



The Arts Society, Devizes

Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2023

Dear friends,

It was fascinating to hear from Caroline Shenton how, from 1939, London's National Museums and Archives, made extraordinary plans to evacuate their national collections to safety and how they were carried out. Using country houses from Buckinghamshire to Cumbria, tube tunnels, Welsh mines and Wiltshire quarries, she told how a dedicated bunch of unlikely heroes became the front line in our Heritage War; dispatching our National Treasures from the capital and places likely to be attacked. We were amazed as this lecture recounted the series of secret adventures that it took to complete this intricate and vital plan.

+See Our website for lectures: www.theartsocietydevizes.org

. Don't Forget to Renew your Membership for a superb line-up of wide and fascinating topics! Membership/other payments by free Bank Transfer please.

. Wessex Inspirational Learning Ltd.

An interaction between the arts/environment/well-being. Watch this space for details.

. Next Special Interest Day: 9th April 2024 - The Layers of Rome, Eternal City.

. Possible Visits for 2024. Wilton House, Salisbury. Talos Sculpture Park/Gallery, Calne.

. Next Lecture: 'Burned, Bombed or Bulldozed. Britain's Lost Houses.'
By Matthew Williams.

There is something incomparably romantic and sad about a long-lost country house that stirs us. Although Britain still possesses some of the finest examples of this lost architectural treasures anywhere, too many have been destroyed. A single ruined lodge or pavilion, an overgrown castle, drive or clump of mature trees are often all that exists to remind us of part of our rich heritage. **Matthew's** lecture will tell the story just some of lost jewels from our National Heritage – destroyed by wars or enemy action, arson, neglect, incompetence, family rivalry, financial disaster, profound social change, high taxation, or just bad management. Hundreds of these were demolished after 1945; beautiful or not, they each had a story to tell in their own fascinating way!

Matthew Williams is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and Curator of Cardiff Castle for nearly 30 years.

His most recent publication is a major book Cardiff Castle and The Marquesses of Bute, published in 2019

A long-standing member of The Arts Society, Matthew has been a Programme Secretary and a Chairman before becoming an Accredited Lecturer in 2001.

At the Town Hall on the 20th December, 10.30am for 11am.
Look forward to seeing you there.
Your Committee.