

CONFERENCE & AGM - 25TH/27TH April 2014

Oadby Halls, Leicester University. LE2 2LG

Practicalities

It's that time again! This year we are returning to Leicester one of our 'midland' venues. We will be based in John Foster Hall part of the Oadby Halls campus which is to the south east of the centre of Leicester and about 5 miles along the ring road from the M1. Taxis (ask for Oadby Halls not University) from the station should cost about £7 (or use buses 31/A or 80/A).

All rooms are single en-suite and are arranged in mini groups of 4 with a communal kitchen/sitting area with a fridge for milk, snacks, etc. Towels and toiletries will be provided and there are tea & coffee making facilities in the bedrooms. Parking will be attendant controlled, on arrival you will be allowed to park as near as possible to your accommodation to unload but may then be asked to move elsewhere on the site.

Additional nights can be booked for Thursday and Sunday if required. This will be B&B basis. Local pubs are recommended for Thursday evening meal. Friday lunch will also be DIY (Asda nearby for supplies).

All the accommodation, meeting rooms and workshops are very close and convenient. Sadly there are no lifts in the workshop building so please let me know if you have mobility/access requirements and we will try to organise the workshop locations accordingly. Everything else will take place in the main John Foster Hall where there are lifts.

What goes on?

For those of you who have not been at a conference before a little more detail might be helpful. The conference starts on Friday evening and continues until Sunday lunchtime. The programme includes a speaker and the AGM on Friday after dinner. All day Saturday is spent in a workshop (the Chair details these in this journal) and we enjoy a more formal dinner that night with yet another wonderful speaker afterwards. On Sunday morning awards are presented and we then have a masterclass demonstration before lunch and departure. Throughout the weekend two exhibitions of members work are held and suppliers also attend to showcase and sell their products. The Guild Library is present and there is also an 'Exchange & Mart' where members can sell equipment and supplies that are surplus to their requirements.

How to apply

In 2013 applications came in quickly and some workshops were fully booked very early in the process. This led to some members, who were away when the journal came out, being disappointed. To try and avoid this in 2014 (and help if there are postal delays) details of the workshops and conference cost will be available on the website from the same time as the journal should be received (Dec 28th).

I would like the majority of applications to continue to be submitted by post accompanied by a cheque (or cheques). However, *where necessary* I will accept e-mail notification of workshop preferences and payment can be made by direct transfer (**not** paypal) to the Guild's bank account after emailing me for the details.

To try and keep allocation as fair as possible and avoid timing discrepancies, I will not 'open' for applications until **Tuesday 31st December** and although workshop places will then be provisionally allocated, these will not be confirmed unless payment has been received and will not be held for more than 7 days. If by any chance a workshop is over-subscribed on the 31st then a ballot will be held.

Please read the application document carefully as some points have changed, and do not hesitate to call or e-mail me if you have any queries.

I look forward to seeing you in April and hope you bring plenty of work for the exhibitions. There will also be opportunities to visit our suppliers and indulge in some 'retail therapy'.

Jane Sheppard, Conference Secretary.