



Newsletter

February 2017

www.warsashartgroup.org.uk

Welcome from your Chairman

*Spring has sprung
The grass is riz.
I wonder where the birdies is.*

*They say the bird is on the wing,
But that's absurd!
The wing is on the bird!*

Just a little ditty that my Dad used to say to amuse the kids. When he quoted it he would say 'boid' for bird, and 'absoid' for absurd. He was a fan of Jimmy Durante.

Well spring is the next season to look forward to with warmer weather and that fresh feeling in the air. A season when the 'outdoor' artists dust off their gear and debate whether to leave their vest off or take an extra sweater.

I hope that you all had an enjoyable Christmas and New Year celebrations. For those of you that came to the Christmas party, I hope you had a good time. I was really pleased to be able to get together a small band comprising members of WAG. Thank you to Steve Phelps, Mike Payne, Carol Nicholls, Diane and Dave Hardiman for providing our entertainment. I have since heard from other members who also play instruments but didn't volunteer this time. I know who you are! We are lucky to have such talent within the group. I must mention our Secretary, Brian. He organised the quiz and just about everything else. He also played the kazoo as a solo! You might have noticed.

It's now time to get back to routine attending classes and preparing for the coming exhibitions. Don't forget, time does go quickly and you will have to plan well to avoid my inevitable last minute panic. It happens every year without fail. I end up filling in the entry form and then have to paint something to fit. So, don't do as I do. Do as I say! Good luck.

Vic Bettridge, Chairman

New Members

A warm welcome to the new members who have joined Warsash Art Group since our last newsletter in November: Diane Ashman, Carole Jarman, David Nicholls, David Painter, Sheila MacGougan and Clarissa Stevens.

Annual General Meeting 2017

Thursday 2nd March 2017

St Mary's Church Hall, Warsash

Before the start of the meeting, there will be a talk on framing pictures by Ken Stanbury of ADW Framing

Please arrive for 7.30pm

Wine and soft drinks will be provided. There will also be a sales table.

Agenda and the Minutes from last year's AGM are attached to the paper edition of newsletter.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due for renewal on 1st April 2017. Renewal forms were included in the paper copy of this newsletter.

Behind the Scenes at Chelsea

November 3rd was one of the most interesting talks held by our Art Group. Chelsea is already popular in most peoples' minds; Hilliers is also very well known, and local to us; Andy McIndoe not so well known but "could be interesting" I thought. The Hall was packed which boded well (obviously a lot of plant lovers I thought) and I had brought along my husband who has always been the gardener in our household (I kid myself that I am the project manager coming up with ideas !! not always welcome).

Andy started on our journey through the many processes the public sees before The Show. This happens a year or two before with all the thought, planning, designing, endless meetings, construction arrangements, and the buying of plants, long before the actual event. We were treated to snippets of each of the above sessions held with interesting back history of the people who would be involved. Woven through his talk were the loveliest pictures on his screen of each stage of construction; the plants he selected; where they came from; the reason for using them; arrangements for transporting them; and then, somehow miraculously, putting everything together to form a show stopping display. Everyone on the team worked so hard and absolutely precisely so that it all looked easy to the viewer. Having watched and listened to his talk I have even greater respect for all the displays we see at Chelsea and I am personally amazed that huge boulders, tall trees, waterfalls - whatever is required in the design - is achieved by relatively so few people - but endless planning and an eye for detail second to none. Andy got a Gold again for Hilliers (his 25th Gold) and it was so well deserved. What a lovely evening it had been, absolutely fascinating, and there were a few plants for sale too. I bought one which looked very "asleep" but a good shape and is a Japanese Cherry Blossom so I am really looking forward to the Spring to see it in full bloom - very exciting.

June Munday

Tuesday Tutored Workshops are Changing

Why?

At the start of 2017 the afternoon workshop had just 5 takers and came close to being cancelled. By contrast the morning workshop had 26 takers and some were turned away. This trend has been building for over a year and we must now address the problem.

The Plan

Vic Bettridge has kindly agreed to give his afternoon workshop over to Kay LePoidevin so that we can cater for her large numbers and hopefully also offer a good choice to Vic's students.

A very large class is unfair on members who need help and advice from the tutor; it also distorts the payment of fees. We need 16 members per workshop to cover our costs. The plan is to limit each workshop to a maximum of 18.

The distinction between "Mixed Media" in the morning and "Drawing and Watercolour" in the afternoon will be dropped. The new workshops will cover both.

Implementation

Hopefully enough of Kay's current morning class will be willing to move over to the afternoon to make this change a success. As in the past all applications will be processed strictly in the order in which they reach me. When (and if) we reach 19 applications for the morning class, that applicant will be offered a place in the afternoon class; or they could elect to join a waiting list for the morning session. If these options are not accepted then the application will fail.

Applications

Summer term workshops will run from Tuesday 2nd May 2017 to Tuesday 4th July (10 weeks) at St Mary's Church Hall, Church Road, Warsash. **Cost**
£48.

Max 18 per class.

Any questions, please contact Chris Madden

Wednesday Afternoon Untutored Workshops 2017

Spring Term – 18th January – 5th April
Summer Term – 3rd May – 19th July
Autumn Term – 20th September – 6th December
£10 Term fee, payable at the first meeting.
Any questions, please contact Nicky Ballingall

Public Displays

Public Displays organiser Ian Lawrence has confirmed that, though we will not have a stand at Bursledon Brickworks this year, the Group will be at Warsash Strawberry Fair on Saturday 8th July. For this he will be calling on members for some help. More details in the next newsletter.

Informal sketching and painting

As this newsletter went to the press, I had two sketching meets combined' with morning coffee in the diary: The Rising Sun on Saturday 28th January; and Coffee #1 Gosport Saturday 11th February from 10.30am. If you'd like to come to the latter, please bring your sketchbook, drawing materials and / or a small watercolour palette. If dry and not too cold, there are views across Portsmouth Harbour from the gardens across the road from the gardens. I will try and organise something on similar lines during March, together with some more outdoor-focused sessions during the spring and summer. Please watch for updates by email and on our Facebook page.

Joan Lee

"Have you Heard about M O O C's?"

If not, it proves what a well kept secret they are !!!
MOOC = Massive Open Online Course, are basically short, online correspondence courses. They are offered by most of the world's leading universities in a staggering range of subjects, many arts based.
Best of all, they are mostly FREE !!!
For example, we are going back to Venice next year so I've enrolled in a "Learning Italian" course offered by the Open University, starting in January.
A good place to start browsing is futurelearn.com, which lists most upcoming UK as well some overseas courses, but if you Google "MOOC courses" you can find many more courses from universities all over the world.
New Year is traditionally the time for undertaking new challenges so this might be an ideal time to have a browse and try something new.

David Burgess

Portraits of your Loved One in Oils or Acrylics **Saturday 29th October 2016, Victory Hall, Warsash**



As soon as I heard that this Saturday workshop was being set up, I was keen to attend. I'm returning to art and craft pursuits with renewed enthusiasm and portraiture is a particular area of interest for me (although I've never had the courage to work in acrylics before). Add to this the fact that the workshop was going to be led by Stewart Beckett, a semi-finalist on Sky Arts Landscape Artist of the Year 2016, and it felt like a worthwhile investment of time even before it had taken place.

Before the day, we received comprehensive advice about what to bring in terms of basic colours and equipment, as well as how to prepare in advance by sketching out our chosen Loved One on canvas or board ready to paint on the day. Finding the Dividers that were recommended for use however, proved just as challenging as producing the sketch itself. The Dividers are an instrument for measuring accuracy of scale on a drawing by comparison with the source photo and, for a portrait, the different landmarks on the face itself. In order to track the elusive Dividers down, I had to enlist the internet researching skills (matched in equal measure by sheer determination) of The Loved One who I intended to paint, but can recommend the Jakar Dividers (pictured above). These are available to order from Art Discount (www.artdiscount.co.uk or phone 01253 295743) at a very reasonable price of £4.99 (although postage and packing unfortunately costs just as much at £4.75). That said, the Dividers arrived well-packaged, within the promised delivery timeframe, are solid and good quality.

When the day itself came around, there were eleven of us. This left plenty of space in the Victory Hall to set up our tables with our preferred medium and go eye to eye with the photo of the particular Loved One who was to challenge us throughout the day to capture their likeness. Chris introduced us to Stewart and to the day, including some very welcome initial reassurance that Mrs Madden had "put the mugs through the dishwasher" so we were off to a flying start. With Chris having broken the ice, Stewart then broke up the day into easily digestible chunks with clear and simple demonstrations about how to get started - either in acrylics or in oils - drawing our attention to the differences in technique between the two. He started by noting that drawing is a big part of painting, particularly in order to capture a good likeness, so the elusive Dividers very soon came in handy to ensure the structure of the head was accurate. Over the drawing we first put an initial wash in a neutral colour. This served to rid our painting surfaces of white in favour of a mid-tone. For this underpainting, we learnt that Raw Umber is the best and fastest drying colour. We then went on to tackle the light and dark underpainting or 'facial contour map' (as one participant aptly described it) that we would go on to tint with thin glazes of colour in order to bring solidity to our portrait.

Throughout the day Stewart offered practical advice on how to attempt specific aspects of the portrait such as sizing the width of the face to approximately five times that of an eye; placing the eyes roughly half-way down the face; ensuring the top lip (which is in shadow) is therefore darker than the bottom lip; painting life-like wrinkles as a combination of tones rather than a straight line, and blending hair into the background (where putting in the latter also offers an opportunity to sculpt the final outline of the head and facial features). Other useful tips included definitions of hue (or colour) chroma (or intensity of colour) and value (how light or dark the colour is); mixing colours in the same range next to each other on the palette, and holding up your work in a mirror in order to see it from the opposite perspective. Stewart also gave each of us advice on a one-to-one basis, sometimes demonstrating relevant techniques on our own pictures.

Stewart's support was supplemented by feedback from fellow painters who circulated around the room at regular intervals to observe each other's work, seeing things that needed to be more accurately represented than we could see ourselves being so close to our work, or simply offering positive encouragement.

When 4.00pm came around, and after several group photos with our portraits, I was ready for home, noticing how much concentration had been needed throughout the day and feeling out of practice in summoning it up. In the space of just a few hours however, I learnt a great deal from Stewart and from fellow participants about how to work in acrylics. Just as important, I went away enthusiastic to finish off my portrait and maybe even attempt another. As a painfully slow worker, and having just read the latest WAG newsletter, I now feel secure in the knowledge that I've almost a year in which to do this if I aspire to showing them both at next year's Annual WAG Exhibition! For someone who had previously harboured a quiet fear of paint, this Saturday workshop proved to be not only an enjoyable day, but also time very well-spent.

Linda Amor

Dates for your Diary 2017

Thursday 2 nd March - A G M & picture framing advice from Ken Stanbury, ADW Frames
Thursday 6 th April - Ian Brennan - Talk: Heraldic sculpting
Tuesday 2 nd May – Tuesday 4 th July – Tuesday classes – summer term
Thursday 4 th May - Maggie Cross - Talk and demo 'The Art of Chinese Brush Painting' <i>Publication of spring newsletter, programme booklet and exhibition entry forms.</i>
Thursday 1 st June - Max Hale – Appraisal of members' work
Thursday 6 th July - David Stockwell - Talk 'Why are There So Few Women Artists?' <i>Publication of summer newsletter</i>
16th -20th August – Annual Exhibition, The Victory Hall
Thursday 7 th September – Phil Biggs - Demo watercolour 'A Village Scene'
26 th September – 28 th November – Tuesday classes – autumn term
Thursday 5 th October - James Taylor - Talk: Brilliant British Humour: Art of the artist-drawn postcard 1909-1939
Thursday 2 nd November - Max Hale – Demo TBC Demo - Portrait in oils (TBC) <i>Publication of autumn newsletter</i>
Thursday 7 th December - Social evening

Next Newsletter

The next newsletter will be handed out at the evening meeting on Thursday 4th May. It will include the forms for the 2017 Annual Exhibition in August.

The deadline for material is **Tuesday 25th April.**

Thank you to everyone who has sent me material for this newsletter, including June Munday, Linda Amor and David Burgess. If you have something you would like me to include, such as a report about one of the Thursday evening meetings, or an exhibition success, please email me.

Newsletter edited and produced by Joan Lee

What's On

Small Faces Exhibition, Solent Showcase, Sir James Matthews Building, 157-187 Above Bar Street, Southampton, 3rd March – 21st April, Monday – Friday 11.00am – 6.00pm, Saturday 11.00am – 5pm. This is an exhibition of postcard portraits sent in by people living and working in the Southampton area. More information at: www.solent.ac.uk/showcase

Bursledon Brickworks begins its 2017 open season on Sunday 2nd April with a Craft Fair, followed by their Big Spring Steam Up on Sunday 23rd April. Between public events, they are open from 11.00am – 4.00pm on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays until 30th October. More details on their website www.bursledonbrickworks.org.uk/index.php

AppArt Art and Sculpture Exhibition 2017 – Priors Field School Saturday 1st April – Sunday 16th April, Priorsfield Road, Godalming Surrey, GU7 2RH. Open daily 10.00am – 4.00pm
www.appartonline.co.uk/

Farnham Art Society's 70th Annual Spring Exhibition, 11th – 22nd April, James Hockey and Foyer Galleries at the University for the Creative Arts, Falkner Road, Farnham Surrey, GU9 7DS
www.farnhamartsociety.org/exhibitions/

Exhibitions in London

Mall Galleries

www.mallgalleries.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions

Pastel Society Annual Exhibition – 21st February – 4th March

London and its River – Wapping Group of Artists - 13th – 18th March

Royal Society of British Artists Annual Exhibition – 22nd March – 1st April

Royal Society of Painters in Watercolours 205th Annual Exhibition – 6th – 22nd April

Tate Britain - www.tate.org.uk

Paul Nash – until 5th March

David Hockney – until 29th May

National Gallery –

www.nationalgallery.org.uk

Australia's Impressionists, until 26th March

Royal Academy

www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibitions-and-events

Revolution: Russian Art 1917 - 1932

Interesting websites

Anne Chadwick <http://www.annechadwickfineart.co.uk/>

Ian Brennan <http://www.annechadwickfineart.co.uk/>

Maggie Cross <http://www.maggie-cross.co.uk/>

Max Hale - <http://www.maxhaleart.co.uk/>

Pip McGarry - <http://www.pipmcgarry.com/index.htm>

Jamel Akib - <http://www.jamelakib.com/>

Linda Appleby - <http://www.lyndaappleby.co.uk/>

The Wapping Group of Artists <http://www.thewappinggroupofartists.co.uk/>

Royal Society of Painter Printmakers <http://www.re-printmakers.com/>

Royal Watercolour Society <http://www.royalwatercolour society.co.uk/>

Smiles

One tectonic plate bumped into another and said "Sorry, my fault."

This is a story of a boy who grew up on a farm, with lots of farm machinery all around him. He loved watching his father driving the tractor and sometimes he would be treated to a ride on a tractor. He had lots of toy cars, trucks and lorries, yet his favourites were always tractors. He liked to draw them, paint them and he found out as much about them as he could from books in libraries and on the internet. You could say he was obsessed with all things tractor. This fascination continued until he went to college and moved on to other things. One evening, he found himself in a café with some student friends. A fire broke out and smoke quickly spread through the building. Though there was lots of damage, everyone got out safely. This was all down to him taking a deep breath and inhaling all the smoke. Once outside, he breathed it all out. "Wow!", said his friends, "how did you do that.". He replied, "I'm an ex-tractor fan."

A few definitions from the Uxbridge English Dictionary Online Edition

<http://www.alspcs.com/main.html>

Abundance – similar to Morris Dancing but with cakes instead of sticks

Barometer – an instrument for measuring the size of wheelbarrows

Colonoscopy – the art of scrutinising punctuation

Copper Nitrate – the payscale for police officers working after dark.

Inkling – the suspicious feeling that you're being ripped off when buying a printer cartridge