



THE ARTS
SOCIETY
FYLDE

In the Picture

Newsletter #19 / November 2019



The Arts Society Fylde
theartsocietyfylde.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

Photographs by Julie England, Ged Curley and Tess Tackett

Cover: Detail of Antonio Gaudi's Casa Batlló, Barcelona, by Hugh Ellwood

Letter from our Chair

Time to wish ourselves a Happy 10th Anniversary!

Much has happened in The Arts Society Fylde (TASF) since the first lecture on 7 October 2009. The 2 October 2019 was a special lecture and event, when we could mark the hard work that has enabled the Society to become so successful. Hundreds of hours of volunteering have gone into developing the multi-faceted organisation that we have today, and the thanks and appreciation of all of us are due to the many who have contributed to this.



At the Anniversary lecture, Florian Schweizer, Chief Executive of The Arts Society, paid tribute to all our members, past and present, and his warm comments were much appreciated by us all I am sure and inspired us to continue the pioneering legacy we have inherited.

This special edition of *In the Picture* has been crafted with great care by Pam Foster, who has brought together material from across our short history. Contributions from past members are particularly welcome, and it is pleasing to see comments and photographs that mark the many varied activities of the last 10 years. I hope this will bring back fond memories of challenging and informative lectures and study days, and an extensive array of projects under the banner of Young Arts, Heritage and Church Recording. Not only have we sought to fulfil our objective of educating and inspiring our membership but we have had fun as well. Trips, lunches, dinners and holidays have all featured in our programme and I am sure have fostered new friendships and provided a wide variety of opportunities to simply have a good time.

Whilst it is pleasant to reflect on past successes it is also a time to look forward and consider what opportunities we have to develop and diversify. Your Committee will continue to ensure our track record of 10 highly rated lectures and two Study Days form the backbone of our offering, but we are keen also to embrace new activities. We have some bright ideas for working with our two theatres – The Lowther and The Grand – to support their work with young people but we need enthusiasts to join us in taking forward such initiatives. We will seek people out, but to volunteer is always better than being pressed!

Delaying the production of this newsletter by a few weeks has enabled us to incorporate within it our Annual Report. This has not only saved some effort (and cost) but enables us to get this publication out to members in good time for our AGM on 4 December 2019. Thanks to Christina McHugh (our Secretary) and Jean Holland (our Treasurer) for putting this together for us. It does enable us to pronounce upon the success of the year 2018/19 both financially and, more importantly, in membership recruitment and satisfaction.

This magazine demonstrates our shared enthusiasm for TASF – thank you to all our members – keep coming, keep bringing guests and encouraging new members and help keep going the lively and enjoyable society we have here in the Fylde.

Pat Corless

Chair, The Arts Society Fylde

Congratulations from our CEO



Dear Members of The Arts Society Fylde,
Happy 10 year Anniversary!

It brings me great pleasure to congratulate you all on working so tirelessly to ensure The Arts Society Fylde has grown and evolved over the past decade. From your inauguration in October 2009, it is clear that the Society has grown from strength to strength creating a vibrant and social environment for your members to enjoy. The way in which you have all supported a number of local activities has certainly ensured that you are part of the fabric of the Fylde Coast community and are a key player in benefiting your community through the Arts. Your exciting programme of events; incredible volunteering achievements and support of local projects embody the core values of The Arts Society and bring us one step closer in making art accessible to all. We appreciate all of the hard work the committee and members alike put into The Arts Society Fylde and I wish you another 10 years plus of success.

With all best wishes,

Florian Schweizer
CEO, The Arts Society

Thanks to all our volunteers from our President

Ten years ago I met Hilary Alcock at an event to launch the Society and recruit members. It was a bold move and the start of something special, as the Society has grown and developed in so many ways since then. Hilary's initiative, drive and enthusiasm has continued ever since as the Society has expanded its range of activities, its achievements and its membership.

The continuing success of the Society is down to effective leadership and all the volunteers who are the backbone of the organisation and have given their time, labour and expertise. Though they expect nothing in return, Winston Churchill encapsulated it all when he said, 'You make a living by what you get. You make a life by what you give'.

Because of the work of all our volunteers, the society is able to thrive and provide something that we are all interested in and enjoy.

These volunteers include the various lady Chairs, committee members, team

leaders and all who have contributed in so many ways over the past 10 years. They all richly deserve our thanks and by their vision and efforts they will ensure that the Society will continue to develop in the future.



Hugh Ellwood
President, The Arts Society Fylde

Best wishes from our former Chairs



Hilary Alcock

Fylde DFAS – a veritable fairy tale

Our Inaugural Founder Chair Hilary Alcock hardly needs an introduction. Here she describes how our Society grew from a Steering Group of six to the substantial and influential voluntary organisation it is today.

Here we are in 2019 and the fairy tale that was Fylde DFAS continues apace. As the Inaugural Chair I cannot help wondering what the next chapter will contain.

Back in the day when there was a small Steering Group of six people: Kate (Cartmell), Philip (Bailey), Olga (Depledge), Marion (Nuttall), Tom (Houghton) and Barbara (Weston), I could not have imagined it would still be going from strength to strength, having gone through a rebranding, acquired a change of name, a superb new location and definitively 'changed the cultural landscape of the Fylde'. We started out in a church hall, comfortable but not the most inspiring of places to meet. It was Kate who adapted it into what offered a more welcoming environment with informative displays, local arts news, and relevant books and reading material... and flowers!

Initially, it was about building an inclusive Membership, planning programmes, Special Interest Days, interesting events and excursions, encouraging people to learn about new places, and experience fun and friendship. We all worked our socks off and even went on our first foray abroad. Christine Cockburn and I took a group of 40+ brave members to Kraków; it was hugely successful and further fascinating visits to historic European cities followed.

Volunteering activities were central to what we did, funding was sought and an inspiring range of projects - *Mr Lowry Comes to Lytham, It's a Birdie!, Tagging the Treasures*, a detailed record of The White Church, the superb *Drawn From Youth Exhibitions* and the annual Royal Society of British Artists/NADFAS Competitions - all preserving our artistic heritage, promoting education

and winning accolades. They were led by various members and in some cases completed well after my tenure, but invariably resulted in exciting new partnerships and outcomes, involving people from different backgrounds and ages.

One of our youngest and most resourceful members, Katrina Kelly, wanted to start a society based on ancient civilisations at her school, in Lytham. She asked us to share with her just how we had become established. We were thrilled to play a small part in such a brilliant initiative, and agreed to also publicise their great programme. It has become very successful and is now the biggest Classical Association in the country, the President being Dame Professor Mary Beard.

As our Membership grew it became more diverse, and people travelled from Preston and the Fylde villages, and from Blackpool and Fleetwood to attend the lectures and enjoy the activities. We had representation from Poland, South Africa, Japan, Switzerland, Malaysia, Ireland and from all corners of the UK; they were thrilling and exciting times.

I have reminisced too much, it is time to look forwards as TAS Fylde moves into the 2020s. The vision of the Fylde Decorative and Fine Arts Society was magically realised, now The Arts Society Fylde has morphed into somewhat less of a fairy tale, becoming a substantial and influential voluntary organisation. It will surely offer the same wonderful insights into a broad range of talks, and I wish it well as it reaches out further into the community with the clear vision that arts and heritage nourish and enrich the lives of us all.



Marie Riley

An opportunity to experience amazing cultural activities

Marie Riley took over from Hilary Alcock to become our second Chair. She will be particularly remembered for securing funding both for the It's A Birdie! community project and our huge Tagging The Treasures heritage project.

I remember the first lecture when Fylde DFAS was newly inaugurated: Valerie Woodgate on British landscape painting. It blew me away. When, a few months earlier, the Society was being formed, my thoughts were, 'I'll join, but I won't get too involved'. Four years later I was Chair. Taking over from the Society's charismatic founder was daunting. I felt something close to Imposter Syndrome. My plan had been to learn more about art. Would people now expect me to be an expert?

I needn't have worried. Members were lovely and I found friendships that I will always value. What mattered on a practical level was delivering the high-quality lectures and Special Interest Days that had won me over in the first place. Plus outings, social events, and volunteering opportunities - and keeping everyone informed about it all. Fortunately, the hard-working committee had fine-tuned the mechanisms to ensure that everything ran smoothly. There were particular

challenges during my time as Chair. A substantial award from the Heritage Lottery Fund to set up the *Tagging the Treasures* project involved a lot of additional work, but it was a privilege to forge a strong relationship with the Friends of the Lytham St Annes Art Collection and support them in their aim to secure the collection's future.

An unexpected relocation to Cambridge caused me angst about leaving projects unfinished, but there were other capable hands, both to ensure continuity and to bring new ideas and different ways of doing things. There have since been substantial changes, a new name and a new venue. What stays the same is the opportunity to experience amazing cultural activities, to listen to incredibly talented and prestigious speakers, and to spend time with like-minded people. I am confident that the Society will continue to grow and thrive.



Jo Darbyshire

This IS working

Jo Darbyshire, our first President and third Chair, replaced Marie Riley. She also remembers that all important first lecture.

I remember the opening meeting of the Society when there was a sea of official guests and a sea of new members, all hoping that the Society would work for them. It was a fabulous afternoon with an excellent lecture by Val Woodgate. I thought then... 'this IS working.' And it has; I think I have only missed two lectures in 10 years.

The Society has made a great deal of progress and given service to the local community in so many ways relating to the arts. It should be proud of itself on its 10th anniversary.

Happy Birthday The Arts Society Fylde!



Margaret Race (centre seated) with volunteers at an art detectives workshop, St Annes Library

Creating bonds via the Tagging The Treasures project

One of our most ambitious projects has been the Tagging The Treasures project, which was a joint effort between members of Fylde DFAS and the Friends of the Lytham St Annes Art Collection.

Margaret Race, Chair of the Friends of the Lytham St Annes Art Collection, remembers this massive project and the bonds it created between the two groups.

Sincere good wishes to The Arts Society Fylde as it produces its 10th Anniversary Newsletter. The Friends of the Lytham St Annes Arts Collection have reason to be eternally grateful to the Fylde branch of the Decorative and Fine Art Society, when six years ago they decided to embark on a project which had a profoundly beneficial effect on the fortunes of the Lytham St Annes Art Collection. Heather Davis, Conservation and Collections Manager for Lancashire County Museum Service, gave a lecture in early 2013 entitled *Angels with Dirty Faces*. The then Chair Hilary Alcock asked Heather to join an informal meeting of key members to discuss ideas for a project. Marie Riley was present at that meeting when the brilliant idea was born that our very own beautiful Lytham St Annes Art Collection should be thoroughly researched. Marie, a founder member of

Fylde DFAS and future Chair, took on the project, which she cleverly called *Tagging The Treasures*. That name rolled off the tongue and TTT became a significant part of the lives of many people for several years to come.

Marie applied for and was awarded funding worth £24,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund and project managed TTT very efficiently for the first 18 months of its life.

The project was a joint effort between members of Fylde DFAS and the Friends, and created a bond between the two associations which we still enjoy today. It appealed to many individuals who came together to research and catalogue the whole Collection.

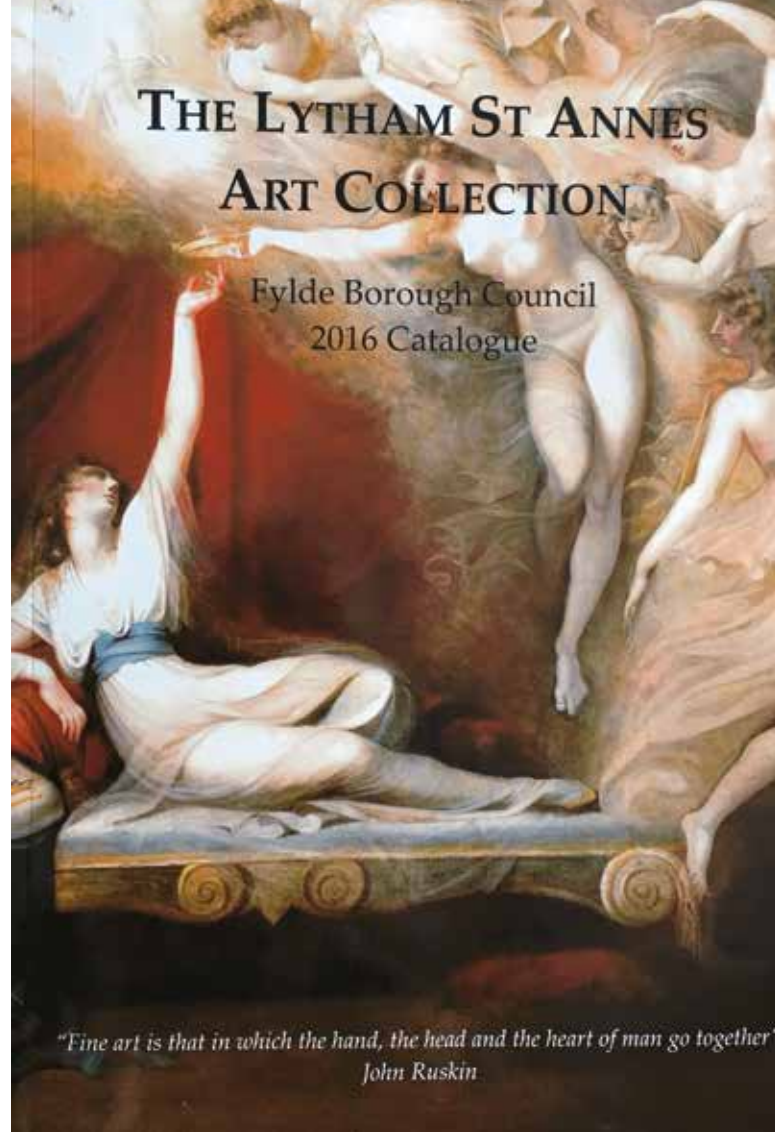
The aim was to research every artwork, artist and donor (all items in the Collection having been donated) and the end result was to produce an online catalogue, a website and a printed catalogue.

It became a massive undertaking with over 60 researchers or 'Taggers' volunteering to find out as much as they could about each painting, watercolour, sculpture, etc. Several very capable individuals joined with Marie to create an effective management team.

Richard Marshall was our paid professional, who created the website which became the online Catalogue and today attracts visitors from all over the world. Veronica McDonnell headed the team of researchers and gathered together all the resulting information. Christine Armstrong kept everyone informed.

Eighteen months into the project Marie dropped a bombshell, she was moving away! We were devastated. We soon recovered from the shock, however, when Marie handed over the reins to Jacqueline (Arundel) Love, who she declared was 'more than capable'! She was right – Jacqueline hit the ground running and saw TTT through to its conclusion.

The printed Catalogue was her work; she seemed to write it and produce it as a finished article in no time at all. What a beautiful Catalogue it is too! She oversaw brilliant exhibitions in the Fylde Gallery and organised other activities until we were finally able to say TTT as a project was officially complete.



The printed catalogue

The online Catalogue (www.lythamstannesartcollection.org) was handed over to the Friends to maintain; the remainder of the printed Catalogues soon sold out.

Research, however, goes on as new facts are constantly coming to light. The Friends are continually adding to and amending information on the website. We are also in the process of bringing out a second edition of the printed Catalogue, which will contain all the extra information gathered since the project ended.

The Friends know what a wonderful thing TTT was in the life of the Collection, it is very much a part of its history. Thank you Fylde DFAS – now The Arts Society Fylde.

Happy memories of a very successful undertaking.



The Luther window, White Church, Lytham St Annes

Learning new skills to record our heritage

Our Society's Church Record of the United Reformed Church on Clifton Drive, Lytham St Annes (The White Church) was completed in the spring of 2018 after six years of painstaking work by our volunteers.

Hilary Cresswell was involved in the project from the start and below she describes how the volunteers had to learn new skills in order to complete the Record.

It was not long after the founding of the previously named Fylde DFAS that Hilary Alcock, the then Chair, suggested the branch should get involved in Church Recording and asked for volunteers. I had no real idea what this would involve but it sounded interesting so with a number of other people I put my name down. The idea of Church Recording had originated with the V&A, Church Commissioners and others, when it was recognised that there was information about the exterior of churches and their architecture but no records of church interiors and their contents. DFAS was approached and agreed to adopt it as a national heritage project.

Following discussion by the committee the White Church in Fairhaven was selected for the project for Fylde. The team gathered there for an introductory talk and training session, and led by Philip Bailey we got started. At that stage I don't think any of us realised how long it would take and how much there was to learn. It all sounded so straightforward – just write down what you can see and take some photos, but that was the easy bit. There was a whole new language of technical terms to learn, how to describe the parts of a window, the designs of wood carving, the shape of a candlestick, the details of books and bookbinding.

And then we had to record what we had seen; the format was prescribed and the information had to be entered into a template using a given format and a specified font – not an easy task. And the photos had to be of a certain quality and size – the contribution of a professional photographer made an enormous difference.

Several years later the record was finally completed, printed and bound, and a copy given to the church during a special service. Further digital copies of the record were sent to all the interested bodies. In retrospect much of the work was enjoyable but I've no plans to do another record soon!



Presentation of the Church Record to the White Church

Teaching children about our heritage

Our latest Heritage project is a new Children's Trail, created by Heritage Team Leader Jacqueline Love, for the White Church, which was launched during this year's Heritage Open Days Festival of History and Culture in September 2019. The trail comprises a question sheet for children between the ages of eight and 12, and an answer sheet for the accompanying adult. It leads the children around the church using simple maps, asking them to answer questions, find items, count, read and draw as they go. The aim is to help children notice art, architecture and furnishings, and to appreciate the community and national history these beautiful buildings are a part of.



Heritage Open Day at the White Church (Sept 2019), with the Church Record on show



Presentation of the ivories: Jenny Trurin, Conservator; Kath Bowen, Head of Heritage Volunteering for The Arts Society; Caroline Collins, Mayoress of Fylde; Peter Collins, Councillor and Mayor of Fylde, Pat Corless, Chair of The Arts Society Fylde; Jo Darbyshire, former Chair of The Arts Society Fylde; and Kunie Couch, member of The Arts Society Fylde.

Our Good Causes

Ever wondered where the money raised from your kind generosity goes? We haven't room to list all of the causes we have supported but they include Young Arts and RBA winners, our recent *Breaking Through* exhibition, the *Stitching Together* event, and those listed below. We have been able to support these projects from monies raised mainly from raffles. Thank you to all who have contributed over the years.

Restoration of the ivories

In 2018 The Arts Society Fylde took the decision to fund the restoration of 10 of the ivories from The Lytham St Annes Art Collection, in recognition of the 50th anniversary of its national body, The Arts Society. A special presentation event was attended by Fylde Mayor and Mayoress Councillor Peter Collins and Caroline Collins; Karen Henshaw, JP and Mayor of St Annes; and members of the Friends of the Lytham St Annes Art Collection and The Arts Society Fylde. A raffle raised money for the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, which protects elephants.

Supplying art materials to children's hospitals

Our Society supplies trolleys of art materials to the Children's Clinic at Blackpool Victoria Hospital, as well as Brian House Children's Hospice in Blackpool. Leanne Lamb, Hospital Play Specialist, said: 'The trolley is used every single day helping put smiles on the poorly children. Having art materials is extremely important in hospital. Messy play is a positive outlet for feelings and frustrations, allowing the child to gain confidence and cope with difficult situations'.

Supporting children's art at St Annes Library

As part of the St Annes Music & Arts Festival in 2015, Fylde DFAS sponsored a kite making event at St Annes Library. The decorated kites were either taken home or used to decorate St Annes Library in advance of the St Annes Kite Festival, which took place the following week.

Donation to the Grand Theatre

Most recently, in September 2019, we donated £1,000 towards restoring the storm damaged dome at the front of Blackpool's Grand Theatre. The Theatre is hoping to raise £125,000 as part of its 125th birthday celebrations in order to complete the repairs. As The Arts Society Fylde is currently celebrating its 10th anniversary we thought this was an excellent opportunity to mark the occasion in a special way.

Art in Education and the work of Young Arts in Fylde 2009 – 2019

Founder committee member and former Young Arts Team Leader Kate Cartmell has been instrumental in highlighting the immense talent of young artists on the Fylde Coast. Here she provides a brief overview of how she and our Society have provided a platform for exhibitions, displaying works from our talented young students.

During the Inaugural Year of Fylde DFAS, our Chair Hilary Alcock invited Heather Leadbetter, a gifted young artist from Fleetwood, to exhibit her first class honours degree work showing paper sculpture, based on plant form. Her exhibition was displayed during our first Special Interest Day, held at Lytham Hall – *Understanding Modern Sculpture*, by Linda Smith. Following her fascinating, successful exhibition, Heather was later invited to display her work at the Fylde Gallery.

Also that year, a photographic student, Ben Shilito was invited to take a series of photographs of our various activities and events, to be published in the *NADFAS Review*, alerting members nationally to our new Society in the North West. Being our first year and still limited by a lack of available funds, we were pleased to help both these students forward their careers in art.



2010 – Mr Lowry comes to Town

Our first Art Competition for Primary Schools in the Fylde was *Mr Lowry Comes to Town*, which was organised by Barbara Weston. Having a Society member whose father had worked alongside LS Lowry in Manchester meant there was considerable local interest in both the artist and his work. Artwork submitted was mostly of a high standard. The winners of the Competition, Year 6, Weeton Primary School, Weeton Camp, were awarded a visit to the Lowry Art Gallery in Salford to see work by the artist, and also included was an art workshop run by the staff at the Gallery. The Society later organised a special workshop for members about LS Lowry by Michael Howard, a specialist in Lowry's artwork.



RBA winner Catherine Latham, AKS, with Ceramic Cabbage

2011 – a National Competition organised by the Royal Society of British Artists (RBA) and the Decorative and Fine Arts Society (DFAS)

In 2011, a new National Competition was arranged open to all A-Level Art students across the UK. Twenty places were to be offered to students to have their artwork displayed alongside winning artists at the RBA Annual Exhibition, held at the Mall Galleries in London. Our Chair Hilary Alcock visited Secondary Schools and Colleges in the Fylde; she later selected and submitted several art works for this National Competition. To our delight, Catherine Latham, AKS Lytham, was awarded one of these prestigious places with her artwork *Ceramic Cabbage*; she was the first student from the North of England to be shortlisted for such an Award. Katie Hampson, another young artist from Blackpool Sixth Form College, was noted for the high quality of her work and was invited to submit her work again the following year; we were delighted to learn that her work was then selected for one of the winning awards. Katie is now (2019) a fully-qualified highly successful, professional artist working in the North West region.

When the students' work was eventually returned from London, Hilary was convinced that the standard of work was so high, that it should all rightly be shown in a local art gallery. Permission was given and the first *Drawn from Youth Exhibition* was shown at Fylde Gallery in 2011.

2011 – 2018 Drawn From Youth Exhibitions at Fylde Gallery

Exhibitions have been very successfully held annually over the past eight years. Initially, art work is displayed which has been selected for the annual RBA Competitions in London. We have had remarkable success, having had 17 RBA Awards won by five of our Secondary Schools and Colleges where the high quality of artwork is seen to be nationally outstanding. We have supported students financially in helping to send their individual artwork to London and return.

We are fortunate in being able to offer schools free exhibition space for additional art students in local schools, thanks to the generosity of the Fylde Borough Council Arts Appreciation Group, who manage the Gallery. Over the past eight years, we are proud to have enabled artwork from over 500 local art students to be exhibited at Fylde Gallery, giving them an invaluable experience of displaying their work in public. Each year exhibiting students have been invited to a Preview event, together with their parents and teachers from their schools – a much appreciated opportunity for gaining confidence and developing an awareness of the importance of presentation in their studies. An excellent rapport has been built with the teachers, of whom we have utmost respect for their outstanding teaching skills, enthusiasm and joy in presenting so expertly their students' artwork. We are grateful to Fylde BC and St Annes Town Council for occasional financial support for these Exhibitions.

The *Drawn From Youth* exhibitions have now ended but it is wonderful news that teachers are coming together, hoping to develop a Forum of Art Teachers in the Fylde – pooling their ideas in working together, developing yet more opportunities for displaying their students' work in public. We wish them well and hope that there will be new opportunities in which The Art Society Fylde may continue to support Art Education within our schools in the future.



RBA winner Jodie Leader, Lytham St Annes High School, with Madonna & Child



RBA winner and now professional artist Katie Hampson, Blackpool Sixth Form, with First Cow of triptych



Drawn From Youth Preview Evening, Fylde Gallery

Engaging with our community

*One of the aims of our Society is to ensure that we are part of the fabric of the Fylde Coast community and a positive force for the wider benefit of arts at a local level. As well as heritage activities, and Young Arts competitions and exhibitions, we have engaged with the local community in other projects. The *It's A Birdie!* project and the *Breaking Through* exhibition involved hundreds of children and adults living in our catchment area.*

It's A Birdie!

Undoubtedly one of our biggest and most ambitious community arts-based projects was the *It's A Birdie!* project, which ran during the Open Golf Championship in 2012. Of course, the Open Golf is a vitally important event for the area in terms of revenue and kudos but we wondered, what did it mean to the ordinary St Annes resident? We wanted to create an arts project that would involve adults and children for whom the golfing event might otherwise pass them by. Our plan was to fill St Annes with birds during the week of the Championship.

With the backing of a £10,000 award from the Arts Council; £2,000 from Fylde Local Strategic Partnership; £1,000 from NADFAS; and £1,000 from Fylde DFAS, we were able to undertake three major projects with professional artists, as well as organise a number of community-based events.

The RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) was an obvious partner, and we were delighted to work with NW artist Rebecca Chesney and the local RSPB Ribble Discovery Centre, to create a sound installation. The sounds of hundreds of birds were recorded by volunteers, and the resulting installation was played at various locations round the town.

Local artists Chris Culshaw and Boz Phillips worked with Home Start Blackpool Fylde & Wyre to deliver an owl project, which saw the children create owl costumes and the whole family getting involved in compiling photographic records of the workshops.

For our project with the Friends of St Annes Library (FoSAL), we commissioned mosaic artist Patricia Lee to design and create a sculpture for the Library Garden. We ran a number of workshops for both



Birdsworth in the Library garden

children and adults at the Library, where participants were invited to 'design' a bird, with the aim of providing inspiration for Patricia to create a unique bird for St Annes Library garden. The winning birdie design was 'Birdsworth' (a literary bird), who still has pride of place in the Library garden.

As well as these three major projects, we ran a range of different sorts of workshops for St Annes residents of all ages. Rainbows, Brownies, primary schools, churches and a ladies' gym joined in the fun by decorating lots of birds. Overall, nearly 600 local residents took part in the project and by the time of the Championship, St Annes was displaying birds in all sorts of venues. Our final act was to create a *Fly Away Birdie* exhibition at a local gallery, which displayed a mix of items from the project, together with artworks from schools, colleges and local professional artists.

Our team leader for the whole project was Marie Riley, who was later to become our Chair. The success of the project was down to Marie's dedication and hard work. Her input was recognised by NADFAS, who awarded her an Individual Marsh Award for Young Arts Volunteering, in recognition of the *It's a Birdie!* community arts project.



From left mosaicist Patricia Lee, Committee members Marie Riley, Angela Brown (and Stanley) in St Annes Library

Breaking Through

There is a growing understanding of the impact that taking part in the arts can have on health and wellbeing. As an arts society with an interest in supporting community art, we were aware that many local support groups situated on the Fylde Coast encourage their clients to get involved with creative art as a means of recreation, help and therapy. These artworks, often produced under unconventional or difficult circumstances, by artists, for pleasure, recreation or their own fulfilment, are seldom seen other than by the group itself.

An opportunity to help such groups get their work on display was identified after The Arts Society Fylde was approached by Kirkham Prison to help with its Inside Art group and especially with getting the prisoners' art on display in the wider community. It was decided that we would take this idea further and involve art from other community groups, as well as prisoner art. Society member Tony Tackett, along with a number of volunteers, was instrumental in getting the exhibition off the ground. The exhibition, *Breaking Through: Unknown & Unseen*, came to fruition in November 2018, at the Solaris Centre in Blackpool.

Exhibits were drawn from four diverse Fylde Coast community groups that provide help and support to people affected by some of the hurdles experienced in today's society, but who have shown respond positively to an involvement with creative art activities. The four were: The Harbour mental health hospital; HMP Kirkham; Stand Together and Recover (STAR), a centre for adults living with mental illness; and The New Langdale, a day centre for adults with learning difficulties.

The range and diversity of the work, and the artistic talent on show was impressive. All works had been created under unconventional or difficult circumstances, and were moving and thought-provoking, especially as many were created by individuals with a challenging cocktail of conditions. Some were for sale and it is a testament to the talents of many of the artists that their works were snapped up.

The Arts Society Fylde was delighted to have provided an opportunity for those who create this type of art, to display their works and to be recognised for their artistic efforts.



A Breaking Through exhibit

Top destinations for our arts and culture tours

One of the many delights of being a member of our Society is the opportunity to join varied day excursions, and UK and European tours. We take a look back at some of our many trips and hear from the volunteers who organised them.

Our day trips, 2010 to 2017 – a personal memory

By Christine Cockburn

I joined Fylde Decorative and Fine Arts Society at its inception and in May 2010 I volunteered to help with the Raffle. Nine years later I am still buying the prizes and organising the raffle for all our events. In 2011 I was coaxed to start organising our day trips by our first Chair, Hilary Alcock, and I then also joined the Committee.

I organised my first day out for members (with great trepidation) to the Manchester Museum to see the exhibition *China – Journey to the East* and then on to the Lowry, Salford to view the Lowry Art Gallery. I learnt the importance of good advertising, viewing the intended venue in advance to ensure no surprises on the day, the importance of tea/coffee on arrival, provision of food or access to it, and ensuring everyone knew when to return to the coach!

Following that first outing I continued to organise days out to stately homes, art galleries and museums all over the North West and within a day's travelling distance of Lytham St Annes. I have ventured to the North East (my home area) with a notable visit to the Bowes Museum in Barnard



Christine, far right, with members in Kraków, 2011

Castle, County Durham. I personally think this stunning Museum is one of the best visits we made together – but perhaps I am biased! We have travelled to Yorkshire to the Hepworth Gallery in Wakefield and Temple Newsome, Leeds. It was a wonderful day with modern art in the morning, contrasting with visiting a building conceived at the time of Elizabeth 1st. We have enjoyed a visit to Adlington Hall near Macclesfield, a Historic House building, where we enjoyed a tour of the gardens with the Head Gardener. In March 2013 we had an exciting visit to Coniston with snow and icy roads, crossing Lake Coniston in two open boats to visit Brantwood, the home of Ruskin. Our wonderful return across the Lake was in the Victorian Steam Gondola. We visited Harewood House, Hardwick Hall, Port Sunlight, Liverpool Anglican Cathedral and many more interesting places.

I have many memories of our days out and the friends I have made organising these trips. I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone of you who entrusted themselves to my days out (always a lottery of what may happen - illness, traffic delays, disappointing food, and drivers exceeding their allowed driving time!).

I did enjoy organising our days together and I must confess equally relieved when we arrived safely home together with another memory of a good Fylde DFAS Day Out. Thank you.

Since 2018 our day excursions have mainly been organised by non-Committee members, in particular, Lesley Peabody-Brewer and Ruth Holden. Our thanks to both and we look forward to many more exciting days out.

Europe here we come!

Our first foray into Europe was to Kraków in 2012. It was organised by our then Chair Hilary Alcock and Christine Cockburn, and was so successful that it gave us the confidence to make Europe an annual destination.

Elaine Wolstencroft joined the Committee and became our Tours Organiser, managing both our UK and European trips. Under her tenure we had lots of interesting, informative and, most importantly, fun visits to European cities and capitals, as well as art galleries, museums, stately homes, theatres and more in the UK. Many members will remember our lovely tours of Bologna, Ravenna, Padova and Parma (2012); Madrid, Salamanca and Toledo (2013); Budapest (2014) and Vienna (2015). A bit closer to home we visited Northumbria (2012); Bristol, Bath and Tyntesfield (2013); Stratford-upon-Avon and Compton Verney (2014); and Glasgow and Dumfries House (2015).

In 2016, Nigel Bramley-Haworth replaced Elaine as our Tours Organiser. He recalls the UK and European trips he has organised since then.

Since taking over from Elaine Wolstencroft as Tours Organiser the Society members have been on a number of trips. In September 2016 I led the tour to Holland that Elaine had organised and which involved a return journey by ferry from Hull to Rotterdam. We stayed in Delft and visited various art institutions.

In September 2017 I organised and led a five-day holiday centred on Lisbon, which also took in other



Elaine, far right, with members in Budapest, 2014

towns in the region. April 2018 saw over 30 members travel to Dunfermline for two day trips to Edinburgh, concentrating on two major galleries and the Royal Yacht Britannia.

At the beginning of October 2018 a party from our Society was joined by a number of members from The Arts Society Salmesbury, to travel to the wonderful city of Dresden for a five-day break. This was an outstanding trip and thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.

In April 2019 a smaller group travelled to Birmingham to visit museums and galleries in this fascinating city. And in October 2019 we celebrated the 10th Anniversary of our Society when, once again joined by friends from Salmesbury, we travelled to Athens to join a nine-night cruise around some of the Aegean Greek islands. Our President, Hugh Ellwood was one of the lecturers on board the ship.

All of these holidays have been informative and enjoyed by all participants. It has been a pleasure to organise and lead these trips.



Nigel with guide and members in Dresden, 2018



Members enjoying lunch in Bologna, 2012



Drinks reception in Salamanca, 2013



Enjoying the Lisbon sunshine, 2014



Afternoon tea, Ballroom, Allerton Castle, 2016



Exploring Yorkshire Sculpture Park, 2016

Dates for your diary

See our website at theartsocietyfylde.org.uk for further information on all our future events



WED 6TH NOV 2019

The Roaring Twenties: Art, Design & High Society

Joanna Banham

Aims to conjure up the energy and originality of the decade, and to explore the lives of its leading figures and examples of its most innovative art and design.



WED 4TH DEC 2019

Joseph of Nazareth: Best Supporting Actor

Amina Wright

Examines the quiet man behind the Christmas crib and his changing face in art.



WED 5TH FEB 2020

From Downton to Gatsby: Jewellery & Fashion 1890-1929

Andrew Prince

Guides you through the extraordinary periods and events between 1890 and 1929, where great fashion houses collaborated with the finest of jewellers to produce works of art of outstanding quality and glittering opulence.



TUE 19TH NOV 2019

Guided Tour of the Grand Theatre, Blackpool

With displays, talks and lectures.

Christmas Lunch at Fylde Rugby Club.



TUE 21st JAN 2020

Study Day: The Grand Mediterranean Tour

Two lectures by Gillian Hovell. At Fylde Rugby Club.



WED 4 MAR 2020

Provenance Matters: The Mass Faking of the Russian Avant-Garde on the World Art Market

James Butterwick

Examines the evidence for and against fake paintings, including attempts to 'sneak them under-the-radar', through exhibitions in Western institutions, as well as attempts to use the Western judicial system and fake news to help 'legalise' the works.