

The WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY

Events Programme - January to June 2012

Unless otherwise stated: Events are at Kelmscott House starting 2.15 p.m. prompt.
Tickets: members , £6; non-members £8; students £4
All applications for tickets to WMS office – address below. Stamped addressed envelopes should accompany all postal applications for tickets.

The pre-booking of tickets for all visits is required. Pre-booking for events at our premises is strongly advised. Our historic Coach House lecture room has limited seating capacity and if you attend without pre-booking you risk being turned away.

VISIT TO TWO TEMPLE PLACE

Friday 27th
January
12.00am
Two Temple Place is one of London's hidden architectural gems, an extraordinary late Victorian mansion built by William Waldorf Astor on the Embankment. Our guided tour will cover the history of this fascinating building, followed by a last opportunity to view the William Morris: Story, Memory, Myth exhibition. This inaugural exhibition looks at how William Morris told stories through pattern and poetry. It will examine the tales that were most important to him, such as the works of Geoffrey Chaucer, Norse saga, Arthurian legend and Greek myth. Five rarely seen, newly-conserved panels of the embroidered frieze 'The Romaunt of the Rose' will be exhibited along with the beautiful Pomona tapestry, unseen in public for eighty years.

VISIT TO CARLYLE'S HOUSE

Wednesday
15th February
11am
A specially arranged visit to explore Carlyle's House before the start of their 2012 season. A personal guided tour by the Custodian will uncover the history and preservation of this fascinating property. Thomas Carlyle was a critic, historian and literary star of the early Victorian period. He had an extraordinary personality and style, like an Old Testament prophet. He denounced the utilitarian, 'mechanical' culture which grew up out of the Industrial Revolution, and inspired a generation of younger writers including Charles Dickens, George Eliot and William Morris, with the idea of 'the hero as a man of letters.' Tickets £6.00 (including National Trust members).

INGRID HANSON: MORRIS & THE LANGUAGE OF BATTLE

Saturday 24th
March
2.15pm
In Morris's serialised poem of 1885-6, *Pilgrims of Hope*, the working class hero, Richard, responds to a speech about the transformations that socialism will bring in these terms: 'I saw the battle awake, / And I followed from end to end, and triumph grew in my heart'. In this talk, Ingrid Hanson will explore Morris's frequent and varied use of vivid, sensual images, metaphors and representations of battle in his writings to express his dissent from the present and his hopes for social change. Following this talk we will have our annual celebration of Morris's birthday with wine and cake.

VISIT TO WATTS GALLERY

Saturday 21st
April
11.30am
The gallery was opened in 1904 (shortly before the artists' death) by G.F.Watt's second wife, Mary, to house his personal collection of his works. The gallery reopened in autumn 2011, after a £5 million refurbishment, and is now able to display a wider range of Watt's paintings, historical and allegorical, plus his portraits and sculptures, including his gigantic gesso horse and rider. In spring 2012 it will also exhibit a selection of the portraits of his illustrious contemporaries that he gave to the National Portrait Gallery. A one hour guided tour has been arranged. We can also view the redbrick cemetery chapel nearby, in

which Mrs Watts expressed her mystical concepts in a somewhat Celtic style.

Meet at Guildford station at 10.30am (trains from London Waterloo every 15 minutes) to catch a bus to Compton just after 11.00am. The guided tour is due to commence around 11.30 am. Tickets £10.

THE UTOPIAN IMAGINATION: ALDOUS HUXLEY'S *ISLAND* 50 YEARS ON

Saturday 5th

May

2.15pm

'How We Might Live' is one of Morris's great topics. Aldous Huxley also explores the issue in his fine utopia *Island* (1962). To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the book, Ruth Levitas and Tony Pinkney have organised an afternoon of talks, readings and discussion on and around Huxley's utopia. How did the author of one of the twentieth-century's great dystopias, *Brave New World*, eventually arrive at a vision of utopia, and how persuasive is that vision for us today?

WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY'S 57TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 19th

May

2.15pm

This year's meeting will take place at Mansfield College, Oxford. The AGM will be followed by a talk by Tony Pinkney on Morris and Oxford. The meeting will conclude with tea and biscuits. Admission free.

WARWICK DRAPER: HAMMERSMITH'S HISTORIAN

Saturday 2nd

June

2.15pm

Warwick Draper lived in Kelmscott House from 1905 to 1915, and subsequently at Bedford House on Chiswick Mall. Besides writing histories of Hammersmith and Chiswick, he was an influential local figure. He led successful protests against building a new road through Hammersmith and against siting a gas-works on Dukes Meadows. He co-founded Hampshire House, a working men's club modelled on Toynbee Hall sited on land adjoining Kelmscott House. In all this, he claimed Morris as inspiration.

Ruth Levitas is Chair of the William Morris Society and Professor of Sociology at the University of Bristol. Her publications include *The Concept of Utopia* and *Morris, Hammersmith and Utopia*, the 2002 Kelmscott Lecture.

OPEN GARDENS - PLEASE COME AND HELP

Sunday 10th

June

10am till 5pm

We will be participating in the Open Garden Squares Weekend by inviting visitors to view the gardens at Kelmscott House as well to look around the WMS Museum. We need your help with greeting visitors, providing refreshments etc. Contact our Curator, Helen Elletson at the WMS Office, details below.

Please note:

- No one will be admitted to a talk after the speaker has commenced.
- Your participation in any event is entirely at your own risk. The Society cannot accept any liability for injury, loss, or damage, however caused. You must arrange your own travel and personal insurance.
- Direct level access can be arranged to our historic Coach House lecture room where talks take place. However the rest of our premises has only limited wheelchair access.
- The Society reserves the right to cancel, alter, or postpone any events, as it may consider expedient or necessary.
- Refunds will only be offered if a cancellation or postponement is by the Society.

The William Morris Society Office is at:
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The William Morris Society and Kelmscott Fellowship
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