

June 2019

NEWSLETTER

The Arts Society of West Suffolk



FUNDRAISING EVENT

Tuesday 3rd September 2019 at 10.30 am

Blackbourne Community Centre, Elmswell

The Hoxne Hoard

Talk by Tony Diamond

This is a charitable event, open to everyone, raising funds for Young Arts. As spaces are limited to 100, **please reserve your space** by giving contact details to Sue Barrett 07770 916961 or email susan.e.barrett2btinternet.com or Jacky Livens on 01359 242425 or jpliv56@gmail.com and then **pay on the day £10**.

Our 2019 **Annual General Meeting** at the beginning of the month was followed by the last talk on this year's programme. We then enjoyed a relaxed finale with drinks and tasty canapés. After her very successful first year as Chairman, we now look forward to next year under the leadership of Sue Barrett with the freshly re-elected committee and Olivia Duchess of Grafton as our gracious President.

The new programme will begin in October, after the charitable talk in September raising funds for Young Arts. Please don't forget to renew your membership, if you have not done so already, by 20 July 2019.



Treasures of the Turf Christopher Garibaldi, our speaker in June, was recently Director of the National Horseracing Museum, Newmarket. He was previously Senior Curator & Assistant Keeper of Decorative Art at Norwich Castle, Museum Curator for the exhibition *George Wickes of Bury St Edmunds, Royal Goldsmith* and catalogued the silver in the Royal Collection at Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle and the Speaker's Residence. He is now fulfilling a long-standing ambition to study for a doctorate researching the history of the palaces at Newmarket.

Christopher's talk focused on the history of horseracing in the United Kingdom. Racing with a jockey on horseback dates back to the ancient Greeks and continued with the Romans, who brought the sport to Great Britain. Romans raced at Chester, York and Colchester; there is evidence that today's racecourse at York is on the original Roman site. Horse racing was highly popular in Britain during Elizabethan times, supported by civic pride and courtly patronage. It came to Newmarket at the beginning of the 17C when James I, having been stuck in the fog on his way to Thetford, came across the vast chalk heathland of Newmarket, ideal for horse racing and subsequently built a palace. This first palace collapsed in 1613; the second was built between 1613 and 1625, designed by Inigo Jones in a Palladian style that influenced the design of many future country houses. Although Cromwell owned a string of racehorses, suspicion of a royalist revolt being rallied in an area that was easy to pamphlet, led him to demolish the palace and ban horse racing. This caused Colonel Fairfax to move his bloodstock to Yorkshire, thus establishing a new racing centre, which continues today. Charles II re-established Newmarket to inculcate a structure of good quality stock after hundreds of horses had been lost in the Civil War, as Henry VIII had done following the Wars of the Roses. Henry was himself an expert horseman who won many races, the sport at that time being only for members of the court. The King's Plate presented in 1655 is the first record of public horse racing at Newmarket.

Horseracing paintings by renowned artists were collected at Newmarket. The Jockey Club was established in the 1750s to standardise horseracing regulations. By the 1790s all thoroughbred horses raced at Newmarket came from either Arabian, Turkoman or Barb stock. Queen Victoria sold Palace House to the Rothschilds in the 1860s. The Queen had once enjoyed horseracing but, after Albert's death, she became censorious of the sport. The prestige Newmarket gained from its early royal patronage continues today with Palace House being counted amongst the great houses of the region. Newmarket's two racecourses still host two of the country's five Classic Races, as well as numerous other group races.



Christopher illustrated his talk with fine examples of horse-racing paintings from the royal collection, many of which can now be viewed at Great Britain's National Heritage Centre of Horseracing and Sporting Art in the Palace House, Newmarket. These included the beautiful 'The Saddling Paddock' by Munnings as well as Stubbs' famous painting of Gimcrack. The latter was obviously painted before Stubbs' scientific study of a horse's anatomy, as the background horses appear to be flying with all four feet off the ground!

Website: www.theartssociety-westsuffolk.org.uk

(Registered Charity Number: 281081)