



THE ARTS SOCIETY CHISWICK ANNUAL REPORT 2023

2023 has been a lively year and the following report outlines our activities during the year. There is a buzz at meetings and all lectures are followed by lots of questions and interest.

There is no report on Heritage Volunteering, as there was only a small amount of activity with a couple of members helping Hammersmith & Fulham Archives prior to their move. We are still looking for a volunteer to co-ordinate Heritage Volunteering for the Society

TREASURER'S REPORT

This was the first year free of Covid restrictions and we were once again able to have fully live lectures and events. There was an improvement in membership attendance and new subscriptions, and in guest attendance at lectures. In turn this contributed to increased revenue from events and bar takings, despite increasing costs, resulting in a small year-end operating surplus.

MEMBERSHIP

In 2023, the Society had 228 members which was an increase of 6 over 2022.

VISITS AND EVENTS

In January we had an enjoyable visit to Tate Modern to see the Cezanne exhibition, preceded by an excellent lecture and lunch, followed in February by an informative visit to the Garrick club and an afternoon tour behind the scenes of the Royal Opera House, where we were fortunate enough to see the high tech scene changes in action as well as a couple of dancers in rehearsal.

A visit to Bletchley Park in March was greatly enjoyed.

In May we had a guided legal walk followed after lunch by a tour of the Royal Courts of Justice, and in June we saw The Rossetti Exhibition at Tate Britain, preceded by a talk and lunch.

We had fine weather in July for a lovely tour of the Royal Hospital, guided by a charming Chelsea Pensioner, after which we lunched in the somewhat haphazard restaurant in the Chelsea Physic Garden followed by a guided tour of the ancient garden.

Our Summer Party in August was held for the first time at the Duck & Ball on a lovely day which was very well attended and most enjoyable.

In October the East End walk with blue badge guide Pepe Martinez was so popular that two walks were booked, morning and afternoon, with a curry lunch at the famous Aladin Restaurant for those who wished.

In November there was an impromptu visit to the Koestler exhibition of prisoners' art at the Royal Festival Hall, which greatly impressed those who were able to go.

Our Christmas Party was held at the Polish Centre. It was fully booked and greatly enjoyed with the addition of the actor Simon Williams who not only gave us a polished and amusing account of his life but was utterly charming.

OVERSEAS TOURS

In April 2023, 30 members had an extremely enjoyable visit to Lisbon. Over five days and accompanied by an excellent guide, we saw many of the sights of the city as well as day trips to Sintra, Sesimbra and Palmela.

LECTURE AND PROGRAMME

The Society has had a very successful year. The lectures covered a variety of genres from Velazquez to 'A Bit of a Carry On': artist to actor. A lecture on the jewellery of Rene Lalique complemented the Society's visit to Lisbon in April.

The number of people attending the lectures, members and guests have increased throughout the year to an average of 103 people each lecture.

The IT support works well, and the new lapel microphone is a great success.

PUBLICITY

During 2023 Publicity has been working to support membership recruitment and retention as well as Lecture and Visits attendance. The 2023 media coverage commenced with an article in Chiswick Calendar <https://chiswickcalendar.co.uk/the-arts-society-chiswick-supports-young-artists-in-west-london/>, and was accompanied by listings of lectures. Both ChiswickW4 and Hammersmith Today and other local newsletters include our lecture notifications.

The promotion of 2024 lectures starts at the Chiswick Book Festival and we were very fortunate to sponsor the most popular session at The 2023 Chiswick Book Festival: Michael Frayn at 90, <https://theartsocietychiswick.org.uk/Special/PreviousSpecial.aspx> which also garnered media coverage.

The year ended with an update to the TASCH website <https://theartsocietychiswick.org.uk/> to make it easier to use and this continued into 2024.

YOUNG ARTS

Due to post-covid financial constraints we did not contribute to any young arts initiatives in 2023 but past contributions are still having an influence as can be seen from the following extract from Koestler Arts Annual Report:

“Thanks to support from the Arts Society Chiswick in 2022, which helped us to reach 30 young people at Feltham, as well as countless others across the Greater London Area, we were pleased to see a 38% increase in Koestler Awards entries from the region in 2023, with hundreds of people inspired to get creative for the first time.”

CONCLUSION

We look forward to another busy year of arts related activities. Volunteers to help run the Society are always welcome. Please contact the Chair or Membership Secretary if you are interested in volunteering.

April 2024