1916 - 2016: Charleston celebrates its Centenary

Monday 3 October, 2016

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Sunday 16 October 2016 marks the centenary of the arrival at Charleston of Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant and David 'Bunny' Garnett. Their arrival as World War I conscientious objectors saw the creation of Charleston as the country home of the Bloomsbury group and a legacy of art, literature and freedom of thought that is as relative today as it has been over the last 100 years.

To celebrate this landmark at Charleston, there are several activities and programmes planned over the centenary weekend and into the centenary year. These include **special access and extended House tours, theatrical performances, free art activities, lectures** and a **new Blog, Charleston in 100 objects.**

Alistair Burtenshaw, Director, Charleston said *"One hundred years after their arrival at Charleston, it is wonderful to see such sustained interest in the Bloomsbury Group – from the BBC2 serialisation of '**Life In Squares'** and premier of '**Woolf Works'** at the Royal Ballet last year to next Spring's Vanessa Bell exhibition at Dulwich Picture Gallery. It is particularly fitting that Charleston, which offers a unique and unparalleled insight into the lives of the Bloomsbury Group, is able to celebrate the Centenary of their arrival at Charleston with both a glorious weekend of events and activities as well as the start of building works on a vital new two-hundred seat performance space in its grade II listed barns, and an exhibition gallery, collection studio and interpretation space in sensitively conceived contemporary buildings".*

Olivier Bell, President, Charleston said *"I've known Charleston for nearly sixty years. When I first went there, it was to sit for my portrait by Vanessa Bell. In 1952 I married her son. In the 1980s I was among the founders of the Charleston Trust. We raised over £1m to do the initial restoration of this unique house. Little did we imagine back then that it would become an internationally renowned museum…. And now, in 2016, Charleston's centenary year, **I too am one hundred years old**. It's a moment to reflect and celebrate past achievements. But it's also a time to rejoice that the Trust I helped start is going from strength to strength, having raised over £7 million of the £9 million needed to restore the barns and construct new buildings, thus bringing a new era of security and stability to this special and creative place."*

Activities in Full:

Saturday 15 October: **The Tribunal: Your Country or Your Conscience?** 4pm

Tickets £10/£8 (concessions). Suitable for ages 12+ Tickets on sale

In 1916, at a time of war and political uncertainty, Conscientious Objectors were alternately praised and vilified. When Catherine Marshall goes to visit her fellow activist – and lover – Clifford Allen at Newhaven Fort, he is insisting on refusing to fight, which could send him back to gaol and to an early grave. Can she save him while still holding on to their ideals?

Co-production by Zap Art & In Site who seek to create immersive theatre on location capturing the spirit of people and places. Recent productions include: The Port, The Beast and The Traveller; Our Dancing Feet; and Home Fires.

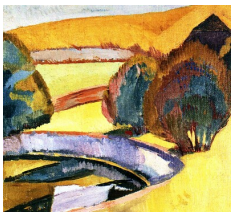
Sunday 16 October (1-5pm): **Charleston at 100** – special day of 'sneaky peaks' and 'extra treats' that explore the rich history of the House and its inhabitants.

- House: **Open access to 'the Kitchen' and 'the Attic'** usually unavailable to visitors. Attic visitors will have the added benefit seeing some objects from the Angelica Garnett Gift
- Paddock **Spotlight Talks**: a series of free short talks exploring a range of Bloomsbury themes
- Pottery: **Drop in art activity**, free for all ages
- Café: Special menu inspired by the Charleston Garden and *The Bloomsbury Cookbook*.

House and Garden, **Extended season opening**

- We are staying open an extra week until Sunday 6 November. House tours Wednesday to

Media:



•CHARLESTON IN 100•



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Sunday, 12pm-4pm; Shop/Café 11am-4pm.
- Special **Centenary Extended House tour** on Wednesday to Saturday in October – limited availability
- Special '**Charleston Covered' weekend** of 3 and 4 December. Find out what happens when we close our doors at the end of the season. A rare opportunity to see the ground floor of Charleston 'covered up' as the House is put to bed for the winter.
- Weekend Shop Openings: Shop open weekends until 18 December featuring a **new Centenary Shop collection.**
- For the final month of the 2016 season visitors to the house will have the opportunity to see **4 new additions to the Charleston collection**. The paintings, by Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant and Roger Fry, have all been left to the Trust in this, its centenary year.

- **Charleston in 100 Objects**: Every Wednesday for 100 weeks our Head of Collections, Dr Darren Clarke will highlight an object at Charleston in a new blog. Each post reveals another aspect of Charleston and Bloomsbury history. Online from Wednesday 12 October

The Centenary Project: The transformative £9.3m Project aims to protect Charleston for future generations through a programme of sensitive restoration, preservation and development. Milestones for 2016/2017 will include:

- **Completion of the Exhibition & Gallery building** – Autumn 2017, groundworks already underway.
- **Restoration of the Barn** – Summer 2017, restoration already underway.

2016/2017 Opening Dates & Hours

25 March – 6 November: House & Gardens Open, Wednesdays to Saturdays: Guided tours, 1pm – 6pm, Last entry 5pm. Sundays (rooms are stewarded), 1pm – 5.30pm, Last entry 4.30pm. Shop & Café open 1 hour before the House

7 November - 18 December, Saturdays & Sundays, Shop & Café only, 11am-4pm. House Closed.

February 2017 - Vanessa Bell exhibition at Dulwich Picture Gallery

1 March 2017 – House & Gardens re-open

NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Charleston Trust

- Charleston, the home and country meeting place for the writers, artists and intellectuals known as the Bloomsbury group, including Virginia Woolf, T.S. Eliot, Lytton Strachey and John Maynard Keynes is situated in East Sussex.
- The house and gardens are open to the public every year from the end of March to the beginning of November
- Set up in 1980, the Charleston Trust aims to restore and maintain the home of the Bloomsbury Group artists for the benefit of the public. Our Founding Mission is to 'Please, inform and inspire the public about Charleston, Bloomsbury and the arts.'
- The Charleston Trust (Bloomsbury in Sussex) receives no direct public income for its core programmes, including the house and garden.
- Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cornwall is Patron of The Charleston Trust.
- The unique collection at Charleston is illustrative of the art and lifestyle of the influential Bloomsbury Group and has been on show to the public since 1986.
- For more information visit http://www.charleston.org.uk/about-the-trust/the-charleston-trust/
- The Charleston Trust (Bloomsbury in Sussex) is a non-profit making company limited by guarantee. Registered charity number 1107313, Registered in England & Wales company number 5212725. Registered office: Charleston, Firle, Lewes, East Sussex, BN8 6LL

About the Centenary Project

The transformative £9.3m Project aims to protect Charleston for future generations through a programme of sensitive restoration, preservation and development. The Project will help safeguard Charleston's heritage, address its needs as a thriving house museum and provide it with a sustainable and financially secure future. The Project will also enable Charleston to increase the scale of its current education programme, ensuring that more schools, community groups and the public can learn and be inspired. The magnificent Grade II listed barns opposite the house are a central part of Charleston's historic setting. However, in the last fifty years, they have suffered damaging neglect with the gradual disintegration of their structural fabric. In the early 1970s, the eighteenth century granary that adjoined the barn (and which featured in many of Duncan Grant's paintings) was demolished and replaced with an open-sided tractor shed. These and other alterations to the adjacent farmyard have had a detrimental effect upon the site and the barns remain at risk both from further neglect and unsympathetic development. The project will sensitively restore the two main barns, making safe the existing structures and upgrading the infrastructure within the buildings to allow for flexible learning activities in a space that can be used all year round. As part of this, a 200-seat performance space will be created for an expanded programme of talks, lectures and artistic activities, including a new stage. Visitor facilities will also be improved, including far better accessibility and enhanced facilities for those who are hard of hearing. A vital component of the site's restoration is the rebuilding of the granary. Using the original footprint and fabric of the old building, the Creative Learning Studio will be an inspirational environment for children, adults, school groups, artists, academics, researchers and local community groups. The Centenary Project will also allow Charleston to develop a significantly expanded visitor attraction for the South East offering a year round cultural experience and educational programme. The Centenary Project will :

- Help attract 50,000 visitors from around the world to the South East
- Grow the visitor economy with increased length of stay and visitor spend
- Unlock GVA of £4.3m per year (gross)
- Create new and protect existing direct and indirect jobs
- Develop the South East creative economy
- Boost place making, build stronger communities and create a stronger identity for East Sussex

The Charleston Trust has already raised £7.2m towards this project and construction works on the new contemporary buildings have already commenced on site. With completion due in mid-2018, the Centenary Project will not only help Charleston become more self-sustainable but will also allow the delivery of a an expanded cultural, tourism and educational offering for the South East.

ENDS

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