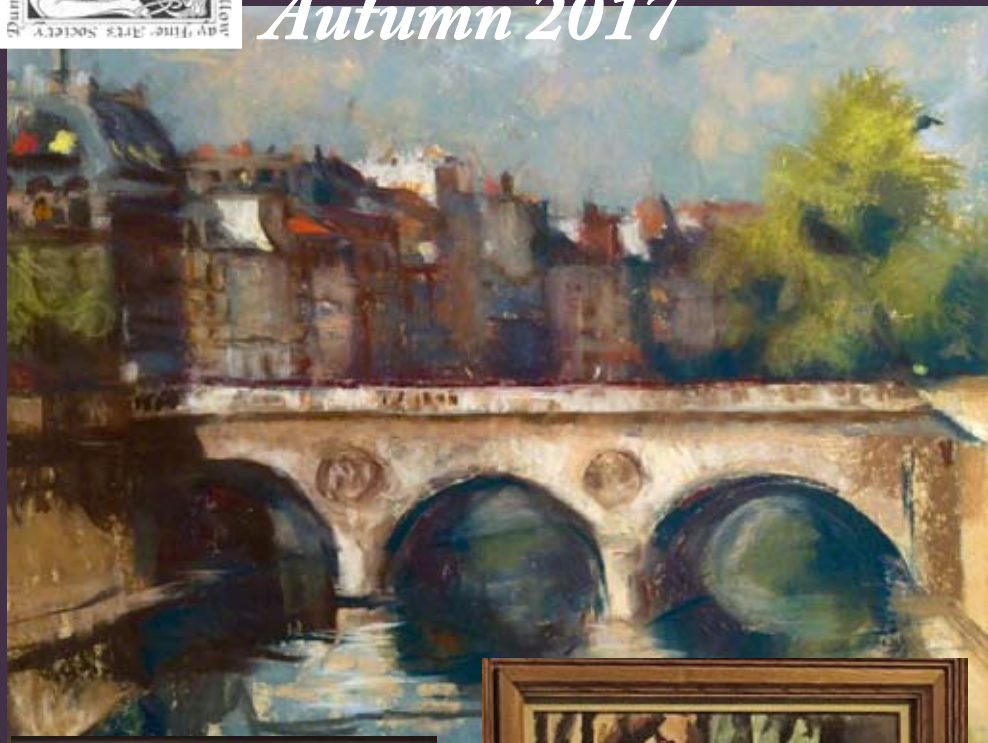




Dumfries and Galloway Fine Arts Society Autumn 2017



On the cover

A montage of some of the paintings in the Past and Present exhibition at Gracefield featuring work by notable members of the society. Clockwise from top right: Lena Alexander, Samuel Peploe, E A Hornel, Frances Cadell, Cyril Wilson, and Charles Oppenheimer.



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(Details and forms for the Christmas exhibition and workshops will also be available on the website: www.dumfriesandgallowayfineartsociety.org.uk)

From the editor

This is looking like a season of innovation for the society - for a start, our Christmas exhibition will not be in the usual hospital venue but in the recently re-opened Ottersburn Gallery in Dumfries.

Some of our other winter events will also be exploring intriguing and unfamiliar territory, such as picture-making with wool and other fibres, and being creative with willow. Other topics will also be challenging - as one of the tutors puts it, it will involve bringing an open mind to the demonstrations and workshops that have been lined up for us at Gracefield this autumn and winter.

Unfortunately some dates given in our last edition were wrong, which led to some confusion. We trust they are all correct this time, but any changes will be notified on the website, so please keep an eye on it if you can. And don't forget to make use of the Noticeboard feature to let other members know of your activities - and put examples of your work in the website gallery, or refresh the ones you have there already.

Is there something you would like to see on the website or in the magazine, or something you would like to write about for either? Remember, we are always open to suggestions or contributions. Thanks to those who have contributed to the feature on out-door sketching in this edition - the weather has not been kind for this activity, but it's rewarding when you get the chance!

Ian Irving
ian@dumfriesandgallowayfineartsociety.org.uk

The chairman writes:

I don't know if you enjoyed the weather this summer but it wasn't all bad. The beginning was warm and sunny but quickly deteriorated as the time went on - not too good for those of you who like working "en plein air".

However it did not deter entries for the 90th annual exhibition. It was a really good show and well received by visitors to Gracefield. It also included the Past and Present exhibition in Gallery 2, which was tastefully selected and hung by Gracefield staff. They have to be thanked for all the help and support that is given to DAGFAS and the council all year round.

We will not be having a Christmas exhibition at the infirmary this year. Instead we have been invited to show at the Ottersburn Gallery, in Nith Avenue, Dumfries (see page 10). We are grateful to Sean and Kate McKay for this opportunity.

Thanks to the council for all the support they give me throughout the year and especially this year's exhibition at Castle Douglas, as I wasn't able to help at that time.

This year we welcome Davy Brown as our new honorary president and hope he enjoys his three-year tenure with us.

The winter programme will be starting soon at Gracefield so we look forward to seeing you all at the Friday demos and workshops over the next six months. We have a good line-up of tutors to entertain you.



Kathleen Woods

Kathleen

Diary dates 2017-18

October 13 Ann Smith fibre art demonstration

November 8 Handing-in for Christmas exhibition at Ottersburn gallery, Dumfries, 11am to 1pm

November 10 Ann Smith workshop

November 11 to December 23

Christmas exhibition at Ottersburn gallery

November 17 Geoff Forrest willow work demonstration

December 1 Geoff Forrest workshop

January 4 Collection of unsold works from Ottersburn Gallery
11am-1pm

January 19 Bella Green demonstration: creative composition

February 2 Bella Green workshop

February 16 Patti Lean demonstration: painting the abstract

March 2 Patti Lean workshop

March 16 William Neal presentation: "One More Time"

March 30 William Neal workshop

***All demonstrations and workshops are at Gracefield, Dumfries**

The annual exhibition: 90 and still going strong

Our 90th annual summer exhibition from July 15 to August 19 was a really good show, writes Kathleen Woods. Once again members delighted visitors with their talents - comments in the visitors book were complimentary. Visitors from all over the UK and from France viewed the 229 works of art by 81 members which had been selected for the show at Gracefield Arts Centre, Dumfries.

Many thanks to this year's selection panel: Hazel Campbell, Fiona Robertson, Sheena McCurrach, Steven Burnie, and Alex Girdwood. The staff at Gracefield did an amazing job of hanging the works (as arranged by our committee) so once again our thanks to Dawn Henderby and colleagues.

About 100 members and friends attended the opening by Oliver Mundell, MSP for Dumfriesshire, who was introduced by our new president, Davy Brown. Twenty works were sold during the course of the exhibition - much on a par with last year. Visitors voted *Daffodils and Lace* by Jane B Gibson their favourite work in the show, with Alexander Robb's *Sand End* and Dennis McCallum's *Sympathy for the Devil* equal second.

In parallel with our "annual", Gracefield mounted a beautifully-presented "Past and Present" exhibition of work by prominent members of the society from its inception in 1922 to the present day. Also on show were 38 Christmas cards, and a print, loaned by Dr Andrew Withey which were painted by Cyril Wilson and sent to Dr Withey's father every year.

Thanks to all who helped to make this 90th show so exceptional. Just five years to go before another major milestone - the society's 100th anniversary!

* Congratulations to Brian Power and Pauline Lawton on achieving full membership this year.



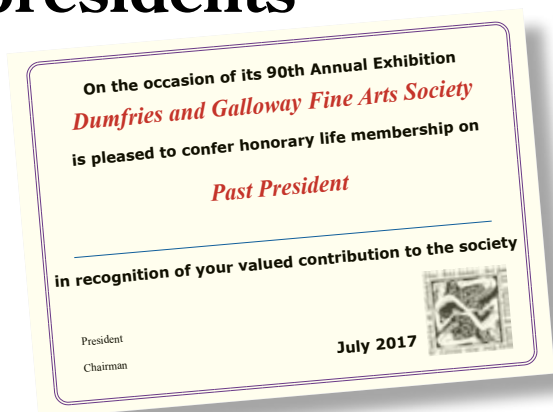
Above: the selection panel at work. Left: deciding what should go where. Below: chairman Kathleen Woods, president Davy Brown and MSP Oliver Mundell, who declared the exhibition open.

More pictures from the exhibition on page 28.

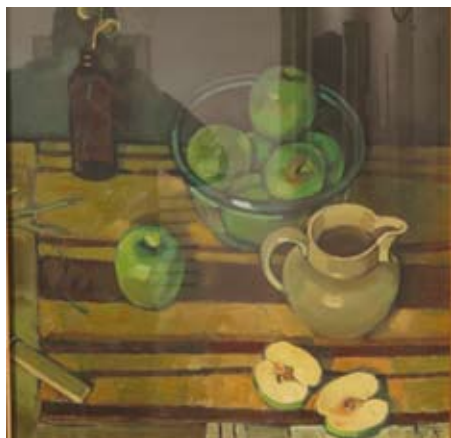


'Life' for past presidents

Five past presidents of the society have been given life - not jail terms, of course, but honorary life membership of DAGFAS. The awards were agreed by the council as a way of thanking the five for their support and as another way of marking the 90th annual show milestone. The work of all five was also represented in the Past and Present exhibition mounted by Gracefield.



MELVILLE BROTHERSTON has been president twice, from 1991 to 1994, and from 2009 to 2011. He celebrated his 75th birthday in July and his paintings were a special feature of the Past and Present show. Website: melvillebrotherston.co.uk



ALEXANDER ROBB, president 2004-2007, was born in Kirkwall, Orkney, and studied at Glasgow School of Art. He gave up a teaching career in 2007 to concentrate on painting full-time. He has lived in Dumfries and Galloway since 1978. Website: windsoverstudio.co.uk



FREIDA DYSON, president 2007-2008, has studied and painted in many parts of the world, including Cambridge - where she took a degree in archaeology - Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Canberra, Australia. She had a studio in Castle Douglas but now lives in Edinburgh. Website: freidadyson.uk



MARGARET ROBB, president 2011-2014, has a diploma in painting and drawing from Edinburgh university. Became a full member of DAGFAS in 1989. She has concentrated on portraiture for a number of years, making life-size (or even larger) paintings and drawings of people by direct observation. Website: windsoverstudio.co.uk



HAZEL CAMPBELL, president 2014-2017, has lived and worked in Galloway for most of her adult life and has developed her own vigorous style of depicting the landscape and still life. She runs "Painting for Pleasure" summer schools at her studio. Website: hazelcampbell.com

DAGFAS Christmas exhibition

at Ottersburn Gallery, Dumfries

Saturday November 11 to Saturday December 23, 2017

Members of the society are invited to submit TWO paintings or artworks, of which at least one will be shown, for this exhibition.

We will endeavour to show all entries but, owing to space restrictions, one entry will be guaranteed to be shown and the other held in reserve.

In order that a list of exhibitors and works can be prepared please send details to Kathleen Woods on woods664@btinternet.com or to 10 Davie Gill Park, Thornhill, DG3 5AH by Monday November 6. (Entry form on page 30)

Artwork must be labelled with the title, medium, name and address of the artist and the price. Please use your own labels and affix to the back of paintings. Paintings must be framed, with rings and cord fixed to the frame ready for hanging. A deep box canvas may be unframed.

The artwork and a fee of £3 per entry must be handed in to the hanging committee at Ottersburn Gallery, 2a Nith Avenue, Dumfries, DG1 1EF, on Wednesday November 8 between 11am and 1pm.

Sales commission will be 25%. The exhibition will be open from 10.30am to 4.30pm daily except Sunday and Monday.

Artworks not sold must be collected from the gallery on Thursday January 4, 2018, between 11am and 1pm.

Ottersburn - a gallery reborn



Ottersburn Gallery in Nith Avenue, Dumfries (off George Street) had been closed for 18 months before new owner Sean McKay and his wife Kate reopened it in April this year. On acquiring the premises they set about transforming the exhibition space, removing a partition and making other alterations which have resulted in a well-lit and pleasing ambience. The gallery hosts a variety of exhibitions, from themed shows with invited artists, to solo shows or group exhibitions such as our Christmas event. A curated open exhibition



The new-look Ottersburn gallery

is also a possibility. The gallery can be hired by an individual or group, on terms to be discussed with Sean or Kate; and artists may submit work for inclusion in general “stock” shows. The usual commission on sales is 35 per cent.

But the display of art is not Ottersburn’s only business - it runs a framing service as well. Sean and Kate have been running an exhibition and display company for 21 years, but Sean has wanted to move away from the commercial world into art and community and has spent the last year studying contemporary art. He is also looking to move away from the use of technology to “the old-fashioned pleasure of working with wood and glass etc. in the framing workshop.”

The gallery is open Thursday to Saturday at present but will shortly open on Wednesdays as well (for the DAGFAS show it will be open Tuesday to Saturday).

Website: ottersburngallery.com. Email: sean@ottersburngallery.com.

On the following pages: a brief look at the summer's programme of workshops

Davy Brown

THE SENSE OF PLACE

Emphasising the importance of experiencing the real thing, rather than just taking photographs,

Davy Brown took his landscape workshop students sketching at Kingholm Quay, Dumfries, on May 19. The excursion followed a discussion in the studio at Gracefield of what makes a good composition. Back in the studio after lunch. Davy showed how he scales up a drawing onto a larger board or canvas, preserving the proportions of the original composition, and then how to simply block in the elements of a painting before attempting to refine it with detail.

The quayside scene (top) and (right) using a frame to assess the view. Below: working from the morning's sketches.



Gwen Adair

STILL-LIFE PAINTING

Gwen started with a fascinating slide show illustrating examples of still-life painting, focusing in particular on Scottish artists. She then gave a short demonstration of her own painting technique. Members set up their own still-life groups from objects brought by Gwen and set to work under her guidance, with some accomplished results.



Studies in concentration in the still-life workshop on July 14

Clare Melinsky

LINOCUT PRINTMAKING



Under Clare's guidance, and using an easier-to-cut kind of lino, participants were soon producing a range of exciting images in the print studio at Gracefield on June 30. Clare, a distinguished professional illustrator, encouraged experiment with different inks and various kinds and colours of paper. A wide variety of styles emerged - some of the effects achieved are shown in the montage opposite.



The printmaking process: (top) cutting the block; (middle) inking up with a roller, and (right) using the press.





Victor Henderson



Working with Victor, it was a case of anything goes. He encouraged his students to empty their minds of preconceived ideas and let their imaginations run riot, randomly. To that end he provided a range of mark-making materials, including inks and paints applied with brush or roller, and an assortment of papers, cards and fabric for collage. The title of the workshop was Toward Abstraction, and that was certainly the direction of participants' work, some of it shown here.





In praise of...

Sketching out of doors



If you want to depict the landscape, get out there with your sketchbook - that's the advice that many an artist would give.

The reasoning is that making an on-the-spot sketch will compel you to observe such things as shapes, proportions, and colours, and in that way you will have come to know the scene, whether town or country, in a much less superficial way than from just taking a photograph.

It can often happen that a quick sketch out of doors has more life in it than the “finished” painting worked up from that sketch later in the studio, perhaps because the pressures of time - or weather - ensured a certain spontaneity,

a need to rapidly capture the essence of the scene. Once comfortably at work on a scaled-up version in the studio there is the time and temptation to fiddle and tweak the life out of it.

Perhaps though, your sketch will never be used as the basis of a developed work; even so, it will always be there as an intimate reminder of a special place and time and atmosphere - that day on Mull when a rain shower brought a hillside to life with sudden pop-up waterfalls; that holiday in the Mediterranean sun when your palette was seriously challenged by the depth of colour in the sea; that spot in a Devon field where you suddenly found yourself surrounded by a crowd of

inquisitive cattle. Yes, there are perils in sketching in the great outdoors. If it's not cattle it might be equally-inquisitive passers-by eager to look over your shoulder to see if your drawing is any good, or mischievous children who want to liberate your pencils or pastels - or even a goat that wants to eat your paper and paints.

In Scotland it's not just the weather that threatens to send you packing (though lowering skies can make for an interesting picture) but also, of course, the midges that are homing in on you. However, there's no need to go to the lengths to which Turner went,

lashing himself to the mast of a ship to experience a storm; just finding a comfortable spot in an interesting place on a warm day and attempting to draw or paint what you see is an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

I invited people to open up their sketchbooks to help illustrate this article and to say something about their work, no matter if the sketch was just a quick scribble so long as it was meaningful to the artist in some way. So, many thanks to those who have contributed their sketches and thoughts.

Ian Irving



Carol Reece: A ten minute session in Dalbeattie park in an attempt to get out and capture a fleeting moment in time; a wee bit of nature; a calm moment in a busy day. Something I might do something more with in the future.



An Out-Of-Doors Study by John Singer Sargent, from 1889. It shows Paul Helleu sketching with his wife Alice (is she looking rather bored or just resigned?)

Brooklyn Museum

Robert Wells: A sketch of Ely Cathedral done during a wet winter's day. I liked looking at the cathedral windows past the large trees. However, it started to rain, which gave the sketch a very free look which I was quite happy with. I sketch outdoors very often; I travel very light, with a small watercolour box, a travel brush, pen and watercolour pad. I am also a member of the Urban Sketchers on Facebook where I see hundreds of sketchers' work from all over the world.





Martine Berlemont: A canal in France. I spent many hours cycling along the towpaths and sitting by the water, looking at the reflections and soaking up the peaceful beauty of the area. Sketching is useful because, apart from making you observe things properly, you can record details that might be useful if you do decide to take the sketch on to a painting, such as the colours, wildlife or human activity around the area, types of trees and plants, where the sun is positioned and so on.



Andi Alexander: a very quick sketch of a group of Scots pines done in pastel on thick

textured paper. I wanted to capture their colourful trunks and the way they related to each other. I took lots of photos too which are very useful when coming to do the painting of them but it's the sketch that gives me the feeling of the trees and reminds me it was raining lightly.

Alayne Smith: While a camera is a useful tool to record information, I much prefer sketching, as notes on my feelings about a place and other environmental factors can be recorded.

A viewfinder is useful when looking at a landscape, helping to compose and frame a picture. I often focus on one element, e.g. colour, texture, composition, or line, finding that this helps to eliminate all the unwanted stuff.

I always have difficulty in limiting what materials to take on a sketching trip – there is so much choice! I have two kits – one for watercolour and one for oils. Both include a cartridge paper sketch pad and drawing pens, charcoal and pencils. I carry a lightweight water colour palette, a couple of Chinese brushes and a bottle of water in my water colour kit. My oil colour kit has oil pastels, some turps in a jar, a few rags and some paper prepared with gesso. I like to prepare small sketch books in advance by washing on colours to pages fairly randomly. I can then choose which page to draw on according to what I wish to record.

I find it useful sometimes to stand in one place and sketch what I see in front of me, turning every so often to alter the view. Altering the distance of my focus each time also helps to give me more information. I often collect small objects from around me, such as



leaves, grasses, wee stones, and shells. A word of caution - include midge repellent if you are sketching outside in summer.

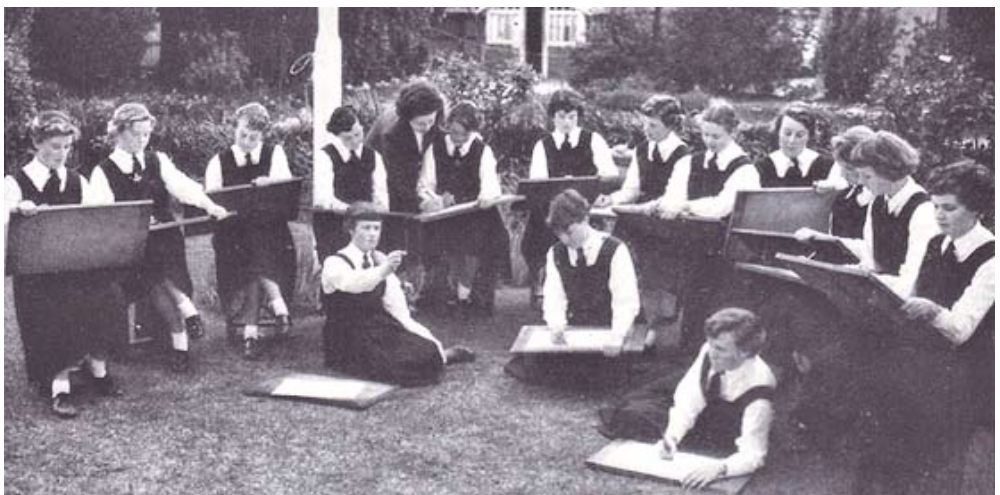
A friend and I found a lovely spot after some searching. We set up our equipment, chose our views and were immediately set upon by a cloud of such ferocious ‘vampire’ midges that we had to abandon our sketching in favour of the delights at a nearby hostelry.

Sketching outside helps to increase my awareness of the world around me. It teaches us to look and see things differently.



Above: pages from Alayne's sketchbooks. Below: starting them young (Australia, 1955)

All together now...draw!



2017-18 winter programme

Events take place at Gracefield Arts Centre on Fridays. Demonstrations 11am to 12.15pm. Workshops from 10am to 4pm.

Ann Smith - 'Painting' with wool

Demonstration: October 13

Workshop: November 10

Ann will be discussing and demonstrating the process of wet felting and needle felting wool fibres into a piece of wool art, going through all stages of both processes. as well as discussing the wool fibres, wool locks and silk fibres used along with other decorative fibres. **Workshop:** We will be using wool, silk and other fibres to create a piece of art. We will be using the wet felting technique and a little bit of needle felting and hand sewing to create wool felt 'paintings'. All material will be provided. Please bring some inspiration for your piece: your own photos or a sketch in the form of landscapes or seascapes. This workshop is aimed at beginners and those with a little experience. Please bring: apron, old bath towel, a plastic container with handle eg a two-pint plastic milk carton or something similar (detergent bottle with handle) with small holes pierced into the cap/lid. This will be used to sprinkle hot water over the wool for felting..



Geoff Forrest - Willow weaving and other things

Demonstration: November 17

Workshop: December 1

Geoff will be talking about the wonders of willow as a craft material, some of its history and current uses, along with a short demonstration. He will also be outlining his own journey from weaving willow to his latest work of sculpting in mild steel. **Workshop:** we will be making simple willow Christmas decorations - a mixture of willow stars, angels, trees, and wreaths. All tools and materials will be provided, but if people want to bring their own greenery or other materials to decorate their pieces that would be fine.



Bella Green - Still life and creative composition

Demonstration: January 19

Workshop: February 2

Bella writes: Like many artists, I have a large collection of objects around my studio. Each has an association, a memory, even perhaps a story. I create my paintings from these sources. I make observed studies in real media and on my iPad, and I use my imagination and a playful approach to picture making. I will show slides of studies and work in progress and talk about my way of working, as well as completed works.



Workshop: This workshop will explore how to create a still life painting from multiple sources. It will show compositional methods derived from Degas - and if participants have an iPad and the ArtRage programme they may also utilise that. Please bring a few inspirational objects and some photos as references, and your preferred medium - acrylics or pastels suggested. You will also need ordinary charcoal, a pencil and biro and your usual canvas/paper and brushes and palette for your medium.

Patti Lean - Painting the abstract

Demonstration: February 16

Workshop: March 2

Patti will lead a discussion about thinking abstractly and will illustrate ways to do this in paint.

Workshop: structured exercises and studies, followed by self-directed time. It will aim to turn our minds to the tactility of paint, remove fear, avoid over-deliberation and practise skills in editing and selecting. Bring



oil paints, linseed oil, eco-friendly thinner (no white spirit or turps please) and/ or acrylic paints, Liquitex thinner or PVA. Something large (50 x 50 cm or more) to use as a palette, such as an old piece of formica, metal or kitchen worktop. A selection of brushes, including large ones, rags, inks (optional) craft knife and/ or scissors. Your own selection of drawing materials. Jam-jars, empty yogurt pots, coffee tins etc. for thinners and water. Photographs, sketches and/ or any source or development material that you've been working on, or want to work on (optional).

William Neal - One More Time

Presentation: March 16

Workshop: March 30

William will explain the processes and techniques involved in his work, with particular reference to his solo exhibition at Gracefield: One More Time - the Album Cover, Paintings, Music and Story. He will be answering the question “What does a flower power car [which he painted at Guildford Art School in 1967] have to do with my latest album cover artwork?” and emphasising the link between painting and music.



Album cover and illustration connected with William Neal's solo exhibition "One More Time" at Gracefield from November 25 to January 6

The workshop: William cautions that this won't be a "paint in a day the William Neal way" event, but one requiring a mind open to "new ideas based on music-related concepts". He aims to "motivate the students' own ideas towards music and materials not often used or considered" and to encourage the idea of collaboration between artists. Bring sketch and note pads, pencils and other drawing implements. "There will be an enormous amount of need for notes, so that folk can work on and remember key motivating factors at home. Not the kind of thing you bring, but you can take away."

WINTER PROGRAMME 2017/2018

Workshop booking form

NB there is no need to book for the presentation – only the workshop
Please tick the workshop/s you wish to book

November 10	Ann Smith	£25	Gracefield
December 1	Geoff Forrest	£25	Gracefield
February 2	Bella Green	£20	Gracefield
March 2	Patti Lean	£20	Gracefield
March 30	William Neal	£20	Gracefield

Name.....

Email for confirmation.....

Telephone.....

I enclose a cheque/s payable to DAGFAS, for a total of.....

Please indicate which workshop/s you wish to attend and send a separate cheque for each event along with the completed form to:

Kathleen Woods
10 Davie Gill Park
Thornhill
DG3 5AH

Email: woods664@btinternet.com

If you require a receipt please enclose a SAE. Confirmation will only be sent by email.

More scenes from the annual show



Top: a section of the exhibition, containing Jane Gibson's *Daffodils and Lace* (bottom left of the picture) and Alexander Robb's *Sand End* (on the right) which were favourites with visitors. Above: another preview-night scene. Right: showcase reflections on fused glass work by Alan Brockbank.

Right: ceramics by David Alexander. Below: *Hats and Cats*, mixed media painting by Evelyn Gray.



Right: *Family Group* bronze by Marilyn Crawford



DAGFAS Christmas Exhibition at Ottersburn Gallery, 2017

Please send the following information to Kathleen Woods, either by mail or email, by Monday November 6 so that a list can be prepared prior to the exhibition.

“I note and agree the conditions under which my artwork(s) may be exhibited (see page 10) and will give this work to the DAGFAS representatives on duty at the gallery to receive entries on **Wednesday, November 8, between 11am and 1pm.**”

(DAGFAS WILL NOT ACCEPT WORKS OUTWITH THESE TIMES!)

Signature

Please print your name and contact information below:

Name..... Tel.No.....

Address.....

.....

Email address.....

First work	Second work
------------	-------------

Title:	Title:
--------	--------

Medium:	Medium:
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Price:	Price:
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Your council

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Last-page laugh With thanks to Richard Whiting



