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Chair's Introduction

Arts Richmond has had a very busy year of events all designed to support our aim of supporting our affiliates and keeping the arts alive in the borough of Richmond.

I am pleased to report that our financial situation has seen sustained improvement and continues to be a major focus of all our efforts.

I extend grateful thanks to all members of our five committees, my fellow trustees and to Linda Hansell for all their hard work and commitment to the charity. I am also grateful to our patrons, many of whom are active and generous supporters. We are hugely encouraged by and grateful to the number of affiliated groups and individuals who have renewed their membership following the difficult Covid period.

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of Kay Williams, The David King Trust, Arts Society Richmond and Barnes Literary Society. We are also very grateful to our anonymous donors.

Annual Report April 1st 2024 - March 31st 2025

Looking forward I believe we have a strong team who are focussed on keeping Arts Richmond financially secure and are constantly looking for new ways to promote our affiliates, boost awareness of arts activities in the Borough and contribute to the wellbeing of Richmond's residents.

1. Objectives

The five art form committees and the Board of Trustees work hard in pursuit of our objectives to disseminate information and promote engagement in the huge range of arts events and activities produced by our affiliated groups and societies. In furtherance of the same objectives we also promote a number of events ourselves as evidenced in this report.

2. Management and membership

At March 31st 2025, 109 organisations were affiliated to Arts Richmond. This figure is growing due to the extensive support given to our affiliates' events on our social media platforms. We have 229 individual members which is slightly down on last year.

John Coombs stepped down from the Chair of the Board of Trustees at the AGM in July 2024. John has been a stalwart member and servant of the charity for many years and we are enormously grateful to him for such a generous contribution. He remains on our Visual Arts committee and continues to play a significant role in supporting us in the wider community. Hilary Dodman was elected Chair to follow him. Our current Trustees are Hilary Dodman (Chair), Sue Pandit (Deputy Chair), Simon Bartlett (Treasurer), Geoff Acton, Peter Cregeen, Sandra Green, Gillian Thorpe, Rachel Tranter and Jean Wit. Two new trustees joined the board this year: Pauline Orchard and Rick Plata. Both are enormously enthusiastic about their roles and we look forward to a long and happy time working with them.

Sadly, I need to report the death of one of our most active volunteers this year. Tributes were paid to Linda White from so many different sources and reflected the huge respect that we all had for her creative and conscientious approach to everything she undertook. We miss her support and friendship greatly.

3. Communication and Publicity

Linda Hansell and Judith Anderton (from the wonderful stuffing team) took over the production of our monthly *What's On* newsletter, following Linda White's untimely death.

Gillian Thorpe continues to play a vital role in monthly proof reading. Our circulation of 1000 remains constant and includes distribution to the libraries and Visit Richmond outlets. The digital edition is widely disseminated among the affiliates every month. With the support of the graphics team at Cyan printers we have managed to keep the pages packed and limited to 8 per edition. We are enormously grateful to Linda and Judith for their commitment to this task.

We could not manage without our loyal group of 'stuffers' who meet every month to ensure the inclusion of affiliates' flyers and the distribution of the posted newsletters. The team is Janet Langhorne, Judith Anderton, Jennifer Braddle, Hilary Dodman, John Hutchings, Clare Judge and Heather Morgan and we are indebted to them all. Jenny Mason stepped down this year after many years of cheerful 'stuffing' and we extend our grateful thanks to her.

On 31st March 2025, our Facebook reach per 28 days peaked at 28K which is considerably up on last year, principally due to the success of our Roger McGough national poetry competition and Open Studios. On Instagram our followers have grown steadily to 2423. On X we have over 2656 followers. This is down on last year as organisations are moving away from this platform in favour of others such as Blue

Sky. We are monitoring this situation and will decide whether we will also move away over the coming months.

The increases are due entirely to the generosity of Deborah Meanes, our volunteer Press Officer, who dedicates 7 hours a week solely to social media.

We are also hugely indebted to Jean Wit, our Assistant Treasurer, who continues to volunteer in the office one day a week and works remotely for Arts Richmond on other days.

Another volunteer, Makeba Moore, who came to us in September 2023 to help with the Young Writers competition, worked tirelessly to co-ordinate with schools and collate entries. Marina Melnikova worked on the graphics for the booklet of prize-winning writing and Loz Keal (another volunteer) put together the projection images for the event itself.

We are grateful to all these amazing people who give us their time so generously.

4. Partnership with LBRuT

Arts Richmond has been involved throughout the year in negotiations with LBRuT Arts Service regarding the borough's commissioning strategy. We are an active participant in the deliberations of the group of officers and commissioned charities that include the Orange Tree Theatre, The Museum of Richmond, Sport Richmond, Hampton Pool and Combination Dance among others. The

funding process is set to change but we feel well placed at the moment to make a substantial case for our continued commissioned position.

We are grateful to LBRuT for their financial support 2024-25. Through our work, we directly contribute to the delivery of the Borough's Cultural Strategy.

5. Visual Arts Committee

Chair: David Upton

Committee members: Jane Aldous, John Coombs, Hilary Dodman, Gill Hiley, Heather Montford, John Wylie

The Visual Arts Committee is committed to creating and sustaining opportunities for artists across Richmond borough and beyond. We have a busy schedule of events throughout the year designed to fulfil this commitment.

Diana Armfield Drawing from Observation Competition.

We received 107 entries to this popular competition. Diana herself chose the winner and runners up and attended the private view in February at The Patch, York Street, Twickenham, in the presence of the Deputy Mayor Cllr. Kuldev Sehra. We are enormously grateful to Diana Armfield now aged 104 years for her continued commitment.

Richmond Artist of the Year 2024

This event is now in its 4th year and we welcomed 27 artists to

the National Archives, Kew, on Saturday 8th June 2024.

The artists were free to choose an inspiring position either inside or outside the building. Their entries, completed in three hours, were judged by a representative from the National Archives, the Deputy Mayor Cllr. Kuldev Sehra and our Visual Arts Chair, David Upton. A prize of £100 was awarded to the winner. The finished works were displayed inside the building for visitors to enjoy until the end of June.

We are grateful to everyone involved in the organisation for their commitment and energy. In July 2025, the event will be held at the beautiful Grade II listed Grove Gardens Chapel in Richmond.

Art House Open Studios 2024

In 2024, Arts Richmond was in its second year of running the Art House Open Studios event.

50 artists enlisted and the event was run over two weekends in June 2024 15th/16th June and 29th/30th June. This event was only possible due to the hard work of Catherine Sweet, our designer, and Linda Hansell the administrator. Linda coordinated all the information from the artists and Catherine created the well-received brochure and helped Linda with the marketing. This was a huge project for Arts Richmond, which relied on the hard work and diligence of the office and all our volunteers.

Affordable Art Tent

Arts Richmond took the work of local artists to both Richmond May fair on 11th May and Kew Fair in June 2024. All artwork had a maximum price of £100.00. We sold artwork to the value of £1275.00 over the two events.

David Upton stepped down as Chair of the committee on 14th March. We are grateful to him for his significant contribution to the charity and wish him well in his future enterprises.

6. Literature Committee

Chair: Sue Pandit

Committee members:

Elizabeth Clegg, Peter Cregeen, Hilary Dodman, John Hutchins, York Membery, Heather Montford, Lottie Walker, Jean Wit and Judith Yeadon.

This committee continued to have a busy and successful year. We have welcomed some excellent new members to the committee: John Hutchins, Elizabeth Clegg, Lottie Walker and Judith Yeadon. The committee members worked tirelessly to put together and promote a programme of excellent events with increased levels of participation from adults and children from across the borough.

Arts Richmond Literature Festival November 2024.

This was the fourth year that Arts Richmond has independently run

a series of author events under the banner 'Creative Voices'. These took place on every November Wednesday evening at The Exchange in Twickenham. Our authors were Fergal Keane, James O'Brien, Susie Dent and Dharshini David. We are enormously grateful to York Membery, journalist and Arts Richmond Literature Committee member who was not only responsible for booking most of these authors but also interviewed Fergal, James and Susie. Arts Richmond patron, Sir Vince Cable, interviewed Dharshini.

On Wednesday 6th November we welcomed Fergal Keane who was interviewed about his memoir, *The Madness: A Memoir of War, Fear and PTSD*. Fergal gave a very honest and moving account of his career reporting from many war-torn areas of the world. This was a sell-out event.

We also had a huge audience for broadcaster James O'Brien who talked about his book *How They Broke Britain* on Wednesday 13th November. This book focuses on ten well-known individuals who James believes have had a negative impact on the UK in recent years. This was a fascinating personal expose.

Susie Dent, best known for her 30 plus years appearing on BBC's *Countdown*, was with us to discuss her recently published first novel *Guilty by Definition*. She was with us on Wednesday 20th November. This book is

now in the best-selling charts and we are sure there will be more to follow.

On Wednesday 27th November our guest was Dharshini David, the BBC's Deputy Economics Editor, discussing her latest book *Environomics* with Vince Cable. We invited a number of local A Level Economics students to join us for this event, they asked brilliant questions and had an opportunity to talk to Dharshini and Vince at the end of the event. This is an initiative that we plan to extend.

We are enormously grateful for all these wonderful speakers and the team behind the operation both at the Exchange and Arts Richmond.

Each evening was supported by Helena Richardson of The Open Book who sourced and sold copies of all our speakers' books and presided over book signing sessions on each occasion. We express our thanks to her for her continuing generous support.

We already have a great programme in place for November 2025.

Young Writers Competition

Our annual Young Writers Competition was launched in September 2024 and the celebratory prize winners' Festival of Writing took place at The Exchange on Sunday 23rd March 2025.

There were over 726 entries to the writing competition from

schools and individuals from across the borough. This year we set the theme 'Changes' which produced a more focused approach to the prose and poems submitted. We thank in particular Makeba Moore who liaised with all the schools and collated the entries. We are also enormously grateful to those on our Literature Committee who were involved in the initial sifting and to our three judges, Loz Keal, Elizabeth Ryan and Hilary Dodman, for their hard work in selecting the longlist for our anthology and the presentations at the prize winners' event.

The young writers' work was brought to life at the Festival of Writing event. All the forty longlisted pieces of work were performed by a wonderfully talented group of young actors from Edmundian Players, Dramacube, Rose Youth Theatre and Twickenham Youth Theatre. They were professionally directed by Marc Batten who was assisted by Stage Manager, Hannah Kirwan. Their work has been published in a 64-page anthology.

Unfortunately, Arts Richmond Patron Anthony Horowitz was unable to be with us this year, but he does continue to support this competition. The prizes were presented by the Mayor of Richmond Upon Thames, Councillor Richard Pyne.

We are enormously grateful for the support that Linda Hansell gives to the overall running of the competition and the

coordination of the Exchange awards event.

We were once again successful in securing £500 of funding for the Young Writers' event from the Barnes Literary Society. We were also successful in applying for £500 of funding from the Blue Spark Foundation. We have also received financial support from the Arts Society Richmond. £750.00

The Arts Richmond Poetry Prize 2025: supported by Roger McGough

The second biennial poetry prize was launched in October 2024. After discussions with Roger it was decided to promote the prize across the UK via the National Poetry Library, part of the Southbank Centre, which promotes a large number of poetry competitions on their website. It was also decided to have a theme and Roger chose 'Changes' from a shortlist of possible themes. The number of entries has increased to 819, raising £2,428 in entry fees.

We are enormously grateful to Heather Moulson who took on the role of co-ordinating the judging process, with fellow judges Julian Bishop, Sharron Green and Connaire Kensit. They were able to very efficiently produce a longlist of 40 poems, Roger then selected the top 4 prize winners.

A prize giving ceremony took place at the Old Sorting Office in Barnes on 1st June when the final

40 poems were read by local actors. Roger McGough announced the winners and also performed some of the poems from his recently published *The Collected Poems: 1959-2024*.

We are enormously grateful for the support that Linda Hansell gives to the overall running of the competition and the coordination of the OSO awards event.

7. Drama (April 2024 – March 2025)

Drama Committee:

Chair: Daniel Wain.

Plus drama committee members who served during this period:

Hilary Dodman, Jeremy Gill,

Loz Keal, Héloïse Plumley,

Linda White.

During the 2024-2025 year, we said goodbye to committee members Loz Keal and Héloïse Plumley and welcomed Francis Abbott to the team. We also sadly lost Arts Richmond stalwart Linda White, who is dearly missed. Daniel (Danny) Wain stepped down as Chair in December 2024 but agreed to remain on the Committee until after the 2025 Drama Party. Jeremy Gill has kindly stepped in as acting chair. Ongoing, the plan is that one member of the committee will act as project manager for each initiative/event to spread the workload.

2024-25 proved yet another vibrant year for local theatre. Most of our drama affiliates have largely recovered from the shutdowns and hiatus caused by the Covid pandemic with creativity, energy and positivity. Audiences are

nearly back to pre-lockdown numbers, enjoying the unique pleasure of live performance and the huge variety of theatre available within the Borough. Sadly a few of our smaller affiliates have ceased or paused their activities due to issues with their venue owners.

Cross-affiliate Collaboration

Arts Richmond's Drama Committee continued to build closer relations with our affiliates during the year, following the Consultation carried out by Danny in Spring 2022.

During 2023-24 we initiated a series of 'Drama Forums', bringing together our affiliates, Drama Committee members and Swan judges. The first took place in February 2023 and during the current year we have held a further two (in May and October 2024).

Subjects discussed have focused on four principal themes: collaboration, marketing, resources (especially technical) and the Swan Awards. However, as many of the issues which spurred the Forums seem to have been addressed, as evidenced by increasingly low turnout from affiliates, it was decided that the October Forum should be the last for now. We will organise further ones on an 'as and when needed' basis.

Danny continued to maintain a consolidated schedule of all shows in the Borough, to avoid 'clashes', help affiliates to share resources and avoid cannibalising audiences (and so maximise sales). This has also helped scheduling for both Swan judges and our limited pool of technical resource. As with so much with local theatre, it's about collaboration and co-operation rather than competition. One further positive development is the increased sharing of both technical resource and training opportunities across affiliates.

New Plays Festival

In 2023, we ran our second Radio Plays Competition, which proved hugely popular, with over 30 entries. In 2024, we therefore decided to resuscitate the New Plays Festival, for live, staged theatre.

Entry was open to all those who live or work in the Borough and scripts had to be original, unpublished and previously unperformed. Running time had to be no longer than 20 minutes, with no more than four actors required. Given the venue (the Orange Tree Theatre), plays also had to be capable of being performed in the round, and work around the existing set (thankfully, as it happened, only two benches, which proved rather appropriate and useful for the chosen plays!). Scripts also had to be capable of being performed with minimal technical requirements, the emphasis being upon the writing.

We received a hugely impressive 54 scripts, which (with an entry charge of £10) resulted in £540 income. These were read by a judging panel of Hilary Dodman, Anna Piggott, Gillian Thorpe and Danny Wain. They selected four finalists:

- 'Sky Horses' by Patricia Bertram
- 'That's All Folks' by Jacqueline Hazell
- 'The Boot Room' by Rebecca Mayhew
- 'Common Ground' by Dominic Parford

Danny recruited directors (Rodney Figaro, Geraint Thomason and Sian Walters) and casts (Nigel Andrews, Peter Easterbrook, Jenny Hobson, Arthur Holmes, Geraint Thomason, Jim Trimmer and Dominic Upton) for three of the plays, while thanks go to Patricia for finding her own director and actors (Pauline Eyre, Lisa McKinnon, and David Vickery).

A real coup was our managing to secure the Orange Tree Theatre as a venue, thanks to Gillian and Danny's contacts there. Community Director Francesca Ellis was particularly helpful, acting as Danny's main contact for the project. The four finalist plays were staged on the afternoon of Sunday 13th October 2024 in front of a sell-out and very appreciative audience. The OTT very kindly only charged us for their staff costs, giving us the space for free and taking no share of the box office. So ticket sales added to entry fees resulted in a profit for Arts Richmond of over £1,000.

Our heartfelt thanks to the judges (Carolyn Backhouse, Liz Crowther and Gillian Thorpe) who selected the winner (Rebecca Mayhew) and to the Mayor, Councillor Richard Pyne, who presented Rebecca with an impressive glass trophy and a cash prize of £250 to be spent on a writing course. Thanks also to Francesca, Priya Virdee, Josh Bayfield and the entire OTT team, Linda Hansell for her invaluable work behind the scenes, the reading panel, Héloïse who helped in the early stages, Derek Baum for sound design and, of course, to all the writers who submitted their scripts. Danny acted as producer / project manager for the whole initiative (liaising with the OTT, directors, writers, tech support, etc.), and then played the roles of production manager, stage manager and MC on the day itself.

It was a very full day for all those involved, but an undoubtedly worthwhile one: audience and participant feedback was incredibly positive and the atmosphere in the packed auditorium truly wonderful. Ongoing, the plan is to alternate the Radio Plays and New Stage Plays competitions on a biennial basis. So submissions for the next competition of the former are due by the end of May 2025, with the winner being announced at the September 2025

Drama Party, alongside the Swan award winners. Francis has kindly agreed to project manage the 2025 Radio Plays.

Swan Awards

After the dissatisfaction voiced during the 2022 consultation by some affiliates about the Swan Awards, the Drama Committee has gone to considerable lengths to address the specific concerns raised. Last year, several significant changes were made in response to the affiliate feedback, including amendments to the event itself, the award categories and the judging panel. These seem to have been well-received, with very little dissent remaining.

One of the changes was to expand the judging panel from six to nine.

During 2024-25, we lost two judges (Susan Conte and Katherine Orrell), who we thank for their considerable input. Susan and Katherine were replaced by Dana Acharya and John Riley. So our judging panel for 2024-25 was: Dana Acharya, Paul Bethel, Terry Dunne, Michelle Hood, Margaret Keelan, Steve Pratt, John Riley, Elizabeth Slater and Warren Walters. Our thanks to them all.

Margaret stepped down as chair of the judges, to be replaced by Steve. Arts Richmond and the wider local theatre committee owe them both a debt of gratitude. Steve is now keeping a record of which judge attends which production to ensure that the workload is evenly distributed, and each judge is now able to review both 'Drama' or 'Pantomime, Musical & Youth' productions, rather than specialising in just one. The aim is for each show to be seen by a minimum of three / a maximum of five judges. The changes have resulted in a slightly different process for affiliates booking tickets for judges.

Another change instigated during the year is the re-introduction of the rule that judges should step down after

three years to ensure a healthy turnover, although judges can re-apply to serve a fourth year if they wish. In addition, some award categories have been simplified or renamed (especially around child / youth performers) and the Judges' Award has been discontinued. All changes were incorporated by Danny into updated guidelines for both judges and affiliates.

Ongoing, Hilary or Danny has attended each judges' meeting to provide support, although, of course, they are not privy to, or influence in any way, the judges' decision-making.

As the list of Swan nominees in 2023 contained errors, resulting in several versions having to be issued, stringent quality checks were established for 2024. These resulted in a smooth, error-free process, for which many thanks to Linda and Danny.

Drama Party

In September 2023, we refreshed the old Swan Awards evening under the new name of the Arts Richmond Drama Party. The aim was to celebrate all those involved in local theatre, not just award nominees, as well as to provide an opportunity to socialise and party. We moved from the traditional Sunday to the non-school night of Saturday, opted for a slightly later start time and a lower ticket price, and changed the physical layout of the space. We also reintroduced entertainment and reduced the running time of the awards element. This more inclusive event saw 200 people attend, resulting in a decent profit for Arts Richmond. As only winners went onstage to collect their trophies, we re-introduced a separate, dedicated Nominations Evening to recognise all those who were nominated.

Both the new Drama Party and the Nominations Evening were well-received so we continued with both in 2024, incorporating a few minor

changes to reflect feedback on the 2023 events. The Nominations Evening took place on 1st August at the Exchange, Twickenham – especial thanks to Linda and Jeremy for their help behind the scenes and to Danny for hosting. There were close to 120 nominations over 20 categories, and all received certificates (from the Mayor if they were present at the in-person event). The Drama Party was hosted at the Landmark, Teddington on 21st September 2024. Key changes were dropping 2023's comedian, allowing more tables and chairs for the awards presentation, extending the length of the welcome reception and introducing a photo booth (to complement the official roving photographer). Danny also ensured that the winners' citations were projected on the large screen, as previously it had been difficult to hear when just read out by the MC. For 2024, we used the same MC as for 2023 (Andy Clarke) but may well look for a cost-free option in 2025. The event made a profit of over £1,600, selling over 280 tickets (a record and 80 more than the previous year). Our thanks to Kay Williams and Colin Squire for their continued sponsorship.

Our thanks also to all those who helped, especially to Linda, the Drama Committee and Swan judge Terry Dunne. Although Loz Keal was unable to help with the preparation, he wrote Andy's script and helped on the night. Danny once again acted as host as well as overall project manager. The event was very well-received (as well as well-attended), with not a single complaint received. Therefore the 2025 Drama Party will largely replicate this successful 2024 one, with a few minor amendments.

AOB

Last year, the rising cost of venue hire and the loss of both active members and rehearsal space meant that we sadly saw

both Park Players and St Mary's Drama Group close. Danny put St Mary's in touch with various possible replacement venues and they eventually collaborated with OHADS on a one-man show ('The Ghost Hunter') at the Cabbage Patch, Twickenham, under the combined company name of The New Drama Group.

During 2024-25, the Edmundian Players also lost their regular venue.

Thankfully, they were able to produce an impromptu show at Nelson School, Whitton, in early 2025, so we hope that they might be able to continue to produce their multi-Swan Award-winning work.

Danny got in touch with Edmundians, offering Arts Richmond's sympathies and support, and the Drama Committee will continue to do all we can to help all affiliates, given the continuing challenges of rising prices and changing demographics.

Over the coming year, we will continue to support both the Swan judges and all affiliates regardless of size. We will also strive to expand the Drama Committee itself through an active recruitment drive. We look forward to another active and productive year of theatre in 2025-26.

8. Showcoach

(Chair: Janet Langhorne. Committee Members: Helen Taylor, Jean Wit)

At Showcoach we continue to offer a very comprehensive and varied programme which has been encouraging more members, and indeed an increasing number of new members, to join in. Members find coach transport to places, which otherwise would possibly not be easily accessible, very appealing. We also visit places in London when members can use their Freedom Passes. Most all, our members very much appreciate and benefit from the buzz they get from the congenial atmosphere on our trips.

April

This month a group of 15 of us had our residential trip by air to see the **Art and Architecture of Glasgow** over four days. On arrival we were met by our guide and given an orientation tour by coach of the city before arriving at our excellent 4* Hotel by the river Clyde. We visited the House for an Art Lover, built in 1996 exactly to the design of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, for a guided tour followed by lunch at his famous Willow Tea Rooms. Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum afforded us a fascinating afternoon visit with everything from Dinosaurs to art by the Glasgow Boys. We also visited Dumfries House which has King Charles as their patron and then onto Culzean Castle NTS. Here General Eisenhower had his own apartment as he visited so often! On another day we visited Ardgowan House, a Palladian mansion, where we had a private tour by the Laird himself, then the famous Burrell Collection of over 9,000 artefacts! On our final day we visited The Hill House NTS, another of Mackintosh's masterpieces, which is at present undergoing an extensive conservation project to restore the exterior of the property. Our final visit took us to Loch Lomond for lunch before being transferred back to Glasgow Airport for our flight home. This was a very successful trip which we all enjoyed.

June

We visited the beautiful Tudor **Chenies Manor** in Buckinghamshire where we were given an introductory talk on arrival before having lunch. The weather was lovely so members were able to walk around the gardens before our guided tours of the house. There was then some more free time to have tea, do shopping etc before returning home. The 29 members who came on this trip all enjoyed a great day out in the country.

August

This saw our annual visit to a matinee at **Chichester Festival Theatre**, always a very popular day which also allows us some time in the city itself. We had our full coach of 29 plus a waiting list! We

enjoyed an absolutely brilliant production of the musical **Oliver** which, after its successful run at Chichester, moved to the West End. Everyone enjoyed their day and declared it to be one of the best productions we had seen.

September

13 of us had a great walk with our excellent **Blue Badge Guide** around the **legal part of London**. We went into the Temple Church and saw the Law Courts where there was so much to see and learn about. We finished our walk with lunch at a real old city pub, The Ship, which was frequented by lawyers. We all went home having learnt so much about this area of quite unknown London.

October

This trip was into the depths of Surrey to **Watts Gallery**. This Artists Village is an art gallery dedicated to the work of George Frederic Watts. His wife, Mary Watts, featured very much too. Again we had a full coach of 29 and on arrival we were welcomed with tea and coffee whilst having an introductory talk. We had a tour of the gallery then lunch. There was plenty of free time for visiting the Watts Cemetery Chapel and Limnerslease, the artist's home, plus the shop and cafe before returning home. This was a very successful and interesting day for everyone.

December

This was a very popular visit to the National Theatre to see their production of **Ballet Shoes**. 15 members enjoyed this amazing show which was proving so successful that it will be repeated in 2025. The production is based on Noel Streatfeild's well known children's book of the same name.

February

We had the opportunity to visit **The View Training Restaurant at Richmond College** which is situated on the top floor of their new building with a panoramic view.

We experienced a three course lunch with silver service designed, prepared and cooked by students learning to become

chefs. 31 of us attended this event which was well received by everyone.

March

Once again, we had a very interesting walk with our excellent **Blue Badge Guide**, this time around the **Kings Cross** area. 10 members joined this walk. We began at Kings Cross station and then into St Pancras, learning the history of these two famous stations. We then walked around the old area passing the famous Somers Town, where people like Mary Shelley and Charles Dickens lived, to St Pancras Old Church. This was also a fascinating place with a great deal of history attached. We found out that Thomas Hardy once worked as a grave digger in the old churchyard and ended our tour passing the multi-million pound flats within the re-developed Granary Square and Coal Drop Yard and had lunch at one of their many eateries. We all agreed this was a place with a lot of history to take in and would need a re-visit.

Our year has been very busy and we have endeavoured to cater to everyone's taste with a wide variety of visits. I would like to thank Linda Hansell for all her help over what has been a difficult year for many. A very big thank you to Jean Wit who has been my lynchpin through this year and to Helen Taylor for her great reviews of our visits. We sadly lost one of our stalwart committee members, Linda White, in October but we are delighted to welcome a new member to our committee, Judith Strong.

9. Music Committee

Chair Hilary Dodman. Committee members Geoff Acton, Cllr. Jo Humphreys, Hugh Rogers and William Summers.

This rejuvenated committee has worked on two projects: the choral workshop and plans for a celebratory concert in 2026 focusing on women in performance and composition. The concert will be the focal point of a wider series of events focusing on the role of women in music.

Choral Workshop in February 8th 2024: We held a Come and Sing Day conducted by Richard Harker and accompanied by Jonathan Booth at St Richard's Church in Ham singing songs from The Sound of Music. We attracted over 70 participants who had a wonderful day and a great deal of fun. The final performance was attended by a good number of family and friends who enjoyed a rousing performance.

The committee is working hard to extend the range of its activities.

10. Assuring quality for Arts Richmond members and funders.

This is achieved through:

- Our office being open for contacts and prompt responses every day from 9.30am to 12.30pm.
- Our attention to the regular production of a high quality newsletter giving accurate, in date information about the activities of our affiliates and ensuring they receive value for money for their membership fee; our attention to the development of our social media platforms and our constant striving to increase our profile in these areas
- Our Trustees Board meeting regularly to consider members' views and expectations and take them into consideration when instigating projects and planning for future events
- Our trustees working to ensure the probity and financial stability of the charity

Arts Richmond

President 2024-2025 Clive Bradley CBE

Vice Presidents: John Coombs, Hilary Dodman, Pam Frazer, Sandra Green

Trustees 2024-2025

Chair: Hilary Dodman

Deputy: Sue Pandit

Treasurer: Simon Bartlett

Assistant Treasurer: Jean Wit

Geoff Acton

Peter Cregeen

Sandra Green

Pauline Orchard

Rick Plata

Gillian Thorpe

Rachel Tranter MBE

Administrative Officer: Linda Hansell

Art Form Committee Chairs:

Hilary Dodman (Music)

David Upton (Visual Arts)

Sue Pandit (Literature)

Danny Wain (Drama)

Janet Langhorne (Showcoach)

Past Presidents

2013 Anne Sebba

2014 Dame Jacqueline Wilson

2015 Clive Bradley CBE

2016 Sara Burn Edwards/ Howard Greenwood BEM

2017-18 Samantha Bond

2018-19 Roger McGough

2019-2020 Lynne Faulds Wood & John Stapleton

2021-2023 Sir Vince and Lady Rachel Cable

2023-24 Lady Camilla Panufnik & Roxanna Panufnik

2024-25 Clive Bradley CBE

Patrons

Diana Armfield
Sir David Attenborough OM, CH, KBE
Clive Bradley
Gyles Brandreth
Professor Ian Bruce & Professor Tina Bruce
Sara Burn Edwards
Sir Vince Cable & Lady Cable
Liz Crowther
Clive Francis
Michael Frayn & Claire Tomalin
Julian Glover & Isla Blair
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Colin Squire OBE
Mark Vellacott
Sam Walters MBE & Auriol Smith
Kay Williams