

artyFACTS

The magazine of the Art Society of Inverness
February 2025



Rosie Fisher

FROM THE SECRETARY

Goodness me! I hear you cry, what happened to the President and their report? A good question.

The answer is – we don't have a President just now, so Artyfacts will need to settle for a report from the secretary instead. Liz had let us know for some time that six years as president was long enough, and who are we to disagree? She has put in an heroic shift and is due to retire with our thanks. Your committee tried hard to find someone from their number who was willing to take on the position but, unfortunately, failed. We have an excellent committee just now but they are all busy doing stuff and don't have the time or energy to take on an extra job. In her last Presidential address Liz described herself as very old, creaky and forgetful: she is not the only one!

Our constitution is silent on the action to be taken if the committee is unable to find one of their number willing to stand as President.

Consequently, we have decided to bumble on without one and hope a new candidate will 'emerge' in due course, much as new Prime Ministers would 'emerge' from the mists in the past..

A couple of points for anyone thinking of putting themselves (or someone else) forward as our next president:

We have a full committee who know how to run the show. The president is principally a figurehead and has an overview of the work done by others. Most of those attending the AGM were past presidents or past secretaries. Among the 200 odd members who didn't attend there must be some willing candidates who could take it on!

Two of our most long standing and hard working committee members stood down at the recent AGM, President Liz Hoey and Treasurer Sue Marshall. Both have volunteered to stay on the committee in other positions, so there must be some pleasure to be had from being on an ASI committee!

Who knows what the future holds.....but there has been talk of a Xmas party and a trip to the van Gogh experience in Aberdeen.

Finally – Best Wishes for 2025 to all our members

David Brown
Secretary

(committee)

PRESIDENT Vacant

VICE-PRESIDENT

Tania Mackie

SECRETARY

David Brown

TREASURER

Elaine French

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Kevin O'Neill

WEBSITE

Bob Peckham

WORKSHOPS

Fiona Morris

LIBRARY

Brian Jones

SCREENS

Belinda Johnson

SOCIAL EVENTS

Liz Hoey

with Belinda Johnson, Jane Nestor

PAINTING WEEKEND

Belinda Johnson, Mira Staszowski, Jane Nestor

ANNUAL EXHIBITION

Sue Marshall

FACEBOOK, SATURDAY MEETINGS

Tania Mackie

(non committee posts)

MORNING ART GROUP

Sandra Dingwall

EVENING CLASSES

PAINTING DAYS

Jonathan Shearer

BEGINNERS' CLASSES

Michelle Knight

ARTYFACTS

Clare Blois

Jenny Hepburn

David Brown

ASI members may contact the appropriate person using the details contained in the current printed copy of Artyfacts, and they'll be happy to help you with enquiries.



MERKINCH MORNING ART GROUP

The current block started on Monday 6th and Wednesday 8th January 2025. The block will run for approximately 12 -14 weeks, and the fee will be dependent on numbers and room hire charge.

Time:-10.00 a.m.-12.30 p.m.

This is an untutored group in which the members like to produce their own work in a variety of media and subject matters. We all help each other out if required, and it is a great opportunity to do your own work in the company of like - minded people

It's great to experience the different approaches to work and we all enjoy the company and the blether. For many of us the group provides the spur and opportunity to focus on our art work, without other distractions.

All are welcome. Good parking and coffee/tea available to buy, or bring a flask. If you would like to join the group but have no transport, please contact us and we will try to help if we can.

Contact Sandra Dingwall

MONTHLY PAINTING DAYS with JONATHAN SHEARER

You can achieve a lot in a whole day! Jonathan provides individual tuition on whatever you are working on, and sometimes extra projects. The location at Killearnan Hall provides plein-air opportunities too. The day starts at 10.00 am and ends with a friendly discussion of everyone's work. Cost £30 for the day - bring your lunch, tea/coffee provided.

Normally the monthly date is a Wednesday at the start of each month. Some Saturday dates have also been arranged at WASPS. Contact Jonathan to enquire and book.

Better still, join the Facebook Group: **ASI Jonathan Shearers Classes and Workshops**. This is the quickest way of getting the information you need and putting your name down!

EVENING CLASSES with JONATHAN SHEARER

These take place at Inverness Creative Academy (WASPS) in Inverness from 7 to 9 pm on Wednesday and Thursday evenings (two separate groups) and are arranged in 6 week blocks at £72 for the block. Jonathan helps everyone individually to pursue their own interests and aspirations, and also sets up interesting projects to focus on particular aspects of drawing and painting. The current blocks of classes are now under way, so contact Jonathan directly to enquire about these classes.

BEGINNERS' CLASSES

with Michelle Knight

Michelle teaches the popular Beginners' Tuesday evening class held at Killearnan Church Hall (from 19:00). She introduces various techniques using pencil, charcoal, watercolour, acrylic and more. It's friendly and informal and about enjoying yourself and having a go.

The current block of 8 classes (at £80 for the block) has already started, so please contact Michelle directly, on the e-mail above, to find out more about future dates.

NEXT EDITION

The next edition of Artyfacts will be published at the beginning of May 2025. Contributions please by 14th April at the latest, as I am away for the last week of that month.

MEMBERS GALLERY PAGE

I would like to include a members' gallery page. Please feel free to send me images of your work (just one per person please) for possible inclusion, depending on space. These should be medium sized JPEGS and please crop them properly if you can (but don't worry if you can't). Include title and medium.

www.artinverness.com

DAME BARBARA RAE at INVERNESS MUSEUM & ART GALLERY

“Times and Places”

This wonderful exhibition of Barbara Rae’s paintings and prints recently came to Inverness Museum and Art Gallery, and one wintry afternoon Barbara’s master print-maker Michael Waight held a print-making demonstration and Barbara herself had us spellbound with a talk.

Michael took us through the process of inking up and printing a steel etching plate. The print of ice floes in beautiful blues and greens is from Barbara’s North West Passage journeys. Michael’s technique is meticulous and he engaged us with his knowledge and long experience.

We had time to absorb Barbara’s artwork “Stone Pier”, a favourite of hers from 1980 (now in IMAG’s collection); “Peat Bank”(1988), a glowing mixed media collage; “Exit” (2015), a massive canvas 213 x 184 cm ,plus some monotypes and etchings. It was a feast of spectacular colours and wonderful mark making, an inspiration.

Barbara then gave us an entertaining and informative talk, tales about growing up and going to art school, stories from her teaching days and descriptions of her travels, to the USA, Ireland, Spain and most recently to the Polar Regions. Her next major exhibition will be based on time spent in Antarctica. Questions from the floor enquired about her ways of working. Barbara paints in acrylic and often washes off layers as part of the process. She recounted a funny story of using so much water that blue paint dripped through the floor onto a life model below.

I have long been in awe of Barbara’s work and it was an honour to meet her. She well deserves her new title of Dame Barbara Rae.

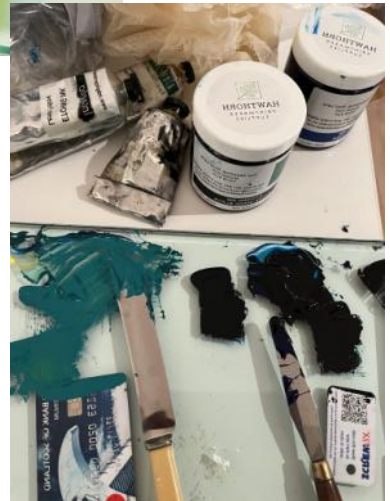
Jenny Hepburn





Some images from the afternoon print making demonstration.

(see back page for images from the exhibition)



LANDSCAPE ARTIST of the YEAR (series 10)

This popular programme is running on Sky Arts (Freeview) on Wednesday evenings, repeated later in the week. Be sure to tune in on February 19th when we are proud to have an ASI member taking part! Catch-up is available on NOW TV if you have it—not sure where else

PAINTING WEEKEND (untutored)

Dornoch

West Church Hall

Saturday 31st May and Sunday 1st June
2025



It's time to get excited about our Painting Weekend! This year we shall be based in the West Church Hall, which is at the first turning on the right as you drive into Dornoch along Evelix Road. Parking is found at the back of the building off Sutherland Road.

West Church Hall will give us a warm and dry base to work from and it will be up to you whether you choose to stay in the hall or go out and explore the area with some en plein air painting and sketching. There should be a wealth of opportunities in Dornoch to get your creative juices going!

Members who attend these painting weekends always go home having got to know some like minded artists, and with a renewed enthusiasm to get out and paint, so if you haven't been before please come along! Tea and coffee will be provided but bring a packed lunch unless you intend to eat in the local cafés or pubs.

There is also the possibility of going on a **History Links guided walk** on Saturday morning, which promises to be interesting and will inevitably help in our search for places to paint. The walk takes approximately 1 1/2 hours and would cost £10. If you could please let us know if you wish to take part and we will contact you if we need to take payment prior to the event.

If you wish to stay the night we suggest you look at booking something as soon as possible, it's bound to be busy with the start of the tourist season. There is a campsite for tents, caravans and campervans.

Looking forward to seeing you all in Dornoch!

Belinda Johnson, Mira Staszowski, Jane Nestor *Organisers*

ASI Website - information from Bob Peckham

At the beginning of this year some minor changes were made to the website menus.

In order to make it more easily available for planning and coordinating our many activities in the coming year, the **CALENDAR** page has been placed in the Main Menu, just after RECENT WORKS.

The **ARCHIVE** page has been moved to the very end (or bottom) of the main menu, and "Contacts and Links" has been renamed **DIRECTORY**.

As usual at the beginning of the year new gallery pages have been set up under **RECENT WORKS**, entitled **PAINTINGS'25** and **DRAWINGS'25**, and all members are cordially invited to send images of their works for inclusion (initially up to 4 and potentially another 4 later in the year). This a great way to share your works with fellow members, and to inspire others to do the same, so please don't be shy. Just email your images to Bob and remember to include a title, the medium and any other relevant info. We may also add a page for **SKETCHBOOKS'25**.

Members who have their own websites are also welcome to check their entries in the **DIRECTORY**, and if necessary to send updated information, or add e.g. their Instagram address or Facebook page address, or a new image.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2025

Hopefully, by now you will have renewed your ASI membership for 2025. If you have not, you will have received a reminder at the end of January, If you do not wish to renew your membership, then thank you for your involvement in the society and please be assured that we will always welcome you back if you wish to rejoin.

However, if we do not hear from you then **you will not receive further emails or copies of Artyfacts and will not be able to go to classes, workshops or be involved in the exhibition.**

So, please make sure that if you want to continue as a member then you have paid your membership and also informed me that you have done this

Kevin (membership secretary)

CHRISTINE O'KEEFFE

(died December 2024)

Christine O'Keeffe was a professional watercolourist and teacher who divided her time between her croft house in the Highlands and her shepherd's cottage in the foothills of the French Pyrenees.

She had always worked in the field of art and design but had specialised in large, bold and loose watercolour paintings of the landscape for the last twenty years. She also enjoyed portraiture and striking flower paintings. Christine exhibited in and around Inverness, Perth, Edinburgh and London and her work found its way into homes as far as Australia, South Africa, Canada and America.

Her work was distinctive in style, and she employed some unusual techniques to encourage a loose, strong and bold final painting. She was happy to share her knowledge and techniques with ASI members through her workshops, where many of us got to know her.

Christine used to say of her medium that "Watercolour painting should be fun. It may be irritating and frustrating, but it should be enjoyable. It is not a nice pale hobby; it is an exciting vibrant battle".

Kathy Sutherland



Saturday 1st March 2025, 10am to 4 pm
Gelli-Print Workshop

**NEW WORKSHOPS
FOR 2025!**

Dive into the art of mono-printing with Gelli plates. Create stunning collage papers using multiple techniques. Experiment and develop your personal style. Use the custom papers you create to upcycle a board book and craft unique bookmark designs.

Thursday 24th April 2025, 10am to 4pm
Gelli-Plate and Abstract Landscape Workshop

Learn the art of mono-printing with Gelli plates and perspex sheets. Create stunning collage papers using textured plates, water spray, and mark making tools. Use the custom papers you produce to create a finished mixed media & collage landscape you can be proud of.

Both the above workshops take place at Inverness Creative Academy (WASPS) and are tutored by Susan McCreevy, an expert in this field.

All materials provided. Cost: £80 per workshop to ASI members (non members £90). OR why not book both together at the special price of £150? (£175 for non-members).

Sorry, but no refunds unless a replacement is found for your place

Bookings please to Fiona Morris

Saturday 10th May 2025, 10am-4pm
Introduction to Fused Glass

Tutor: Lynne Donald, Venue: The Noost Glass Studio, Rosemarkie

Cost : £80 to members of Art Society of Inverness

Lynne will use the first part of the day to demonstrate the techniques used . Then you'll decide what you would like to make – perhaps a pendant, a hanging piece, a dish, curve, wave or a framed piece. Now time for a fun creative day , guided by Lynne! Finished pieces can be collected or posted out following kiln-firing. All tools and most glass is included in the fee. There may be small extra charges which are payable direct to Lynne on the day. Sorry, no refunds unless a replacement is found for your place.

Bookings please to Fiona Morris

STOP PRESS: WEEKEND WORKSHOP 22-23 MARCH with SAM BOUGHTON.
Have a look at her website www.samboughton.co.uk - details being finalised now, register your interest with Fiona.

Stained Glass Workshop with Catherine Carr

Jane Nestor reports on a workshop held at WASPS before Christmas. Catherine Carr is a fantastic glass artist who has her studio there, and hopefully this workshop might happen again!

We started off with Catherine outlining the whole process, and talking us through the tools we were going to use. She then demonstrated how to use the glass cutters, showing us how to cut a straight line.

Now it was our turn! We were given a piece of glass around A4 size, and practised cutting a few straight lines. Then we moved on to wavy lines and various shapes until we were comfortable using the cutter. Catherine was very attentive, going round us all to make sure we were cutting at the right angle and using correct pressure.

There was a selection of Christmas themed patterns for us to choose from, which most of us used, although the option to use our own design was there. There were angels, doves, holly leaves, stars etc. Then we chose our colours. There was a huge selection of glass, ranging from clear, iridescent, patterned, textured, even mirrored. The colours were stunning, especially when you held them up to the light, and everyone had fun making creative choices.

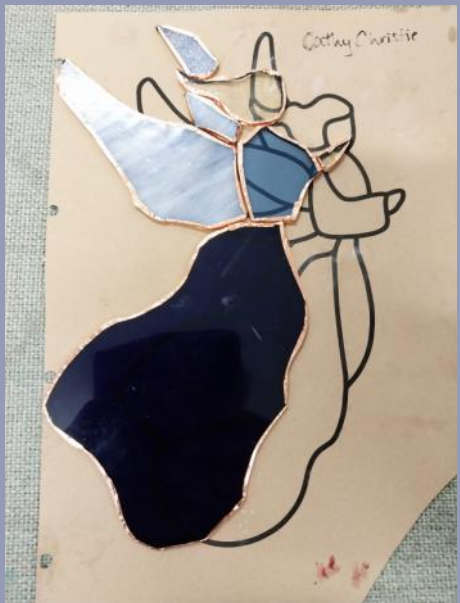
Once we had cut all our pieces, all the cut surfaces were then ground down to smooth them off. There were 3 grinders for us to use, so nobody had to wait long for a turn. Next, we applied the copper foil around the edges and smoothed it down. Now, on to the soldering! I found it a bit daunting at first, but soon relaxed into it. Even though it wasn't perfect, I was happy with the end result.

There were a lot of new skills learned that day, and everybody gained a sense of achievement. It was a busy and absorbing process in a very friendly and encouraging atmosphere. Catherine's knowledge, experience and patience were invaluable, and everybody thoroughly enjoyed the workshop.





**Stained
Glass
work in
progress**



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I hope you all enjoy receiving Artyfacts. Over the years I have always liked getting it through the door and looking at it with a cup of coffee! (I have to admit that its arrival is not quite so exciting now that I am the one who writes it).

Jenny, David and myself work hard at this, collecting the information, putting it together and trying to keep Artyfacts informative and interesting. It does take time and effort, so we have decided that four times a year is enough for us, and in future you'll be receiving it every three months. Kevin does a marvellous job keeping you all informed by e-mail, so you won't miss out on anything. Do make sure you read his messages! I am aware that there are still a few members who have not embraced the internet, but hopefully family or neighbours might help you out? Our thanks also to Elaine, who stuffs all the envelopes and licks all the stamps. Essential tasks!

We would really appreciate any contributions from you, the members. Jenny invited views in the last edition and I give gold stars to Clive and Helen, the only two out of 240 who responded! We can do better than that, so please consider sending me short pieces about your experiences, ideas, hopes, aspirations or gripes! Ask me first if you are not sure about suitability. You can even remain anonymous if you wish! Also let us know of anything you would like to see in Artyfacts, and we'll try our best. And while I am here, don't forget to pay your ASI subscription. If you are leaving us through dissatisfaction, do tell us why

Our cover painting is a recent sketch by Rosie Fisher, a member from Grantown on Spey who particularly enjoys mixed media. An evocative



kitchen scene. Rosie belongs to a whats-app group of friends who try to do "A sketch a day for January". I too belong to a group like this and it is very good motivation. I have not kept up very well this month but maybe we'll go into February! Why not try it?

Happy painting - from Clare
(and Torquil the Tortoise)

Questions, questions.....

Jenny Hepburn invited your views, including any controversial ones!

In the last edition, Jenny posed some questions and these were answered by members Clive Williams and Helen Joy.

Which artists, dead or alive, do you find most inspirational? I know, there are lots, but pick a few.

Clive: Shirley Travena, Edward Wesson, Edward Hopper, Norman Rockwell, Joan Eardley.

Helen: Francis Bacon, Maggi Hambling

What do you get out of creating art?

Clive: Hopefully something I can bear to live with.

Helen: The intellectual challenge of trying to reproduce in visual formats how I feel about the people, animals and things I experience

Can you suggest ways of overcoming the “blank canvas”, or artists’ block?

Clive: Pencils and brushes are wilful. They have minds of their own. You can exercise control by micro-management - or trust them to obey your instructions - or let them wander across the canvas at will.

You decide before you commit to canvas.

Helen: I make marks in response to sounds, often with eyes closed

Do you agree with Tracey Emin?

Clive: “The work of art is to dominate the spectator” (Oscar Wilde). The art is important, not the gender of the author nor when they reach their peak.

Helen: I don't agree that over time generally men become less influential, but do agree that women should value their impact more .

“Painting does not mean slavishly copying the object. It means perceiving harmony in numerous relationships and transposing these to a system of one’s own, developing them with a new original logic.”

Cézanne

(thanks, William Mather, for sending)





Some inspirational work by Dame Barbara Rae, recently shown at Inverness Museum and Art Gallery