

ART HISTORY 2 : 2015

Art History 2 started on 3 February 2015 and we have had a very busy first year. We have a very wide range of interests, but after looking initially at Stone age art, Cave paintings and the Elgin marbles, we found a common interest in **Impressionism** and began researching and presenting artists to tie in with the National Gallery exhibition 'Inventing Impressionism' which ran from 4 March to 31 May 2015 and which a number of us visited and enjoyed. In addition to some French Impressionists who featured in the exhibition, *Boudin, Degas, Monet, Manet, Morisot, Renoir, Sisley* we researched and presented the work of some of the most famous American Impressionists, *Mary Cassatt Wm Merritt Chase* and *Theodore Robinson* and we showed our work, mostly in the form of Powerpoint presentations, at the Summer Open Day.



Some of us also reported on visits to museums (the Ashmolean, Oxford, the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, the Musée Marmottan, Paris) and those of us who were around in August had a very enjoyable group visit to the 'Sickert in Dieppe' exhibition at Pallant House.

In the autumn, a new member, newly-retired, gave us a very interesting illustrated talk on her career as a museum curator - which had some very exciting moments over the years! Having enjoyed the BBC's *Fake or Fortune* series, we also watched a very interesting follow-up documentary about the family of forgers featured in one of the programmes.

In October, having noticed that a number of London galleries were showing autumn exhibitions of portraits by various artists, we decided to focus our research on portraits by a wide range of artists across the centuries. We began by watching two recordings of portrait painters at work, one classically trained, the other self-taught, which led to a lively discussion of the merits of each painter and their approaches to portrait painting. Two of us attended the U3A Study Day on Portraiture at the National Gallery towards the end of November and fed back to the group in the New Year.