

NEWSLETTER

The Arts Society of West Suffolk

NEXT MEETING Tuesday 5th March 2024 Blackbourne Community Centre, Elmswell
Doors open 10am for Welcoming Coffee/Tea and Biscuits

10.45 am Van Gogh: 444 Days in Provence Mariska Beekencamp-Wladimiroff

Van Gogh's period in Provence is known for his brightest and most expressive paintings and for his illness. We visit some of the most influential, recognisable and loved paintings ever made by an artist.

Mariska Beekencamp-Wladimiroff has an MA from the Courtauld Institute of Art in London in Dutch Baroque Art, and set up Art Historical London, offering art historical lectures, courses, tours and events from London. Over the years this has expanded to events in New York and Amsterdam and, since 2020, online. Mariska also teaches on the public programme of the Dulwich Picture Gallery.



SPECIAL INTEREST DAY: **Tuesday 20th February**

70 members are now booked in for the Special Interest Day. We look forward to hearing Marc Allum's auctioneers' tales and his discussion of objects from

his own collection, as well as items brought along by our members. Doors open at 9.30 am with the first lecture starting at 10.00 am. To allow everyone to take their places in time for the first lecture, coffee/tea and biscuits will not be served until the first break at 11.00 am. The second lecture is scheduled for 11.30 am with a break for lunch at 12.30 pm. Discussion of the various objects will begin at 1.30 pm and the day will end at 3.00 pm.

VISIT A visit has been arranged to the Suffolk Archives in Raingate Street, Bury St Edmunds on Wednesday 27th March from 10.30 to 12.30. The Bury St Edmunds Psalter will be on view but limited spaces are available. Cost £7 per head. To book on a first come, first served basis, please contact Julia Eeles, our Visits Organiser, on 01359 240838

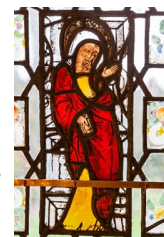
The West Suffolk & Bury St Edmunds Church Recording Group is very generously supported by both the West Suffolk and the Bury St Edmunds Arts Societies. Over the last two Church Recording seasons both Santon



Downham and Bardwell Churches have been recorded and their Records are due for presentation shortly. Despite being small, St Mary the Virgin Church at Santon Downham, known as the Church in the Forest, has a number of fascinating structural puzzles spanning from its 12th century origin, through various building phases, and these certainly caused much discussion! The earliest is a curious carved stone

plaque above the South doorway of what appears to be a wolf eating the Tree of Life.

The Church of St Peter and St Paul in Bardwell is large and lofty with a wonderful hammer-beam roof still coloured with its original painting of the late 14th / early 15th centuries; there are four wingless demi-angels and twenty-nine decorative bosses. The Church is noted for the collection of mediaeval glass in two of the tall windows, particularly the depiction of Sir William de Berdewell in full armour, kneeling in prayer. The window also contains an early 14th century image of a female saint, dressed in red and holding a book. This is a rare survival in Suffolk, since most such images suffered in either the Reformation in the mid-16th century or at the time of Oliver Cromwell one hundred years later.



Music in Art Sophie Matthews is one of the foremost

players of the English border bagpipes in the UK. She also plays a variety of early woodwind instruments such as shawm, rauschpfeife and recorder and has made her own baroque oboe. She is one of a handful of British players of the baroque musette, an 18th century French bagpipe similar to the Northumbrian small-pipes. During her lecture this month, Sophie described the history of these instruments and how they were made, treating us to beautiful demonstrations on her replica pieces. She also highlighted the significance of musical instruments in art from the middle ages to the 18C. An early depiction of bagpipes in an illustration in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, for example, denoted the lowly status of the miller amongst the assembled pilgrims. Sophie explained the meaning of a number of instruments and musicians represented in works of art over the ages, including Nativity paintings, church carvings, frescos and pastoral scenes. Sophie's entertaining and educational talk ended with a prime example of music in art shown in Hogarth's *The Enraged Musician* (1741). Every figure in this picture has an associated sound (in some cases maybe not particularly musical!) enraging the titular character. The most significant person, however, is the milk seller, standing slightly larger than the other characters, facing forward and undoubtedly plying her wares by singing in a loud clear voice.

