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Cornucopia - Time and Place: an exhibition of contrasts

ERICA BROOKE commends an exhibition which holds interest for everyone making every visitor that bit richer and more curious.

Phil and Pat Bennett have done the Foxlowe Arts Centre proud in mounting the present exhibition, *Cornucopia*, which runs until May 20th. A group of seven exhibitors, four painters, Phil Bennett, Lucy Bennett, Colin Grimes, Stewart Griffin, and two ceramicists, Ruth Robinson and Jeff Teasdale and one felt worker, Suzy Shackleton, present an exhibition of extreme and exciting contrasts.

The exhibitors stand together in their shared interest in the past and sense of place, their individual approaches inviting thoughts on their techniques and use of colour.

Lucy Bennett's pictures, built up by the use of tiny motifs, and rich complementary colours, are at times so excessive, they tend to overpower and lose one in a psychedelic whirl, and at other times create movement which leads the eye over the canvas, creating dream-like 'other worlds'.

Phil Bennett's work, divided physically in the exhibition, but also in style, uses geometric images of architectural artifacts and topiared shapes which contrast to the more impressionistic paintings on the opposite wall. Both evoke 'the idea that we are surrounded by our past'.

The delicate, sparse landscapes in the work of **Stewart Griffin** are accomplished images of paint on canvas/paper when seen from a distance, but merit closer examination. The meticulous working of paint by **Colin Grimes** belies the complexity of the themes he engages, giving an impression of a seamless surface of humanity in confined situations.

Suzy Shackleton's felt pictures are strong joyous displays of shape and colour that invites the forbidden, the desire to touch them. Ceramist **Ruth Robinson's** creamy white classical designs, with simplicity of the motifs decorating the surface, are contemplative works which invite respite from our busy world.

Jeff Teasdale's raku ceramics seem torn, almost ripped, pieces of clay. In form, the organic, deliberately incomplete vessels are imbued with the memory of the land and his experience.

Heritage Rooms Opened

The two first floor rooms overlooking the Market Place were formally opened on Friday 20 April by Foxlowe Arts Centre trustee, Roger Warrillow.

"This evening's opening marks a long cherished dream to see Leek's Heritage celebrated within this beautiful old building." Roger said on declaring the Heritage Rooms open.

"This has been made possible by officers of the Leek and District Historical Society who have been responsible for the opening exhibition. This co-operative approach with different local groups is central to all we do at the Foxlowe Arts Centre!" Roger told the guests and added:

"These Heritage rooms and our Gallery complement the Museum and Gallery at the Nicholson Institute."

Roger concluded by launching the appeal to double our number of pledgers to 500 during the next three months.

One room is devoted to photographs and information about several historic Leek buildings and institutions while the other is devoted to the history of the Leek silk industry. A notebook is provided for visitors to ask questions or provide additional information and memories.



Foxlowe Films seek volunteer projectionists

MAUREEN WISKIN, Foxlowe Films co-ordinator

The Foxlowe Arts Centre owes a huge debt to Gerald Mee, veteran film maker, and his colleagues for supporting the initial 10 week pilot programme. Without them it wouldn't have happened.

Not only has he loaned his own projection equipment, which meant hauling it up and down the stairs every Tuesday night, but he has been our projectionist week in week out. Very many thanks from us all.

We can safely say that feedback from the pilot has clearly demonstrated that there is a real interest and demand for a community cinema in Leek.

So those of us in the Film Group will be actively seeking further grants to purchase our own equipment and also address the seating issue, which we know needs improvement because it was mentioned on most feedback.

Looking ahead to future programmes we realise we will need to recruit 3 or 4 volunteer projectionists to provide adequate cover. While technical experience would be useful, Gerald Mee has kindly offered to train anyone who is willing to be involved.

If this appeals to you and you are prepared to give some time to bringing quality films to Leek and the Moorlands then please get in touch with me on 01538 385799.



www.facebook.com/FoxloweArtsCentre

Book signings by local authors

Presented by Leek's Bookshop at the Foxlowe Arts Centre Saturday 26 May 10.30-12.30pm

THE NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE RAILWAY IN LMS DAYS
Volume 2.

by Basil Jeuda
176 pp Price £22.50
ISBN 13: 9781899889655
Black Dwarf Lightmoor Publications Ltd
120 Farmers' Close, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NR
01993 773927 /
info@lightmoor.co.uk /
www.lightmoor.co.uk

The second of three volumes looking at the North Staffordshire Railway after it became a part of the LM&SR in the Railway Grouping of 1923. The volume is again profusely illustrated, with nearly 500 photographs, maps, tickets, posters, handbills, timetables and other material, much of it not previously published. Further original research has once more provided much new information for the text and captions.

Basil Jeuda has previously written fifteen

There will also be copies of Volume 1 and 'The Knotty', and Basil will be happy to sign any of his books already possessed!



THE DUKE'S MANOR: Hartington and Buxton in Georgian Times Under the Dukes of Devonshire.

By Lindsey Porter
170pp £14.99
ISBN: 978-1-84306-544-9
Guidelines Books and Sales
11 Belmont Road, Ipstones, Stoke-on-Trent. ST10 2JN
Tel: 07971 990 649

Drawing on hundreds of previously unused records at Chatsworth House, the author contrasts the huge investment of £670,000 by

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books and has lectured extensively on the NSR and the subsequent history of the area it covered for more than thirty years.

This new work is building into an important illustrated history of the North Staffordshire Section of the London, Midland & Scottish Railway.

This volume includes a look at: Milk Traffic, Workman's Tickets, Ex NSR Locos in Crewe Works and the Railway Air Services, Meir Aerodrome as well as in-depth studies of local routes.

the 5th Duke in 1773-1810 (which started in Hartington Manor) with the way of life in the area; developments at Buxton; Inclosure of the Common; the transformation of the landscape through liming and inclosure, creating the green fields and stone wall landscape we know today.

Although concentrating on one particular area, this 100,000 word book also dips into what life was like in the Derbyshire Dales as a whole using Hartington as an example.

Foxlowe's Crafty Kids



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July 21 August 18
September 22 October 20

Celebrate with PIVA's 10th Birthday

Have you ever wondered what a crumhorn really sounds like or where it came from and where did it go? What is a curtal or a shawm and what do they sound like?

The answers to these questions and many more will emerge in a fascinating talk by Eric Moulder, internationally famous historical woodwind maker and Director of the music group Piva.

To help mark their 10th anniversary PIVA will be giving two talks prior to their anniversary concert at All Saints Church, Leek on 9th June.

Piva plays popular dance and ballad music from the Elizabethan period on a wide range of historical instruments. Whenever they perform, they are usually asked about the instruments, where they came from and what they are all about, but there's rarely time to give the whole story.

So Eric, together with other members of Piva, will take you through the maze of ancient instruments explaining their history, how they work and what they sound like. As well as the weird and wonderful, Eric will take a fresh look at the familiar violin and recorder and instruments that you think you may know – but perhaps don't!

Piva must be unique in that all five members of the group are actively involved in making musical instruments so they really do know how music is "made"!

This second talk will take you back to the workshop of a 16th century instrument maker and Eric, accompanied by his wife Jane, will explain how Tudor woodwind instruments were developed, made and played. Along the way, you can find out about the common thread that binds Henry VIII, Elizabeth I, William Shakespeare, a Silk Moth and the Dark Lady. Together with playing some music of the period, this talk will give you an entertaining insight into the skills of the past.

Anniversary Concert at All Saints Church, Saturday 9th June, 7.30pm.

In June, the 60th anniversary of Elizabeth II's reign will be celebrated in Leek, so it is more than appropriate that Piva will help you celebrate another golden age, that of Elizabeth I.

Tickets for the concert are £8 and £7 concessions from the Tourist Information Centre, on the night or contact Eric Moulder on 01538 386867

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