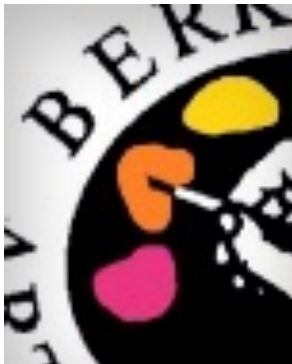


ArtNews

Berkhamsted Art Society

June 2024 — No. 400

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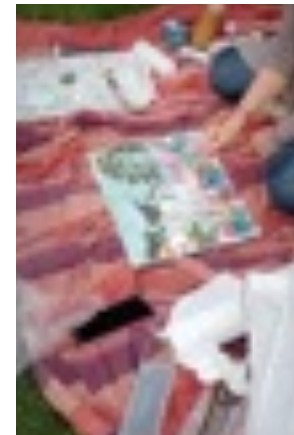


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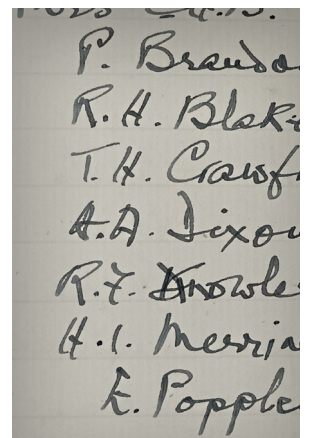
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ArtNews 400th Issue

We are Celebrating the 400th Edition of the Berkhamsted Art Society ArtNews

In recent years this publication has evolved under the editorial guidance of Bob Osborne then Peter Millard for 12 years, succeeded again by Bob Osborn and then Tracy Dudley and Brian O'Carroll. To mark this special occasion, we have featured articles from three esteemed long-standing members, Mitzie Green and Brigid Marlin and James Honour.



New members

Andy Hill — I've always had a keen interest in art but never really found time to expand on the interest. Shortly after retirement I took a couple of courses with St Ives school of painting.

At heart I am a bit of a techy so I've also done some work on the iPad using Procreate but find that it is extremely time consuming! I also attended a 2 day course on woodblock printing and am currently experimenting with a variety of printing techniques.

Bottom line is that I love art in many of its forms and am passionate about expanding my horizons. Last year I made the invitations for my middle daughter's wedding, at her request, which was a very special commission.

Rosaro Carder — I am a returning new member.

Sienna Cheshire — Hi my name is Sienna. I am 10 years old and I am very excited for my art to finally be shown to the world. I like drawing and painting.

I am very kind and friendly. I'm also an artist with ADHD and Autism. My friends and family say I'm very talented for my age and I'm very funny

Rob Hunt — I paint in oil and have had a few shows

Richard Hackett — Worked in corporate videos, now retired

Pauline Maddocks — I paint semi and abstract art, the narrative of which is the continual carbon footprint on flora around the world.

Krystina Cheshire — I have always loved drawing and painting. I vividly remember visiting the Civic centre as a child, where I saw one of your Art Fairs- it was the first time I ever saw art displayed and it really inspired me.

I lost touch with my Art for a while when I began my career as a Teacher and I had my own children. However during Lockdown, I was inspired to return to it again by Catherine Hay and Katie Jones with their weekly art challenges and by their own stunning art work. I began experimenting, adapting my style and media and haven't stopped since!

Emily Langworth — I've just moved to Wigginton with my partner and baby. I'm a psychotherapist (I studied art first time round).

I love life drawing and am always looking to improve! I'm also into carpentry, linocut printing and working with found text.

Painting the Dalai Lama

Part 1: Bridgid Marlin begins her once-in-a-lifetime journey to meet and paint a portrait of the Dalai Lama

When I received permission to be the first person ever to paint an official portrait of the Dalai Lama, I was overjoyed until I read the letter of permission more carefully. I was offered only 40 minutes—take it or leave it! No one can paint a portrait in 40 minutes! I knew it would be madness to go all the way to India and travel up the mountains to Dharamsala for a sitting of only 40 minutes, but I decided to go anyway. I had found that strange things happen when you take a risk, and adventures occur when you are travelling.

My friend, Mary Craig, came with me. She was writing a book on the Dalai Lama (later to be published under the title Kundun) She would interview His Holiness while I was painting him. Talking to a model keeps the face alive. Several months later when the time for my sitting drew near, we made our way to Dharamsala, and stayed at a little Tibetan hotel, run by the Dalai Lama's younger brother and his wife. I had prepared a sort of kangaroo pouch with all my painting materials in it—ready for action—I didn't want to waste a minute of my precious sitting.

At last a jeep came to take us to the sitting, and we clambered out when it stopped in front of the gate to the residence. I waddled forward, impeded by my kangaroo pouch which contained oil paints, painting rags, turpentine and medium. In addition I clutched a plastic

bag of brushes in one hand and a palette in the other. Mary carried my gesso panel. We were searched by the guards who looked very puzzled by my equipment, and then led up to the Dalai Lama's 'Palace' which was just a large square house with a gaily painted border on top.

Inside the waiting room was furnished with carved furniture and thick Tibetan carpets. There were colourful Tanka paintings on the wall and underneath them sat two very little boys each dressed in the bright yellow and dark red robes of a monk. Beside them sat their tutors: two wrinkled old monks who fussed over their charges like nannies.

After one little monk went in, I realised my sitting would take place after the other little monk's audience and I began to panic. I started to squeeze out my paints on to the palette: even squeezing time was precious now. The little boy on the bench watched me with interest, but his tutor looked shocked. A nervous assistant came to put my paper palette on a carved tray, which looked more respectful. Then Mr. Chimme, the palace official, appeared and looked at my blobs of colour with distaste.

He said bluntly, "There are many people waiting to see His Holiness today, can you cut your visit short?"

I stared at him in consternation, "But I only have 40 minutes!"

He frowned. "Who said you have 40 minutes?" I was speechless, but Mary came to my aid.

She said, "We have a letter with us that promises her a sitting of 40 minutes and it is signed by you."

Mr. Chimme turned to me, "Can't you be very inspired and paint the picture in ten minutes?"

I glared at him. "Have you ever painted a picture?"

"No," he said, and left the room. The little boy monk was called, and I knew it was my turn next. I tried to collect my thoughts and calm my nerves. At last Mr. Chimme came to fetch us.

He said firmly to Mary, "will you keep the time?" Mary nodded.

We got up and prepared to be ready to offer the regulation white scarves, which I managed with great difficulty, loaded down as I was.

We were led along a corridor and at the end of it we saw a touching scene.



Spoiler alert: Bridgid does paint the portrait

The story continues in the next issue of ArtNews

About Our Art Society

I was astonished to find that the Berkhamsted Art Society dates back to the late 1920's when a few enthusiastic local artists met to share their interest in art and to encourage others. I would love to see some of their original art work now.

I joined in 1990 while doing evening classes in watercolour painting at the local College of Further Education which was in the High Street above the betting shop and got huge inspiration from the workshops which the Art Society arranged. They were held all day Saturdays and given by different artists such as Rory Browne.

As my skills improved the Berkhamsted Art Society gave me the courage to exhibit my work for the first time, and imagine my utter joy when my first painting of Begonias



Begonia 1992



Pink Splendour 2024

sold (see below). This gave me the confidence to develop my career as an artist and I've tried to return the favour by doing the odd demonstration and a talk about my career as an artist. I also remember the Art Exhibition becoming a Must Attend Event for art lovers in the 1990's when it was regularly opened by the Mayor of Berkhamsted.

I remain a proud member to this day and am delighted to see the society flourishing again under the new leadership who deserve our enthusiastic support. We are so lucky to have our own Art Society in Berkhamsted



Mitzie Green

BAS Spring Art Fair

66 local artists shared their work when Berkhamsted Art Fair came to town



Art lovers of all ages flocked to Berkhamsted Art Fair in May, which featured paintings, ceramics and glassware by 66 local artists.

Children from Swing Gate School and Bridgewater Primary made a special trip to discover how some of the art was created and to explore. There was a painting table, where children could make bug-related art. An interactive demonstration also gave visitors

the chance to get creative, resulting in a 'community still life'.

Hundreds of people came to enjoy Berkhamsted Art Fair across the three days. One visitor commented: "The demonstration was delightful and I enjoyed the whole exhibition. It was really interesting to meet and speak to so many talented artists and see their beautiful work."

All the artists who exhibited their work are members of



Berkhamsted Art Society.

Not only does the Society organise two art fairs a year, it also put on weekly drawing evenings in summer, monthly life drawing sessions in winter, demonstrations and regular social events

Membership is £25 and, if you join now, it runs until 31 August 2025.

Catherine Archer, who has been a member since 2018, says: "It's fantastic to be part of this ever-growing community of artists. Everyone is encouraging and supportive of each other. There are so many ways to be an active member, whatever your experience or medium."

Find out more at

www.berkhamstedartsociety.co.uk/joining

or email

berkhamstedartsociety@gmail.com



Fresh View

Exhibiting with the BAS from the perspective of a new member

I joined the BAS in April 2024 as I was looking to exhibit more locally as well as meet other local artists. The exhibition came at a good time for me as I was having a bit of a lull on the creativity front for one reason or other, and isolated myself from a lot of things, I was able to exhibit existing work so did not have the pressure to create anything new which I would not have been able to do given my headspace at the time.

It was lovely to meet several people at the coffee morning prior to the event, where I quickly felt welcome and helped put faces to names, which always helps when setting up on hanging day. I was amazed at how

quickly all the artwork was hung and was grateful for everyone's patience whilst I waited to see where my slightly heavier artworks could be hung.

I popped into the exhibition on the Friday morning, and it was lovely to see all the school children engrossed in the artwork and talks given by some of the artists.

The Private View was a good opportunity to meet more artists and see everyone's work, an impressive variety and pool of talent, all whilst having delectable little canapes!

The weekend seemed to have a steady flow of people and sales and it was great speaking to people about my work. I thought the event was extremely well organised. A big thank you to everyone at BAS and all the other artists that I have met thus far for letting me become a part of this community. It's helped get me

back on track on my creative path and enabled me to focus and get ready for the BAW Open Studies which I participated in. I do look forward to attending some of the classes when my schedule permits and who knows, hopefully, I will be able to give a little resin demo to you all soon (if it will be of interest to people!)

by Skevi

www.yourabstractartist.com



Private View



Helene Engrand Speaking to the school children about her work



My Homeware and resin artworks



Our History at 95

A potted history of Berkhamsted Art Society which will be 95 years old on 9th December 2024.

Although there seems to have been support for local artists during the 1920s from Berkhamsted Citizen's Association, by the end of 1929, there was obviously great enthusiasm and determination to form an independent society specifically for art and crafts activities in the town.

Accordingly, at 8.30pm on Monday 9th December 1929 at 'The Poplars', a house on the High Street facing down Raven's Lane (the home of Mr and Mrs Brandon-Jones, the former appears to have been the art teacher at Berkhamsted School for Boys), nine people met to propose the 'foundation of an Arts and Crafts Society in Berkhamsted as a body apart from the Berkhamsted Citizen's Association.' The last two remaining founders from 1929, Mr A Dixon and Mr E Popple, had both resigned from office by March 1959.

The name 'Berkhamsted Arts and Crafts Society' continued until April 1959, when I believe a new generation of young artists joined the society and committee with fresh ideas and wished to drop the 'crafts' aspect, becoming Berkhamsted Art Society (BAS). These artists included Margaret Woods, Jean Folkard, Jennifer Andrews and Brian Bennett. As a consequence of this fresh injection of energy, membership rose around this time to over 100.

The exhibitions were held in the Town Hall until the 1970s when the building became neglected due to falling revenue and no longer complied with fire regulations. So, BAS moved to the Civic Centre (which had opened in 1938). Brian Bennett once told me how

he helped to build the wooden-framed pegboard wall hanging screens for the Civic Centre which we still use to this day.

There were also matching wooden-framed double-sided pegboards that were used as the free-standing screens in the hall space and on stage. These were extremely heavy and were sold and replaced with a much lighter, state-of-the-art aluminium framing system in the late 1980s. It was very expensive, but it provided us with professional display screens that we still enjoy today.

In terms of people, I remember from when I joined the committee in 1987, the post of Chair with their approximate period of office: Ralph Pointer (5 years), Julie Young (6 months), David Turnbull (5 years), Peter Grimer (23 years), Frances Evershed (5 years), myself (5 years). Crucially, many dozens of lovely people have served and helped on the committee over the years



Margaret Woods (Left), Brian Bennett (right), Berkhamsted Town Hall 1965.

Some random members from around the 1980s and 1990s that I remember, who all lived in Berkhamsted but are sadly no longer with us:

Margaret Woods — An eager committee member during the 1960s and early 1970s. She would hand deliver newsletters around the town on foot. She was a skilled oil portrait artist. She asked me to sit for her in the mid-1980s. My parents still have the picture. She asked for the collection at her funeral to go to BAS.

John Chalkley — Also served on the committee in the 1980s. He was a lovely gentle soul and had a particular style of short paint strokes that he used to do local landscapes and abstracts.

Gwen Webb — Part of a little group of ladies of similar age who had often trained at art school and were very good artists.

Sheila Jessop — An artist and sculptor.

George Sear — A jolly, popular Berkhamsted artist who specialised in watercolour scenes around the Chilterns and Norfolk.

Harry Sheldon — A commercial artist and a war artist in WW2. A very popular and skilled watercolour artist who didn't drive. He could often be seen sitting around

Berkhamsted painting local scenes during the 1970s and 1980s. He also illustrated many local publications and leaflets.

Jean Folkard — A talented oil painter and BAS committee member. She lived at Woodcock Hill house which had an old timber-framed barn, where she allowed the exhibition screens to be stored up to around the early 1990s, when we finally had access to a stable behind the Civic Centre. During the middle part of the 20th century, Woodcock Hill was occupied by Carmelite nuns, an order that was not allowed to communicate with the outside world.

We will soon be celebrating 95 years of BAS and long may it continue to thrive.

by *James Honour*



Margaret Woods (centre), Brian Bennett (left) — 1966. Berkhamsted Town Hall.

Berkhamsted Art Society Committee Members

| | | |
|---|------------------|--------------|
| Chairman, Events Programme and Life Drawing Organiser | James Honour | 01442 879632 |
| Treasurer & Website, Assistant ArtNews Editor | Ian Jones | 01442 876034 |
| Secretary | Bernadette Duffy | 01442 864373 |
| Facebook Administrator | Tracy Dudley | |
| Membership Secretary (Acting) | Ian Jones | 01442 876034 |
| Committee Member | Catherine Archer | 07711 699411 |

Fame at last...

... and a creative approach to giving back.

Catherine Archer won *The National Brain Appeal's 2024 Christmas card competition*

To read the article about Catherine's entry and why she did it go to the National Brain Appeal website:

www.nationalbrainappeal.org/a-creative-approach-to-giving-back/



Ann Collins

We were shocked and sad to hear that Ann Collins passed away in hospital in Plymouth on Tuesday 28th May 2024 after a short battle with multiple health issues. She was in her early 80s.

Ann Collins was an enthusiastic, hard-working BAS committee member in the late 1980s and through the 1990s, often doing multiple committee tasks, including organising and running Saturday workshops. She was happy using various media, pencil, watercolour and especially pastels.



She lived in Gossoms End. She moved to Plymouth in the early 2000s to be nearer her family, including her grandchildren. She always retained a keen interest in BAS, the people and eagerly awaited the BAS newsletters. She never

quite found an equivalent art society or group to join in Plymouth, so really missed the social aspects of BAS.

We were fortunate enough to stay with Ann in Plymouth (and her cats, Teddy and Daisy) on many occasions, including last year. She was good company, enjoyed a good laugh and would share 'funnies' on WhatsApp.

Ann was brought up in the Peckham area and was also a talented maker of curtains and other soft furnishings. She made the curtains in our house, and for many friends and her family.

She will be really missed.

I plan to represent BAS at the funeral.



by *James Honour*

Summer Drawing evenings June to August



3 June: Hawridge Place On Monday Evening 13 members gathered together on a mild, but clear evening. We drove up a long drive to the , set in beautiful

artists
a
paints.

the
also
to
10



surroundings and the all found a place with view and got out there Some chose the derelict fountain, others the architectural features of house and there were spectacular flower beds paint.

June: Castle Village gardens, near Berkhamsted Golf Club.



17 June: Sketching on canal tow-path between The Boat pub and the Rising Sun pub,

24 June: Great Gaddesden cottages, church and churchyard. Park near the school.





1 July: David Satchel's house, Puddingstone, Leighton Buzzard Road, Hemel Hempstead HP1 3DL. Riverside water meadow and wildflowers. Parking by the house or on the verge if full.

8 July: Sunnyside Allotments, Berkhamsted. Park there or on Ivy House Lane.

15 July: Boxmoor canal bridge, towpath and river at the end of OLD Fishery Lane. Park in Camelot Rugby Club car park.



22 July: Pixies Mere. Four acres of fishing lake and waters. Pix Farm Lane, between Berkhamsted and Boxmoor. HP1 2RZ. Secure gated parking available. By kind permission of Boxmoor & District Angling Society.

29 July: Broadwater car park by the canal, Berkhamsted. Drawing action at the nearby Bowls Club, if available.

5 August: Meet at St Peter and St Paul Church, Tring. Main car park on the right, coming from Berko, as you get near the town centre.

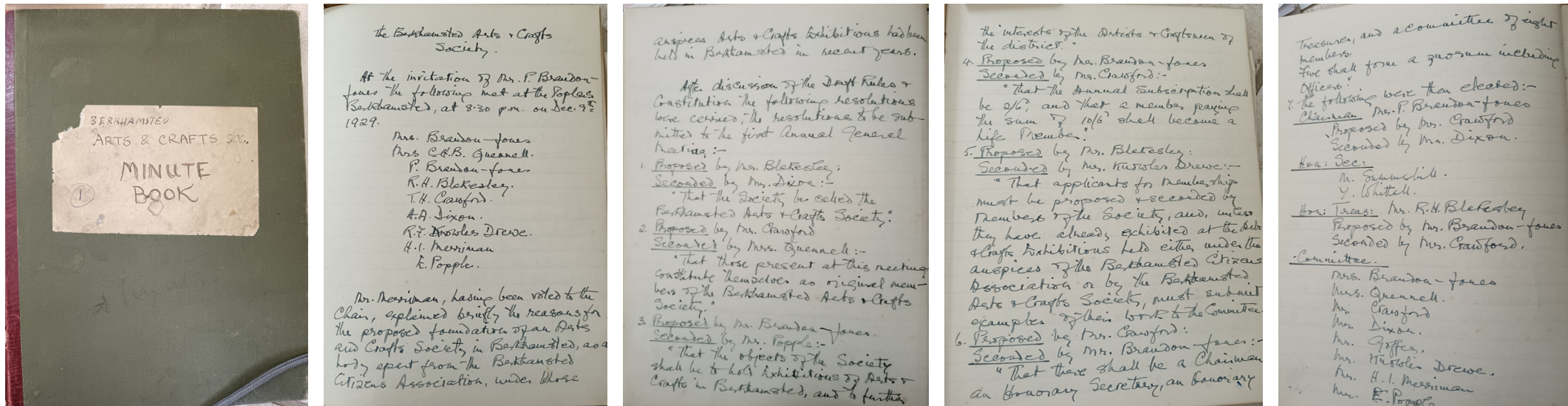
12 August: 'Patchwork', 22, Hall Park Gate, Berkhamsted. This is a beautiful garden opened especially for us. £5 each, but well worth it with free tea and coffee. Park in Hall Park Gate.



A History of Berkhamsted Art in 101 Objects



It is neither the beginning of art nor the beginning of Berkhamsted, but this hand-written book documents the start of Berkhamsted Art Society — born on 9th December 1929 as Berkhamsted Arts & Crafts Society.



1 The First Minutes

A year's membership could be bought for thirty pennies in 1929, whilst lifetime membership was set at the gentlemanly sum of Half a Guinea — the denomination of Artisans and Craftsmen.

The original objectives of furthering the artistic interests of the members and holding exhibitions of members' work in Berkhamsted remain today. Although, the way that is done has, I think, changed considerably. In the original minutes much emphasis is put on vetting members by seeing their work as a part of the membership process. Those who had shown work in an exhibition put on by the Citizens Association would be admitted without such scrutiny.

In 1929 art movements were heavily influential and Berkhamsted, along with the rest of Europe and the US, were witnessing Art Deco and Bauhaus — would artists influenced by either of these be granted membership? I don't know. Maybe later records will reveal the tastes of the day.

In 2024, with the centenary fast approaching, the Berkhamsted Art Society remains true to its founding objectives whilst modernising its operation and its judgement of members' artwork.

The last fifty years has seen a communications and computer revolution which has enabled the sharing of the enormous diversity of art created today with a vast

audience. Indeed, it's impossible to keep up with the influx of new art as it arrives at our fingertips.

As regards membership — that is more modern too. Not only can you find joining instructions on the [BAS Website](#) but you will also find that a portfolio is not required! Just an interest.

But there is one exception. Although their artistic endeavours are numerous and highly intriguing BAS excludes artists identified as an Artificial Intelligence — Human is a membership requirement. For now.

*By Brian O'Carroll
Human Photographer*