



WALTON AND HERSHAM  
DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY



## Newsletter 2011

### Chairman's Report

I would like to welcome back existing members and new members for what I believe will be an interesting year ahead with lectures ranging from Mozart's *Così* to post-war British art.

We have had another exciting year of Lectures, Visits and Special Interest Days and, if you are thinking of becoming a member, then contact Tony Collins to join the waiting list and we will generally be able to promote you to full membership within a year. The Society has a full programme of activities and, thanks to David Taylor's astute treasury management, we have been able to maintain our subscription at the same level as when we were formed, yet support a wide range of events and art causes and still have a healthy bank balance. Behind the scenes Margaret Sale meticulously maintains our minutes and all those essential secretarial functions.

Thanks to Pauline Varney we have had a diverse lecture programme with many excellent and outstanding speakers on subjects ranging from

photography in Russia to the fourteenth century Wilton Diptych. Halina Heyworth is taking over from Pauline so we can expect the high standard of talks to continue. Catherine Carter has organised four Visits including Chiswick House and Dover Castle and Diane Ball arranged the Special Interest Days, including the very successful day on Edward Elgar. Pat Gamba is taking over from Diane and Val Woolford from Catherine so we will continue to offer many thought-provoking days of special interest and successful visits. Lindy Wilson has not only started a new Young Arts project at St Charles Borromeo Primary School but has found the time to upgrade our sound system and improved our multimedia facilities.

Finally, this is your Society and we would welcome you to join the committee so that you can also participate in the organisation of these exciting activities.

I look forward to seeing you all in the coming year.

*Laurence Shafe*

### Membership Report

I feel this year has, once again, been very successful. We are fortunate to have full membership along with a healthy waiting list when taking into account the present economic situation. You will by now have received your invitation to renew your subscription for next year and, if you have not done so already, could you please let me have your reply as soon as possible. This will enable me to gauge how many people on our waiting list can be offered membership.

If you enjoy being a member, please spread the word among your friends and families and encourage them to come to the occasional lecture. We cannot afford to become complacent about our membership level.

I look forward to seeing you at our lectures or speaking to you on the telephone during the coming year.

*Tony Collins*

**New members will be invited to a Coffee Morning on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December to give them the opportunity to meet the Committee and learn more of how we operate as a society.**

### Heritage Volunteers

In the past we have supplied heritage volunteers to help at Hampton Court but over the last couple of years we have not been aware of any vacancies. However, we hope to be able to develop this in the future.

## Report from the Treasurer

We must count ourselves fortunate in these difficult times, as our finances remain strong. Once again we have invested in upgraded equipment, this year improving the audio side. Many members have said how much they appreciate the better quality. This programme of improvement has been timely as most lecturers we engage have converted to digital presentation.

We continue to keep our subscription at the same level as when the Society was formed, and we can support Young Arts, Church Recording and donate to saving works of art in the national interest without stress.

WHDFAS has an excellent record in attracting Gift Aid for members' annual subscriptions so that every year a cheque arrives from Nadfas House in respect of our share of the rebate. This is an ideal way to recycle tax payers' money for the benefit of the country as a whole - and we have so far contributed over £1,200 in this way. We continue to seek out worthwhile projects.

If you have already filled in a WHDFAS Gift Aid form you do not need to do so again. If not, and you are eligible because you pay enough UK tax, then please ask me for a form or use the form that will be in the November mailing.

David Taylor

## Programme Secretary



At the start of 2011, our local historian, Barry Venning, gave us a superb picture of Art, Design and Photography in post-revolutionary Russia. Rodchenko, a photographer and graphic artist, recorded an epoch of revolution and stood up to the official art of Tsarist autocracy.

Chloe Sayer showed brilliantly coloured images of the textiles of Mexico, followed by a display of exotic fabrics. More at home, a lecture on the City and Guilds of London was given so humorously by William Forrester. In May, Hilary Guise portrayed the history of 'Wine and Vine in Art'. A very enjoyable wine tasting followed using specific grapes. We learnt about the Aesthetic Movement with Anne Anderson and in July The Wilton Diptych mystery intrigued us all, with a fascinating lecture by Leslie Primo. After the summer recess, we will explore the golden age of Georgian furniture making, the mysterious world of Salvador Dali and a musical history of 18th century life, given by Jeanne Dolmetsch, a member of that famous musical family.

We hope that you have enjoyed the year. We aim to please and to give you value for money and of course a stimulating hour after lunch!

Pauline Varney

## Teas after the lecture



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An honour was bestowed on me in the year two thousand & eight,  
When I was given custody of the Nadfas catering crate!

At first I had a panic about how to cope with these demands.  
Did not see how I could make the teas with just one pair of hands.

Then it dawned upon me that helpers could be found.  
Let my fingers do the walking, I had to ring around.  
"I wonder if you'd help me" I would politely ask.  
But sometimes it would seem to me to be a thankless task.  
How happy did it make me to find someone say YES!  
And those who made excuses - well, I bet you'd never guess!

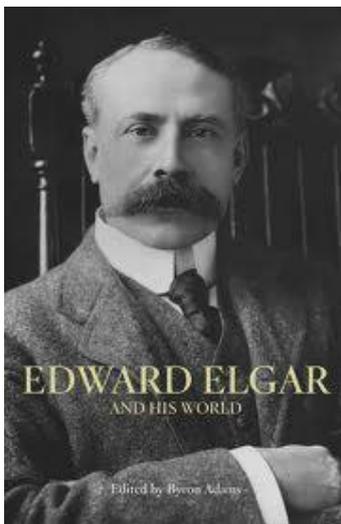
My third year as Tea Lady has been the best year of the lot.  
It was great to see how many lovely volunteers I got.  
Rather than me ring you, please come and sign my list.  
Making tea is fun you know; come on do not resist!

I'm grateful to my 'regulars'; on them I can rely,  
But we do need some new helpers, come on please don't be shy!  
This year is sorted Thank you, but next year we're making tea -  
So sign my list, or find me - you know where I will be!

Thank You!

## Special Interest Days 2010 and 2011

Another successful twelve months with a “full house” on all the Special Interest Days at the Riverhouse. Last year ended with our traditional festive supper when Elizabeth Gordon entertained us with Vivaldi and Canaletto. In March, we enjoyed a superb day with Denis Moriarty and his lectures on “Edward Elgar - Music & Architecture of the Three Choirs Festival” in concert with Peter Francis who played some wonderful musical accompaniments. The feedback from this Special Interest Day was extremely complimentary! We are now looking forward to “Vienna and the Habsburgs” at the end of September and will end



the year with our Festive Supper lecture “Breughel” when we will explore the ways in which scenes of festivity have been portrayed from 1400-1900.

This is my final year as organiser of Special Interest Days and I would ask you to welcome Pat Gamba who is taking over this role. We have already organised some exciting bookings for you for 2012 and I know you will give Pat the help and support you have so warmly given me over the last three years. I shall not, however, be leaving the Committee in the short term so shall look forward to keeping in touch.

Diane Ball

### Tours

The Committee continues to explore the possibility of a tour and if any members have some ideas or views, we would be interested to hear from you.

### Audio Visual

The use of Digital Projection has become the norm, but we almost got caught out when one of the lecturers announced that he had not yet updated his lecture to digital, even though the Nafas list of lectures listed it as digital! It is a pity when this happens, as members are used to the better projection from the digital projector and certainly notice the difference. This year, we updated the audio side. Our Wi-Fi mikes are very good but were let down by the amplifier, so that was our first purchase. We realised that more lecturers were using CDs and thought that DVDs might also get used, so we bought a new DVD player. It has also become apparent that some lecturers like to have

their computers in front of them on the stand, so we have purchased a special cable that gives them that freedom. All of this was updated together to ensure compatibility and a new “box on wheels” contains all the equipment to ensure its safety. We have had many positive comments about our Audio Visual equipment from the lecturers and we hope that you find it a pleasing way to access the content of the lectures.

Once again, thanks go to the Audio Visual Team who give up their time before and after the lectures and who, in the words of a recent lecturer, produce “a very professional environment for the lectures”.

Lindy Wilson

### Membership Card

*You will have noticed the small Nafas 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.*

### Church Recording

We are coming to the end of recording the artefacts in St Nicholas Church in Shepperton; now comes the lengthy business of checking everything to ensure that we present an accurate and professional record, and the compilation with photographs and the final binding.

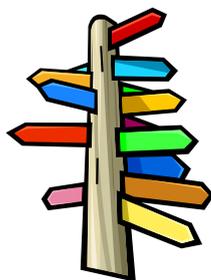
We hope to present the Record next year and will bring it to one of our meetings to show you all.

One of our group has just organised a ‘Church Crawl’ for us. We went further afield this year visiting Langley Marsh near Slough, Stoke Poges, where we had our picnic lunch in the Churchyard where Gray wrote his Elegy and lastly a visit to St. John’s at Shottesbrooke, a Church set in a private estate but open to the public.

If you would like to know more about Church Recording do ask one of us at a lecture meeting.

Val Goodhart-Riley

## Visits 2011



On a beautiful spring day in April, we visited Chiswick House and Gardens. Despite this being a 'short haul' destination the visit proved to be very popular. We admired Lord Burlington's art collection in his Palladian Villa and had a very interesting guided tour of the newly restored gardens.

In May, following our lecture 'From Craftsman to Creative Genius', we extended our knowledge by visiting the magnificent new Medieval and Renaissance Galleries at the Victoria and Albert Museum. We had a very informative guided tour but with so many exhibits we could have spent a whole day there. We also had a guided tour of the Royal Albert Hall which, although we couldn't go backstage, proved to be quite fascinating. Whilst we weren't allowed to go into the Royal Box and the private facilities, we did linger in the Royal Reception Room.

The extremely impressive Dover Castle was the destination for our July visit. We were very



relieved that we left all the rain behind in Hersham and had a sunny day. Like the May visit, this was very popular, with a greatly increased number of men joining the group. The newly restored Great Tower shows the vibrant colours used in decoration in the Medieval period when Henry II sought to impress Europe's elite pilgrims on their way to Thomas Beckett's shrine in Canterbury. The other main attractions were The Underground Hospital and the Secret Wartime Tunnels. A new display, opened in June, showed the organising of Operation Dynamo, vividly bring to life the story of the evacuation of Dunkirk.

The October London walk will include a visit to the Vintners' Hall and the Guildhall Art Gallery with an opportunity to see the remains of the Roman Amphitheatre under Guildhall Square.

As this is my last year as Visits Organiser, I would like to thank all who have joined us for their support and generous appreciation.

Catherine Carter

## Young Arts Project 2011/2012



The present project is spanning Autumn 2011 to Spring 2012. All the children of St Charles Borromeo Primary School in Weybridge are involved in a joint Art and RE project called "In the Footsteps of Jesus". The project involves two parts; firstly a Prayer Book written and illustrated by the children which will be published in November 2011; secondly an Art Exhibition which will take place in March 2012. For each of these, expertise was required to enhance the children's Religious pencil drawing and painting skills. WHDFAS have allocated this year's Young Art's Fund to buy in this expertise over the next two terms. The Art Exhibition will take place at the school and all the paintings will be framed.

The school would like members of the community, especially members of WHDFAS, to exhibit in the Art Exhibition, so if you have any artistic inclinations in any medium and would like to exhibit an entry within the theme of the project, please contact Lindy Wilson at [lindy.wilson@whdfas.org.uk](mailto:lindy.wilson@whdfas.org.uk).

Lindy Wilson

## Guests

**We're always happy for Members to bring guests and for Waiting List members to come to lectures. Just remember to contact Tony Collins, our Membership Secretary, and arrive with £5. For those "on-line", it is more convenient for Tony to receive notification by e-mail: [tony.collins@whdfas.org.uk](mailto:tony.collins@whdfas.org.uk). However, you can of course, still ring him: 01932 343794**

## Payment for Visits and Special Interest Days

**May we remind members that we regret we are unable to accept cash and only cheques for a maximum of two people can be accepted for Visits and Special Interest Days.**