



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR MEMBERS

Christmas and New Year Greetings from our Chairman Rhys



2025 was another busy and successful year for Droitwich Arts Network, and my first year as Chairman. The Hub provided the base for most of our activities including Dabble Days and a joint event with the NHS, each attracting hundreds of visitors to the Hub. Other events also proved to be very popular with visitors as well as members. Membership numbers continued to grow, reaching a peak of just over 100.

We will face challenges and opportunities in 2026. The closure of the Hub, and taking on a permanent but smaller space in Droitwich Library, means we need to establish new and innovative ways of exhibiting members' artwork. Becoming a Community Interest Company changes nothing overnight, but does allow us to access many more sources of grant funding. This will enable us to consider

projects and events that offer interesting opportunities for our members as well as delivering benefits to the community.

Our next AGM will be held on the 12th of January. It seems to me that there are two committee roles that need to be developed. One is publicity; the other is managing our programme of meetings and events. The publicity role needs someone who is familiar with online platforms such as Facebook and ideally can access image creation software such as PowerPoint or Canva. The role of managing the programme of meetings needs someone who has good organisational skills. Don't be shy! If you think you can help, please contact Rosie (our Secretary) or myself as soon as possible ahead of the AGM.

I am extremely grateful for the enthusiasm and support of all committee members who have helped us understand and plan for the changes we must make during coming weeks and months.

I send you all best wishes for the Christmas period, and wish you peace and good health during 2026.

Rhys Chairman rhys@photomaestro.co.uk

DAN at Droitwich Library

It is unlikely that there will be a new Hub in St Andrews Square in the foreseeable future.

The manager of Droitwich Library has offered us the exclusive use of a small area in the library. until at least the end of 2026. We are already holding events in the meeting room upstairs in the library and evening sessions in the open area downstairs.

The area is to the right at the top of the ramp, next to the line of windows that look out on the road and St Richard's House. The library manager has arranged for two display boards to be attached to the walls giving some space for pictures. We have also been offered a large screen on a stand to show a continuous loop of images and text to attract visitors. I have received a new pull-up banner and we will include one of our three-panel display boards that was in the Hub. Depending on when the boards will be attached to the walls, we hope to establish our presence from the beginning of December.

There will be space for members to display artwork which can be for sale, but the space will be significantly smaller than it was in the Hub. However, an average of 400 people visit the library every day, so it is up to us to make our area attractive and to make visitors feel welcome. We will need to establish a simple system for booking artwork to be displayed but we probably won't need a rota of volunteers. If members could sit, and possibly work, in our area whenever possible, it will encourage people to view, and possibly buy, artwork. It is likely that we will also attract new members.

More information will be sent to members by email during the coming weeks. **Rhys**



DAN December Drink and Doodle

Our members Drink and Doodle sessions will as usual, be held in Droitwich Library. With the last evening session of 2025 being held on **Tuesday 2nd December 6-8pm in the open area**, downstairs.

Please be aware that the library is accessed with your library card in the evening as it is unmanned. If you don't have a card, don't worry... just knock the window for our attention and one of us will let you in. **Wendy**



DAN November Remembrance



Member and former DAN chair, **Helen Karakashian** created a wreath from poppies beautifully made last year by members of DAN and laid the wreath at the annual service at the towns war memorial on behalf of DAN.

This service held extra significance as it also marked 80 years since the end of the Second World War. Crowds attended to see the magnificent Remembrance parade march from Droitwich Police Station to the war memorial.

DAN supports the St Andrews Square Christmas tree

Rhys took some lovely photos of the DAN supported tree. The management of St



Andrews Square provided the Christmas tree and the lights on the tree.

DAN supplied the baubles which were placed on the lower part of the tree by members of Droitwich Arts Network. **Rosie** and **Rhys** were the main decorators of the lower part of the tree but **Sheena Howarth** joined them for the finishing touches.

What an excellent effort and hopefully it shows our presence is still around in the town centre.



DAN New Member Simon Wilday introduction

"I worked for a Bromsgrove firm for 50 years designing for world-wide promotions. My family lived in Cornwall and I have been there for last 10 years. The model in the photo is a concept unit for promoting artwork at local events and the buggy is a replica of my vehicle built in 1980, which I still have it. All the images in the model are of my original artworks.



Moved back to Droitwich this year and until getting back to water colour painting have been drawing on a computer tablet. I am looking forward to meeting DAN members at our meetings."

December Droitwich Delights!

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH ON Christmas is here in Droitwich Spa!

The big countdown to the illumination was undertaken by the Mayor, Coun Chris Bowden, and Father Christmas. From 12noon to 5pm there were festive market stalls and then a funfair until the 6pm Christmas lights switch on. Councillor Dan Birch said "Another great Christmas light switch on! Great to see once again for a second weekend running another busy Saturday in Droitwich town centre. Thankyou to everyone involved in organising and of course to everyone in Droitwich for coming out and showing what our community is made of!"



Edward Winslow Celebrations

Edward Winslow Day

Before the celebrations, a few members of Droitwich Arts Network dressed the Edward Winslow statue in St Andrews Square as part of [Edward Winslow Day, Droitwich Spa](#).



On 27th November the inaugural 'Winslow Awards' were presented to the following people at St Peter's Church

1. Winslow Community Champion – Individual - Shelley Dixon
2. Winslow Champions Award (Group) for the Spirit of Giving & Charitable Enterprise in the Community - Droitwich Lions
3. Winslow Endeavour award - Anne Roberts
4. Edward Winslow Droitwich Spa 'Salt of the Earth' Award - Suzi Wood

Well done to all nominees and Winners:



On the day many, many celebrations took place, starting with the flag lowering ceremony at St Richards House. The flag has now been taken down and we look forward to next year.

Then a Winslow inspired street market with fluttering American flags and a full day of music and entertainment. There was even a Mechanical Organ playing festive tunes all day. Then the Salvation Army band, the Salties Folk Trio, Line dancers, Morris Dancers, and ending the day with Voices Unlimited and Tuneful Tubes. A worthy celebration.. well done all!



Junkanoo Party at Westmead

Recently Kate Lockwood from Westmead Care Home asked if DAN would help with her project. The project was to transport the residents to the Bahamas to enjoy the Junkanoo Festival.



A lot of hard work from Kate paid off with a brilliant day of fun and entertainment.

The first picture is of Kate, the second is of the party in full swing.

DAN members help create many of the artworks at the previous Drink and Doodles.



They spent two sessions making Junkanoo Art to decorate the home Derek brought some art materials and members also brought bright, coloured card and feathers so we could add to our pieces and Kate from the home came with a resident of the home to help out.



There were several very generous donations of materials that have given a real boost to the project. Thank you to the members who produced some really colourful art and who were generous in providing materials. Westmead really was transported to the Bahamas. **Derek**



DAN Poetry Corner

Pauline Franks sent in this thought provoking poem which she wrote on solstice night in a lane in fernhill heath 5 years ago, accompanied by one of her lovely paintings.

Oak Sleep

Walk the lane with me in owl light
To seek the magic of Solstice night

Black against yellow sky
The might oak stands strong
Muscle like boughs heave and sigh
on leaf bare crown twigs sing their song

Behind the Malvern Hills
The cold light fades and dark descends
A mysterious spirit lies beneath
Bark so ridged and deep
A life force soon to awake
From winters sleep

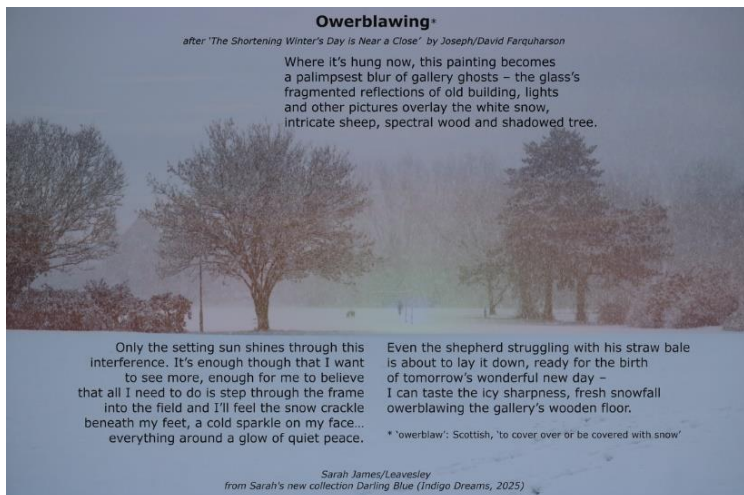
The shortest day
The longest night
We await
The return of light



Owerblawing*

after 'The Shortening Winter's Day is Near a Close' by Joseph/David Farquharson

Where it's hung now, this painting becomes
a palimpsest blur of gallery ghosts – the glass's
fragmented reflections of old building, lights
and other pictures overlay the white snow,
intricate sheep, spectral wood and shadowed tree.



Only the setting sun shines through this
interference. It's enough though that I want
to see more, enough for me to believe
that all I need to do is step through the frame
into the field and I'll feel the snow crackle
beneath my feet, a cold sparkle on my face,
everything around a glow of quiet peace.

Even the shepherd struggling with his straw bale
is about to lay it down, ready for the birth
of tomorrow's wonderful new day –
I can taste the icy sharpness, fresh snowfall
owerblawing the gallery's wooden floor.

* 'owerblaw': Scottish, 'to cover over or be covered with snow'

Sarah James/Leavesley
from Sarah's new collection *Darling Blue* (Indigo Dreams, 2025)

Sarah James sent in her photo-poem of 'Owerblawing' which is inspired by 'The Shortening Winter's Day is Near a Close' at the Lady Lever Gallery in Port Sunlight and is included in her new poetry collection *Darling Blue* (Indigo Dreams, 2025). More about the collection can be found on her website at: [here](https://www.sarahjames.co.uk/)

DAN Exhibitions

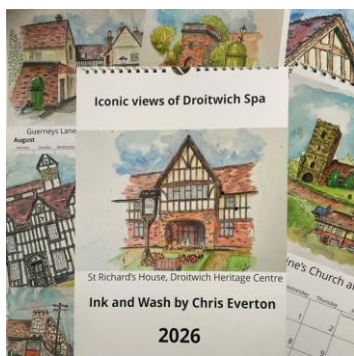
DAN currently has three venues where members can exhibit their works.

The Library with DAN: From the beginning of December, we will have two display boards attached to the walls giving some space for pictures. There will be space for members to display artwork which can be for sale, but the space will be significantly smaller than it was in the Hub. However, an average of 400 people visit the library every day, so it is up to us to make our area attractive and to make visitors feel welcome. We will establish a simple system for booking artwork to be displayed.

The Library Staircase is only a small space behind the staircase but over the last year members have shown it is really possible to make great displays. Certainly, it will get your paintings seen by a lot of people.

Corbett Medical Centre: Here we exhibit on the back walls of both waiting rooms. Hospitals now recognize the value on our mental health to all of displaying art. It is a great way to promote art and enrich surroundings.

If you are interested in exhibiting (Christmas upon us and sales of art peaks at this time of year!) contact Derek derekwebster20@aol.com



CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

During December **Tina Watkins** paintings will be exhibited in the **both Waiting Rooms at Corbett Medical Centre**. During December, **Christopher Everton** will be exhibiting in **Droitwich Library Staircase**, in the small area below the stairs. This is a no fee slot and ideal for just showing a few works. Please contact Derek Webster to book your venue. derekwebster20@aol.com.



Local Arts Events

DROITWICH EVENTS

Midnight Fox

The Hadley Bowling Green, Droitwich

Tue 9th December 2025 7:00pm - 10:00pm £33. Book [here](#)

Join Brush Party, the UK's 'Paint and Sip' experts at The Hadley Bowling Green, Droitwich on Tue 9th December 2025 at 7:00pm till 10:00pm to create our fabulous theme 'Midnight Fox', and enjoy a great night out you'll be talking about for weeks! What to Expect:

- Guided Instruction: Our talented instructor will guide you through your evening in easy-to-understand step by step stages, helping you recreate this stunning artwork with ease.
- All Supplies Included: We provide everything you need - A quality canvas, brushes, paints, and aprons. Just bring yourself and get ready to paint!
- Sip & Socialise: Enjoy a glass of wine (or your favourite beverage) as you paint. It's the perfect opportunity to relax, socialise with friends, meet new people and have a great night out.
- Take Home Your Masterpiece: At the end of the night, you'll leave with your very own "Midnight Fox" painting to proudly display at home.

It's all about fun and a great way to explore your creative potential in a relaxed, supportive environment.

Why You'll Love This Class:

- No Experience Needed: Whether you're a seasoned artist or picking up a brush for the first time, this class is designed to be enjoyable for everyone.
- Social Atmosphere: Paint, sip, and chat in a laid-back setting that's perfect for a night out with friends, a creative date night or even a 'get away from it all' night out on your own.



- We're not sticklers: We are all for you mixing it up a bit - If you feel confident, you can interpret our instruction any way you wish - Maybe you'd like to change the colours to suit your décor? We love it when you go 'rogue', we might even learn a few tricks!

Ready to create your own beautiful masterpiece? Reserve your spot today, and get ready for a night filled with creativity, laughter, and fun!

Don't miss out—our Paint and Sip classes fill up fast!

Willow Court Wednesday - Stitching workshop

By West Midlands Heritage Trust at 65 Ombersley Street East, Droitwich

Dec 3 from 10am to 12pm GMT



Come join us at Willow Court Wednesday and immerse yourself in a fun morning working on our community stitched art

Join Droitwich Spa & Rural Council for Voluntary Service for a fun-filled morning of crafting!

Whether you're a seasoned pro or a newbie, this event is perfect for all skill levels. Get creative with colourful tiles and create your own unique masterpiece to take home, inspired by the theme of home.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to unleash your artistic side and meet fellow crafters. See you there! Refreshments will be available. This workshop is free. It is made possible because of the National Lottery Heritage Fund project at Willow Court Farmhouse, Droitwich Spa. Reserve your place [here](#)

WORCESTERSHIRE EVENTS

Christmas Tree Festival at Worcester Cathedral

4th December – 6th January



It's back and it's bigger than ever! With more trees from charities, schools, businesses, community groups and others from across the region to enjoy. Our sparkling Christmas Tree Festival will be open to visit from Thursday 4 December 2025 until Tuesday 6 January 2026 (excluding Christmas Eve* and Christmas Day**), during normal visiting hours - 10am-5pm Monday to Saturday and 12.30-3pm on Sundays.

*Open for visiting 9am-12pm on Christmas Eve.

** The Cathedral is open for worship on Christmas Day at 7.30 am, 8 am, 10.30am and 4 pm - usual visiting resumes on Boxing Day.

🌟 **New this year... Dedication Trees - A Living Tribute - Celebrate, Remember, and Give Thanks**

This Christmas, we're delighted to introduce a new and meaningful way to be part of Worcester Cathedral's much-loved **Christmas Tree Festival**.

We invite you to dedicate one of the **real miniature Christmas trees** that will adorn our ancient Chapter House to someone special — in memory of a loved one, in celebration of someone who inspires you, or simply to say thank you.

In partnership with **St Peter's Garden Centre***, there are 60 trees available for dedication, each priced at £55.

For £55, your Dedication Tree will:

- Be **beautifully displayed** in the Cathedral's Chapter House throughout the festive season (dates), with your personal dedication message on display
- Be adorned with your choice of decorative topper
- Be seen and appreciated by **tens of thousands of visitors**
- Be **yours to take home** in January — to plant, nurture, and enjoy for years to come.

This is a wonderful opportunity for you, your family, and friends to take part in a cherished tradition, while creating a lasting tribute that grows beyond Christmas.

Join us in making this season one of celebration, remembrance, and thanks. [Click here to Dedicate a Tree](#). More information [here](#).

Worcester Victorian Christmas Fayre

The Worcester Victorian Fayre is one of Worcestershire's most popular Christmas events, attracting visitors from across the country. The friendly atmosphere of the event is unrivalled and the smells, sights and sounds will definitely get you in the Christmas spirit. The traditional event combines a variety of street entertainment and 200 stalls across the whole city. 4th to 7th December [Click Here](#)

Santa Steam Specials at Severn Valley Railway

After festive fun at Kidderminster Station, travel in a private compartment or at a reserved table on a vintage steam train to Arley, for an all-new theatrical show: The Great Christmas Train Rescue.

This amazing live show features Santa himself, but his magical steam train is in trouble, and only Polly the polar bear and a pair of cheeky elves can save the day from the scheming villain, Victor Von Sneeze!

With dazzling puppetry by War Horse's Matthew Forbes, toe-tapping tunes, and heart-warming moments, this is a festive experience like no other. Back on the train, presents will be waiting for all children, before your train steams back to Kidderminster.

Relaxed Santa Steam Specials

For those who would prefer an experience which brings down the volume, keeps lighting at a low level and offers a reduced capacity, Relaxed Santa Steam Specials can also be booked online. [Click Here](#)

Worcester City Art Gallery

Visit the exciting Christmas Fair at Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum with many different crafts people scattered throughout the building. While you're there, take a look at the permanent and visiting exhibitions and enjoy a drink, cakes and hot and cold snacks at the on site cafe. A not to be missed quiet oasis during Worcester's Victorian Market! [View all events](#)

DAN Spotlight On – New Member Sarah James' Poetry Event



On Saturday 22nd November in Droitwich Library, **Sarah James** (AKA Sarah Leavesley) launched her new book of poetry called "Darling Blue". Sarah's book (subtitled "the lover I couldn't forget") interweaves poems with a fictional poetry narrative of love, lust, and letting go.

The poems, inspired by Pre-Raphaelite artworks include QR codes enabling the reader to view the pieces alongside their reading. Blue here is more than just a colour or inspiration; it is desire, secrecy and sorrow.

Sarah was a founding member of Droitwich Arts Network and we are delighted that she recently re-joined. Sarah is a poet, fiction writer,

journalist and photographer, and joint winner of the Geoff Stevens Memorial Poetry Prize 2024.

Sarah was joined by a number of other local poets, including **Karen Read**, who read her work.

ALL ARTS ALLEY

We really do thank everyone who sent in their splendid artwork photos for our All Arts project in this edition. We are hoping an item can be chosen to be **spotlighted** every week here and possibly in the Hub. Would you like your artwork chosen? Everyone who wishes to will have the spotlight turned on to their artworks over time but do please let me know if you would like yours **spotlighted** in **January**! In the meantime, please send in to the usual All Arts Alley **ANY ART/CRAFT BASED WORK**. I just need photos of your work with any describing information, to show in the coming newsletter. Send email, [HERE](#). **By 30th December**.

Tina Watkins recently sent in this Droitwich Christmas Tree lights painting - Pastels on PastelMat.



Kathleen Thomas sent in this photograph and says, "From Woodland to Concrete City. Digbeth Birmingham."



Wendy Simmons sent in this very lovely watercolour offering and says, "The lido from Herriot's Pool side"



David Wornham sent in this erm.. interesting photograph and says "Father Christmas having a good blow on the Serpent at Hartlebury Castle. The sound produced was even more interesting, as he was a trombonist, so played well!"



Here is an example:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mnhy31PNUvU>

Peter Hawkins sent in these wonderfully detailed paintings and says "The first is my most recent painting, Cadair Idris from Brithdir, the result of a visit to Snowdonia earlier this year. The flowers were not visible in my primary reference photo, but are the result of exploration of the wild flowers of Snowdonia (so they could have been there!).

The second is a picture of the bridge where Briar Mill Road crosses the Droitwich canal, near the leisure centre. It dates from 2011 - so, unlike my more recent pictures, does not include a land crab. It seems suitable for this time of the year.



Pauline Wheeler sent in another lovely artwork and says *"This time it's a mixed media canvas with recesses made to hold an object and using a mix of texture paste through stencils and distressed with inks along with papers and an embellished and layered paper butterfly"*



David Wornham sent in another festive photograph and says *"Shell packhorse bridge with Bransom/Bow Brook in flood, December 2020"*



Sheena Howarth sent in her Christmas theme offering and says *"This was last years Xmas card, to help the Hedgies!"*



Jane Dix forwarded her last two studies and says *"I thought I would forward my latest artworks. Whilst they're not Christmassy they tick the wintry theme. I've been experimenting with Graphitint pencils which*



I've then worked on with ink, pastel and, in the case of the wintry depiction of Gaudet Luce golf course, gold and red gouache."

Susan Cook sent in these Xmas shapes and say *"These are made using painted collage papers ripped and glued to one side of the cardboard(can use card or strong paper) with the shapes required drawn on the opposite side of the cardboard. When completely dry. Cut out shapes.*

I am using mine for Xmas cards!"





Simon Wilday sent in these nicely done tablet paintings and says *"until getting back to water colour painting have been drawing on a computer tablet"*

Claire Tooley send in all these exciting paintings and photos and says *"I have been working on these since January 2025."*



For the latest information visit: <http://www.droitwichartsnetwork.org/> on Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/208713719174369/>