

news from

185

bath street



AUTUMN 2013 No 39

THE GLASGOW ART CLUB NEWSLETTER

President's Column



Guitarist, Ian Watt

"If music be the food of love ..."

With the advent of autumn we can start to look forward to another busy season of artistic and musical events in the Club. We may have temporarily lost the use of our wonderful gallery for its much needed refurbishment, but this has not dampened the enthusiasm of our management and social teams.

Most of us will admit to a love of good food and good music so what better way to combine these passions than coming along to our Supper Club. So far, along with fabulous menus, we have enjoyed gentle clarsach music, and more recently a night of virtuoso guitar music from brilliant young guitarist Ian Watt. For me, as a guitar enthusiast, the highlight of this evening was having a long chat with Ian after the recital about guitars, lutes, music and our mutual hero Julian Bream. Where else but the Glasgow Art Club could you enjoy an evening like this?

Autumn also sees the return of weekly jazz nights in the club on Thursday evenings, 7.30 for 8.00. With the piano now situated in the dining area I anticipate an even more intimate atmosphere than before.

With a full programme of exhibitions planned for our first floor Billiard Room gallery, members are in for a real treat. Frequently changing exhibitions will include artist members' group shows,

Arresting launch of autumn exhibition



Blythe Duff captures the audience at the opening, below, with the President



A dramatic opening marked the start of the season of exhibitions in the Billiard Room. It was launched by actress Blythe Duff, best known as DI Reid in the Taggart crime series but starring in the one-woman show *Ciara* at the Edinburgh Fringe. Since David Harrower's hit play is set in Glasgow and the star is an art dealer, Blythe felt it particularly suited to the Club and treated viewers to a mesmerising sample of the script. She went on to chat with artists and admire the 61 pictures fitted into the smaller gallery space. Despite wind and rain outside it was a most sunny occasion which won Blythe many friends who will take the opportunity to see the whole show when it comes to the Citizens' next year.

solo exhibitions, and charity shows. Gallery Convenor Philip Raskin has to be complimented on bringing all these exhibitions together and for providing us with an amazing string of T.V. personalities to open the exhibitions. So far this year we have enjoyed listening to Gordon Bruar, Kaye Adams, Blythe Duff, and we are looking forward to welcoming Kirsty Wark when she opens our Winter Exhibition of

Artist members' works.

I am delighted to report that the Club is living up to its reputation of being at "*the Centre of the Arts, in the Heart of the City*"

And now, as Shakespeare went on to sayplay on"

Robert Kelsey

Home from home in Perth

We are delighted to announce that Glasgow Art Club now has a reciprocal relationship with The Royal Perth Golfing Society and County & City Club, which is a private members' club established in 1824, the first such club to be accorded royal patronage.

The club is situated in a magnificent Georgian crescent in the beautiful city of Perth, Scotland. It overlooks the historic North Inch and River Tay and offers very comfortable dining and recreational facilities. HRH The Duke of York is the present club patron.

The Club is the proud custodian of several golfing artefacts and golfing memorabilia. Some of the golf trophies and medals date back as far as 1825, and there are others dating from 1827 and 1838.

The club is open weekdays from 10.00 a.m. to members, member's guests and members of clubs with reciprocal rights.

If you plan to visit please ring ahead to the Society on 01738 622265. For further information on The Royal Perth Golfing Society and County & City Club please see:—

www.royal-perth-golfing-society.org.uk

Dropped stitch—but will pick up

A welcome new user of our premises has had to look for other accommodation while the building is under wraps. Last spring the Royal School of Needlework set up its first Scottish branch and found the Library at 185 an ideal setting for weekly classes in embroidery and related skills.

Apart from the convenient position and congenial setting they particularly appreciated the bright natural light – now obscured by the scaffolding – and have had to find a temporary meeting place elsewhere while work is in progress.

However, the needlewomen, who are working towards prestigious qualifications – the organisation takes on high quality work such as the handstitching of the wedding dress for the Duchess of Cambridge – are keen to return to the Club where our members will be given opportunities to look in on workshops.

Cheers for Conrad

Conrad McKenna may not be the oldest member of the Club but he is certainly the longest-standing. For two-thirds of his life he has been paying subscriptions – “the first one was £15 and I have the receipt to prove it! The total must amount to many thousands” he points out with little rancour.

This year Conrad turned 90, and the Club asked him to be guest of honour at a celebration luncheon. He joined in 1953, newly appointed as a teacher at GSA: the war years had been spent learning to navigate Mosquitos, with a spell in hospital practising copies of Varga's pinup portraits which were very popular with his RAF colleagues. He had already decided to study art before the war, and, following demob, went on to GSA where a slap-dash fellow student (one Joan Eardley) was advised to copy his meticulous methods! Most of his teaching life was spent in the Art School, where he was popular with both students and staff: his leisure interests have concentrated on Italy, where he spends many months each year visiting friends and perfecting his knowledge of



Above, Conrad as we know him at home in the Club, and below, as RAF colleagues knew the young navigator.



the language. This has been shared with fellow members on various Club holidays – and in informal tutorials in the Club. Always affable and modest, he sees no reason why the Club should pay him special honour for just surviving and proposes to toast “long life and short speeches”

Square mile of culture

Glasgow Art Club is not the only cultural building in the city centre to be going through the trauma of upgrading. Across Sauchiehall Street several iconic institutions are under the scaffolding or facing extension.

On the top of Garnethill CRM's famous Glasgow School of Art is getting used to a new neighbour, the striking glass building designed by New York architect Steven Hall. Coming down the hill, the interior of the Art Deco GFT is being rejigged to create a third viewing space, while the Theatre Royal is acquiring an exciting addition to improve access and provide much-needed facilities for opera-lovers, playgoers and the general public who will be welcome in the various bars and rooftop cafe.

At the Royal Concert Hall, an extension is being built to provide an on-the-spot home for the RSNO, completing the attractions of the newly named 'Cultural Quarter' in time for next year's fun and games. And meanwhile, of course, the long-neglected McLellan Galleries have had a quick airing thanks to the efforts of the RGI now in residence for their annual exhibition.

DIARY DATES

Weekly Jazz Nights with Bill Kyle

Thursdays, doors 7.30pm for 8.00pm
Tickets are available on the door. Prices vary.

See <http://www.bridgejazz.co.uk> for details

From club's first to city's second

Raymond Williamson who was the first lay president of the Club, has been elected Lord Dean of Guild for the City of Glasgow. The title links back to the ancient guilds which regulated the burgh's trade and commerce before the development of local government. The Merchants' House which he heads is now largely concerned with supporting charitable and educational groups, but the office retains its place in the civic hierarchy, coming second to the Lord Provost on ceremonial occasions. Raymond, a lawyer to trade, is also a notable patron of the arts, particularly music in the city and beyond. Congratulations on this latest honour!



Raymond Proudly wearing his chain of office

Quartet with the WOW factor



The Fejes Quartet, which has been delighting club members for several years, played again for us on Friday 6th September. It was the first use of the Dining Room as a recital venue with the grand piano.

The good-sized audience found that the combination of the room, in café layout, and the acoustic very well suited to such music-making.

The programme was intriguing, comprising Verdi's only string quartet, a memorable discovery for many of us.

After the interval there were nicely contrasting piano quintets in the delicate, busy music of Boccherini and a powerfully romantic piece from Respighi.

The quartet was joined by Marco Scolastra, courtesy of Instituto Italiano di Culturo in Edinburgh who ended the recital delightfully, if enigmatically, by performing a brief, but un-announced collection of powerful piano solos in which the hand of George Gershwin was apparent!

I.McG

Bard on Bard

A present-day Ayrshire poet will confront his world-famous predecessor at the Club on the last day of January. Rab Wilson, who comes from New Cumnock and has also won critical acclaim for his writing 'mainly in the Scottish tongue' has agreed to propose the Immortal Memory at the Club's Burns Supper, held just six days after the bard's official birthday.

His wife Margaret, a noted folk singer, will also be contributing to the programme: other guest appearances have still to be announced.

Because the Gallery is not available, the number who can be fitted round tables for this popular event will be much reduced so early booking is strongly advised.



Times past

This scrap of newsprint, spotted by a workman in the Gallery and handed over to a member, confirms that the building has been largely undisturbed since for the past 120 years.

It is from The Evening Times of March 13, 1893, just months before the club moved into its permanent premises. The work, to combine two neighbouring townhouses and add a purpose-built gallery, started on 16 September 1892 and the Council held its first meeting there on 7 June 1893.

Archives show that the paper is marked 4 pm, and so the second of five daily editions – later issues were added for special occasions. But there is no breaking news on the front page: in the Evening Times: as in other journals of the time, that was reserved for public notices and advertisements, mainly for sales of fashion goods and services, some of them familiar today.

A peek behind the curtain – Sign of the times

Paul Dowds, chair of the Glasgow Art Club Property Company brings members up to date with the work in the Gallery.

No one visiting the club can have missed the level of activity now underway, since the main contractor, W H Kirkwood, took possession of the site in early August 2013. Work is currently taking place on a number of fronts and is on programme.

You will be aware that the project includes the refurbishment of the Gallery as originally conceived. It includes early design work by Charles Rennie Mackintosh who was an assistant in Keppie Architects.

The Gallery has now been stripped out including the floor, floor joists and wall panelling – essential preparation, prior to the installation of a new damp-proof membrane under both the new floor and behind the wall panelling. The high level, timber lay-light at ceiling level, which was an early 20th century addition, has been removed, revealing the original cupola's architectural detail and greatly increasing the amount of light levels in the Gallery as intended by Keppie.

Excavation and construction of a concrete pit in the basement has been completed. This will house a scissors lift to facilitate the raising and lowering of furniture stored in the basement for use in functions in the Gallery. Work has begun on laying a limecrete slab over the Gallery floor area.

Scaffolding has been erected to the front of the building, this will remain in place until the Bath Street stone facade and the whole roof area have been renewed, both major elements of work within the project. A temporary canopy will be erected on the roof over the Gallery area to protect it during the roof repairs. Scaffolding will be erected this month along the rear lane external Gallery wall to support one end of the temporary canopy.

It is anticipated that work on replicating the Mackintosh frieze will be completed by the end of August 2014. The contract is scheduled for completion by 31st December 2014 but it is planned that the refurbished Gallery will be handed over to the Club in early October 2014.

Members cannot have failed to notice that a large banner advert has been mounted on the facade scaffolding which is producing an additional source of revenue.

I will issue another progress report in February 2014. Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries.

Tel. – 0141 586 7873

email – p.c.dowds@ntlworld.com



Above, the cupola seen in its full height and light. Above right, the giant scaffolding banner; below, the gallery stripped out (left) and the excavation of the basement (right) Inset, left to right, Celia Sinclair, Robert Kelsey and Efric McNeil.



Adieu to the gallery



Party pictures show, above left, The President bidding farewell for the present, and right, Jim and Maeve Fitzpatrick dancing the night away. Below, the last private view in the gallery – for now.



Chairs in store

On a Monday morning in June at 09.45 precisely the removal men arrived at Bath Street and loaded every stick of Gallery furniture into their large van.

They also loaded-up an astonishing and frankly depressing quantity of broken tables and chairs dumped in the basement over the last fifty years or more. This stash may prove useful when repairing some of the other furniture.

The team of four dealt quietly, quickly and carefully with everything including the rag-tag and bobtail of disgracefully neglected stuff.

Down we went to Scottish Opera's South Street scenery store, an enormous Zeppelin-hangar-like building, formerly Barclay Curle's engineering shop.

Inside this cavernous place were stacked upon stack and aisle upon aisle of 40' long metal shipping containers – each large enough to take the contents of a pair of three-bedroomed houses.

One of these monsters was made available for temporary storage of the club's furniture, offered by Scottish Opera's general manager, Alex Reedijk. A big debt of thanks to him.

Within two and a half hours the whole operation was completed, including dismantling, reassembling and moving the grand piano to get it through the too too narrow gallery doors into the Dining Room!

The repairer-restorers will now be able to access all the furniture stored in the container, returning the pieces one by one to a couple of upstairs studios to prepare as much as possible, for the grand reopening of the Gallery.

All of this, of course, is totally dependent on the extent to which club members are prepared to contribute as liberally as possible to the cost of all this urgent work. If you haven't got around to contributing please don't delay. Every pound counts.

Iain McGlashan

Sun shines on a hidden gem

It was third time lucky for this year's summer outing. Following high winds at Dumfries House and a wash-out at Ardkinglas, picnickers arrived at Craufurdland Castle in hazy sunshine – and astonishment at finding such a fascinating estate so close to the city. We were welcomed by Simon Craufurd – whose family was gifted the land in 1245 – with his wife and two lively young daughters, then left us in peace to set out the food and group seats on the lawn under a now blazing sun.

Simon then took us on a tour of the building, packed full of history but now split into a comfortable family home and a separate flat which can be rented by discriminating visitors. This left little time to explore the extensive grounds before packing up and leaving the castle entrance as we found it, but everyone agreed it was a perfect place for a sunny Sunday in June.



Setting up the feast



Simon Craufurd and daughters bid us welcome



Food for all



What to choose?



The perfect backdrop for lunch

Exhibitions in the Club

Glasgow Art Club President's Painting and Drawing prize

An exhibition of work by 3rd and 4th year Painting and Printmaking students from Glasgow School of Art. Prizes will be presented at the opening. Private view: Sunday 17 November, 3pm. Exhibition Runs: Sunday 17 – Saturday 23 November

Philip Spence solo exhibition

Private view: Friday 29 November, 5.30-8pm. Exhibition Runs: Monday 25 November – Monday 2 December

Glasgow Art Club Winter Exhibition

Private view: Sunday 8 December, 3pm – opening by Kirsty Wark. Exhibition Runs: Sunday 8 December – Monday 13 January

Obituaries

Laura Campbell

22/9/35 -27/4/13

Laura Campbell was already a collector of fine art and antiques when she joined Glasgow Art Club. Over more than 20 years she became a great supporter of GAC artists and they in turn supported the many activities she organised.

Her auctions raised many thousands of pounds for the Club – one brought in around £80,000 – but she always made sure that the artists received their commission. She also invited many buyers to the Club and seldom let them out without a purchase.

Another passion was for organising spectacular parties, particularly at Christmas time. Who could forget the legendary black-and-white ball or the brilliant Elvis Presley night ('close your eyes and he's in the room, pet'). The gallery looked fantastic, the cocktails

flowed, the chef excelled himself... everyone danced the night away and we had yet another auction and one of the most extravagant and generous raffles one could have witnessed. It recalled the glories of past Art Club balls yet with Laura's own particular glamour and glitz.

For many years Laura made the most exquisite floral decorations for every occasion – for weddings, parties, special lunches, as well as normal club activities. Always hands on, she would be up at the crack of dawn and off to the flower market, coming back with something new and exciting every time – and paying for most of it herself. She gave the same particular attention to any number of small projects – and woebetide the workman who did not meet her exacting standards!

Hazel Nagl



Alan King

23/8/46 -12/7/13



Alan King was a good man, a fine teacher and an excellent artist of the highest order.

He was very proud of his artist membership of the Club and once served on Council. He always supported the exhibitions and never failed to donate work when the Club needed to raise funds.

Alan's art, famed for his men in red hats, was decoratively detailed, and had the feeling of a fantastic operatic set grounded in his love of the Italian Renaissance masters Leonardo, Botticelli and Piero Della Francesca.

He studied the masters' techniques and he himself was a master of the glazing technique... look and admire how he could drape sheer translucent cloth over skin.

I well remember the day when he excitedly

told me he had found a potion that would lay down black oil paint just the way he wanted.

His main compositions were painstakingly researched, prepared and carefully completed over a long period of time – a labour of love.

Alan was a great family man and he and his wife Agnes enjoyed having friends over for dinner. It was always a pleasure to be in their lovely and happy home.

Agnes prepared a lovely meal, and Alan, over a glass or two of fine wine, would entertain with his cheeky, whimsical and fantastical yet innocent sense of humour... he loved to giggle.

He was taken too soon. All thoughts are with Agnes and Alan's family. The Glasgow Art Club will miss Alan.

I miss him. He was my pal.

James S.Davis

Welcome to new members joined since spring

Anderson Gary Mr
Armstrong Evelyn Mrs
Anderson Jennifer Ms
Agnew Julian M Dr
Adey Jadwiga Mrs
Blamire Leo Mr
Briggs Julie Ms
Bouchier Anthony Mr
Bassett Aaron Mr
Bird Theodore Mr
Bond Michael Sir
Cunningham Kaye Ms
Cahn Catherine Mrs
Connell Philip Dr
Edgar Graeme Mr
Erroch Bruce Mr
Forsyth Alistair Mr
Galloway Alexander Mr
Howard Ken Professor OBE RA
Hunter Laura Ms

Artist
Lay Retired
Artist Town
Lay Town
Lay Country
Artist Country
Lay Retired
Lay Corporate
Lay Corporate
Lay Country
Lay Town
Lay Country
Lay Country
Lay Country
Artist Town
Lay Corporate
Lay Country
Artist Town
Honorary
Lay Corporate

Henderson Steven Dr
Kennedy Alison Miss
Kay-Williams Susan Dr
Lansberry Elizabeth Miss
Lightbody Katherine Ms
Mulhern Ciara Miss
Morton Niall Mr
Moss Anya Mrs
Merley Mark Mr
McGoldrick David Mr
McCreddie Iain Mr
Robertson Alexander Mr
Ross Lindsey Dr
Richardson Carolyn Ms
Renton Ronald W Mr
Stillwell Natasha Miss
Sughrue Cindy Dr OBE
Tait George Mr
Tait Madeleine Mrs Y
Walsh Thomas Mr

Young Lay
Young Lay
Lay Corporate
Lay Corporate
Lay Town
Young Lay
Young Lay
Lay Town
Honorary
Lay Associate
Young Lay
Lay Corporate
Lay Country
Lay Town
Lay Corporate
Lay Town
Lay Country
Lay Associate
Lay Retired

Pictures and pixels

Ian D McMillan spent more than 20 years developing his own graphic design and digital services company before returning to his first love, painting. Here he shares his know-how with GAC members.

Often, the quandary facing artists in publicising their work is understanding the technical needs for photos in different media and what kind of digital camera will achieve the desired results. If you use a professional photographer you will not only pay for his or her time but you will get all the right digital info you will need. However, it's essential to establish final aims with them for the size and quality of photograph needed to reproduce your work.

Q. How much quality do you need for differing sizes of printed images?

A. High-end Litho printing requires the highest resolution digital photos (300dpi) that, ideally, should also match the exact dimension of the finished print.

Uncompressed TIFF image files are the natural choice, to maintain quality, but compressed JPEG images can be used safely if that's all you have got. Most single lens reflex cameras and good quality compact cameras allow for selection of TIFF or JPEG and whichever you use is a judgement call, depending how much space there is in the camera's memory

card. What's important to remember here, is that a larger image is easily sampled down if a smaller reproduction is required, but if the file is too small in both resolution and scale, sampling up is very rarely successful.

Q. In what circumstances are CMYK and RGB colourspaces to be used?

A. CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow & Black) are the primary printing ink colours and RGB (Red, Green & Blue) are how TVs, computer monitors and cameras display and capture colour. RGB files do not work in commercial Litho printing and need to be converted to CMYK. However, designers or printers will normally do this conversion.

Conversely, digital printing and web sites do not use CMYK and RGB files are essential. A printer or designer can advise if you are not sure. However, using the same photographs across the different technologies necessitates a greater understanding of how colours will vary in the final production of images.

Q. What is resolution and why is it important?

A. Resolution is still referred as Dpi (dots per inch) and the same terminology is still used today in the digital world.

Digital photographs start life now as pixels per inch and any manipulation work or colour correction done on a computer is actually done in pixels. However, ignoring the low resolution web and social media for now, and dealing with just the printing process, it separates images into dots (dpi) on zinc plates to achieve the final printed product. Confusing??

It's confusing because dpi is used to describe two different, yet connected, parts of the same process. A printing press still needs photos to be separated into dots, (dpi) and that is a purely mechanical process. However, dpi is also used in a more subjective way as a target criterion, to achieve final quality in photo manipulation and correction programmes such as Photoshop.

Perhaps it's easier to explain what happens when things go awry. If an original digital photo is only taken at, say, post card size, at 300dpi and is then stretched to make an A4 or larger, front cover shot for an exhibition catalogue, the number of pixels from the post card size photo will not have increased and will be very obvious.

Resolution can be increased, and the pixels reduced but the result will now appear very blurred rather than pixelated.

If any members have technical queries please let the office know and we will include them in future issues.

DIARY DATES

Christmas Party

Saturday
14 December
£25.00 – festive buffet and entertainment, from 7pm.
£10 – entertainment from 9pm.

Burns Supper

Friday 31
January 2014
£35 with special guest speakers

Drawing support

While the gallery is out of bounds during refurbishment, other parts of the building are finding new uses. Two years ago, work started on reinstating the large south-facing room on the second floor as a practical studio space. It is now known as Studio 2, pictured right, and has been used by artist members for drawing and painting workshops.

Artist, Alice McMurrough has organised untutored life classes on Monday afternoons – they held their first exhibition in the Gallery in March. Her husband Neil Macdonald has also offered classes in life drawing and portraiture.

These have been popular with members and non-members and incur a fee, all profits feeding into the Club purse.



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DIARY DATES

Club Holidays

The Club will be closed over the festive period from Friday 20 December and will reopen on Friday 3 January. Please note however that the Club will be open from 12 noon – 6pm on Saturday 28 December and Monday 30 December