day siege of 1941-1943. The enjoyment of our visit was greatly enhanced by our excellent tour guide - Alla Boromykova - whose comments on social and political history from Rasputin to Putin provided essential background to what we saw.

Catherine Carter

'An Unexpected Reunion with your Past'



Most committee members and some spouses ventured into Notting Hill in August for our annual outing. The venue chosen was the Museum of Brands, Packaging and Advertising. We saw a selection of toys, cleaning materials, food products, cigarette packets, postcards, magazines, and so much more....

As their publicity states:

“This history of consumer culture is revealed decade by decade in the ‘time tunnel’, from Victorian times to the present day. Discover the trends of daily life, the revolution in shopping habits, the groceries, sweets and household goods, the changes in taste and tempo, the advent of motoring, aviation, radio and television, the gradual emancipation of women and the effects of two world wars.”

There are over 12,000 original items on display - leading to a distinctly nostalgic day with all of us agreeing that we really should return. Should you wish to discover more, log on to www.museumofbrands.com

Pamela Scott

Guests

We're always happy for Members to bring guests and for Waiting List members to come to lectures. Just remember to contact Hilary Nunn, our new Membership Secretary and arrive with £5. For those "on-line", it is more convenient for Hilary to receive notification by e-mail; hilary.nunn@whdfas.org.uk . However, you can of course, still ring her; 01932 253560

Teas after the Lecture

Sue Cardy has kindly agreed to take over the organising of the Teas. Please contact Sue on 01932 226183 (sue.cardy@whdfas.org.uk) with offers of help. You need to arrive about 1.45pm to help set out the cups and you need to be prepared to stay until about 4.15pm to finish the washing up. Her number is also on the Programme Card

Membership Card

You will have noticed the small Nadfas Membership card in your Renewal pack. It can be used at certain museums and art exhibitions to get a discount so remember to carry it with you.

Payment for Visits and Special Interest Days

May we remind you that only cheques for a maximum of two people will be accepted for Visits and Special Interest Days. Unfortunately we are not allowed to accept cash.

April 2

As you know, we meet on the Second Thursday of the month - unless the second Thursday is the day before Good Friday. The Village Market has been held for many years on Fridays in 'our' Hall. Since they don't operate on Good Friday they hold their market on the previous day. So, it is no mistake that our lecture in April will be on Thursday 2 April, to avoid a clash.

Exhibition of the works of Sisley

Our January lecture is about the painter Sisley to coincide with the exhibition of his works at the National Gallery from mid November to February. I hope a number of you will try to visit.