



# NEWSLETTER

## Friends of Harlow SCULPTURE COLLECTION

**Number 5**

**November 2008**

### Harlow Hotspot Competition

We came second in the Harlow Hotspots Competition winning £5,000 towards a new sculpture for the Town Park.

The competition was run by Harlow Renaissance and Harlow Star as part of the Harlow Town Show. Readers of the newspaper and visitors to the show had to vote on a short list of regeneration projects. Parndon Wood Nature Reserve came first and we came second.



Our project was in cooperation with The Harlow Art Trust, to provide a sculpture to replace 'Children on a Rock' by Hilary Frew in the paddling pool in the Park, which had been damaged beyond repair last year.

In the current art world £5,000 is not a great deal of money, so we will be following an Art Trust tradition and a seeking a sculptor from the art schools. Work has started on the project, the art brief has been compiled and Nick Bullions and Michael Paraskos will be visiting the art schools to find a short list by the end of this term. A decision is to be made in January, the piece to be completed by the end of May and installed in July.

A condition of the award is involvement by the community and this will take the form of a children's workshop to ascertain their ideas on a sculpture for the pool.

### A Christmas Do

Following on the success of last year, we will again be holding a light hearted entertainment for Christmas on Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> in the Gibberd Gallery at 7pm. The entertainment will be two short talks – '20<sup>th</sup> century Art in 20 minutes' by Nick Bullions and 'Art Trust Tales' by Jackie Storey, a former clerk to the Trust (with a little help from Sir Frederick Gibberd.) Festive food and mulled wine will accompany the talks.

### Sir Frederick's Centenary

To conclude the centenary year of Sir Fredericks birth 'Designed in Harlow - the work of Sir Frederick Gibberd's Harlow office from 1956 – 1983 will be exhibited in the Gibberd Gallery from November 29<sup>th</sup> 2008 - January 24<sup>th</sup> 2009. Photographs, drawings and models will document the work of the office during the period Sir Frederick lived in the Town he designed.

### Edwina Chaston

With great sadness we report the death of local sculptor Edwina Chaston. Her sculpture 'Letting Go' is part of the collection and situated in Gladden Court, off Southern Way. She was much loved, a generous and enthusiastic artist. The funeral will be on Wednesday November 5<sup>th</sup> at 10am at Harlow Crematorium.





## Can We Bring Sandwiches

This year's summer exhibition by Paul Mount was not the high profile event we put on last year. The pieces were all by one artist, known as a sculptor, and included his more recent abstract paintings. Paul Mount is in his nineties, living in Cornwall, and was too frail to attend the exhibition. There was not therefore the same emphasis on security as we had last year, with the portable Henry Moore, so we restricted invigilation hours to 11am-3pm, thus covering lunch, a tricky question for some. I brought sandwiches, but I don't know what others did.

It all went fairly smoothly, with no one reporting problems. On some days, particularly Saturday mornings with the children's art activities, the Gallery was full, on others there were only a forlorn 2 or 3 attendances recorded. Usually there were a respectable 10 to 15. As I found, those who did come were intrigued and appreciative. I sold one Harlow Sculpture book, but I only covered 3 days. Everyone loved the Gallery, and the permanent collection got as much attention as the exhibition. I hope that next summer's show will live up to its predecessors, and that we will get more press interest in what is a unique event in Essex's art scene.

I hope everyone, new and seasoned invigilators alike, had positive experiences. I'm up for doing it again next summer. The Committee thanks everyone involved for sparing the time. We hope to see you next year. What do you think? Comments to our Editor, Jackie Storey.

Barbara Burge



## You Don't Need To See It To Enjoy It

After checking out with Kelly and finding some cotton gloves I invited my friend Maureen to come and experience the exhibition; she has been losing her sight over several years and now needs her faithful friend and guide dog Faldo to get out and about. She has had a go at making three dimensional things in an art class she attends but had never been to an exhibition of sculpture before and did not know what to expect at all. We started with a warm up using the Family Group by Henry Moore as practice. Maureen remembers this from its days in the square looking out over the south of the town.

Upstairs we put on the white gloves and found the first Paul Mount piece - Partage de Midi. Maureen was surprised it was so small and manageable - I could not say what it looked like because it didn't look like anything but for Maureen it felt lovely - smooth and slippery and a curiosity - where did this shape go? How many shapes were there? How did they fit together? - It didn't need to represent anything it was just very pleasing to touch and Maureen would love to have it grace her table at home.

We felt our way round a couple more small and shiny ones where the curves and planes, wedge shapes and squares kept Maureen's interest and enjoyment. Then we found Cyclone - the dimensions of this large piece amazed Maureen and it took her a while exploring all its curves inner and outer to realize the concentric repetition of it through three sections all interlinked - When we thought about the title - Cyclone - it did seem to represent the wind going round and round the peaceful eye of a storm but again the smooth texture made it a pleasing piece to touch - a bit big for the sitting room though!

When we reached the Guardian, the change in style and texture caught Maureen's imagination and before she knew the title she felt part of it represented a spear - and perhaps the rest of it a sort of gate - which I think really fits its title.

When we reached the largest sculpture I described to Maureen how Paul seemed to use curves to indicate movement in his picture and showed her the curves on this one. Following where they led Maureen found the spiky stylized 'Birds'. I don't think she was very impressed by this feeling uncomfortable around all the points and bits sticking out!



The tall bronze Torre Aalta was intriguing for its changing texture but the hard nobly shape was not pleasing to her touch.

Now we came to the 'magic' sculpture; We could just about reach to the top of Ewigkiet And by feeling the base and following the curved plane all round we came back to the base but on the other side of the form - carrying on following the same plane it became narrower and at the base found we were on the inside of the shape - This amazing sculpture has only one side - one dimensional!!.. Wonderful to look at but absolutely intriguing to feel - an impossible shape - what an incredibly clever sculptor to make it. (Did you realize before I told you why it is a magic sculpture - it only has one side and one edge a super mobious strip.)

The last sculpture Maureen explored brought back memories for her and without being told its name she exclaimed 'Oh! Its just like those clowns juggling lots of plates on sticks! She was right The Jugglers really does just that although many people looking at it thought 'space ships' before they read its title.

So you really don't have to see sculptures to enjoy them and appreciate them for just what they are - not what they might represent.

Jenny Lushington

## Sculpture Tour by Bike

On a lovely, warm August Sunday afternoon twenty people gathered at The Museum of Harlow for what turned out to be delightful experience. Our ages ranged from 10 years to 70+, but our common bond was the promise of a gentle ride around part of Harlow's cycle network visiting some of the sculpture on public display in the town. The plan was to ride between sites and hear an expert talk about the sculptures and their creators at each stop.

Nick, well versed in the in the sculptures of Harlow undertook to do the talking and I devised the route and led the ride. We left the museum and rode through Mark Hall North. Tanys Dell was dispatched swiftly as we rode on to Glebelands; our first stop. Contrapuntal Forms by Barbara Hepworth. Comments were made about the poor state of the cobbled area surrounding this wonderful piece.

Riding on through Dovehouse Croft and Great Plumtree, we had enough time to admire the fine old oaks that form the boundary between these two areas, before crossing First Avenue and into The Stow. Here Nick explained that the bronze casting of Leon Underwood's clenched fist sculpture Not In Anger had been cast from the Portland Stone original that can be seen in the Gibberd Garden. We moved swiftly on to the front of Moot House to admire Mary Spencer Watson's Chiron.

Most of the group had never before ventured into Sewell Harris Close, our next port of call. It was well worth the effort as Gerda Rubenstein's Julia was widely admired. It truly is a charming piece. Onwards via one of the town cycle tracks to Pittmans Field to pat the Donkey. This delightful piece by Willi Soukop was cast for Harlow in 1965. It is obviously much loved as its shiny ears, muzzle and haunches are evidence of much patting and stroking. Retracing our tyre tracks towards Blackbush Spring we joined Latton Street and cruised to Ladyshot where Nick talked about Ralph Brown and his bronze Sheep Shearer.

Now it was time to stretch our legs as we continued along Latton Street to Puffers Green, and then by a devious route ended up on the forecourt of Tesco's at Church Langley. The circuitous route was worth it as we stood and admired John Mills powerful bronze Chinese Dynamic. The horse depicted is, apparently a Chinese breed of fighting horse. Onward we went, around Barnsley Wood.

Along Old London Road we sped and into Old Harlow High Street to admire Kore by Betty Rea and to wonder why she is so shy that she hides round the corner of the building? Our journey was nearly at an end as we rode into the grounds of St Johns ARC to see F E McWilliam's moving piece Help. It only remained to cycle a short distance along Netteswell Road and passed The Lawn to be back at the museum, refreshed in body and mind by the experiences of the afternoon.

John Curry





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## Ralph Brown

Ralph Brown was born in Leeds in 1928. Following in the footsteps of fellow Yorkshire sculptors Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth he attended Leeds College of Art and then the Royal College of Art in London. Whilst at the Royal College he took part in a student show at the ICA. It was at this exhibition that Moore purchased Brown's Mother and Child sculpture. Phillip Hendy, a friend of Moore and Chairman of Harlow Art Trust, saw Brown's sculpture at Moore's home in Perry Green, and on Hendy's recommendation fellow trustee Patricia Fox Edwards (later Gibberd) visited the ICA exhibition. This was subsequently followed by a visit to Brown's studio, and with the approval of the Trust his Sculpture *Sheep Shearer* was purchased. It was sited in 1956 next to the amateur boxing club on Momples Road in Ladyshot, Harlow where it remains today. It was listed in 1997 by the DCMS with Grade 2 listing.

In 1957, on the strength of *Sheep Shearer*, the Trust commissioned Brown to make a piece of work for the new market square in the town centre. The original commission was for Brown to make a sculpture to be cast in concrete. However on seeing the Marquette the trustees were so impressed that it was agreed funds would be sought to cast the proposed sculpture in bronze. A grant from the Elmgrant Trust was secured and work begun on the commission. The sculpture depicted two men

carrying a carcass and, as with *Sheep Shearer*, portrays a scene of everyday human toil without being sentimental or whimsical. The sculpture was sited in 1961. Brown had originally titled the sculpture *Figures with a carcass*, however the Trust managed to persuade him to change it to the less gruesome sounding *Meat Porters*.

Brown was elected a Royal Academician in 1972 and his work has been shown in solo and group show throughout the world including a full retrospective held at the Henry Moore Centre in Leeds in 1988. Brown now lives and works in Gloucestershire, where he has his studios and gallery.

Nick Bullions



## New Treasurer

Albert Storey, who temporarily took on the role of Treasurer needs now to spend more time on his archaeological interests so has had to give up the post. We therefore have a new Treasurer, Karen Bishop. Please contact her with any financial queries on 01279 454520.

Membership costs £5 for adults, £2 unwaged/students and £10 for organizations.

If you wish to join the Friends of Harlow Sculpture Collection please complete this form.

Please make cheques payable to Friends of Harlow Sculpture Collection and return this form with your cheque to : Karen Bishop, 78, Bynghams, Harlow, Essex CM19 5NT

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