



Gallery Views

The latest exhibition of art in the Gallery at the Foxlowe Arts Centre showcases the creative talents of ten artists.

Outline Art is a group of professional artists who live on the borders of Cheshire East and Staffordshire. The group was formed to promote the work of individual members who live and work in outlying areas, where easy access to the opportunities in large cities is limited. Their collective aim is to bring high quality work to the attention of a wider audience through exhibitions and events at venues throughout the region and beyond.

The ten members of the group combine a wealth of experience through backgrounds in education, industry, commerce and arts organisations. They work in different styles across a wide range of disciplines including painting, ceramics, sculpture, photography, original printmaking, stitch and textiles.

The group members are: Barbara Barlow, Penny Beautiman, Bridget Bowie, Margaret Ann Brothwell, Vicky Christmas, Jan Fox, Anne Mychalkiw, Ondre Nowakowski RCA, Ann Roach, and Estella Scholes. The Outline Art Exhibition is running at the Foxlowe Arts Centre until Saturday September 22.

The Foxlowe Arts Centre's gallery is situated on the first floor of the Georgian building. Opening hours are Wednesday to Saturday from 10am until 4pm and the first Sunday of the month between 11am and 4pm. With admission to the gallery free. The Gallery Co-ordinator Jane Wilde has a band of committed volunteers who help to curate and steward the Gallery. However, she is always on the look out for additional volunteers to help showcase some of the most creative work in the area, and beyond. To offer your help email volunteers@foxloweartscentre.org.uk

Pupils showcase talents

In 2015 local schools were invited to submit pupils' artwork for display in the Foxlowe. Since then we have exhibited work from first, middle, high and special schools.

Ground floor Gallery Co-ordinator Pat Bennett said: "The last academic year provided us with an exciting range of images inspired by famous artists, historical events, current affairs, and revealed cultural and community awareness as well as the development of practical skills and personal creativity."

Schools whose work has featured since last Summer include: **Leek High School:** Self portraits displaying excellent observation and understanding of form and tone. **St Edward's CofE Academy:** The current display includes three themes of Collaged Cupcakes, pen and ink drawings of Beetles, a beautiful wall hanging, and a photograph of a four foot wide Butterfly. Every piece evidences patient and involved attention from pupils. **Beresford Memorial CofE First School:** A visit to Burslem. The Ceramics Biennial at the former Spode factory and the Wedgwood Museum, as well as 'Hands on Clay' proved to be a busy and exciting day. **Abbey Hill Special School & Performing Arts College:** Work on canvas inspired by the work of William Morris. Westwood First School: Illustrations in crayon and tissue paper. Heroes including: Ghandi, Florence Nightingale, and Rosa Parks. **St Mary's Catholic Academy:** Unicef linked exploration concerning Refugees and Migrants. **Painsley Catholic College:** GCSE work on exploring paper sculpture, clay, photography, photoshop, collage, paint, plaster, and wire were explored.



Special music night in memory of beautiful Tally



Four fantastic music acts are set to grace the stage of The Foxlowe Arts Centre in September – all in aid of charity.

The Donna Louise Trust is set to benefit from a fantastic night of live music which is being held in memory of Leek girl Tally – who sadly lost her second battle with leukaemia two and a half years ago.

After a similar sell out show last August, that time in aid of Endometriosis UK, acts I Set the Sea on Fire, The Gillespie Brothers and Kayleigh Knight are back at the Foxlowe with the addition of Teah Lewis, showcasing their talents by performing their own material with a few covers thrown in for good measure.

Headliners 'I Set the Sea on Fire' are an alternative rock band from Sheffield. The band are well known for their single 'Tastes Like Funk', which got airplay on BBC Radio 1 and BBC Radio 2. A spokesman for the gig organisers said: "The gig is being held to support and say thank you to The Donna Louise Hospice who have a very special place in our hearts, in particular because of the love and support they provided Tally, a beautiful girl who is sadly no longer with us."

The Donna Louise Trust provides care and support services for children and young adults with shortened life expectancy or those who, due to illness or injury have a life-threatening or life-limiting condition.

Tally's mum, Jane Wilde, who is a volunteer at the Foxlowe Arts Centre, said: "Donna Louise Hospice provided Tally (and me) with somewhere to enjoy art and music, and to forget about being ill for a little while.

"Tally wrote and recorded many songs there, as well as learning new instruments.

"Tally would have turned 16 this year, and would have thoroughly enjoyed this event, as music was one of her real passions. "

The fund-raising 'Live at The Foxlowe' evening will be held at the Foxlowe on Saturday September 29.

Tickets for the event are £5 and are available directly from the Foxlowe or from any of the event organisers/bands.

For more information visit the Facebook page : Live at The Foxlowe.

'United We Volunteer'

Painsley Catholic College student Zeb Hartmann, pictured on the right, has been carrying out work experience at the Foxlowe Arts Centre. Here the 15-year-old shares some of his thoughts about the community-run venue, in particular about some of our much-valued volunteers.



The most noteworthy part of my recent tenure of work experience at the Foxlowe Arts Centre was encountering and interacting with the wide variety of volunteers which the centre has attracted over its seven-year lifespan. A seemingly innocuous building at first glance, the range of personalities I met over the course of six hours alone astounded me and testified the true unifying power of charity, even on a more minor scale.

The first of the personnel I encountered during the working day was a woman by the name of Jane Kirkham, a lifelong resident of Leek who, upon being asked of her motivation behind volunteering, replied that she ultimately decided to volunteer out of her own enjoyment. Formerly a psychiatric nurse (with a qualification extending back an impressive four decades), Jane first became involved with the Foxlowe three months after its opening in 2011, and has since gradually ascended the house's volunteer hierarchy from kitchen pot-washer to gallery financial admin (ensuring that savings from the renowned 'Fox box') for 7-10 hours a week (two clearly spent in the gallery), which has ultimately enabled her to meet a number of the artists whose works have been displayed in the room over the years (an experience which she cites as her fondest memory of her time at the Foxlowe). While interviewing Jane, it was evident that she harboured a distinctive affection for both the Foxlowe and her work at the centre which permeated through her approachable disposition, citing her continued desire to volunteer here "as long as I enjoy it" against the potential draws of alternate occupations, which personally set an air of poignancy and honesty that recurred throughout the day.

An hour later, my brief visit to the Foxlowe café was punctuated by two encounters, the first being with one of the most unique teenagers I have met. Bethany Gray, a denizen of the nearby village of Cheddleton, was, if anything, a demonstration of the spectrum of differing personalities that the centre and its causes have attracted. Currently an assistant in the Foxlowe's café for ten hours a week (ensuring that customers are served and tables are neatly maintained), she expressed her greatest desire in volunteering as being to simply help the Foxlowe's visitors and make new friends. I found it admirable that the common aim of the volunteers I had interviewed were all motivated out of their own accordable free will/enjoyment, the latter of which Bethany considers to be the highlight of her volunteering experience. Currently a college student (undergoing a 'life skills' course), Bethany clearly derived enjoyment from her six-month tenure at the Foxlowe and appeared to have worked admirably despite facing various challenges in her path. While she aspires to move on from the centre in the future (adding that she will "miss it"), her words were a clear personal indicator of the most unique quality of the Foxlowe – its ability to draw in a wide spectrum of volunteers unified by the singular (or similar) cause of willing charitability.

That observation was asserted further by the other main volunteer I encountered in the Foxlowe café, Claire Dobie, a Leek resident and former teacher responsible for running the café on Mondays and also helping with ensuring the well-oiled operation of the bar at other Foxlowe-hosted events - a total of eight hours weekly. Drawn into her seven-year volunteer tenure by the social aspect prominent in the Foxlowe (notice the unifying theme present here), Claire described her fondest memory of working at the centre (which she seemed to express a clear appreciation for) as the annual Christmas get-together (a certain fulfillment of the centre's social aspect) and is content with continuing to volunteer at the Foxlowe alongside her chief profession of privately tutoring math and physics.

While interviewing the plethora of people above, I rapidly came upon the realisation that the volunteers of The Foxlowe Arts Centre embody the true essence of the centre's identity – a range of individuals, originating from a range of different backgrounds, yet united as volunteers within a relatively small cultural centre by one facet: their charitability.

Garden News

ALISON McCREA, Foxlowe Garden co-ordinator, reports on the latest green-fingered developments.

What a summer! We welcomed the long warm and dry spell but never expected it to last quite so long. Not that we're complaining but it certainly altered the gardeners' activities. Most of our time was spent watering plants rather than cutting grass, with activities planned for the beginning and end of the day, or at least in the shady side of the garden. The very dry ground forced us to defer installing the new bench, which needs to be sunk into the soil. However, the small shed was painted as planned.

The garden has continued to be a popular outdoor venue, especially with children and for classes that can be held outdoors. I'm told that some of the aromatic herbs played a key role in one of the yoga sessions.

However, the high points are the big outdoor celebrations and in July the gardeners were delighted to host 'Love Fest', a wedding blessing for a member of the garden team, Laura Heath, and her husband Stephen Catchick, along with their beautiful daughter Iris. She may not be aware of this, but the gorgeous *Iris reticulata* planted in one of the cycle planters in the spring was put there in her honour. Laura and Stephen have very kindly donated the arch installed for their event to the garden for future use, along with several of the straw bales used for seating on the day. Many thanks to them and to another of our gardeners, who has plans to turn one into a permaculture bed next year, so watch this space.

Plans are taking off for the forthcoming Apple Fest on Saturday October 6, from 11am to 2pm. Full details are on the Foxlowe website, especially for those who want to bring apples for juicing. It looks as though apples may do better than the soft fruits this year, especially if we continue to get sufficient rain, so we have started collecting a reserve of screw-top wine bottles in case not enough are brought on the day. The take home message for Foxlowe supporters is: keep drinking the wine but do please save the bottles and tops for us.

If you would like to become involved with the garden, please contact Alison McCrea 07753 172564 or e-mail

volunteers@foxloweartscentre.org.uk.

Foxlowe Films

As the nights draw in the Foxlowe Tuesday evening movies get underway with an exciting and varied season of films.

Kicking off the season on September 11 is Greta Gerwig's Academy Award nominated directorial debut **Ladybird** (15) starring Saoirse Ronan in a beautiful, sensitive coming-of-age story. The following week on September 18 we screen **In The Fade** (18), a riveting thriller set in Hamburg following a bombing in which a husband and son are killed. A change of pace on September 25 brings **Funny Cow** (15). Maxine Peake gives a formidable performance as an aspiring female comedian in the sexist 1970s Northern English Club circuit. With a soundtrack by Richard Hawley and Vic Reeves and others as club entertainers its by turns hilarious and heart-breaking. October finds Foxlowe Films screening a **UK premiere**. Following phone calls with the USA promoter of this important film, we're proud as punch to be collaborating with Leek's Blues and Americana Festival in screening **Sidemen: Long Road to Glory** (12A) on October 2. This wonderful film charts the lives and legacies of three legendary blues players – sidemen to Howlin' Wolf and Muddy Waters. The film succeeds in capturing the personal triumphs, tragedies and tremendous perseverance of three of the last original Delta and Chicago bluesmen while preserving a critical legacy that is nothing sort of our last links to the origins of all popular music. The following week on October 9, we screen **Beast** (15) a smartly layered British psychological thriller set on Jersey. We expect a full house on October 16 – so early booking is suggested for Ian McEwan's **On Chesil Beach** (15). Adapted by McEwan from his Booker winning novella it stars Saoirse Ronan (Brooklyn) and Billy Howle (Dunkirk) as two young lovers on honeymoon on the Dorset coast.

The documentary season starts on Wednesday October 10 with **Human Flow** (12A) an epic film journey led by the internationally renowned artist Ai Weiwei, giving a powerful visual expression to the scale and impact of human migration due to famine, climate change and war. Further details about this Autumn season of movies are included in the Foxlowe Films programme or on the Foxlowe website. Tickets are £5 available in advance, online or on the door and films start at 7.45pm prompt. It is free admission for the documentary 'Human Flow' with donations welcome.