

The Townsend Times

News, views & reviews

Affiliated to the Cheltenham Arts Council

APRIL 2011 www.cheltenhamartclub.co.uk



Annual General Meeting, 26th March, 2011

Reg Fahey, gave a comprehensive account of his first year as Chairman covering; the new Saturday morning classes; the necessary expenditure on Studio lighting and other equipment; the efforts to freshen-up and promote the Club including the creation of a new Club Leaflet and other material. The Secretary's report followed, she summarized the year's activities. The Finance Director reported a fall in income from membership subscriptions and Studio fees and increases in expenditure on Studio rent, gas and electricity, courses and cleaning. The net result being a loss of just over £800 compared with 2009.

The election of Directors and officers took place (see page 4) and the Chairman announced the appointment of Trevor Waugh as Club President which was ratified by members.

In his final remarks Reg again stressed the need to welcome and encourage new members in order to keep the Club viable by offering more tutored sessions, remaining competitive by controlling expenditure and promoting the Club at every opportunity, He thanked each of the Directors, Committee Members, officers and especially other members of the Club who help in many ways doing the little unseen tasks that are so vital to the running of the Club.

Presentations were made to Mrs. Lily Gibson who received an Honorary Membership; to Guy de Gastell on his retirement from the Board of Directors and to Gillian Bailey in appreciation of her work as talks and demonstrations organizer.

On display in the Studio was a fine portrait by Pam Stone of the late Joyce McGreary who unfortunately had passed away before she could receive her Honorary Membership.

Lily made an Honorary Member

One of the longest standing members of the club, Lily Gibson, received Honorary Membership at the AGM. She was presented with a certificate and some flowers in gratitude for all she has done since she joined in 1970.

In those days the club was in two basement rooms in Suffolk Square and Lily delighted all present with her account of what you could see through the front window as people passed in the street.

Lily organised the Wednesday afternoon Portrait Group for 25 years, what an achievement finding models to sit each week for that length of time! Still a member of the group she continues to give encouragement to all. The Still Life Group also claim her as one of their own and we thank her for all the help she gives us.

In spite of failing eyesight her enthusiasm and commitment to art has never diminished. Keep going Lily we all need you.

Mary Warner

The Percy Mills Cup for Best Beginner

Dr. Frances Wilson-Copp gave a short appraisal of each painting using her experience as an artist with an MA in fine art and a PhD in art history. She said it was a difficult choice from the 19 entries.

The Winner "Purple Skies" by Rachel Jones
A masterful use of watercolour. Rachel had also achieved success at the Gardens Gallery Exhibition

Second "Devon Heaven" by Michael Butler

Third "Apples 2" by Sarah Powell

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Scheduled Painting Groups & Leaders –Summer Session

Starting Tuesday 3rd May to Saturday 20th August

Monday

9.30-12 md 9 th May	General Painting-Any medium	Robin Martin
2-4pm 9 th May	Watercolour Painting	Delia Graham-Clarke
7-9pm 9 th May	Life painting/drawing	Steve Parker

Tuesday

9.30am-12 md 3 rd May	General Painting-Any medium	Jill Blower
2pm-4pm 3 rd May	General Painting-Any medium	Carolyn Ward

Wednesday

10am-12md 4 th May	Portrait Painting/drawing	Steve Johnson
2pm-4pm 4 th May	Portrait Painting/drawing	Francine Danks

Thursday

9am-12md 5 th May	General Painting-Any medium	Tony Daffurn
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Friday

9.30-12md 6 th May	General Painting-Any medium	Frances Arrow
2pm-4pm 6 th May	Still Life-Any medium	Jean Callwood

Saturday

10.30am-12.30 7 th May	General Arts/Still Life	Barbara Coles Kathryn Ralls
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The Group Session Fee for a full term of 16 weeks is £16

The Monday Sessions have only a 15 week term so £15

The Group Session Fee for short term of 9 weeks to end of June is £10

Casual Attendance Fee £2

Prompt payment to Group Leaders please

Dates for your Diary

Wed.4 th May	En Plein Air See page 3
Tuesday, 10 th May 7pm	Wine & Cheese Party in th Studio
Wed. 1 st June	En Plein Air
Sat.4th June	Start of Acrylic Course—Terence Evans
Wed 6 th July	En Plein Air
30 th July-6 th August	Visit to Gottingen. Joint Exhibition with Kreis 34 Art Group
Wed. 3 rd August	En Plein Air.
Sunday 7 th August	Summer Lunch Party in the Studio & Garden.
Wed. 7 th Sept.	En Plein Air, .
Sat. 12 th November 2011	Coach Trip to RWE Academy Exhibition, Bristol

Cheltenham Art Club Welcomes New Members

Georgina Meredith, Carol Grahame-Spencer, Corinne Anderson, John Chubb, John Skillman, Darlas Hunter, Anne Fletcher, Judy Von Speyr, Moira Morphew, Ken Morphew, Lisa Harford, Edward Roberts, Joyce Redman, Hilary Cowles

Well done and thank you to all who made the Winter Market such a success. Including the extra sales after the day, the sum raised was a record breaking £664.62

En Plein Air – Didi Jepson

All members are invited to enjoy these days painting in the open air. We meet at 10am and finish at 4pm but you do not have to do the full day if it is not possible. We each take a picnic and join up at lunch time to eat together. There is always somewhere to shelter, if the weather is bad, and loo facilities. Because there is no charge and we are guests of the land owners, we take a collection which we give to our hosts and they donate this to their chosen charity. Didi has arranged five exciting venues for us this year, dates and addresses below. Please phone her a day or two before each session to let her know you are coming.

Wednesday 4th May. Home Farm, Tredington
Wednesday 1st June. Jesse Mary Chambers House, Tennyson Rd. Cheltenham
Wednesday 6th July. Dole Farm, Capel Lane, Andoversford
Wednesday 8th August. The Tynings, Shurdington
Wednesday, 7th September Postlip Hall, Winchcombe

Didi has sent us this message

“Next year I am passing on the baton to anyone who would like to take it on. I shall be happy to show them the ropes. It is a job I have loved doing but for health reasons feel it would be better to step down, while I am able to ease someone else into the role.”

Please contact her if you are interested, we are grateful to her for organising these delightful outings and would be very sad to lose them.

Acrylic Course—Terence Evans

I will run a four week class on Sat. 4th & 18th June and Sat. 2nd & 16th July. I have been painting for nearly fifty years, have an honours degree in Visual Arts, attended numerous courses and been on many painting holidays. This is intended to be an introduction for those who are starting from scratch at painting or are new to acrylics and also to reinforce and improve what they have learnt so far.

A list of materials and equipment needed will be sent to you when you sign up for the class. I will bring some photos from which you can paint or bring your own reference materials.

The cost will be £20 for the four weeks. Please contact me via this website!

New Members—Jean Callwood

The Still Life Group invite all new members to join us during Friday afternoons in the Summer Session. We shall be painting in the Courtyard in fine weather and still life displays when we have to be indoors. This is a chance to get to know the club and how our groups work. We know we have some very good artists in this club but join us for a few weeks and you will find not everyone has reached their peak!

Contact Jean to check .

STRAND ARTS

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**Great offers on Acrylics
&
Watercolours**

**Discount to members of
Cheltenham Art Club**

Please sign up to receive your Newsletter by email. You will receive it sooner, with colour, and also save the Club money on printing, envelopes and stamps. So far 38 people have sent me their email address. I promise that I will not use it for any other purpose new club members will receive their newsletters this way and we hope everyone with computers will agree to join in. Mary Warner email via this website.

CHELTENHAM VISIT TO GÖTTINGEN

JOINT EXHIBITION WITH KREIS34 - Colin Isted

You may know that some members of the club are taking part in the Cheltenham,/Göttingen Twinning festivities this year, the 60th anniversary of the twinning of the two towns.

The response to the invitation from Kreis34 has been a little disappointing with only four or five members travelling to Germany. In an effort to ensure we exhibit a reasonable number of paintings, I have been asked to take paintings for exhibition from members who are not travelling to Göttingen.

You will not be involved in any great cost and you will be able to show your work without the hassle of travelling or stewarding. The coaches will leave about 8.00a.m on 29th July and return on 5th August. I will need to know a.s.a.p. if you want to exhibit.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE CONTACT ME and we can discuss the packaging of paintings for coach travel. Colin Isted

Wine & Cheese Evening **Tuesday, 10th May at 7pm in the Studio**

Members are cordially invited to our Spring Wine & Cheese Evening at the Studio on 10th May. A great opportunity to meet other members and to hear about Bill Bacon's experience of living in Venice. Why not bring a guest?

Prize for the lucky ticket

Raffle

Tickets £5 each, includes first glass of wine and all the cheese you can eat.

Only 40 tickets available so contact

Peter Daniels— publicity@cheltenhamclub.co.uk

Directors and Officers elected at the AGM on 26th March;-

Reg Fahey
Heather Watkinson
Dorothy Daniels
Antje Smith
Francine Danks
Colin Isted
Peter Daniels
Mary Warner
Pat Emery

Chairman/Director
Vice-Chairman/Director
Secretary/Director
Finance Director
Painting Director
Exhibitions Organiser
Publicity Organiser
Newsletter Editor
Website Organiser



Craft and Skill in Painting - Alex Wallace

I would like to take up the point about the “craft of painting” made by Tony Daffurn in his excellent contribution to February's Newsletter.

I am not by any means knowledgeable about Pre-Raphaelite painting but in 2003 I saw Andrew Lloyd-Weber's Art Collection of Pre-Raphaelite and other Victorian masters. I must say that I was simply astounded by the craft and technical expertise of these painters. Beautiful coloured chalk portraits by Rossetti, a preparatory watercolour of Millais's “Ophelia”, the sharp clear detail of “The Shadow of Death” by Holman-Hunt and the light which seems to emanate from inside the three figures in Waterhouse's “St Cecilia”.

The later Victorians took this expertise further and if anything were even more concerned with texture and detail. “Stapleton Park” by John Atkinson Grimshaw has every twig and leaf beautifully described and incorporated into the complete image to convey a feeling of evening. Alma-Tadema's “The Baths of Caracalla” packed with figures, floating drapery, and marble pillars. I spent five minutes staring mesmerized at the marble tiles in the foreground! Possibly the “The Mirror” by Sir Frank Dicksee summed up the whole experience for me. The way flesh tones, transparent fabric, heavy brocade, peacock feathers and mother of pearl was translated into paint is nothing short of miraculous.

As I write this there are two points which come to mind which really should be explained and defined. However I do not think I can do this justice in this article. It would be interesting to hear other members comments in future Newsletters.

The first point is the “realistic” as opposed to the “real”. I am thinking of the way the Pre-Raphaelites and Victorians could paint any object and capture the shape, texture, colour perfectly but there was still too often that overall gloss. An airbrushed feeling of sentimentality. Even when painting real events as in “Feeding the Hungry after the Lord Mayors Banquet at the Guildhall” by Adrien-Emmanuel Marie. The whole thing looks staged, the people are all actors playing a part and yet everything is beautifully and realistically painted. And as Tony mentions there is certainly something of an up-market Page 3 voyeurism to some of the nude figure painting. So realistically painted but not real?

The second point is the question of “craft”. How well the artist handles the medium would be perhaps a simple definition. I think it may be difficult for the viewer to appreciate how much knowledge and skill there is in a painting unless it is depicting real objects in a realistic and figurative way. At least the viewer can compare his or her own knowledge of the object to what the artist is depicting. How often have we heard in galleries the comment “it looks so real I could pick it up”? Unless you have tried it yourself however it is difficult to appreciate the skill of say Van Gogh who painted a canvas a day with thick slabs of paint, wet on wet, without it resulting in a muddy mess! Abstract painting is even further removed from the ordinary viewer especially one who is not a practising artist. Perhaps in part this accounts for the general public's dislike of modern art?

Painting seems to have gone out of fashion during the latter part of the 20th century. However there have always been exceptions and I am sure you will all have your own favourite painters. Over the past few years I have seen exhibitions of some artists who still paint, in my opinion, with great skill although less figuratively and with more expression than others before. I saw Lucian Freud's exhibition at the Tate Liverpool many years ago but I still remember it vividly. His handling of paint is exceptional not just in his figure and portrait painting but in his still-life work and views across the rooftops from his studio window. John Virtue is another whose work I saw some time ago in the National Gallery. He had painted in black and white, huge landscapes looking out over London and the Thames, very freely painted and expressionistic but with great detail and perspective.

Finally, if you want to see that the skill and craft of painting is alive and well, I recommend the BP Portrait Competition/Exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery.

Spring Exhibition at The Gardens Gallery—Colin Isted

It was with a little trepidation that I booked space for our exhibition from 9th to 15th March. Was it too early in the year? Would it be too cold? Would there be people walking in the gardens? However, other later dates were already reserved so we had no choice.

I need not have worried. The exhibition turned out to be the most successful for some time, due in no small way to the expert job of setting up by Ralph Malpass and Carol Kinchin, ably assisted by three second year Art students, Kelly, Anna and Carl from Pittville Campus, University of Gloucestershire, who joined us to gain work experience.

We were fortunate to have acquired the services of the well known artist, Barry Herniman, of Ross-on-Wye to assess the paintings and to choose the one he considered “Best in Show.” He pointed out that any assessment must inevitably be subjective and proceeded to give a short critique on those which had particularly caught his eye. He liked Carol Kinchin’s “Light on the Horizon” for its simplicity and lovely texture, and although Michael’s Walshe’s “Madeira Market” was not his thing he liked it for having lots of colour. Pamela Stone’s highly detailed “Ring Tailed Lemur” was extremely competent and “Upper Slaughter” by Dawn Bound was simple, with lovely colour.

He then came to two watercolours by Maureen Chew which he felt embodied all that was best in the watercolour medium, “Rocks, Sea and Spray” and “Spring Sunshine.” He said that so often pictures were spoiled by having shadows shown as dark flat areas but if you looked carefully you would see colour in shadows. She had achieved this effect admirably and he therefore had no hesitation in awarding the Appleby Cup to Maureen for her watercolour representation of “Spring Sunshine.”

On the opening day members brought in 43 unframed paintings and 119 framed including 21 reserves, a daunting task for the hanging team. However they were up to it and their expertise was recognised in the favourable comments from many visitors.

Visitor numbers were fairly encouraging, with 642 Adults and 60 school age children. The busiest days were Saturday and Sunday, with 176 and 156 respectively. Eleven framed and two unframed paintings were sold, three of the framed ones sold for £120, £175 and £190, which I find very encouraging. Total sales of paintings was £1,100 (including £1,025 framed and £75 unframed). Eighty five greetings cards were also sold. .

The Echo, featured four different items about the exhibition, including a full page of photographs in the Weekend Supplement and the exhibition was publicised on our club website. The publicity has engendered an increased awareness of the club and this has resulted in a significant number of new members.

My thanks to all who helped to make this exhibition a success, including those who handled booking in and setting up, organising the drinks and nibbles at the preview and all the artists who took part, without whom we would not have had an exhibition.

Useful Contacts

Chairman, Reg Fahey - chair@cheltenhamartclub.co.uk
Vice-Chairman, Heather Watkinson
Secretary, Dorothy Daniels - enquiries@cheltenhamartclub.co.uk
Exhibitions Organiser, Colin J. Isted -
Newsletter Editor, Mary Warner
Website Manager, Pat Emery - web@cheltenhamartclub.co.uk
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Next Newsletter June 2011—Copy Deadline Thursday 26th May