

Chairman's Bulletin - June

As promised, my first regular Bulletin on the Website. If you are reading this you are The Converted! Persuade your fellow members to use it too.

Lectures on ZOOM

Your Committee having been meeting regularly this month (weekly, in fact!), using Zoom, to try to bring you a programme of live lectures and I'm pleased to say the first live, remote lecture using Zoom will be on Friday 12th June at 11am: Simon Seligman – “From Venice to Sheffield: John Ruskin's passion for Art, Craft and Social Justice” - one of the lectures we missed.

You will all get an invitation to join the Zoom meeting from Stefan Pijanowski, who will "host" the meeting and introduce the lecturer. Stefan also organised and hosted remote Zoom training for members last week which was much appreciated by those who signed up. We hope many of you are already familiar with Zoom so you can attend the lecture.

Our plan is to roll out, subject to confirmation, a lecture in July and TWO in August (and our programmers are working hard to engage with lecturers - again, thanks to Gunta and Erica), which would catch up with our 2019/20 quota of ten lectures. One, at least will be a lecture we missed - Anne Anderson on Scandinavian Design (see programme card) and two will, hopefully, be lectures not previously booked. Not all lecturers do live remote lectures.

Membership Renewal & AGM

You will also be receiving renewal papers soon, including a discounted 2020/21 subscription to reflect the lectures, visits and study day missed. Obviously we hope most of you will renew to keep the Society viable and that we'll be physically meeting as soon as safely possible.

AGM : We will almost certainly postpone the September AGM (constitutionally, of course!) and I am delighted to report that ALL the Committee have agreed to stand again in the interests of continuity in the emergency, for which I give them my heartfelt thanks on your behalf. We are proposing small changes in the Constitution to reflect the need to vary Committee members' and Officers' tenure during the emergency. An example would be myself: I should be standing down after three years in office this September. The proposed change would allow a further year, or even two if members agreed it would serve our interest. This is not a Putin-style coup but a pragmatic adjustment! (I bet he calls his lifetime Presidency the same thing!!) Details to follow.

Study Days

You will also get details later of the November study day which should be possible to run remotely in a changed format.

Looking Ahead

Our plans for the new lecture season will be to run remotely as many of the booked lectures as we can. Where booked lecturers do not do online lectures, we will be looking for replacements who do, possibly from lecturers who would have appeared later in the year. Much work for Programmers! Our Co-opted committee members in hospitality and IT have also agreed to carry on when we can meet again, for which I thank them too.

We do not, of course, have any plans yet to have live lectures in the Hall, and will not until it is absolutely safe to do so, in line with Government guidelines - or "instructions" as we have been reminded recently, they clearly are!

A reminder that The Arts Society has a range of online lectures which can be accessed at any time, and that they are working hard on our behalf to keep us updated with advice, support, remote training and a very strong sense that we belong to a vibrant local society within a dynamic national body. We will emerge, eventually, to enjoy belonging to a fully functioning Arts Society Oundle. Best wishes to you all. Stay safe

Nigel Harper, Chairman.
June 2020