



# Fleet and District Art Society Newsletter

February 2012

[www.FleetArt.org.uk](http://www.FleetArt.org.uk)

## AGM Report

In December at All Saints Church we enjoyed a good annual general meeting although it would be nice to see more members at this important meeting. This year special thanks were given to two members who have contributed in great measure to our society. Desi Mills and Alan Denten were both retiring from the committee after years of work on our behalf. Desi was presented with a book of John Piper's work and a "Director's Chair cover" in recognition of her decades of service to the art community in Fleet. Hilary Dancer won our "My Favourite Painting" competition.



L to R: Ken Baker, Peter Forey, Alan Denten, Desi Mills

There was relief that we are in a better position financially than could be reported last year. Peter Forey, the Treasurer, reported that this was mainly due to our previous membership fee increase now falling in this accounting year and our workshops meeting their cost. For the period 1 Sep 10 to 31 Aug 11 we made a surplus of £1025. The outlook is reasonably optimistic. We constantly work to control costs for workshops, newsletters, etc without sacrificing the quality of our demonstrations and exhibitions.

A VOLUNTEER FOR THE ROLE OF MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY IS URGENTLY REQUIRED

## AUTUMN 2011 EXHIBITION RESULTS

Peter reported that 12 members sold work at a total of £1540 out of 234 framed entries. Our profit was £121. Our donation to Fleet Hospital was £142. Our small paintings experiment was considered a success. Peter Webster's "Towards Dartmoor" was the favourite painting.

Judith Reece-Russel will be joining the committee as the new Exhibition Secretary and Jill (Alexandra) Smith will be assisting in charge of the Fleet Hospital Display.



Judith

The concluding message was that painting sales can be expected to continue to decline and our success will depend on having a continuing increase in the numbers of paintings exhibited. We need to encourage more of our members to lose their inhibitions and join in the fun! Any increase on this year's 62 entrants?

The executors of David Hudd's estate have very kindly donated his art materials to the Society, for which we are very grateful. £170 has been raised so far by the sale of some of these items at the AGM. Some items will be used as prizes for our demonstration painting competitions.

## BREAKING NEWS!

**We have been invited by All Saints Church to participate in their 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations by holding an exhibition of our work in the church for a week, from 5<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> May! This is a generous, exciting opportunity and we hope you will participate. The details are on a separate insert(page) with**

**this newsletter. We will need lots of help with stewarding. Read all about it!**

## **URGENTLY NEEDED: MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

**FRIENDLY MEMBER WITH GOOD HEARING TO BE THE WELCOMING FACE OF OUR SOCIETY TO POTENTIAL NEW MEMBERS. PLEASE JOIN OUR COMMITTEE (3 MEETINGS A YEAR) AND HANDLE OUR ANNUAL RENEWAL IN AUGUST /SEPTEMBER. BASIC COMPUTER SKILLS NEEDED. QUERIES TO BARBARA CLEMENTS, OUR SECRETARY 01252-614059.**

### **Mark Your Calendar**

8 Mar	<b>ENTRY DEADLINE FOR OUR EXHIBITION AT ALL SAINTS CHURCH, FLEET</b> <i>(notification at March meeting 10<sup>th</sup> March &amp; by email of space remaining)</i>
10 Mar	<b>Meeting</b> Demonstration by Ali Cockrean <i>Abstract Mixed Media</i> <i>Competition: Full of the Joys of Spring</i> <b>** Entry Opens for the Summer Workshops at this meeting. Bring a cheque.</b> <i>(No pre-booking allowed prior to the meeting.)</i>
14 Apr	<b>Meeting</b> Critique / Demo by Ben Manchipp <i>Friendly Problem Solving</i> <b>Bring 1 painting or drawing</b> , preferably unframed, for guidance or helpful ideas. Categories wanted: (1)Architecture/ buildings (2)Landscape (3)Marine (4) Figures/ portraits (5)Floral/ garden/ still life <i>Competition: Flowers and Gardens</i>
4 May	<b>Social Evening</b> for members & guests at All Saints Church Exhibition 6-7 pm
5-10 May	Our <b>exhibition</b> at All Saints Church, opposite Church Rd Car Park, Fleet 9-4 daily Sunday 2-4
10 May	Collect unsold work 4-5 pm
12 May	Workshop, 10-4:30 Melanie Cambridge <i>Acrylic Flowers Big and Bold</i>
9 Jun	Workshop 10-4:30 Wendy Jelbert (replacing Rosemarie de Goede)
14 Jul	Workshop 10-4:30 Jo Louca <i>Watercolour Techniques</i>
6-10 Jul	Snowdonia On Location Workshop Tutored by Tony Yates
22 Jun	Copy Deadline for July Newsletter
7 Jul	July newsletter +Membership renewal form distributed by email & post

## **Is It Finished Yet?**

“What a pity he didn’t finish it”. What can we expect from a demonstrator?

We all recognise that it is a tall order to produce a finished painting in two hours – or even just an hour and a half when the tea break is taken into account. The speaker has then to introduce himself, explain his approach and the materials he is going to use, which further reduces his painting time, so it is unreasonable to expect a finished painting. In any case he or she will almost certainly have examples of completed works on show –works which have possibly taken many hours to produce.

What we do expect to learn, however, is the way he gets his inspiration for a painting, his subject. Then how he turns that conception into a plan, involving composition, colours, tones. Finally we learn how he turns that plan into a physical painting – what materials, medium and techniques he uses to reveal to us some depiction of that original conception and how during the very process of painting his ideas may have evolved and altered, causing him to change direction during the procedure.

Some artists have a very clear idea of where they are going when they start to paint. Others (Mike Bernard comes to mind) start with a sketch, but during the process of painting depart in directions not thought of at the beginning, almost as if letting the painting itself dictate how it is going to look in the end.

We can learn much from a demonstration if we look for the sort of approach the artist takes. What we have no right to expect is a finished painting.

**Brian Fox**

## Meeting Reports by Ron Clements

OCTOBER

### Melanie Cambridge – Mixed Media Demonstration

Sometimes, when I'm watching a TV interviewer, I'm impressed how neutral they appear to be. I wonder how they manage to keep their own opinions in check. I felt somewhat in that situation at the commencement of Melanie Cambridge's demo. Her subject was flowers, something that usually leaves me cool and disinterested. So how would I be able to control my opinion and produce an unbiased piece?

Melanie said she would be working mainly in acrylic with other bits and pieces thrown in. Maybe she didn't use quite those words, but that's how it sounded to me. (Well I do have hearing difficulties; that's the politically correct way of saying I'm a bit Mutt and Jeff. And yes, as a genuine Cockney, I do use expressions like that in my day-to-day conversations).

Her subject was a vase containing a bunch of flowers she said she'd picked up from the garage on the way over. I wonder if that suggested a certain lack of preparation? Anyway, as she made bold charcoal marks, she said the flowers were just there to give her an idea. From time to time she pulled a leaf off a stem in order to examine it close up. Other times she took a flower from the vase to see from a different angle. That's something I've never seen anybody do before.

Melanie had a chatty, informative style and talked fluidly whilst painting flower heads in a variety of colours. I was impressed when her quick, jabbing strokes translated into realistic blooms. For leaves and stems, and even backgrounds, careful thought and mixing can produce a wide variety of shades of green. If you get muddy greens your colours are too hot. Rectify this by cooling down one of the colours in the mixture.

For the background she switched to acrylic ink. Diving in with a purple shade, she almost obliterated the stems, leaves and most of the flower heads too! At this point her excitement and enthusiasm reminded me of Joyce Grenfell in her 'jolly hockeysticks' mode. She quickly wiped away the resulting long drips of paint with tissue. She also used tissue for added texture by carefully tearing shapes and glueing them onto the flower heads. By taking care not to scrunch the tissue Melanie gets a better, more natural result.

During the break I gleaned these opinions:

- 'She gives the impression of being a bit ditsy, but I don't think she really is';
- 'I thought it was alright until she put the background in';
- It's a different approach. I like to see people taking a risk';
- 'We've decided she's alright'.

After the break Melanie kicked off by explaining the problem of using cheap texture paste which is not, but should be, thicker than normal paint. Having given that warning, she then inexplicably dabbed some of her cheap paste onto the picture. I suppose the message was that it's actually OK to use cheap paste anyway.

Regardless of the pros and cons of cheap texture paste, I thought things went downhill from there. Melanie, dissatisfied with the leaves she had painted, wiped them off, re-painted them and then removed them again. Not an inspiring close to the session. On reflection, maybe it was reassuring to see someone with her experience making a bit of a balls-up (another Cockney expression) in such a public manner.

Because of her friendliness and eagerness, I wanted to be writing a glowing revue of Melanie's demo. But as the afternoon progressed I became less and less interested in what she was doing. As far as I was concerned she was fighting a losing battle. There was nothing there to induce me to want to paint flowers.

**WINNERS OF THE PAINTING COMPETITION: KEN BAKER, PHYL RALTON AND DESI MILLS**

NOVEMBER

### Mike Bragg - Life Model in Oils

I must admit I approached the meeting hall for this demo with a certain amount of trepidation. The subject, Life Painting With a Female Model, had me worried. Would there be any aspects of this demo that could be embarrassing to write about? Could I write down words like 'b --- s ---' or 'f ----- f ---' without getting the shakes? And as Patricia Webb, a Society member who kindly agreed to model, settled down, I wondered would it be a completely nude Fleet Art Society Newsletter

painting or would Mike Bragg insist on keeping his socks on? And if, as he says, he's going to paint Patricia in acrylics and oils, would she have a lot of trouble washing it off?

Mike briefly mentioned his early training at Goldsmiths College and his more recent exhibitions in London and New York. He showed us examples of his work, full length ladies completely n - - , and I almost fainted with embarrassment. Fortunately Patricia posed properly clothed, although her upper arms and some adjacent skin were uncovered.

Mike began by putting down random marks on a canvas board with a prepared green background. I love it when the demonstrator begins in this manner. I enjoy the anticipation leading to the moment when the subject suddenly appears. And at that point Mike dried off Patricia's underpainted image with a hair dryer, packed away his acrylics, and turned to his oils. He explained that by putting the background in first it makes it easier to get the skin tones correct. If you settle on skin first then, when the background is added the skin tones often look wrong.

He started with only three basic colours on his palette and, not having used oil paints, I was fascinated by Mike's back and forth scrubbing strokes. He directed most of his attention at the posture of his sitter, preferring to almost ignore facial features until a later stage.

During the break I heard almost unanimous positive comments from our members. There was also general agreement that Patricia deserves much praise for her total control in holding the pose rock steady for such a long period of time.

In the final twenty minutes of the demo Mike worked swiftly and silently to pull this portrait together. Usually, when a demonstrator works silently, the audience get restive and fidget and talk amongst themselves. Here, there was total silence as Mike brought his demo to a close. 'And that's it' he exclaimed to a round of genuine applause and approval.

#### **WINNERS OF THE PAINTING COMPETITION: BRIAN FOX AND TERRY HOOPER**

#### **JANUARY**

#### **LIZ SEWARD, SWA - LANDSCAPE IN ACRYLICS**

For many years Liz has been a well-respected demonstrator with our members and they turned up with happy expectations for this opening session of the New Year. I have to admit that, as the hall began to fill, I became quite worried. Although everyone looked familiar, I couldn't remember a single name. This was more than just another annoying Senior Moment and I'm concerned that one day I might look in the mirror and not recognise myself!

Liz began by explaining that at this point in her career she is strongly committed to painting the landscapes of the area in which she lives and this demo would be an example of her approach in that respect.

In the past she has worked mainly in watercolours and acrylics and, more recently, with liquid acrylics. She became quite animated as she explained her current enthusiasm for FW inks, the most liquid of all. Using them, she said, can be a whole new ball-game for people who paint predominantly in watercolour. And so she began.

Onto a well-wetted sheet of paper Liz slapped broad bands of colour - red, blue and purple. As she worked she entertained us with a stream of amusing comments and meaningful observations like 'Don't paint pretty, paint interesting', and 'Don't go to Bognor Regis'.

Liz showed us a technique she called 'cutting out'. With a brushful of dark grey she painted over a specific area of interest to her. I think I would have called this process 'emphasising'. Either way, 'cutting out' or 'emphasising', the label hardly matters. On second thoughts, yes it does. To me 'cutting out' suggests taking something away whereas 'emphasising' suggests adding something, and the next bit of adding something was giving some shape and structure to the foreground trees.

At the beginning of a painting, says Liz, everybody produces a few lovely bits. But then, by adding too much detail the lovely bits get lost, so, she advises, 'leave your lovely bits alone'.

At one point Liz wanted to restore some lights into the picture. She did this by using white and yellow pastels but she did warn us to 'stop making marks for the sake of it' and 'if you use square brushes you can't fiddle'. She also mentioned a colour she refers to as 'old ladies' knicker orange'.

By the end of the afternoon Liz had demonstrated not only her painting skills but her stand-up comedy skills too. All-in-all I found it a very pleasant experience. Liz is a very competent artist who displayed her skills in a very non-show-off kind of way. I liked her painting; a nice combination of realism and impressionism, and I left the hall with pleasingly contented feelings.

**WINNERS OF THE PAINTING COMPETITION: PHYL RALTON and JEAN CLAYDEN**

## Painting Competitions at our Monthly Demonstrations

One of the purposes of this competition is to encourage more of our members to exhibit their work at our exhibitions. To this end, we request that members who win first prize in a month refrain from entering again until the following year. It was also decided to award two prizes rather than three per month.

Thank you to Andrew Lievesley for his provision of and assistance with our website during 2011.

Fleet Art Society Committee	As at Jan 2012	Telephone	E mail Address
Chairman	Ken Baker	01252 872858	kenfbaker@gmail.com
Secretary	Barbara Clements	01252 614059	barbron@tiscali.co.uk
Treasurer	Peter Forey	0785 7527190	peterforey@btinternet.com
Membership Secretary	vacant		
Exhibition Secretary	Judith Reece-Russel	01252 786166	reecerussel@sky.com
Fleet Hospital Display	Jill Smith	01252 676520	d.smith44@ntlworld.com
Exhibition Steward Co-ordinator	Ruth Hudson	01252 842152	billnruth@btinternet.com
Exhibition Entries	Hilary Dancer	01252 844655	hilarydancer04@hotmail.com
Workshops & Demonstrations	Audrey Ketcher	01252 622864	avketcher@aol.com
Newsletter Editor	Frances Reed	01252 616748	fleetartnews36@talktalk.net

## Members' News

### Congratulations to Caroline Bletsis, who reports:

It's been a long hard slog over the years, but brilliant to finally be getting somewhere. I have an illustration on the front of the new Derwent watercolour media collection called 'Just Add Water', which has a full page ad in all three art magazines in Sept, including my painting as the main background with a very nice credit underneath. They have also commissioned me for three further illustrations which will be on the tin of a new collection of Inktense pencils & colour blocks next year. Also, very shortly, a book called 'The People's Potatoes' written by Alan Wilson, a Fleet resident, will be published, including 100 fine-art illustrations of varieties of potato painted by me. At the moment I am knitting the scenery and animal characters for an animated film. Life is never dull!

*(Ed's note: These projects have taken years to come to fruition. The knitware is from Caroline's 'weird and wonderful' collection. See more on her website carolinebletsis.com)*

### Sadly, we have two Society members who have passed away since our last newsletter:

David Hudd was a long-standing member of the Society and always had a crisp, pertinent observation to make on monthly demonstrations. He came to art later in life, after working as a Government veterinary surgeon, spending a lot of his time in Greece. He later worked for an international pharmaceutical company. He ran an Art U3A group for a short while and was very anxious to instil the principles of perspective drawing into those who were not necessarily inclined to take on the challenge.



**David Hudd, 1938-2011**

He was very keen on language and the structure of languages in particular. Quite by chance I enrolled in a French conversation U3A group (by necessity to keep up with my two French granddaughters!) only to find that it was David leading the group – and we learned the structure of French! In both art and languages he was a very careful and precise teacher and although not enjoying the best of health in later years he retained his wonderful dry sense of humour that embellished all of his classes.

Peter Forey



ROSEMARIE DE GOEDE, S.W.A.

1928-2011

Rosemarie was born in Punta Arenas, Chile and was raised on a large sheep station in Tierra Del Fuego surrounded by horses, cats, dogs, cows, pigs, 45,000 sheep and assorted chickens and ducks.

She was mainly self-taught except for the monthly escape from boarding school for drawing lessons with a local art teacher in Buenos Aires. In later years she attended many courses in life drawing and mixed media painting, studying and working with a number of well-known artists. Her favourite medium was line and wash but she worked in many others, often mixing them for an enhanced effect.

Rosemarie was an active member of seven Art Societies and exhibited widely over the years both with them and with many galleries throughout the south of England. In 2000 she gained elected membership to The Society of Women Artists and in the last decade exhibited with The Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolour and The Society of Equestrian Artists. Her unique, lively drawings were much sought after and her illustrations of Arab horses were published internationally. Recently, a selection of her paintings appeared in 'Dynamic Acrylics' by Soraya French and 'The Artist' magazine. At the SWA Annual Exhibition at Mall Galleries in London in 2011 she won the Andrew Hillier Prize for Creativity.

In recent years Rosemarie gave workshops on painting and drawing animals and people. A kindly and supportive teacher, her techniques have been imitated by a large following.

Typically modest, Rosemarie said of her work –

"Colour was always difficult for me. The Island of Tierra Del Fuego is a dry windswept place, especially in the north where I lived. The grass was permanently burnt by the roaring forties gales, with the result that there was not much colour of any sort except for the grass around the house which was protected by huge windbreaks. Horses were the main means of transport, cars were rather unreliable, not meant for the rough boggy tracks of the area, hence my interest in horses. If I wasn't riding one I was drawing it!"

We shall all miss her wonderful sense of humour and wise counsel.

Liz Seward Nov. 2011

### Items of Interest

- **Fleet Hospital** was delighted with our exhibition donation, which is being used to support their current equipment purchases of a smaller scanner for the OPD Vascular surgeons, a syringe driver for the Palliative Care service, and new chairs for the Red Cross Center.
- **Monteagle Gallery** is a new gallery at Yateley Industries available for hire at reasonable rates. Further details may be obtained at the Yateley Industries website or tel 01252-872337. Several members of Fleet Art Society are joining like-minded people from Odiham Art Group to exhibit in the gallery in May.
- **The Friday Art Group** will hold its annual watercolour exhibition **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> April 12-5 and Sat/Sun 28 / 29 April 10am – 5pm** at the Bentley Memorial Hall (centre of the village) Refreshments provided. Visitors most welcome.
- **Massive sale of specialised art books** Farnham Library Feb 16-18