



# NEWSLETTER



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## SEPTEMBER MEETING

In September we were entertained by Jill Daniels who has been to us on several occasions before and this time her talk was entitled “Through the Keyhole – Lives of the Famous”. Now many of us remember a TV show of the same name which featured people like David Frost and Loyd Grossman who would show us round an elegant property and ask us to guess to whom it belonged but this was a bit more straight forward in that Jill told us up front who the place belonged to. We were simply invited to appreciate the pictures of the beautiful houses such as Chatsworth, Hatfield or Chartwell and their interiors while Jill gave us the fascinating facts about them and their famous owners both at present and historically.

## BIRTHDAY PARTY

Without our friends from Southampton this year we were a bit worried about numbers and so chose not to book up the Fountain Court as we usually do, but instead do some home-made celebrating. This involved carpet skittles in St. Andrews Hall with the skittles kindly provided by Pete and Trish who had managed to salvage them from the Marchwood dump! – amazing the things you can find up there.

As it turned out the numbers were not a problem with around twenty-two of us and about an equal number of boys and girls (no one claimed to be gender-neutral). We had a couple of rounds and when the scores were added up it could not have been closer with the girls scoring 120 points, just one ahead of the boys. Prizes were awarded to the highest score from each team and they turned out to be Terry and Shirley – well done to them.



We also had a delicious finger buffet paid for by the club which made it taste even better but being the church hall, the refreshments were decidedly non-alcoholic although it didn't detract from the enjoyment one little bit.



*Champions Terry & Shirley*

*Not as easy to hit as you might think*

## PETWORTH HOUSE

After a very mild period, it turned out suddenly cold on the 28<sup>th</sup> of October when we boarded the minibus for a day trip to Petworth House. Trish Sayers had very kindly procured the use of the children's bus that she drives as part of her work and so for a very reasonable price she was able to drive us down to West Sussex.

Petworth House is a National Trust property and although we didn't quite have enough bodies for the group discount, at least some of our NT members saved on the entry fee. The

house is a delight in itself with a small part of it being occupied by Lord Egremont and his family but the majority given over to the display of artworks. There are room after room of marvellous sculptures and many paintings, some by the likes of Turner and Van Dyck but as a group we were particularly interested in the "Carved Room" which is devoted to the woodcarvings of the famous Grinling Gibbons.

Born in Holland and then moving to England, Gibbons is probably the best known woodcarver of all time. He carved in Lime and was in great demand during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries by some of the wealthiest and most influential characters of the time and his work at Petworth is reckoned to be some of his finest.

The carvings were quite breathtaking in their detail and an inspiration to all of us but there is no doubt that 300 years has taken its toll on them and there is evidence of the ravages of woodworm, ill-advised coatings and just general wear and tear so it is necessary to try to imagine them when they had just been carved and viewed for the first time. In one of the pictures below you can see an open pea pod and legend has it that he would not carve the pod open until he had been paid for his work so it looks as though Petworth coughed up!

Just as an aside, I can tell you that I have an uncle who is an amateur woodcarver like myself and he goes by the name of Rod Giddings. When things are not going quite to plan on the carving front and he's not feeling very happy, my aunt refers to him as "Grumbling Giddings".



*Paid in full*



*Whaaat? planet pensioners more like!*



*What can you say?*



## NOVEMBER MEETING

Things got off to a rather inauspicious start at our November meeting when we turned up at around 9.30 to set up for a carve-in in the Garden Room at St. Andrew's only to find that the room had been double-booked. The people in charge were very apologetic and were at least able to offer us the small chapel off the main church but that was both small and freezing cold so we weren't feeling too pleased. However, the heating soon got going and we didn't have as many carvers as we had anticipated so it turned out to be quite comfortable.

It being the approach to the festive season, Roger's reindeer made their annual appearance on the sales table and as per last year Roger was on hand for the reindeer masterclass which was eagerly taken up by Vanessa and Shirley who had both produced delightful wooden Rudolfs by the end of the morning session.

We then had our usual lunch of fish and chips (eaten with fingers – much tastier) followed by a fabulous lemon drizzle made by Pippa and accompanied by tea and coffee.

The event in the Garden Room had by then finished and so we were able to decamp over there where we were joined by a number of other members ready for our afternoon speaker. His name was Andy Willis and the title of his talk was "Bees, Trees & Wax" meaning of course that he was an apiarist or bee-keeper and being involved with bees for almost thirty years he was able to impart his considerable knowledge in a fascinating and engaging way. Those of us who know only what we read in the papers about bees would be aware of a couple of issues, namely the Varroa mite and the general decline of honey bees, but happily Andy was able to tell us that both those problems were either under control or much-exaggerated. He also told us that paying through the nose for Manuka honey is not worth it – no better than the ordinary stuff. At the end of the talk we were able to buy some of his delicious produce.



*The two Andys get stuck in*



*All ready for Christmas*



*Watch the teacher carefully*

## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS** - notes for your diary

### **JANUARY**

Thursday 18th -----Carving Club – Oak Lodge School  
 Note! This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday not the second

Saturday 20th -----Annual General Meeting  
 Followed by card bingo

Thursday 25th -----Carving Club – Oak Lodge School

### **FEBRUARY**

Thursday 8th -----Carving Club – Oak Lodge School

Saturday 17th -----Morning: Carve-in.....we hope – to be confirmed  
Afternoon: Mike Haselden  
 Wood turner – demonstration and display

Thursday 22nd -----Carving Club – Oak Lodge School

### **MARCH**

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> -----Carving Club – Oak Lodge School

Friday 16th -----Social – Jonathan Dowe  
 Pole-lathe turner

Thursday 22nd-----Carving Club – Oak Lodge School

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“A lovely thing about Christmas is that it's compulsory, like a thunderstorm,  
 and we all go through it together.”

*Garrison Keillor*