



LISKEARD ARTS

Chair's December Newsletter 2024

Dear Members

Winter has now arrived! Since our last meeting we've had snow, high winds, much rain and chillier temperatures! Time is flying by, Christmas is just round the corner and we're coming to the end of this year's programme.

I was not disappointed with last month's talk by Jacqui Carey on MS 8932 Medieval embroidered almanac. She not only unpicked the needlework cover but gave us an insight into the John Somer almanac, its contents and construction. Jacqui's expertise in and enthusiasm for historic English needlework is legendary. We're so fortunate to have such high quality speakers at our meetings.

I'm sure that this month's talk by Simon Whitehouse on Oscar Wilde will be just as engaging and I look forward to welcoming you all along to our complimentary Prosecco and mince pies before we settle down to hear what Simon has to say.

If you have paid your subscription for 2025 by 1st December or do so on the 10th, you will be able to collect your Membership and Programme card from Liz Undy at December's meeting. If not the card will be available when you come along in January.

Mary Utton
Chair

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

DISCOVERY MORNING on 1st APRIL 2025

What exactly is Byzantine Art and how do you pronounce it?

The early art and architecture of one of history's greatest empires – from Constantine to Justinian

Our speaker is LAS friend, **Geri Parlbay**

Session One: 4th and 5th centuries. The Emperor Constantine – the birth of Constantinople and the mosaics of Ravenna
Session Two: 6th and 7th centuries. The Emperor and the Prostitute – the era of Justinian and Theodora; ivories and icons and the building of Hagia Sophia.



Look out for the booking form soon to be available from our website or attached to the emails Liz will be sending out.

RAISING MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

Thank you to the LAS Members who suggested that it would be easier to encourage someone to come along to one of our Liskeard Arts meetings if they had the 2025 Programme ready to hand them.

For this purpose we have produced an A4 double sided sheet. Liz has already sent you an email with the Programme sheet attached. You will also find it at the back of this newsletter and in case you have difficulties printing the document out, you can also find hard copies on the registration desk.

About the Speaker

SIMON WHITEHOUSE



Simon Whitehouse is a (recovering) actor, lecturer, presenter, Alexander Technique and voice teacher and award winning London Blue Badge guide.

He has worked as a guide lecturer in house at Shakespeare's Globe, the Royal Opera House, the BBC and the National Gallery guiding both public and private tours. He is on the faculty of Ithaca College and also lectures for the Blue Badge Guide training course on the performing arts and English literature.

Simon's specialisms and passions are theatre, literature, fashion and art history but whatever the subject, Simon will weave a wonderful story from it.

WILDE ABOUT OSCAR – THE LIFE AND TIMES OF OSCAR WILDE

Simon Whitehouse

Tuesday 10th December 2024
at 19:30

Join us in Liskeard Public Hall from 19:00 and help us celebrate the Christmas Season with complimentary Prosecco and mince pies (non-alcoholic beverages available)

Guests (£8) are always welcome

"One should either be a work of art, or wear a work of art." Oscar Wilde.

Writer, wit and the first modern celebrity; the life and times of Oscar Wilde from his Irish roots to his days as a student at Oxford and his meteoric rise to the heights of celebrity.

We travel with him to the United States and examine his starring role within the artistic & theatrical worlds of late 19th century London. We visit his home in bohemian Chelsea and some of his favourite West End haunts.

Finally, we learn how 'tired of being in the heights, he plunged into the depths' of his prison cell following the most infamous criminal trial of the 19th century and became famous for being INfamous...

Looking ahead: Talk on 7th January

Tyler Butterworth will be joining us to talk about "**A Bit of a Carry On**"

This is the remarkable story of Carry On actor Peter Butterworth and his wife, Britain's first female tv impressionist, Janet Brown, best known for her impression of Mrs Thatcher. We get to see behind Tyler's parents' public lives and hear their fascinating stories.

NB: *This talk takes place on the first Tuesday of the month*

LISKEARD ARTS VISITS MINSTER CHURCH OF ST ANDREWS PLYMOUTH, PRYSTEN HOUSE AND ABBEY HALL

On 6th November, 16 LAS Members and friends gathered at St Andrew's Church, Plymouth. William Greaves-Stocker led the tour of the church for us. William proceeded to give us a brief outline of the church's history and its layout but the main purpose of our visit was to see and appreciate the wonderful Piper windows with their bold colours, the designs of which William went on to explain.



John Egerton Christmas Piper *CH* (1903–1992) was an English painter, printmaker and designer of stained-glass windows and both opera and theatre sets. He began working in stained glass from 1951 in partnership with Patrick Reyntiens, whom he had met through John Betjeman.



Piper was born in Epsom, Surrey, in 1903 and from a very early age developed a love for churches and archaeology. He claimed that he had visited every church in Surrey by the time he was fourteen. Eschewing a career in Law he went on to study at the Richmond School of Art followed by the Royal College of Art in London and was invited by Ben Nicholson to join the Seven and Five Society in 1933; fellow members included Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore. His earliest works were abstracts based on coastal themes (boats, shells, beaches etc.) using collage and paint effects but by the mid-1930s he had begun again to incorporate architectural and archaeological images. He also worked on the early *Shell* guides with John Betjeman. It was in 1951 that Penelope Betjeman, John's wife, happened to be a guest at John and Myfanwy Piper's home, Fawley Bottom near Henly-on-Thames, and mentioned that she had made the acquaintance of the young Patrick Reyntiens whose parents-in-law, the

Bruces, were friends of hers and John's. Thus it was that the key link between the combined creative talents of Reyntiens and Piper, essential to the success of St Andrew Church windows, was forged.



Patrick Reyntiens *OBE* (1925-2021) studied fine art at Edinburgh College of Art. He began his career in stained glass with an apprenticeship with Eddie Nuttgens, and flourished when he met and collaborated with John Piper.



Together Piper and Reyntiens redefined the medium in the post war era. They worked on the Baptistry Window, Coventry Cathedral and Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral as well as numerous ecclesiastical and secular commissions in Britain and USA. Within the Minster Church of St Andrew, Plymouth there are six Piper/Reyntiens windows, one of the best collections of post second World War glass in the Southwest.



*Tower window (1957-62)
Astor Memorial Window*

An outstanding five-light window packed with Crucifixion iconography in glowing colours. Although started in 1957, it was not completed until 1962.

The 15th Century parish church of Plymouth is now known as the Minster Church of St Andrew, having been declared a Minster on 29th November 2009 as part of 1100th anniversary of the Diocese of Exeter. It is the largest church in Devon, nearly 60 metres long and 30 metres wide with aisles but no clerestory.

Between 20th and 22nd March 1941 it was completely burnt out by German incendiaries during the Plymouth Blitz. Only the walls and tower remained. The carillon of bells and two faces of the clock were damaged. The bells themselves were intact. The manual organ was destroyed. A board with the word Resurgam, meaning I will rise again, was fixed over the north porch. The ruins were laid out as gardens and services were held there in what became known as The Garden Church between 1942 -1949. On 22nd October 1949 HRH Princess Elizabeth laid the foundation stone for the restoration of the church, which was re-roofed and restored by Mr Frederick Etchells and in November 1957 on St Andrews Day, the church was re-consecrated by the Lord Bishop of Exeter.



The star of the show is undoubtedly the scheme of six windows designed by John Piper and executed by Patrick Reyntiens. Perhaps the most interesting is the window, dedicated to the memory of Lady Astor, the first female MP to take her seat in Parliament in 1919 (technically Countess Constance Markievicz was the first MP elected, but as a member of Sinn Féin she did not take up her seat). A north transept window has a vividly coloured window based on a theme of inspiration and music, and is dedicated to Dr Harry Moreton, organist here from 1885-1961.

Not much that is old survives apart from some wall monuments but the sheer scale of the place, its overall post-war feel and the Piper glass makes this a very impressive church worthy of a visit.

After our coffee break, Janet Greaves-Stocker took over as tour guide to show us Prysten House and Abbey Hall.

Prysten House is a late medieval merchant's house, built in the late 15th century by Thomas Yogge, who died in 1509. It was erroneously identified in the 19th century as the Prysten (Priest's) House. Thomas Yogge helped have the west tower of the church built by paying for the labour. He also paid for a new Lady Chapel on the north side of the church.

Prysten House is built of limestone with granite dressings. The bay window above the entrance is especially grand. The house is of three storeys with galleried wings flanking a back courtyard. The back block was replaced in the 1920s by Abbey Hall.

An interesting piece of history linked to the House is that in 1501 Katherine of Aragon, on her way to England to marry Arthur, Prince of Wales, landed at Plymouth after a difficult voyage across the Channel. She went in state to St Andrew's to give thanks for her safe arrival and stayed overnight at Prysten House.



Feedback from Members shows how much they appreciated the visit. Here are just some of the comments received: *"Thank you for organising today which was very enjoyable The light was bright enough to really enjoy the windows and look at them in detail. I will now want to see the preparatory sketches in The Box"* (Nigel)

"I very much enjoyed the tour and would like to thank you for organising it. The speakers were good (although it was a tad difficult to hear William) and we had just the right amount of time to see everything. It was also good to mingle and talk with fellow LAS members. I loved the stained glass windows and the tapestry in particular." (Lucia Clark)

"We both had a very interesting visit... such magnificent windows all inspiring. A relaxed visit which made for a very enjoyable morning." (Alan and Sheila Chambers)

"Julie and myself really enjoyed the tour and would certainly recommend it. The windows in the Minster were spectacular and the tour of Prysten House and Abbey Hall were very informative and interesting. Thank you for organising the tour." (Roger and Julie Beck)

"Prysten House and Abbey Hall were fascinating; I would have liked longer there." (Frances Impey)

"The tour of Prysten House was so very interesting. The guide was very enthusiastic and knowledgeable." (Sue Jolly)

We owe William and Janet, who are both LAS Members, a big thank you for leading such an interesting tour.

UPDATE from THE ARTS SOCIETY

The wish of Head Office is that all Members become better informed about the strategy and activities of The Arts Society; so here is the latest news from Trustees

Appointment of Acting Chief Executive

The trustees are pleased to announce that they have appointed Ian Arnold as Acting Chief Executive Officer. Due to existing commitments Ian will initially be with us part-time, moving to full time with effect from 12 December 2024.

Ian is an experienced business man and marketing professional who will help us develop and implement our emerging strategy of using national marketing, including digital techniques, to raise our profile, attract new audiences and drive new members to the societies; of accelerating the development of tools to assist the societies in their own marketing efforts; and supporting and strengthening the national and area teams to assist both new and existing societies.

We are sure all members will welcome Ian to the team, and he will be keen to meet as many as possible of you over the next few months.

Financial Accounting at Head Office

After an in depth review carried out by Gina Krupski, our Honorary Treasurer, we have agreed to outsource financial accounting to JS2, a firm of chartered accountants who specialise in providing these services to the not for profit sector. They will be working closely with Lewis Merricks, who will continue to be the principal point of contact for most of you on accounting matters. This means we will not be looking for a direct replacement for the Chief Operating Officer.

Autumn Town Hall meeting

The Autumn bi-annual Town Hall meeting took place on Monday 28th October 2024 at 11am on Zoom. Around 170 Society representatives joined the meeting and a number of topics were raised and discussed with Trustees.

Changes to Trustee Board

Sally Kent stepped down from the trustee board on 5 November. Sally has played a major role in developing our strategy, and the board would like to record its appreciation of all the work she has done.

Visit to our Patron HRH The Duchess of Gloucester

On 11 November, the Society's Patron, HRH The Duchess of Gloucester graciously received Jeremy Thomas, Chair, and Caroline Coleman, Vice President for Volunteering. The Duchess showed a keen interest in the activities of The Arts Society and provided some helpful insights and suggestions. Jeremy and Caroline were able to update her on recent developments, and left with her good wishes for the Society's future.

Governance Review Report

Following requests from a number of members, we have placed in the Resources Area of the website a report dated April 2023 from the Compass Partnership on a Future Governance Structure for The Arts Society. This was commissioned by the then leadership team, to look in particular at how trustees were appointed. In reading the report, it should be borne in mind that:

- The report assumed that the Society would follow a twin track strategy, where national activities were pursued *in parallel with* supporting Societies (without pre-empting our current strategy review, the current board will be placing greater emphasis on national activities *which support* Societies);
- The report draws heavily on interviews, including with some of the then trustees, and to some extent it reflects back the views of those interviewed;

- The consultancy put forward different options, and the recommendations in the report are from the particular option chosen by the then leadership team. (We do not have details of the other options which were presented.)

The proposals that were subsequently put out to consultation with members in early 2024 differed markedly from the report's recommendations, and were decisively rejected at the Extraordinary General Meeting in June 2024. Nevertheless, the report contains some interesting insights and analysis, and will be borne in mind when the new Board, in conjunction with experts drawn from the wider membership, conducts its own review of governance, including the trustee appointment process.

Reading this I now have more confidence that following a rocky period The Arts Society will be able to heal the rift that had developed between Head Office and local Societies.

REMINDERS FROM THE COMMITTEE

December's Refreshments Don't forget that at this month's meeting our Refreshment Team will be serving a complimentary glass of Prosecco or non-alcoholic beverage and mince pie from 7.00pm to help us get into the Christmas spirit.	Guests Welcome! Our doors are open to guests (£8). If you have family nearby or visiting, or have friends interested in seeing what we're about, please do encourage them to come along with you. Even better would be for you to persuade them to become members! Membership contact: 07790 821714
Hearing Difficulties If you have difficulty hearing our speaker, please email me or Liz Undy by 9.00am on the day of each talk if you wish to reserve seats at the front	Raffle Please bring your £1 coin for the raffle. Tickets will be on sale for £1 / per ticket with a chance to win a bottle of wine.
Liskeard Arts Website Have you ever visited and explored our website – www.liskeardartssociety.org.uk ? If not, I encourage you to do so. There's all the relevant information there about talks, Discovery Days, visits, tours and other activities we have been, are and will be involved in. You can also give feedback on the speakers and their talk.	
Speaker Feedback Don't forget to provide your feedback on the speaker and their talk. Please go to our website, www.liskeardartssociety.org.uk You should see on the front page a box saying 'Lecture Feedback'. Click here and it will take you to a page where you enter a password which is Liskeard and then can grade the quality of the lecture and the quality of overheads/slides. There is also a box for your comments.	

If you have any ideas, comments or queries or you can help us in any way please contact me.

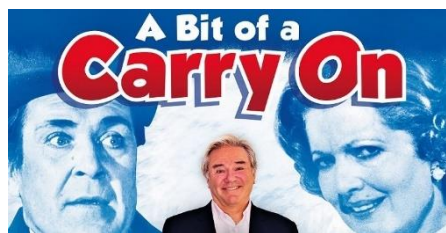
This only leaves me to wish you a very happy Christmas and all the very best for the new year ahead.

I look forward to welcoming you back to Liskeard Arts on Tuesday 7th January 2025 after your Christmas festivities and New Year celebrations.

Mary Utton

Chair of Liskeard Arts

mary.utton2@gmail.com or liskeardarts@gmail.com



January 7th

Tyler Butterworth – A Bit of a Carry On

The remarkable story of Carry On actor Peter Butterworth and his wife, Britain's first female tv impressionist, Janet Brown, best known for her impression of Mrs Thatcher. Using classic film and tv clips, with rare photographs and letters from his family's unseen collection, we see behind Tyler's parents' public lives and hear their fascinating stories.



February 11th

Doug Gillen – Empowering People. The Real Voice of Street Art

'Art lies at the heart of social unrest, a voice for those who cannot be heard. Graffiti is more than mindless vandalism, it's the early stages of revolution'. Doug Gillen created production company, Fifth Wall TV, six years ago and he's been filming and talking about street art ever since.

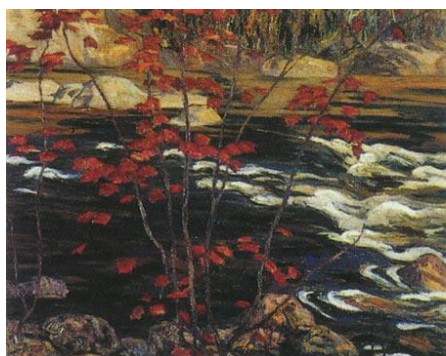


March 11th

Jane Gardiner – Vases and Volcanoes

This talk will focus on two overriding interests of the late 18th century – the study and collecting of Greek vases and a fascination with volcanic activity, encouraged by the excavations at Herculaneum and Pompeii; in particular, at the life and collections of Sir William Hamilton, British envoy to the Court of Naples from 1764 to 1800.

Picture is of Sir William Hamilton by David Allen, 1775



April 8th

Ross King – Wild Men of the North

In 1924 an English critic acclaimed an exhibition of Canadian landscapes as 'the most vital group of paintings produced since the war – indeed the century'. These vibrant, Post-Impressionist landscapes of Canada's northern lakes and rugged backwoods were created by the 'Group of Seven', Toronto-based painters. Ross King explores how they broke through conservative barriers to gain international recognition as a distinctive avant-garde movement.

This painting by [A. Y. Jackson](#) is in the public domain in the United States because it was first published before 1923



May 13th

Ashley Gray – A Yorkshire / Cornish Textile Renaissance: Tom Heron, Cryséde and Cresta at the Birth of Modernism

An epic tale of two extraordinary figures from the same valley in Yorkshire who were destined to change the world of fashion and design for all time. A story that takes us from the mills of Yorkshire in the 1920s to the coast of Cornwall; from Welwyn Garden City to the corridors of power at Westminster.

Ashley Gray: leading specialist and curator in modern textiles and their design and history.



June 10th

Sarah Cove – Fakes and Fortunes; or have I discovered a Constable in my attic?

A behind the scenes talk where renowned Constable expert, Sarah Cove talks about her discoveries on the BBC show Fake or Fortune. Beyond the show, she has many more stories of highs and lows in the art world.



September 9th

Ralph Hoyle – Mid-Eighteenth English Rococo Silver

Ralph brings with him the silver he is going to talk about and covers the social context of the piece and its Huguenot inspired design. He then shows us how he discovered who the original owner was and the misfortunes that befell them.



October 7th

Chantal Brotherton-Ratcliffe – Jan Brueghel

Jan Brueghel, the younger son of Pieter Bruegel, recorded much of the world around him. He delights us with fantasies and scenes of heaven. Short-sighted, he painted pictures of exquisite detail and entrancing miniature scale. His landscapes are microcosms of the known flora and fauna of his day. His beautiful paintings are analysed but, above all, they are presented for the sheer enjoyment of the audience.

This work is in the [public domain](#) in the [United States](#) because it was [published](#) before January 1, 1929.



*'Field of the Cloth of Gold,'
anonymous.*

November 11th

Siobhan Clarke – King and Collector; the art of Henry VIII

Henry VIII was an enthusiastic patron of the arts whose palaces, tapestries and paintings enriched the Tudor court and began the Royal Collection. The forces that influenced his life can be seen in the works he commissioned, all telling one central story: the glorification of Henry and his England.

Painting is in the public domain in the United States because it was first published in 1545



Mere Downs, © Charlie Waite

December 9th

Charlie Waite – The Making of Landscape Photographs

Landscape photography is a way of life and is an essential method of expression for Charlie Waite. This fully illustrated talk with in excess of 60 images explores the relationship between the making of an image and the way in which it is perceived by the viewer. Further discussion centres around the eye and the brain being an extraordinary double act made up of visual references and intellectual interpretation.

DISCOVERY MORNING on APRIL 1ST - Morning only

Geri Parlby - What exactly is Byzantine Art? Early art and architecture from Constantine to Justinian

Session One: 4th & 5th Centuries – The birth of Constantinople and the mosaics of Ravenna.

Session Two: 6th & 7th Centuries – The era of Justinian and Theodora. Ivories and icons and the building of Hagia Sophia.

