



August 2017

Dear Member

This is my third and final report as Chairman. May I take this opportunity to thank members for supporting the many activities the Society undertook during the year.

In my "Letter" to you, enclosed with this report, I detail important changes to our Society. Nationally, the Society becomes "The Arts Society". We are now "The Arts Society Walton".

I thank the Committee for all their hard work. Catherine Carter - Vice Chairman, Sue Hughes - Secretary and James Moore - Treasurer - whose advice, help, and guidance, I greatly value. Lectures organised by Anna Foster have been a great success, providing a varied and interesting programme - from "Maps" and "Ocean Liners", "Photography" to "Sculpture". Next year's programme of lectures is already arranged. The Visits Secretary - Val Woolford - organised terrific outings to places as varied as a "Gin Distillery" and the "Museum of Brands". Pat Crisp has organised interesting and successful Special Interest Days, including "Backstage at the Opera" and "The Romanovs". All such events require research and long-term planning. Your support is therefore greatly appreciated.

Tony Collins and his "Tea Team", and Lindy Wilson and her "Audio Visual" crew ensured that Lectures work effectively. The dedication of Margaret Sale and Diane Ball with membership and renewals enables the Society to function efficiently. In addition, Diane and James Moore undertook a great deal of work on the new Society website. Together with "Claremont Arts Society" - Val Goodhart-Riley and her team continue to be involved in Church Recording at St Paul's, East Molesey. Halina Heyworth organised a very successful tour to Yorkshire in May this year. "Young Arts", also organised by Halina, continues to provide funding for "Art Bursaries" for children at the Riverhouse. The Society has been very involved with the "Mount Felix" tapestry at Riverhouse, as well as materials research by children from Rydens School, and support for local schools with national art competitions. Members of the Committee reviewed our approach to events in the light of changes taking place in "The Arts Society". Their recommendations provide future direction for the Society.

As you know we have been forced to relocate, following the closure of Hersham Village Hall, our home since 2002. But, we are not moving far! We have managed to find a new venue with effect from 14 September at All Saints Church Hall, 13 Queens Road, Hersham KT12 5LU opposite Hersham Green and next to the Village Hall. However, it will be necessary to start our lectures earlier, at 2pm due to other bookings for the Church Hall. The hall is at the far end of the site and there is space at the entrance for cars to drop off those who are less mobile. Members' parking will be as before. All thanks to Pamela Scott who has organised this on our behalf.

I am delighted that Pamela has agreed to stand at the forthcoming AGM for the chairmanship of our Society for the next twelve months and I wish her every success. Lastly, can I pay thanks to all the volunteers who give of their own time to the Society. We look forward to another exciting year in 2018.

John Smith

# THE ARTS SOCIETY WALTON



August 2017

Dear Member,

The past year has been one of great change for “NADFAS” nationally, and for the 372 separate societies which form the organisation. We are all now part of what has become “The Arts Society”. This process of change was started by “NADFAS” in 2016, and adopted by the annual conference of the Society in May this year. This re-branding is intended to create an organisation more relevant to our times, rather than one which has its roots in the 1960s, when “NADFAS” was formed. In recent years, many similar re-branding exercises have taken place in organisations such as “The W.I.” and “The Art Fund”. “The Arts Society”, essentially existed to provide support and training for individual societies, and a contact and information point for enquiries from the public. The re-evaluation concluded that “The Arts Society” should adopt a much higher public profile, have a more pro-active and campaigning approach towards all areas of the arts, and an increased audience for societies’ activities.

As a result of these national changes, your Committee looked at how we might attract new members, and appeal to a wider audience, so that the Society can continue to prosper. Additionally, how we might continue to develop our role in the community. The questionnaire that members completed gave the Committee a great deal of information, and ideas for the Society’s future direction. We are extremely grateful for all your observations.

This process of change, developed nationally, required that we modify our title from “WHDFAS”. We debated this and decided that we should be called “The Arts Society Walton”. The Committee was aware, in adopting this new title that we might be moving too far from our original name, and the venue where our talks take place and that you, the members, might be concerned at the deletion of “and Hershams” from the title. However, technical difficulties in connecting our new website to that operated by “The Arts Society”, made that change essential.

For many years our adopted logo was an outline drawing of Walton Bridge, (created by Peter Scott) from the painting by Canaletto, and owned by Dulwich Gallery, who very kindly agreed to allow us to use the image of the painting itself for all administrative and advertising purposes. We are extremely grateful to them. We have a new website with the newly adopted title, encompassing Canaletto’s painting. I encourage you to visit the site ([theartsocietywalton.org](http://theartsocietywalton.org)).

I would like to express my thanks to all the Committee for their efforts over the past year in what has been a challenging series of changes. In particular, I want to thank the past-chairman, Laurence Shafe. His work, ideas, and thoughts in creating the new website have been considerable. We are extremely grateful for all the work that he undertook, and continues to undertake, on our behalf.

This is my third and final report as Chairman. I am stepping down from the Committee after 5 years. It has been a great honour and a pleasure to have served the Society as Secretary and Chairman. I would like to thank the Committee, both past and present, for the kindness shown towards me, and more importantly the advice they have given. Finally, can I thank you, the members, for your support and ideas, and especially for your patience when we have experienced technical problems at some of our lectures. The suggestion that perhaps I might speak more slowly when facing you is, alas, a lifelong sin of mine. May I wish you and the Society, all the best for the future.

John Smith