

Summer 2026 Newsletter

As we approach the end of our programme year this month, we will literally take you to the end of the pier, which for those of us with long memories of our childhood summers, will remember as the centre of seaside entertainment. For this lecture, we have Tony Lidington presenting *Pierrot Heroes*, which will come straight from the heart, as he is a Pierrot performer himself. Expect lots of fun and joy!

Looking ahead, we have a fascinating selection of talks lined up for the 2026 -2027 season, some of which stand alone, and others that loosely pursue a theme. We start in September with a talk about Art's Hidden Secrets, and then move to chillier climes focussing on art from the Baltic States and rare photographs from Antarctica illustrating Shackleton's famous Endurance expedition. In 2027, to mark the 300th anniversary of Thomas Gainsborough's birth, we will be taking a close look at one of his best loved paintings, *Mr and Mrs Hallett*, or 'The Morning Walk' painted in 1785. We shall also hear about the 18th Century Grand Tour, and the season will conclude with a virtual voyage down the Thames in 1749.

With our new season, we will hit the ground running with our first visit on **Wednesday 9 September** to the **National Maritime Museum and Queen's House at Greenwich**. Already this is proving very popular and if you haven't booked a place yet, please [click here](#) for further details and an application form.

Our next special interest event will be on 14 October for **The Sound of the Silents: The Art of the Movies**, so please keep the date in your diary.

Looking back over the year, in addition to our regular programme of talks, visits and special interest events, though less visible to many of you but equally important to our society, is our **Community Arts** support. We were delighted to provide a grant supporting the March 2026 Brushstroke Art Exhibition and Sale held at Sudbury Arts Centre. This major fundraising event for **Success After Stroke** showcased artworks created by their members, and gave local artists an opportunity to exhibit and sell their work. Over 3,000 people attended the Exhibition which raised more than £20,000, enabling Success After Stroke to continue its support for local stroke survivors.

Now there is one matter where you may be able to help us. We are looking for one or two members, with a nursing / medical background to volunteer as first aiders. If someone is taken unwell during one of our talks, it is very reassuring to know that we can apply necessary first aid. If you would like to offer your help, then please contact Jan Spencer at janetannspencer@gmail.com

And finally, you will recently have received your membership renewal invitation for next season, from which we hope to see as many of you as possible rejoining. Mary Knapp works hard co-ordinating all your renewals, and it would greatly help her if you would respond early to her invitation. (Thank you if you have already renewed your membership.)

We hope you have a wonderful summer, forget the cares of the world and it will be lovely to see everybody back together again this autumn.

The Arts Society Stour Valley