



The Art Workers' Guild

Proceedings and Notes – No. 33 – February 2019



*HRH The Prince of Wales opening the new Courtyard in March,
Image Bro. Nick Carter*

A MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

It seems hard to believe that this time a year ago I was putting finishing touches to my year’s programme, as it has flown past so quickly. My aim was to have a programme that would be diverse – appealing to as many of the varied interests and talents of the Guild as possible, with a bit of an Isle of Wight focus (as it is where I live and I planned to host the summer outing there) and with some humour.

The initial trepidation of calling on speakers was dispelled, as all bar one accepted happily, and all were familiar with who we are and what we do. This task became easier the more the programme filled out, and I have really enjoyed being Master and all that the role involves – buoyed up by the extreme kindness, support, encouragement and general warmth shown to me by all the Brothers, staff, Honorary Secretaries and Past Masters. I visualise the Guild as a wreath or chain of interlinked hands – passing skills from one member to another and across the generations with Guild Brothers supporting and helping each other. Being the Master is a link in this chain of sharing and communication.

Among many highlights of the year some things stand out: meeting HRH Prince Charles on his visit to the Guild to unveil our new wonderful Courtyard, and his look of delight on entering the Hall to find Brothers busily working away demonstrating their crafts. I was moved by his deep and sincere engagement with everyone he met and talked to that day, resisting being hastened on by his aides, who were mindful of his other engagements.

I also really enjoyed the lecture by Lynne Truss on her book *Tennyson’s Gift*, which satirises Julia Margaret Cameron and Tennyson’s time on the Isle of Wight in the 1860s as part of the Freshwater Circle. Lynne kindly visited the Guild the week beforehand to run through her images and, after giving her talk, she said that when she wrote the book ‘never in her wild imaginings did she think she would one day present it in such illustrious surroundings and to such an eminent and appreciative audience’.

Another highlight was Tim Hunkin, whose talk on automata was applauded before he even started speaking, which felt a very generous way of Guild Brothers to greet a fellow maker and was clearly unexpected. Tim went on to delight us with his hilarious catalogue of highly inventive automata. Also, Andy Friend, who gave an hour-long, wonderfully detailed lecture on Ravilious & Co without notes; not to mention the very special lectures by five of our talented fellow



The Master and the Prince, Image Bro. Nick Carter

Brothers: Tanya Harrod (design historian), Simon Hurst (Hon. Architect), Sue Lowday (metal and leatherworker), Alan Powers (academic and artist) and Tracey Sheppard (glass engraver). the last being our newly appointed Master Elect Elect.

A large focus of my year was planning and organising the late August outing to the Island, greatly supported by Leigh Milsom Fowler, our Guild Administrator. I was so pleased that 35 Guild members were able to make it on this four-day visit, covering trips to Farringford (Lord Tennyson’s home), the Needles, Dimbola Lodge (Julia Margaret Cameron’s home), Osborne House and Carisbrooke Castle. The trip’s main focus was on the south-east of the Island, where I live and work, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. We were lucky to have excellent sunny weather, with lots of swimming, and a very warm welcome from many islanders, some of whom opened their homes and gardens to us, and others who helped enormously in planning the schedule. My wish to throw a final feast at Algernon Swinburne’s family house, East Dene, in our cherished village of Bonchurch, was granted. We hosted 64 people, including 35 Brothers and Past Masters, with very enjoyable food and music, meeting the locals involved in Island Arts & Crafts.

On this trip, it was apparent the important bonding role the summer outing plays especially in integrating

Brothers who live outside London and who struggle to make it to normal OGMs due to travel/costs etc. The choice of destination UK and overall costs were kept intentionally affordable so that as large a group as possible could participate.

We have had three Master’s Suppers at the Guild over the year. I chose only to do three as I wanted to have the maximum number of meetings where Brothers could have direct contact with the speaker. The suppers were held for the following speakers: Professor Robin McInnes, Walter Keeler and Felicity Aylieff, and two of these suppers were deliciously catered for by Brother Jane Dorner.

I have been bowled over by the great generosity of all the Brothers supporting me this year, but special thanks are due to the Guild Secretary, Catherine O’Keeffe, Leigh, and Elspeth Dennison, the Guild Steward, who tirelessly toil and ensure the highly efficient and smooth running of the Guild; to Past Masters Prue Cooper and Phil Abel; and to Honorary Secretaries Mark Winstanley and Rebecca Jewell, who have helped me enormously in my year’s preparation; and Brother Sue Lowday for all her unstinting support this year. My thanks to the Guild for this great honour of being Master, with hearty good wishes to Anne Thorne, Alan Powers and Tracey Sheppard, who pick up the mantle.

Jane Cox

11 January 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Master’s Night
MASTER JANE COX

The meeting opened with Bro. Alan Powers offering thoughts on, and memories of, his long-standing friend, the late Bro. Gavin Stamp. There was a minute’s silence.

After some brief announcements, the new Master, Jane Cox, took the floor with a fascinating talk, *From social anthropology to ceramic pyrotechnics*, comparing the latter, with its thermal reactive qualities, to the lively debates and delightful friendships characteristic of the Art Workers’ Guild (AWG). The Master has, over the years, attended to the inner workings of the Guild, serving as a committee member and as a Trustee.

But she began her talk with an account of her life. She studied social and kinship systems at the University of Sussex, but found a rigidity within academe that proved unattractive. She described her background:

her father a London County Council architect, a good artist and eventually the co-founder of Shankland Cox Partnership; and her mother, who had studied with the political theorist Harold Laski at the LSE. She grew up in north London in a leftwing, artistic milieu, full of gaiety but also dedicated to good housing, in a household where ‘high density’ was discussed at the dinner table. From Gospel Oak Primary School she went to Camden School for Girls, which was intensely competitive but stimulating. Holidays were spent in Bonchurch on the Isle of Wight in a cottage originally bought by a scientifically-minded aunt and her partner.

Retrospectively, the Isle of Wight seemed important, as did her parents’ friendship with Peggy Angus, the fiery artist and pattern, textile and wallpaper designer. (Angus’s remarkable cottage, Furlongs, in a fold of the South Downs, was also formative: motto ‘The easy life is harder than you think’). A youthful encounter with the aptly named Donald Potter, the famed sculpture master and pioneer pottery teacher at Bryanston School in Dorset, was an introduction to clay and throwing on a wheel.

Before going to Sussex University, the Master took a job at the Aerated Bread Company and saw for the first time how working-class folk lived and worked. Employment in a small factory was a transformative



Jane Cox MA RCA, *Haj - black & white platter* (Detail), British Library Collection, earthenware, 2016

experience, introducing her to a whole world of hierarchies, complex gender-led divisions of labour and even to the reality of race relations.

She saved up and travelled to France, where she found work at the Galerie Daniel Malingue in Paris, taking French lessons at the Alliance Française. However, determined to test her French to its limits, she left the lush pastures of the art gallery for a job in a *boulangerie-pâtisserie* in the Latin Quarter, mastering the names of some 30 to 40 different pastries. She then worked at the Château de La Salle in Burgundy and continued to return there to work during her university summer vacations.

By then the Master was bilingual and after leaving Sussex she worked as a translator and subsequently, through her partner at the time, came to know the Monmouth Coffee Company and various inspirational businesses set up by Nicholas Saunders in the Covent Garden area. She worked at Neal's Yard Wholefoods and at the coffee house and then with an inspiring graphic design company – Patrick McLeavey and Partners. All this activity funded the Master to retrain at Camberwell College of Art and at the Royal College of Art (RCA).

A foundation course at Camberwell at the ripe old age of 26 proved a revelation and thanks to Ruth Franklin and Angus Suttie, the Master was increasingly drawn to clay, taking a BA in ceramics under the tutelage of Bro. Carol McNicoll, Ewen Henderson, Colin Pearson and the inspirational, mysterious Gillian Lowndes. In that lively atmosphere she was given permission to try everything and anything. Learning slip casting from Bro. McNicoll and drawn to Russian constructivism, the pattern of the Master's future work began to form and she won a Housewares Industry award in 1991.

At the RCA, the Master and Sue Pryke, the future designer for IKEA, specialised in functional wares, bravely going against a tide of fashion that favoured one-off sculptural work. The Master left the RCA having won two major awards, enabling her to buy her first kiln.

Her first pottery was set up in Brockley, in south-east London. She had a basement workshop and an upstairs showroom, and was soon exhibiting widely and teaching part-time in art schools and adult education. She built up a name, held open studio events and generally worked incredibly hard to establish her practice.

After 20 years it was time to recalibrate and the Master moved to her beloved Isle of Wight, to Bonchurch, the home of her childhood holidays. Her studio is at St Lawrence in an old glassworks shared with eight other artists, about 15 minutes from where she lives. The Master gave a detailed description of her workshop and the varied equipment she requires to create her range

of ceramics – from jiggers and jolleys to a spray booth. She took us through different ceramic practices and illustrated her work as a collagist and screen printer. She made a powerful case for the importance of drawing and, as a marvellous finale, showed a series of images of the Isle of Wight, highlighting its many charms. Questions came thick and fast, with Bro. Caroline Boyd Harte commenting on a lovely bowl, and the Master explaining further her interest in glaze technology. Henry Binns complimented the Master on a talk that showed lovely objects as well as addressing the complex and all-important matter of making a living.

Bro. Tanya Harrod

25 January 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Lecture · *Life as the stage: the paintings of Leonard Rosoman*
BRO. TANYA HARROD

Bro. Tanya Harrod said what an honour it was to give the first talk under the new Mastership and she hoped her comments on Leonard Rosoman would send listeners to Pallant House, Chichester, in March or April, to see an exhibition there of his pictures inspired by the theatre. The works on show would include a series – not shown together since first exhibited – based on John Osborne's play *A Patriot for Me*. Rosoman enjoyed close friendship not only with Osborne and his fourth wife, the actress Jill Bennett, but also with the famous director of the Royal Court Theatre, George Devine, who gave this theatre its innovative, edgy and political reputation. Much was expressed in a slide shown of Rosoman's portrait of Devine, decked up as the character Baron von Epp. From then on, the interest offered by this fast-moving talk never dipped.

As most of Rosoman's theatrical pictures are among his later works, Bro. Harrod started with an overview. This was most welcome, for Rosoman had a long and fertile career. He was born in 1913, was still working hard in 2007 and died in 2012. Although his life spanned most of the 20th century, it is not easy to slot him into the history of British art, for, although greatly admired by many artists, he refused to fit neatly into any style, movement or group. 'We can be assured,' Bro. Harrod remarked wryly, in an aside, 'that he won't be included in Tate Britain's forthcoming exhibition *All too Human: Bacon, Freud and a Century of Painting Life*'. But she succeeded in identifying him as an Arts & Crafts figure who saw his calling as a job, who relished the challenge



Leonard Rosoman, *The Drag Ball, No. 2, Act 2, Scene 1*, 1967–68.

Acrylic on canvas, 182.8 cm x 228.6 cm Collection Roxanne Rosoman.

Photographer John Bodkin. © London, Royal Academy of Arts

of commissions, and who responded creatively to their limitations and possibilities, be it a postage stamp or a ceiling decoration for the Archbishop of Canterbury's private chapel at Lambeth – both of which he successfully achieved.

Behind the expert knowledge displayed in what followed lay all the research the speaker had done in connection with her book, *Leonard Rosoman*, commissioned and published by the Royal Academy in 2017. Without distinguished monographs of this kind, even Royal Academicians such as Rosoman are in danger of dropping out of sight in this fast-moving age. While preparing her talk, Tanya Harrod had visited the Ilya and Emilia Kabakov exhibition at Tate Modern, where an installation showing a departing train with artist's canvasses left behind on the track bore the title that had given its name to the show: *Not Everyone will be Taken into the Future*. For her, the installation not only offered a reminder of artists who had fallen out of favour during the Soviet regime but also of the many other artists who had been forgotten for whatever reason.

Perhaps because Rosoman's murals were mostly painted on board, rather than the actual wall, they have on the whole survived well. The speaker regretted that the mural *Upstairs and Downstairs* in the restaurant at the Royal Academy is now interrupted by some fashionable Tom Dixon hanging lights, and a new shelving system does not help. The Unilever directors have evidently tired of the tripartite murals he did for Lever House (as it used to be called) in Blackfriars, reflecting on the historical benefits introduced by this firm, for the murals have been packed off to the Williamson Art Gallery

in Birkenhead. As was pointed out, with many of his murals Rosoman seems to have been spurred on by the restrictions within the architectural settings that he was given. Slide after slide gave a welcome opportunity to see the wealth and diversity of his wall paintings, as the purpose of the building was always taken into account in his designs.

The rich visual interest of this talk continued as Bro. Harrod took us through Rosoman's wider career, his work with the Firemen Artists, then as an official war artist, his moody neo-romanticism in the late 1940s and early 50s and gradually his emergence as an idiosyncratic figurative and often narrative painter, in images made edgy and alive by his awareness of the freedoms which modernism had introduced and which brought out his imaginative flair. During question time, Peyton Skipwith recalled that on *Desert Island Discs*, when asked what he wanted to take with him, Rosoman had replied 'a sloping lawn'. This not only reflected on his love of grass (in the right places) but also the leaning, tipping quality created by his handling of perspective in many of his pictures, which gives them an unexpected tension. The wonderfully informative tour-de-force delivered by Tanya Harrod was rounded off with Peyton's ringing acclamation that Leonard Rosoman was 'an extraordinary interpreter of people' and 'a major figure in twentieth-century British art'. There is no doubting he has caught that train.

Bro. Frances Spalding



Leonard Rosoman painting his mural *Hybrid* in his dining room in the 1970s. Leonard Rosoman archive © London, Royal Academy of Arts



'Ilfracombe, North Devon' by Alfred Robert Quinton. c.1920. Watercolour. Image © J.Salmon Limited of Sevenoaks

8 February 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Guild Business

The Master, Jane Cox, was in the chair. Notices were given out, the Minutes were read, and two new Brothers were introduced: Helen Whittaker, a stained glass artist, by Past Master Dick Reid, and Hannah Coulson, an illustrator, by Flora Roberts. Both were welcomed to the Guild with acclamation.

Lecture · *Bridging the disciplines of Art and Science: using historical imagery to assist coastal management*
PROFESSOR ROBIN McINNES OBE

Professor McInnes is a geologist, though he confessed that he might have become an artist. His interests are in geomorphology – in particular, coast erosion. With climate change, this is an increasing threat. But it is, of course, a process that occurs over time. Any early records of the form and appearance of coastlines may thus throw light on their history and on the processes involved. Britain is unique in the quantity and quality of artists' views of such scenery, a record enormously enhanced from the late 18th century by the rising taste for the Picturesque, by burgeoning enthusiasm for watercolour among both professionals and amateurs, and by the Napoleonic Wars, which made foreign travel virtually impossible and intensified tourism at home. New print techniques, first aquatint and later

lithography, would be encouraged by a growing middle-class market for prints and colour-plate books.

Appreciating the enormous potential of such sources, Professor McInnes felt that there might be some objective way of ranking their reliability and value. This involved a number of factors. One is date: early views may be more valuable than later ones, if only because of their relative scarcity. On the other hand, conventions change, and the late-18th century taste for the sublime might produce images that are less reliable than the Ruskinian exactitude of some painters of a century later. Experience allows one to judge which artists are more consistently reliable than others, and to take into account artistic conventions that may have increased the picture's contemporary appeal but diminish its value as an objective record. Having studied the work of numerous painters, and assessed a range of elements in their paintings, Professor McInnes found it possible to produce a reliability ranking of the artists. This table informed a study for use by the Crown Estate – which is concerned with the management of many coastal environments – and was increasingly referred to by other authorities with similar responsibilities.

For well over a century now, traditional artists' images have been supplemented by the vast number of photographic views produced by and for tourists. These, too, are hugely valuable for the evidence they contain. Early coloured postcards, taken before the advent of colour photography, were usually reproduced from meticulous paintings. As works of art they are of little value, but they would not have found a market if they had not been accurate. A further source of information

is the record of coastlines by naval officers in ships' logs.

Professor McInnes illustrated his talk throughout with a marvellous range of examples of the work of painters of coastal scenery. Some of these were familiar, many not so. For those who wanted to know more, he referred us his own splendid and very fully illustrated book on the subject, *British Coastal Art 1770-1930*; to the archive of Art UK, previously the Public Catalogue Foundation, which includes many thousands of coastal views; and he anticipated great rewards to be had from the new Watercolour World project by the British Association of Picture Libraries and Agencies, which he expected would ultimately contain several million images.

The questions and enthusiastic applause that followed showed how much the audience in the Hall appreciated Professor McInnes' fascinating and deeply researched talk.

Bro. Nicholas Cooper

22 February 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Guild Business



Teapot by Walter Keeler. Image © Walter Keeler

The Master took the chair. Bro. Rachael Matthews read the Minutes of the previous meeting and these were approved, after a comment from Bro. Edward Sargent – that they contained no account of questions – had been duly noted.

Lecture · *Function and ornament: tradition and innovation*
WALTER KEELER

Introducing the speaker, the Master drew attention to a display of his signature grey salt-glazed jugs on the table at the side. Walter Keeler then plunged straight in, almost literally, with an image of a mass of broken pots and shards, which he had collected as a teenager while mudlarking along the shores of the Thames. This image graphically demonstrated his love of particular forms, as well as salt glaze and slipware. He spoke about his time at Harrow School of Art, and his introduction to Bernard Leach's manual on pottery. Being physical rather than intellectual, he had responded to the drawings and images rather than the written text. After Harrow, he went to teacher training college, while his wife, Madoline, went to the Royal College of Art.

He talked about his father's interest in Egyptology and history, and his own love of old wine jars with their bulging forms and structural bases. It was the dynamic of form in pottery which particularly appealed to him and he showed examples by William Staite Murray and Hans Coper, but his interests extended way beyond what one might call 'art pottery' to the semi-industrial pottery of rural England during the 18th and 19th centuries. This interest was enhanced when he and his wife moved from the Home Counties to rural Wales, working with local clay and wood ash for glazes, but he felt that at this period he had slightly 'lost the plot', seduced by the rustic life, keeping cows, etc.

A breakthrough occurred in about 1980, when he turned to more sculptural shapes and made the first of his watering can-like teapots. A £5,000 Crafts Council grant at this time gave him freedom to experiment and his obsession with handles and spouts became a prominent feature of his work, especially when he realised that, while he was struggling to sell more traditional pots for £5, he could sell these more daring articulated forms for £10. He exploited a new playfulness inspired by organic forms and a jokiness entered into his work. He looked at 18th-century Wealden ware and mechanical techniques such as engine turning and extrusion, exploiting the former for decorative detail, while the latter opened

up whole new possibilities of form. He delighted in cutting pieces out to shape spouts and using the spare clay for handles – this was evident in several of the jugs on display. But a new, disciplined playfulness became evident at this time. Although there was a severe geometric discipline in the many examples he showed, he drew inspiration from organic forms, particularly the gnarled old hedgerows and orchards near his home. Carried away by such exuberance, the projector expired at this point, and Keeler decided it was time to stop talking.

The Master opened the questions by asking about the influence of Mick Casson, whose classes Keeler described as charismatic. On a practical level, Bro. Jane Dorner wondered how much attention he gave to the functionalism of his teapots, asking bluntly, ‘Do they pour?’ The answer was a slightly guarded affirmative. PM David Birch commented on Keeler’s spiral hallmark and asked whether this was sprigged (applied separately before firing), to which the answer was yes. An interesting discussion followed Bro. Tanya Harrod’s question about craft courses. The speaker was passionately against the academisation of such courses. He admitted to being a pessimist, commenting that regrettably it was cheaper to teach a pupil on a computer than on a potter’s wheel. The vital thing was to encourage pupils to find themselves. Individuality was threatened by bureaucracy. PM Anthony Paine asked about the relationship between time spent on drawing and design and the finished object, and remarked how sometimes hours spent on design could result in failure while at other times a quick sketch could produce a dramatic result. Keeler responded, amid laughter, ‘I think you have answered your own question.’ PM Paine agreed. The Master thanked Walter Keeler for a thoroughly enjoyable and informative evening.

PM Peyton Skipwith

8 March 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Lecture · *The Freshwater Circle*
LYNNE TRUSS

By way of a prelude to the Master’s outing to the Isle of Wight in August, the novelist and journalist Lynne Truss talked about the group of Victorian artists and writers known as the Freshwater Circle, who provided the inspiration for her 1996 novel, *Tennyson’s Gift*. Its members included Tennyson himself, Julia Margaret Cameron and George Frederic Watts, all of whom

spent time at Freshwater Bay during the 1860s. Truss also managed to include Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, better known as Lewis Carroll, in her cast of characters, as the writer visited the Island in July 1864. Initially apprehensive about writing a comic novel about these celebrated individuals, she was relieved to discover on reading up about them that their forceful personalities and often eccentric behaviour offered plenty of material for this kind of treatment. Truss’s initial interest in the Freshwater Circle was stimulated by Cameron’s photographs, as well as by those of other members of the group taken by photographers such as Oscar Rejlander, whose work featured with Cameron’s in the 2018 National Portrait Gallery exhibition *Victorian Giants: The Birth of Art Photography*. A selection of these photographs provided the focus of her talk. She began by discussing the houses in Freshwater where members of the circle lived. Tennyson bought and extended Farringford House with the proceeds of his hugely successful poem *Maud*; it featured a spiral staircase down which the poet could escape from visiting admirers. Latterly a hotel, it has since been restored by a private owner. Cameron’s house Dimbola, which she created out of two smaller houses, has been restored by a trust and is now a museum. Watts, at the time a hugely famous and much lionised artist, moved temporarily to the Isle of Wight in 1864, shortly after he married the actress Ellen Terry, then aged 16 – 30 years his junior – who left him less than a year later. During his 1864 visit to the island, Dodgson saw both Tennyson, whom he admired, and Cameron, about whom he was much more critical, complaining that her photographs were out of focus.

Complaints about the lack of focus in Cameron’s photographs were beside the point, however, as focus wasn’t important to her. She photographed members of her household and visiting friends dressed up as biblical and literary characters, using such objects as a table cloth or a poker as props. With her female models, including her servants Mary Hillier and Mary Ryan, she was primarily concerned to make them look beautiful. But she made male sitters, such as her friend the civil servant Henry Taylor, ‘look like God’. In Taylor’s case, it clearly helped that he had a particularly impressive beard. Some of Cameron’s photographs seem to suggest that she took an interest in the shape of people’s heads. This prompted Truss to include an American phrenologist and his daughter as characters in her novel. She ended her talk by discussing the Cameron photograph of Tennyson often known as *The Dirty Monk*; the drip mark on his cheek is not only typical of Cameron’s somewhat erratic technique but also serves

as a reminder of what photography is: chemicals that have captured light and shade and made a picture.

After the talk, the Master asked about various aspects of Truss’s work on the Freshwater Circle, which includes not only *Tennyson’s Gift* but also a study commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery, *Tennyson and his Circle*. She agreed that part of her aim was to draw attention to the neglected cultural significance of this episode in the history of the Isle of Wight and said efforts were now being made to promote it. She also talked more about the way Cameron celebrated the achievements of great men, commenting that she personally would have hated to be flattered and cosseted by her, though men like Watts clearly loved it. Asked about women as artists, she noted that, of the famous people who posed for Cameron, Ellen Terry has never been given her due as a serious figure, despite having lectured on Shakespeare. There were two comments from the floor: from Thomas Ponsonby about Virginia Woolf’s play, *Freshwater*, and from Emma Barker about Cameron’s maid and model Mary Ryan.

Bro. Emma Barker



Whisper of the Muse
Photograph of G.F. Watts by Julia
Margaret Cameron 1865

22 March 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Guild Business

The meeting started with a minute’s silence for Bro. Paul Millichip, painter, who had died aged 92. The Master then reported that the Office of HRH the Prince of Wales had written to say how much the Prince had enjoyed his visit to the Guild, and that the last meeting’s speaker, Lynne Truss, had written to say she had never experienced such a responsive audience.

PM Brian Webb then introduced two new Brothers, Jeff Fisher, an illustrator, and his daughter, Georgia Fisher, a textile weave designer. While they were signing the book, PM Webb urged Brothers over 65 to take up the offer of the Wellcome Trust to have an MRI scan of their brain, for a study on imagination and creative thinking. PM Prue Cooper said it was painless and well worth doing.

Lecture · *Natural dyes used in historic
and contemporary textiles from conservation
to sustainable design*
PENELOPE WALSH

Penelope Walsh described how a study of colour and natural dyes had been a constant thread through the twists and turns of a varied career as a textile designer. At the Royal College of Art in the 1980s she was inspired by the tapestries of Hannah Ryggen and was invited to a residency in Norway, where she learned about natural dyes. Working with natural materials, the colour and the material become one. Dye samples from this residency were the beginning of a much larger study.

Back in London, Walsh became a founder member of the spinners and dyers group at Vauxhall City Farm. Along with Bro. Prue Bramwell-Davis, she grew a full dye garden, spinning and dying ranges of fancy yarns during the 80s’ knitting resurgence, and selling out at the Chelsea craft show.

She then delivered a thorough lesson in natural dyes, showing us rare dyestuffs such as seashells, which produce microscopic amounts of purple, and cochineal beetles for red. We learned how easy it is to find colour in common British plants. Weld grew wild in a car park, a wodge of woad grew out of her doorstep, and common chamomile, madder and bracken were easily recognisable. Carbon-based compounds soluble in water were used to enable the fibres to absorb more intense colour. Afterbaths changed the colour again. Old recipes were useful in calculating intensity of



Environmental damage from synthetic dye effluent.
Tullahan river Philippines. Image © Greenpeace

colour. Charts showing the ranges of colour sources and processes and combinations of dyes, along with many examples of yarns and physical exhibits, proved that natural dying can produce infinite possibilities in colour.

Having learned her craft, Walsh took her work to Premier Vision, a trade show where yarns were ‘presented like rock stars’. A fascinating insight into colour forecasting revealed that the industry loved her natural dyes for their subtleties, but that her ‘Aqua’ samples prepared for 2019 will – as usual – get interpreted with synthetic dyes, which sadly could add to ecological disasters across the planet.

Walsh then applied her skills to the conservation course at Winchester School of Art, where she worked on fragile fabrics, making sure that the natural chemicals in new threads balanced with the old ones.

This craftsmanship and knowledge of the textile industry combined to fuel a new venture, AO, a sustainable textile company which has partnered with the Royal School of Needlework and Gainsborough, the silk weaving company, to make fashion and furnishing fabrics. We learned about *Red Carpet Green Dress*, a sustainability awareness project highlighted at events such as the Oscars, working with top designers. Walsh stretches the potential of industrial machines, pumping natural dyes through the hand spraying machines and mixing new techniques with old wherever she can.

Concluding her talk, she quoted PM William Morris, who had an indigo dye bath in Queen Square and hoped his friends would complain when he met them at the theatre with blue hands.

After a hearty round of applause, the Master complimented the speaker on how many different worlds she had navigated through her work with colour. PM Prue Cooper asked why the textile industry had to use synthetics at all, and the speaker explained how hard it is to change such a big machine back to a natural way of working. Bro. Jane Dorner described her love of the smell of boiling lichens and how inhaling feverfew could fix a migraine as well as provide colour. Bro. Prue Bramwell-Davis talked about the lost skills of mordanting or binding dyes and the controversial work of the Ditchling weavers who, in the Arts & Crafts revival, tried everything with natural dyes, but perhaps in a sloppy way that led to pollution. Finally, the Master enquired as to how the speaker’s husband copes with sharing the kitchen with the dye pans. Walsh explained that although woad has a bitter taste, it is a good antiseptic, which may be why it was painted on the skin before battle – but she rounded off by confirming that it is never a good idea to eat blue toast.

Bro. Rachael Matthews

12 April 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Guild Business

The Minutes were read by the Hon. Sec. Rebecca Jewell. It was then announced that Bro. Jane Dorner was buying everybody a drink to thank the Guildsmen collectively for their support and friendship in putting together the *Workshop of PM Stephen Gottlieb* exhibition in the Master’s Room.



Sketchbook evening, image Jane Cox

Sketchbook Evening

The evening was spent looking at presentations of current work by Brothers in the Hall and the exhibition in the Master’s Room. The exhibition consisted of work made by a number of Brothers in response to a visit to PM Stephen Gottlieb’s studio. The wide range of work communicated a real sense of the atmosphere.

The sketchbook evening presentations involved a range of media. Two-dimensional work included illustrations by Bro. Hannah Coulson, a folder of bright architectural sketches by Bro. David McLaughlin and pencil drawings of babies and children by PM Alison Jensen. Three-dimensional work included embroidery and medical stitching by Bro. Fleur Oakes, leatherwork by Bro. Sue Lowday, period hats by Bro. Jane Smith and carved wood picture frames by Bro. Georgy Metichian. All the work demonstrated a range of skills and contexts as well as extraordinary imagination. The evening could not fail to inspire.

Bro. Carol McNicoll

26 April 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Lecture · *Peggy Angus: a romantic revolutionary*
CAROLYN TRANT

Carolyn Trant began by talking about how she came to write her biography of Peggy Angus, *Art for Life: the story of Peggy Angus* (Incline Press, 2004). She was taught by Peggy at the North London Collegiate School, stayed with her at Furlongs and printed wallpapers for her while studying at the Slade. Carolyn wrote the book at Peggy’s behest and it draws heavily on her own words; it was important to seize the moment while she was still around so as to keep Peggy’s reputation alive after her death.

Peggy was born in Chile in 1904, but her family moved back to Britain when she was five. She attended North London Collegiate School and then got a scholarship to the Royal College of Art, where she met Eric Ravilious, Barbara Hepworth and many others. Although she was drawn to the Design School, she really wanted to paint; she excelled at portraiture, thanks to her interest in people. She was interested in Victorian painting and loved the Pre-Raphaelites. In general, she was in favour of a flexible approach to art, rather than a narrowly Modernist one. For Peggy, as for other women artists, Modernism was problematic in so far as it tended to have a rather misogynistic tone, rejecting

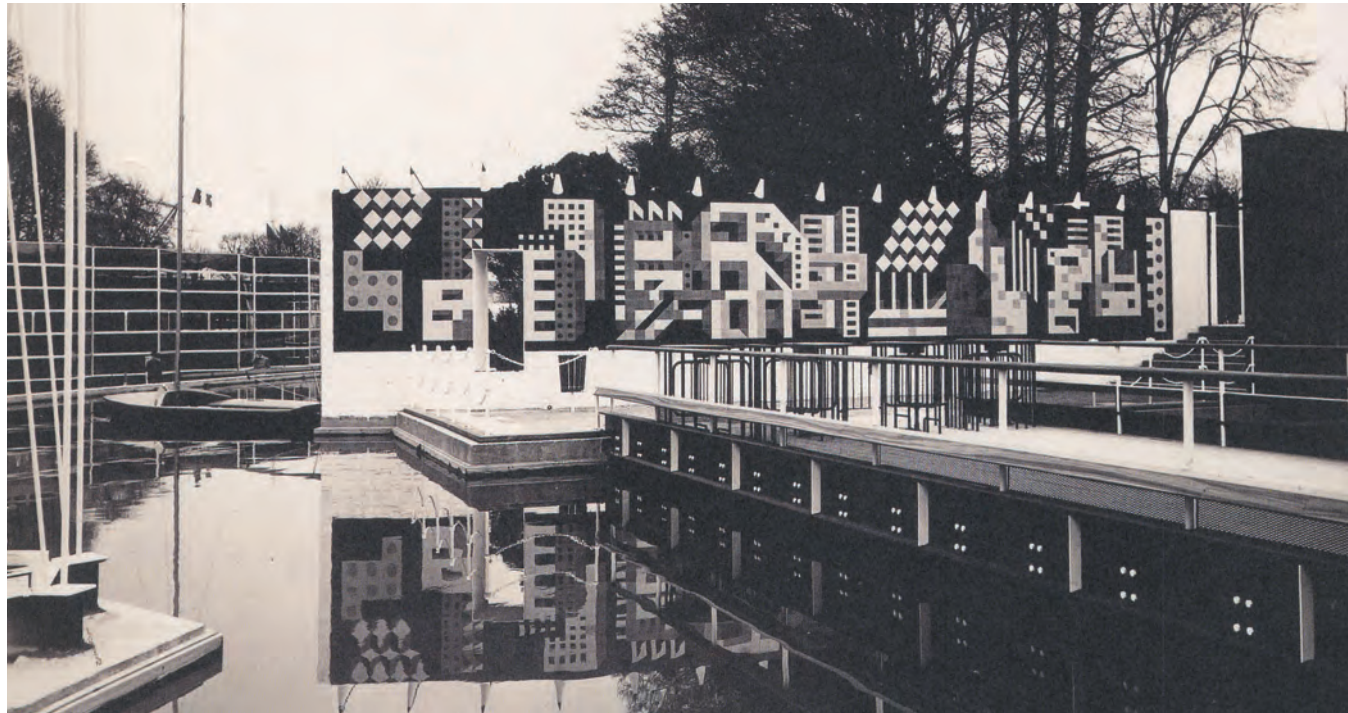
femininity and the domestic. Her 1934 painting of the Asham Cement Works, near Furlongs, also painted by Ravilious, reveals a typically Modernist interest in machinery, but she found it difficult to balance this kind of interest with her love of Victorian-style detail and decoration. Ravilious did say, however, that she transformed his conception of landscape.

Peggy kept sketchbooks all her life; the sketches she made on her many trips abroad show that she was constantly paying attention to aspects of design in what she saw. Visiting Bali in 1961-62, a trip made possible by a scholarship, she spent time studying the work of village craftsmen, as well as drawing daily life, festivals, puppets and masks. Her whole approach was towards craft, in making, rather than the vision of the individual artist. She was also always conscious of the political dimension of what she saw, which in Bali meant noticing Western exploitation. During the 1930s she was very politically engaged, travelling to Russia in 1932 as part of a delegation of art teachers; she noted the benefits for women of the regime there, with its emphasis on female employment and the provision of childcare. She was also interested in Soviet design, samples of which she brought back. She was, however, too much of a loose cannon ever to be accepted as a Communist Party member in Britain.

It was Peggy’s work as an art teacher that gave rise to the tile designs for which she is best known. She sought to foster her pupils’ talent for design, wanting the whole school to be decorated by the children working collaboratively, to avoid individuals getting hung up about their own efforts. Her abstract designs worked well in the many concrete buildings going up in the post-war era; the simple geometric patterns could be arranged however the architect wanted. She designed a tile mural for the Susan Lawrence School in Poplar, London, which formed part of the Festival of Britain,



Barong Sketchbook from Peggy’s travels in Java and Bali on a scholarship. © Estate of Peggy Angus, all rights reserved DACS 2019



Mural at the Brussels Exhibition in 1958. Made up of individual geometric tiles, arranged like a cityscape after an idea she worked out with her schoolchildren ‘apprentices’ on paper with potato cuts. Photo © Louis Ullmann

and exhibited at the Brussels World’s Fair in 1958. Her tile designs led to commissions for wallpaper, consisting of abstract patterns built up from squares, like the tiles. She liked to work collaboratively with her customers, too, getting them to tell her what they wanted; she also used the papers all over her own house. Her later designs tend to be less abstract, more ‘folksy’, in accordance with the changing tastes of the 60s.

Throughout her life, Peggy was concerned to take art back into life. From her council-owned studio in Camden, north London, she ran community art classes, which she called ‘art for love’, and organised an annual trip to Furlongs for her students. She was hostile to the avant-garde tradition, with its emphasis on constant innovation, seeing it as ego driven, and instead believed that art should be fundamentally communal and collaborative. She had a huge effect on many people’s lives, not just through her art but also, for example, with the big bonfire night party that she gave every year.

At the end of the talk, the Master asked what it was like to collaborate with Peggy on the writing of the book. Carolyn talked about the process, observing that Peggy was so forceful that it was entirely on her terms. Asked how Peggy’s teaching at North London Collegiate squared with her political commitments, Carolyn explained that it was not an entirely private school at the time but had many state-funded pupils. PM Peyton Skipwith recalled that Peggy’s Christmas cards invariably featured a hammer and sickle, while PM Phil Abel recalled that she had remained a committed

Communist, who read Mao’s *Little Red Book*. The Master contributed some of her own memories of Peggy, who, she said, threw herself on life and got what she asked for. Catherine Lock, a founder of The New Craftsmen, announced that new work based on designs from Peggy’s archive would be exhibited at the Mayfair gallery from 8 May 2018.

Bro. Emma Barker

17 May 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Lecture · *An architect’s journey*
SIMON HURST

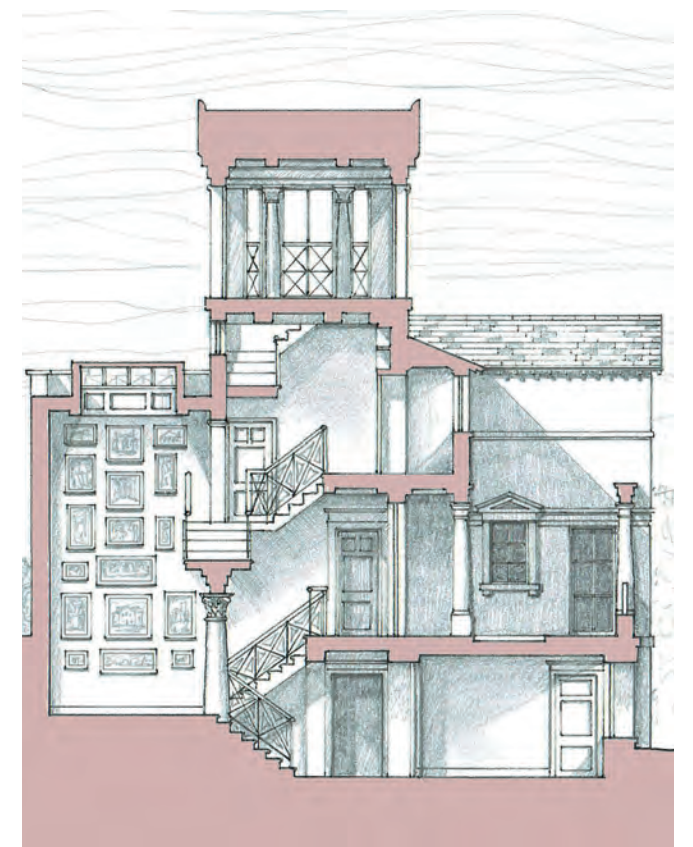
Much applause greeted our speaker, the Guild’s Hon. Architect, Simon Hurst, talking about what he called ‘an architect’s journey’ in three parts: past, present and future; in other words, his career as architect, builder and dreamer, and like all good architecture this structure turned out to be logical, sound and pleasing.

Beginning with the architect, he recalled a walk in the Cotswolds when he saw a line of gables breaking the horizon. ‘Those are nice,’ he thought. Then he realised, ‘Good Lord, they were designed by me.’ They were part of a farm complex he had restored and greatly enlarged, but with sensitivity to local materials and building traditions, and to the accretive, organic, unselfconscious way in which such groups of buildings have grown and evolved

over the years. Careful craftsmanship had enhanced the impression he created, such as softening the arrises of new ashlar chimneys, avoiding lead flashings by laying stone slates in traditional ways, and applying render to rubble masonry rather than to blockwork for the sake of an uneven surface, so that if it fails the wall textures will still be harmonious. There were problems: in many old buildings that have stood for 300 years structural techniques were employed that would have failed modern building codes, so that new masonry arches now have to have concealed reinforcement and stone columns have to have concrete cores. And, of course, a building that is meant to look as if it has grown over the years invites further growth, so that when it does grow it isn’t always in the way its designer would have liked. Simon was admirably philosophical and detached about this and seemed much less indignant about some of the more recent additions than his audience was.

Part two of Simon’s talk was about the present and about building, and about how to transform a modest early-20th century terrace house into something highly personal and self-expressive. He spoke about his extraordinarily eclectic collections, from Moorish ceramics to classic cars, and how he had adapted his house to receive them. He had designed and printed his own wallpaper to create probably the only malachite room in the whole of Walthamstow; a retractable television screen lay behind a fireplace mirror, while the fireplace itself concealed a safe. (Thieves might be afraid of getting their fingers burnt.) Water jet cutting turned flatpack furniture into cabinets from Morocco, and a salvaged GPO phone box was being restored to resemble Giles Gilbert Scott’s original prototype.

Part three was the future, the dream. He had bought 35 acres of land on the edge of Keynsham, near Bath, in the hope of one day building the house he showed us. The inspiration for this was international – in Karl Friedrich Schinkel, in Alexander Thomson and Sir John Soane and the legacy of a local landscape riddled with Roman villas – but all informed by an essentially English Picturesque. Detailing was the most correct Neoclassical, and even such a solecism as a Corinthian column with no base was to be explained by archaeology: the ground had built up around it. But the asymmetrical massing allowed an extremely idiosyncratic yet totally functional plan: a very personal dream of a two-bedroom house with a belvedere, and a private theatre in the basement. The extraordinary inventiveness of the design was in character with everything else Simon showed us: this was the work of someone whose whole life was creative, productive and, perhaps above all, fun.



Cross Section through Simon Hurst’s proposed house
in the country © Simon Hurst

Such a talk naturally invited lots of questions. The Master wondered where Simon found his energy and how he organised his life. The answer was that he would have 15 or 20 things on the go at any one time, but once he had decided what to do that day, he would do it. That made it possible to work a four-day week, though he clearly worked just as hard on all seven. Simon said his father had made and collected things, and Simon had wanted to be an architect since he was 12. Asked about other ambitions, he said that if he built only one building, it would be a mausoleum like the one he recently designed for an Ideas competition, a single room in which he could live and – ultimately – die. It was very economical. Pressed further about architectural honesty and traditional construction, Simon juxtaposed novelty with the idea of being a link in a chain, and said that he preferred to restore (or to give the appearance of restoration) rather than rebuild. He agreed with Bro. Edward Sargent about how hard it was to deal with young building control officers who know nothing of traditional construction.

The final applause showed how greatly the audience had enjoyed Simon’s talk, and how fortunate the Guild is to have him as its architect.

Bro. Nicholas Cooper

Lecture · *Silver / metal / leather:
a voyage of discovery*
BRO. SUE LOWDAY

This lecture took the audience through an extraordinarily versatile and highly successful career. Bro. Sue Lowday is well known for her work with metal and leather, but few in the audience would have been aware of the variety of commissions she received in her early career as a silversmith and medallist, or of the extent to which happenstance, luck, talent and sheer hard work have shaped her progress.

Sue was born and grew up in Hull. Although the parents of most of the children at her school (on a big housing estate) worked in the docks, times were changing. A poignant photograph recalled a family outing to a dock newly converted into a landscaped garden. Sue's family were considered posh because they owned their own house, but they did most of the household jobs that needed doing themselves, her mother making most of their clothes and her father doing the car maintenance.

It may have been her father's love of stone that triggered Sue's interest in materials. He not only worked as a clerk for a granite and marble merchant but



Sue Lowday *Mad Bag*, Hand dyed and formed vegetable tanned hide, calf lining. Image © Sue Lowday

he also joined a lapidary club and began scouting the Yorkshire beaches for treasure. He made a wheel from an old washing machine motor and a tumbling machine for polishing stones, turning them into jewellery with a brooch pin or a loop for a pendant.

Sue's ambition from early on had been to go to art school. Her parents' anxiety over the cost had to be allayed by a grant and earnings from a holiday job. Once these had been sorted out, she went to Sheffield College of Art, then situated in the grounds of an old Bluecoat school with magnificent new purpose-built studios. After completing a foundation course, she opted to do a degree in silversmithing and jewellery. At this stage her interests were in Art Deco and Art Nouveau and she benefitted from encouraging teachers. But her fascination with techniques led her to experiment with the Japanese lacquer tradition, as used by Jean Dunand and Eileen Gray. Her ideas were often fuelled by unexpected finds at jumble sales and in junk shops. Taught how to make her own hammers, she left college with a full set, in different shapes, ready for the future.

She had shown one special piece, a silver teapot, to Electrum, a shop in South Molton Street, Mayfair, and was disappointed when it was rejected. Some 20 years later, however, came the satisfactory news that Sheffield Museums had bought it, with the aid of a V&A purchase grant, for its display of silver in Sheffield's Millennium Gallery.

After applying unsuccessfully to the 30 or so silversmiths listed in Sheffield, she heard of the Goldsmiths' Hall apprenticeship scheme and under its auspices joined the Sheffield Assay Office. Her boss and guardian angel appears to have been the Assay Master, Mr Johnson, who evidently recognised talent as he instigated her first commission. After her three-month apprenticeship, he gave her a full-time job, first in the marking hall, then as a punch controller. She continued to receive commissions, established a workshop of her own, and began making modest pieces of jewellery to sell at a stall at the Crucible Theatre on Saturdays.

When Yorkshire Artspace moved into bigger premises in Matilda Street, Sue joined forces with a jeweller, Annie Cole. They had a breakthrough when the chain store Next took up their work and included it in its catalogue. There followed an immensely ingenious period when a variety of readymade components entered their designs. But the arrival of children eventually made it necessary to split the business. Sue decided to concentrate on working with leather, bringing to it many of the skills she had learned as a silversmith.

And so the complicated narrative of this richly diverse career moved on, through craft fairs and a return to

college for a master's degree, which brought with it a refreshing opportunity to experiment with many different metals. The whole talk was beautifully illustrated with slides of Sue's work. They affirmed her willingness to try new things, and to be bold in chasing new ideas and new techniques such as her recent interest in electroforming. Unfailing inventiveness seemed to go hand in hand with a willingness to move on and, in Ezra Pound's famous words, to 'make it new'.

Bro. Frances Spalding

Guild Business

The meeting began by welcoming Monica Boxley as a member of the Guild, introduced by PM Ian Archie Beck. The Master then introduced the speaker, Roger Law, whom she has known since she worked in his studio while a student at the Central School of Art.

Lecture · *From politics to pots: edited highlights
of a journey from satire to making ceramics*
ROGER LAW

Raised in the Fens, Roger Law – future half of the TV puppet show *Spitting Image* – ran away to art school, he said. There he was introduced to the work of the English satirists, particularly his lodestar, the cartoonist James Gillray, whose drawing, energy and scabrous wit at the expense of the powerful he found completely appealing. Law was delighted to discover he could be paid 'for taking the piss out of the establishment' and noted how out of touch the rich and powerful can be, reminding us that the tsar's diary entry on the day before the Russian Revolution reads: 'A bit windy ... went swimming.'

Law updated Gillray's most famous print, depicting only the entwined feet of the 18th-century Duke and Duchess of York, when Sarah Ferguson (Fergie) married Prince Andrew, his own version showing details which would undoubtedly have been picked up by readers of *Private Eye*.

All this led on to his joining forces with Peter Fluck, an art school contemporary with whom he had collaborated making plasticine caricatures to illustrate articles in *The Sunday Times Magazine*. Their pitch for a satirical puppet show was initially rejected as being more suitable for children, but *Spitting Image* launched in 1984, ran for 18 series and was franchised round the world, including, improbably, in Russia and Turkey.



Tea-time in Jingdezhen, drawing © Roger Law

The Russians, he said, didn't pay royalties.

The pace was relentless. They made more than 2,000 puppets, often working 18-hour days. To stay sane, they made ceramics on the side – starting with the famous Thatcher teapot and Reagan coffeepot, of which President Reagan himself bought two. These were made in Stoke, where Law enjoyed working with specialists in a small factory environment. So when *Spitting Image* came to an end he turned to ceramics full time. In Jingdezhen, in eastern China, he found a Sung dynasty spoil heap full of lightly carved celadon rejects on a building site cleared of small workshops to make way for a Walmart store. He decided to make his own Sung bowls.

Pots are thrown roughly and trimmed and carved with sharp knives; at first local carvers were reluctant to work with him on designs they would not use again. He had sketchbooks filled with drawings of the plants and fauna of Australia and these were translated onto his magnificent pots, flowing and crawling with life. After initial failures – in his experience, he said, the only thing you learn from success is the address of a good lawyer – the pots grew enormous.

He showed an image of himself standing inside a huge cup made by the factory, barely able to see over the rim, with the accompanying teapot spout towering over him.

It can take one to three weeks to draw the design on a huge jar, maybe 8ft tall, and then the background has to be cut back. The pot is continually brushed with water to reduce the fine porcelain dust, which means

the design is washed away and constantly needs to be redrawn.

Law admitted it was difficult work and he can, as he put it, ‘become volatile at 100% humidity’. He asked his translator why the Chinese were not more direct when dealing with problems. ‘That is not the Chinese way,’ was the reply. ‘They will say nothing and hate you secretly.’

Many good questions from the floor rounded off this interesting and well-received presentation. Law’s talk was greatly appreciated, for its fruitiness as well as its interest, and the only regret was that it wasn’t longer.

PM Prue Cooper

5 July 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Guild Business

The Master gave out notices about the summer outing, the Table Top Museum, the Psychology of Programming Interest Group (PPIG) conference at the Guild (5-7 September), and members’ exhibitions before introducing the speaker, Alison Britton.

Lecture · *Finding form*
ALISON BRITTON OBE

Alison Britton is a potter and a writer, and in her talk she discussed the creative process in both fields and how for her ‘both start out as rough approximating endeavours’. Clay is a creative material in its own right; you can form it at every stage, from the first raw lump to the final stages of decoration, and at each you can allow new ideas to emerge from the material and the process. Writing is in some ways similar, although a clear idea of the end product may emerge sooner.

Britton said her approach to potting and writing owed much to her parents, both teachers. Her father taught English and was later an educational editor for the publisher John Murray. He believed strongly in writing as exploration: that through the very act of speaking or writing, children discover things to say and ways of talking about them. (Some of his daughter’s writings and conversations were used as examples in his own books.) Her mother taught art and as a child there were always art materials around the house with which Britton and her sisters were encouraged to work and experiment. Making, in both fields, involves manipulating the materials until something is created with which you are satisfied.



Alison Britton pot, *Trope*, 2016.
Image © Philip Sayer

She traced her own career in ceramics and in writing about pots from the 1970s. Her early pots had often been decorated with images, but she came to feel that these distracted attention from the object. By the early 80s her work had become more abstract and three dimensional, inspired in part by the work of Tony Cragg. In the 90s her work had evolved further, from hard edges that still echoed earlier figurative decoration to an interest in the interactions of different masses; work more abstract, complex and ambiguous in form and using coiling and stabbing to effect softer transitions. Around 2005 she moved on again, working with red clay and exploring different methods of applying slips and glazes.

Alison Britton’s talk concluded with a discussion of the importance of novelists to her work. Notable influences were the later novels of Penelope Fitzgerald, whose precise narration is interrupted by the unexpected, the bizarre and the surreal. Another powerful influence was the Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk, whose novel *My Name is Red* features constantly shifting narrators, ambiguities, and contrasting voices and cultures. In such writings she found powerful resonances with the complexities of her own work.

A number of comments and questions naturally



Alison Britton pot, *Sedge*, 2017.
Image © Philip Sayer

followed this stimulating reflection on her own work and on the nature of creativity. In response to a query from the Master, she emphasised the essentially unacademic, imprecise way in which she had approached her craft, keeping her mind open to opportunities and exploiting them. To questions from Bro. Ashley Howard and Bro. Caroline Bullock, she gave a similar reply – that forms and themes emerge in the course of work, in what she called ‘a magical shopping trip’. It was clear from the applause that followed how much the audience admired Alison Britton’s work and had enjoyed her talk.

Bro. Nicholas Cooper

27 September 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Guild Business

The Master announced a minute’s silence in memory of three Brothers who had recently died: associate Bro. Brian Dixon, Bro. Mary Jane Long and Bro. Leonard Pearce. Four new Brothers were announced: Bridget Bailey, a milliner and textile artist; Rachel Warr, a

puppetry director; Harriet Vine, a jewellery designer; and Taslim Martin, a sculptor who was formally introduced by Bro. Carol McNicoll.

Lecture · *Clearly obscure*
TRACEY SHEPPARD

The Master introduced the glass engraver Tracey Sheppard, who began by saying that she had not been keen to do a talk as she felt her area was a bit obscure. Her first image was a life-size glass road sign saying Memory Lane which she had made for the *Art of Remembering* exhibition at The Garden Gallery at Broughton, near Stockbridge in Hampshire, demonstrating how clear glass could be read as black within an image on etched glass. She talked about her history, showing images of early plant drawings. Plant imagery has remained an important part of her work. When deciding on higher education she was advised that to hope for a career in art was ridiculous, so she studied English literature and fine art. While at college, her tutor suggested she enrol in a glass engraving class and she was immediately captivated. Her first studio was in her parents’ conservatory, looking out on the garden, and her current studio in Winchester overlooks her own garden, which is a constant source of inspiration.

Tracey described her technique. Starting by drawing the design on the glass and etching it on to the surface using a combination of tools – abrasive stones, diamonds and polishers - she works ‘dry’ with extraction on the bench. She uses her sketchbooks, occasionally photos and working from life to create her designs.

She enjoys commissions, particularly the relationship that evolves with the client, and doing work for exhibitions, which give her more freedom. She showed images of various dishes. One was a commission showing a client’s treasured castellated yew hedge, one a personal homage to Sissinghurst Castle, in Kent, and another personal piece of the National Trust’s Coletton Fishacre garden, in Devon. She does not usually work in colour, but she showed a small blue dish made for a friend, featuring the annunciation.

In the 1990s, she started working on a larger scale, particularly on church doors. The first was for St Peter’s Church, Winchester, and was made in her Winchester studio. In order to carry out this type of commission more easily, she started working at Nero Glass in Brixton, where she learned acid etching and new masking techniques. She said how interesting the staff were to work with and how much she had learned from them. She relished the mutual exchange of information. She showed images of doors featuring angels that she



Paeonia delavayi Mrs Sarsons. Image © Tracey Sheppard

had created for St Mary Magdalene church in Taunton, Somerset, explaining how etched glass could be used to create an obscuring effect. Other examples included a window designed to obscure an unpleasant view in a Winchester house and a commission for St Michael and All Angels in Thursley, Surrey, where she had created a screen to prevent people seeing into the new vestry.

We were shown an image of Ray from Nero Glass in the acid shop and Tracey talked about the different masking techniques used when working with acid, illustrated by an image of large doors she had created for a new frontage at St Jude's Church, Southsea, Hampshire, using acid etching among other techniques.

Tracey's commissions extend beyond churches, as she demonstrated with drawings and images of a commission she had completed for St Michael's Hospice in Hereford. She told us she had failed to read the architect's drawings carefully enough and arriving on site had to swiftly adjust all her designs. The imagery on the glass is a variety of birds, reflecting the names of

all the hospice's rooms.

Next, we were introduced to Dave Blackwell of Nero Glass, who has been in the industry for more than 50 years. He has worked with the greats and is now looking after Tracey. He was holding a panel with gilding on it. Gilding is a technique Tracey only uses occasionally. She showed an image of a window at St Mary's Church, Sulhamstead Abbots, Berkshire. It needed to be read from both inside and outside, which she achieved using gilding, and she showed images of the process.

The last slide of the evening was of a small glass cube engraved 'absolute perfection', made as a tribute to PM Stephen Gottlieb. A cube seemed the right thing as Stephen is known as a maker of exquisite boxes – a tribute to the small and particular way that he worked.

During questions she was asked about the tutor who had suggested she enrol for glass engraving. She felt she could see that the drawing techniques promoted by her fine art course were alien to her.

Asked if she had a dream commission, she said she really enjoyed working on whatever requests appeared, though like all self-employed people she was always afraid of the work drying up. Having worked on so many commissions for churches, she said that one job would often lead to another.

To a question about teaching specifically in a school of architecture, she replied that she would love the opportunity to teach architects about the possibilities of glass, of which they were so often unaware.

Lastly, she was asked, what acid did she use and how long would the glass be immersed in it? She replied that mixtures and timings depended on the desired result, but as acid did not work on toughened glass the etching had to be done before toughening. This was risky, because if the glass shattered she would have to do the whole thing again.

Bro. Carol McNicoll

11 October 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Lecture · *Ambitions in scale: working from a studio in China*
FELICITY AYLIEFF

At the heart of this talk by the ceramicist Felicity Aylieff was her passion for China, and the stimulus and energy gained from working in a country that may soon be the world's leading power. The Chinese ability to adapt and learn, exemplified in the field of ceramics/pottery, mirrors what Felicity has been doing over the past 12

years since she first visited China with her husband, Takeshi Yasuda, who is also a well-known ceramicist.

The Master first met Felicity at the RCA and she spoke of her immediate respect for Felicity's work and her willingness to experiment. Felicity had quickly moved from completing her MA to exhibiting internationally, eventually returning to teach at the college and run the Ceramics Department.

Why a love of clay? Felicity spoke of its primordial, tactile and transformational qualities, 'charged with antiquity'. Although she said it once came bottom of the list of expressive materials – first being bronze and marble, then glass and lead – she indicated that this all changed around 1990 when Richard Long poured clay onto the floor of Tate Modern's Duveen Gallery. Mud/clay then became recognised as an art form, now given such increased status as to be included in the Frieze art show. It is the democratic nature of clay that Felicity thinks gives it its credibility.

Appropriately, her talk was a visual delight, from the first image of her standing beside a giant pot, the humble servant to a magisterial form, with its expressionist, abstracting cobalt blue bands of washes linking the sections of a work that was soon to be transported to the Middle East. Jingdezhen in eastern China, the centre for porcelain production where this 'pot' was made, has now become home, although Felicity showed us the Wesleyan Chapel at Larkhall, Bath, she formerly used as her studio. However, Bath was not sufficient to the requirements of Takeshi and Felicity. Despite her initial reluctance to work in China after Takeshi had set up a residency in Shanghai in 1996, she began to observe street life with her eyes and camera and soon became excited by this country of contrasts. We were shown images of clay heads of deities being transported through overhanging power lines, a pheasant on a lead, umbrellas patterning the factory ground on which they lay drying. The potential for creating new and larger porcelain forms at Jingdezhen became apparent and as Felicity likes a challenge, she was soon to embark on a scale of work that may even have taken her by surprise.

The family workshops at Jingdezhen are adept at making huge porcelain figures, so her request for large abstract forms, though not common in China, was possible. Felicity drew what was required and, with collective local knowledge and experience, the forms materialised. She showed us a wondrous video of three youngish, half-dressed men, entwined like wrestlers, working the clay with shared strength on a huge floor-bound wheel. The power and skill of such teamwork was clearly evident. This team of 'journeymen potters' works quickly and in silence. She must give them at least six or

seven pieces to make it worth their while. She amazed us with a photo of a courtyard filled with numerous pot sections from single day of their work.

After exploring various printing processes, she spotted a dish at a 'ghost' or night-time antiques market – and this was to be instrumental in her employing water-based enamels to illustrate her knowledge and love of flowers. She told us that she then added the dots to her designs for 'a contemporary feel'.

Felicity's designs are precise, but rich in colour and inventive in form. She draws black outlines with oil-based black enamel that holds the watercolour in place. Because of the high cost of firing, she paints directly on to the porcelain body, which is then fired once at around 1,300F (704C). She surprised her audience, particularly the potters, by saying that although the firing time was only 12 hours, with a cooling period of three days, the kiln might be 'opened' for 20 minutes at 1,240F to help



Blue and White vase. Image © RedHouse

its cooling and to encourage a depth of colour in the enamels.

Felicity spent two creative months at the Royal Delft porcelain factory, where she worked with their traditional blue and white glazes in a modern idiom, before returning to China with her husband in 2010.

She enjoys melding the old and new together, as exemplified by work she exhibited recently at *Art Out Loud* at Chatsworth in Derbyshire. In China, she began to work on new projects such as monumental pots for Qatar, but she soon found that she was undercharging. She is now freed up by her agent, Adrian Sassoon. She can experiment with her designs, and surfaces may be decorated with familiar objects, graphically recorded in a sketchbook, or more random charcoal marks.

With a greater variety of forms, some of which she can make herself, Felicity is now working at speed, decorating with colloidal gold and abstract patterns. Her ability to decorate a three-dimensional form with such imagination, skill and apparent ease is praiseworthy. The applause she received at the end of her talk was proof of the large audience's admiration.

Questions were limited by the time available, but broadly focused on the availability of materials – the exhausted kaolin mountains, the kilnwork, estimating costs, teaching commitments in London and life in China. Felicity emphasised that the cultural contrasts of the UK and China excite her: China offers a refreshing artistic freedom. Asked about language problems, she said she found learning the language difficult but that much may be communicated through drawing. She said young women are now doing more than decorating pots and that the Chinese in general have a huge appetite for new ideas. In all, she has helped Chinese potters to experiment and in return has learned much from them.

PM Sally Pollitzer

25 October 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Guild Business

The Master welcomed a hall crowded with members and guests, after which the Minutes of the previous meeting were read and applauded – a well-intended but unfortunate gesture, as it distracted the Master from getting them approved and seconded, so there is no guarantee that they represent an accurate record of that meeting. A few announcements about exhibitions etc. were read out by PM Prue Cooper, and then the Master introduced the speaker.

Lecture · *Ravilious & Co:*
how they earned an artist's living
ANDY FRIEND

The writer Andy Friend gave a lively and spirited lecture, speaking with enthusiasm and without notes on the subject of both his book about Eric Ravilious and the exhibition *Ravilious & Co*, which he had curated and which, after opening at the Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, had toured to Sheffield and Compton Verney, Warwickshire.

He explained that the artists represented in the exhibition were not a group but a loose web of friends, lovers and collaborators, hence the subtitle, *The Pattern of Friendship*. Some of the names were well known, such as Ravilious himself, Edward Bawden and John Nash; others, such as Enid Marx and Barnett Freedman, were reasonably well known; and yet others, particularly Percy Horton, Douglas Percy Bliss, Helen Binyon and Tirzah Garwood, were hardly known at all. However, they all contributed and became part of the rich pattern of friendship that made a very tangible contribution to the artistic life of Britain in the inter-war years, and in this context he quoted a remark by Enid Marx that even 'the lesser pebbles become sand'.

Ravilious and Bawden first met in 1922 when, as scholarship students, they entered the Royal College of Art and were assigned by the principal, Sir William Rothenstein, to the Design School, presided over by PM Robert Anning Bell. Bliss, several years older but enrolling at the same time, was in the Painting School. Ravilious, Bawden and Enid Marx, who was also in the Design School, all benefitted from the teaching and example of Paul Nash, who had been persuaded by Rothenstein to join the staff on a part-time basis for a short period in 1924-5. Ravilious had opted for mural painting as his main degree subject, but it was Nash who encouraged his pursuit of wood engraving. Wood engraving also became the basis for Enid Marx's hand-blocked textiles and designs. Harold Curwen of the Curwen Press, and his partner Oliver Simon – a cousin of Rothenstein's – played an important role in the lives of several members of this group, particularly Ravilious, Bawden, Marx (who was known as Marco) and Freedman, not only producing their pattern papers, but, as the favoured printers for such (then) enlightened bodies as London Transport, the BBC and the Empire Marketing Board, commissioning posters and other material. Freedman's genius for autolithography and lettering came to prominence, and his book jackets for such authors as Siegfried Sassoon are classics of the period. Firms including Dunbar Hay and Contemporary



Newt Pond, pencil and watercolour, 1932, Image Eric Ravilious

Lithographs Ltd also helped to disseminate their work, as well as promoting the marble-papers produced by both Charlotte Bawden and Tirzah Ravilious, (née Garwood), who had been one of Eric's students at Eastbourne School of Art.

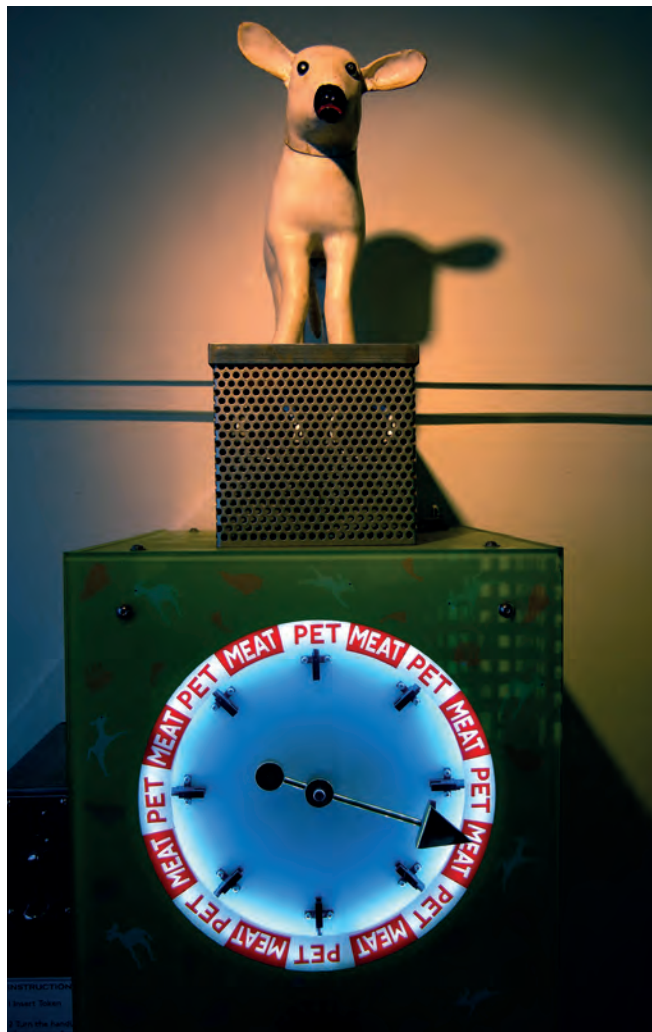
Ravilious and Percy Horton met while teaching at the Ruskin School of Art in Oxford. Horton, a Sheffield man, older than the others, had been an absolutist conscientious objector during the First World War. Refusing to do any recognised civilian job such as working on a farm, he was imprisoned in Calton Jail, Edinburgh, for the duration, much of it in solitary confinement. Surreptitious access to rudimentary drawing materials kept him sane, though he never fully recovered his health. Another figure who came into this loosely knit, largely ex-Royal College, grouping in the 1930s was Tom Hennell, who took lodgings one night at Brick House, in Great Bardfield, Essex, part of which had been rented by Bawden and Ravilious as a base from which to paint landscapes. At the time Hennell was bicycling round the countryside collecting material for his book *Change in the Farm*. After a mental breakdown and a spell in the Maudsley Hospital, in south London, Hennell returned to Brick House to stay with the Bawdens to recuperate. To help his recovery, Ravilious illustrated his little book, *Poems*, which was printed by the Oxford University Press. Sadly, Ravilious and Hennell were two of the only

three official war artists to be killed during the Second World War, and it was with the death of Ravilious, while accompanying an air-sea rescue mission off Iceland, that the speaker concluded his excellent and well-illustrated talk.

The Master asked Friend about the demographics of visitors at the various exhibition venues. He replied with a smile that in Eastbourne 'they were a bit like us', but in Sheffield, where admission to the exhibition was free, there was a much larger percentage of young people. In response to a question regarding his interest in the work of Ravilious, Friend described coming to Sussex from Australia and walking his dog in the countryside near Lewes. The dog ran off through the gates of Firle Place and, following to retrieve it, Friend said he had had a sudden sense of *déjà vu*, realising that although he had never been there before, he knew the landscape intimately from watercolours he had seen by Eric Ravilious. From that time on he was captivated. The Master thanked him and he sat down to enthusiastic applause.

For those who missed the talk or want to know more and haven't already read Andy Friend's book, *Ravilious and Co: The Pattern of Friendship*, published by Thames & Hudson, the writer of these minutes cannot recommend it too highly.

PM Peyton Skipwith



Pet or Meat, Image © Tim Hunkin

8 November 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Guild Business

The Master took the chair and welcomed Brethren and guests. The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and agreed as a correct record. Three newly elected members were introduced. They were Rachel Warr, a puppeteer, Will Houstoun, a magician (a first for the Guild), and Harriet Vine, a jeweller.

Lecture · *Novelty automation*
TIM HUNKIN

The Master introduced the engineer and cartoonist Tim Hunkin, who has been making and operating his own style of arcade machines on Southwold pier in Suffolk for the past 20 years or so. To explain, he showed a short film clip of people on the pier enjoying several of his machines. These included a man having his hand apparently bitten by a mad dog; Rent-A-Dog, which

involved walking a treadmill with a wooden dog on a lead; aerobics for couch potatoes, where the couch did all the gym work; a three-minute full package holiday experience; and finally discovering your upcoming future by attempting to cross a motorway on a zimmer frame. There was much laughter. Tim said he relished all the feedback he gets – and the weight of the real money in actual coins, which he explained were split 50/50 between the pier and himself.

He had become interested in automata and machines after seeing the Cabaret Mechanical Theatre in Covent Garden in the 1980s. He showed one of his early machines. It was a Chiropodist, a frankly terrifying looking figure in a box. Patrons were invited to slip a bare foot into an opening at ground level. When a coin was inserted, the boxed figure would slowly descend and the ‘treatment’ would begin. Tim said he had been unsure how users would react, as people are very odd about showing their feet; however, the cumulative sound of some 20,000 people screaming was a very satisfying result. He said that by having to pay a small amount of money, people became invested in the machines and bothered to read instructions properly and so on. He showed two further examples of his machines with a satirical edge. One involved keeping track of money laundering through a system of pulleys, the idea being to evade the watchful eyes of the Financial Standards Authority. Representatives of the FSA had actually come and played the machine, he said, and had reported that it was too difficult, and that real money laundering was much easier.

Tim is an engineer by training and has always made things, but his machines are very much built through trial and error. He has amassed an enormous collection of stuff housed in sheds from which he constructs them. He showed his process in detail on one particular machine. He had noticed the very difficult and rigid time restraints that the ‘fulfilment workers’ at Amazon were under. This at once suggested to him a possible arcade machine experience and he showed a film of the work in progress – the attention to detail and craft was impressive. A man with a trolley must collect goods from various parts of the warehouse, veering in different directions, up and down, backwards and forwards. Using some heavy-duty scrap chain and a gearing system, he had devised a vertically arranged plot for the cart to follow. The chain snaked round in loops and could switch direction. The model figure was sculpted from a particularly hard-wearing plastic and the machine would be operated by pedal power. A collaborator had manufactured a host of miniature objects stocked by Amazon, from a lavatory bowl to

perfume bottles. In the course of the game, if the little figure successfully picked an object then a larger version of the same object appeared in the trolley attached to the guidance system.

His prototype had required welding, a process he very much enjoyed. ‘People are too scared of welding,’ he said. He had tested the machine using a child and after modifications it was added to the arcade. If the task was completed successfully the player was rewarded with a zero-hours contract; failure to load all items in time resulted in a P45. He ended the talk by showing his arcade, Novelty Automation, in Princeton Street, just a stone’s throw from the Guild. It features a figure sculpted in the likeness of Nicholas Serota, to whom any object can be presented for a judgment as to whether or not it is art. Apparently the former Tate director had himself visited the arcade and played the machine and approved.

The Master asked if Tim still had friends from the academic and engineering worlds. He said that he dated most of his friends from the period of the Cabaret Mechanical Theatre in Covent Garden and beyond. His influences had been a book called *The Shows of London*, plus the works of Hogarth and Gillray. Nowadays he felt everything was very corporate and that individually crafted things bucked that trend. Bro. Neil Jennings asked about the decline of actual cash. Tim replied that he liked the honesty of cash, as it truly showed which machines were the most popular. They had recently instigated a system of tokens, but it was not the same. Bro. Caroline Bullock admired the understanding of the present day in the machines and Tim agreed with a suggestion from the floor that he was a kind of animated *Private Eye*. A visitor asked about the older automata as seen on the piers at Brighton. Tim enthused about the various executions these depict, from hanging to beheading. PM Peyton Skipwith wondered what Tim did for fun and Michael Sangster warned that Tim was in danger of being taken seriously by Serota. A very enjoyable presentation ended with prolonged applause.

PM Ian Archie Beck

22 November 2018 · ORDINARY MEETING

Guild Business

With the Master in the chair, two new Brothers were introduced: Eleanore Edwards Ramsay, bookbinder, by Bro. Bernard Middleton, and Phillida Gili, an illustrator, by PM Phil Abel. Both were warmly welcomed.

Lecture · *Enid Marx, designer and five-foot electrically-charged ‘exotic’*
BRO. ALAN POWERS

Enid Marx was born in West Hampstead in 1902. Her father was a prosperous engineer and inventor. The speaker showed a nice family photograph taken when Enid was very small, showing the men in glossy hats and frock coats, and the ladies with their hats perched on the tops of high coiffures. Enid was a tempestuous child, but at school at Roedean she had teachers who encouraged art and making things. From there she went on in 1921 to the Central School of Arts and Crafts for one year, where her studies included pottery and textiles, and thence to the Royal College of Art. 1922 was a remarkable year for the RCA: her contemporaries included Edward Bawden, Barnett Freedman and Eric Ravilious, with Paul Nash later memorable among her teachers. With the encouragement of Ravilious, Marx took up wood engraving. She had always enjoyed textiles and their patterns, and her first pattern-making commission was for bookbinding papers for the Curwen Press. In 1925 she went to an exhibition of printed fabrics by Dorothy Larcher and Phyllis Barron, who offered her an apprenticeship. Designing block-printed patterns would provide not only an income but personal satisfaction and fulfilment.



Enid Marx – a life long fan of Siamese cats



Dust jacket of the Charles Kenneth Scott Moncrieff translation of Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* © Estate of Enid Marx

In 1927 Marx opened her own business, moving in 1928 to a studio in St John's Wood that was recorded in a drawing by Ravilious. Over the next 10 years her business would grow, nurtured by exhibitions in England and abroad, and by showing at the famous Little Gallery and subsequently at Dunbar Hay. In 1937 she received her first commission for furnishing fabrics for the London Underground, at the instigation of the architect and industrial designer Christian Barman. Here, the demands of lighting, wear and tear, and manufacture were very different from those of the book papers and expensive dress and furnishing fabrics that she had worked on previously.

With the war, Marx's focus shifted. She designed economical but cheerful 'Utility' fabrics, once again adapting to a new market. In 1944 she was appointed a Royal Designer for Industry. She wrote and illustrated three children's books, notably *Bulgy the Barrage Balloon* for Oxford University Press, and engaged in book design and autolithographic and block print illustration for the publishers Chatto & Windus, for the Hogarth Press (perhaps most famously for the dust jacket of the Charles Kenneth Scott Moncrieff translation of Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*) and in due course for Faber & Faber, for Puffin Picture Books and for King Penguins. She would do illustrations for the Recording Britain artistic documentary project. After the war she would design patterns for laminates and the low value stamps for the new reign in 1953, and make linocuts that reflected her growing interest in traditional popular art. This she shared with her close

friend and companion, the historian Margaret Lambert ('Lamb'), whom she had first met in 1932 and with whom she would build up a notable collection spanning many media. Their interest would see its first published result in 1946 in Collins's *English Popular Art*, and subsequently in the much-expanded *English Popular Art* published by Batsford in 1951. After much effort, their collection eventually found a home at Compton Verney in Warwickshire. Marx died in 1998, having seen and enjoyed a notable revival of interest in the work she and her contemporaries had done before and during the war.

After warm applause for the speaker, several questions came from the audience. PM Peyton Skipwith asked if Marx had undertaken any ceramic designs, which apparently she had not. Alison Britton asked if she was related to Karl Marx. Again, apparently not: moreover, she admired Margaret Thatcher. PM Sally Pollitzer enquired about connections with the Bauhaus: once more the answer was negative. Annie Sherburne asked if Marx had known Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson at the RCA. The speaker suggested that these artists were too intense for Enid Marx's tastes and purposes. Emma Barker asked if she had known Peggy Angus, to which the reply was yes, but they did not like each other. Neil Jennings referred to the difficulty of finding a home for the collection. Finally, a further round of applause showed how greatly the audience had appreciated Bro. Alan Powers' illuminating talk.

Bro. Nicholas Cooper

A Year In Pictures



Jane Cox MA RCA, *Bonchurch Midnight* speckle glaze large & small jugs, earthenware, 2018



'St Agnes Point, Isles of Scilly' by Edward William Cooke RA. c.1848. Watercolour. Image © Martyn Gregory Gallery, London.



Leonard Rosoman, *The Drag Ball, No. 1, Act 2 Scene 1*, 1967–68. Acrylic on canvas, 182.8 cm x 228.6 cm. Collection Roxanne Rosoman. Photographer John Bodkin. © London, RoyalAcademy of Arts



Buckthorn berry – image showing varied shades and intensities of colour on different fibres © Penny Walsh



Jane Cox MA RCA and Walter Keeler

A Year In Pictures



Still life with
brushes, fencal enamel
© Felicity Aylieff



Sketchbook evening, image Jane Cox



Malachite wallpaper up in Bro.
Simon Hurst's front room ©
Simon Hurst



Alfred Tennyson, Julia Margaret Cameron, 1865
Sometimes referred to as "The Dirty Monk" ©
National Portrait Gallery



Condiments Set © Bro. Sue Lowday

A Year In Pictures



Exhibition 'Containing', at Marsden Woo Gallery,
Clerkenwell, London, 2007. Photograph © Philip
Sayer. The exhibition included 19 new ceramic
works by Alison Britton and a collection of chairs,
some historic, from the David Bonsall collection,
and some contemporary made by Martino Gamper



The James and The Foremost Prince, pencil
and watercolour 1935, Image Eric Ravilious



St Mary's Church, Sulhamsted Abbots ©
Bro. Tracey Sheppard



Enid Marx fabrics and printing
blocks displayed in her studio

A Year In Pictures

Divorce © Tim Hunkin



Freshwater Cauldron ©
Roger Law



Visit to Haddon Lake House as
part of the Master's summer outing.
Image © Bro. Simon Hurst



Puppet made by ELTA in collaboration with the
Watts Gallery, inspired by the work of James Henry
Pullen. © ELTA



New cushions in the Hall Image ©
Bro. Simon Hurst

OFFICERS' REPORTS

Chairman of Trustees

There is a Chinese curse that says: 'May you live in interesting times.' We do and the future is hard to predict; however, the Guild is in good shape to weather storms.

While the Committee looks after our culture, the Trustees' primary task is to be the guardians of our resources and assets. I am fortunate to be surrounded by wise and careful Trustees, and to have the support of diligent and skilled office staff. My thanks go out to them.

As our Hon. Treasurer, Alec McQuin, will show, the Guild is in better financial shape than it has ever been. On behalf of the Guild, I wish to thank Alec for his detailed and dedicated management of our finances. Our second biggest asset, our building, is in excellent visible and structural repair thanks to our Honorary Architect and the DAB Committee. You, the Guild's Brethren, our biggest asset, are entertained and educated by our Master's excellent choice of speakers. We continue to be well catered for by our own national treasure, Elspeth, who also brilliantly manages the hire of the rooms. The outreach and mentoring activities continue to have their desired impact.

Provided we can continue on our present path and the times do not get too interesting, in the foreseeable future we should have a sufficient surplus to survive a total loss of income for two years. With this safety net in place, we could consider developing a strategy to allocate further surplus in ways that fall in line with our charitable status. Over the next year, I would welcome suggestions that will help to develop a strategy that will meet our broader aims.

Wishing you all a merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Bro. Tony Wills

Hon. Treasurer

Year ended 30 September 2018

The year has been a successful one for the Art Workers' Guild and I am pleased to submit the annual accounts as your Hon. Treasurer.

My report compares the figures achieved during the year against budget rather than last year's figures, as last year was anomalous due to the expenditure

incurred in completing the Courtyard area (£149,000) and the income received from grants, donations and fundraising (£154,622).

I must also again acknowledge the support and generosity of the individual donations, bequests and trusts that continue to assist the Guild and support our work.

Income

Income for the year was £337,703 against a budget of £310,659, an increase of £27,044 (9%). I would here acknowledge the hard work undertaken by the Guild Secretary, Catherine O'Keeffe; our Administrator, Leigh Milsom Fowler; and especially the Guild Steward, Elspeth Dennison, for this excellent result.

The income was made up as below (budget figures in brackets):

- Rental income and investments £93,683 (£91,255). +£2,428 (2.7%)
- Subscriptions £37,874 (£34,580). +£3,294 (10%)
- Donations, bequests, fundraising £25,071 (£21,600). +£3,471 (16%)
- Hiring of rooms and catering £167,726 (£153,200). +£14,526 (9.1%)
- Other income: Guild guests, outings, postcards, outreach and sundry £13,349

Expenditure

Expenditure for the year was £248,488 (£236,830), an increase over budget of £11,658 (-4.9%). Expenditure was higher than expected in several areas, the key ones being building repairs and cleaning as detailed below:

- Building repairs / Courtyard works: £48,832 over budget. Other than general repairs and maintenance of the building, notable items of agreed expenditure were:
 - Front elevation repair and redecoration, including basement works £40,510.
 - New chair cushions in the lecture hall £2,130.
 - Work on the drains in the basement £2,675.
- Cleaning: over budget by £9,574. It was agreed to increase the number of days cleaning required and a higher specification was also implemented.

Despite these costs, the accounts show a surplus of £72,898 for the year, a small increase of £2,162 (3%) over budget.

Balance sheet

The balance sheet stands at £359,013 as compared with £286,115 last year, an increase of £72,898 (25.5%).

In addition to the above, the items detailed below should be noted:

- The debtor system is now established and working well. The total number of debtors at year end was only eight.
- The hiring administration has been made easier and this is reflected in the excellent revenues we have received from our hirers.
- The new systems and processes implemented within the administrative and financial disciplines of the office are working well.
- The membership has increased to 392.
- We have progressed well with the processing of our own accounts and completed a full review of our external advisors.
- Our monthly profit and loss (P&L) management accounts are accurate and timely.

Three-year figures

I thought it might be helpful to look at some three-year statistics as detailed below:

Income total over the last three years is: £1,101,023.

The balance sheet value has increased from: £162,931 to £359,013 (£196,082 or +120%)

Expenditure in completing the Courtyard works: £145,530.

Building maintenance and improvements: £122,250.

Total spent on the building: £267,780.

Despite these costs, an increased surplus was achieved over the three-year period of £196,082.

I am pleased to report that the Art Workers' Guild is in good health, as reflected in our year-end accounts.

Should anyone have any queries I will be pleased to answer them. My telephone number is 07831 456505 and my email address is alec.mcquin@rokill.co.uk.

I would conclude by thanking everyone for their support and encouragement in the year, in particular our Chairman, Tony Wills, our Master, Jane Cox, and our Guild Secretary, Catherine O'Keeffe, who has done a magnificent job of organising the office and ensuring the Guild's continued health. I would also thank the Trustees and Committee for their constant support and help.

Bro. Alec McQuin

Outreach Committee

The purpose of the Outreach Committee is 'to initiate, consider and promote projects or events which further the Guild's educational objectives' as set out in its constitution. The Committee's aims include the passing on of specific skills, promoting the importance of craftsmanship and the understanding of creative thinking; its activities may be academic, community, cross-disciplinary or experimental. Some of the Committee's activities have continued those of previous years, but it is important to be open to new approaches and ideas.

On 9 July Guild members who are part of the V&A Research Institute (VARI) 'encounters group' took part in the All-Party Parliamentary Design and Innovation Group (APDIG) panel discussion at the House of Commons chaired by the director of the V&A, Tristram Hunt. They discussed 'the challenges faced by D&T teachers; greater access to arts and design education; the right for all to an education that opens wider horizons; and the recognition that craft is increasingly becoming a way of reconciling traditional making techniques with modern systems thinking'. Bro. Mark Miodownik also spoke, and APDIG's co-chair, Barry Sheerman MP, raised the issue of design education in the Commons that evening. Similarly, Guild members took part in the Heritage Crafts Association's All-Party Parliamentary Group for Craft, which resulted in questions in Parliament about the loss and undermining of arts and practical skills education in schools.

The Guild members of the VARI group also hosted a workshop for the group's academics (in the fields of semiotics, education, art history, medicine, music, etc) with the object of engaging them in ways they might find challenging but offering insights into the way artists think. We devised a simple exercise in which each participant chose one of a selection of reproductions and wrote a description of their chosen image to enable someone who had not seen the original image to reproduce it. After half an hour the descriptions were exchanged with people from another table who then had to draw the original pictures working solely from these written descriptions. The approaches varied enormously, as might be expected, but provoked much discussion and the participants were rewarded with supper.

There were several textile-based events during the year. The first was a collaboration with East London Textile Arts (ELTA, a longterm developmental project working with diverse ethnic groups) and the Watts Gallery, which resulted in creating a characterful and



Table Top Museum - Disposable Ice Cream Spoons by Joshua Sofaer - Photograph © Leigh Milsom Fowler

beautifully made collection of puppets, as part of the Watts Gallery education programme.

Work has also begun on a project with ELTA, Watts and Guild members, on the theme 'John Frederick Lewis, Orientalism then and now'. This will culminate in an exhibition at the Watts Gallery in summer 2019 and at the Guild in the autumn. Funding for this project has been found from Newham Libraries and the De Laszlo Archive Trust, with further fundraising under way. ELTA and Guild members also worked with King's College Dental Institute on a project for adults with learning disabilities; their work with textiles was used as a creative educational tool to explain gum disease and promote gum health. Related projects are now being discussed which we hope will form part of future AWG outreach projects.

In May, Bro. Rachael Matthews held a day of intensive darning and patching (a wider range of participants will be invited this year) and the Guild and neuroscientists from the Wellcome Trust jointly hosted a seminar on the way conditions such as dyslexia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) manifest themselves in the work of artists. In September, the third Table Top Museum attracted more than 600 visitors, who (except for one indignant visitor) found the unexpectedness

of the displays fascinating. Its wider educational value (where makers and designers showed collections of objects they had collected for some particular focus, stimulus or unexpected connection) is being understood and enjoyed beyond the Guild. This year design students will be invited to contribute collections.

Although approaches may have been new, most of these activities have involved the Guild's traditional skills and materials. However, as computers play an increasing part in members' creative activities, we welcomed the approach made in January 2018 by an international group of computer academics who wanted to find out what they could learn from the way artists and makers think. Artists mainly work and create as individuals, and a particular concern of the Psychology of Programming Interest Group (PPIG) is the homogenising and exploitative cultural effect of computer technology. Since one way or another this 'cybernetic totalism' affects all 98% of Guild members who use a computer, we readily agreed to host a conference jointly, with as much Guild input as possible over the three days, including contributions to an exhibition of words and images revealing the varied attitudes of Guild members to their computers.

Papers were a mix of the highly technical, the political

(addressing the power structures and the authoritarian nature of most software) and the creative, which included talks by Bro. Fred Baier, Bro. Simon Hurst, Bro. Will Houstoun (a conjuror) and a poem by Bro. Nicholas Cooper. PPIG organised a brain-rattling workshop where Guild members and (self-described) computer nerds collaborated to build The Essence of a Computer – in an hour, using materials brought from a cupboard in the Cambridge University Science Department.

It was remarkable how highly skilled computer programmers and Guild members with no computer knowledge whatsoever seemed to have similar approaches to the making and illustration of connections, and how creations differing radically in appearance had so many fundamentals in common. The aesthetics of neat, individual solutions that at the same time opened up further possibilities seemed to unite everyone across both disciplines. PPIG is keen to continue to work with the Guild and is currently discussing with others the ideas that emerged; such long-term ripple effects are just what the Outreach Committee hopes to achieve. One participant has offered funding for further collaborations.

This writer will be standing down as chair of the Outreach Committee after five years and handing over to PM Jane Cox, who will continue to have the support of a well-balanced and imaginative committee. These first five years have been quite a learning curve – working out what works and what doesn't, how to play to our strengths, and building a network of contacts. The programme has expanded in scope and support, and funding raised from elsewhere has easily doubled the Guild's outreach budget.

The sociable structure and independence of the Guild allows us to foster connections easily, and to explore ideas informally without official or institutional pressures. Goodwill and fraternity make teamwork possible; teamwork makes the outreach projects possible; and outreach projects reward recipients and participants alike. This easy sense of common purpose is key to the Guild's running and activities. If you are interested in taking part in any way, do let us know.

PM Prue Cooper

Hon. Architect

This year we have completed the renovation of the exterior of the building with the overhaul of the front elevation: repairing the 13 sash windows, and redecorating with the new colour scheme for the front



AWG Lanterns photo by Simon Hurst

door in dark green with a stone-coloured surround.

We have also installed the new lanterns either side of the front step, thanks to the very generous donation made by Bro. Jane Muir. These were made by Great British Lighting from a range of materials, including milled and extruded aluminium, laser-cut brass sheet, and 3D printed nylon for the finials. They are mounted on Portland stone plinths. The choice of materials and technologies was very much driven by the buildability and nature of their installation around the existing railings in a reversible way.

The hall received its new seat cushions, in nine colours, made by Fine Cell Work, a charity engaging more than 500 prisoners across 32 prisons nationwide. The fabric is made from wool and hemp.

New track lighting has been fitted in the Master's Room and new pendants in the office.

Next year we expect to get listed building consent to convert the coal vaults into a dedicated repository for our archive and books.

Decoration of the Library and the Master's Room will also be completed, along with new oak flooring to all the first floor rooms.

Bro. Simon Hurst

Hon. Curator

2018 has seen two major Guild exhibitions and many smaller ones. In January we held a members' exhibition, *Making with Fire*, focusing on Brothers using different materials that require fire to transform them into works of art. I would like to thank Mary Ann Simmons, representing silversmithing; Peter Layton and Cathryn Shilling, representing glass; Dewi Prysor, representing blacksmithing; and Gareth Mason, representing clay and slip. I am indebted to them for participating and transporting their work to and from the Guild.

In April, May and June, the Master's Room was busy, firstly with *The Workshop of Past Master Stephen Gottlieb* – an exhibition by Bro. Jane Dorner of works inspired by PM Stephen Gottlieb's workshop, many of them created by Brothers. Next came the Traditional Architecture Group, exhibiting their unsuccessful entries to the RA Summer exhibition at the *Salon des Refusés*, which filled the Courtyard beautifully, and finally Bro. Rob Ryan held a solo exhibition of new work.

Over the summer in the Gallery we displayed work by new Brothers: *The Art of Playfulness* featured Jeff Soan's wooden animals, and illustrations by Hannah Coulson and Zebedee Helm.

The second major Guild exhibition in the Gallery and Courtyard came in the autumn. *The Figure: cast, carved and restored* was about the process of making and conserving sculpture, with works by Simon Smith, Guy Reid, Charlotte Hubbard, Wally Gilbert and James Butler on display, and even the prototype of the new Guild lanterns, which now adorn the entrance.

October and November, our busiest months in terms of bookings, saw three members' solo exhibitions: Alan Powers' *The Art of an Art Historian*; Neil Jennings' selling exhibition on Harold Jones; and Elizabeth Ball's *The Sphinx Project – Repositories of forgotten dreams*, an exhibition of collaborative work between her, Professor Grzegorz Mazurek and Marek Letkiewicz PhD. We also had a display and sale of Christmas cards by members, which I hope will become an annual event in the diary.

On my role as a keeper of the existing collection of artworks at the Guild, I can report that after a fruitful meeting with PM Peyton Skipwith and Bro. Neil Jennings, we secured a budget for some much needed reframing, remounting and conservation work to the portraits not painted in oil. I am now in the process of getting some quotes and hope the work will be carried out this year.

I can't sign off without thanking the Trustees and the DAB Committee for deciding to improve the hanging

and display systems on the ground floor. The cabinets are now well lit and the one in the Master's Room is at eye level. The hanging rods in the Courtyard will be used in the coming new year, so look out for our exhibition on painting with glass.

Bro. Monica Grose-Hodge

Hon. Archivist

Until recently the Guild possessed photographs of only a few of the Past Masters' portraits. We have therefore had all of them digitally photographed at high resolution. Copies have been lodged with the Bridgeman Art Library, which will act as our agent if an outside publisher or researcher wishes to use them. Use of these images will be free to the Guild and its members, and the record will remain as insurance should there be any loss or damage to the originals.

One of the more notable items in the archives is a memoir of the first 50 Masters of the Guild, written by Past Master C.R. Ashbee, who was personally acquainted with most of them. These highly personal (and often entertaining) memoirs have never been published. They have now been transcribed to provide a copy that can more readily be consulted and that might serve as a basis for publication. The text would still require extensive editing, but it might be illustrated by the portrait photographs recently taken. Discussions are proceeding.

Over the 10 or more years since the Guild's archive was sorted and catalogued, items have become misplaced and further material has needed to be added, either to existing series or for new entries. During the summer we had two weeks' work from an extremely efficient archivist nearing the end of her professional training. Misplaced items have now been returned to their places, and more recent additions catalogued and filed. The present location of all items has been noted so that it will be very much easier in future to retrieve and to replace the items in the archive. Some have also been re-housed in better envelopes and boxes, saving space and providing better storage.

Bro. Nicholas Cooper

Hon. Librarian

It has been delicately suggested to me that it is time I passed on the post of Librarian to someone else. This

is undoubtedly true. So this is my final library report. In recent years, I have tried to keep acquisitions to a minimum. The bookbinder Jen Lindsay donated two books by T.J. Cobden-Sanderson (*The Arts & Crafts Movement*, 1905, and *Ecce Mundus*, 1902.) The two volumes of Cobden-Sanderson’s memoirs were also on offer, but, alas, I was a bit slow off the mark and someone else snapped them up.

Bro. John R. Nash



Mentoring Evening photo by Simon Hurst

Mentoring Committee

On the evening of 22 October, we held the launch of the pilot mentoring scheme. Seventeen Brothers had agreed to be mentors and most of them brought examples of their work. Some select college students and tutors had been invited and a total of 31 students attended from Kingston, the RCA, Camberwell, UCA and City & Guilds, covering courses in graphic design, architecture, stone

and wood carving, among others. There was great enthusiasm and optimism all round, and a number of mentees have already signed up with mentors. I think it bodes very well. We would like to make this evening an annual event and include other events through the year. The next step is to get many more Brothers signed up to the idea of being mentors, so we can create a database of our specific areas of knowledge so that Catherine can reach out to more colleges to find mentees to match.

Bro. Simon Hurst

*Hon. Secretaries
Serenely ceramic*

Jane Cox can now bask in reflected glory. The Guild has been treated to a rich cornucopia of intriguing and wide-ranging lectures, from Roger Law of Spitting Image to Tim Hunkin on his surrealist arcade machines, and from Simon Hurst’s dreaming towers to Tracey Sheppard’s extraordinary etched glass. The Guild was treated to a series of dinners with the Master’s guests. On every occasion we were richly dined and wine by our resident cook, Jane Dorner, and her friends. But surely the highlight for many Brothers was the great Isle of Wight trip. What a treat to rub shoulders with Julia Margaret Cameron, Tennyson and Swinburne. We must all thank Jane for staging such a successful works outing. Her year has sped by all too fast.

Bro. Mark Winstanley
and Bro. Rebecca Jewell

Guild Chest

The Guild Chest exists to give financial assistance to members of the Guild. Applications are considered in the strictest confidence by the Trustees and are approved by the Master. If you would like to know more, please contact any of the Trustees. Their contact details are in the List of Members and are also available from the Guild office and at www.artworkersguild.org/who-we-are/the-guild-chest/ The Trustees are Bro. Angela Barrett, Bro. Jane Dorner and PM Phil Abel.

PM Phil Abel



Guild summer trip to Isle of Wight, photo by Sue Lowday

Guild Secretary

This has been another busy year at the Guild. The Hon. Officers have been active, and their reports will testify to this. Leigh and I have been very happy to make our contribution and support them in any way we can. In the office, we continue to work on the website, which has been restructured (again) to include all the activities now undertaken by the Guild, including mentoring, outreach and the all-important details about how the Guild Chest operates to provide support to Brothers in times of need. Throughout the year, Leigh has been working on a rolling programme of updated images, which keeps the website fresh and interesting, as well as providing a wonderful platform on which to showcase members’ work. The Guild’s presence on social media has increased dramatically over the past year, thanks to Leigh’s regular postings – and thanks also to all of you who provide her with the material to work with. The Guild is now active on Twitter and Instagram, as well as having a Facebook page.

Here are a few statistics:
Twitter followers 1,706 – an increase of 40% on last year, with a total of 2,239 likes.

Instagram followers 2,313 – an increase of more than 100% in less than a year
The membership is still growing, and stands at 392 Brothers.
I hope our new members find the Guild as welcoming and friendly as I have done over the past few years. Elspeth continues to provide a very efficient and responsive service to all those who hire our premises. Most of the hirers are repeat customers, which goes to show how well she looks after them, and how much they like being here. This year, we continued to work on the building and facilities to ensure they are maintained to the highest standard. As well as the work on the front elevation and the new cushions for the hall chairs, we have also upgraded the sound system in the hall and (less glamorously) repaired the drains in the basement. Thanks as always to Alec McQuin, our Hon. Treasurer, our Chairman, Tony Wills, the Master, Jane Cox, and our Hon. Secs, of course, who have all been supportive and encouraging throughout this year.

Catherine O’Keeffe

NEW GUILDSMEN IN 2018

New Brethren

Julie Arkell – Maker/Papier Mâché
Bridget Bailey – Milliner/Textile Artist
Laurence Beck – Graphic Designer
Monica Boxley – Jewellery/Textile Designer
Eleanore Edwards Ramsey – Designer Bookbinder
Jeff Fisher – Illustrator
Phillida Gili – Illustrator
William Houstoun – Conjuror
Marie-Hélène Jeeves – Illustrator
Chris Keenan – Ceramicist
Taslim Martin – Sculptor
Andrian Melka – Sculptor
Lawrence Neal – Furniture Maker
Jeff Soan – Sculptor
Harriet Vine – Jewellery Designer
Penelope Walsh – Textile Dyeing
Rachel Warr – Puppetry Director/Dramaturg

Affiliates

Georgia Fisher – Textile Designer
Alfred Newall – Furniture Maker

VALETE

Brian R Dixon, Mary Jane Long, Leonard John Pearce

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 2018

Master – Jane Cox
Immediate Past Master – Phil Abel
Master Elect – Anne Thorne
Master Elect-Elect – Alan Powers
Past Masters – Julian Bicknell, David Birch
and Anthony Paine
Chairman of the Trustees – Tony Wills

HON. OFFICERS

Hon. Secretaries – Rebecca Jewell
and Mark Winstanley
Hon. Architect – Simon Hurst
Hon. Treasurer – Alec McQuin
Hon. Curator – Monica Grose-Hodge
Hon. Librarian – John Nash
Hon. Archivist – Nicholas Cooper
Hon. Editor – Thomas Ponsonby
Chair of Outreach Cttee – PM Prue Cooper

ORDINARY MEMBERS

Jinny Blom, Christopher Claxton Stevens, Paul
Jakeman, Rosemary Ransome Wallis, Flora Roberts,
Frances Spalding

Hon. Chaplain – Rev. Alan Carr

Guild Secretary – Catherine O’Keeffe
Guild Administrator – Leigh Milsom Fowler
Guild Steward – Elspeth Dennison

