



The Arts Society, Devizes

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2024

Dear friends,

Amazing as it is, another year is nearly finished, with 2025 just around the corner.

Reflecting on all the magical and enthralling arts we have been able to see and hear; kindly prepared for us by Alice and Linda, who, like the rest of your Committee, give freely and engagingly to make our Arts Society, Devizes, something to enjoy and share with others.

As we prepare to celebrate God's Greatest Gift, there is yet more thanks to give and more warmth for us to share with friends and family. Our December meeting will also feature free Mince Pies with your coffee, courtesy of the Committee.

Our Remembrance Month Lecture, by Richard Burnip, was another excellent one, filled with new and amazing facts about a, supposedly well-known author, Arthur Conan Doyle! Fascinating truths about his being a doctor, knighted for his work in Blomfontein during the Boer War; the many reasoned histories he wrote on Britain's conflicts for The Peninsular War, Egypt, Palestine and Europe.; his setting up a Commando Unit in Surrey from what he'd learned in South Africa; writing of plays for Sir Henry Irving, the first Knight of The Theatre; daredevil racing cars with The Kaiser and how Sherlock Holmes came out of all this.

84% of you rated it Outstanding or Excellent.

Thanks Alice for booking this superb and appropriate lecture for us.

See our website for all lectures and activities: www.theartsocietydevizes.org

. VENUE FUTURE

As we have heard so many members saying how much more they enjoy our temporary location for lectures in the Ceres Hall, we'd like to offer a challenge:

The more friends/ family we bring to swell the audience for lectures in the Corn Exchange, the more likely it is that we can afford to stay there permanently..... Over to you folks.

. NOVEMBER 2024 SPECIAL INTEREST DAY :

Was another treat for members, with three delightful, informative and mind-broadening lectures by Brian Healey, sailing us in on Great Ocean Liners, their Art, luxury and style, as they battled to gain people and the prestigious Blue Riband for the fastest.

After refreshments and time to chat, Brian brought us The 'Ashcan' School of Painters of New York. Superb innovation in art and valid sympathy for the forgotten people there.

Following a delicious lunch, the sparkling story of Tiffany's, from a London commodities store, to jeweller to Queen Victoria and the wealthy across the world.

All of these with perfectly appropriate images at every turn.

Another triumph for Alice! Thanks to her, the committee and members, who help set up the hall, serve refreshments, washed up and reset the venue.

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. Next Special Interest Day is Monday 3rd March 2025's Silk Road 2.

Following the success of the 'Silk Road Cities' special interest day last year, join us for the SEQUEL, 'Unravelling The Silk Road.' With Chris Aslan.

Venue is, again, the Seend Community Centre and includes lunch and refreshments.

Details at the December meeting and on our website: www.theartssocietydevizes.org

. STILL TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Use the easy online option: www.theartssocietydevizes.org and click on the 'Renew' button.

After this you can pay by BACS or cheque, as shown. And it's is all done.

Unsure if you have already renewed? Please email us to ask: theartssocietydevizes@gmail.com

. Have you decided on your entry for the Annual Devizes Creative Arts Festival ?

As we now have access to enter the recently established A8 Class Adult Art Classification. Your work may be your choice of subject and of any size or medium.

Entries received from 2/12/24 to Friday 31/01/25. Please wrap your entries.

Mark each: 'To: Mrs Claire Magill, c/o Devizes Books, with your name, A8 Class and Title.

Collection from there after festival completion 24/03/25.

7th March results. 20/03 Presentation to winners/exhibition of their work our Town Hall.

This prestigious Eisteddfod has been an event here for many years, covering all the arts and encouraging children and young adults in schools around Devizes.

Entries are just £3 per piece. A8 are looked at by Art Teacher, James Smith, who gives each a certificate with his creative and positive comments on. A8 winner receives The Wanborough Cup.

See; www.devizes-eisteddfod.org.uk for more details and applications.

. Susan Seeking Sponsors.

Do you have a link to someone who might sponsor us to further our aims for the community? Whether a business or individual, please let us know.

. VISITS

2025 Kelmscott Manor on the 2nd July by coach. At arrival we'll be given a 10minute talk on the manor, followed by an hour and a half guided tour (afternoon tea included).

Bookings open in Spring 2025.

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEA

How about gifting a family member or friend membership for 2024/5?

Certainly value for money, with such a wide variety of fascinating arts topics to meet together to see and enjoy!

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. Christmas Trees in St John's

Thanks to Linda Cassidy and Anna Bishop for setting our tree up again this year.

Opens on 7th December for visits until January.

Our Facebook page needs you to simply tick 'Follower' and check it every now and then.

. Next Lecture 18th December 2024. 10.30am for 11am.... in the Corn Exchange.

KIRSTY HARTSIOTIS

'Christmas Ghosts: The Tradition of Winter Tales' (particularly in Wiltshire).

According to Kirsty, we have told supernatural tales at midwinter for a very long time. During her talk she will take us back to the earliest winter tales the Middle Ages and the age of William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe. From there Kirsty will explore the lost years of the 17th and 18th centuries, where it is most often thought that Christmas wasn't celebrated much – yet, ghost tales at Christmas-tide were still an essential part of the season.

Throughout the 19th century, many of these were collected, and, even now it is considered one of the spookiest times of the year.

During her talk will be midwinter tales from across Britain, exploring the links with European traditions and drawing on Kirsty's long experience as an oral story teller, writer and teller of local ghost and folk tales in Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. So, be prepared for dastardly drumming in Tidworth, long-dead brides in Laycock and Calcutt's midwinter ghost pigs, as we explore local lore and famous stories from this time of the year around our country. You may well come away with a shiver still running down your spine but with some sensational seasonal spooky stories to share with family and friends this Christmas!

Kirsty Hartsiotis is curator at Swindon Museums, currently involved in the Un/Common People Folk Art and Lore Exhibition opening at the end of this month and coming to Devizes Wiltshire Museum in March 2025.

She was curator of Decorative and Fine Art at The Wilson Art Gallery and Museum, Cheltenham, from 2008 to 2023. Kirsty is a freelance researcher, currently looking into archives for Arts and Crafts War Memorials and the work of The Arts and Crafts designers in churches of the South West of England.

An Oral Storyteller for over 20 years and has published a number of collections of stories.

Kirsty was newsletter editor for the Society of Decorative Arts Collections from 2009 to 2023. She is also a regular columnist for Cotswold Life, and writes for diverse other publications on Art History and Folklore.

. Free Mince Pies from your committee to go with refreshments at the December meeting.

Looking forward to seeing you there and sharing the Seasonal cheer.

Your committee.

