



THE ARTS  
SOCIETY  
FYLDE

# In the Picture

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*Newsletter #17 / October 2018*



# Letter from our Chair

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Membership of The Arts Society Fylde (TASF) certainly provides plenty of variety – educational and inspirational talks and visits, social occasions and opportunities to participate as a volunteer. I am pleased to say that 250 others agree with this view and have joined for the 2018/19 Season.



Having re-located to the Lowther Pavilion we have room to grow and will readily offer part-year membership to anyone wanting to join mid-season. Guests too are welcome anytime. Please spread the word and encourage others to share our enjoyment.

Planning ahead for and then arranging the change of venue took a lot of effort on the part of the Committee and a team of willing helpers. My thanks are due to so many individuals. I cannot name them here but their hard work is much appreciated.

Developing partnerships with other similar arts related organisations is something my Team has been keen to achieve and moving to a more spacious lecture hall has created opportunities for this. A pre-meeting refreshment service is now available, with room to sit and chat, provided in partnership with the Friends of the Lowther. In future, we can offer display space to local societies to promote their events. Links have been forged with TAS Salmesbury to join in our trips and foreign tours. Working with Friends of the Lytham St Annes Art Collection, TASF has paid for the restoration of four antique ivories to mark the 50th Anniversary of The Arts Society in 2018. We have a theatre trip to the Grand (Blackpool) arranged for February 2019 and we look forward to supporting their efforts to restore and enhance this beautiful old Theatre.

In May this year, The Arts Society held the AGM in London and linked it with a wonderful service – Celebrating the Arts for Fifty Years in Westminster Abbey. This was to mark the 50th Anniversary of the national association. Several of us attended and were pleased to represent the Fylde on such a special day. The pleasure of the occasion was heightened by being at the meeting to support the appointment of John Parkinson as the National Treasurer – he joins Hilary Alcock on the Board of Trustees and means we now have two of our members on the National Executive. In addition, we have representation on our Regional Committee, where Kate Cartmel is the Area Co-ordinator for Education.

The months since the last Newsletter have been packed with activity: a well-received Special Interest Day on Japanese Art, a splendid *Drawn From Youth* exhibition in the Fylde Gallery, the handing over of a magnificent record of the White Church, an action packed trip to Edinburgh, not to mention trips to The Lakes, plus viewing tapestries and delighting in afternoon teas. Whilst this Newsletter looks back on some memorable highlights, as a team of organisers we are always looking forward and there is much to anticipate – coming soon is the four-day visit to Dresden, a new style Christmas lecture and lunch, a festive outing with afternoon tea, a theatre trip and another Special Interest Day. Please make sure you book your tickets either online or at the October and November lectures.

*Pat Corless*

Chair, The Arts Society Fylde

# Dates for your diary

See our website at [theartsocietyfylde.org.uk](http://theartsocietyfylde.org.uk) for further information on all our future events

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WED 5 SEPT 2018

## Signs, Symbols and Iconography: The Hidden Stories in Art

*Leslie Primo*

Aims to reveal the hidden language of stories in paintings, and equip the modern viewer with an antique language and a new way to look at paintings through signs, symbols and iconography.



WED 3 OCT 2018

## Architecture: Dame Zaha Hadid

*Anthea Streeter*

Tells the story of this pre-eminent architect, as we move around the world to look at some of her completed works, including her most famous building in the UK, the Aquatics Centre for the London Olympics in 2012, as well as unexecuted designs.



WED 7 NOV 2018

## The Age of Jazz

*Sandy Burnett*

To tie in with The Age of Jazz exhibition, a collaboration between The Arts Society and The Bulldog Trust, this lecture covers the early years of jazz from its beginnings through to the start of the Second World War.



WED 5 DEC 2018

## When Cotton Was King. The Architectural Legacy of 19th Century Manchester

*Brian Healey*

Provides a detailed study of the allegorical sculpture and decoration of Manchester's finest buildings, many of which have fascinating stories to tell and which were designed by eminent architects.

*(Please note that this lecture will be held at Fylde Rugby Club at 11.00 am)*

WED 5 DEC 2018

## Christmas Lunch

*Fylde Rugby Club*



THUR 13 DEC 2018

## Christmas at Hoghton Tower – tour and festive fare



WED 6 FEB 2019

## The Whole Art of the Book (AGM to be held prior to lecture at 1.00 pm)

*Dominic Riley*

This lecture is a 'Through the Round Window' for grown-ups, and tells the fascinating story of everything that makes a traditional hand bound book.



# Art materials are “invaluable” for Blackpool’s sick children

*By Sally Bannister & Muriel Wardman*

The first invoice for art materials for both the Children's Out-Patients Department at the Victoria Hospital, Blackpool and Brian House, which is the Children's Unit of Trinity Hospice, Blackpool, was dated 21 November 2014.

In 2016, two volunteers were asked to and accepted the role of supplying the art material to the two venues within the confines of the money given by the The Arts Society Fylde’s Executive Committee, from its Young Arts account. At first it was decided to try and buy the material locally. This was an impossible task as there were no local suppliers who could give the range of art materials needed and it was decided to contact the original Lancashire supplier of educational art materials. Since dealing with them they have always been most helpful.

When the Children's Out-Patients and Brian House were contacted they were overjoyed at the prospect of more materials. Since then, there has always been a discussion about the basic art materials – drawing and painting paper, card, paints, crayons, pencils and collage materials. Where there was money within the budget, we could then have a discussion about materials that would benefit the various particular needs of Brian House and the Out-Patients Children's Department.

There is no money given for art material by the hospital. The Hospital Play Specialist is so grateful for our Society’s money that, each year, she has sent thank you cards from the children and herself to the Committee. Once a month there is a monthly forum on long-term patients. A professor comes from Manchester with his team, to assess the children and is most impressed by the art material in Victoria Hospital. He said there is nothing like it in Manchester.

When a Brian House Specialist was asked if our help was useful she said: “It is invaluable. If the money comes through a donation I don't have to take it out of our small budget for crafts. Art and crafts are very important to the children as it is a way of expressing themselves. It is wonderful to have the support of The Arts Society Fylde. It means a great deal.”



School of Athens by Raphael

# My Favourite Things

By Jeffrey Hammond

*As part of a new series of 'Favourite Things' we asked member and artist Jeffrey Hammond to share his views on a 'favourite' painting. Read how he has been influenced by Raphael's School Of Athens.*

Why am I not writing about a secular Bach Cantata, a Bonnard bathroom or a Jorge Luis Borges poem or short story? Amongst a myriad of others these are a few of my favourite things. Oh no most definitely not that though. So I've slightly sidestepped an impossible decision and chosen a painting that has had an almost subliminal effect on my work. I've been fortunate to visit the Vatican on a couple of occasions, once before the Sistine ceiling was cleaned and once when they were midway through

the process, which of course made one wonder what all the controversy had been about. Though I haven't seen the finished article one can only admire Michelangelo's achievement. However, what appealed to me even more were the more human and dare one say it, down to earth proportions of Raphael's *School Of Athens* in the Stanza della Segnatura.

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Yes, I have spent time looking at it in-situ but not in any sense studying it. Along with many other reproductions I had a photograph of it on the end wall of my studio in Gloucestershire for 25 years and so it has had many sideways glances. The subject of the painting is Philosophy, perhaps a divinely secular theme in such a religious institution, albeit Raphael does have Plato pointing to the heavens, maybe querying what's up there? Gathered here is probably every notable Greek philosopher.

But what interests me most about the painting are the formal aspects of it. This is theatre on a grand and yet human scale. The shape of the fresco contained within what I see as a proscenium arch, providing Raphael with a stage set, whose architecture was inspired and possibly designed by Bramante. The arches, echoing the proscenium and the vaulting and its perspective are a reminder of Masaccio's magnificent *Holy Trinity*. No doubt Raphael had fun deciding who should stand or sit where. Though he himself may for some stand in the shadows of Leonardo and Michelangelo, he was gracious in posing them as Plato and Heraclitus respectively. And it is grace, a somewhat now unfashionable attribute, that flows from Raphael's brush.

Centre stage are Plato and Aristotle surrounded on either side by various extras. At each side of them are other members of the cast, some possibly identifiable, such as Socrates and Pericles, and maybe even Raphael himself posed as Apelles. Masterfully, Raphael includes steps thus ensuring that figures in the foreground that are on the lower level do not obscure those above and behind. Grouped at either side are crouching, bending and sitting figures, including Pythagoras, Euclid and centrally Heraclitus. The whole drama is beautifully coloured and lit, and though the subject matter looks to the past for inspiration it is one of the high points of the Renaissance and for me continues to be a visual delight.

*Have you got a favourite work of art you'd like to share with us? It doesn't have to be a painting – it could be a building, a piece of jewellery, a ceramic pot – something that you admire or has influenced you in some way. If so, please get in touch.*

## Breaking Through exhibition offers opportunity for local non-professional artists

By Tony Tackett



This November sees another initiative by our Society in the Breaking Through – Unknown and Unseen exhibition, which will run from 8 – 28 November. This event will feature works by members of the Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde communities, who create art, often in difficult circumstances, for their own self-respect and fulfillment. It will give them an opportunity to display their own works and be recognised by others in the community for their creative abilities and artistic efforts.

The exhibition runs at The Solaris venue on New South Promenade, Blackpool. Come along and be amazed.



Guests and members at the Opening Preview evening

# Drawn From Youth: eight years of success for our young artists

By Kate Cartmell

Our annual young arts schools' exhibition at the Fylde Gallery, Lytham, opened on 15 March 2018 and ran until 18 April 2018. As in previous years, the exhibition was initiated from a national competition offered by The Arts Society, working in conjunction with the Royal Society of British Artists (RBA).

Each year, 20 places are offered to A-Level Art students to exhibit their artwork at the Annual Exhibition of British Artists at the Mall Galleries in London. This year, we had two students who won these much coveted RBA places: Robert Mills, from AKS, with his gold-glazed *Cogs and Gears* ceramic bowl, and Martha Walmsley, from Cardinal Newman College, Preston, with her machine embroidered wall hanging, further embellished with hand embroidery and jewels. Both students were entitled to be called RBA Scholars for the duration of the Mall Gallery Exhibition. This was our eighth year of participation in this national competition and we are both fortunate and proud to have won 13 of these Awards during this time. This is an impressive number of winners and is an indication of the immense artistic talent amongst our local young people.

The *Drawn From Youth* exhibition included all the RBA entries and also some further work completed throughout the year, involving high quality artwork from A-Level Art students within our Fylde Coast area. Seventy-two exhibits included paintings and

drawings using a range of media, ceramics, numerous textile techniques, photography, graphic design, as well as 2D and 3D construction and installation.

As in previous years, participating students were invited with their families to an Opening Preview event. Also invited were teaching staff from the schools and colleges, as well as special guests from The Arts Society and The Arts Society North West. Two guest speakers, Joanne Martin, from The Arts Society and Colin Binns, a retired Lecturer from the Department of Contemporary Art at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN), offered encouragement to the students and awarded a variety of prizes. The first prize went to Dominic Wylie, Blackpool Sixth Form College, whose work showed a wide exploratory use of materials in a 3-dimensional form. The second and third prizes were shared by Wen Shiqi, AKS, with a still life painting; and Georgia Latham, Blackpool Sixth Form College, with an exquisite floral dress.

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# Drawn From Youth Exhibitions – a look back

*Drawn From Youth Exhibitions* was initiated in 2011 by Hilary Alcock, the Inaugural Chair of the then Fylde Decorative and Fine Arts Society, to display A-level artwork from schools and colleges from the Fylde Coast. Such Exhibitions have been held at the Fylde Gallery for the past eight years, fully supported by the Fylde Council Arts Working Group, which manages the Gallery. Heather Davis, Manager of the Lancashire Conservation Studio, who provides guidance and expertise in the care of the Lytham St Annes Art Collection, has also given continual on-going support and encouragement to our Schools' Exhibitions. We are most grateful for her guidance and also for the free use of the Fylde Gallery for our Exhibitions, which has provided over 500 students from the Fylde Coast with an opportunity to show their artwork to the general public. This has greatly contributed in enhancing students' self confidence, showing pride in their remarkable accomplishments.

From this year, three of our seven participating schools will no longer be offering A-level courses, including Art as a subject. Two of the Heads of Art are moving to other schools. This appears to be a natural break for our on-going *Drawn From Youth Exhibitions*. Our small Young Arts Team is most appreciative of the warm rapport, which has been built up with the schools concerned over the past eight years. We have been privileged to work with the many talented teachers, including also several dedicated, hard working technical assistants, who have been invaluable in helping to install such vibrant, stimulating exhibitions. We salute the many students over the years for their exciting and sensitive talents they have shared with us, and welcome the pleasure and admiration, which has been expressed in our Exhibition Visitors' Books.

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*'Cogs & Gears' bowl by Robert Mills*

*'I will forever be thankful'*

## Robert Mills describes how it feels to be a RBA winner

I am honoured to have had the privilege of my artwork being exhibited in a series of Art Galleries throughout London; it is something which I really appreciate and am proud of. My ceramic bowl was part of my GCSE project in 2016. My chosen theme was 'Wheels'; I started off my work by looking at the overall theme of wheels, but as I drew closer to the final 10-hour exam, the majority of my work was based on the intricate design of bike cogs. I really wanted to create something with a lot of depth and detail. I didn't feel that a painting or drawing final piece would highlight the detail of the cogs so I ended up with the idea of making a ceramic bowl. Once I had finished my planning stages and actually started making the bowl, I soon realised how important timing is with clay pieces. I had to carefully monitor how quickly the clay was drying as I moulded it into the desired shape. Taking the bowl out of the kiln was definitely my biggest worry, as I know how easy it is to accidentally leave an air gap in the clay and for the whole piece to shatter under the high temperatures. But, thankfully, the bowl came out exactly as I hoped. I decided to glaze it with a glossy colour rather than matte, because I love the way that the light reflects off the edges of the cogs.

I felt so grateful when I found out that my *Cogs and Gears* piece was going to be exhibited in the Mall Gallery in London. I never imagined that the artwork I created in my art classroom at school would be exhibited in front of the public in such a prestigious place. The whole experience of travelling down to London to see my work was such a great honour, and something I will forever be thankful for.

In future, A-Level students attending Fylde Colleges and Sixth Forms will continue to have selected artwork submitted for the Royal Society of British Artists (RBA) Annual Competition and Exhibition, at the Mall Galleries in London. We wish the schools and students continuing success in this prestigious opportunity.

Hopefully, new opportunities might arise, enabling more young people of all ages within Fylde an opportunity of again sharing their artwork in public. Teacher evaluations of the Exhibitions inform us that their students 'felt very privileged to be chosen to exhibit their artwork'; they loved 'the opportunity of seeing their work hung in a real Art Gallery setting' and 'appreciated the feedback they received from the visitors'.

In general terms, Art as a subject within the school curriculum is continually beset by cutbacks. Our involvement with the schools has offered very positive support for teachers in their work; what a joy it has been working with them, helping to publicise the very high standard of artwork to be seen in our schools. We would like to thank the staff for their friendship and expertise contributing to our successful partnership, and to thank the students for



RBA winner Martha Walmsley with her wall hanging

their continuing passion and dedication, striving to pursue careers in the exciting and new opportunities currently arising within the world of art. Warm appreciation too of all the many volunteers who have contributed to the success of *Drawn From Youth* Exhibitions over the years.

## Arts & Crafts and tapestry in the South Lakes



Outside the Quaker Museum, Kendal

Members enjoyed a spring day out last May to Blackwell Arts & Craft House in Bowness followed by a visit to the Quaker Museum in Kendal.

The grade 1 listed Blackwell House, designed by the architect Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott, is full of wonderful furniture, textiles, windows, etc from well known arts & crafts experts.

After the tour of Blackwell, members departed for the Quaker Museum in Kendal to see the Quaker Tapestry, an embroidery of community art, which has been created by more than 4,000 people in 15 countries over a 15 year period.

# Opera proves to be a winning FyldExperience

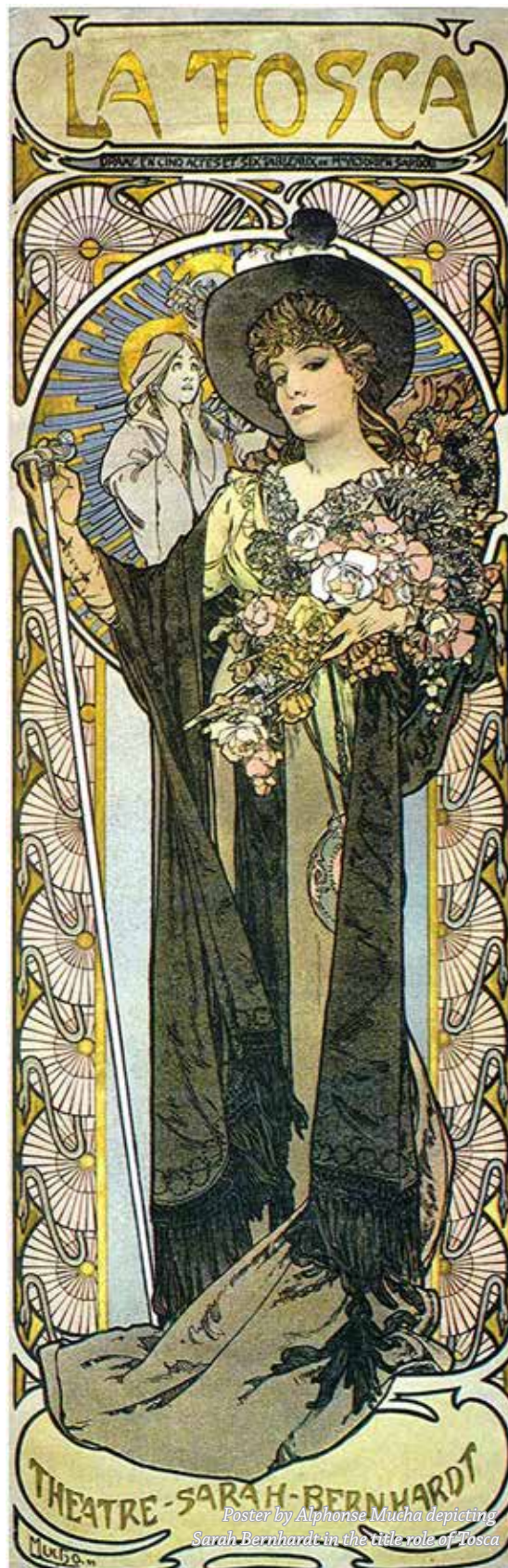
By Nigel Bramley-Haworth

As part of the newly-launched The Arts Society FyldExperience events, I organised a trip to London to include a visit to the Royal Opera House to see *Tosca* by Puccini, and to the V&A to see an exhibition, *Opera: Power, Passion and Politics*.

And so on a cold Monday morning last February, nearly 30 members met at Preston Railway Station to take a lunchtime train to London. Expectations were high as some of the party had never visited the Royal Opera House before.

After dinner at a restaurant next to the Opera House we only had yards to walk to enter this magnificent building. We all enjoyed an outstanding production of *Tosca*. Famously described at its premier as Puccini's 'shabby little shocker', this melodrama unfolded its magic on all in the auditorium. The three main principals, Martina Serafin (*Tosca*), Riccardo Massi (*Cavaradossi*) and Marco Vratogna, outstanding as *Scarpia*, thrilled us with their singing and portrayals. The Royal Opera House orchestra was on superb form under the baton of Placido Domingo, who received rapturous applause. We all agreed that it had been a performance to treasure.

The following morning saw us leave the hotel soon after breakfast to visit the V&A Museum. Here we saw a magnificent exhibition that was a joint venture between the Museum and the Royal Opera House. The exhibition was based around seven areas surrounding a final arena. In chronological order we were taken to seven different cities, where seven operas received their first performances. The operas were explained within the context of what was happening in those cities at that time and we were also able to trace the development of opera right up to the present day. Starting with Monteverdi's *The Coronation of Poppea* in Venice, the seven areas ended in Leningrad and *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsenk District* by Shostakovich. The central arena highlighted newly built opera houses and new operas.



Everyone who visited the exhibition found it to be a fascinating insight into the world of opera. This was the first of what I describe as an Arts Society FyldExperience and I hope we will be able to organise other 'Experiences' in the future as there is clearly a demand for such trips.

# Botanical art links people to plants

By Marion Nuttall

At the end of May I went to The Peter Scott Gallery at the University of Lancaster to see the exhibition '*In Ruskin's Footsteps. Linking People to Plants Through Botanical Art*'.

The exhibition was an opportunity for botanical artists to focus on the botany and create interest in the beauty of our native flora. These plants are often derided – considered as weeds – until one studies them in great depth. A matter in which I failed spectacularly to convince a friend, whose comment, 'if they were in my garden I'd dig them up....' did not go unnoticed!

The artworks selected included a variety of plants from a wide range of habitats – some very rare (Marsh Helleborine) and some seen almost anywhere in the UK (Rosebay Willowherb). By studying the illustrations and reading the information one became increasingly aware of the beauty and usefulness, often medical, of our native plants.



Various media were used by the 28 artists – watercolour, graphite and coloured pencil, pen and ink, and acrylic.

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit and, as a comparative beginner, left with ideas about composition and felt vaguely reassured that even one or two of these expert botanical artists faced the challenges of mixing greens and sometimes didn't get it quite right. Reading the artists' profiles was interesting as some were entirely self-taught in art and came from a scientific background, inspired by working in



## Programme Launch event at our new home

Judging by your feedback, our Programme Launch event in July proved to be a big success. Not only did it provide the opportunity for 115 members and volunteers to browse stalls of activities, look back on the past season's events, familiarise themselves with the Lowther layout prior to the start of the new season – it also enabled us to inform you about our exciting upcoming programme of lectures and planned events for 2018-19. Full details are available on our website [theartsocietyfylde.org.uk](http://theartsocietyfylde.org.uk).

Re-locating to the Lowther provides us with an opportunity to grow so please do encourage your friends to attend as guests and enjoy a lecture or two before maybe deciding to become members too.

conservation. Others were very highly qualified from university art courses. I spent a lot of time talking to an artist, who for 13 years has been the official orchid artist to the Royal Horticultural Society – what a job! She could draw thin flower stems, making continuous parallel lines of about 60 cm long without stopping or lifting the pencil. I'm still trying – much shorter lengths – but improving.

Shortly before I left the exhibition I read that Ruskin's lifelong interest in botany reflected his passionate belief in drawing: 'I would rather teach drawing that my pupils learn to love nature, than teach the looking at nature that they may learn to draw' (1857). I think I've started the wrong way round but am utterly captivated by the complexity of plant structure and how to translate this onto paper.

# A royal day out for Rita

*In recognition of her services to The Arts Society Fylde, Rita Calvert was invited to attend a Royal Garden Party in Edinburgh.*

As part of The Arts Society's 50th anniversary celebrations, I was privileged to attend a Royal Garden Party at Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh in July. I was fortunate to be joined by the founder member of The Arts Society Fylde Hilary Alcock and four others. We met in The Royal Scots Club in Abercrombie Place and spent a convivial hour there before making our way to the Palace.

The weather was glorious so no need for jackets or umbrellas. We joined a large crowd of well dressed people all making their way onto the lawns. A piper was playing, and the men in the Queen's Body Guard looked resplendent in their dark green uniforms and caps, with an eagle's feather on top.

We waited for the Queen to descend from the palace steps to the lawns. She was accompanied by Prince Andrew and Prince Edward. They slowly made their way through the crowds stopping to chat every now and again. I must point out that when I say crowds I mean crowds - there were thousands there!

We made our way to the tea tents where we had a lovely afternoon tea of dainty sandwiches and delicious mini cakes.

The atmosphere was great and the fashion eye catching. All in all a very pleasant way to spend an afternoon. I must thank Barbara Parkinson for putting my name forward.



# Recording the Past For the Future: Church Recording Team completes first record

*By Jacqueline Love*

Following nearly six years' work by Church Recording volunteers at Fairhaven United Reformed Church (The White Church), the completed Church Record was handed over at a special ceremony, held during a Sunday service last May.

Beautifully bound, gold blocked and with 119 pages, the Church Record details each item within the church, together with its history. It includes items such as memorials, metalwork, stonework, woodwork, textiles, paintings and windows, enhanced with 93 photographs and line drawings.

The Reverend David Phillips was delighted to receive the record: "...a snapshot of the interior of the church as it is today, a special place for individual reflection and shared acts of worship. The record will be a marvellous way in which current and future Church members would be helped to understand the history in their surroundings".

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*Church Recorders, Society Members & Friends handing over Church Record*

As well as the copy presented to the church, digital copies have also been given to the Lancashire Records Office, the V&A Museum Art Library, and Historic England Archives, where they can be used by researchers and historians.

The White Church is the first church on the Fylde to be recorded in such depth. Hilary Creswell, who has been involved with the project from the start, said: "As a small group of 12 volunteers, we were aware that we were undertaking a big project, which needed great patience and attention to detail, but we rose to the challenge and the resulting Church Record is a beautiful document that has been much admired by those who have seen it."

The painstaking work of recording each item in the church was done as part of a national project. Since 1973, The Arts Society's Church Recorders have undertaken a vital role in recording the past for the future by promoting recognition and preservation of our rich artistic heritage, held in places of worship of all denominations and religions, throughout the United Kingdom. To date, 1908 churches in the UK have been recorded by 2,000 recorders.

The iconic White Church is a prominent feature of the landscape, with its all white faience slabs, typical of a Byzantine or South West French Romanesque style, and with an interior that is a marriage of Edwardian Baroque and stained glass. Designed and built about 1907-1912 by Scottish Architects, Briggs, Wolstenholme and Thomey, it is now a Grade II listed building.

A prominent feature of the White Church is its beautiful stained glass windows, comprising images and scenes that shed light on the central drama of Christian salvation. Images of many great reformers, such as John Wycliffe, Martin Luther, William Tindale, Oliver Cromwell, John Milton, George Fox, John Bunyan, Isaac Watts, John Wesley, David Livingstone and William Carey, are depicted.

Whilst recording in the church the group observed that the stained glass windows were never static. During the course of the day they were animated by changing light, their patterns wandering across the floor, inviting your thoughts to wander with them. Just as in ancient medieval churches they are essential to the fabric of this church, illuminating the building and the people within, both literally and spiritually. Small wonder that The Arts Society Fylde selected this church for its first Church Recording project.





**The Arts Society Fylde**  
[theartssocietyfylde.org.uk](http://theartssocietyfylde.org.uk)

A member of The Arts Society

Members pursue a mutual interest in the arts through lectures on a wide range of decorative and fine arts topics including art, sculpture, jewellery design, architecture and garden design. Lectures are on the first Wednesday of every month at 2pm at the Lowther Pavilion, Lowther Terrace, Lytham St Annes FY8 5QQ.

Chair: Pat Corless

Vice Chair: Nigel Bramley-Haworth

In the Picture is edited by Pam Foster. It is published twice a year in March and October. If you would like to submit an item please contact the editor at [pamfos@gmail.com](mailto:pamfos@gmail.com)

Cover: Window, Blackwell House, Bowness