

ISLE OF WIGHT ART CLUB

NEWSLETTER – GALLERY – ARTICLES – Nov 2025



As this is the last Newsletter of the year, the Council would like to wish all members and your families a very Happy Christmas and New Year.

The Newsletter has all the information you need for the rest of the year and into 2026 including some new articles, the Chair's Challenge and a new artist from Peter. We've photos from members work over the summer and at Riverside plus reviews of the demos and Study Day.



Meryel Boyd's winning entry from the recent Inktober competition

Winter Programme:

Tues 25th Nov: Workshop

Tues 2nd Dec: Workshop – Sale of Artists Materials

Tues 9th Dec: Workshop

Mon 15th Dec: Carol's Christmas Quiz – Complimentary mince pies, tea and coffee

2026

Tues 6th Jan: Workshop – Launch of Chairman's 30 day Winter Challenge (details below)

Tues 13th Jan: Workshop

Wed 21st Jan: Workshop in Little London Room and Hunnyhill Room (not Trafalgar Room)

Tues 27th Jan: Zoom demo – Jameel Akib - www.jameelakib.com

Tues 3rd Feb: Workshop

Fri 6th Feb: Study Day with Kim Whitby

Tues 10th Feb: Workshop

Tues 17th Feb: 'The BIG Picture' – Group Tile painting (details below)

Tues 24th Feb: 3rd Mar: Workshop

Tues 10th Mar: In person talk by Martin Kinnear www.martinkinnearstudio.com

Tues 17th Mar: AGM – Followed by 'Winter Challenge' members' sketch book presentation with prize

Tues 24th Mar: Zoom demo – Brian Smith www.briansmithartist.com

These date changes in **red** are beyond our control – including the Jan 21st Jan room change. The full updated Winter Programme can be found on the Club website.

Remember Summer? When it didn't rain for weeks on end? Here is a reminder from later Plein Air Tuesdays: Mottistone – Newport Quay – Havenstreet Railway



Early work: Kim's early works were of a meticulous/exact/painstaking style. She showed us some examples of her early ink works plus her early pen and wash watercolour colouring in style.

She is now influenced by the US artist Cy Twombly in her works of Indian ink on paper to produce her contemporary artworks.

Materials

Kim uses Indian Drawing Ink which she dilutes with varying amounts of water to produce the range of tones for her works on (usually) Saunders Waterford paper.

As she works, Kim uses blotting paper to ensure that the tone of her mark is kept light then builds up the picture using various containers for her watered down ink. She uses a variety of watercolour brushes, Chinese ink brushes, and even sticks from the garden. Tissues are used to mop up ink/water and spare paper is used to check the tone as you go.

The traditional **Five** key visual elements are as follows: (Colour would make six)

Line: Consider the quality and type of the line you want to make. What does it represent and how is it best shown in a 2D image?

Kim showed us her work of a large tree in a churchyard. The tree branches were produced using sticks to produce thin angular lines, the tree trunks and shadows using brushes.

Tone: Can be produced by cross hatching but Kim tends to use wet drawing techniques to produce different tones, by dropping ink into already wet areas and letting the ink spread, controlled using tissues and/or blotting paper. White can be preserved using a resist, masking fluid, masking tape or wax.

Shape and Space: Regarding composition, consider the shapes and spaces made by the things both the positive and the negative spaces. Thumbnail sketches help to position subjects and angles, noting that tones help to create shape.

Pattern: This is produced by varying the brushes etc used, eg flat brushes for patterns, mops for leaves with varying pressure.

Texture: Different marks are needed to produce texture within a pattern. Wet in wet is used for fabric and shadows also for softening hard edges.



Above: Example of 'line'



Above: Tone with resist



Above: Pattern & Texture

Kim demonstrated all these techniques in a still life demo of a pomegranate and beetroot on a circular plate with three patterned and textured cloths underneath to cover all the key elements above.

The first step was to do a thumbnail sketch in pencil to map out the composition to decide where to put things considering the texture of each item. The pomegranate is shiny, the beetroot dull so you will need sharp outlines for the shiny fruit and softer blended outlines for the duller fruit.

Then the darker background to the plate and lower left hand cloth was inked in to produce a light grey variable tone.

Apply a resist to preserve any white or lighter areas, especially on the shiny surface of the pomegranate. The next step was to paint in the pomegranate and beetroot body using wet in wet techniques to produce the mottled surface of the beetroot and the shiny surface of the pomegranate. Several applications were applied, blotting each application dry to gently increase the tone. Consider the type of outline for the fruit. The shiny pomegranate needs a sharp edge. Draw in the blisters of the beetroot whilst wet and allow the marks to bleed naturally into the surrounding areas of the beetroot.

Next the lines in the bottom left hand cloth were drawn in with a brush of similar width to the stripes. The side marks on the cloth produced using the side of a flat brush and the dirty water.

Further applications of ink to the beetroot and the pomegranate deepened the tone in places, using water to thin out the ink in places and blotting the result. Control the ink flow and blot where necessary. Finally, the beetroot leaves were painted in using long strokes with a watercolour brush.

Kim gave us a very thorough grounding in the use of ink in a variety of ways, explaining her methods over the 2 hours. It was an extremely enjoyable demo and we look forward to Kim joining us for a Study Day in February. Many thanks .



CHAIRMAN'S WINTER MONTHS CHALLENGE!

This year's 30 day Challenge is to cover the winter months, simple sketches in a sketch book, preferably daily but not compulsory. It is an exercise that is designed to keep, even enhance our ability to observe and create and will only take about 10 minutes to do most of them. A bit like a pianist has to do daily scales to keep his or her hands nimble. Have a go during the cold winter months and bring your sketch book to the AGM in March where there will be a prize for the most enterprising one. Good luck everyone!

Daphne

1 – A tea cup or mug	2 - A mushroom	3 - A twig or branch	4 - An ornament	5 - A window	6 – An apple
7 – A face	8 – A wine glass	9 – A seed head	10 – A bird	11 – A Chair	12 – Wood grain
13 – An ivy leaf	14 – An orange half peeled	15 – Rose hips	16 – A hand	17 – A bowl	18 – An animal
19 – A vegetable	20 – A flower pot	21 – A door	22 – An umbrella	23 – A vase	24 – A fish
25 – A book	26 – A tree	27 – A mouse	28 – A piece of lace	29 – A shoe	30 – A flower

BLACK FRIDAY – Lots of the online retail art dealers have offers now, particularly for **Black Friday** which seems to extend from October to December! Jackson's, Bromley's Art Supplies, (formerly Ken Bromley), SAA with Cass Art, Great Art, Cowling & Wilcox, ART discount, London Graphics Centre, probably more.

Things to check – Delivery options - minimum spend to get free delivery plus some retailers have a strange idea as to the placement of the Isle of Wight within the UK. The Island has been swapped with the Isle of Man and repositioned off France with the Channel Islands. If you see 'no delivery to PO box' it refers to 'Post Office' not our postcode.

There are currently good offers on Daylight Lights for these darker days. They range from small table top lamps which are rechargeable to floor lamps with double arms to avoid shadows. Alternatively, just buy the bulbs if you already have a lamp, check it's compatible.

The BIG Picture

17th Feb 2026, John Hunt has again organised the Big Picture for us which is made up of Tiles painted on the day by members. Each participant will get an envelope with a blank tile, approximately 5 inches square plus a 2 inch square portion of the picture to be copied. This portion of the final picture is then enlarged by painting onto the tile in acrylics, no other medium is acceptable as it has to quickly dry. (I will bring a few spare acrylics)

The painted tiles are then collected and put into a frame approximately 1 metre square, which becomes the **Big Picture**. The envelopes with blank tiles are picked up from the desk on the day at the start of the workshop and painting should finish at coffee time allowing them to dry before being assembled. Any tiles that are not collected ten minutes after the start time will be redistributed. There will be a charge of £2 for each tile to cover the cost of John's materials and to finance a raffle at the end of the session. It's great fun to do and is always popular.

*Below: The artist's painting
Far right: The completed Tile
painting from 2023.*

*Near right: A painted Tile ready
for assembly*



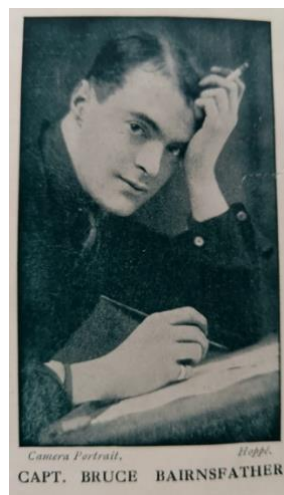
Peter Allen's British Artist you may not have heard of: Charles Bruce Bairnsfather 1887 – 1959

There have been many wartime artists, poets and writers but few who did so much whilst serving to raise the morale of the troops on the front line during the First World War. Therefore, at this time of Remembrance our artist is Charles Bruce Bairnsfather, always known as Bruce.

Bruce was born on the 9 July 1887 at Muree, which is now part of Pakistan. His father was a Major in the British Army serving in India.

Brought to England aged 12 years, he was educated at Westward Ho! in Devon and then at Stratford upon Avon. He then took the entrance exams for Sandhurst Military Academy but was unsuccessful. Instead, he enlisted in the Cheshire Regiment but in 1907 resigned from the Army. Wanting to become an artist he enrolled at the John Hassall School of Art in Kensington. At first not being very successful as an artist Bruce trained and became an electrician but continued to develop his artistic skills. Whilst working as an electrician at the Old Memorial Theatre in Stratford he was introduced to Thomas Lipton who recognising his artistic talent and commissioned Bruce to produce advertising posters for Liptons Tea, Players cigarettes and Beecham's Pills amongst others.

In 1914 Bruce was commissioned to the Royal Warwickshire Regiment as a Second Lieutenant and saw action with a machine gun unit. The following year he was wounded and suffered from shell shock during the fighting at Ypres. He was then posted to a unit on Salisbury Plain. During this time some of the walrus moustache 'Old Bill' drawings that he had been making began to be published in the Bystander weekly magazine.



Bruce Bairnsfather



After some initial objections, the 'Fragments from France' drawings as they became known together with their wry captions became increasingly popular, particularly with the troops on the front line who identified with the scenes depicted. The War Office, recognising the importance of this work in raising moral with the troops promoted Bruce to Captain.

Twenty years after the war a letter was sent to Bruce from an old soldier commenting on the terrible costs of the conflict and referring to the 'Old Bill' drawings containing the following sentence, '..... will it not be a reminder of the ingloriousness of war, its preposterous absurdity, and its futility as a means of settling the affairs of nations'.

On a lighter side there is a theory that police officers at the time sported similar moustaches to Bruce's main character and as a result gained the nickname 'Old Bill' which has of course stuck to this day. I do hope this is true!

Bruce died in 1959 at Worcester.

Peter

Some portraits from Riverside afternoons – more available to view on the IWAC Membership Plus facebook page:





Unison Colour Pastels:

Unison, the family firm was founded in 1987 by John Hersey when he couldn't find the colour pastels he needed to convey the Northumberland countryside after moving north with his family. He started experimenting with pure pigment trying out various binders to get the right consistency for each different pigment powder for his secret recipes. The soft pastel sticks are still made the same way nowadays, mixed – in a Kenwood mixer now, not a pestle & mortar – rolled, labelled and packed by hand.

When John died in 2008, his widow Kate and their son Dan took over running the company and found about 450 different colours in notebooks carefully notated by John into colour tones, each one made from its own pigment base, not just adding blacks or whites to darken or lighten.

The 18 strong workforce are very much part of the 'family', both full and part time, some of whom have been with the company for almost 30 years so have built up knowledge of what goes into producing the perfect pastel. Each different colour pastel made, starts with the pigment blend mixed with water and binders plus 'secret' but natural ingredients, then spoonfuls are dried on blotting paper to get rid of the moisture. They are then squeezed by hand and gently rolled into the familiar shape, cut to size, jumbo, usual size or half sticks, then dried.



Some of Peter Allen's array of Unison pastels

Unison Colour is accepted as one of, if not the best pastels made today, high pigment content, soft but not crumbly, minimal but natural binders and made here in the UK. There are now over 350 different colours to buy either on their own or in sets by colour or tonally. Any questions about Unison, ask Peter Allen, he uses nothing else and his work is a great advert for the company. **GN**

More portraits and still life:





Daphne's Study Day: Nov 14th

After a sociable coffee and sorting out our work stations, Daphne welcomed us all and told us a little about her art career, starting as an illustrator, work across the globe, to where she is today.

Starting with basics, the rule of thirds, we had 5 different grid sizes to work with. (Right) Portrait, landscape, square, panoramic horizontal and vertical. After a quick demonstration we did quick sketches in the 'boxes' from photos. It was interesting to see all the variations from one photo! Daphne also showed us that the square breaks all the rules and is a lot more forgiving when it comes to composition.



We had another photo to work with, thinking about changes to colour, light and scale. Then we had multiple images to put together composite sketches. (Right) Daphne explained about taking the most challenging object in the sketch for the direction of the light as it will be easier changing shadows etc on other parts, like trees, buildings. Scale is an important consideration when using multiple photos, also positioning. So, birds, animals, people, etc, are they supporting the composition or the main focus of the composition.



Below: Member's working during the day



Daphne brought in some finished examples of composite pictures she has painted. Each one she explained how she had planned and executed. She also told us how challenging some of her commissioned pieces had been!

Below: One of Daphne finished paintings

Following a relaxed lunch (the Riverside lunch was enjoyed by those who chose it) we started on our own planning and afternoon pictures, Daphne working around the room with everyone individually. Trying to be creative and imaginative.



A really good, informative and productive, day.
Thank you, Daphne.

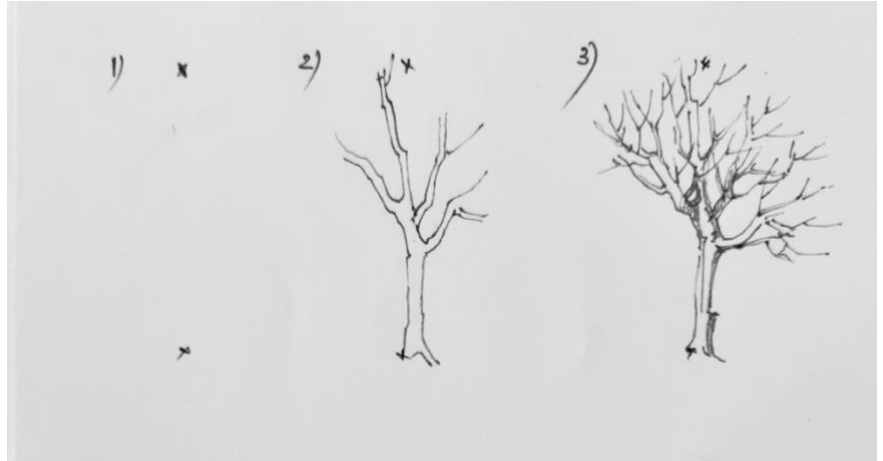
Di Hanson

TIPS FROM THE CHAIR:

As winter approaches and the leaves fall from the trees we are presented with their naked structures. This is a wonderful opportunity to observe their shape and the different characteristics of the different species before the leaves confuse the eye. It is important that we take note of the different shapes so that we can have variety of form in our paintings. If we are not careful it is all too easy for our trees to morph into the same shape each time we put them in a picture.

Below right, is an illustration in three stages of how to draw a naked tree!

1. I make a mark to denote the space I wish the tree to fit in - this prevents them being too small or too large.
2. I simplify the structure by concentrating on the main boughs of the tree. I prefer to start at the top and work down to the trunk otherwise I have a tendency to make the trunk too tall.
3. I add in the branches not forgetting that there is a depth to a tree having a front, middle and back. This is shown by shading.



Daphne

TURNER & CONSTABLE – Rivals and Originals



Joseph Mallord William Turner 1775 – 1851



John Constable 1776 - 1837

We are hoping to run a coach trip to Tate Britain next March to see the exhibition to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the births of J M W Turner in 1775 and John Constable in 1776. A unique occasion and opportunity to view over 170 paintings and work on paper of both these icons of British art. More details of the day will be announced soon.

December 2nd – Sale of unwanted Art Materials:

Bring in all your unwanted items to sell to fellow members. All those bargains you bought which seemed such a good idea at the time but you've never used? Someone else might be pleased to buy it.

Please price everything individually plus your name and we will sell it for you. Bring **cash** please as we cannot use the SumUp as it's not for the Club, it's for members. We only ask for a small donation to club funds from anything sold.

Members' work: Left to right – Patric Brooks, Val Cranwell and 2 from Neil Barton



Marilyn Allis zoom demo – Nov 18th:

We got a good deal with the artist Marilyn Allis, who gave us two demonstrations in one afternoon, through zoom.

For both pictures, she had stretched the 90lbs paper in advance, and pencilled in the main composition. She had also masked out some areas she wanted kept white, including random scrapes with a credit card for sparkle, so the fluid could be dry. (The fluid she uses is a secret formula which you can buy from her website).

The first picture was taken from two photos as reference, of people at tables and Corfe Castle in the background.

Marilyn quickly washed in the background with a big brush, the sky in ultramarine blue, and the greens by a watery mix of ultramarine blue, burnt umber and lemon yellow. She pointed out that paints onto wet paper would dry into a lighter shade, while those onto dry would dry a similar tone.

The painting was thoroughly dried before Marilyn painted in the castle. Using ultramarine blue and burnt umber, she made a bluey grey, varying the density with water to create the different shades.

Moving on to the people, Marilyn used a light red and sepia mix for the skin tones (pale areas had been masked out). She chose colours for the clothes, with the range of tones, using quick bold strokes.

For dark shadows of the furniture and trees, she used prussian blue with lemon yellow for dark greens, and added sepia for a browner tone.

After drying the painting thoroughly once more, Marilyn removed the masking fluid (with a rectangular tool called a Maskaway). She used the edge of a card with paint on for some straight lines where needed, and painted in a few more details. She was careful not to overdo the detail, keeping the loose style alive and producing a lively result.

After the break, Marilyn demonstrated a multimedia collage. Referring to a photo of cellists, she tore up sheets of music and stuck them (with PVA glue) around the page, over the predrawn image and avoiding the masked areas. She stuck to three colours of watercolour for this picture, burnt sienna, intense violet and prussian blue. She added a metallic sheen by mixing in a goo called Metallic Inspiration, (available from her website, on offer). Using a big brush and lots of water she covered the page in these three colours, varying the intensity and tone.

When dry, and masking removed, Marilyn used darker shades of the same colours, and free loose strokes, to give body to the instruments and clothes of the musicians. Straight lines were put in with the edge of a card again, and some essential details with a finer brush and ink.

The resulting picture was full of movement which vividly captured the energy of the players engrossed in their music. Thank you Marilyn for managing to produce the 2 demos in the time, a most enjoyable afternoon.



The finished paintings of the picnic below Corfe Castle and the Cellists in the Auckland Orchestra



Any articles you would see or add to your Newsletter, or any suggestions, please contact the Editor at gilliannye@rocketmail.com Thank you.