

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

To say that I am surprised again to be writing to you, as Chairman of the society, is an understatement on my part. When my term of office as Chairman finished in 2017, Pamela Scott, our President, took over the reigns at what can only be described as a challenging time for the Society. Pamela not only took charge of the changes our Society was undergoing, but she also made extraordinary efforts to ensure that the church hall we currently use, was suitable for member's lectures. On behalf of everyone may I thank her for everything she undertook during her year's tenure of office. Pamela, however, felt she needed to hand over the role after a year. To my considerable surprise therefore, I again find myself again standing before you at members' lectures.

Changes have had to be made by all societies as they became Art Societies. The national Arts Society decided to adopt a much more pro-active role in the support and development in the arts generally, as illustrated by changes in the quarterly magazine. The Arts Society is looking towards societies having a greater involvement in community events, whilst at the same time also wanting to recruit younger members. We will all need to see how this affects "The Arts Society Walton" in the coming years. One thing is certain, we are all getting slightly creakier, and a little greyer, as overall, our membership age increases. I therefore make a plea to you; if you know of "younger" people who might be interested in becoming members, please encourage them to come to a meeting. You never know, there might be a trainee committee member, or even a chairman amongst them.

In May this year I attended the Arts Society AGM in London and discovered that next year's event is in Malaga in Spain. There are members of TAS in many countries of the world, including 5 societies in Spain, but, much as I am tempted by a few days in the sun, it seems a somewhat exotic exercise in spreading the message. I will wait to read the results later.

The committee has heard that our meetings may yet return to the village hall. This is obviously subject to decisions outside our control. We shall of course keep you posted as we may yet again be re-housed there. Meanwhile, All Saints Church has been most welcoming under hugely difficult circumstances.

I would like to finish on a thank you to all the committee for their efforts, together with those who set up the monthly talks in the church hall. Without them, we would never get off the ground. However, I conclude my report with one particular thank you to someone who is stepping down from an important role for the society. For many years Halina Heyworth was a committee member. During my time first period as chairman, she had responsibility for speakers, and then young arts. She pursued these roles with drive and wonderful determination. Her other role for quite a number of years has been that of our annual tour organiser and leader. She has approached this task in an amazingly professional and determined manner. Many, many, thanks Halina, from everyone whoever went on tour with you both in the UK and abroad.

John Smith