

SPECIAL INTEREST DAY - Monday 20th April 2026

TWO BALKAN WOMEN – PHOTOGRAPHY, TEXTILES AND SILVER

Bold and intriguing - the living legacy of two amazing Balkan women, Edith Durham, an Edwardian collector of beautiful Balkan things and Princess Ksenia, a photographer princess, daughter of the King of Montenegro.

Learn about the fascinating history of 'the silver thread.' See and touch examples of the Balkan women's handiwork, in particular, exquisite filigree work. Admire rich fabrics

Hear about the stories that Balkan women left for us to read, without the use of the alphabet.

Journey through Montenegro, Kosovo and Albania with a face and a human narrative to the history and culture of this region.

Our accredited Arts Society lecturer is **Elizabeth Gowing**. Educated at Magdalen College Oxford. She supports people in education, health and social welfare through 'the ideas Partnership', which she co-founded in Kosovo. She also works on cultural heritage and protection of the environment, promoting volunteerism and philanthropy.



In 2016 she was awarded the Mother Teresa medal for humanitarian work by the President of Kosovo. She has Kosovan citizenship by decree and in 2021 was appointed by the President to the cabinet to advise on community affairs.

PROGRAMME FOR THE DAY

Morning Lecture 1

BOLD EDWARDIAN COLLECTOR OF BEAUTIFUL BALKAN THINGS

Edith Durham was the granddaughter of the tutor to Queen Victoria's children and the eldest daughter in a family of girls. Her sisters went on to have remarkable careers (one was one of the leading civil servants of her day). Edith, however, on the death of her father, was obliged to stay at home and be a companion for her mother. At the age of 37 she had a break-down and the doctor prescribed



travel. The cruise she took down. The coast of Croatia changed her life. She negotiated 9 months with her mother and 3 months travel leading to a move to live in Montenegro. There she became a collector of the silverwork and textiles that she so admired of that region. Her collections form the major part of what is in existence today. The lecture will begin with her history and move on to her collection.

Morning Lecture 2

THE SILVER THREAD

Silver has shaped Kosovo and the Balkan region through its mining and this lecture will deal with both the history of the metalwork in those countries and the mining and trade.

Elizabeth will bring along some examples of filigree work: an amulet, bracelet for example and invites participants to bring along any examples they may have which they may well have bought when on holiday abroad, perhaps in Malta where the craft just about persists. They will be shown designs and motifs of Edith's filigree collection and be able to match it to their own. But silver was also woven into threads and was used in the church vestments and in traditional clothing. She will bring examples of these too.



Afternoon Lecture 3

MONTENEGRO'S PHOTOGRAPHER PRINCESS

Princess Ksenia, 1881 – 1960. Was one of the many daughters of the king of Montenegro who became known as the father-in-law of Europe as he married them off to most of the crowned heads of Europe. Ksenia, however, refused to be so disposed of, and instead became the secretary and confidante to her father until his exile in 1916. She decided to record her country's story through photography and the decisions about what she photographed reflect the history of her country of her country at an interesting time – just before the Kosovan civil war



TIMETABLE

10:00am	Registration
10:30 – 11:30am	Lecture 1
11:30am	Coffee
12:00 – 1:00pm	Lecture 2
1:00 – 2.15pm	Lunch
2:15 – 3:15 pm	Lecture 3
3:15	Questions

Our **Special Interest Days** are very popular and are usually fully booked well ahead of the event. Early booking is recommended.

Tickets cost £53.00pp and includes an excellent lunch and glass of wine or soft drink.

When booking for events we are encouraging members to '**Book Online**' if at all possible. It's easy to do and only takes 2 minutes. It has the following advantages:

- You receive an instant acknowledgement of your booking.
- You will receive an emailed copy of your booking form so you can be sure of the detail.

Should you require additional information or help, please contact our organiser
Lesley Nadel E: lesleynadel@aol.com T: 07909 918890

[Click here to book your place](#)