



**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR MEMBERS**

### Christmas and New Year Greetings from our Chair



Everyone on the DAN Committee joins me in wishing you all, the happiest and healthiest Christmas and year ahead.

Despite Covid restrictions we have managed to continue our monthly meetings on Zoom and maintain an active role within the local arts community with the exhibitions of members' work, live music provided by **Mike** and **Ian** and the occasional workshop in the successful Community Hub in St. Andrew's Square.

Our AGM will be on Zoom on **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022** and hope many of you will join us. I do hope very soon after that we will be meeting face to face to enjoy the varied

programme we have planned for next year. Warmest good wishes, **Helen**

### Remembrance Day with DAN

The poppy wreath made in October by our DAN members was laid by our Chair, **Helen Karakashian**, on behalf of Droitwich Arts Network.

This year hundreds of Droitwich residents were able to gather in Victoria Square to pay their respects. The Mayor of Droitwich took the salute as the parade passed en route to the Droitwich War Memorial in Victoria Square, and both he and the Reverend Nigel Byard were present to observe the 2-minute silence at 11am to remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the service of our country.



After the Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial the procession passed on its way to St Andrew's Church for the service. Earlier a stunning display of poppies were reflected onto St Richard's House, which houses the town's Heritage Centre, in a wonderful light installation in the lead up to Remembrance Day.

### ART on the Station



Friends of the Droitwich Spa Railway Station (FODSRS) is a newly formed station adopters' group. Helen attended the initial meeting with three hats President of Rotary, Governor of the High School and Chair of DAN. It soon became clear that the most effective way to improve the look of the station apart from the wonderful planters which are now in place was to concentrate on installing relevant art work and Helen is responsible for organising this.

Helen says "After meeting on the station various areas were earmarked for art. The general idea is to celebrate the heritage of Droitwich and also incorporate elements of travel. We are hoping to include local young people to prepare a mural on the side of the ticket office. Currently a 6th former from Droitwich High School is working on art work for the inside of the shelters on the Birmingham side of the station as part of her A level studies.

We are now looking for artists to put work under the bridge and inside the bricked-up windows of the Brunel building and other areas on the station still to be decided." **If any DAN members are interested in having work displayed on the station, they need to send sketches, photos etc. of their proposed work to [Tina](#) before 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022 which is the next meeting of FODSRS.**

### DAN Programme for 2021 and 2022

**16<sup>th</sup> December Christmas Social – A Christmas QUIZ on Zoom** with PRIZES to be won! Please bring your drinks and festive mince pies to the event... Christmas jumpers and hats are to be encouraged the louder the better!

**Partners and households are welcome to join in.**

**20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 AGM, 7.00pm on Zoom.**

Are you willing to give a demonstration or talk at future meetings? Please contact [Rosie](#) if so.

## Metro Bank Update

Our account with Metro Bank is now open. Our old account, HSBC, has closed and all funds have been transferred. **Rhys** will send out an email to all members with statements showing exactly where they are in terms of fees for the Hub. As we now have access to online banking, it is hoped the delay we have experienced in the past with late notification of membership payments is behind us.

You may now pay any fees directly into the DAN bank account, the details are; Account Name; Droitwich Arts Network; Sort Code 23-05-80; Account number 43249169. **You must include your name as a reference.**

## A musical Note – Mike Johns

Given the season, choirs in our area have been busy rehearsing their Christmas set lists and hoping their plans will come to fruition. The Community Choir performed in St Andrews Church on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> after the lights were switched on and will be busy visiting several care homes in Droitwich over the next few weeks. There will also be a Carol service in St Andrews on **Tuesday 21st December at 6.30**. Droitwich Folk Club meets on **December 2nd in the Old Cock Inn**.



Most choirs are looking for men who can sing bass or tenor and there could be a role for the Network here in the form of a workshop in future to help men into singing in harmony. There are many who have good voices but have not had the encouragement they need to do this. From a personal point of view, I was lucky in hindsight to become a church choir member at the age of 8. Then to move into the tenor section alongside my Welsh father. This was a musical education par excellence. Anyway, I wish all members and readers a normal and happy musical Xmas and harmonious New Year. Mike

## Venues for displaying DAN artwork - UPDATE

**The Lido Café** [LittleAlskitchen@gmail.com](mailto:LittleAlskitchen@gmail.com) : • Owner Alex Daw • Wall space opposite the counter has been purposely left free for displaying art. • Alex would also like to hang work above the windows (quite high up). • Photos of artwork required before being accepted for hanging.

**Diamond Coffee Bar**: • No landline in place yet but contact Pioneer Group on 01905 827078. Staff there happy to pass on messages. • Very enthusiastic but needs to check with the owners as they intend to turn it into a cocktail bar and might want to change the décor.

**Library** [drilib@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:drilib@worcestershire.gov.uk) • Contact - Tiffany • Under the stairs • There is also the gallery upstairs but there will be a charge and they take commission.

**Park's Café**: • New owners are happy to continue displaying artwork and are happy with current arrangements.

**The Button Tree**: • Continuing as normal (booked through all of 2022).

### Other venues

- **Hanbury Hall** is turning the Long Gallery into a restaurant so will not be available for us to exhibit.
- Trevor Hunter suggested **Croome Court**.

## Book Launch Event

[Alison Jean Lester](#) is a British-American novelist living here in Droitwich with her Halesowen-born photographer husband, [Andrew Gurnett](#). Alison contacted us as the Arts Network to let us know about her third novel and a literary event she and Andrew held at the library during November.

*Glide*, their third novel was published on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

*It's November in Massachusetts. Leo Coffin is making a birthday cake for his wife, Liv, due home soon from a trip to Norway, when a stranger comes to the door claiming to be Liv's half-brother, Morten. Too polite to make the stranger wait until Liv is home before letting him in, Leo unleashes a troubling, fascinating force into his quiet life. When Liv returns, unable to separate fact from fiction, Leo is forced to live with mystery upon mystery, as well as a secret he's been keeping himself. Can his marriage survive the fiction? Can it survive the truth?*

The psychological drama includes moody, monochromatic, often abstract photos between the chapters, designed to add to the atmosphere.

On 17<sup>th</sup> November, the Droitwich Library held an evening event where Alison talked about the writing of the novel and read from the first chapter. Andrew described the collaboration and the way he went about creating

the images from photos taken all over the world. Attendees were also treated to an exhibition of the photographs, which were on sale along with the books.

*Glide* is available from all good bookshops and Alison's website, [www.alisonjeanlester.com](http://www.alisonjeanlester.com)

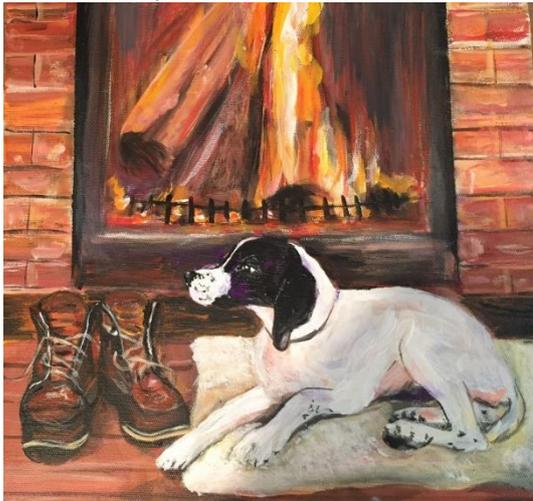
## Our LAST ARTS and CRAFTS SECTION November's theme – Bonfires

Thank you to everyone who sent in their rather splendid arts and crafts pics for last month's section.

Sadly, this will be the last of our arts and crafts page. There have been some spectacular artworks, photographs and poetry sent in. Thanks once again for getting involved.

If any DAN members are interested in having work displayed on Droitwich station, they need to send sketches, photos etc. of their proposed work to [Tina](#) before 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022 which is the next meeting of FODSRS.

**Lyn Shape's 'I'd Rather Be Indoors'** Lyn hadn't really got any bonfire pictures, and was too busy to paint one, so sent in this painting she did a while ago, in acrylic. I said 'I can see a fire and its tres bon! So why not!'



**Tina Watkins 'Fireworks over Kenilworth'** when it was possible! Not exactly a bonfire but it's there somewhere! Brusho and wax. ... messily of course!



**Susan Birth's 'Onirque'** in acrylic. Which was never intended to be a bonfire, but she thinks perhaps it could be! I think so too!



**Stephen Evans 'Bonfire'** A quick pencil drawing for your theme of 'Bonfire' for the November DAN Newsletter



For the latest information visit: <http://www.droitwichartsnetwork.org/> on Facebook  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/208713719174369/> e-mail [tina.watkins@ntlworld.com](mailto:tina.watkins@ntlworld.com)