



The Arts Society Leatherhead July 2018 newsletter

Dear Member,

Our 100th anniversary World War One talk next week is on Lawrence of Arabia by an archaeologist who has visited us before; see below. For those of you who can resist watching England in the World Cup we will have our traditional July Pimms and light snacks at the lecture.

We are now finalising trips bookings for the rest of 2018 (details see below):

Wednesday 5 September: **Woman's Place in Parliament Exhibition**; spaces.

Tuesday 11 September: **A chance to see Bamber Gascoigne's West Horsley Place**; only a few tickets available (note a change of date). Bookings open.

Thursday 25 October: **Ismaili Centre and the V&A**; bookings open, maximum 20.

Over 40 of you have already booked for the **Musical and Historic Tour of Westminster Abbey**, including supper on Saturday 17 November. I suggest others book now if you want to go; we have less than 10 places available.

As I said last month, with a number of retiring Committee members we need a couple more Committee members in October (e.g. a Secretary and someone with IT/website expertise, e.g. to help with the newsletter). Ask John Andrews, or me, if you might be interested and want to know more.

All my best wishes

Huw Jenkins, Secretary

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This month's Talk 7.30pm Wednesday 11 July

Lawrence of Arabia: Excavating the Legend by Dr Neil Faulkner

On the basis of sensational new evidence from archaeological fieldwork, Neil will contrast the legend of Lawrence of Arabia with the true story of what happened in the famous desert war of 1916-1918. Dr Faulkner, who has visited us once before, will have copies of his 2017 book, "Lawrence of Arabia's War" for sale.



Do you have friends interested in becoming new members?

As a special offer members joining us after 1 August only have to pay £15 for membership for the rest of 2018. Ask me if you want to invite them as guests next week to try it out.

Voice and Vote exhibition at Westminster Hall on Wednesday 5 September



2018 marks 100 years since Parliament passed a law which allowed women to vote for the first time. On this tour we will visit Westminster Hall, which was the part of the Houses of Parliament that survived the fire of 1834 (remember Caroline Shenton's excellent talk to us last summer). We will see the magnificent hammer-beam roof of Westminster Hall, which is the largest medieval timber roof in Northern Europe. In the Hall we will see the major exhibition, Voice & Vote: Women's Place in Parliament. We will also be able to examine how the fascinating recent "New Dawn" work of art celebrates votes for women. Bookings will be taken on Wednesday. The trip will be led by our President June Robinson.

Bamber Gascoigne's West Horsley Place on Tuesday 11 September

Note: We have had to change the date of this tour as the house was needed for filming

Stories about broadcaster Bamber Gascoigne inheriting West Horsley Place hit the national papers four years ago and since then many of us have been curious to see inside this local mansion. There will be a tour of the Grade I listed mansion, the majority of which dates to the 15th century and was so desirable it was seized by Henry VIII. We will also see some of the house's 300 acres, on part of which a 700 seat opera house has been built. Maximum 20 (we will take names of those interested who cannot go, and may book another tour if this tour is well received).

The Ismaili Centre and the V&A on Thursday 25 October

This visit is an unparalleled opportunity to be guided round a mosque on a group tour. The Ismaili Centre is an award-winning piece of modern architecture in South Kensington, opposite the V&A, with traditional decorations inside and a beautiful Islamic roof garden. There are also photographs related to the Aga Khan, its sponsor. Our guide will answer general questions on Islam and on the Ahmadi tradition in particular. After lunch we can visit the V&A.

Musical and historic tour of Westminster Abbey Saturday 17 November

The music during our very special **evening tour** of the Abbey is provided by members of the Purcell Club (Henry Purcell was the organist 1679-1695). Former Abbey choristers will sing and narrate their way around the Abbey (including St Edward the Confessor's

Shrine, Henry VII Chapel, Poets' Corner and the Unknown Warriors grave). They will sing anthems and other pieces ranging from the 16th to 21st centuries. This is a unique way to be in the Abbey at night. We have already taken bookings for 43 of 52 places (of 78 in total that evening) and our group will have the Abbey to ourselves. We will all travel by coach from Leatherhead and have booked a two course supper before the tour in the Cellarium Café at the Abbey. We last did this tour in 2011 and only 12 groups do the tour each year

Western Sicily holiday 15-22 September 2019

Any members who showed an interest in this 2019 holiday have a place reserved. The itinerary and the booking form can be downloaded from the Visits section of the website. At this stage there may be no extra places available, but if anyone else is now interested please tell Gilly Coombes and their names will be placed on a waiting list.

Report on Royal Holloway College June visit

The trip to Royal Holloway College (part of London University) was well received. The highlight of the day was an excellent informative discussion of the Victorian paintings by the Curator in the Picture Gallery.

Report on College of Arms June visit

The second visit to the College of Arms gave another 20 members a chance to see the amazing historical manuscript records and old books the College owns. Some of you will have seen our press release on the trip (The Leatherhead Advertiser, 21 June). It will be on the notice board in July.

Review of June talk: Thomas Hetherwick: the Leonardo de Vinci of our times by Anthea Streeter

We had another "excellent" talk. There were a number of very favourable comments. I particularly liked one, "Thoroughly enjoyed the lecture - quite a change to have a subject when the main character is still alive and kicking!"

Friday 14 September: talk on Mrs Greville of Polesden Lacey: save the date

Mole Valley Heritage Open days ("HOD") will be on 13-16 September. This year's HOD theme is "Extraordinary Women" and the launch event will be at Leatherhead Theatre. Sian Evans will be talking about Mrs Greville, the extraordinary hostess of Polesden Lacey. Sian has written the definitive book on Mrs Greville: "The Society Hostess who collected King's." Tickets are free but prior booking with The Theatre will be needed; booking opens on 1 August. In the Summer Polesden Lacey will also explore how Maggie Greville took advantage of her influence and power.

Polesden Lacey – Painting of Mrs Greville's dress – Friday 27 July

Come and watch members of Leatherhead Art Club painting a model wearing a copy of Mrs Greville's dress created by Heritage Volunteers from The Arts Society East Surrey Area.

Abinger Roman Villa on Saturday 14th July

A member, Simon Ritchie, is organising a trip to the site of Abinger Roman Villa. At present Surrey Archaeological Society are investigating the pre-Roman usage of the site. If you want to know more please email Simon (simonritchie.uk@gmail.com).

Leatherhead Theatre

Arts highlights include:

RSC Live: **Romeo and Juliet** on Wednesday 18 July at 7.00pm

Glyndebourne's Handel's "**Saul**" on Thursday 26 July at 6.30pm

Leatherhead Rep will make a welcome three week return for an Autumn Season and three plays from 6 November.

Next Talk (Wednesday 12 September)

Aboriginal Art by Rebecca Hossack

Rock, Bark, Ochre: the story of Aboriginal art in the culturally distinct communities of the north of Australia; an extraordinary story of continuous artistic endeavour from rock-paintings dating back 50,000 years, to modern work done on bark in natural ochres. Rebecca Hossack is a Director of three international galleries and has done a lot to introduce Aboriginal Art into Europe.



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