



# BROADBRUSH

Newsletter of Woking Art Society

Spring 2018

## CHAIRPERSON'S OVERVIEW

**Alan Manie**

Hannah Bruce stepped down at the end of December after three years as the Society's first female chairperson for a long time. She brought a lot of youthful energy and enthusiasm to the post. She used her expertise in social media to make the Society more media friendly and was innovative in other ways too, including hosting the first summer party. The Society owes Hannah a serious vote of thanks and the good news is that she remains on the committee as Social Media Secretary.

More good news is that you should not have to wait so long for another female chairperson!

I have stepped in as acting chairperson with a view to handing over to Sue Hinton in a year's time, all being well – and assuming someone else steps in to take on her role as Membership Secretary. *(If you might be interested, please get in touch with me or Sue.)*

It is six years since I was last in the chair – where did all the time go? The truth is that things have changed and will continue to change. I see my job this year as holding everything together. There is a strong committee and, as always, we will continue to try to do what is best for the Society.

We have just held a successful Spring exhibition at the Lightbox, selling 13 paintings. As usual, the selection of work to be exhibited was made by three independent judges who were very complementary about the overall standard of work submitted.

Thanks must go to the committee and all those who put time and effort into making the exhibition a success, especially Sue Hinton who volunteered to act as Exhibition Secretary just for this one exhibition. She did a great job and there's a rumour she may consider carrying on this role – provided we have a volunteer to relieve her as Membership Secretary!

The new display panels were delivered in time for the Lightbox exhibition and proved quite easy to handle. They looked good and were certainly much more professional than our old ones.

The panels cost £3,278 but the Society has a healthy bank balance and the committee took the view that it was time to replace the screens that were getting old and grubby.

The next exhibitions will be outdoors on the 9th and 16th June in Woking town centre. Open to all members, these are great opportunities to advertise ourselves to the general public and attract new members, so please put the dates in your diaries.

Once again Sera Knight has lined up an excellent programme of demonstrations on the first Saturday of the month.

It is worth reminding everyone that Woking Art Society exists for all of its members, from those with a casual interest in the arts through those who paint for a hobby up to professional artists. We aim – and need – to be friendly and welcoming to all.

## EDITOR'S NOTES

**Sue Hinton**

A big thank you to all those who've contributed to this latest offering of Broadbrush – and a plea to ALL members for more stories, anecdotes, news items and/or generally useful stuff for artists next time around please!

The next issue will be published soon after our Autumn Exhibition at The Lightbox. But don't wait until October to submit your copy.

Whether it's a paragraph or a page, you can send your contributions to me at any time. If there's something exciting happening in your art life or you'd like to share your thoughts about an exhibition or something else art-related, send me your draft while it's fresh in your mind.

If you don't have a computer, hand-written is fine as long as it's legible. Relevant images can be supplied in any of the usual formats (that is, jpeg, png, pdf or tif).

Either post everything to me at Rangewell, 5 Pirbright Road, Normandy, Guildford GU3 2AG or email [sue.wokingart@btinternet.com](mailto:sue.wokingart@btinternet.com)

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## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Sue Hinton

At the end of March 2018, Woking Art Society has a total of 143 members, of which 93 are full, 46 are associates and four are honorary.

We finished 2017 with 170 members but some didn't renew for various reasons. So, sadly, the gradual decline in our overall membership numbers seems to be continuing, although it must be said that the Society is faring a lot better than many similar organisations.

Indeed, I'm delighted to report that we've attracted quite a few new members in recent years – to be precise, there were 15 new joiners last year and there have been seven so far in 2018, two joining as a direct result of our recent Lightbox exhibition.

The annual full membership selection process took place in February with 13 associates choosing to participate and seven attaining the required level with all three of their submitted works.

Many congratulations go to our new full members: **Clare Abrahamsen, Elaine Balmer, Pino Cammisa, Maggie Howe, Bryan Jones, Nagihan Seymour** and **Kai Choi**.

And lastly, as Alan mentioned in his Chairperson's report, after six years, I need to hand over my Membership Secretary responsibilities.

*Whilst you need to be fairly organised and familiar with basic Excel spreadsheets, there's nothing complicated about this role – and it's much easier to start it mid-year before subscription renewals!*

If you're interested and/or want to know more, please get in touch.

## RANDOM THOUGHTS FROM A 'NEW' PAINTER

Maggie Howe

Last April I picked up a paintbrush for the first time in 45 years and joined all the classes and art groups that I could find/afford. So I thought that, after 12 months of drawing, painting and printing, I'd reflect on what I've learned (so far!):

1 The community of artists is incredibly generous, sharing materials, advice, experience, time and occasionally excellent cakes. I've made new friends and been given wonderful support and encouragement. I resolve to 'pay it forward'.

- 2 You have to paint and draw badly before you can paint and draw well. Like a child learning to walk, there is quite a bit of practice and persistence required. The pictures that don't 'work' are actually very important as they are the necessary steps to improving your skill.
- 3 Save all the pictures that don't work – you can draw and paint on the back and save them for collage (*who knew that collage would be so satisfying?*)
- 4 Teachers and the wonderful volunteer tutors at Art Groups NEVER agree; but all have so much to offer.
- 5 Buy the best materials you can afford – *does anyone have a use for 50 sheets of practice watercolour paper??!*
- 6 You will always forget at least one thing when you go out to paint.
- 7 You can never have too much kit, although as my son says: "*all the gear, no idea!*"
- 8 Blue and yellow don't always make green.
- 9 You can't get alizarin crimson out of a blue sweater.
- 10 Trees are not shaped like lollipops and neither do they have brown trunks and green leaves.
- 11 Everything looks better in a frame!

I'm so looking forward to the next year of painting.



*Judging by this example, called 'Honesty Gold', Maggie's skills are progressing pretty well!*

## A WEEKEND IN THE COTSWOLDS

John Baker

Way back in the 1990s I decided to invest in a weekend painting course with John Blockley and Moira Huntley. The setting was a village whose name I can't remember, but was one of those delightful villages in that part of the world.

There was a large hall where the demonstrations took place, overnight accommodation with several B&B cottages and the village pub right opposite. What more could you ask for?

John Blockley was always a favourite artist of mine and this was an opportunity to pick up some of those techniques that had made him famous. I was a bit in awe of meeting him and Moira, but that was never a problem as both were very welcoming and hospitable. Their demonstrations were brilliant and did give you the feeling that you could emulate some of those techniques.

When it came to painting time, everybody was feeling a bit nervous I think. Firstly, we painted inside the hall working from still life in the medium of choice. Most people used watercolour or pastel as I remember. On the second day we transferred outside to the beautiful Cotswold countryside.

Of course, John was famous for his cottages in that wonderful loose style where he was able to work with no boundaries between abstract and representational. Many people (including me) attempted to follow that style. I was reasonably pleased with my efforts and at lunchtime decided to repair to the local hostelry for some sustenance. Looking around for a seat, the only spare was at the back of the pub and I could see there was somebody at the table. As I sat down I realised that the other person was John.

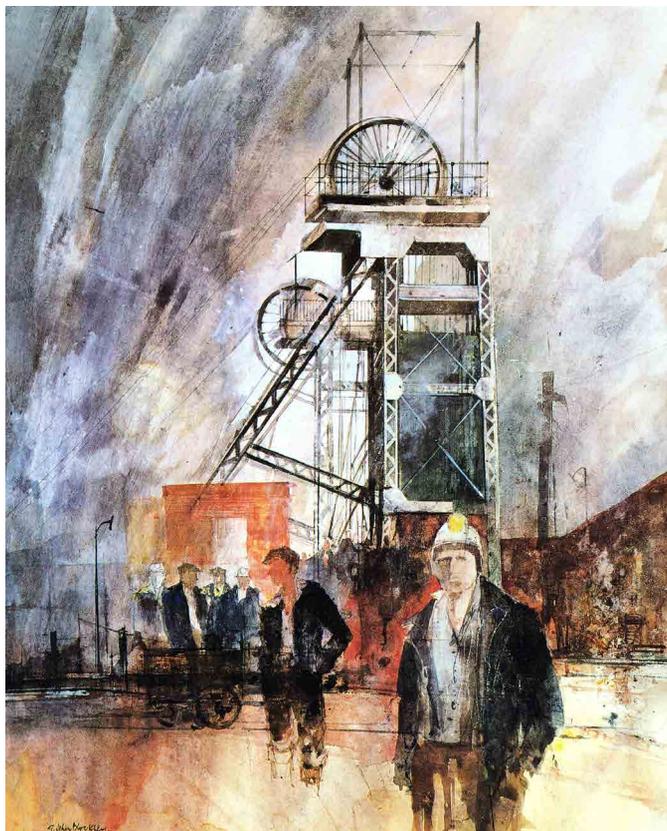
So, would this be an intrusion into his private time or would he be a friendly companion?

Luckily the latter was the case, so I was able to spend an enjoyable half hour or so with the man himself. Apart from general conversation, he talked about his start in life and desire to break away from his work as an engineer with the UK Atomic Energy Authority and to become a professional artist. This was at the age of 52.

Sadly, John passed away in 2002. His daughter Ann is also an accomplished painter and has published several books.

Somewhere in my aging art collection there are the results of that weekend. When I last looked at them I was reasonably pleased with the watercolour of the cottage. This could have been taken out of the John Blockley book – but nowhere near as good of course. The still life in pastel, however, was not something I would like seen in public and the outside watercolour of the farm was far too figurative and not at all in the style of the great man.

Following that weekend, I did make efforts to change but, sadly, never managed to accomplish anything worthwhile. Nevertheless, it was an unforgettable and enjoyable experience.



*'Markham Colliery' by John Blockley – taken from his book 'Watercolour practice and progress'*

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## SPRING EXHIBITION AT THE LIGHTBOX

Sue Hinton

When David Williams departed for Australia last October and relinquished his role as Exhibition Secretary, no-one volunteered to step into the breach. I had recently given up full-time working and so, with a little more time available, took on the somewhat daunting task of organising our Spring Exhibition.

It was only when Alan Manie and I got together in January – both new to the task – that we realised there was more involved than we'd anticipated!

But, to cut a long story short, we tapped into the knowledge and support of fellow committee members before contacting all the necessary people, securing suitably qualified judges and confirming arrangements with the Lightbox. Only then could we invite members' submissions and start arranging helpers and stewards for the event itself.

Somewhat to my surprise, things went pretty smoothly on the whole – at least until the snow arrived and prevented some of our customers from collecting their purchases on the final Sunday!

### The good news...

From over 130 submissions, 90 paintings and one sculpture were selected, all of a very high standard, as attested by our professional judges. The works displayed a real mix of styles, subject matter and media, which made for an interesting exhibition that was well set off by our brand new screens (they arrived only five days before!).

Having formally opened the Spring Exhibition at Tuesday's Private View, the Mayor clearly enjoyed it as he stayed for most of the evening after also presenting the trophies to the winning artists. He and other guests were very complimentary about the show and we received many very positive comments from other visitors throughout the following week. What's more, we sold a total of 13 paintings – more than at other recent exhibitions – with a total sales value of £2,565.

### ... and the learning points

Inevitably there were a few things that didn't quite go to plan and these will be discussed at our next committee meeting.

Our biggest problem was with paperwork.

I must stress the need for all stewards to write clearly and to fill out all the sections on the various forms when they make a sale or when someone consents to join our mailing list. With missing details, we had difficulty in contacting some buyers who were unable to collect due to the bad weather.

Two issues were highlighted by members – for which many thanks. Firstly, the calling papers weren't clear when it comes to the size of paintings members can submit; so next time there'll be three categories – small, large and extra large (no more than two of your three submissions can be extra large).

Secondly, we'll give you precise stewarding times on the papers, rather than simply morning, lunchtime and afternoon.

### And so to the winners

Many congratulations go to:

Peter Howitt – Spring Trophy

Louise Rowe – Watercolour Trophy

Ian Henderson – Highly commended

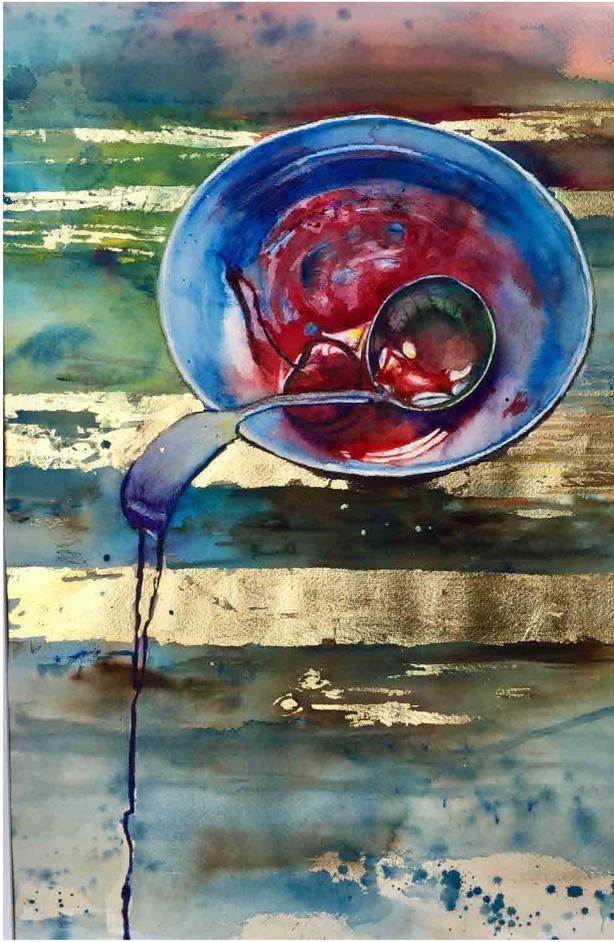
Sera Knight – Highly commended

Bara Aylwin – Chairman's Shield

The Chairman's Shield is awarded to the artist whose work receives the highest number of votes from the general public visiting the exhibition. It's interesting to note that 67 of the 90 paintings exhibited received at least one vote, but the clear winner was Bara's 'Evening Glow, Isles of Scilly' – which was also sold, so it was a win, win for her!



Spring Trophy: Peter Howitt's 'Surrey Downs'



*Watercolour Trophy: Louise Rowe's 'Juice'*



*Chairman's Shield:  
Bara Aylwin's 'Evening Glow, Isles of Scilly'*



*Highly commended: Sera Knight's 'Street Musicians'*



*Highly commended:  
Ian Henderson's 'Lunch break  
in the building of Sainsbury'*

## IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF FRANKLIN

Laney Randell

In August 2017 my husband, Peter, and I joined the Akademik Ioffe in Greenland on a journey to find out more about Captain Sir John Franklin's trip to discover the Northwest Passage in 1845. His two boats, Erebus and Terror, have recently been discovered near King William Island and historians now hope to discover what happened on this fateful journey, when the expedition literally disappeared off the face of the earth.



We spent some time in Greenland visiting Sisimuit and Ilulissat, meeting the locals and learning about their way of life before heading across Baffin Bay to the most northern tip of Canada, Pond Islet. Here we visited the Natinnak Centre and watched a wonderful display by the Elders and young people. We also saw Inuit carvings from the Narwhal whales, jewellery and other crafts.

From there we went to Dundas Harbour where there was an outpost of the Royal Canadian Police which had operated until the 1950s. Maxwell Bay was next and where we were surrounded by Beluga whales in our zodiacs. Beechey Island followed; this is where Franklin's ill-fated expedition spent its last 'comfortable' winter before disappearing for good. Almost 60 years later Roald Amundsen stopped at Beechey Island too, during the first transit of the Northwest Passage.



It was on this desolate island, while we were toasting the graves of some of Franklin's men with a tot of rum, that a polar bear was swimming towards us. As they can cover a mile in five minutes, we had to hurriedly get back into our zodiacs and leave. Our guides were armed at all times with flares, pepper spray and rifles.

Prince Leopold Island was our next visit. This is the home to thick billed murres, black guillemots, northern fulmars and blacked legged kittiwakes. With several hundred thousand birds, the island is one of the most important bird sanctuaries in the Canadian Arctic.

From there we sailed through the Prince Regent Inlet, Fort Ross, located at the southern end of Somerset Island where there is a former Hudson Bay Company fur trading outpost and ancient archaeological sites nearby tell a story of more than 1,000 years of habitation by the Inuit and their predecessors.

We passed through the Bellot Strait and, at this point, were blocked by sea ice and unable to get to King William, where Franklin was last seen by the local Inuit.

We found that the Arctic does not support the huge variety of wildlife that we found in Antarctica but we saw many polar bears with cubs, bearded seals and a variety of birds, whales, musk ox and Arctic hares. It is a desolate place but, at the same time, a photographer's and an artist's dream.

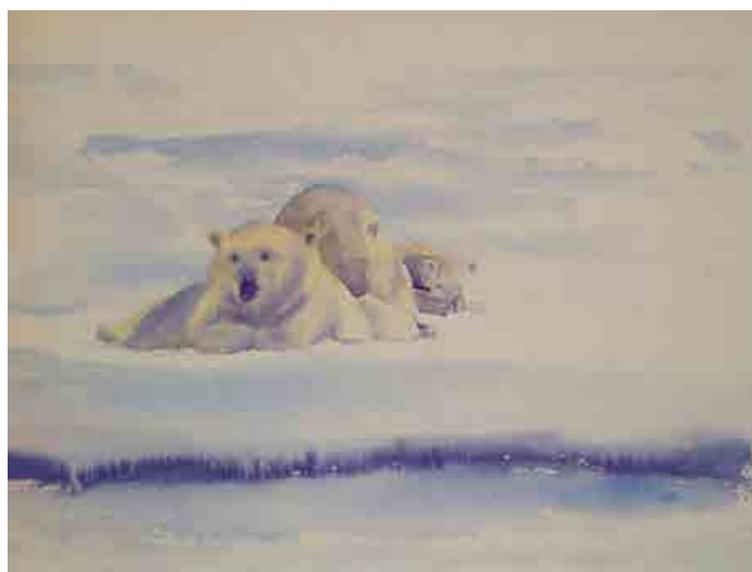


I personally managed to do a lot of sketching from the zodiacs (providing I wasn't getting soaked from big seas) and on land (providing the weather wasn't blowing a gale). I was able to do a lot of painting in our cabin and sold a lot of polar bear pictures with the money going to the Polar Bear Foundation in America.

An amazing trip to an extraordinarily desolate place where people and wildlife manage to live in harmony. A privilege to have been there.



*A few of Laney's paintings*

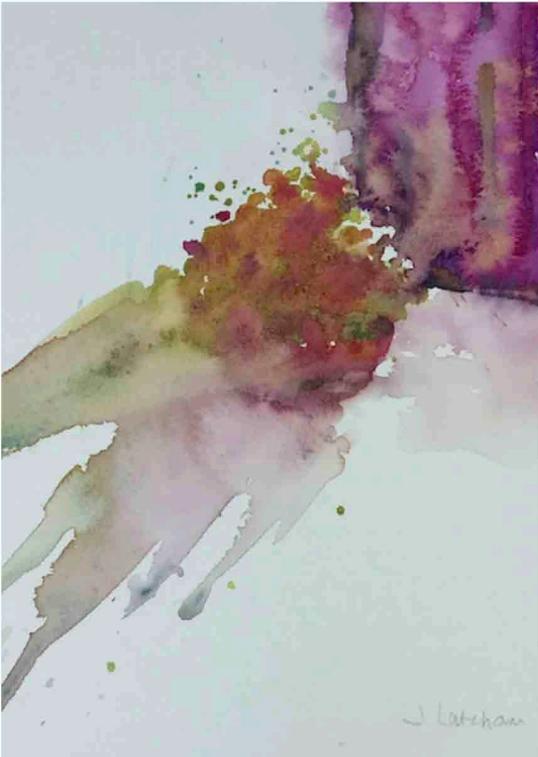


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## MEMBERS' NEWS

### Janelle Latcham

Janelle has been on a winning streak since being awarded the Autumn Trophy at The Lightbox last October. She went on to win the Aquarius Open Award at Guildford Art Society's Autumn Exhibition the following month and had a painting selected for the RWS Contemporary Watercolour Competition 2018, the annual open national/international competition run by UK's Royal Watercolour Society. The exhibition was held at Bankside Gallery on London's South Bank in March.



*Janelle's painting 'Pot with magenta door'*

### Katya Kvasova

Katya has a watercolour shortlisted for Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours 206th exhibition in Mall Galleries, London, which runs from 6th to 21st April. Katya is also collaborating with another Woking-based artist and their 'Chinese Whispers' will be on show from 28th April until 28th May in Pinnock's, Ripley.

### Louise Rowe

Louise has alshad a painting accepted by the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours 2018 annual exhibition at the Mall Galleries in April.

### Shirley Slocock

Shirley has a painting included in an exhibition of botanical paintings commissioned by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, at Kew Gardens. The Florilegium is an exhibition of works illustrating the beauty and diversity of plants grown by the Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust and is running from 31st March until 16th September 2018.

### Janina (Nina) Klein

Nina entered the Royal Society of British Artists' Annual Exhibition for the first time this year, was pre-selected and then went on to be selected for the Exhibition which finished at the end of March. This was a terrific boost for Nina, who thoroughly enjoyed meeting Phillip Mould (from the TV Series 'Fake or Fortune') when he opened the Private View and other non-members who travelled from as far afield as Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. All agreed that the Society was moving on and that there was more openness and inclusivity in both the chosen exhibits and prize giving.



*Nina with her painting*

### Richard Storey

Ending on a sad note, we must report that Richard died in December 2017. He was a member of the Society for many years. Our sympathies go to his wife June, who remains an art enthusiast and recently visited our Spring Exhibition.