Chairman’s Report

In order to celebrate the tenth anniversary of our foundation the Committee has decided to reduce your annual membership fee for 2013 from £35 to £30. We have managed to maintain our fee at £35 for the last ten years despite an increase of our costs so this reduction will only be for 2013.

I would like to thank all the hard working volunteers, especially the members of the Committee, who have brought us another wonderful selection of topics and images during 2012. We all now lead such busy lives that I am sure all the members would like to join me in thanking them for their dedication and enthusiasm. As always, we are interested in hearing from any member who would like to join the Committee. You will be able to shadow an existing Committee member for a year to learn one of the many roles and the commitment is limited to three years.

Although all the lectures and events were of a very high standard this year I would like to remind those lucky enough to attend of the outstanding Special Interest Day organised by Diane Ball, when Frances Hughes talked about Shakespeare accompanied by the actor Tony White. I would also like to single out Valerie Woodgate’s entertaining and informative talk on ‘The Mysterious World of Salvador Dali’.

A limited number of members were fortunate enough to visit an exhibition of Leonardo’s work at the National Gallery, a unique event that sold out early and for which we were able to obtain tickets. Another once-in-a-lifetime event of a very different type that was also sold out was the visit to the Olympic site. I would like to thank Catherine Carter and Val Woolford for putting in the extra effort necessary to arrange a second visit at short notice so that another group of members could attend. Also to be thanked are the other Committee members and back-room helpers who make the whole Society run so smoothly.

Finally, I would like to welcome you all to what I believe will be another exciting year with lectures ranging from Turner to Klimt and with subjects such as furniture making, fashion and architecture also included in the mix. Modern art is again not forgotten as we start the year with reflections on the life of that iconic Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. For 2013 only, this will be £30 for the ten lectures.

I hope to see you all in the coming year.

Laurence Shafe

Membership Report

It’s that time of the year again. Don’t they just fly by? I hope you enjoyed the varied lectures, visits and Special Interest Days that were arranged during the current year. Those Committee members involved in arranging these events certainly worked very hard and deserve our thanks.

We maintain our full quota of members but our Waiting List has diminished somewhat over the year which may not bode well for the future. If you know someone who may be interested in NADFAS please pass on the word.

You will have received your renewal invitation for next year with our ‘Special Offer’ of an unrepeatable £5 subs. reduction which I hope will prompt you to return your renewal slips in good time! I ask this not for myself as I am finishing my term as Membership Secretary this year, but for my able successors, Margaret Sale and Diane Ball. You and I are so lucky to be left in such capable hands.

Thank you all for your friendly co-operation in advising me of the guests you intended to bring to lectures among all the other kindness you have shown me.

Tony Collins

Heritage Volunteers

In the past we have supplied heritage volunteers and hope to be able to develop this in the future.
Report from the Treasurer

Our reserves remain in good shape; this is appropriate in these difficult times. We are digging into them in 2013 to reduce our annual subscription to £30 as a celebration of our 10th anniversary. We have kept our subscription at the same level since the Society was formed. We continue to support Young Arts and Church Recording; in 2011/12 we increased our support for Young Arts.

Part of your subscription (£11.40 in 2012) is forwarded to NADFAS, which attracts Gift Aid. NADFAS shares this rebate with us and each year we have put this towards saving works of art for the nation and similar projects. We have so far contributed £1,500 in this way. 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.

Finally, I would like to thank Chris Kipps for examining our accounts for several years. This year we have been grateful for the services of former WHDFAS Treasurer, Barry Wilkinson.

David Taylor

Programme Report

Diversity has been the main feature of 2012 programme of lectures prepared by my predecessor Pauline Varney. Her selection has covered a wide time scale - from the early Middle Ages to the present day, and included an impressive range of subjects.

Alan Read started the year with a demonstration of his interest in the little known Newlyn School of plein-air painting, and in February Mary Acton skilfully reviewed the development of Western sculpture from antiquity to modern times.

The Olympic theme was dealt with by Ian Gibson in his March lecture, and Jonathan Hinden brightened a gloomy April afternoon with an entertaining run through Mozart’s Cosi Fan Tutte. In May, Karin Fernand used her acting experience and a selection of period paintings to illuminate Virginia Woolf’s challenging writings and in June Jane Angelini talked about Ravenna and her glorious Byzantine mosaics. Patricia Wright highlighted the beauty of art created in the monasteries of Iona and Lindisfarne, and we are yet to be introduced by Tom Errington to the puzzles of trompe l’oeil and to be guided by Jane Gardiner through the Golden Age of Venetian glass.

I hope that you will be intrigued by my choice of lectures for 2013 - we shall take a look at the striking portraits of Frida Kahlo and the work of the Shakers; we’ll learn about British modernist architects, Jane Austen’s houses, Huguenot silk weavers and Russian opera. We’ll also discuss the secrets of art forgers, Grand Tour collections, and Turner’s fascination with the River Thames.

Halina Heyworth

Audio Visual

More and more NADFAS Lecturers have “gone digital” so our investment in up-to-date audio-visual equipment over the last few years has certainly proved to be very worthwhile, as we receive compliments from visitors as well as members. We also hope you have noticed our new, larger noticeboard at Hersham Village Hall, to display the news and activities of WHDFAS and other societies. The Committee continues to review what’s new in the world of technology but hopefully we won’t need to make any further investments for the time being.

We are indebted to the Audio Visual Team who give up their time before and after the lectures to ensure everything runs smoothly - so thank you to Robin Sutton, Spencer Needs, Harry Oliver, David Taylor, Gordon Swain, Hugh Taylor and Barry Wilkinson.

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.

Guests

We’re always happy for Members to bring guests and for Waiting List members to come to lectures. Just remember to contact Margaret Sale, our Membership Secretary (or Diane Ball), and arrive with £5. For those “on-line”, it is more convenient to receive notification by e-mail: margaret.sale@whdfas.org.uk or diane.ball@whdfas.org.uk. However, you can of course, still ring Margaret on: 01932 840583 or Diane on 01784 254792.
Farewell; Adieu; Auf Wiedersehen; Goodbye*;
I've done the teas for four years now, my how time does fly!
I've got a little weary; can you see it in my face?
I'm looking for a volunteer, someone to take my place.
We also need more people to sign up to make the tea,
Don't look away, don't turn aside, don't think 'it can't be me!'!
Shortly we'll be asking you to sign up for next year,
So go and put your name down, there's nothing you need fear!
A BIG Thank you to my regulars, the willing loyal few
You are the ones I can depend on, I can't do without you!
But there's lots of you who turn up but never do your share,
So sign up now to wash the cups or else it's just not fair!

*S Pronounced as in the 'Sound of Music'!

Sue Cardy

The Committee is delighted that Sue has agreed to stay until the new team can start in April.

Special Interest Days

It was only when I took over from Diane last year that I realised just how much work she had put in to the organisation of such a successful and varied programme for the last three years! In September we were treated to Edward Saunders “Vienna and the Habsburgs”. Starting with Charles V we learnt how the Habsburgs dominated half of Europe through marriage, political skill and pertinacity. We learnt about their love of sponsorship and the arts and their wealth which enabled them to fund great art collections, many of them in the palaces and museums of Vienna today.

In December we were back in the Barn for a delicious Christmas supper followed by a fascinating lecture by art historian Clare Ford Wille on “Celebrations and Festivities” as depicted by Pieter Breugel and his successors. The New Year brought us Frances Hughes, accompanied by actor Tony White, with “Curtain Up” on Shakespeare, his influence on the theatre and his fame as an actor and playwright.

Looking ahead, in September Andrew Davies returns this time to delve into the history of our English Churches. Our Christmas supper will be followed by a Hilary Guise lecture on the “Ox and the Ass - silent watchers at the Crib”, explaining why so many crib scenes in art include these animals and why their presence is significant. In 2013 we look forward to David Battle and “A day in the life of the Antiques Roadshow” in March. Peter Darty talks on “Art Deco and its influence on Design” in September, and Philip and Rosemary Banham entertain us with a “Victorian Christmas through the magic lantern” at the ‘Festive Supper’ in December.

Pat Gamba

Church Recording

We have finished recording at St Nicholas in Shepperton and are in the process of compiling the Record: this is taking longer than we had hoped as photographs have to be produced in a special format for the archives at the V&A. Our photographers rose to the challenge and we have some excellent photographs which you will be able to see when we present the Record to you. We are now planning to start recording at St Peter’s Church in West Molesey in September, this Church is usually open so worth a look if you pass by.

We are having another ‘Church Crawl’ this year. We start at St George's at West End, then The Friends Meeting House in Esher followed by St George’s and Christ Church also in Esher. After lunch we will visit to St Mary’s Stoke d’Abernon.

If you are interested in Church Recording please speak to one of us at a meeting, we are usually found having a cup of tea after the lecture.

Val Goodhart-Riley
Visits 2012

2012 proved to be a year of ‘once in a lifetime’ experiences. The year began with a visit to the National Gallery to see Leonardo da Vinci: Painter at the Court of Milan. Despite the scarcity of tickets for this important exhibition, fifty-two members went to Trafalgar Square and enjoyed a fascinating illustrated talk before going into the galleries. It was a great privilege to see these masterpieces, which had been collected together from all over the world.

Following Ian Gibson’s lecture “The Great Exhibition to 2012 Olympics”, our second visit was to the Olympic Park in April. So many members wanted to see the venue, that we had to book another tour and seventy-three people went on the trip on two separate days. We had a guided coach tour around the Park and the Olympic Village and a walk to a viewing platform close to the iconic Stadium and the Orbit: Anish Kapoor’s amazing sculpture. Although, for security reasons, entry was not permitted we felt we had become familiar with the Park. We ended the tour with a fascinating visit to The Museum of London Docklands at Canary Wharf.

The third visit this year was to Chichester in July to Pallant House Gallery and the collection of modern British art, including the Peter Blake exhibition commemorating his 80th birthday. After an excellent lunch at George Bell House we had a guided tour of Chichester Cathedral.

The final visit for 2012 is a London Walk in October with a Blue Badge guide to include Clerkenwell, St John’s Gatehouse, St Bartholomew’s Church and Smithfield.

Vol Woolford

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.

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.

Young Arts

The 2011/2012 Young Arts Project at St Charles Borromeo Primary School “In the Footsteps of Jesus” was completed with the culmination of an Art Exhibition which was held at the school on 20 March 2012. This was a great success and the Head Teacher has written to the Society to thank us for our support.

Your Committee is now considering other Young Arts projects for 2013.

Lindy Wilson

St Charles Borromeo “In the Footsteps of Jesus” Art exhibition