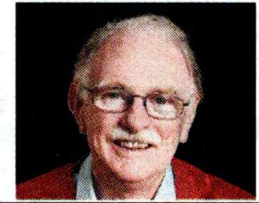


# Horsham Society

with Oliver Farley



## Inspired in the garden

**T**he word paradise comes to us ultimately from the ancient Persian for a park or garden, and often we can feel the sense in which the quiet of a garden with its ordered plantings and shady corners can be compared to our own little bit of heaven.

We may not all have a garden of our own or not much of one to speak of but we can rejoice in the shared possession of our Horsham Museum's garden, a tucked away gentle space, usually sunny and always attractive, right here in the centre of town.

To add to its natural attraction, the Association of Sussex Artists recently held open days in the garden, working away to the wonderment of those of us who are much less talented and all the more admiring.

The ASA holds their big annual show in late August, this year from the 17th to the 25th in the Drill Hall in Denne Road and this is a show we always make a point of attending.

We are very fortunate in our home town in having so many truly gifted artists amongst us, revealing a wide variety of



**Award-winning war artist Gordon Rushmer will be exhibiting at the ASA show on a contrasting and more peaceful theme, with this watercolour, *Early Morning on the Blackwater*.**

artistic talent in many media, from oils to watercolours, from sculptures to pottery. It was an inspired idea to use the

garden during our splendid warm weather as a venue to display our local artists at work and let us all into the secret of watching real talent turning raw materials into a pleasing aesthetic work.

Art and gardens bring immediately one place to mind, that modest house where the little river Epte flows through a marsh to join the Seine, the flat landscape with woodland and reeds where Claude Monet spent 40 years of his life painting and pondering.

From 1883 to 1926 this was his special home and its every detail yielded art which has influenced so many since.

Poplars, haystacks and water lilies feature obsessively in his work and by his treatment of light, colour and shade he advanced Western art from depiction to abstraction.

Such a small place, yet such a source of vast inspiration; we are all struck by very modest means achieving most prodigious ends.

Visiting the site today one is thankful that nature is pretty much the same and one can feel something of the atmosphere which Monet found so congenial.

The house still stands, small and also

much the same but for the flocking of hundreds of visitors whose incessant treading through the corridors and stairs threaten to shake loose the fabric.

No such threat to our own artists' garden sanctuary, so all the more peaceful for that.

We look forward to the August show and in the meantime we can reflect on the practical attitude of another great artist inspired by gardens, the Swiss Paul Klee, who wrote, "My mind is clearest and freshest, and I often experience the most captivating moods, even moments of great joy, when I am tending plants in my garden, making cuttings, potting, binding, pruning, transplanting separating etc, and when I feel like a plant myself; it is the only way to feel properly at home."

*The Horsham Society is concerned about the past, present and future of the town. It seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces. Membership of the Horsham Society is open to anyone who shares these concerns. For more information, visit the website [www.horshamsociety.org](http://www.horshamsociety.org) or phone 01403 259038.*