

## Dates for your new diary...

### Thursday, 6 January Tate Modern - Gauguin: Maker of Myth

Gauguin is one of the world's most famous and best-loved artists from the early 20th century. For the first time in the UK in over 50 years, Tate Modern presents an exhibition dedicated to this master French Post-Impressionist, featuring paintings and drawings from around the world. His sumptuous, colourful images of women in Tahiti and beautiful landscape images of Brittany in France are some of the most popular images in Modern art. A troubled soul – but a great artist! For further information and booking please contact **Jane Woods 01256 862469**

### Sunday, 16 January



Private View of the biennial WH Allen exhibition entitled *In the Footsteps of WH Allen – watercolours of Dorset and Sussex*. At the Allen Gallery,

Church Street, Alton; 12noon - 2pm with drinks and canapés. Tickets £5 available at lecture meetings (or contact **Tony Cross 01420 85906**)

### Thursday, 10 February Visit to Leighton House/Linley Sambourne House

Lord Leighton was one of the most successful artists of the Victorian era. In 1865, he bought a modest house for himself in South Kensington and over the next

three decades he transformed it into something akin to a grandiose palace of art. Situated nearby, Linley Sambourne House is a uniquely well preserved late Victorian town house formerly the home of Edward Linley Sambourne, the Punch cartoonist, illustrator and photographer (1844-1910). The house retains many of its original features including much of its furniture, furnishings and decoration from the 1870s.

For further information and booking please contact **Lissa Wilson 01420 543892**

### Thursday, 10 March Study Day on Silver with Ian Pickford

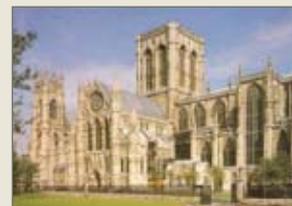
In order to appreciate any pieces it is essential to look at them in the context of the social customs and ways of life of the periods in which they were made. Only then can the reasons for such things as silver chamber pots, elaborate dressing-table sets and lids on cups be properly understood. Sounds like a day not to be missed. For further information and booking please contact **Kit Butterfield 01420 88356**

### 14-18 April - visit to Yorkshire

Details will be available shortly for this long weekend trip to be based in York.

If you have been on previous visits you'll be aware of the format; if not it'll be a weekend of visiting interesting

cultural sites with like-minded people and based in a comfortable hotel with good food and intelligent conversation. For further information and booking please contact **Lissa Wilson 01420 543892**



# Church Recorders at St Nicholas' Church

As some of you know, the Venerable Michael Harley, Archdeacon of Winchester, has kindly given permission for us to go ahead with the recording – so, at last, we are up and running – figuratively speaking! We have now done a full inventory of the Church and are divided into groups to start the Record. I am very grateful to all the Volunteers for joining this venture, and I know we will learn so much about the furnishings of churches – it is a very exciting undertaking.



Rosie Sirl

## A warm welcome



Back in September Peter and Lissa Wilson kindly hosted a drinks party to welcome new members to Alton DFAS. With many of the committee also in attendance it enabled members to chat in an informal setting to reinforce Alton's enviable reputation as a welcoming DFAS group.

Taking part in our varied programme of activities (lectures, visits, study days, church recording and heritage volunteering) ensures a range of different opportunities to meet like-minded folk. Besides, new members are the life blood of any organisation and as an active DFAS we cannot hope to prosper without them.

## Bletchley Park

On 22 September members enjoyed a well organised visit to Bletchley Park (wartime codename Station X) and spent a fascinating late summer's day learning how 10,000 people, billeted deep in the surrounding countryside, worked tirelessly in complete secrecy from 1938 to break the Enigma code then the backbone of Germany Military Intelligence. It was a race against time and odds were formidable as the Enigma machine was capable of 150 million, million, million possible variations. Yet the collective brilliance of a selected group of disparate people, all with incredible minds and skills, succeeded. This breakthrough is credited for shortening the War by two years and saving vast numbers of lives.

Such was the loyalty to the Official Secrets Act that the Germans remained unaware that the Code had been broken and the secret was kept for thirty years after the War ended, as two of our Members personally recalled.

Although few huts remain in the lovely grounds we saw the very basic working conditions and isolation in which everyone laboured under intense pressure and in total secrecy. There were replicas of the initial slow Bombe decryption machine and the later, much quicker, huge Colossus. A superb lifelike statue of Alan Turing involved in their design and intricately made from 500,000 pieces of 500 million year old Welsh slate is on display.

The vital pioneering work of Station X remained largely unknown until the mid 70s due to the 30 Year Rule, but today Bletchley Park is recognised as being the cradle of the computer and for having shaped the modern world of communications. It was saved for the Nation in 1999 as a living memorial to Second World War intelligence work. So we were able to marvel at the brilliant skills and unshakeable loyalty of all those connected with Station X who "never cackled" and to whom we owe an immense debt.

Madeline Kendrick

## Gilbert White's House and the Oates Collection

There are 14 of us Stewarding at The Wakes in Selborne and have enjoyed a busy Summer helping when they have large Groups.

Gilbert White was aged 7 or 8 when his family moved from the nearby Vicarage to 'The Wakes' (named after the Wake family who had lived here previously). At that time the property would have been no more than a 'two up, two down' but over the years many extensions and additions have been made, creating the house you see today.

The rooms have been restored following descriptions in White's own correspondence and include a chair he used at Oriel College, Oxford (loaned from the College), items of



contemporary furniture, family portraits and bed hangings embroidered for him by his aunts. On display is the original manuscript of his book, *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne*, which was purchased with generous help from English Heritage and others.

If anyone would like to help our Heritage Volunteers please contact Liz Ray (01252 835151)

# Your Committee



Above: L – R (back row) Janet Tierney, Niven Baird, Liz Ray, Tony Cross, Jane Woods, Martin Woods, Kit Butterfield, John Tomlinson, Vanessa MacMahon; (L - R front row) Laura Rose, Peter Wilson and Therese Keogh. Left: Rosie Sirl (left) & Lissa Wilson, Sue Ruffhead.

All members of your Committee were re-elected at the Society's AGM held in September and Vanessa MacMahon was elected for the first time. We extend to her a very warm welcome!

Peter Wilson continues as Chairman with Niven Baird as his Vice-Chairman. Martin Woods remains Treasurer and Laura Rose Secretary. Therese Keogh, as Programme Secretary will plan and book all our lectures, many of which have to be booked up to two years ahead in order to ensure we can get who we want on the day we want them! Similarly, Kit Butterfield plans our two Special Interest Days, the first of which next year will be on Silver, by Ian Pickford in March. Jane Woods and Lissa Wilson will plan and organize our various visits to galleries and other places of interest, including our long week-end away which next year will be to Yorkshire, staying in York, from 14 - 18 April.

Liz Ray co-ordinates our Heritage Volunteers in the work they do at The Wakes, Gilbert White's House and Rosie Sirl will co-ordinate our new Church Recording project at St Nicholas Church, West Worldham.

Sue Ruffhead is our Membership Secretary and will always appreciate any help you can give her by introducing new members. Tony Cross is the editor of our Newsletter and also runs our Web-site (Have a look at it – [www.alton-dfas.hampshire.org.uk](http://www.alton-dfas.hampshire.org.uk)). John Tomlinson keeps us well stocked with wine for our lecture meetings! Janet Tierney, Judy James and Vanessa MacMahon are willing and able to turn their hands to any task required. Readers are encouraged to speak to any member of our committee with any thoughts they have on how we can improve the work of our society for the benefit of our members.

## There are only two certainties in this life...

I think you know that these are death and taxes and whilst we cannot avoid the former, a little judicious planning can reduce the latter. From time to time we all get a mailing from a membership organisation asking us if we had ever considered leaving a bequest to them in our will. ADFAS is only in its second decade, but forward planning is vital and we too can provide an opportunity to benefit our educational activities for young people with a bequest. A discussion with the Chairman or Treasurer should be able to answer any questions you may have on the subject.



# Alton Peace Mugs 1919



It is 100 years since King George V came to the throne, and 22 June 2011 marks the centenary of his Coronation. Yet he is still alive in the memory of the present Queen, who in her childhood called him 'Grandpa England'.

These two mugs from the Curtis Museum show him dressed stiffly in navy and army attire; not the country tweeds in which he was happiest. However, they commemorate the end of the First World War so the uniforms are understandable, and in the case of the naval one, far more than honorary. George was sent to join the Royal Navy aged 12 and served for 14 years before the untimely death of his brother, Albert Victor, placed him in direct line of succession. This meant an end to active service, though in the years spent waiting to become King his rank progressed from Commander to Admiral.

Still only second in line, he became comparatively idle. Nearly a decade occupied in stamp collecting and shooting gave him

a reputation for dullness. Undeserved, because almost as soon as Edward VII succeeded in 1901, George and his wife Princess May (later Queen Mary) embarked on a tour which took in Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand – names which, as Dominions of the British Empire, appear framed on the mugs along with George himself. On his return his father involved him more in affairs of state, just as George later did with Queen Mary – incidentally showing more respect for his wife's intellect than was usual for a man at that time.

But there is one act above all for which George V should be remembered. During World War I, in 1917, he ordered that all members of the extended royal family with names and titles originating in Germany should give them up or change them as he directed. Prince Louis of Battenberg, for example, became Louis Mountbatten. George's immediate family, a branch of the House of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, were transformed into the Windsors – a name happily suggested by Windsor Castle. Though the need to deflect anti-German feeling was self-evident, these changes were radical and probably helped to ensure the continuation of the monarchy up till the present day – not what you might expect from a dull man.

**Neil Hyman - Hampshire Museums**

## Forthcoming Lectures

**7 December at Alton Maltings**

**A Christmas Pie**

**Jean Dolmetsch & The Dolmetsch Ensemble**

We explore the evolution of Christmas customs and folk-lore down the ages by examining holly, mistletoe, fir trees, glass balls, robins, reindeer, yule logs, puddings, cakes and St. Nicholas. The 16th century story of Jack Horner and his Christmas Pie is retold and we experience the bleak times when Christmas is abolished under Cromwell and mince pies were made illegal. We will include the Christmas Truce of 1914 on the Western Front and carol singing during an air raid in 1940. Musical illustrations will evoke the spirit of each period.

**11 January at Alton Maltings**

**A New Genesis Cycle for the Great West Doorway at York Minster**

**Rory Young**

Here was a thrilling opportunity at the end of the twentieth century to contribute new meaning through art and craft to a salient part of this great religious building. However, iconography was renewed at the expense of 'ancient work' and controversy ensued. Nonetheless we were continuing the medieval tradition of writing a prayer in stone, anonymously by aggregative effort. Cathedrals can be seen as living buildings, and as ideas, perhaps greater than their parts. This fascinating project will be fully described.

**8 February at Alton College**

**Northern Lights: Scandinavian design in the 20th century**

**Deborah Lambert**

The beginning of the new millennium has witnessed a growing taste for clean lines and lack of clutter which has stimulated

interest in 20th century design. With many of us visiting Ikea on a regular basis, the influence of the great Scandinavian designers of the mid-20th century has had more of an impact on contemporary design than most people realise.

Some of the most important designers whose influence remains extraordinarily strong were Scandinavian, makers of the new 'antiques', pushing the boundaries in the use of design and materials and with a lasting legacy.

**8 March at Alton College**

**Lee Miller and Picasso.**

**Antony Penrose**

The relationship between Lee Miller and Picasso began during the enchanted summer holiday they shared in the Côte d'Azur in 1937 and lasted until Picasso's death in 1973. Picasso painted 6 portraits of Lee Miller and she photographed him more than 1,000 times. She was a frequent visitor to his home in post war years accompanying Roland Penrose on his many research trips whilst he was writing his biography of Picasso. The story is told using Lee Miller's own photographs and contains a brief biography of her and Roland Penrose. Contains some wartime images which may be disturbing.

**12 April at Alton College**

**Winchester and the Origin of the English Sepulchres**

**Christopher Herbert**

In the late tenth century a synod was held at Winchester which had a profound and lasting influence upon English religious and artistic life and which may have had an impact across Europe.

It laid down a number of guidelines for acts of worship, including the ceremonies of Holy Week and Easter, and amongst the recommendations was one which proposed that the liturgies of Good Friday and Easter Sunday morning should incorporate a small piece of drama.