



EDINBURGH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

EDFAS INTERNSHIP

For several years EDFAS has supported students at the Edinburgh College of Art through our bursary scheme. This is of great benefit to the recipients during their studies, but it stops when they graduate and have to move into the world of work.

Therefore, hearing of Edinburgh University's Internship programme, especially a six-month scheme sponsored by Santander who cover almost half the costs, we saw an opportunity and realised that together with a generous donation from the Evelyn Drysdale Charitable Trust, we could afford to add helping a graduate into the world of work to our support for individual young artists.

Our motives were not entirely altruistic, as your Committee has been considering for some time the need to take a fresh look at how we manage the significant amount of administrative work involved in running a large arts society. For a graduate to be able to establish a toehold in arts administration and to begin to make new contacts in the Edinburgh and wider art world was too good an opportunity to miss.

From our viewpoint, it is proving an excellent and valuable appointment. **Ruth Bingham-Hamilton** is our first intern and she describes her experience so far:

An internship is a great way to establish a future career path post university. At EDFAS, as Intern Administration Assistant and Researcher, I realise how broad ranging is the scope of the work. Currently, however, I am gaining really useful insight into the interior operations of an arts society, and learning practical administrative skills within an office environment - a new experience for me. I feel totally enthused by the work that EDFAS does in Edinburgh, and it is great to be involved in a worthwhile, appreciated and generous organisation. The internship has so far been a valuable way for me to connect more deeply with the cultural fabric of Edinburgh, further learn about its heritage, and make contacts across the city - specifically with thanks to the wealth of individual knowledge that the EDFAS team provide me with.

I have just graduated BA in Intermedia Art from the Edinburgh College of Art at the University of Edinburgh, and I am hoping to pursue a career in the Arts and continue with my own visual art practice.



My Favourite Picture...

My favourite painting is 'Niagara Falls' by Frederic Edwin Church.

In the late 1940s I was introduced to the National Gallery of Scotland by my father on a summer holiday from Jedburgh. He wished to show me his favourite painting, 'An Old Woman Cooking Eggs' by Velazquez.

I did not return until 1966 when I was confronted by the huge and dramatic Church canvas. Having visited Niagara from the US side, I was bowled over. It is not photographic but the treatment of the light and the spray conveys the power of the falls so well that we can almost hear them.

Church was a central figure in the Hudson River School of American painters, a mid 19th C movement whose aesthetic vision was influenced by romanticism and luminosity. Much of his work and that of the others is a trifle too romantic, though very descriptive of landscapes for my taste, but when at the foot of the Mound I have sometimes just popped in to view Niagara.

James Murray

Do you have a favourite picture, building, garden or sculpture that you would like to share with EDFAS members? If so, please contact the Editor.



Niagara Falls, from the American Side, Frederic Edwin Church, 1867. By kind permission of National Galleries of Scotland.

Volunteering Update



Beautifully bound copies of the Church Recording were handed over to the trustees and the chaplain of **The Robin Chapel** on 17 October, 2016. After nearly five years of research and recording with a team of friends in a unique environment, it was a bit like seeing your teenager off to uni – you hope you have done a good job, but the time has come to let go. Simon Nieminski, the chapel organist, played a beautiful selection of sacred music to the recorders and their guests at the ceremony in this special little chapel. To say thank you, the trustees had laid on a delicious buffet in the new all purpose building beside the chapel. Please visit this little gem in Craigmillar. It really is one of Edinburgh's hidden jewels. www.robinchapel.org.uk



June Graveson at St. John's Church

A Church Trails Training Day was recently held in St. John's Church, Princes Street. June Graveson, head of Church Trails at NADFAS House, gave a presentation in the morning explaining how to go about creating a Church Trail, and in the afternoon the group went round the church trying to identify questions suitable for 8 to 12 year olds. Two other churches were visited during the day: Canongate Kirk and St. Andrew's and St. George's West. Sixteen people attended the day including the Area Chairman, and four volunteers from Borders DFAS who are keen to make Trails in both Norham and Melrose, as well as EDFAS members.

Workshop Update

EDFAS has given, on several occasions, tool kits for the apprentices at the St Mary's Cathedral Workshop. Sarah Grotian, Appeal Secretary, writes about recent activity at the Workshop.

The new project began in August in which apprentices will be doing placements with other organisations, including Edinburgh University and the City of Edinburgh Council, to give them a wider experience. We recruited six new apprentices, including one female, one graduate, two apprentices from a 'looked after background', and two further apprentices who had a stonemason uncle or grandfather - our usual recruiting ground.



We were visited within the first month by Jamie Hepburn MSP, Minister for Employability and Training. He met the apprentices and we had some of our stake holders including Skills Development Scotland, CITB, and the Scottish Stone Federation present to discuss the new project.

Our female apprentice is being put forward for an award by college, and she is also going to help us with a series of 'taster days' being organised in conjunction with Skills Development Scotland with schools in the Lothians to encourage girls to come and give stone-masonry a try. We intend to extend these day courses and offer a week's work experience in the summer to any who show an interest, whilst our apprentices are at college.

EDFAS visited us in early November bringing with them a very welcome donation - enough to buy two sets of tools for two apprentices

Applications are being made to every possible appropriate charitable trust, and I hope that their trustees will see that not only is St Mary's Cathedral Workshop providing a crucial contribution to the construction and heritage sector, but that we are now able to take on a greater number of apprentices including those with difficulties and train these young Scottish stonemasons for a bright future.



Sarah Grotian with apprentices

NGS Paintings

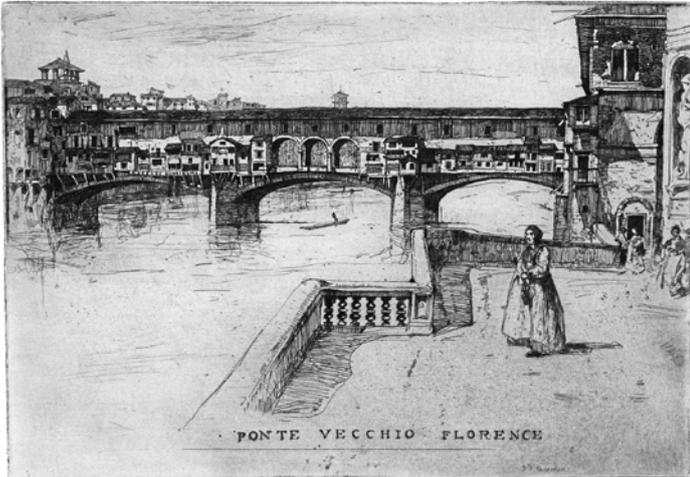
After a visit to the Print Room at the National Gallery of Scotland EDFAS presented a cheque to the Gallery to be used for conservation of two prints.

Curator Charlotte Topsfield describes the prints. The first (shown right) is by **Charles Hodge Mackie** (1862-1920) *The Incoming Tide*, about 1900, Colour woodcut on Japanese paper.

Mackie is particularly known for his expressive, innovative and technically accomplished colour woodcuts; landscape became his principal mode of expression and *The Incoming Tide* is one of his rarer and most attractive colour woodcuts. All of Mackie's prints were based on watercolours; celluloid stencils transferred the outlines of the watercolour to a block which was then cut. Initially Mackie used blocks of cork linoleum, but later, following his contact with Gauguin, began to import oak blocks and Japanese vellum direct from Japan.



The other (shown left) is by **David Young Cameron** (1865-1945) entitled *Ponte Vecchio, Florence*, 1895, Etching on paper.



This impressive etching comes from D. Y. Cameron's *North Italian Set*. Cameron toured northern Italy in 1894 with the photographer James Craig Annan, visiting Genoa, Florence, Verona and Venice. Between 1894 and 1896 he worked on 31 etchings depicting Italian landscape, architecture and figure studies, of which 26 were published in 1896 by W. B. Paterson of Glasgow as *Etchings in North Italy by D. Y. Cameron*. The NGS collection of Cameron's prints is extensive, but until the acquisition of this work we held only one print from this important set in the permanent collection, so this is a very welcome addition. This etching will be included in an exhibition of D. Y. Cameron's works on paper from the NGS collection, *The Spirit of Line*, which will be shown at Duff House, Banff, in spring 2017.



CHAIRMAN'S DIARY

LECTURES • VISITS • EVENTS

September

The current lecture season opened with **The Art of Enamelling** by Sally Hoban who described the materials, techniques and history of the skill with great clarity, a subject of which many in the audience had little knowledge. She also focused on the part young early 20th century women art students played in this field, showing us exquisite examples of their work in the Arts & Crafts and Art Nouveau styles.

October

With the failure of the lift at Central causing access problems, we swiftly had to find a new venue. We were fortunate that the Freemasons' Hall at 96 George Street was available for our current needs and the move took place with the minimum of disruption, proving how adaptable our members are.

In this new location we very much enjoyed hearing from Mary Rose Rivett-Carnac on Art UK, a unique and ambitious project set up to catalogue every oil painting in public ownership. This involved visiting 3,000 collections across the country and photographing over 212,000 paintings, an astonishing achievement. The paintings are now freely available to view at www.artuk.org.



As well as our lecture series, a diverse events programme is available and we started with a private visit to **Dalmeny House in South Queensferry** by kind permission of the Earl and Countess of Rosebery. The family have lived for over 300 years at Dalmeny which houses an enviable collection of paintings, furniture and porcelain. Warmly greeted by Lady Rosbery, members were then given an excellent tour by in house guide Linda Edgar.

N.B. Dalmeny is looking for volunteer guides to act as guides when the house is open to the public. Contact linda.edgar@dalmeny.co.uk for further details.

At the end of the month we met curators Georgina Ripley and Emily Taylor at the recently opened **New European Art and Design Galleries, National Museums Scotland**. Members then toured the exciting new galleries with many exhibits familiar to EDFAS volunteers who have for some time been involved with the conservation of the Jean Muir collection at the NMS. For more information re volunteering visit www.edfas.co.uk



November

After favourable feedback, we decided that The Freemasons' Hall would remain our lecture venue until further notice, and I hope members will agree that 96 George Street suits our present needs.

On this positive note, we welcomed back to EDFAS Daniel Snowman to deliver his lecture with the intriguing title **Verdi and Victoria - National Icons**. He referred to them as the two 'Vs', and we discovered how, after gaining celebrity style status in their earlier years, they retired from the public gaze almost completely, only to emerge into the limelight again in later years as National Treasures. I think they must have had some very good PR agents!

Also during November we visited to **The Edinburgh City Museums' Reserve Collections Centre** tucked away at No.10 Broughton Market, an Aladdin's cave of treasures, which proved so popular we are hoping to arrange another date for members unsuccessful first time round. We have to thank Paul McAuley, Collections Care Officer, for generously devoting so much of his valuable time to not only showing us some of the many fascinating items in the collection, but

also those under repair and restoration by a very small and dedicated team. As a result of this visit, we were able to make a donation towards the restoration of an old painting on wooden boards purporting realistically to portray 'Hound Point' on the Firth of Forth, which derives its name from a local legend surrounding the lord of the nearby Barnbogle Castle. Once completed, the conserved painting will feature in an exhibition in May 2017 at the City Arts Centre.



Gail Guest, EDFAS Chairman, presents a cheque to Paul McAuley for the restoration of this painting.

December

Members and their guests rose to the challenge to dress with a dash of 'sparkle' at our **Festive Event at Lyon & Turnbull Auction House** in Broughton Place when they viewed highlights from Lyon & Turnbull's next Fine Jewellery and Scottish Paintings sales.

After James Bolton's recent excellent lecture on Sir Joseph Paxton, he was the obvious choice to present December's lecture entitled **Capability Brown and the English Landscape Movement** to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the birth of one of the best known names in garden landscaping. With his extensive knowledge of gardens and garden history, James captivated



EDFAS member Sarah Hynd tries on a 20.13ct diamond ring

his audience describing how Lancelot Brown's ability to design gardens, parks and magnificent lakes to reflect exceptional, and seemingly effortless elegance made him one of the most influential movers and shakers of the English Landscape Movement.



Members before the December lecture



DIARY DATES

Visit www.edfas.co.uk for details of lectures and events until the end of the current season.



EDINBURGH
DECORATIVE
& FINE ARTS
SOCIETY

Edinburgh Decorative and Fine Art Society

A Member Society of the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies

President: **The Countess of Rosebery**

Chairman: **Mrs Gail Guest** Tel: 0131 556 3678 chairman@edfas.co.uk

Vice Chairman: **Miss Anne Mason Brown** Tel: 0131 225 1080 vicechairman@edfas.co.uk

Editor: **Miss Grace Durham** Tel: 0131 225 5363 lecture@edfas.co.uk

EDFAS is a charity registered in Scotland (No. SC039651)