

Presidents' Report

Having been on the Society Council for 14 years, and held various posts including Exhibition Secretary, Secretary, Syllabus Secretary and Vice President, I felt the time was right for me to take a step up. I might have done this three years ago, but the time did not seem right, so Matthew agreed to carry on for a second term as President, totalling six years in all. I want to pay tribute to Matthew, who has been ever enthusiastic and cheerful, and also shown dedication and commitment, hardly ever missing a meeting – and this is someone with a full time job and family. No President has served as long as six years since 1968! Even now Matthew will not be taking it easy, having agreed to replace me as one of the Vice Presidents, and also take on the role of exhibition rota organiser from Keith Harris.

I have been able to take this role now because we are in the strong position on Council in which people are willing and able to take over my previous roles. We are fortunate that when Linda Downs called last year for members to assist her in organising the Exhibition, three new members came forward, all of whom have since joined Council and made significant contributions. Rachel Sykes has agreed to take the role of Secretary, enabling Shirley Waddington to replace me as Syllabus Secretary. John Steadman, along with Linda Downs, will take on the organisation of outdoor days. Laura Davies has also agreed to take on some aspects of the Membership role, which Trevor Ferguson has felt unable to continue with. I am thankful that the other members of Council, Linda, Carol and Fiona, will be continuing. It is pleasing that although Trevor Ferguson and Jill Moynan are no longer able to attend council, both have agreed to continue their roles, Hamer Award organiser and Newsletter respectively. As well as presidential duties, I will be keeping some roles, including website manager, membership admin, and archives.

Council is vital to the running the Society – please appreciate the time and effort we put in – and of course we need members to attend meetings. I am pleased that attendances have been increasing on Saturdays, Portrait Group and Life Drawing Group. During the renewal process we only lost five members, mostly non-active, yet ten new members have joined over the last six months, most of whom regularly attend one or more of our meetings.

I intend to focus on what I see as key areas for development over the coming years.

Firstly, looking forward – technology for communication is advancing all the time. I am proud to have set up the HAS website and email system eight years ago and still devote much attention to it. John Steadman has led the establishment of a Facebook presence for the Society and the two weekly groups. It is important that these two media formats complement each other. Meanwhile the Newsletter has been very ably produced for some years by Jill Moynan, and we are already beginning a process of consideration of what form it should take in the future and its relationship with both the website and Facebook.

Secondly, looking back – Laura Davies' interviews with Life Members reminded us what a wealth of knowledge and memories are held by these four much respected members. I already look after archives, having for instance made the slide show of past members' work into a book, but I would like to collect more information about the Society's history and set it down in a document available to all.

A third theme is the format and number of our meetings. During my time as Syllabus Secretary I have put in more members' workshops, which have proved popular, and put more activity into our long summer break by extending Saturday meetings into May, and increasing outdoor days to three. There may be support for continuing this trend, and I will be supporting Shirley Waddington in planning these. We are also aware that full day workshops are no longer possible and will consider if, how and where these could take place again. My fourth theme has emerged recently since the Hamer Award meeting in February. Members who attended showed much interest in the students, who in turn were keen to know about our activities. Our new member Sophie Davies (Laura's daughter) who is a current art and design student, has given us several ideas to consider.

Those are my thoughts, but of course I always want to be open to all members' ideas and suggestions. My phone number is widely published, and you may have noticed that I use my personal email for HAS communications so that I receive replies directly, so please feel able to contact me at any time. Of course I also look forward to talking to many of you at our various meetings. I am pleased to have the opportunity to lead our great Society over the next three years.

David Whiting
(New) President

LIFE MEMBER INTERVIEWS by Laura Davies

Olwen Kitson

I met Olwen in her home, surrounded by her works of art. They were on the walls and stacked on the floor – so many beautiful works of art it was difficult to know where to look. A former president of Huddersfield Art Society, Olwen is a vibrant, inspiring lady with an immense love of life and art.

Olwen has a natural talent for music and art. In her early years, music was her dominant talent. At the age of 18, Olwen was playing the Violin with the Huddersfield Philharmonic Orchestra and studying music at Huddersfield College of Music. Sadly, by the age of 21, Olwen had developed severe hearing difficulties, which led to her leaving college.

Olwen got a job as a Photographers' artist, colouring, repairing and editing photographs. A trial at Pinderfields to fix her hearing failed and Olwen decided to leave Huddersfield and start a new career. She went into catering, obtaining work at the Methodist Guild, Swanage, running a dining room for 104 quests. In her leisure time, Olwen loved to go for walks with her watercolours and paint the landscapes and she began to feel more passionate about art than about music.

Due to further problems with her health, Olwen left the Methodist Guild and took up employment with a lady and her daughter, who bred Boston Terriers. This was a chaotic time in Olwen's life and her health suffered as a consequence, however she then met her future husband at a dance and settled into married life.

Olwen joined HAS in the 1950s when meetings were held in rooms above the shops on Westgate. Olwen describes these rooms as being full of "treasures" – works of art and equipment, art books, pictures and mementos. She was welcomed with open arms and, once her work was seen, she joined as a full member. As the rooms were above Silvio's, they got cakes and sandwiches for the break and one of Olwen's great pleasures was to sit and chat with other members after the session, discussing art and eating the leftovers.

Jean Parkinson

Jean has been a member of Huddersfield Art Society for 62 years, joining at the age of twenty. She has always had a love and talent for art, drawing from being a child. Although unable to take art at high school, due to being in a science form, Jean went on to teacher training college and took art as an advanced subject. Ten years later, she took an art course for mature teachers, which covered etching, lithography, textiles, figures, oil painting and much more.

Jean was the Assistant Secretary of HAS when Norman Culley was President. Jean would take minutes and introduce new members at meetings. Like Olwen, she recalls the tea, potted sandwiches and cakes at the afternoon meetings above Silvio's and the library of art books for members to use. The books were sold when the meetings moved to St Thomas'.

Jean has not only exhibited in HAS annual exhibition but has had her work exhibited at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 1966, 2006, 2008 and 2014.

Jean enjoys the works of the French Impressionist Claude Monet and the English painter David Hockney. Hockney's 'Grand Canyon' is one of her favourite paintings. She is moved greatly by this painting and feels that the colours radiate tremendous heat.



THEN AND NOW!

Jean with a portrait of her younger self painted by Harold Blackburn and a recent portrait by Carol Wood created during an Art Society Portrait Group session.

If any member is interested in sitting for the portrait group please contact John Steadman.



COLLAGE WORKSHOP and OUR CHRISTMAS MEAL

Members working together, November 12th

A follow-on workshop after Sue Fords' successful collage demonstration.

Jill Moynan led the members session with a short talk and demonstration of her own tissue paper collage technique.

Some members chose to work in tissue paper and others worked in the style of Sue Ford. Many chose to do their own thing. Lots of ideas with a huge range of mixed media.

Fun and enjoyment were the key elements to this very enjoyable creative session.

As you can see from the enclosed images everyone had a great time

Jill Moynan



Huddersfield Art Society's Christmas Lunch. 10 December 2016

Just under 30 of us met up at the Golden Cock, Farnley Tyas, and everyone was in good spirits.

We caused a bit of a bottle neck in the bar area for the restaurant as people greeted each other and caught up with those they hadn't seen in a while. The conversation flowed throughout the meal, and thanks to David's organisation we all ended up with the meals we ordered, even when we had forgotten our requests!

We were entertained by a horse trying to eat the fake plants outside and a visit by some hounds to the decking outside our windows.

As a good Christmas meal should be, new friends were made, old friends were caught up with, everyone enjoyed the food and drink and all left with the Joy of the Season. It was agreed by all that not having the museum visit on the same day made the timing more acceptable and encouraged more people to attend.

I am already looking forward to the next one if it's as enjoyable as that was.

Laura Davies



DEMONSTRATION IN PASTEL BY JEREMY FORD

Saturday 13th January 2017

There was a full house; 26 members attending the first session of 2017.

Presentations by Laura Davies and Matthew Evans.

Laura Davies, a relatively new member, bravely started by talking us through her growing interest in art. Matthew Evans then spoke about his much longer journey but with the same emphasis on the enjoyment we all have when we create. Members were very impressed by the work shown by both presentations and made many encouraging and complimentary comments.

A Demonstration in Pastel ‘Winter Scene’ by Jeremy Ford

We had a very pleasant, interesting and informative afternoon. Jeremy started his demonstration by explaining why he uses Clairefontaine Pastel mat paper (or the sturdier type which is bonded onto board) for his pastel work. He buys large sheets and cuts them to size. These pastel supports come in several colours with crystal paper to protect the finished artwork for storing or prior to framing. Jeremy is a very experienced, popular and successful artist who now concentrates on teaching. The scene that he demonstrated is one that he has done many times from his imagination. Members can use the methods he used when producing their own work.

The next session on 28.1.17. is for that purpose. Jeremy strongly recommends that everyone has a sketchbook with them at all times, as it is invaluable for drawings and notes that can be referred to later - he passed several of his sketch books around for members to see. Most of us said that we would have framed all of the ‘sketches’ in the books! He usually makes a note of how long each sketch took as it is the question that most people ask.

Jeremy first drew a very light outline to show where the horizon would be, and told us that the angles of skyline, clouds, treetops would all point towards the focal point. ie., the figures, a man and a dog. He uses a variety of different pastels, but mainly Unison soft for larger areas and Daley Rowner Conti for details. He keeps a roll of paper at the bottom of the work to catch any dust of which there was very little to be seen. The sky was created with sweeping bands of dark and light blue, followed by cream, light yellow, brighter yellow and orange from top to bottom. Rubbing each ‘stripe’ in with his fingers or any fleshy part of his hand. Lastly he used pinky red for the horizon, working at a slight diagonal. Clouds were then added with purple/grey, touching the

edge of the pastel in a broken effect in order to be not too neat or uniform. When blending Jeremy used a rubber blender or a brush when his finger was too big. He said a brush can also be used to remove excess pastel. The colour were completed by adding light underneath using a creamy colour for lower ones and pink for higher ones.

For the distant tree-line Jeremy used the same purple and grey used in the sky, which he smudged to darken and create grey/green trees. He swept pale blue across the picture to show shadows in the snow and to tidy up the base of trees. The nearer trees were done in browns, such as ochres, umbers and even black, in a ‘hit-and-miss’ style. Adding detail with a pastel pencil.

To finish Jeremy drew the figures using the hard edge of the pastels. He showed us on a separate paper how to draw simple forms. He made it look extremely easy! He placed the figures across the horizon line to break it up and then added shadows to the ground. The picture was finished by creating a suggestion of footprints or a track at an angle that pointed to the figures.

The finished work was greatly admired by all present. We will all be inspired to create our own winter scene in pastels.

Shirley Waddington



WORKSHOPS

January 28th - WINTER SCENES



This workshop followed on from Jeremy Ford's brilliant demonstration.



Each member brought their own wintery scene to try working in pastels. A number of us keeping closely to Jeremy's image of a snow scene at sunset with trees and a distant dog walker.

Some used soft pastels, others oils and some pastel pencil. Others chose to use mixed media or acrylic to try blending colours.

The atmosphere at the workshop is reflected in the finished pieces. A great days work with everyone enjoying themselves.

Here are some images showing the creativity taking place during the workshop.



February 25th STILL LIFE with David Stockwell.

Members were asked to bring items of their own choosing for the still life workshop, but rather than working on our own, we brought in a tutor, David Stockwell, a very experienced art teacher.



David introduced the session advising on composition, firstly saying that although we were to draw from observation, our work was still a picture and not actual reality, so we had freedom to modify appearances if needed.

He then advised on recognising overall shapes of the grouping including negative shapes between objects. David then walked around the group giving individuals advice on their work and composition. He often took the seat of the member he was advising to gain the same eye-view so as not to disrupt the arrangement.

The objects brought in and medias used were varied giving way to some fantastic pieces of art, I am sure you will agree, looking at some examples of the work here.

Laura Davies



GALLERY VISITS

Saturday March 11th DEAN CLOUGH, HALIFAX

This was the first time we had run a gallery visit since deciding to separate this from the Christmas lunch, and I feel all who attended enjoyed it and found it worthwhile. Fourteen members found their way to these huge mills just outside Halifax (three having had to miss the trip due to illness). The complex was actually much quieter than when I had previously visited on a weekday, as it is largely occupied by commercial premises, and a big advantage of this being free parking. The senior gallery staff do not work at weekends either, but the two staff on reception were very helpful.

I had prepared a sheet detailing art works that I recommended members look out for, though others were discovered during the visit. Members were probably most impressed by John Baldwin's colourful abstracts, which I asked the group to stand next to for the group photo. Members admired the work of the resident artist (Doug Binder) who was brilliant. Commenting on his use of a base colour and the definition with subtle lines in the paintings of life models. Martin Waters' work with gloves recovered from sea shore was another favourite – in an atmospheric room, with the smell of the sea. All were amazed by the Lego replica of Dean Clough mills still in production.

We gathered together after nearly two hours in the various galleries to comment on the works. Several of us then went into the 53 Degrees North bar / café and had an interesting discussion about Art Society matters.

David Whiting

FERENS' GALLERY, HULL.

I am sure you all have been aware that Kingston upon Hull was chosen to be the City of Culture 2017.

The first event of a busy year was FERENS' OPEN ART EXHIBITION. 1,700 works of art put forward for selection for this prestigious gallery. There were 330 selected.

Three of our art society members had their work selected and hung in the exhibition. Judith Bleazard, Trevor Ferguson and Jill Moynan.



The selectors were:

Maureen Lipman, born in Hull, CBE, Actor.

Dr. Gabriele Finaldi,
Director of the National Gallery, London.

David Mach, Sculptor and Royal Academician.

The exhibition ended in the middle of March. If you did not get over to see it then you missed one of the best art exhibitions in the North. Perhaps next year we could encourage more members to put their work in for selection.

Judith Bleazard

HUDDERSFIELD ART SOCIETY AGM MINUTES

Summary of AGM at Gledholt on 25.3.17

It was a case of quality not quantity at the AGM as there were only 18 members present, including nine Council members, but it was an interesting and productive meeting.

The main event was the farewell to Matthew Evans after his six-year term, and the appointment of the new President, David Whiting, plus several changes of office for some Council members. Some new posts were created as part of the society's aim of keeping up to date with technology, and a move towards a more personal connection with members.

Matthew was also very pleased to announce the title of Life Member for Betty Thornton, who has been a member for over fifty years, and has played a huge part in the development of the society. Both Betty and Matthew spoke about the huge impact art has on the life of members, both in the past and the present.

Carol Wood, as Treasurer, explained the healthy financial position of the society and thus it is not necessary to increase fees or subscriptions.

There was much discussion about encouraging younger members to join the society, and art student Sophie Davies (daughter of Laura) is enthusiastic and keen to be active in this venture, which is an exciting progression for the society. John Steadman is a relatively new member who has already joined Council, taken over running the Portrait Group and has been instrumental in the society being represented on Facebook, helping it to move with the times.

David spoke about the huge benefit to the society from the willing help given by John, Laura and Rachel Sykes as new members who give practical support in so many ways, and he thanked them on behalf of the society.

Before Matthew stepped down he thanked all members, but especially those on Council, for all the support he has had during his time as President. David took on board several ideas suggested by members at the meeting, and promised to look into each one as he begins his new role.

It was a very positive and friendly meeting, and I think that everyone left with a good feeling about the future of Huddersfield Art Society.

After the tea break there was a sale of books and other art related items, mainly donated by the family of the late Peter Wilson, Jean Parkinson and some items left over from previous sales at Gledholt.

Election of Council Officers. – Matthew Evans read out the list of nominations, which included several changes, a vote was held and the members voted unanimously for the new positions to be confirmed.

The following officers were elected;

President – David Whiting
Vice President 1 – Shirley Waddington
Vice President 2 – Matthew Evans
Treasurer – Carol Wood
Secretary – Rachel Sykes
Exhibition Secretary – Linda Downs
Syllabus Secretary – Shirley Waddington
Membership Liaison Secretary – Laura Davies
Social Media Secretary – John Steadman
Catering Officer – Fiona Bruin

Other roles held by Council Officers are as follows;

David Whiting – Website manager, e-mail account manager, membership administrator, archive monitor.
Matthew Evans – New member publications, exhibition attendance rota coordinator.
Linda Downs / John Steadman – Outdoor days coordinators.
Laura Davies – Members' presentations coordinator, social media editor.
John Steadman – Portrait Group Coordinator.

Roles held by members not on Council;

Trevor Ferguson – Hamer Awards Coordinator
Jill Moynan – Newsletter Editor. and Life Drawing Group Coordinator.

The Life Drawing Group

The Life Drawing group meets on Thursdays at Gledholt 1.30 to 4.15pm. All Members are welcome.

The group will close on April 13th and 20th for Easter and then continue weekly until the end of May. The last session will be on the 25th May, and will start again in late September.

Jill Moynan 01484 863759

*Life Drawing Group Coordinator.
and Newsletter Editor*

If any member would like to write an item for the newsletter please get in touch.

*Shirley Waddington
March 2017*

THE PORTRAIT GROUP



On the 1st of March their names were put into a hat and partners randomly selected. Everyone participating was informed of the name and contact details of their portrait partner and asked to provide their nominated artist with a suitable photograph from which to compose a portrait.

This year we said goodbye to our Portrait Group organiser, James Fitzpatrick, who has moved away from the area, but we thank him very much for his work over the last few years. He left the group with a programme of models that has enabled us to continue and grow without interruption.



The Portrait Group which meets every Monday (except Bank Holidays) is going from strength to strength, we have recently welcomed a number of new HAS members, including Kay France, Val Turner and Richard Roads. They have swelled our numbers to between 8 and 12 each meeting.

Our programme of having a new model every 3 weeks continues, which enables group members to either do a quick 2 hour /1 evening study or a longer piece of work over 2 or 3 weeks. The current programme will continue until the 8th of May when we are due to close for the Summer, resuming sometime in September with a new organiser, (date to be confirmed).

If any of you are interested in joining our group, please go to our new Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/HASPG/> to see examples of our work or just come along one evening and give portraiture a go, you will be made very welcome.

This March saw the introduction of a new event for Huddersfield Art Society, a Portrait Swap, which is a novel and light hearted idea to encourage as many members as possible to try their hand at portrait painting. The idea being that participants would be randomly paired up and paint each others portraits with the finished pictures being swapped at the end of the event.

Members were given a few weeks to decide whether or not they were interested in accepting the challenge and forward their names to the organiser.

It isn't a competition in the truest sense, since there are no winners nor prizes its just a fun way of for members to get involved with portrait painting. Of course it could be said that receiving a portrait of oneself to be prize enough. There were no strict rules, the portraits could be of any size, style and medium preferred by the artists and there were 4 weeks in which to complete the picture, wherever the participants felt most comfortable working. Partners were encouraged to swap the finished works at the beginning of April.

In order that everyone could be kept up to date a new Facebook page was set up where artists could post both finished portraits or works in progress. You can view these works at www.facebook.com/groups/haspswap as well as at the dedicated Portrait Swap page on the HAS website, <http://www.huddartsoc.webeden.co.uk/portait-swap> where you can see all the artists and their entries. Also, as many of the finished works as possible will be exhibited at the syllabus meeting on the 22nd April in Gledholt.

If the event is deemed to have been a success and its objective of encouraging members in the art of portraiture is achieved, it is hoped that it may become a regular event on the HAS calendar.

We meet at:

Paddock Quakers Meeting House, Church Street, Paddock, Huddersfield HD1 4TR

Start time: 6:45 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Costs are £3 per evening with 25p for a cup of tea/coffee at half time.

For more information contact John Steadman by email at jsteadmanhas@gmail.com

John Steadman