



Bulletin of the International Association *of Lyceum Clubs*

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Celebration of the 120th anniversary of the founding of the International Lyceum Club and the relaunch of the London founding Club

120TH LYCEUM ANNIVERSARY AND RELAUNCH OF THE FOUNDING CLUB

AT THE ROYAL AIR FORCE CLUB - 128 PICCADILLY – LONDRES



On the 27th of September, the International Lyceum Club of London officially celebrated the 120th Anniversary of the Lyceum and the Relaunch of the Founding Club. The events, presided by the President of the International Lyceum Club of London, Lauriane Bradford, took place at

the Royal Air Force Club, the iconic address where the first Lyceum Club opened its door in 1904. The President of the International Association of the Lyceum Clubs, Muriel Hannart and the Vice-President of the Northern Hemisphere, Monique Gächter, attended the events with other guests from France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland.



Carefully planned by the Committee members, the events included a series of inspiring and informative presentations on Constance Smedley's life, the founder of the Lyceum, on the Lyceum Club between 1909 and 2003, and on the club today, including our vision and innovative project, Fellowher@, to support young British women artists.

Two very special guests attended the meeting: Diana Armfield, the niece of Constance and Maxwell Armfield, who knew her aunt and gave a poignant and personal testimony of the clever and formidable Constance ‘with those dancing eyes and expression’ (...) ‘who drew people to her, to help bring about such marvellous events: plays, productions, pageants, groups and the most important -clubs for professional women, all from her wheel chair; it was not allowed to prevent her achieving the worthwhile enterprises she excelled in. (...) she had so much to give, and she gave it, fully.’



The second guest speaker, Helen Whittaker, a well-known British artist and stained-glass specialist, came specially from York, to explain her art and her sources of inspiration. Helen has so far created more than 100 commissioned works as well as restoration of ancient stained glass. The highlight of Helen’s talk was the presentation of two major stained glasses commissioned in 2008 and in 2018 by the Royal Air Force Club. The latest one, which particularly appealed to our members, was to celebrate the women in the RAF. Those stunning works decorate the staircase leading to the first floor and the space between the 601 Squadron and the Presidents’ rooms where our Gala evening was taking place, bringing light to a dark space of the Club by playing with gold leaves and internal light.



To mark the celebrations, two beautiful cakes specially baked by *Luminary Bakery*, were delivered for the occasion. *Luminary Bakery* is ‘a social enterprise designed to offer opportunities for women to build a future for themselves, by providing a safe and professional environment where women can grow holistically – encouraging ambition, restoration and second chances. *Luminary Bakery* uses baking as a tool to take women on a journey to employability and entrepreneurship, equipping them with transferable skills for the working world, by offering courses, work experience and paid employment within our bakery, empowering women to build their career.’



The beautiful recital by Elena Kokka, an internationally renowned pianist and soprano and a member of the Club gave a joyful note to the Gala evening. Then guests and members in sparkling attire headed to a sumptuous table decorated with blue and yellow bouquets, the colours of the Lyceum. The traditional speech was followed by a delicious three course meal but above all it was a marvellous international and joyful gathering, and we all raised our glass to Constance, to our club, to our friendship and to our future. Long live The Lyceum!



The following morning, our guide and historian Becky Laxton - Bass -Director of *Women of London*- led us from the Memorial to Agatha Christie to the statue of Millicent Fawcett on Parliament square. It was not only very informative but also very entertaining for our visitors and members. Around 9 p.m., we indulged ourselves at the *Two Chairmen* pub with traditional British food. An excellent and relaxing way to say goodbye to our guests.



Photos: Colette Hewitt www.colettehewittphotography.com

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Croquis: Marina Trani

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Welcome speech

Mrs the President of the International Association of Lyceum Clubs, Muriel Hannart
Mrs the Vice-President of the Northern Hemisphere, Monique Gätcher
Mrs the President of the French Federation, Sabine Coiffe,
Mrs the Past-President of the French Federation, Jacqueline Suttin,
Mrs the Past-President of the Swiss Association, Janet Blümli,
Mrs the Vice-President of the German Association, Erika Pratsch
Mrs the President of the Club of Amsterdam, Bettine Polak
Mrs the President of the Club of Edinburgh, Diane Burrow
Mrs the President of the Club of Florence, Giovanna Corsi
Mrs the President of the Club of Paris, my sister, Pascale Anderson Mair
Mrs the Past-President of the Club of Orléans, my mum, Anne-Marguerite Chupin,

Dear Ladies and Friends,

It is with great emotion and pleasure that I welcome you today to mark the official re-opening of the Lyceum Club of London which coincides with the 120th Anniversary of the Lyceum.

Until last year, I never thought that I would one day be standing here with you for something so special as the Relaunch of the London Club. But when you are surrounded by talented and dedicated friends who worked hard to reignite Constance Smedley's spirit, when you have the full support of the President of the International Association of Lyceum Clubs and you receive encouragement by many members, and when you have the chance to have two longstanding Lyceum members, President and Past-President of their respective club in your family who have been sharing their own experience, impossible does not exist and they have given me the wings to make sure the club take-off.

I would like to thank you all for joining today. To make the day even more unique, I am delighted to welcome two very special guests and renowned British artists: Diana Armfield, Constance and Maxwell Armfield's niece and Helen Whittaker who came specially from York to present her glass works which you might have already noticed when entering the Club. Thank you very much Diana and Helen for being with us.

Of course, you will hear a lot about Constance, the history of the Lyceum and our vision, but today is also the opportunity to show our appreciation to our members, for being part of this community of women from different backgrounds and profiles but with a common interest in the arts, sciences and social concerns, a shared willingness to pursue lifelong learning and to contribute to the life of the Club. Our members are the greatest value of the Club where they can find friendship.

I wish you wonderful celebrations and may the Lyceum and our club continue to grow and thrive in the 21st century.

Lauriane Bradford President of the Lyceum Club of London

Evening speech

Dear Ladies and Friends,

May I compliment you all for your elegance! What a beautiful and sparkling assembly! Thank you very much for being here tonight to celebrate this very special moment in the life of the Lyceum and particularly for our Club in London. On behalf of my committee and my members I thank our friends from France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland for joining us tonight and for their support.

This afternoon we paid tribute to Constance Smedley and to those pioneers' women and followers who created 120 years ago something unique which brings us together: the Lyceum! It was also an opportunity to present our vision for the months and years to come and I will say a few words later.

Recently a friend asked me how I was managing this. My answer to this question is very simple and comes in 4 points:

- 1- I strongly believe in the value of the Lyceum and what it has to offer. I had many opportunities in my life to realise that there was something unique in the Club: whether in Moscow, Paris, Berlin or recently in Rabat or Athens, the Lyceum offered not only a curated programme but also a vibrant and caring environment for its members, and Friendship is the cement of the Club and the Association. We need this friendly environment where we can satisfy our curiosity and our need to continue to learn.
- 2- I am grateful to my proposer, Jacqueline Suttin who introduced me to the Lyceum Club of Paris 30 years ago. I also have the chance to have in my family a Past-President, my mum, a President, my sister and I benefit from their experience and knowledge of the Lyceum. My nieces and daughters (and in brackets my husband) are also very supportive. It is almost a family affair.
- 3- I am surrounded by a beautiful talented team. And each member is bringing her enthusiasm, her skill in a specific field and her determination to see the success of the club.
- 4- But above all I am doing this for you. The members are the most valuable asset of the Club. Without you we would not be here. The Lyceum Club exists for its members, through its members and by its members.

Earlier today I thanked those who have been working on the Committee and I would like to name them tonight: Helen Dalton, Lorraine Rienecker, Caroline Rio, Elisabeth Hagmann who will set down once we have found a new treasurer. My members today, Anne Ariss, who welcomed you and Barbara Brouwers who did a fantastic work designing the invitation and the booklet. I am particularly grateful to two committee members who for the last 18 months have been my most dedicated supporters in this enterprise: my niece Lauriane Anderson Mair who among many things, set up the website and design our communication tools in record time and Anne Cavell with her multiple hats: from membership director to honorary secretary, leading activities and recruiting at the same time, my very loyal right hand. Their encouragements and initiatives have been priceless. So, it is with a little pinch of sadness to see my niece leaving the committee after this event for professional reasons. Thank you, Lauriane, for your very valuable contribution to the relaunch of the Club.

I am delighted to announce that Emma Cavell will take over from Lauriane and lead the difficult task of creating a young members' circle. Welcome Emma to the team.

Knowing the story of the Lyceum is part of the journey to understand what we are aiming at. We have defined our "raison d'être" and set three objectives:

- Increasing our membership
- Creating visibility and notoriety
- Making the most of the IALC

The committee will be leading different projects which should help us to reach those objectives, but they are only achievable with you. We do count on our members to spread the word about the Lyceum, when meeting friends, inviting friends to our events and by following us on social media. Each member should be an ambassador of the Lyceum.

Creating visibility and notoriety will be achievable through different projects and particularly the Followher@ which will be led by Barbara who without doubt can count on your support. We are also trying to make sure that our club is not perceived as an expat club. We need to find our 'Lady Balfour'.

And the third objective is making the most of the IALC. Our Club is a sparkling star in the Lyceum Constellation. There is so much to discover from other clubs, and I warmly recommend you to attend the international events whenever it is possible. We will also develop some interclub exchanges.

Tonight, we are starting a new chapter in the history of the Lyceum! Being there at the beginning of this chapter is fantastic and I hope that there will be many more anniversaries to celebrate together.

I would like to invite you to raise your glass to Constance, to our guests, to our club, to our friendship and to our future! Long Live the Lyceum!



Muriel Hannart, International President



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