

NEWS FROM THE BURTON ART GALLERY & MUSEUM

It's a question of 'follow that' when the Torridge Schools exhibition has to be taken down, but the walls will again be filled with colour and design, this time '**Contemporary British Watercolours**' which began on 24th March, and continues until 9th May, so we have a good few weeks in which to enjoy it. There are 21 British artists taking part, and their names will mostly be new to us, as this exhibition demonstrates the 21st century approach to our usual conception of what is called 'British' art. So we will see experimentation in watercolour techniques, and it will be interesting to compare it with what we recall of the School children's exhibition, as it is surely the way the younger generation experiment as they begin to create a work of art.

Bertram Prance – 'Humour and Light': what an appropriate title for this talented artist's cartoons and gouache paintings! The Gallery is privileged to own quite a large selection of Bertram's work, collected over the years from donations, and gifts from his son, Christopher. Bertram was born in Bideford in 1889, and trained at the Bideford Science, Art & Technical School, now the Art Centre on the Quay, and was praised for his skill in the Gazette's report from that establishment on many occasions from 1906 while a student. On leaving Bideford for London, he became a member of the Savage Club, where he met other artists, and was elected President of the Sketch Club in 1948. His pen sketches were published in 'The Tatler', and he illustrated for a 'Punch' magazine contributor, Anthony Armstrong. From then on his humorous cartoons were much in demand, and the list of periodicals and newspapers using his work is endless. Prepare yourself for a good laugh, but also take time to admire his gouache paintings: landscapes, street scenes, and his technique with cloud formations. His son, Christopher, is giving a free 'Talk and Tour' of his father's work on Saturday, 9th April, at 2.00.

Vicky Lindo's face is familiar to many of us who have visited the Burton in the past, as she could be found behind the counter, always cheerful and helpful. But she had another role, that of managing the Shop and Craft Gallery. Her embroideries were often to be found in the latter, but when she left the Burton, she took a course in ceramics, and now has her own studio in Bideford. You can see her latest creations – and her love of cats and plants – in the Craft Gallery collection. Her sense of humour comes over in all her work; the funny things that cats get up to, is one of her favourite subjects. Her work is bold and simple, and very buyable. Enjoy it until 30th April.

The Friends of the Burton Gallery are holding their Annual General Meeting on Saturday, 9th April, from 10.30, in the Kingsley Room (upstairs) and all are welcome. The speaker this year is Judith Gentry, Chair of the 'Burton At Bideford' Trust, which comes into force this month, taking over management of the Burton from Torridge District Council, who had this role from 1974 when District Councils took over from Borough Councils. Judith Gentry has been Chair of the Shadow Trustees on a voluntary basis, and has worked tirelessly to progress this very important changeover. All are welcome to learn more about the future of Bideford's main attraction.

Diana Warmington,
Friends of the Burton Art Gallery & Museum.