

NEWSLETTER

Autumn / Winter 2020



Here we are hoping to emerge from Lockdown 3.0 shortly, having had a one-day three-household Christmas and lots of Zoom offerings since September 2020.

What extraordinary language we have all learned in the last year and what an extraordinary time it has been, but there is light at the end of the tunnel with vaccinations underway and hope that, by Summer 2021, we may have some version of normality in sight.

During the summer of 2020 we managed to have one actual get together when members were able to see each other at the wonderful **gardens of Bourton House**. These gardens are particularly planted for their late summer display which was spectacular, and we were lucky to have the sun shining on us – what

a treat! There are some photos in the website 'gallery'. Since then, we have 'seen' a lot of each other, but in a virtual way.

The Arts Society Malmesbury has risen to the virtual challenge during these Covid times and has embraced a new world of online lectures and tours. We started this journey with Stella Lyons, who walked us through the absinthe fuelled café culture of the 19th century **Parisians at Leisure**. Stella helped us gain our Zoom confidence and, having held a couple of drop-in training sessions, we have regularly had about 100 viewers at each of our lectures. The lecture programme has been able to continue as scheduled and our lecturers so far: Sarah Stopford on the **Art of JMW Turner**, Chantal Brotherton-Ratcliffe on **Historical Materials and Techniques of Painting**, Caroline Holmes with **Step into the Christmas Card**, Peter Medhurst on **The Genius of Beethoven** and Marie Conte-Helm on **The Art of George Chinnery, Exploring the East** have coped brilliantly with this new lecturing format.

We have also ventured into other virtual experiences and have been on **A Tour of East End London** as well as **Shakespeare's London**, held a virtual Christmas Extravaganza, **the Spirit of Christmas**, explored the **Queen's Personal Jewellery Collection** and **Rosemary Verey's Contribution and Legacy to C20th Gardening** – all of these were greatly enjoyed by members and we've all found that virtual viewing is better than we had anticipated it might be. Of course, we cannot wait to get back to Crudwell Village Hall, seeing friends and enjoying tea and delicious cakes after stimulating lectures, but we have still got a few more months we need to get through in order to be safe.

As we edge towards spring we plan (if allowed) to identify outdoor pursuits, such as open gardens, where we may be allowed to meet as small groups.

The committee and I hope you all continue to stay safe and well.

Julie Thomas, Chair.