



News LETTER

Bookham Decorative & Fine Arts Society

Church Recorders

We would like to start a local Church Recorders Group – there are three parish churches in Great Bookham, Little Bookham and Fetcham which would benefit from having a detailed record of their contents. Please contact John Tiffney if you are interested in contributing to this worthwhile project.

Heritage Volunteers

Members of the Society are needed to help with the conservation and preservation of our heritage which are tremendous burdens on the National Trust and owners of historic houses and gardens. Polesden Lacey is one of three N.T. properties in our area and the Administrator is keen to develop a close liaison with our Society and to offer training to our members to become heritage volunteers.

Young Arts

NADFAS aims to inspire young people with lasting enthusiasm for the arts, an awareness of our arts heritage and its conservation. Our initial project is to organize a young artists exhibition in October 2004 as part of the annual Mole Valley Arts Festival. Schools in our area are being invited to submit examples of their pupils' artistic talents. We will need help in stewarding the exhibition at Denbies from the 23rd – 25th October next year and volunteers would be most welcome – contact John Tiffney.

As promised here is the second edition of our Newsletter – this issue includes a contribution from *Catherine Sharpe* one of our members, who has written about the Society's visit to Titsey Place. I am sure there are others with the requisite literary skills, so please put pen to paper and let us have some comments on the lecture programme, visits you would like us to arrange or topics for a special interest (study) day. It's your Society and we need to ensure you get maximum benefit from your membership.

It is reassuring to learn that only 20 people decided not to renew their membership so we must assume that we have satisfied the majority in our inaugural year. I am particularly grateful to all members who have helped with registration, car parking, refreshments, votes of thanks and especially our projectionists without whom our monthly lectures would not have been possible.

I am pleased to announce the launch of our website – www.bookham-dfas.org.uk - it has been designed and will be maintained by Bob Evans, one of our members on a voluntary basis. A huge vote of thanks to Bob without whose expertise none of this would have been possible. The website will enable Members and non members to check on our Society, its events, subscription, venue and organisation. It also has links to other neighbouring Societies and places of interest.

I am keen to develop our contribution to the aims of NADFAS especially Young Arts, Heritage Volunteers and Church Recorders. If you are interested in contributing to these activities please contact me – a brief description of what they entail is in the adjacent column.

John Tiffney - Chairman

Programme

We are coming to the end of our first year of lectures and fortunately all our speakers have turned up on the correct day! As Programme Secretary it is always a worrying time waiting for them to arrive.

I hope you agree that we have had a very enjoyable year with some excellent speakers and I am sure we have all increased our knowledge on a wide variety of subjects.

The programme of lectures for 2004 is printed in your Membership card, you will see that we have another varied programme ranging from Dutch painting to the Arts of Bloomsbury. We also have a lecture on Shakespeare's Globe by Sara BurnEdwards who was our guide around Hampton Court in June 2003.

I am sure we can all look forward to a very interesting year.

Judy Money – Programme Secretary

NADFAS Membership Cards

Did you know that some stately homes and galleries offer a discount on entry to Members? So remember to take your card with you on holiday!

Committee Members' Telephone Numbers

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| John Tiffney | 01372 453332 |
| Peter Worsfold | 01372 458271 |
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Membership News

At the start of our first year the Committee was anxious to ensure adequate seating for members attending the meetings at The Old Barn Hall. For this reason we limited the initial membership to 180 (the seating capacity of the hall) bearing in mind that everybody must be able to see the speaker and the screen properly.

However, another concern we had was that there were nearly 90 people on our waiting list. We monitored the numbers of members attending the early meetings and as a result we were able to increase numbers successively.

Membership now stands at just over 220 with an average attendance of 135 per meeting which also enables us to allow up to 10 visitors to lectures – from next January.

Renewals for 2004 are very encouraging and we anticipate about 20 non-renewals and this will enable us to reduce our waiting list which currently stands at just under 50 people.

Peter Worsfold – Deputy Chairman and Membership Secretary

From the Treasurer:

The first year's finances have turned out satisfactorily and we should be part way towards building up the level of reserves that NADFAS recommend.

Despite the increase in the capitation fee of £10.25 required by NADFAS in 2004, we have been able, with careful budgeting, to keep the subscription at the same level of £32.00. Payment is required well before the start of the year, as we have to pay NADFAS their fees before the end of this year, and the hall hire has to be paid in advance.

Michael Atkins – Treasurer

Visit to Titsey Place by Catherine Sharpe

It was a glorious Summer's day in August when a coachload of Bookham members visited Titsey Place, as well as a Victorian church and Sackville College. The coach drive through the narrow and picturesque streets of Oxted did nothing to prepare us for the hidden estate just behind Clacket Lane Services. Our guide Bronwen Mills who is a Bookham DFAS member had already whetted our appetites imbuing us with her enthusiasm for Titsey Place with its interesting family history and rich collection of paintings, furniture and china. Her ability to incorporate lively anecdotes about notable characters such as Kitty Fisher, the Chancellor to Queen Elizabeth I and the 'old boys' in the dining room, connected with the house and depicted in the many portraits by famous painters such as Reynolds and Lawrence, added to our enjoyment of the visit.

Another aspect of the visit which was very enriching was the realisation of the important contribution of the family to our country's history particularly its financial organisations and the inter-connections with other Surrey families.

I personally derived great pleasure from the peaceful atmosphere of the house which arose mainly from the beautifully proportioned rooms with fabrics, furnishings and pictures perfectly chosen and displayed.

It was interesting to wander round the formal garden and kitchen garden and learn that none of the abundant produce was allowed to be sold for profit, but had to be given to local hospitals. We enjoyed talking to one of the gardeners and the present housekeeper who joined our tour to hear for herself about the history of the house she was looking after.

We left Titsey Place feeling that we had visited a family home and not a museum, which was certainly in accord with the wishes of the 'old boys' Richard and Thomas, the last in the line of the Leveson Gowers.

Future visits

12th February SPECIAL INTEREST DAY – TATE BRITAIN

We plan to meet at Tate Britain at 10 a.m and have a guided general tour in the morning. After lunch (not included in the cost) the guide will lead a discussion of what we have seen, finishing at approximately 3.30 p.m. Cost will be £15 to include morning coffee and cake.

May 21st – 24th Visit to WORCESTER

A long weekend based in the centre of Worcester. Arts and Crafts visits to **Kelmscott House**, home of William Morris, **Rodmarton Manor** and **Madresfield Court**. Elgar's birthplace and museum, **Witley Court, Church and Sculpture Park**. There will be time in Worcester to visit the Cathedral, the porcelain factory and museum and other places of interest.

Friday 11th June – "A day of Contrasts"

A visit to **Charleston**, near Lewes in Sussex which will link with Marina Vaizey's lecture "**The Arts of Bloomsbury**". For over half a century from 1916 Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant made this their country meeting place for the group of artists, writers and intellectuals known as the Bloomsbury Group. It defies description and has a very special atmosphere. We will also visit Berwick Church to see their murals.

After lunch in Alfriston we will see murals of a different kind at **St Mary's House**, Bramber which dates from the 15C. The unique Elizabethan room and the fine interior of the Kings Room and Monks Parlour are also of interest.

Tuesday 6th July "Two Hampshire Gardens"

Helen McCabe, our lecturer on Gertrude Jekyll recommended a visit to the **Manor House at Upton Grey** which has a 15 acre garden designed by Jekyll in 1908. The current owner has restored part of the garden to its original design and will share with us her 20 years experience of restoring the house and garden.

West Green House garden at Hartley Wintney is quite an unusual garden with interesting designs and planting, an elaborate ornamental kitchen garden, a newly restored Nymphaeum, and the Lake Field with various Follies.

Jean Parker – Visits Secretary