

In Millennium year a group of amateur artists from France, Switzerland, USA and the UK met in the Rhône Valley at the invitation of a Hotel owner for a week's outdoor painting. They enjoyed each other's company so much that they agreed to circulate the event around each country in turn. 20 or so artists visited Saddleworth in 2002, 2006 and 2010 and are due here again this year. A German group joined in 2013 when the group were invited to Meissen.

In 2002 the event was supported by the Lottery and in 2006 it was recognised and funded by the Arts Council. On every occasion both the Saddleworth Parish Council and the current District organisation also funded the event. Over the years the enjoyment of a common interest and development the relationships between ordinary people with a common interest has worked well and spread to include the involvement of hosts who have volunteered to provide "B&B and occasional transport".

A pattern has developed for the way the week runs with paintings being done each day and being hung in a central place (Saddleworth Museum Gallery for us) with local people and visitors to Saddleworth enjoying the growing exhibition. Also local artists have taken to painting alongside the visitors and others simply chatting to the artists as they paint.

The funding for each event is spread between the artists themselves and whatever local sponsorship and fund raising by the Saddleworth Group of Artists (SGA) has been forthcoming. The Saddleworth Parish Council and the District Council have sponsored the event each time the JdeP has taken place in Saddleworth, In addition Saddleworth Group of Artists main sponsor GA's sponsor 'Landmark Financial Planning' has also made its contribution. [We are grateful to them all and hope that even in the current financial situation our local official sponsors can support this event again.