



The Arts Society, Devizes

NEWSLETTER

January 2025

Dear friends,

We trust that you have weathered the minus degrees and, knowing each day there is now more sun, are uplifted, even if unwell.

While the weather still tricks us, there was no such trickery with Caroline Holmes. Her subject knowledge treated us to a series of wonders from Australia that many of us have never seen or known. Caroline delivered these with her research, style and enthusiasm, as image after image showed us the different type of light the sun gives to this country and how The Heidelberg School captured and entrances us still with their impressions.

An apology from Devizes Town Council for the late heating switch on, has been received.

See our website for all 2025 lectures and activities: www.theartssocietydevizes.org

. Dorothy Watchman

It is with great sadness that we learned that David Watchman's dear wife Dorothy passed away. An engaging presence in meetings, she was a strong supporter of the break from Melksham Arts Society, that David proposed, which created our Devizes Group. Dorothy, was a wonderful supporter and dear friend. She will be greatly missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with David, Hugh and family.

Dorothy's Farewell will be at Semington Crematorium Tuesday 28th January at 1pm.

(Donations to the Heart Foundation are preferred to flowers.)

. Raffle 15th January

**WHAT AN AMAZING RESPONSE !
THANK YOU. THANK YOU SO MUCH!**

We made £272

As with last year, unclaimed prizes were given to local charity, perishables to Devizes Food Bank.

. VENUE CHANGE REASONS (with apologies)

As a committee we were asked by many members, 'Can't we change to the Ceres Hall permanently?

While we agreed that the Assembly Rooms did have a more attractive decor and ambience, the practical reasons behind the move are more important:

- Assembly Room had a maximum of 150 and Ceres double that and we are, with your help, moving towards 200 members.
- Screen size & sound system are both superior and suit our pool of membership, who can see and hear so much better.
- Our projector does not have to be carried in set up/ taken down/carried away.
- There is technical help at hand if needed, provided with the hire.
- Ceres has no stairs or unreliable lift to contend with.
- Refreshments are easier to manage and better than the Town Hall.
- Numbers of people expressed how they enjoyed the space in Ceres more.
- After a financial study, it was found that we could afford the price.

On the basis of the above the Committee voted for the move.

There are decisions that have to be made for the future and interests of members. Naturally, we are sad to leave the beautiful Assembly Room, yet, our growing numbers and the reasons above, made it necessary.

Our thanks to Sue Small for querying the decision and waking us up to the fact that many others would be asking the same questions.

. First Special Interest Day

Monday 3rd March 2025

'Silk Road 2.' £40pp

THE SEQUEL..... 'Unravelling The Silk Road.' With Chris Aslan.

Looking into how textiles have changed the course of Central Asian history, politics and away of life there.

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

Details on our website: www.theartssocietydevizes.org

. 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

First one :

On Friday 16th May 2025 we will have a 'drive yourself' visit to Bowood House. We will be given an hour long private tour of the House with emphasis on the art works as well as the interesting history and architecture. The tour will be followed by free time to enjoy the beautiful gardens.

Full details to follow shortly. Booking will open in March.

Next is Wednesday the 2nd July. £54 pp

Kelmscott Manor, which was the home of famous English textile designer, poet, artist, writer associated with The British Arts and Crafts movement. Arriving by coach in the afternoon we'll see a 10 minute video on William Morris' life, followed by an hour and a half guided tour (afternoon tea included).

Bookings open in Spring 2025.

NEXT LECTURE....February 19th 2025,

BRINGING INDIA TO BRITAIN by Helen Rufus-Ward.

This lecture will begin with the portraits decorating the corridors of Queen Victoria's favourite home, Osborne House, on the Isle of Wight.

Austrian artist, Rudolf Swoboda, was commissioned by Her Majesty to paint authentic portraits of her Indian subjects to represent, 'various types of nationalities' there.

Swoboda brought back some extraordinary images from his two visits to India and the Queen was thrilled by them! Calling them her 'Beautiful Things'

The final part of the lecture will look at an exquisitely crafted Durbar Hall, created and shipped over from India, to serve as a backdrop for The Colonial and Indian Exhibition.

It is now the centrepiece of the Hastings Museum and Art Gallery, having been gifted to the town by the Brassey family.

Dr Helen Rufus-Ward is an art historian, with a BA, MA and an Arts and Humanities Research Council funded Doctorate (DPhil) from the University of Sussex, where she worked for 10 years. A published author, Helen has written on: Late Antique Ivory Carvings and 19th Century Plaster Castings.

Helen holds a Higher Education Academy Teaching Qualification, is a member of the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies the Society of Jewellery Historians and is Chair of Eastbourne Arts Circle

Looking forward to seeing you there. 10.30am for 11 start. Your committee.

