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# Fleet and District Art Society Newsletter July 2011

## Chairman's Jottings

It is some weeks now since we held our Spring Art Exhibition at the Chernoke Hall in Fleet's Harlington Centre; the general consensus is that it was a successful event. Although the exhibition was only open to the public on Friday afternoon and all day Saturday whereas we have in the past also opened on Sundays, the attendance figures were as good as most previous years. The exhibition was well supported by our members and the standard of exhibits remained high. We also made a profit for the first time for a year or so! My thanks to all those who gave their time and efforts to make this a successful exhibition.

A number of members have suggested that the pre Christmas period would be a better time to hold our annual exhibition. Your committee has reviewed this suggestion and in future we will hold the exhibition end November, beginning December. To avoid a big gap the next exhibition will therefore be on Friday/Saturday 2/3 December 2011 and thereafter at this time annually. In 2012 it will be the 30 November/1 December.

Most of you will know that we have a limited permanent exhibition at Fleet Hospital and paintings are changed from time to time to give different artists an opportunity to exhibit their work. The organisation of this exhibition is both time consuming and a responsibility and we are currently reviewing how this should be done.

The programme for our Autumn/Winter demonstrations and next years' workshops appears elsewhere in this newsletter and promises to be both instructive and entertaining.

Our website is updated now three times a year at the same time that our Newsletter is published; we display paintings by our members and change these from time to time so if you have paintings that you think could be used please send photographs to me electronically. Also if you have news that you think would be of interest please let me know.

I am sad to report the death of two of our long-standing members, Linda Adams and Patsy James. Obituaries appear elsewhere in the Newsletter.



See you in the autumn.  
Ken Baker

### *Mark your Calendar*

|   |   |                          |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Sept 11                 | Annual Subscription Due (return enclosed form, please)        |                          |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> /3 <sup>rd</sup> Dec 11 | Our Christmas Exhibition at Hart Centre (start painting now!) |                          |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> Sept 11                | Jean Haines, ASWA   | Watercolours with Life   |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> Oct 11                  | Melanie Cambridge   | Flowers, Mixed Media     |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> Nov 11                 | Mike Bragg  | Full Figure Model        |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> Dec 11                 | Annual General Meeting  |                          |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> Jan 12                 | Liz Seward, SWA   | Mixed Media Still Life   |
| 11 <sup>th</sup> Feb 12                 | Keith Morton  | Acrylic Portrait         |
| 10 <sup>th</sup> Mar 12                 | Ali Cockrean  | Abstract Mixed Media     |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> Apr 12                 | Ben Manchipp  | Problem Solving Critique |

Competition: Black & White Drawing

Competition: On The Wild Side

Competition: Woods & Woodland Setting

Competition: Craggy Coasts & River Banks

Competition: Portraits of Pets & Other Animals

Competition: Full of the Joys of Spring

Competition: Flowers & Gardens

**Summer Workshops will be held on:**

**12<sup>th</sup> May TBA**

**9<sup>th</sup> June Rosemary de Goede *Animals in Mixed Media***

**14<sup>th</sup> July Jo Louca *Watercolour Techniques***

This year there will be no pre-booking. Bookings will open at the March meeting in an orderly manner. Audrey Ketcher

**3<sup>rd</sup> September 11** Copy deadline for the October Newsletter to the editor at

*Orchard Cottage, Avenue Road, Fleet, GU51 4NG donandfran@tiscali.co.uk*

Advertising Rates per A4 page black & white: 1/2 page £40, 1/4 page £25, 1/8 page £15

**Library Note for the September Meeting**

Would you please remember to return any outstanding DVDs or Videos. We have new DVDs by Jean Haines, Trudy Friend, Carolyn Lewis, Trevor Waugh, and Wendy Jelbert.

Diana Ashcroft

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| <b>Other News Items</b> |
|-------------------------|

**Spring Exhibition 2011 Report**

Both the number of members entering work in this exhibition and the number of entries were consistent with our last few exhibitions (171 framed pictures and 54 artists). Twelve members sold work. We made a profit of £166, half of which was earned by the raffle.

The winning 'Most Popular Exhibit' was Rosemarie de Goede's 'Wagon Team' of shire horses. Close equal seconds were Mike Rome's 'Odiham Sunset' and Peter Richardson's 'Hanging Village – Cuenta'.

Peter Forey

**Waitrose Community Matters Scheme**

The Society has received a donation of £150 from the May customer voting in this scheme. Thank you to those of you who participated in this. We received 15% of the £1000 donated by Waitrose to community organisations this month. The remaining amounts went to the N Hants Deaf Children's Society (£600) and the Farnham Talking Newspapers (£250).

**Linda Adams and Patsy James**

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the loss of Linda Adams. She fought long and hard with illness and unfortunately lost her battle at a relatively young age. Her unique style and talent brought her much artistic recognition and she was always generous with her advice and encouragement to others. Those of us who had the privilege to know her as a friend will miss her terribly.

Equally sad is the loss of Patsy James, a popular member of our society for many years. Her generosity was legendary and she will be fondly remembered. She too suffered terribly but was fortunate to be cared for at home until the end.

**On Friday 30<sup>th</sup> Sept** I am holding a Macmillan Coffee Morning in their memory at Willis Hall, Sandy Lane, Church Crookham from 9:30 – 1. Please come along and support this worthy cause.

Barbara Clements

**Summer Workshop Reports**

**Pastel Workshop 14th May by Ann Wilkinson**

We had a full house for the pastel workshop. Ann Wilkinson brought with her a quantity of items for still life although many of us had come prepared with objects and flowers. Some people worked at easels so as to be above their subject while other members preferred to be seated. Ann began with a demo to get everyone started as soon as possible and then continually worked her way round patiently giving advice. She was very informative, giving away lots of useful tips. The session ended with a brief critique and Ann was favourably impressed by the quality of work produced.

Audrey Ketcher

**Acrylic Workshop June 11<sup>th</sup> by Dave White**

Dave White's workshop was an interesting introduction to acrylics for those of us who were dabbling for the first time and informative to both dabblers and old hands. Dave started

serious painting quite late. He is now in his fifties and seven years ago was a finance director with a major company before chucking it all in to paint for a living. Dave has achieved international recognition for his work; you can see details on his website.

Dave talked about the properties of acrylics and how to handle acrylics, covering everything from applying the paint to washing brushes. We then went on to experiment with painting background washes. This was interesting, observing the differences between slap it on like emulsion paint to parallel brush stroke application. Having got a couple of background washes we then had a couple of interesting exercises: one was of a rose and the second a portrait of Marilyn Monroe, both in monochrome. Marilyn we had to paint upside down; this was to get us to observe and paint shapes and to notice darks and lights. The finished results were quite realistic, better in many cases than if we had painted in a more traditional style.

We then had to practice covering our masterpieces with different glazes with interesting results. Then there was time for us to experiment and paint subjects of our own choosing. A very enjoyable and instructive day.

Ken Baker

## Meeting Reports by Ron Clements

### MARCH: Frances Shearing, The Lady with the Thin Pointed Stick

I arrived at the hall to find our demonstrator, Frances Shearing, flat out. I don't mean *she* was flat out, but her painting surface was. In the past, demonstrating on a flat surface would have caused problems, especially with a large audience. Fortunately closed circuit video can eliminate any difficulties that might beset a demo painted on the flat. Nevertheless she began with her board upright on an easel.

Frances said she would not be painting a complete picture, but doing pieces that would show her way of working. She used to be too fiddly in her approach and rebelled against the compulsion to fill in all the white spaces. And so she began, and as she worked she offered several tips relating to her working methods.

Tip 1 *Draw and paint with a wooden kebab stick, but soak it first to absorb more water.*

Tip 2 *Hold the stick horizontally and make downward strokes with it.*

Tip 3 *If you use the point like a pencil it will cause some bruising of the paper. This results in a varied texture.*

It didn't take long to realise Frances was the complete opposite to a recent demonstrator. As she worked she kept up a useful and interesting commentary and there was no need to enliven her with unnecessary questions. So there we were, silent and entranced as Frances talked us through a couple of small paintings which clearly demonstrated her armoury of techniques.

Tip 4 *You can draw with the stick to produce lines which are softer, have a nicer feel, and are more interesting than pencil.*

Tip 5 *You needn't use kebab sticks. You can use sticks from the garden. Forsythia seems to give the best results.*

Responding to a question regarding figures, Frances said doing a portrait could be rather frustrating, but doing figures would be OK for this stick painting method. By this point she had shown us how to do trees and hedgerows, billowing clouds above a landscape, and a textured stone wall. For her next 'stick trick' (my quote not hers), Frances quickly painted a very nice flower. I must say I found this a very intriguing way of painting. And I wasn't alone as these comments confirmed:

'the quality of that flower is amazing',

'it's another way of doing it and much better than the last demonstration',

'I think I shall go home and have a go at this',

'I will try it, though I may be tempted to reach for a brush',

'she's very inspiring'.

After the break Frances went back to an earlier example and showed what happens if she worked over it. Her point was that the initial painting did not move, so in that respect a stick could be better than a brush.

With less than fifteen minutes remaining Frances took a chance by attempting a portrait from her imagination. If this had been a concert, the face that emerged would have been the

strong finale that had the audience calling for more! (And in spite of her intention to be painting on the flat, she did the whole demo standing at the easel).

**WINNERS OF THE PAINTING COMPETITION: TONY KARAVIS, JEAN CLAYDEN & SANTOSH MATHUR**

#### **APRIL: Christine Russell, Pastel Demonstration**

George Bernard Shaw once wrote to a friend 'I'm writing you a long letter because I don't have the time to write a short one'. Having agreed to limit these write-ups to around 500 words, I can understand his problem.

If I were a betting man I'd have said a pastel demo would have no chance against the Grand National on TV on a fine sunny afternoon. Well, I was wrong. The hall was crowded and it seemed Christine's reputation had preceded her. Actually when it comes to betting, I have rather bad form. In 1952, I was briefly unemployed and a distant barrow-boy relative got me a day's work selling Walls ice cream at Epsom on Derby Day. To cut a long story slightly shorter, my cohorts, a crowd of spivs, layabouts and gamblers, all made money. I was the exception. Why? Because the ice cream we were selling was called Walls Gay Time and this street-wise team all had each-way bets on a Derby runner called Gay Time, and the horse came second.

As she began sketching, white on a dark background, Christine told us pastels had been her favourite painting medium for many years. Her project for the afternoon was an elegant set-up in a dark box. It consisted of a length of white material and several oranges in and around a copper pot, lit by a single frontal light. She worked from plastic boxfuls of pastels, which she keeps relatively dust-free with a sprinkling of semolina. My experience of pastels is extremely limited; my knowledge of semolina almost equally so. Semolina was just the worst aspect of school dinners during those far off wartime days. So far off that I barely remember learning anything of significance at my slightly prestigious grammar school. One memory I do have is of a new teacher strolling into our form room one morning saying 'write this down. Manners Maketh Man is the motto of Winchester College but manners need not necessarily be confined to Winchester. When I hand out lines as punishment, that's the line.' (By pure coincidence, when I opened the May issue of The Artist I found a painting of my old school).

As Christine worked on her background she told us she works from dark to light, from top to bottom and from back to front. I must admit that at this stage I thought it looked somewhat like a child's colouring pad. However, I knew from the impressive displayed examples of her work, something magical would happen at some point. Progressing to the copper pot Christine explained that her strokes followed the structure of the pot, coming either straight down or, at the top, sloping inwards.

Christine was fascinating to watch, as evidenced by the silence in the hall. My own concentration resulted in my neglecting to write much down. During the interval everyone I spoke to had something positive to say. She painted through the interval transforming a patch of white paper into nicely textured muslin.

Whilst I'm no great fan of still-life pictures (I find them too contrived), I did like this one. I liked the 'Old Master' realism Christine obtained. And I liked the parts that looked to be wet-in-wet but were actually dry-on-dry

This was altogether a fascinating demo using a less popular medium. Clearly it was liked by all our members, so perhaps we will see more pastel work in future.

**WINNERS OF THE PAINTING COMPETITION: JANET HOYLAND, JEAN CLAYDEN AND PAT GRESHAM**

| <b><u>Fleet Art Society Committee</u></b> | <b><u>As at July 2011</u></b> | Telephone    | E mail Address   |
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The Farnham Sculpture Society has given us a donation for enclosing their leaflet this month.