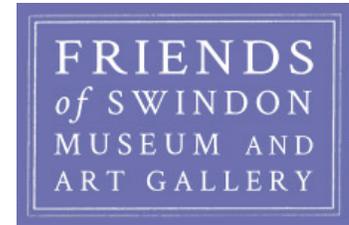




Newsletter

July 2022



Hello Friends

At the June committee meeting we discussed the progress of Swindon Borough Council's plans to convert the first floor of the Civic Offices into a Museum and Art Gallery and the sad news that Apsley House is to be put up for sale.

July Zoom talk

Wednesday July 27th, 7.30pm A talk from **Kettle's Yard Gallery** in Cambridge.

The Zoom link to the talk will be emailed close to the date

Videos of past talks are available at: <https://friendsofsmag.org/you-tube-videos-of-talks/>

Thanks to **Martin Newman** of Historic England for his very interesting and informative talk, 'List Swindon: 75 Years of Protecting England's Heritage'. Also see page 3

To view listings go to <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

Apologies, this talk was not recorded.

Friends Trips in the pipeline

August, a visit to Rabley Drawing Centre, Mildenhall, Marlborough

Monthly Zoom talks for the rest of the year

August 24th: **David Thackray** will give an update on the Swindon Mechanics Institute.

September 28th: **Lucy Abel-Smith** will tell us about Quenington Rectory Garden. Friends visited the sculpture exhibition held in the garden in June. See page 2

October 26th: to be confirmed

November: **Richard Osgood**, Senior Archaeologist with the MOD, and 'Operation Nightingale' for post combat, post traumatic stress disorder sufferers.

Friends' Website Click on <http://www.friendsofsmag.org> to find details of talks, newsletters, news, videos of talks, a link to the blog and **make a donation to FSMAG**.

Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/friendsofswindonmag/>

Try out the Friends **Instagram account**, now with **1,163** followers.

We share news of talks and other events etc on the account so do give it a follow.

Don't forget the Friends' page on the '**We Are Swindon**' website:

<https://weareswindon.co.uk/swindons-charity-hub/friends-of-swindon-museum-and-art-gallery/>

The Fresh Air Sculpture Exhibition at The Old Rectory, Quenington

A group of Friends visited the Fresh Air Sculpture exhibition set in the grounds of Quenington Old Rectory on the evening of the 9th of June, and were warmly welcomed by organiser Lucy Abel Smith and her husband, David. **Lucy will be giving a talk to the Friends in September.** Here are two of the many pieces on display.

DANS L'INTERVALLE by Edith Meusnier

Ribbon and stainless steel

'Edith's installations form a paradoxical and random environment that questions notions of sustainability and vulnerability.'
'They contrast with the natural elements before melting into the surrounding landscape through a play of transparency and overlapping.'



VIRUS by Joanne Risley

Corten steel

'Joanne is interested in the repeated forms found within natural elements linking the microscopic with the monumental.'
'She does not seek to copy nature, rather to absorb, filter and create something new from the things she has seen and the experiences she has had.'

Council proposals for a Museum and Art Gallery at the Civic Offices

Progress on the Swindon Borough Council's Planning Application for a Change of Use of the First Floor Offices to a Museum and Art Gallery, at the Civic Offices building in Euclid Street, moves slowly on. The application reference number is S/22/0204

You can view the application documents here:

<https://pa1.swindon.gov.uk/publicaccess/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=R71AL2PTKLY00>

The drawings are only plans of the existing building and don't show the extent of the alterations, as this is just an application for Change of Use. A further application will be needed if the changes involve alterations to the listed building fabric.

You can view the listed building entry for the Civic Offices here:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1467731>

Friends committee members are meeting with Cllr Matty Courtliff, Cabinet member for culture, heritage, leisure and town centre experience, on a monthly basis to keep them updated and enable discussions about the shaping of the future of Swindon Museum and Art Gallery.

Sale of Apsley House

Apsley House, the former home of Swindon Museum and Art Gallery has now been emptied and Swindon Borough Council have agreed to sell it. Aware of the vital role it plays in the Swindon community, the Friends applied to make it an asset of community value, and this was agreed. A building or other land is defined as an asset of community value if its main use has recently been or is presently used to further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community and could do so in the future.

We are now in the initial six week moratorium period during which a community group can register as a potential bidder, this triggers a six month period during which, the Council can only sell Apsley House if it is to a community interest group. After the six month moratorium period the Council can sell to whoever they choose.

The Swindon Advertiser has published three articles about the sale, which is attracting a lot of interest, unsurprising bearing in mind the importance of this building:

<https://www.swindonadvertiser.co.uk/news/20238734.apsley-house-closed-swindon-museum-art-gallery-sale/>

<https://www.swindonadvertiser.co.uk/news/20234790.swindon-museum-art-gallery-building-put-at-risk-list-save-britains-heritage/>

<https://www.swindonadvertiser.co.uk/news/20240664.response-proposed-sale-swindon-museum-art-galleries-former-home/>

In his June talk Martin Newman of Historic England led us through the history of listing and reminded us that Apsley House was one of the first buildings to be listed in Swindon.

You can see the listing here:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1023456>

Current 'Art on Tour' displays – glimpses of Swindon's paintings and ceramics

<https://artontour489147035.wordpress.com/exhibitions-2/>

Please visit these displays and talks, if possible, and pass on your thoughts to the Friends, email: admin@friendsofsmag.org, and to Matty Courtliff, newly appointed Swindon Borough Council Cabinet Member for Culture, Heritage, Leisure and Town Centre Experience, email: Mcourtliff2@swindon.gov.uk

Interventions

9 April – July 2022 Lydiard House Museum, Lydiard Tregoze, Swindon, SN5 3PA

'Interventions' brings artworks from Swindon Museum & Art Gallery to the historic setting of Lydiard House Museum. This playful trail responds to the grand Palladian spaces with modern creativity, encouraging fresh visual and contextual relationships between the two.'

Opening times: Wednesday – Sunday: 11am – 4pm (last admission 3.30pm).

Admission charge to Lydiard House Museum is applicable, information here:

<https://www.swindon.gov.uk/lydiardhouse/info/11/plan-visit/4/plan-visit-1/7>

Highlights from the Swindon Collection

Civic Offices, Euclid St, Swindon, Ongoing, Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm

Enter by the central door, via the steps or the ramp, sign in at the reception desk.

'This exhibition brings together 20 works of art from Swindon Museum and Art Gallery, to showcase the variety and quality of the Swindon Collection of Modern British Art. It includes paintings and prints by world famous artists, and artists with a special connection to Wiltshire and Swindon.'

Lunchtime talks: Talented Swindon

Wednesday 8th June and Friday 1st July, 12pm – 12.30pm

Free, booking essential, email ArtOnTour@swindon.gov.uk. *This talk explores artworks and artists with links to Swindon, including Roy Bizley, Harold Dearden and Nicholas Monro.*

A Celebration of Colour

Committee Room 3, off the foyer of the Civic Offices, Ongoing, Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm

Enter the building by the central door, via the steps or the ramp, sign in at the reception desk.

'This exhibition presents a selection of paintings and studio ceramics. It explores the chemistry behind some of the most vibrant ceramics in the collection, and reveals different ways modern and contemporary artists have approached colour through paint.'

The Art of Industry, STEAM Museum of the Great Western Railway,

Ongoing, Monday – Saturday, 10am – 5pm, Sunday, 11am – 4pm

This exhibition brings together artworks from the collections at STEAM Museum and the collections formerly housed at the Swindon Museum and Art Gallery, now closed. 'The Art of Industry' includes work by Leon Kossoff, Margaret Neve and Ken White, amongst others from the Swindon Collection.'

Ongoing exhibitions elsewhere

'Pre-Raphaelites, Drawings and Watercolours'

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 15th July until 27th November 2022

'There are over 100 artworks on show. These include works of extraordinary beauty, from the portraits the Pre-Raphaelites made of each other, their studies for paintings and commissions, to subjects taken from history, literature and landscape.' <https://www.ashmolean.org/pre-raphaelites>

Booking is essential, including members

'The World of Stonehenge' British Museum, until 17th July 2022

The exhibition includes artefacts from Salisbury Museum and Devizes Museum.

There are talks about the exhibition available on the museum's YouTube channel

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDy2RvseIW8ZPY4z7rBVfNg?view_as=subscriber

'Hardy's Wessex: The Landscapes That Inspired A Writer' 28th May - 30th October 2022

Wiltshire Museum, Devizes Open 7 days a week. Mon-Sat 10-5, Sun 11-3

Pre-booking is recommended. <https://www.wiltshiremuseum.org.uk/exhibitions/>

Exhibition: The Lost Words until 18th September 2022

Russell Coates Gallery, Bournemouth Open Tues - Sundays 10am-5pm

'This enchanting exhibition combines the creative talents of writer Robert Macfarlane and artist Jackie Morris to celebrate the relationship between language and the living world, and nature's power to spark the imagination.' <https://russellcotes.com/event/the-lost-words/>

Kelmscott Manor 'the inspirational Cotswold retreat of William Morris' is now open until October. Thursday to Saturday from 10.30am to 5pm with timed entry for the manor house at 15 minute intervals, book online: <https://www.sal.org.uk/kelmscott-manor/>

Van Gogh: The Immersive Experience, is a 20,000 square feet light and sound spectacular featuring two-storey projections of the artist's most compelling works. Encounter the brilliance of one of history's greatest artists in 360 degrees. Propyard, 39-46 Feeder Rd, Bristol, BS2 0SE <https://vangoghexpo.com/bristol/>

Let us know of other exhibitions and events, which may be of interest.

email: admin@friendsofsmag.org