



Twelve Rivers

Magazine of the Suffolk Poetry Society

Registered Charity No. 1162298

Vol. 7 Iss. 1 Spring 2016



Word from the Chair

Greetings!

Since Suffolk Poetry Society's AGM on March 6th I have been settling in as your new Chair, with sterling support from the talented team on the Committee. We have exciting times ahead, with the Festival of Suffolk Poetry all day on Saturday May 28th at the John Peel Centre, SPS's collaboration with Ipswich Choral Society on Saturday 25th June at Christchurch Mansion to celebrate Shakespeare's 400th anniversary, as well as Felixstowe Café Poets' appearance the same day at the Felixstowe Book Festival.

One of the first things I did as your new Chairman was to attend a meeting organized by *Kissing it Better*

at Ipswich Hospital. This group organizes uplifting experiences for patients and residents in hospitals and care homes, using music, poetry, drama, art etc, delivered by volunteers who are mostly students but can be from community groups such as SPS. Andrew Motion, their Patron, says, "*Kissing it Better* does untold good. By connecting people who have dementia to melodies and poetry still living inside them, it connects them with their richest selves and also with the world outside them. The beneficial effects are extraordinary." If you feel you can spare some time to take part in this valuable service to the community, have a look at the website www.kissingitbetter.co.uk and email me:

chair@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk.

Continued p.2

Word from the Chair	1
Florence Cox – Our new Chair	3
George Crabbe: An Eye For Detail	5
Apologia for Nature Poetry	7
Bungay Group	7
I Sang In My Chains Like the Sea	8
Felixstowe Book Festival	8
Earmarked	9
Review: Poems From The East	10
Quiz	10
Review – Wilderness	11
Treasure Open Mic	12
Introduction to Poetry Workshop	13
Tea at The Priory	13
3rd Festival of Suffolk Poetry	14
Poem from the President	16
Selected Poems	16
Upcoming Events	20
Contacts	20

Word from the Chair cont'd.

Don't forget to have your Crabbe poetry entries in by June 15th! This is a competition with fine prizes for anyone who is a member of SPS and/or has a connection with Suffolk.

September is looking interesting, with the annual Members' tea party at the Priory, Stoke by Nayland on Sunday 4th September. Catherine Dell will give a talk on Lorca, *The Road to The Fountain of Tears*, before tea. Do let Diane Jackman know in good time if you wish to attend, as numbers are limited.

Why not indulge in *Takes on Shakespeare* at 5pm on Sunday September 18th in Walpole

Old Chapel to celebrate the bard's works, complemented by original writing from SPS members echoing Shakespeare's work. Refreshments will be available.

At the suggestion of Poetry Wivenhoe, we have rescheduled our planned visit there to Thursday September 22nd which will give SPS the entire evening to entertain our friends across the country border with our poetry, and avoid a clash with other events and the EU referendum. Let Sue Wallace-Shaddad know if you wish to read your poetry at this event.

Shortly after becoming Chairman I was asked by the playwright and SPS member

Ray Rumsby to chair a panel discussion entitled *George Crabbe: Stories that matter* at the Jubilee Hall, Aldeburgh on April 9th. Academics Gavin Edwards, John Lucas and James Wood brought their insights to the debate alongside Ray; I said that I was delighted to discover that Crabbe had no idea how to keep order, and liked his own muddle. Obviously a man after my own heart... Ray's play about George Crabbe is very interesting and is touring Suffolk and Norfolk. You will find the dates on the website www.stuffofdreamstheatre.com

Do let me know if you have any particular yearnings for future events.

Florence Cox

Bungay SPS Poetry Group

"The end of writing is to instruct; the end of poetry is to instruct by pleasing" Samuel JOHNSON

We take part in some poetry gatherings to work on our writing and help fellow writers with theirs, some to air our work, socialise, enjoy the biscuits... When it comes to a group which also develops our knowledge of and enthusiasm for a wide range of modern poetry, the Bungay branch of Suffolk Poetry Society could meet your needs.

This SPS local group meets in Bungay on the last Monday of every month (except August and December) at 7.30pm.

The venue is Bungay Library, Wharton Street, Bungay, NR35 1EL.

We share and discuss mainly but not exclusively post-1900 published poets

We also have a chance to hear feedback on each other's work in a friendly setting.

The cost is £2.00 a session including refreshments.

You are welcome to come and sample a meeting, whether you write, read or simply enjoy listening to and discussing poetry.

We have also sponsored a number of SPS events, including workshops by Robert Seatter and Catherine Dell and a presentation on John Gay by Caroline Way

The contact is Elizabeth Bracken on 01502 715907. Please ring in advance.

Copies are still available of Suffolk Poetry Society's 60th Anniversary volume *The Singing Stone*, containing poems selected by Pauline Stainer mainly from the Crabbe Prize winners. Contact Sue Wallace Shaddad on 01473 210264 or secretary@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk. Price £5.00. 'It is simply a wonderful evocation of this county by those who have come to know it personally and who have found their own words for it.' *Ronald Blythe*

Florence Cox – Our new Chairman

In Conversation with Anne Boileau

'Adapt and Survive'

AB *Florence Cox, you have been elected Chairman of SPS and I'm sure our members would like to know a little more about you as a person. You're well known already for your poetry, in the county and SPS. You've won Third Prize twice and been commended no fewer than twelve times in the George Crabbe Poetry Competition. Your poem Coach Man has had over eleven thousand reads on line and so has Disney in Hades! And you've been a member for a long time, and were even Vice Chair when Gerard Melia was Chairman. Would you say the Society has been important to you over the years?*

FC *Yes, it has. I owe a great deal to Frank Wood. He took a lot of trouble and time reading my poems, giving me feedback; then he took me along to a poetry party at Gillian Bence-Jones' house. After about a year of sharing poems there he invited me to join a poetry writing group with Michael Laskey. We've been meeting in each others' houses for a quarter of a century now. The criticism is savagely honest, helping you to see and correct the defects in your writing.*

AB *Your roots are firmly embedded in Suffolk. The love you have of the landscape and your sense of place shines through in your poems.*

FC *Yes. I was born and raised in Ipswich. Being a supply teacher, I have to drive long distances, often along ancient country lanes. I do love this county and the landscape.*

AB *I'm thinking for instance of Orwell Bridge, which you describe*

and use as a metaphor for bearing grief; and Hazel where you say 'Tall trees scrape the buttery sky and hold the last of the sun in their bare branches.' Your poems are very visual, which is partly why I asked you at lunch if you are a painter too.

FC *I love painting, and could well have gone to art school; I did take Art A Level. But somehow, when I really got into writing poetry, the painting took a back seat.*

AB *You are Suffolk born and bred, but you've travelled widely too.*

FC *I went to Ipswich High School for Girls, then I studied French and Italian at Leeds University. But by then I'd already hitchhiked with my little sister to the south of France; that same year I hitchhiked to Rome with a girl friend and the following summer I hitchhiked from Ipswich to Greece.*

Our mother allowed us freedom to roam, because her own mother had kept her and her sister on such a tight rein and she didn't want us to be confined in that way. She gave us a note, in her best French, to say 'these two young people are travelling with my knowledge and consent'. The freedom she granted us in our youth must be the reason why my brother spent 23 years sailing around the Pacific Ocean in a small yacht, taking photographs, and why my sister travelled widely and ended up marrying a Swede and living in Sweden. I lived in France for over seven years, and never thought I'd come back, but I did, and married an old childhood friend, Robert Cox. I've lived in Felixstowe ever since.

AB *To go back to the hitchhiking, though; it's not without its risks. Some might call it*

courageous, others might call it rash. Did you ever get into trouble?

FC *I did. I was travelling back home for Christmas from Cognac and the man who had picked me up drove into a wood and attacked me. I had to fight for my life. But the interesting thing was that before that incident I had been quite depressed. I discovered that when you're faced with possibly losing your life, it makes you cling onto it with all the more ferocity – the experience swept away the blues.*

AB *And your motto became 'Adapt and Survive'. Do you still follow that premise?*

FC *Yes I do, except that sometimes I feel I adapted too much. I probably should have stopped being unhappily married sooner than I did; but my mother taught me forbearance and tolerance. And of course we had three children.*

AB *You stayed together for 21 years, which is longer than the national average. You have written about your French boy-friend who you were with for eight years; you write movingly about 'the love of my wandering youth, the love everyone ought to have'. But Jean Louis did not want children, and you did, so you agreed to part. You have had your fair share of loss and sorrow. Your sister died recently, and your father too. Would you say that poetry provides solace in times of adversity?*

FC *Poetry has been my place of refuge. I started writing poems seriously in my teens and continued while I was at University and it's always been a very important part of my life, in fact I can't imagine life without it. It doesn't really matter if no one reads my poems, although I do love to share them; ultimately,*

it's the writing that's important. I have always admired the poems of Thomas Hardy, and my English and History teacher David Britton inspired me with a love of poetry.

AB *Being no stranger to grief yourself, you are able to empathize with the pain of others. Carpe Diem for example is about an old lady bingeing on food at a party; it turns out she was put on the Kindertransport as a little girl and would have lost all her family.*

FC In fact, most of my poems are rooted in my own life, or my own direct observation. A few are about imaginary people, such as *The Headmaster's Wife*, about a woman whose apparently ultra-respectable husband is abusive behind the scenes; mostly there's enough meat for poetry in your own life experience, without inventing other situations. My poem *Fish and Chips*, for instance, is completely true. My poems and the songs I write are little short stories, almost like ballads.

I sing folksongs too, in a few pubs where they still do live singing, and I've found a man who will write the harmony for my tunes. One of my songs is on the piano, I can sing it for you later if you like.

AB *Apart from song and music, would you say being a linguist informs your writing?*

FC Yes, definitely. There are some things I might want to say which can't be expressed so well in English. I've written poems in French and one, experimentally, in French and English, with some jokey rhymes. I realize language is a rich playground for a writer. I want to avoid obscurity, so that any of my poems could be translated and still be understood. Sometimes I wonder if I'm too transparent. It's a fine line.

AB *You've had quite a varied career. What other jobs have you done, apart from successfully raising three children, and teaching in primary and secondary schools?*

FC I've worked as a cleaner, translator, proof-reader, bi-lingual secretary and for several years I worked for a French inflatable boat company based in Paris.

AB *That couldn't be more appropriate, Florence! I can see you as an inflatable boat, buoyant on choppy seas, staying afloat in the face of a gale.*

Now that you are Chairman of Suffolk Poetry Society, do you have any particular hopes or ambitions for the Society?

FC I'd like to create an event where poets explore an aspect of the past, because so many people write tellingly about the history

and prehistory of this area. David Gill writes about archaeological finds, Colin Whyles about boats preserved in mud; lots of us wrote about Sutton Hoo at the Festival which Fred Ellis organized. We could all delve into the past of this region we share and extract something from it; perhaps we could collaborate with local artists and musicians as well.

AB *And your own writing? Do you have any particular aims and objectives in your writing career at this point?*

FC I do wonder whether there is a novel within me struggling to get out; but not being a very organized person I might find it hard to dedicate the time to write at such length. My poems are like mini short stories; I really enjoy that, so I've probably found my niche.

As far as SPS goes, I feel it's an honour to be the new Chair and I'm lucky to have such a strong and capable committee. They will help me as I settle into the role.

AB *Thank you, Florence.*

Anne Boileau Felixstowe, April 2016.

Our Web Presence

You can find us at the following places on the Internet:

Our own website:

<http://suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/SuffolkPoetrySociety>

Twitter:

<https://twitter.com/SuffolkPoetrySo>

YouTube:

<https://youtube.com/c/SuffolkpoetrysocietyOrgUk2015>

Donations:

<https://www.totalgiving.co.uk/donate/Suffolk-Poetry-Society>

These places are the best places to keep up with what is and has happened in poetry in Suffolk.

George Crabbe: An Eye For Detail



At The Priory last September, we were discussing the psychological insights Crabbe shows in *The Confidant* (1812). Anna, a Lady's Companion, helps her pass the time by embroidering, and by playing the piano or card-games, in exchange for wages and accommodation. When Anna is called upon to play whist, to her it resembles a conscript's *call to drill*. She must perform to order. So she plays cards *but with inferior skill*. Anna has to lose deliberately.

And if not cards, then music:
Music was ever pleasant till she played
At a request that no request conveyed

The piano-playing is *ever pleasant* while the Lady plays. This is not a description of the quality of the Lady's playing, but of Anna's performed response to it. The phrase *ever pleasant* then carries forward the meaning to a second, ironic, conclusion. Anna at the piano must offer a less pleasing performance, which she cannot enjoy either. Finally, the Lady's

request is in fact a command. Both women know this. It is all part of the prevailing fiction that the existing social order is somehow based on merit.

Nowadays, having to conceal one's true feelings (somewhat stressfully) in order to perform a job requirement is known in organisational research as *emotional labour*:

A young businessman said to a flight attendant, 'Why aren't you smiling?' She put her tray back on the food cart, and said, 'I'll tell you what. You smile first, then I'll smile.' The businessman smiled at her. 'Good,' she replied. 'Now freeze, and hold for fifteen hours'. Arlie Hochschild, *The Managed Heart*. Berkeley, University of California, 1983 p.27.

Similarly, in *The Confidant*, Anna:
...veiled her troubles in a mask of ease,
And showed her pleasure was a power to please.

The first line seems to be a straightforward *third person narrative*, in which an omniscient author-voice tells readers what a character is thinking or doing. However, Anna's face not only masks her true feelings from the Lady, but the nature of her *troubles* must be inferred by readers. The couplet's ending adds to this complexity. We know already that Anna is acting, that she does not regard herself as existing merely to please others, since a *request* is in fact an order from someone who commands her. Crabbe presents the ambivalence of Anna's situation obliquely. The very act of showing pleasure is itself a deception. Crabbe's technique washes out the borderlines of identity. We witness what the Lady sees; we feel what Anna experiences.

These days we call it *free indirect style*. We know that Jane Austen was a keen reader of George Crabbe's work, and *borrowed* the

name of one of his characters (Fanny Price) for the heroine of *Mansfield Park*. Recently, John Mullan has written of her novel, *Emma*:

It is still a third-person narrative; Emma is not telling her own story. We both share her judgments and watch her making them... Austen was the first novelist to manage this alchemy. She was perfecting a technique that she had begun developing in her first published novel, Sense and Sensibility... Austen miraculously combined the internal and the external... Scholars have raked through the fiction of predecessors and contemporaries such as Fanny Burney and Maria Edgeworth, and found a few flickerings of this technique, but nothing more. Guardian Review 05.12.15, p.2.

Sense and Sensibility appeared in 1811, *Emma* in 1815. The example in Crabbe's *The Confidant* is their contemporary. The poem (590 lines long) appears in a collection of twenty-one verse tales which must have been put together over a lengthy period.

Is Crabbe's use of free indirect style a *flickering*, or a more established part of his poetic narrative repertoire? The tale of Jachin in *The Borough* (1810) features a holier-than-thou Parish Clerk, quick to censure others, who breaks the trust placed in him by stealing money from the church collection plate intended for the local poor. Jachin is ostracised:

He lived in freedom, but he hourly saw
How much more fatal
Justice is than Law.
He saw another in his office reign,
And his mild Master treat him with disdain;
He saw that all Men
shunned him, some reviled,
The harsh passed frowning,
and the simple smiled...

The repetition of *saw* stresses the constant reminders of Jachin's shame in different contexts, for of course we witness his perceptions here. Crabbe's authorial presence progressively dissolves until the stanza's final couplet no longer needs *He saw*.

We already sense how Jachin must feel – a man proud of his literacy and of his former role in leading the congregation's responses. Therefore the greatest hurt is the last, that he should be ignored by his educated fellows:

*The Town maintained him,
but with some Reproof,
And Clerks and Scholars
proudly kept aloof.*

It must be with deep bitterness that Jachin recognises the irony of their doing this *proudly*, that they perceive it as a mark of honour to cold-shoulder him. But Crabbe does not tell us his shame directly. This passage of writing is sustained, not a mere *flickering*.

Another extended example occurs in *Peter Grimes* (1810). The celebrated description of the mudflats and salt-marshes (ll.171-204) is neither a standard third person account of Grimes in his surroundings, nor a Gothic distortion of natural appearances, but the symbolically-projected mental landscape of a sick man. To lack energy and responsiveness is symptomatic of depression. Grimes looks upon *the same dull views, a bounding marsh-bank* (which, from a boat low in the water, obscures the horizon) and a *blighted tree*. Away from his boat, he lies motionless. Immediately the focus of Crabbe's description becomes an extreme close-up. His eye-movement is merely to *trace* the delicate imprint of crabs in the mud. It is a life arrested. Peter Grimes himself is *dull and hopeless*, rendering a gull's cry *tuneless*.

Most of Crabbe's poetry was published in the early nineteenth century, often known as the *Romantic Period*. But scientific ideas were also developing fast. By the time of Crabbe's death in 1832, The Beagle had already set sail for the Galapagos, carrying Charles Darwin on its voyage of epic discovery.

James Bainbridge emphasises how Crabbe's lifelong interest in natural history was important to his poetry:

*...not in the botanical
information it relates, but as a
source of terms, and of taxonomic
models of classification which he
uses to talk about human beings. It
also developed in him the minue
level of detailed observation which
typifies his work.*

The species in this genus known...,
Romanticism, 20.02.14, pp.128-139.

This passage has enabled me to understand the organisation of *The Borough* (1810) as a classification of human groups which is analogous to botanical categories. It helps to explain why titles such as *Trades* and *The Election* sit with verse-tales about named individuals grouped under the heading, *The Poor of the Borough*. Crabbe's Borough is conceived less as a microcosm than as an ecology.

The widow's home in the *General Description* (Letter 1) shows Crabbe's studious particularity:

*There stands a Cottage with
an open door,
Its Garden undefended
blooms before;
Her wheel is still, and
overturnd her Stool
While the lone Widow seeks
the neighbouring Pool.*

The use of the present tense conveys immediacy; the *open door* and *overturnd stool* a sense of drama. But the door left open, the unfenced garden, the spinning-wheel (a means of income) stopped, and the fact

that the slowly focusing object of our concern is a *lone Widow*, all suggest vulnerability. The pool she hurries towards is the harbour area where newly-arrived boats are moored (as in the *Pool of London*).

A story is revealed through description. But we do not follow the Widow to the dockside. With a true storyteller's skill, Crabbe keeps us at the scene to examine further evidence:

*...Here are tokens of the
Sailor-Son:
That old blue Jacket, and
that Shirt of Check,
And silken Kerchief for the
Seaman's neck;
Sea-spoils and Shells from
many a distant Shore,
And furry Robe from frozen
Labrador.*

The son's belongings, kept as he may have left them, show us not only his livelihood but also the mother's feelings for him. (Possibly he now wears naval uniform.) The overturned stool suggests that the widow has rushed out - quite possibly, not for the first time - to see if her son is aboard the new arrival in port. Like the best news photography, the image tells its own story.

Marilyn Butler referred to *that apparently least poetic and least intellectual of poets, George Crabbe* (*London Review of Books* vol.18.15, 01.08.96). It is typical of the somewhat hedged praise he tends to receive. Indeed Crabbe's poetry is more subtle, analytical, and psychologically rich than may at first appear. The regular metre and rhyme of his verse, their familiarity and occasional obviousness, can lull critical sensibilities. George Crabbe's innovations are worth our close attention.

Ray Rumsby

Norfolk Poet **Paul Binney** will be reading to the Suffolk Poetry Society Bungay Group at the Library, Wharton Street, Bungay, NR35 1EL on Monday June 27th at 7.30pm.

Paul taught English at the City of Norwich School for over thirty years. His collection *Learning the Language* is available from Jarrolds Norwich at £7.95.

To book please ring Elizabeth Bracken on 01502 715907. (You do not need to be a member of the group or SPS.)

Cost is £2 which includes refreshments plus a donation to Christian Aid at the poet's request.

Apoloia for Writing Nature Poetry



I've been writing and publishing poetry and prose for nearly fifty years. Most of my work concerns itself with the natural environment – though not exclusively. I do occasionally write poems and prose on other subjects including: politics, satire and human relationships, to name but a few. Over the years I have submitted poems to many magazines, newspapers and periodicals. I have had my share of success and have been published in a number of well-known and well respected literary outlets. I have also had more than my fair share of rejections – which is normal for a writer and only to be expected.

What saddens me is the response I've had from some – though not all by any means – poetry editors. Rejections I can cope with, it's par for the course, but rudeness I can do without. One

particular editor – no names, no pack drill – ended his rejection slip in reference to my nature poems by writing: *you obviously have some descriptive talent but why don't you write about something with some blood in it.* Nature red in tooth and claw, I presume!

Constructive criticism is both valuable and much appreciated but crass, not to say patronising, inane and unnecessary comments, are something I and no doubt the rest of us can do without. Are the likes of Edward Thomas, Norman MacCaig, Seamus Heaney, Ted Hughes, Frances Cornford or Emily Dickinson, to be castigated for writing nature poetry? Not to mention the legions of contemporary poets who concern themselves with nature and the environment. I think not. In fact I think it was Edward Thomas who said something along the lines of: *all poetry is in essence nature poetry.*

What did he mean by this remark? For me personally it means that everything we see around us has been created by chemical processes in the heart of the stars in our mysterious and magnificent universe; everything – even the lines upon this page. And if that's not nature in action, then I don't know what is! My poetry in general concerns itself with the

cycles of our lives, the cycles of the seasons, and their correspondences. Politics, satire, human relationships and much else are important and worth writing about, of course they are, but none of these things or aspects of temporal reality would exist without nature. They are, as I've intimated, the earthly manifestations of 'stardust'!

For me the poetry of nature is not an escape from our existential reality, nor is simply a consolation to fall back on in the face of a modern, war torn, urban and industrialised consumer orientated society. It is for me personally a *raison d'être*. To write about the noble, spiritual and creative side of humanity is for my part an attempt in my own small way to counterbalance the ignoble, materialistic and destructive side of our man-made and man-perpetuated insanities. Nature poetry, I suggest, is nothing other than expression of who we are, where we've come from, and ultimately in what direction we're heading. It is in fact a gauge by which our lives and our connections to the planet we live on are judged, and in my humble opinion, not an irrelevance but a genuine and enjoyable creative necessity.

Mervyn Linford

I Sang In My Chains Like the Sea

Rhapsody is a concept not often invoked in the context of modern poetry – but no other word could describe the intense, resonant, oracular account of the poetry of Dylan Thomas by his fellow Swansea poet, Ian Griffiths, on 19th March 2016 in the great oak-beamed auditorium of Lavenham Guildhall.

Ian began by recalling his aunt, born in the same year as Dylan, but living on almost until today, and through her and his own childhood he recreated the boisterous, homely, parochial life of the Welsh industrial port and its green ambit of hills and small farms. As Ian read through his personal selection of Dylan's

prose and poetry most of us will have recalled some of those lines that have etched themselves on our memories. Again and again, even in the poetry of his later years (though he died at only 39), it is the imagery, language and stories of his childhood that strike us. He seems, like Blake, to have retained, right into his last years, despite all the problems he largely brought upon himself, an ability to recover the innocence and excitement of a small child. We have to believe that those wonderfully bizarre but earthy characters of *Under Milk Wood* and his other stories were lifted out of the treasury of childhood.

And then there's the voice. The intonality, the music, is distinctly Welsh, but the vowels hover somewhere between the

strangled norms of BBC announcers of the 'thirties and an aspiring Church of England bishop. Ian explained that though Dylan's family were Welsh speakers he was discouraged, like many of his generation, from speaking Welsh and given English elocution lessons. Well, poets are actors speaking the drama of their own, often imperfect, lives: those ambiguities of Dylan's voice perhaps reflected the insecurity of what he was – a spoilt adult child, but a brilliant one.

The presentation was organised by Jane Henderson, a member of SPS, and is one of what we hope may be a series in this enchanted location.

PEDANTICUS

they start off with Flipside Brazilian music to get you in Festival mood. FBF have produced a booklet, available from Libraries and ticket venues and elsewhere, giving brief details of all events. (Most events cost £8 or concessions £6, that is very good value and the joint ticket mentioned above is even better value). The Festival venues are The Orwell Hotel, Felixstowe Library and Langard Fort, and tickets can be obtained from New Wolsey Theatre www.wolseytheatre.co.uk, the Festival website www.felixstowebookfestival.co.uk and in person from Stillwater Books, 36 Hamilton Road, Felixstowe, IP11 7AN.

Penny Cutler

Felixstowe Book Festival

Felixstowe Café Poets (FCP) have a great slot at Felixstowe Book Festival (FBF) 7.00p.m. Saturday 25th June. Our event is called "*Poetry and Pimms*" as is the wonderful Hollie McNish event! I cannot invite any SPS folk to come and read with us as I did last year but I do invite, in fact urge, you to purchase a discounted joint ticket which includes our event (tickets have been on sale since March and are going quickly) This ticket will entitle you to attend three of the poetry events: Will Stone, (he was at the very first Felixstowe Book Festival and is making a return visit), Felixstowe Café Poets (they made a good splash at last year's Book Festival and with their love poems on the FBF

Blog, and are making a return visit) and Hollie McNish (first time at the Felixstowe Book Festival but already a very well known poet). FCP event this year will include music, song and poetry and our very own SPS Director of Festival of Suffolk Poetry will be taking part. Felixstowe Book Festival is in its 4th year. Last year's Festival was said to be the best FBF yet, and this year's is lining up to be even better. They already held a very popular event for children in February this year and there are more special events for families, children and teens on both Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th June as well as all the adult events. FBF do cater for every age group and talking of 'catering', there is always food available as well. On the Friday evening 24th June 7.00-8.30p.m

Suffolk Poetry Society wishes to express its gratitude to its sponsors:

Fairweather Law Ltd, Solicitors, Aldeburgh for supporting the Crabbe Memorial Poetry Competition prizes.

The Limbourne Trust for supporting the festival.

Alde Valley Spring Festival Ltd for supporting the Crabbe Memorial Poetry Competition prizes and anthology.

E armarked

I am fortunate enough to be in the writing group that Michael Laskey and others set up a number of years ago. We meet monthly and those who can take turns to host the meeting so every now and then we meet at Michael's, and thus it is that I can reveal that he has a copy of one of my favourite poems - *Those Winter Sundays* by Robert Hayden - blu-tacked to the wall of his downstairs loo:

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labor in the weekday weather made
banked fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering, breaking.
When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?

Powerful memories and feelings honestly recalled and expressed in plain, subtly musical language – what more could one want? I hope you knew it already. What I am wondering now, though, is how many of us have favourite poems, or quotations, dotted around the house to encourage us on our way? Though I don't exactly do this myself, I do have a couple of favourites within easy reach, on my computer desktop.

My quotation is from David Constantine's *Poetry*:

A nswers to previous QUIZ

Unusual rhymes

Name the poem and the author:

The winner was Diane Jackman with eight correct answers.

physiognomy	Deuteronomy		Eliot	<i>Practical Cats</i>
telephone	juicy bone		Auden	<i>Stop all the Clocks</i>
drunk	thunk		Ogden Nash	<i>There was an old man in a Trunk</i>
stamped on	Wolverhampton		Auden	<i>Letter from Iceland</i>
sinew	in you		Kipling	<i>If</i>
python	bison		MacNeice	<i>Bagpipe Music</i>
bray	Tay		McGonagall	<i>The Tay Bridge disaster</i>
knew in them	ruin them	astrew in them	Hopkins	<i>The Wreck of the Deutschland</i>
liable	Bible I		Ira Gershwin	<i>It ain't necessarily so</i>

The Literary Agenda: "Saying the human, saying the whole irreducible, recalcitrant, fraught, contradictory energetic plurality of humankind, is a bid for a consciousness adequate to what we are and so, intrinsically, a demand for a politics that will help. The energy of poetry is itself helpful. The stuff of it – the steadily truthful but not despairing contemplation of ourselves – is the necessary premise for survival."

I find that last sentence particularly challenging and inspiring. And the poem that I keep nearby, to comfort and energise me, is by Michael himself – the title poem of his latest collection:

Weighing the Present

I didn't believe it for a minute
but turning the corner at the lights
saw him waiting on the opposite pavement
outside A1 Discounts to cross.

Though I didn't believe it for a moment
I knew it was him by the set
of his shoulders and head, that physique
and the all but forgotten lift

of my heart at the sight of him.
For an instant he was alive
or I had died, though I knew
neither could be true and pressed on

to the post office past my friend
with the present that needed weighing,
more or less knowing nothing
was impossible, even heaven.

<http://www.poetryoutloud.org/poet/robert-hayden>

Rob Lock

Review: Poems From The East by Antony Johae

Published by Gipping Press Ltd. 2015

It's always a pleasure to read a collection of poetry by a member of the Suffolk Poetry Society and there is a particular interest in reading this collection as it provides us with insights into cultures we may know little about. Antony lived and worked in Kuwait, soon after liberation from Iraqi occupation at the end of the Gulf War, for eighteen years and has travelled widely to other countries in the Middle East, including Lebanon and Iran and to the Far East. There are poems about China, Afghanistan, Thailand and India. This book is, in other words, a poetic travelogue.

On of the most moving and impressive poems in *Poems From The East* is entitled *At First In Kuwait (after Liberation, 1991)*. I particularly like the following lines of the third stanza of this poem:

*Then out of plush-muffled sounds
I heard a woman's cry reach to the roof
an ululation so profound
it moved me – to another place
distant desert in no city state
encampment, water-hole
men attired in white
children sandal-less on sand*

black-covered women chatting . . .

These lines transport the reader to an alien but recognizable world. We are both imaginatively and emotionally moved to another place. Poetry can bring one closer to other ways of being than news reports as it explores human experiences rather merely relate facts.

Another memorable poem in this collection depicts the aftermath of the tsunami which struck Thailand and so many other Asian countries in December, 2004. In the closing stanza of *On The Great Wave*, we are brought closer to the human cost of the disaster and the last line is bitterly ironic:

*In the aftermath, bodies fill the floors in sacks.
Medics in masks bend over the living,
Children sit and lie empty-faced.
Women weep as men search among the bodies.
They do not find. There are pictures on walls
with names and numbers written under them.
Those who pass by have not seen this one, nor that.
The faces smile out; they receive no smiles back.
Above them, a sign suspended near-illegibly askew:
Happy New Year.*

The Suffolk Poetry Society is fortunate in having a member who can so expand our often rather narrow outlook on the world.

James Knox Whittet

QUIZ

Few poets have lived entirely by their poetry and many have done unusual jobs. Can you identify the poets?

1. Controller of Customs
2. worked on London Underground
3. bricklayer
4. distributor of stamps
5. tramp
6. typist and secretary
7. pencil maker
8. night watchman
9. Professor of Greek
10. architect

Answers please to editor@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk

Review – Wilderness

by Tim Gardiner

Brambleby Books 2015

Tim Gardiner, who will be known to many of our members for his appearances at readings at the SPS Festival and elsewhere, is a distinguished ecologist with a specialism in entomology and a very active professional life as a conservationist in Essex and the surrounding counties.

This is an attractive book of poems focussing on nature and the issues of conservation today. Most of the poems are set against photographic images, and succinct prose passages provide helpful information about the subjects with references to literary and historical

connections.

Tim is a deeply serious writer who is inspired by nature and writes as much about arthropods and fungi as about the more conventional themes of *nature poetry*. He does not disguise his deep concerns about the threats to the environment and there is evangelistic strain calling on us all to speak up for the extraordinary, intricate, and indispensable world beyond human kind.

The poetry is sometimes uneven in quality and the rhythms and phrasing of his lines can become a little routine. Most of the poems are rhymed, though sometimes the rhymes are forced and grating on the ear (e.g. *angel/dangle*). My own preferences were for the poems

where he puts aside the irregular rhymed pentameters and goes for a freer, more sparsely-worded form. This is well exemplified in the last, very moving, poem of the book, *Primrose*, addressed to a still-born child:

*For this tragic baby
Had no name
Or glorious future,
And we had to bury you
In a shallow grave
Where a solitary Primrose
Does grow in spring.*

Despite the reservations mentioned above I would recommend this volume to anyone with an interest in our living landscape and the response of a professional, highly sensitive intelligence to the wonder and threats it holds.

Cameron Hawke Smith



Deleting Footnotes

You can never prepare for this task.
It demands no passion in the wrecking,
just obliterating all signals of existence
throughout your dead parents' house.

Discovering now what you never knew,
finding parts of what you came to be.
Eventually appearing in your first school
report folded neatly under your first baby shoes.

There are always secrets, some small,
six hoarded packs of sugar, several tins of spam
a forgotten habit, triggered by War memories
only recently remembered and re-lived.

Some findings can confuse or bite,
a carefully hidden photo of an unknown,
a small suitcase with letters of exchanged love
an intensity that shocks, and must be burnt.

If you are lucky there can be humour
a desk drawer full of jumbled keys
brass and steel, but only one labelled
'This was the back door key — before the lock was
changed'

How will you be unmasked when the clearers
come?
Have you already left the footnote for your life?

Ivor Murrell

Treasure Open Mic

'Treasure' was the theme chosen for the Open Mic evening at UCS Waterfront building on 15th April. Through some pretty astonishing weather the intrepid poets and poetry lovers came to this jewel on the Ipswich Marina, described by Professor David Gill as *the Saint Tropez of Suffolk*. After his short welcome and thanks from Florence Cox, Chair of SPS, Beth Soule stepped up as MC, or curator if you will, of the riches ahead. I'll try to rein in the treasure puns from now on.

Poets had travelled from as far as Paris, Lebanon and Essex. And the theme of treasure was interpreted even more widely. Kaaren Whitney blended two precious objects, Stonehenge and sunrise; Sue Wallace-Shaddad revealed the treasure that is our natural world as well as beautiful boxes of jewels nestled in velvet plush. Caroline Gill asked us to *use your eyes to take you to a thing of unknown beauty*, advice for any aspiring poets in her poem about a fragment of ancient silk.

It became clearer still as the evening went on that poetry is itself a discovery of treasure, or a process by which trash can be transformed. David Gill's short and concentrated poems *transported [us] in time, in culture, in place*. We then, fittingly, heard a narrative poem by Jean de la Fontaine in both English and the original French, a morality tale about fortune meaning something different to us all. Florence Cox's poems echoed this notion of perception – *we're not clever enough to know if what we've found is what we're looking for* – as in treasure hunting, so in life.

Tim Gardiner, Matt Annis and Alexandra Davis all took a personal approach to the theme. Tim conveyed an encounter with a rare butterfly to suggest elusive human relationships, and found treasure while playing pirates with his son; Matt's poised performance centred on a precious photograph containing *a piece of [his] soul*, and Alex focused on a gold ingot inherited from her grandmother.

Antony Johae read about the treasure that is our planet, an

interpretation also chosen by Deborah Wargate who warned against our *treasure-stripping society*. We heard, in absentia, Treasurer(!) of SPS Colin Whyles' song about a relationship – *the secret that you whispered is the treasure that I keep*. Finally Beth Soule read poems about the significance of her parents' and grandmother's rings.

After a short interval there was time for a little more poetry, which cemented the notion that language is itself a treasure to be cherished. In his WW1 diary, Tim Gardiner's uncle *left his truth on the page*. Sue imagined collecting stars, a powerful volta in the final line revealing her *greed and joy*. Beth lamented the words excised in a modern children's dictionary: *In naming there is love...What we love we guard* – a powerful and profound definition of treasures of all kinds.

It was a beautifully wrought and thought-provoking evening where our minds were opened to look beneath the glittering surface of things into the inestimable value of the world both around us and within us all.

Alexandra Davis



David Gill, Sue Wallace-Shaddad, Antony Johae, Alex Davis, Matt Annis, Kaaren Whitney, Tim Gardiner, Beth Soule, Florence Cox

Introduction to Poetry workshop

*An Introduction to Poetry with
Derek Adams*

Location: Sudbury Learning
Centre, 18-20 Cornard Road,
Sudbury, CO10 2XA

Saturday 11 June 2016

Time 10:00 - 15:30

£26

This one day workshop is for both beginners and those who have been writing poems for a while but would like to know more about the craft?

Course Content

Published poet Derek Adams will help you access your creative powers and show you how to produce well crafted poems. We will look at various techniques and forms used in poetry, poems that rhyme and poems that don't. Bring a note pad and pen; there will be creative prompts and exercises to get you writing, discussion and constructive feedback.

Equipment Required

Please bring a note pad and pen. As this is a Saturday workshop you may wish to bring a packed lunch, there is a vending machine for hot beverages.

Concessions

Concessions are available if you are in receipt of a contribution based Job Seekers Allowance or income related Employment and Support Allowance in the Work Related Activity Group. Please call 01284 716333 for more information.

The Tutor

Derek Adams has an MA in Creative and Life Writing from Goldsmiths and his poems have appeared in magazines in the UK and abroad including *Acumen*, *Ambit*, *Rialto*, *Magma*, and *Smiths Knoll*. His work has also appeared in anthologies including: *Days begin...* (Wivenhoe Books 2015), *GOLD: 30 years of Southend Poetry* (Southend Poetry 2015), *Inspired by Hungarian poetry: British poets in conversation with Attila József* (2013), *From the City to the*

Saltings: Poems from Essex. (Poetry in Practice 2013), *Birdbook 2: Freshwater Habitats* (Sidekick Books 2012).

He has a collection *Everyday Objects, Chance Remarks* (Littoral, 2005) and pamphlets *Postcards from Olympus* and *unconcerned but not indifferent: the life of Man Ray*. He was BBC Wildlife Poet of the Year in 2006.

His poems have been broadcast on Poetry Please BBC Radio 4, BBC local radio and were featured in *I Leave This at Your Ear* the listening wall at the Clore Ballroom at Royal Festival Hall as part of the 2014 Poetry International.

He has been a featured poet at various venues including Coffee House Poetry at the Troubadour, Oxfam Reading Series, Derwent Poetry Festival, Enfield Poets, Poetrywivenhoe, Essex Poetry Festival, Poetry Café, Ware Poets, Lumen Poetry Series, Camden Poetry Series. Poetry in the Crypt, Ride the Word, Poets off the Shelf and Shakespeare & Co, Paris. He was poet in residence for the 2015 Ely Folk Festival.

Tea at The Priory

The topic for this year's *Tea at The Priory* on the 4th September will be *The Road to the Fountain of Tears*: an introduction to the life and work of Federico Garcia Lorca (1898-1936) whose assassination, at the start of the Spanish Civil War, brutally curtailed his career as Spain's greatest 20th Century poet and playwright. With Catherine Dell.

This is our only member's-only event of the year, and places are limited, so you need to book your seat with the Membership

Secretary, Colne Lodge, Weavers Court, Diss, Norfolk, IP22 4QH, telephone: 01379 642372 or email membership@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk.



3rd Festival of Suffolk Poetry

Although we have only made small changes to the festival format to date, each has developed its own character, which must come down to the mix of performers each year attracts.

In the first year we had the extremes of James Knox Whittet's quiet and piercing poetry, greatly influenced by his Islay upbringing, and the demonstrable energy of Luke Wright. Last year we heard Michael Laskey's poems that speak so directly to the human experience in such simple language contrasting with the poetry of Angela Locke, which relates her experiences both home and abroad.



Dean Parkin

This year we will finish with that most deeply Suffolk of poets, Dean Parkin, who will have some musical content provided by the jazz pianist Maurice Horhut. Dean will be preceded by Myra Schneider, a tutor at the Poetry School. I wonder if she will bring her cats?

Between the ranges of these poets, each year Suffolk's seven poetry cafés entertain and inform us with the huge variety of poetry that pours out of the county. The format of each of the

cafés varies, but with attendances of 15-20 at each, and most meeting monthly, and with each poet reading three poems, up to 420 poems a month are heard across Suffolk.

With this sort of output, how poetry can be such an invisible art baffles me, although I admit that before I came to the poetry scene (about 2006), I didn't know how much it thrived either. May I make a plea that we all try to rectify this? We need to make more noise. Send poems to your local newspaper or parish magazine, especially if they are topical. Ask your library and cafés to display them.

And please support the *Festival of Suffolk Poetry*. It is designed to give you a voice. Without your voice it will wither and die.

But we are not dying yet – we have a long way to go.

This year, opening the evening will be the Davis poetry family from Felixstowe. The Davis family boasts three generations of poets. The most senior of them, Ron is grandfather to the junior member, Alfie, whose dynamo of a mother, Alexandra, many of you will know. They all have a different take on poetry, and I expect they will be very entertaining.

Mervyn Linford and his partner Clare Harvey will follow. Mervyn and Clare tend to write very pastoral poetry, although as they travel to France quite a lot, I am sure there will be other content as well. Mervyn is a published poet, and can boast that one of his poems was, for a time, used to introduce the BBC's *Countryfile* programme.

This year we have an *In Conversation With* spot that I am greatly looking forward to. It was a wonderful surprise to find that the wife of one of the last century's great British poets lived in Sudbury, along with one of his friends and colleagues. The poet, Jon Silkin, was not a Suffolk poet, but with his wife and colleague living among us I felt the opportunity had to be grasped to get an insight into him. Jon Silkin died in 1997, but was considered to be in the top ten of British poets. Last year Carcanet released his *Complete Poems* in both paper and electronic form.



Myra Schneider

Silkin's poems can be deeply mysterious, but they are fascinating, and I recommend you read him. There is much to be found about him on the Internet. I am told that he had the appearance of an Old Testament prophet and walked around thrusting his work into people's hands. Neither invisible nor quiet, then, perhaps something we could learn from!

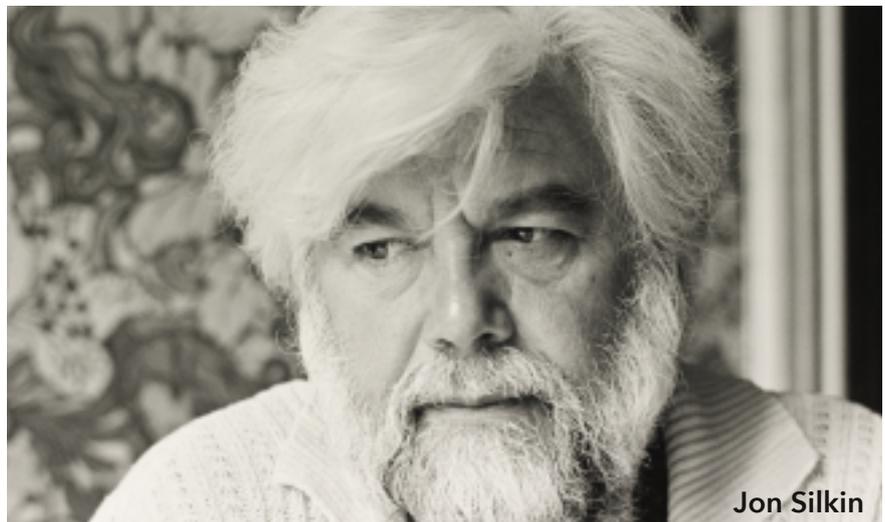
Lorna Tracy Silkin, who for 30 years was the fiction editor of *Stand* magazine (started by Jon Silkin in 1952 and still published), will be in conversation with Rodney Pybus and Douglas Coombes.

As ever, the day begins with the more studios among us in one

of three workshops. Dean Parkin will be exploring *Where We Live* with his group. Bring your own mental map. James Knox Whittet will be leading his group through the intrigue of the *Sestina*, a most interesting form, and Cameron Hawke Smith will be delving into the *Intonation* of poems. By this he means not how a poem is read aloud, but how it looks and sounds both on the page and as read in relation to its content. Just as in a song it is important that the music supports the words, so the words of a poem should intone correctly to convey the meaning.

The workshops are beginning earlier, at 10:00, as they always seem to run out of time.

The main business begins at



Jon Silkin

13:00 with the cafés, who this year are joined by students from *Suffolk ONE*.

The *Poetry Doctors* were popular last year, so if you need a break from the main activity, bring a poem for one of our doctors to give it the once-over.

The bookstall is moving into the John Peel Centre this year so that you can browse easily and the volunteers don't have to miss the action.

See you there!

Colin Whyles
Festival Director



"...a great day of celebration"
- Michael Laskey

3RD FESTIVAL OF SUFFOLK POETRY

The John Peel Centre,

Stowmarket, IP14 1ET

SATURDAY
28TH MAY 2016

Tickets

SPS Member prices shown.

Workshop	£12
Afternoon	£10
Evening	£10
Any Two	£17
All Day	£25

Workshops

Café Poets

Bookstall

Green Café

Dean Parkin

Myra Schneider

Doug Coombes +
Rodney Pybus +
Lorna Tracy Silkin
on Jon Silkin

Mervyn Linford +
Clare Harvey

The Davis Family

John Peel
CENTRE FOR
CREATIVE ARTS

Tickets available from the Festival Director or online at tickets.suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk
Contact: SPS Festival Director, festival@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk,
or by post 64 Broom Street, Great Cornard, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 0JT, tel: 01787 374516

Colours Of Dreams

I gathered your body like a piece of driftwood
from the beach; my fingers pushed your hair,
rigid with salt crystals, out of your unseeing eyes.

I held your wet body in my arms, crooning to you softly,
as if it was your bedtime. I staggered, drunk with grief,
beneath an arc of pitiless sky with the laughter of strange

sea birds mocking me. Five thousand US dollars I begged
and borrowed to bring us to this promised shore that
beckoned, beckoned to me in the mirages of my dreams

like pointing fingers of lightning that tear apart the fabric
of sky in desert storms. We were in sight of safe land
when our vessel, shaped like a coffin, capsized: all those pleading

arms reaching out of the enveloping waves like worshippers
in a mosque. I tried to hold on to you but you slipped
from my clutching fingers as your father slipped from

me when those men in olive green took him away that
night. Weeks later, they released his body with his feet
blackened and swollen with beatings; his genitals burnt;

the cracked blood on his fingertips where his nails had been
ripped out; his mouth still gaping open in an endlessly
suspended scream: my mind a film with a single repeating reel.

Imprisoned, processed and packaged, they've set me free
to live the life I once longed for. From this high rise perch, I
feel the clouds brush my veiled head. When a sudden jet
thunders, I dive for cover but no bombs fall. I gaze at the
television with its advertisements urging me to buy, buy, buy.
Some here call me a cockroach: a threat to their values and safety.

Often I want to bury my head in smothering pillows:
to sleep and never awaken. But the voices of Amer and
my Elias whisper as winds whisper through spines
of the Aleppo pines in the mountains or the calls of flamingo
chicks imprisoned within their shells. I catch glimpses of
my family's faces through greying leaves of swaying tamarisks.

I make a cradle of my arms to carry their lost futures.
A chameleon who has escaped from the desert, I rise now
to take on the ever shifting colours of their dreams.

I shall fan the sparks from their doused fires until I burn.

James Knox Whittet

Sheep Years

Over three hundred sheep
the colour of dried peas
let loose after the dipping
a pale woolly foam
pouring, tumbling
they congeal on the bright
meadow

begin to flow, first erratically
then purposefully
over the rise, along a dusty track
and I'm counting days, nights
months
years
as the sheep run
and run
and I stand
and I watch
thinking
there they go.

Susan Mobbs

Haiku

a day's last sunlight
falls on Iken church tower –
lone seawall shadow

Tim Gardiner

Peeling the Orange

A tear of moisture
escapes,
vulnerable white pith
laid bare
as I cut my way through,
break off islands of skin,
penetrate
that taut membrane.

Discarded peel mounts up.
I am left with a naked ball.
My fingers part the flesh
gaping like an open wound
weeping tart acidic blood.
My sticky fingers
drown in pleasure
as I release small boats
into a sea of taste.

Sue Wallace-Shaddad

Serengeti

prrrrrrrflightofhighskywingcatchesirislight
prrrrtoohighrrrrrrflickoftailtuftpr
prrrrrrrrrrrrrshadowshiftinsandprrrrrrrrr
watch prrrrrrtoofarrrrrrrrflickrrflick
prrrrrrrrrgrassesswayrrrrrrrrwindperhaps?
prrrrrflickflickflickprrrrrrr watch
prrrrrskitteroffeetprrrr nowind prrrrr
tenseprrrrrrrwatchprrrrrrrmuscleripplepr
gentleasinofofpositionprrrrrweightbalanced
prrrrrrrcrouchrrrrwaitrrrrwaitrrr
prrrrrcrepprrrrcrepprrrrrrrrsettle
prrrrrrrrgatherprrrrrrrrrsilentspawspadcloser
NOWRUNRUNRACETHEWINDCATCHTHESCENTOFFEAR
SINGITTHROUGHBLOODANDBREATHANDDUST
SPINTURNTWISTCHASE
LEAP

CLAW

BITE

TEAR

STRUGGLE

shred

lick lap

chew

s l e e p

Elizabeth Soule

Published on

Visual Verse website 4/3/16

Enough Rope

Height, weight and collar size,
that's how I get the measure of a man.
That many times, I can do it by eye,
could tell the length for every man in this pub.

Don't ask what they've done,
the wherefores or the whys.
Don't listen when they speak to the priest,
aye there's some that will, and worse too.

I was assistant to this fellow once, I tell no lie,
hand on the trap release he leant forward and
whispered through the cloth This is thy
last chance to confess before God.

I call it unprofessional, damned rum,
I won't work with him no more. I have my
standards, even if it means I missed
out on my earnings by a bob or two.

Me, I do it by the book, quick and precise,
Through that door. Head straight. Stand
Still. And sometimes, if I hear them cry,
whisper: It'll be all right, don't worry lad.

Derek Adams

Aesthetic

(Poughkeepsie N.Y. 1926) after a photo of Lee Miller by Theodore Miller

Papa has a new passion, stereotography.
I'm home from New York for the weekend
and he wants to hog all my time.

'Betty, you're a beautiful young woman.'
I disrobe and he poses me
on the arm of a wingback chair.

He places my arms behind me to emphasise
my torso, positions me so the window light
shapes and caresses my form.

The camera's two lenses stare at me.
I look away and down, not from modesty.
'That's good Betty, hold that pose.'

While Papa develops the film, I join Mama
in the kitchen, 'Are you eating properly?'
She asks, 'Getting enough sleep?'

After dinner Papa passes round the Holmes Viewer.
We all marvel at the effect, so lifelike
you could reach out and touch my body.

Derek Adams

Winding Wool

I'm holding a skein of heather-dyed wool,
and my mother is winding it into balls.
The dog's by the fire, the cat's on my knee.

Ben Hope veiled in a wimple of mist,
Loch Hope sullen under purple sky,
River Hope in spate, brown as tea.

The unravelling yarn tickles my hands,
as she sings of Jura, Harris, Arran.
She'll knit a jersey specially for me.

The flash of a flank in a warrigal burn,
the Salmon are running, eager to spawn.
Wild swans on the wing, free free free.

A fiddler in Oban played me the song
she sang long ago while casting on:
You'll never see the tangle of the isles.

And now, on the early ferry to Mull,
I watch the sun rising behind those isles.
My soul in a tangle, mist in my eyes.

Anne Boileau

An Angel in the Pig Pens

I asked the grown-ups, do pigs go
to Heaven? They laughed. (They didn't know!)
But when she farrowed and they lay in a row
a sunbeam shone down, making them glow.

And I imagined an angel might
slide down that sunbeam and gently alight
beside them – it would be only right
to hallow their sty – a blessed sight:

eight fresh piglets suckling on the teats
of their supine dam. A Paraclete.
I know we breed them for their meat.
Suffer the piglets – and did those feet

not walk among England's fecund swine?
Did He not bless the bread and wine?

Anne Boileau

Teasels

– Liston Water Meadows (near Long Melford)

The teasels have outgrown the bulrushes –
nearly as tall as a man they stand their prickly
ground
between the river and the water meadows.

A "charm of goldfinches"

- how apt –

defy this apparent barbarity
to feed and tintinnabulate
like tiny bells.

I'm on tenterhooks as I think about the past –
the wealth acquired through sheep and wool
as these latter day survivors of a craft
nap our November skies.

Long Melford church
more cathedral than parish focal point,
stares our across the corduroy of the fields -
newly ploughed.

Lavenham Blues, Kersey Cloth, Linsey Woolsey:
the green baize of the water meadows
waits in trepidation for the floods
- the winter spates -
while the warp and weft of pheasants, rooks, and
fieldfares,
weaves its autumn tapestry of sound with faded
threads.

Meroyln Linford

Jewish Cemetery

In the year 1790
came a Jewish family
strangers to a northern place
to bury their dead.
In a clearing of the forest
they laid bare the earth
chanted last prayers
cast down soil
and set up a tablet
inscribed with eastern characters
the star of David at its head.
There they left the dead
in the clearing of the forest
and the stillness of high trees.

Then came Cohn, Seligmann and Meyer
to bury their kin
cast a prayer
a last look
cover the grave
erect a tablet
inscribed with eastern characters
and at its base an Occidental tongue.

Then came the Hitlerzeit.
Now the Jew has gone
from Ketwigg an der Brücke.
No one tends the crumbling tablets
nor the graves moss-green matted.
There's a bench catches the light
where couples court
casting only brief glances
at the graves in shadow.
They forget that Goldmann's gone
and Sachs as well,
that Weiss and Woolf
left for camps and died,
or saved, set out for second lives.

Antony Johae

*This poem has appeared in
The Journal 40 (Autumn 2013)*

Flying away in Fall

(for Thérèse in Lebanon)

Seeing leaves come down
and flocks in flight cross the sky
I long to wing south.

Antony Johae

*This poem has appeared in
Dial 174 84 (Winter 2010)*

Silence

Concorde rips up the sky above Windsor
across the endless whisper of the motorway.
In the Castle Gardens, A Midsummer Night's Dream's
drowned out.
Through London Heathrow thirty million a year come and go,
among them passengers for package holidays,
families from the Indian subcontinent flying back as visitors.

My journey home is via Paddington.
At Liverpool Street piped music fails to soothe
late passengers who miss their evening trains.
Beyond Colchester the doors slam shut
on almost empty carriages. Noise
thins to the sizzle of a fish supper.

I ease open my old bedroom window:
there is no sound of vixen's bark or owl's screech
just a lone motorbike, cornering the bend by the church
and the seven lights of Mendlesham television mast
sixteen crow-flown miles away, soundlessly broadcasting
the twentieth century across the East of England.

Elizabeth Bracken

Refugee at Calais

He was at the basin when I entered,
stopped shaving, made way apologetically,
mumbled a word in English, then in French
while I washed my hands before breakfast
at the quayside boulangerie.

Confiture had made my hands sticky, butter and croissant
greasy.

He was still at the basin when I went back.
"Encore ici!" I said in surprise – he seemed to take fright,
packed up his shaving things –
"It is not sharp," he said, makeshift razor in hand.
I would have gifted him a fresh blade, but had shaved electric
on 240 volts
at the municipal camp site where my wife and daughter slept.

As I went back to the comfort of my bunk
I thought of him returning to the camp they called La Jungle
– to a half-shelter of plastic, pumped water, squalid washing
and despair –
razed by the town gendarmerie days after we took the easy
ferry to Dover,
an erasure which, like the man's face, would not stay long
smooth.

Antony Johae

This poem has appeared in The Transnational (2014)

Important Notice To Contributors

The deadline for all items other than poems for the next issue at the latest is **31st October 2016**. The preferred format is a Word attachment to an email to editor@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk but you may send them by post to me at my address: 6 The Crescent, Steeple Bumpstead, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 7DX.

It is very important that your name and email/address are written on the item you are sending.

ARTICLES

I welcome all articles to do with poetry in the county and would especially encourage news from the cafés and other groups.

POEMS

The deadline for poems will be **30th September 2016**. This will enable me to circulate them to our referees and receive their recommendations. **If you are sending poems please put your name, address and preferably e-mail address on each page.**

IMAGES

Images, drawings or photographs are welcome. Please send them in as high a resolution possible to webmaster@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk.

Cameron Hawke Smith, Editor



Upcoming Events for 2016

28th May: 3rd Festival of Suffolk Poetry

15th June: George Crabbe Memorial Poetry Competition closes

25th June: Celebrating the Bard: poetry and music

4th September: Tea at The Priory – *The Road To The Fountain of Tears*: Lorca, with Catherine Dell

18th September: *Takes on Shakespeare*, Walpole Old Chapel

1st October: Alde Valley !*Cornucopia!*

workshop / reading Helen Ivory / Martin Figura

6th October: National Poetry Day – South Lookout, Aldeburgh, *Messages*

13th October: Singing Stone readings with music, Ipswich Arts Association lunchtime events

4th November: Poetry in Aldeburgh: Kate Foley workshop

5th November: Poetry in Aldeburgh: Moniza Alvi + Crabbe winners

See the brochure/website/newsletters for details.

Contact details

:

suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk

Chairman

Florence Cox

chairman@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk

Vice Chair

Beth Soule

vicechair@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk

Secretary

Sue Wallace-Shaddad

secretary@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk

Treasurer

Colin Whyles

treasurer@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk

Membership

Diane Jackman

membership@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk

Tel: 01379 642372 for new membership enquiries

12 Rivers Editor

Cameron Hawke Smith

editor@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk

Portfolio Secretary

Pat Jourdan

portfolio@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk

Crabbe Competition

Beth Soule

crabbe@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk

Stanza Rep

Beth Soule

stanza@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk

Webmaster

Colin Whyles

webmaster@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk

Twitter

Alex Toms

[twitter@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk](https://twitter.com/suffolkpoetrysociety)

Facebook

Caroline Gill

[facebook@suffolkpoetrysociety.org.uk](https://www.facebook.com/suffolkpoetrysociety)



Published by Suffolk Poetry Society, c/o Fairweather Law Ltd, Solicitors, 16 Wentworth Road, ALDEBURGH, Suffolk, IP15 5BB, UK

Deadline for next issue: 31st October 2016

Copyright © 2016 Suffolk Poetry Society