

## Editorial

The recent survey of your thoughts on the Newsletter and our website has revealed a number of interesting points. It is reassuring that 97% of you (well, those of you who responded!) are more than happy with the appearance of our Newsletter and between 90 and 96% are pleased with the different aspects of our activities it contains. 93% manage to read the lecture synopsis before



attending and about 65% of you have been encouraged to visit the Allen Gallery after reading the Museum Piece articles.

We will be taking note of the suggestions and will try to inform you about local NADFAS courses, feature decorative and fine art treasures of the area and include reviews of exhibitions or houses within easy travelling distance.

The website was also given a resounding endorsement in terms of its appearance and content, with a few suggestions for additions there as well. About half of you have brought a guest to a lecture and as we have a good 'conversion rate' of guests into members, perhaps the other half will consider bringing someone along as a treat? That said, if you all came to every lecture and each brought a guest we would have a space problem!

## Dates for your diary...

### Wednesday, 8 June Hatfield House

One of the finest Jacobean houses in the country was built 1607-11 by Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury and Elizabeth I's Secretary of State. Currently lived in by the 7th Marquis and Marchioness of Salisbury and their family, we will have a day to explore the house and garden with the added interest provided by an outdoor exhibition of sculpture by Henry Moore (1898-1986).

**For booking please contact Jane Woods 01256 862469**



### Thursday, 15 September A double bill

**Frogmore House**, Windsor, is set in the private Home Park and renowned for its beautiful landscaped garden and 18th-century lake. Queen Victoria was inspired to write 'all is peace and quiet and you only hear the hum of the bees, the singing of the birds'. Indeed Queen Victoria loved Frogmore so much that she chose to build a mausoleum for herself and her husband, Prince Albert, in the grounds.

### **Royal Holloway College**, Egham

A Victorian Art Collection where we will see works by Frith, Fildes and Millais and learn about the collection and legacy of Thomas Holloway, the founder of the College and self-made multi-millionaire.

Thomas Holloway's aim was to buy a collection of art that would help in the programme of education for young ladies. He held the belief that art could teach and the paintings reveal scenes of contemporary Victorian life. Millais' Princes in the Tower (1878), perhaps best known of all the history paintings here, expresses the inevitability of their tragic fate through their apprehensive faces and vulnerable, boyish figures.

**For booking please contact Lissa Wilson 01420 543892**



# College Report

Receiving an ADFAS Scholarship this year was such an honour and I have already made use of it. A magazine subscription helps keep me up to date with everything happening and is an endless source of inspiration, and I have also acquired some brilliant reference books. I am very excited to have arranged tickets for three new exhibitions in London, and the Scholarship has been a huge help in making these trips possible. In addition, I am looking into the specialist lectures programme at the Victoria & Albert Museum and other short courses I could undertake in vacations.

The College course so far has been fast-moving and challenging but also a lot of fun. Although I am specialising in Textiles and Fashion design, I have greatly enjoyed experimenting in other areas such as Fine Art, Photography and Graphics and feel I am now a more well-rounded designer as a result. The workload is full-on, with each of us already having produced around seven different projects and a 3000 word essay, but it's all been worth it and I'm looking forward to what's in store for us after Christmas.

Recently I sent off my University applications and I am very hopeful that I'll be offered a place at my first choice. I would really like to thank ADFAS for providing me with such a useful opportunity.

**Isabelle Hynds**



## Special Interest Day



We had such a stimulating day with Valerie Woodgate last November in Beech village hall as she led us through Signs and Symbols. The hidden messages in her chosen

paintings (at least 35 of them) were vividly explained.

We, her fascinated audience, will never again give a picture a perfunctory glance.

There was something for all of us to absorb: from Uccello to Emin, from Hogarth to Van Gogh and Holman Hunt to Picasso, from the obvious to the obscure, from a well placed shaft of sunlight to a subtly placed snuffed candle. Every picture tells a story or two or three! The lecturer skilfully paced the day so we were left wanting more – which is probably just as well as she is lecturing to us on a different topic next month!

Kit Butterfield did it once again..... such a well organised day and delicious hot lunch.

Thank you Val and Kit.

**Judy James**

## College Report



Being awarded an ADFAS Scholarship has given me the opportunity to enrich my work. For example, it has already enabled me to go to the Turner Prize, Eadweard Muybridge and Rachel Whiteread exhibition at the Tate Britain. Seeing Muybridge's sequential photographs was especially useful for me as it was during the week of our animation project, and gave me insight into producing a sequence of drawings. I have enjoyed the variety in the course so far, and being challenged in different areas has been a fascinating process where I have learnt a lot.

Next term I go on to specialise in Fine Art, and I am excited about returning to painting. I plan to use some of the funds towards a set of oil paints, as I have never had the opportunity to use these before. I think my painting will benefit from the richness of colour and being able

to manipulate the paint for longer. I recently bought a book of paintings by Cecily Brown which is brilliant because it has close ups of her vibrant mark making and is showing me how to develop my own brushwork. I think I want to make larger scale paintings to be more adventurous. I'm going to continue using the scholarship towards exhibitions and books as well as materials as they give me ideas about my own work.

I have recently applied to study for a degree in Fine Art, and so have been preparing by creating a portfolio and writing an essay on Influential Modern Art. I really hope I obtain a place as I would love to continue studying Art.

**Francesca Mollett**

# Venice: Canaletto and his rivals

During the 18th century Venice was a major destination on the Grand Tour and a souvenir painting of the city was an important record of one's travels. Back in November we visited the National Gallery to see how the rise of these 'view paintings' led to the emergence of a number of artists including Canaletto.

How did he stack up against the competition? This is what members thought:-

Whilst I was aware of the special architecture of Venice, I hadn't appreciated that it was also the wonderful light that attracted the artists.

*We were unaware that there were so many artists painting for that market.*

Most interesting to see the comparative styles of the other artists although, for me, Canaletto stands head and shoulders above the others.

*What a wonderful record of Venice; so festive and colourful.*

A super exhibition showing an interesting view of Venetian society.

*A thoroughly enjoyable and efficiently organised day.*

Canaletto was definitely the master; his draughtsmanship and sense of perspective is outstanding. Exquisite facial details in some of his crowd scenes but a surprising absence of children.

*A wonderful exhibition well displayed for comparison and contrast. An excellent audio commentary enhanced with music.*

A very interesting visit and although I liked the paintings, I was not keen on the people shown or their fashions.



*Cimaroli - not so good with the detail; Carlevarijs - dull by comparison; Guardi's colours not so bright, Tironi lacking in colour, however Bellotto (Canaletto's nephew) came a pretty close second in architecture but I felt he failed with his figures.*

What a wonderful record of Venice; so festive – so colourful and what a treat to visit it at that time.

*Interesting to see the Modern Perspectives work of Clive Head as a contemporary take on the urban landscape.*

Didn't realise that Canaletto was so interested in painting dogs – one of the ways the experts determine who painted many of those unsigned pictures.

*Was encouraged to go to the main galleries upstairs to see a few more pictures by Canaletto and Guardi – not quite so crowded there*

# Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) – Maker of Myth

A good outing for a wet day and impressed at Ray's diversion when confronted by the blockage on the A3.

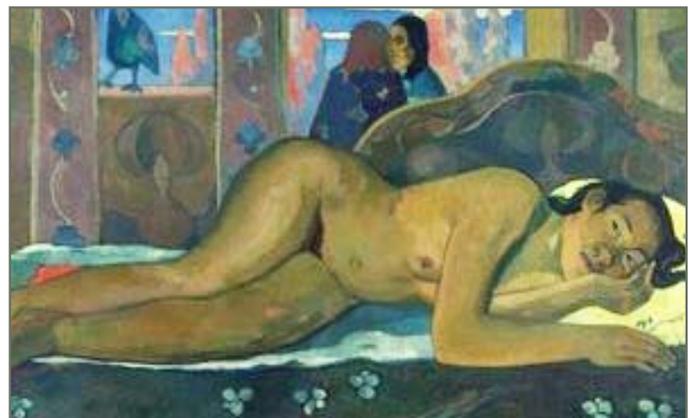
*Very interesting lecture in the morning without which the exhibition would have been so much less enjoyable.*

The layout of each section was comprehensive especially the world maps of the islands where Gauguin lived and painted and the comparative history of the political & social influences and happenings.

*Interested to see examples of his ceramics and wood carvings. His strong use of primary colour was effective rather than gaudy.*

A well balanced show combining the works of art with a comprehensive history of the painter and the circumstances of each work.

*Tate Modern didn't seem very user friendly on our visit with regard to toilets, and café facilities.*



Extremely well displayed and I was particularly interested in the strong elements of primitivism, the strong lines and the use of vibrant colours with evocative themes.

*In spite of all his misfortunes Gauguin had the courage and conviction to keep making wonderful paintings. However, like many true artists he was a very selfish person and not much use as a husband!*

A well organised and enjoyable trip - as usual!

**Contributed**

# A Tale of Two London Houses

A particularly wet February day was considerably enlivened by visits to the houses of Lord Leighton and the Sambourne family, both just off Kensington High Street.

The latter was 'a hidden gem in the Heart of London', whilst the former was sensational in a different way.

Members reported an interesting contrast between the two Victorian dwellings, one a terraced property, unremarkable from the outside and indistinguishable from its neighbours. The other was purpose-built in a residential area popular with artistic types for a well known painter, later President of the Royal Academy of Arts.



The smaller house gave an impression of a family with a middle class Victorian life style typified by walls of modest rooms covered by pictures, whilst the upper class artist moving in higher social circles enjoyed an enviable amount of space with a remarkable lack of clutter. That Frederick

Leighton lived on his own perhaps explained the rather stark nature of his abode.

The family man was Edward Sambourne, cartoonist for Punch, married father of two with live-in servants, who had an interest in photography. Some of the images we saw seemed only mildly pornographic today, but would have regarded as 'hard core' when he took them. However, we discovered he used them to assist his drawing.



Leighton also painted his subjects in the nude (not him – the model!) and then he added the clothes afterwards and although we saw some examples of his work, it was his house that attracted our attention. The Narcissus Hall was interesting, the Library functional, the Drawing Room featured a fireplace under the window, the Dining Room had seen important guests around its table, the Studio was spacious and light, the adjacent Silk Room was marvellous, his bedroom was stark beyond belief, but the Arab Hall was simply delightful. It was dedicated to house his prize collection of Middle Eastern art and also a relaxation area for his guests and visitors.

The 17th century tiles on the walls included plain and decorated types as well as those with religious text, originated in Damascus, whilst woodwork came from Egypt.

An excellent day out considering many of us had probably heard of neither and both houses provided knowledgeable guides to assist us, and whilst a little different from a normal London visit, it was none the worse for that. Ray's skills in handling a coach in difficult driving conditions were greatly appreciated – heavy commuter traffic on a wet day isn't everyone's idea of fun, which is what makes these visits so pleasurable!

## Forthcoming Lectures

**10 May at Alton College**

**Looking at Portraits: A Very English Taste**

**Valerie Woodgate**

In England, for about 200 years after the Reformation, portraiture was almost the only subject in art. During this time most major painters working here were foreigners; the most important of these were Holbein and van Dyck. From the 18th century on, outstanding British portrait painters such as Reynolds and Gainsborough came to prominence and the portrait has continued to intrigue and fascinate right up to the present day, as artists such as Lucian Freud continue to explore and expand the subject.

**14 June at Alton Maltings**

**Once upon a time in Blue and White  
- the Story of the Willow Pattern Plate.**

**Amanda Herries**

Two lovers eloping, a fierce father and jilted suitor; pursuit across a bridge, in a boat, to a sacred island ... tragedy and death. Love-birds together for ever under the gentle sway of the willow tree. It is a familiar story from the exotic east, with an instantly recognisable image on the blue and white willow pattern plate. But is all as it seems?

This lecture tells the story of the plate. Where the images and decorative designs originate and how the tale of the lovers, and the production of the plate, came about. The story is also the fascinating journey of mysterious and fine Chinese porcelain of a thousand years ago to the competitive industrial pottery towns of nineteenth century England.