

Editorial

The only thing worse than being talked about is not being talked about so said Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) that source of quotations for every occasion and whose statue members saw last year in Dublin, the place of his birth.

ADFAS needs to be talked about in the local community to help generate new members; we need to generate an awareness of our activities to ensure our continuing success in the future. Please invite your friends and associates to our lectures for there seems to be a correlation between guests and new members. Would a reduction in your membership fee if you introduce new members encourage you even more than a simple appeal?

Do mention ADFAS at your social groups for although we know of the quality of the lectures and visits, not everyone reads the reports that are published regularly in the local press. If you'd like an extra copy of a Newsletter please ask when attending a lecture or steer potential members to our website which gives a flavour of what goes on as well as copies of current and previous Newsletters.

I have the simplest tastes. I am always satisfied with the best – Wilde could have been describing the ADFAS programme!

Dates for your diary...

Thursday, 1 December
The National Gallery, London

Leonardo da Vinci: Painter at the Court of Milan'

This exhibition is billed as the most complete display of Leonardo's rare surviving paintings ever held. This unprecedented show – the first of its kind anywhere in the world – brings together sensational international loans never before seen in the UK.

We will have the benefit of a lecture before viewing the show and bookings will be taken at the October meeting.



Church Recorders

The team are proceeding well with the record at St Nicholas' Church, West Worldham, but, even with a tiny church such as this, many details have to be researched, sometimes at different sources and with various experts! Finding that even cleaning materials had to be included under "Miscellaneous" gave some idea of the detail required. Memorials have all been recorded and, after perusal by two experts, are now awaiting the next stage.

Now a small plea – would any member like to join us to assist with recording metalwork; i.e. candle snuffers, locks, tops to the staffs, etc? There is not a lot involved but do please contact me if interested on **01420 543188** (answerphone) or by email: rosie.sirl@care4free.net

With my thanks to all the Recorders.

Rosie Sirl

Members moved by Pickford's day



Ian Pickford did a splendid job at Beech Village Hall back in March when he talked about Silver at the Spring Study Day. Following the tried and tested format of two talks in the morning followed by another after lunch, members were introduced to the subject through the social context of Silver, rather than merely talking about the different types of items. Using sources as diverse

as paintings, embroidery, illuminated manuscripts and museum objects he skilfully introduced a wide range of silver used in the past.

Diet, daylight, meal times and social status were all brought into the story as we considered drinking vessels, salt pots, cutlery (knives), flatware (spoons and forks), cup boards, bowls, candlesticks, the tea caddy, sauce boats, tea sets dressing table sets and even the chamber pot.

While all this was going on Kit and her band of helpers were preparing a super lunch which was well received by the assembled throng numbering about 45.

Suitable refuelled, members then unpacked a wide range of silver items which Ian Pickford examined and provided information regarding date, makers and uses demonstrating in a very practical way, his knowledge and expertise which makes him such a valuable member of the *Antiques Roadshow* team.

The material included flat ware, snuff boxes, a picture frame, vinaigrettes, boxes, a cheese scoop, candle holders, a serving dish ring, tea pot, a small 18th century mug and an impressive 19th century claret jug.

An excellent, well organised day exploring an interesting topic.

Niven Baird

Visit to Hatfield House

We left Alton with a full coach and the anticipation of a very special day. On arrival and after a welcome cup of coffee we divided into groups for our guided tour. Following an introduction from our Guide, we began in the Marble Hall where we received a detailed explanation of the famous 'rainbow portrait' of Queen Elizabeth I. We then moved to the Grand Staircase with its wonderful Jacobean wood carvings and hanging tapestries. On the first floor we were guided to various rooms of the house including the magnificent Library and the Long Gallery with its world famous ceiling lined with gold leaf over its entire length of 170ft. There were magnificent views of the ancient formal gardens, before heading down the Adam and Eve staircase to the family chapel with its colourful stained glass. All three guides were exceptional and provided fascinating details relating to the Royal connections with the site, the Cecil family, the house and contents.

After the tour some headed to the restaurant for lunch, others toured the gardens and some set off to look at the Henry Moore sculptures dotted through the landscape. The associated church of St Etheldreda, which featured a Burne-Jones window of 1894 as well as Cecil family tombs, was also on the agenda. One could see ADFAS members perambulating between all of the above



and taking advantage of the shopping opportunities clustered around the former stable yard during heavy showers.

During our journey home we were informed that this trip was the last organised by Jane Wood as she was not seeking re-election at the AGM. We gave our appreciation for her efforts and arrived back in Alton with a coach full of smiling faces after a memorable and very well organised day.

June Uribe and Ray Wilkerson



York

The York trip back in April was a very pleasant cultural experience enjoyed by some 41 members. The journey north was punctuated by lunch and a guided tour of Haddon Hall in Derbyshire, whilst on the way back Calke Abbey performed the same role.

Fountains Abbey, Ripon Cathedral and Newby Hall made for a busy first day; York Minster and The Treasurer's House started the following day with members then being 'let loose' in the city. Some took in museums and galleries whilst others indulged in a little retail therapy. Sunday saw us heading out to Nunnington Hall west of Malton, followed by Castle Howard, well known as the location for the TV series of *Brideshead Revisited*.

The Hilton Hotel right in the centre of York made for a comfortable and convenient base and Ray ensured we were in the right place at the right time – as always. It would be invidious to pick out particular locations but this selection of pictures aims to provide a flavour of the visits. If next year's long weekend away is half as good as this was it will be well worth joining.



René Magritte

René Magritte (1898-1967) is one of the most distinctive artists of the 20th century and currently showing at Tate Liverpool (until 16 October) is the first major exhibition of this Belgian Surrealist in almost 20 years.

René Magritte: The Pleasure Principle looks at the less explored aspects of Magritte's life and artistic practice, with themes including the artist's use of pattern and artifice, ideas and revelation, and visual fracture and eroticism. The exhibition also investigates the relationship between Magritte's paintings and commercial design, and the inspiration he drew from mass market literature and popular culture. The exhibition traces these themes in Magritte's major paintings as well as in his early commercial work, in drawings and collages, and in his rarely seen photographs and films. Featuring major works from across the world and from all stages of the artist's career, *The Pleasure Principle* will display over 100 artworks, many not seen before in the UK.

Why mention the exhibition here? Well if you appreciate a decent pint of beer you will know about Alton's *Railway Arms* pub. If you don't know it I'm sure you'll know the sign high on the front wall of the building on Anstey Road opposite Station Road, which features a railway locomotive (an M7 tank if you are



interested) emerging from a tunnel. It may surprise you that the inspiration for this piece by local sculptor Richard Farrington, came from one of Magritte's paintings.

Not convinced? Type *Time Transfixed* into your computer search engine and see the connection for yourself.

The sign also features in the on-line *Alton Sculpture Trail* (www.alton-sculpture-trail.hampshire.org.uk) which, if you have viewed the exhibition of *Modern British Sculpture* at the Royal Academy recently, may also be of interest.

Tony Cross

Forthcoming Lectures

13 September
Carmen - Fatal Attraction
Jonathan Hinden

This promises to be a non-technical and not too serious account of Bizet's masterpiece, its characters and story, with musical illustrations on the piano. It was first performed in 1875, although the composer died within six months never knowing how popular his final work was to become. The evening will focus on the Bizet's ability to express character and mood through music and a brief look at the circumstances and context of its composition. Come early for the AGM (at 7.30pm) and to make sure you have a seat for this very popular speaker!

8 November
The Cult of the South Pacific: from Cook to Gauguin
Leslie Primo

Our lecturer aims to look at the enduring Western obsession with, and the invention of the so-called 'exotic' or 'noble savage' starting with the Island of Tahiti in 1767 and charting the impact, through painted images of the island and its people, of the European influence in this part of the world bolstered by 18th century artists who bolstered these notions in the minds of those back in Europe. We will explore the 19th century through the work of the Post-Impressionists and see what happens to these notions of the exotic.

11 October
How to look at Art
Lynne Gibson

The lecture will outline a flexible approach to interpreting any piece of art giving us the confidence to be an active, rather than passive, viewer. It is a tool for life – simple and effective. We will put it into practice by looking at a range of works from across the history of Western Art; observations and questions will be encouraged and welcomed.

This will be a 'must' for anyone interested in visiting galleries exhibitions and art museums. It will, quite simply, help us to 'see' more, learn to trust our eyes and enjoy art to the full!