



Suffolk Poetry Society

Newsletter

October 2006

Editor ; Gerard Melia

Welcome to another edition of the Newsletter. Remember that news items , letters, reviews or reports from your local group are welcome. This edition has lots of contributions from members and news of poetry in Ireland and America. I hope you enjoy reading it.

Gerard Melia, editor.

WE ARE LOOKING FOR MEMBERS WILLING TO READ THEIR OWN POETRY

The Committee have decided it is time for the Society to keep a register of poets willing to read their own poems in order to help when choosing readers for various SPS and Joint events. We want to encourage as many poets as possible to take part in this scheme, whether experienced or not. Enthusiasm, a reasonable standard of work and audibility are the main considerations. With this in mind, we have devised a simple form for any member who wishes to read (**including those who have read before**) to complete, so that we have a register we can consult when making up our programs. Don't feel you need to have previously read in public or had poems published. The categories on the form are there to provide a profile of our readers. If you can only supply your name and address, that's all right, though being a Portfolio member is recommended.

Frank Wood

This newsletter will include a form for each poet to fill in and send to any member of the committee. Ed

Billy Collins visits Suffolk..

Billy Collins is an American phenomenon. No poet since Robert Frost has managed to combine high critical acclaim with such a broad popular appeal.

His appearance at Snape confirmed his popularity with a full house and the long lines of enthusiasts queuing for his book signing had to be very patient.

He has published eight collections and his work appears regularly in 'Atlantic Monthly' and 'The New Yorker'

He read the following poem at Snape.

No Time.

In a rush this weekday morning
I tap the horn as I speed passed the cemetery
where my parents are buried
side by side under a smooth slab of granite.

Then, all day long, I think of him rising up
to give me that look
of knowing disapproval
while my mother calmly tells him to lie back
down.

News from Helen Burke winner of 'The Crabbe Competition' in 2000.

Dear Editor

'I am now performing as part of group of 3 poets called The Flaming Poets - we are appearing at Ilkley Literature Festival Fringe on September 30th - doing a series of poems with music called "Stalking Happiness"-- poems about love landscape and relationships. We will also be at Pocklington Arts Centre on November 9th - again with poems on territory, landscape, love and the beginnings and endings of things.'
I recently did readings at Hull Library, Beverley (Subtle Flame) and Guppys Club in York. My work can be seen on www. Poetrypf . Helen Burke.

Always pleased to hear of members success in the wider world. Ed.

IMPRESSIONS OF STROKESTOWN 2006

*... I see it well shaped from the anvil and
sharp from the file;
The grain of the wood and the line of the
shaft nicely fitted,
And best thing of all, the ring of it, sweet as
a bell.*

Seamus Heaney - Poet to
Blacksmith

County Roscommon: where the road from Charlestown joins the road from Dublin to Elphin. The Cornerstone is a quiet, low ceilinged pub, with a peat fire in an iron stove-box, a colour TV, showing the races. At the bar, an ancient in a tweed suit, sips Finch's Lemonade. We settle ourselves at the travellers' table outside. Warm sun rays slant through my Guinness, printing a ruby-coloured perihelion on the pinewood bench. I am with Billy my younger son. The conversation flows, weaves itself between us. Peace: and with the second glass, the euphoria, the craik.

Jackdaws work the pavements clean. There are high trees in the green park land west, and a larger sound of busy rooks. The scent of peat smoke, all pervading, atmospheric, stands for the continuance of things, not least the persistence of, and reverence for the spoken word; a willingness on the part of locals, to look you in the eye, as they enquire for your welfare. Every sentence rounded with its own cadence, its roll and point of balance. Hereabouts, there is pleasure to be got from things well said.

Discourse is about more than making demands. What better meeting place than this, for the fifteenth annual **Strokestown International Poetry Festival ?**

Friday night at the School Hall. Four hundred come in to hear the grand master, Seamus Heaney. He waits quietly behind a wooden lectern on the stage, while three musicians (flute, fiddle and tenor voice) play us into his world of memory and desire. He comes forward, bespectacled, pale cheeked, and with unruly hair, you might be forgiven for thinking it was John Watts in the half-light. Here, he is close to home. Return of the native. He begins with a nod to Kavanagh and Yeats, then he takes us with him ...

He reads first from his earliest collection, *Death of a Naturalist*, and then from *District & Circle* (Faber 2006) Each fine poem, and the manner of its delivery commands a huge and bottomless silence of listening¹ - *The Turnip Snedder, The Harrow Pin, Poet to Blacksmith, The Tollund man in Springtime.*

After 40 years as a poet of importance, the Nobel Laureate maintains a modest, almost schoolmasterly tone, an easy pace, a sureness, which comes when a great poet recollects, plunders for metaphor, the direct experience of a working life, lived and loved to the full. This is the bardic song of his people, of his roots, for all humanity and for all time.

Interviewed by James Campbell for The Guardian Review (27.5.06.)

Heaney had this to say about a poet's sense of commitment.

' At the end of the day I suppose I feel some covenant with the..... unlettered, yes. Or to put it more simply I still have these brothers who didn't get the eleven plus. There's one

highly intelligent brother who ought to be in charge of something by now. He just missed the moment. My father and mother had no sense of entitlement for their children. They would never have rung up the Headmaster or anything like that. So I'm not writing for them, but ever since I got up in public, there was somebody like that in the audience and I didn't want them to get shy of the thing.'

The philosophy endears the man. It is what has brought him and me to Strokestown, which has been called The Poetry Festival without egos' where what matters most is not celebrity' but the universal and efficacious Celtic magic of good verse, spoken truly, and listened to with loving attentiveness. The categories in the Strokestown Open Poetry Competition tell it all: - for school age poets - for gaelic language poets (from Scotland, Ireland and The Isle of Man) - for the best poem in English, for poems of Political Satire and Humour, - and for Town Pub poets (*'Bard or be Barred ! no subject excluded, so long as there's no court case.'*)

LISTENING TO THE TRUMPETING OF THE STAGS

for Frank Lewis

The sun is making love with the winter in the glen
While a voice is resounding here and there in the air

A high and mighty trumpeting flowing from peak to peak

Silhouetted against the light, sharp as a blade,
See the seven-tined stag engraved on the sky.
The sun is making love to the winter in the glen.

Paddy Bushe.

Mornings and afternoons, the short listed poets are given a public hearing. For three

days, in a crowded room, with flowers and a candle burning, we sit entranced, at one with Calliope, our muse. After three days the listener feels replete, achieves a state of grace almost. In addition to generous monetary rewards, supreme winners are presented, in the library of Park House, with a sturdy ash plant, fresh hewn from the surrounding woods; a green symbol, if one were needed, of the link between the poets and people, landscape and history.

Saturday night, in the banquet hall at The Percy French Hotel, poets, men, women, children, travellers, holiday visitors from the far corners meet to hear the short listed poems of Political Satire and Humour. There is mischief in the air, and a good deal of joviality. Folks have eaten well, glasses are full, we ease back in our chairs, ready to make much of the foolishness of humankind, and to sup fortitude at the spring of mirth. The adjudicator listens one last time, then pronounces. A brown envelope, a 'backhander' is slipped surreptitiously, into the hand of each prize winner, more laughter. Top prize goes to a piece from a London Poet, who satirises the witless complexities of rail privatisation, through the device of a long and tortuous Tannoy announcement to passengers. Third prize, notably, is scooped by S.P.S member Bev Ellis, for her bright, scurrilous and scatological piece on the ironies of semi-literate celebrities who make millions from ghosted autobiographies¹.

Between times, we get to know the town, Billy and me. The garden of contemplation, down by the trout stream, The terrible beauty' of the *Museum of the Famine* housed in the stables of Park House, a Georgian pile, Palladian fronted, furnished as it was when the last patrician was finally escorted home to Eaton Square.

Whatever the inglorious history (*the hunting baron declines to madness, a distant cousin, brought in from the Old Country, promotes lenient terms' or forced migration, the first of seven landlords to be assassinated, one dark night; the obscenities of the potato famine, the soup queue, photographs of starving mites as hideous as any from the darkest corners of our empire*) whatever the record of 'planters' in their ascendancy, the house remains; its furnished sculleries, kitchens, library, nurseries, salons and bedrooms, mustily pregnant with shades of the Mahons, the Pakenhams. Outside, things do indeed fall apart, the walls drip. The grandeur, terrace walls and garden, dissolve slowly back into a wilderness that is itself, by degrees, taken over and reworked by the very folk whose land it always was.

Monday, May 1st 2006. We wait outside The Cornerstone for the bus from Dublin to Elphin, Charlestown and Knock International Airport. Over a last pint of Guinness, or two, we listen to the town and its jackdaws, happening. It is raining for the first time. My Donegal coat slowly cures in the soft drizzle and peat smoke. I resolve never, ever, to have it dry-cleaned.

Mike Bannister 8/06

(Winning Strokestown Poems, are to appear in Poetry Ireland Review No 87 later this year.)

Members Publications.

Joan Sheridan Smith has had a collection of her poems published by the Poetry Monthly Press in Nottingham. The thirty eight poems include poems

about friends family, landscape and historical subjects. I was somewhat aghast to see she had written a poem about *marmalade*. I thought I was the only person in Britain to have attempt such a feat. Copies available from the poet at £4. Ed.

.....

Pauline Stainer held a launch party at Crabtree's Coffee Bar in Hadleigh High Street. to publicise her new book of poems entitled "The Monsoon Room".(illustrations by Rosamund Ulph) After some time spent in India the poet and the artist combined to produce a beautiful edition of words and images.

The Drum House.

So many overtones-
honeycomb hanging
from a parapet
below the palace drums,
timbre between the two.

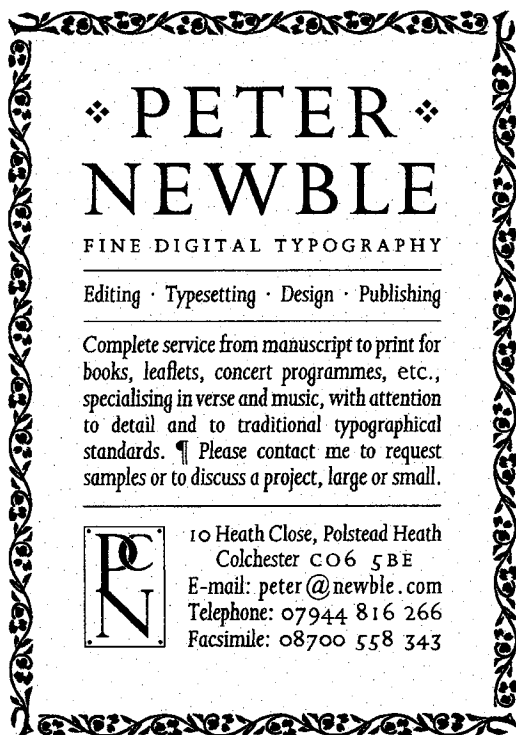
Indian swifts
coming back on themselves
as echo and re-echo
at the wide, latticed windows
never alighting

Green parakeets
so shrill they could
dispirit any drum
vibration
charming the snake,

infra-red
and indigo answer,
that light notation
between a noon drum
and the last silence.

"The Monsoon Room" was designed, typeset and printed by Peter Newble.

Many Suffolk organizations use his expertise including the "Suffolk Villages (music) Festival, and Hadleigh Choral Society as well as others in London and beyond. Of course he also published Mike Bannister's *Green Street Fragments*.




❖ PETER ❖
NEWBLE

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Herbert Lomas, the president of our Society writes;

" Anne Beresford's *Collected Poems* – she is of course a society member – has just been published (Katabasis £14-95) it contains the cream of her thirteen books.

She's a poet I love to read and reread, subtly allusive, economical and precise; a visionary, who hints obliquely at spiritual depths and then walks away lightly, as if she hasn't said anything profound. The title of one volume, *Hearing Things*, is just right; it's a poetry of listening, as well as seeing. Something from the subliminal speaks with a quiet wit, a finger pointing at the moon. 'This is a wild garden where

plants happen,/ are content to be left alone.' The birds read the trees, and 'at first light every word becomes clear'. Her essence is a sort of evanescence. Among the 'soot and smell of twenty suppers' in a dull geranium-in-the window, washing-on-the-line world, 'the walls are moved imperceptibly nearer'.

The poems are short poems that are longer than long poems, little stories with big question marks, often querying orthodoxies, or rewriting the taken-for-granted. Mary reflects';

... who was there to see
him lay his head against her naked breast?
Perhaps a swallow dipping and diving
towards the night or a small spider hanging by a
thread from her hair
which brushed her face.

'Always in Another Country' starts:

Begin a long way off,
always in another country
where forgotten places
are never brought to light ...

Start again from the beginning
this time in a café,
a cup of coffee on a table,
and there's a brick crashes through the window ..

and ends;

.Just start again,
enter the café and order coffee.
When are you going to stop crying?

She can shock; in 'A Crusader's Story' the almost idyllic prologue leads to the revelation of the husband's ransom: the delicate wrist of his wife's severed hand. A suicide is asked 'Did you conserve your energy/ all those years so you could lie still/ at your post mortem?'

The economy, the absence of anything cosmetic, shouldn't make one overlook her depth or miss her subdued humour and awareness of the comedy of the birds. She's in touch with whatever it is that makes us human and slightly more human.

Letters

A letter from Joan Emmens recommends 'Smith's Knoll' as an excellent magazine and recounts a very useful poetry writing course she attended at Belstead House.

She writes; "*I went to Rushmore St Andrew Church for a wonderful evening of summer music and poetry with strawberries and cream. Michael Stagg read, Hardy, Auden and Yeats among others and the vocalist and pianist were marvellous.*"

A letter from Joan Sheridan Smith

Comments on access to local groups;....
"the Ipswich U3A doesn't have a creative writing Group and I'm not keen to initiate one. I tried it in Skipton and I thought it went well, but it faded out. People found it too much like hard work. The U3A in Ipswich have two poetry reading groups, though, meeting once a month. I run one of them
Joan Sheridan Smith.

From John Watts

Science and Poetry.

I have recently had an interesting correspondence with a friend who is a physicist. One engaged longtime on whizzing particles around tunnels in Switzerland to find a particularity. After reading my Three Poems for Astronomers, he wrote to say..."I am one of those prosaic scientists who may love poetry, but has no idea how to put names to its qualities, but your poems struck a resonance, opening my eyes (or ears I suppose) to profound aspects of their subject that I would not have thought of myself." In considering the

relative functions of science and poetry, he went on to say"... in short, there is little difference, only the medium used to express the philosophy. **I use maths while you use poetry"**

On the question of whether the poet needs to be accurate in terms of science, he wrote "I can imagine that the danger for a poet when writing about such things is that he gets the science wrong or, if it is right, he wraps it up in a contrived analogy or association". (My friend went on thankfully, to say he was satisfied that my poems avoided these pitfalls.)

In reply, I wrote as follows: The relationship of science to poetry is an interesting one and in the end probably indefinable. Certainly I would want to avoid factual error, such as confusing a neutrino with a nucleus, or something like that, but really what I'm trying to do is to translate what I experience to a construct of words, giving them some shape, more or less formal, so as to embody that experience. Perhaps the scientist is doing something similar, pinning down experience, making order out of chaos"

This could start a debate among readers on the subject of science and poetry.
John Watts 2006

From Margaret Cornish in Felixstowe.

Dear Gerard,

I am enjoying a good read of the S.P.S. Newsletter and read with particular interest Mike Bannister's appraisal of Judith Crammond's collection "Early and Late" When weather and energy permit an expedition

into town I must enquire at my bookshop if a copy is available.

I had hoped to see a mention of my own collection but maybe it got lost in the exuberance of Christmas mail..... However I'm now sending you a 'flyer' and a notice to explain that I'm selling copies at £5 each for 'Acorn Village' near Manningtree, (a community for adults with learning difficulties) which is a registered charity. The bookshop in Felixstowe has been very supportive.

The collection with other scribblings was in a drawer – to be sorted out after my death. (For the passed three years I've been 'hors de combat with hip operations.) My daughter took the collection, added photos and designed the layout hoping to arouse my interest! Briefly – I recovered and for some time felt embarrassment at reading a secret horde of poems in print – then annoyance at the many printing errors which to me , distorts however slightly the rhythm and or sense.

Finally I decided to market the product and so hope for some small support from S.P.S. of which I have been a member for the past ten years.
Sincerely
Margaret Cornish.

{ ed notes; The book is called "Birds in the Wilderness". The publicity material says that the poems reflect Margaret's lifetime involvement with canals. She is in her 90th year and has written two very popular books about her experiences as a boatwoman during the war. This collecton contains 82 original poems with photographs spanning nearly a century. Copies cost £5. Enquiries at 12 Yetton Ward House, Cricket Hill Rd. Felixstowe IP 11 2LQ.}

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DON'T FORGET!

**The Eighteenth
Aldeburgh Poetry
Festival 3rd-5th
November 2006**

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American Adventures

Kaaren Whitney

Before I went to the States last year I used my computer to google in *Poetry-April-CT*. CT is the commonly used abbreviation for Connecticut, the north eastern state where I would be staying. Three entries were of interest to me, within my time-frame and travel distance, or so I thought.

The first was a reading very nearby and on a Sunday afternoon so I could combine it with a visit to a friend. It was an enjoyable reading with two outstanding pieces but more significantly during the tea and Danish I met the poet's publisher. As our conversation continued a workshop was mentioned. "Yes, I'm coming" I said. He said "I'm afraid it is already fully booked." "Yes, I have booked on the internet." He was very pleased and gave me directions – fortunately for me as this venue was at the very top of the state, almost a two hour journey and in the early dark of evening.

What a worthwhile venture it turned out to be. After and inspiring introduction 'Poetry within a Picture' found fifteen poets in the art gallery of the sponsoring library. We were given the remit to

choose a painting and let a poem emerge. I was immediately drawn to a landscape with a single pine tree near water called 'Bar Harbor, Maine'.

As time quickly ran out I was one of the few people to get to read my poem. The leader generously extended the workshop by having everyone give their e-mail addresses and plans were made to work on our poems, share them via email and finally have them published along with the accompanying picture in an A5 booklet.

The timescale was short, the e-mail inboxes always full and the responses from the leader/publisher were unstinting. Not all the poets commented on all the poems but it was a stimulating two weeks with many e-mails each day concerning poetry. This is the poem that finally emerged for *Painting to Poem*.

FATHER, SON

Lone naked trunk
pitched forward
echoes the pain of a son lost
to the deity of money.
O my second born, spar partner.

Rock where I sit, earth bound,
clamped in Adam's red clay,
no longer sustenance
but binding close my grief,
until rage cracking shards
splinter apart my heart,
like ice, as the lapping sea
curls the near shore saying
Come to me, come to me.

At my feet the pink pasque flower
does not move, nor her beauty touch me
although her fragrance is a gift

given freely like the offered comfort
of so many friends. Surrounded,
I cannot feel. Embraced,
my senses withdraw.

I wrestle in dawn, in noon and dusk
longing for quiet comfort of sand banked
cliffs
and the illusion that my *Why?* will be
silenced.

.....

The final event had an unusual twist as well. On the internet it said 'Read your favorite poem' as part of a scheme for National Poetry Month. It was sponsored jointly by the Shelton Library and a local bookshop-cum-theatre called Center Stage. I duly signed up to read *Bridge Builder I Am* by John Aggaard. When I got there it turned out to be very local. The mayor, school superintendent, police chief, historical society matron and president of the high school poetry club were among the twelve or so presenters – and me. Fortunately I had an 'in'. I had lived in Shelton for five years almost forty years ago and I was the first children's librarian the town had employed.

The readings were all done to a very high standard, mainly classics from the educational past but with great variety from Stephen Spender to the whole of the Pied Piper of Hamelin! The Newspaper sent a reporter who spoke to most of the presenters, took down lots of interesting information, then printed little of it, just the facts M'am, with a local slant.

I told some of this saga to a friend and he also googled in *Poetry-Yorkshire*

when he was about to go on a short business trip. He found himself blessed with two poetry events and several new friends for his efforts. Why not give it a try yourself?

Karen Whitney

Portfolio News

I shall soon begin my fifth year as portfolio Secretary, how time flies! Although the job is not always easy, I have found ways to simplify the work and by this means the paper work has been organized to run like a well oiled machine; except for the occasional poet dropping a hand full of sand in the works, all's well. Mind you; I have spent some time arriving at this happy state. Now if at some time in the future I hand over the job of Portfolio secretary to some other unfortunate, I shall be able to do so with a clear conscience.

As this is being written in July 06 the membership stands at twenty two poets, at one time last year it went up to twenty nine, and then gradually dropped away to eighteen, the lowest in four years. There were several reasons for this, poor health, wanting a break etc....etc....Most poets stick at it for about two years, and then rest for a while.

However there are those stalwarts who have maintained their membership for years.

Always making interesting comments, returning folios in good time and regularly sending in new poems; these folk are the backbone of our group and I thank them most sincerely.

As you may know there has been a Poetry Folio Competition for the last three years and this has been well supported. But as

membership has dropped at the beginning of the year, and only twelve members wish to take part it was decided to rest the competition for a year. We will see if it can be reinstated next year.

There's no doubt that the group would benefit from a few more members, why not join? I'm sure, if you are writing poetry you would find it beneficial, giving fellow poets the opportunity to read and comment on your work; a feedback that is not possible to get any other way.

Just a few facts about the Portfolio. The annual membership fee is £10 which covers the cost of postage and stationary. The object of the folio is to encourage and, if possible, assist members who are writing. Members contribute their poetry and offer a written criticism of the poems within the folio. (usually about 15-18 poems per folio); the aim is for every member to receive eight folio sets within a twelve month period. When a folio has been in circulation for a year it will be dismantled and the poems together with the comment papers are returned to the poet.

Peter Davey, Portfolio Secretary

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Notice about our Society Poetry Library.

The Library, presently kept in Woodbridge, will be situated at Suffolk College. Details of the system for borrowing will be published in the next Newsletter.

Quotable quote;

'This is not a book to be tossed aside lightly. It should be thrown with great force'

Dorothy Parker.

The Difficulty in writing a poem on being a Rugby Referee.

Terence Butler

**“Disunited are those who shout for the rose
the shamrock, daffodil or the thistle
but scream in accord at the slightest mistake
if made by the man with a whistle.”**

Every sport has its own poetry, from the Eton Boating Song to Betjeman on tennis, hockey or golf. There are countless modern poets who eulogise about soccer. Cricket has the classic “deathly hush in the close tonight”. The gladiatorial aspects of the game of rugby, either Union or League, lends itself to bold sagas about blood, sweat and tears, (especially from prop forwards). I have written two poems about the brave camaraderie, the friendships and the ‘punch ups’ associated with a career as a rugby player. Don’t panic you won’t be seeing them in this Newsletter!

I finished my playing career and became a referee with the Suffolk and North Essex Referee’s Society where I discovered a whole new aspect to the game I love. As players, we had mixed feelings about the referee but always accorded them a grudging respect. We could not play without them and good or bad, their word was law. The power of the whistle was absolute. When I could no longer stand the pain of the scrum but was still active enough to need regular exercise, taking up the whistle seemed a good idea. I achieved a reasonable grade for a man of my age, fairly fit, good knowledge of the game but too old to be considered for the top class games. It is quite a shock to the system from a season changing with the

lads, to having your own room and players calling you ‘Sir’.

Now retired from refereeing to gentler pursuits, gardening, reading, writing or being allowed out on my own, when sent with a note to Tesco. No more sly innuendo from the scrum-half. “Can he do that ref?”

Or the absolute abuse from the one man and his dog on the touchline bawling “refer-bloody-ree!”. I take time now to reflect on those enjoyable days and summon up the muse to express both the terror and the euphoria of being the man alone. You know it just won’t come. Not without incurring a certain stigmata when old wounds reopen. I have a recurrent tinnitus, an echo of certain remarks like “don’t forget to feed your guide dog!” I now watch games with sympathy for the referee and a irritation at opinions expressed by television commentators, ten caps for England, what do they know? There is a poem in there somewhere, just don’t hold your breath.

The Challenge!

Can any member find a poem, (or write a poem) that would satisfy Terry’s urge to express the life of a referee. Is there a Petrarchan sonnet, a limerick, an elegy, a ballad, or even a villanelle? Just think of the possibilities of the repeated lines in the villanelle if they were direct quotes from an irate crowd e.g “If he can referee, I can plait sawdust!” or “ He’s as useless as a chocolate teapot!”

Please send all poems to the editor in time for the next Newsletter in March 2007.

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**A contribution from assistant
Professor Jenny Barber at Suffolk
College, Boston U.S.A.**

Editor's note.

Surfing the internet I came across the Suffolk University in Boston. As this is the Suffolk Poetry Society Newsletter I asked for a contribution from The English Faculty and in particular from the founder of the 'Salamander Magazine, Jenny Barber.

Jenny Barber writes;

According to myth, salamanders possess the ability to withstand intense heat and are therefore able to make their home in the midst of fire. I've always considered this myth an apt metaphor for what writers do: they make a dwelling-place, their art, out of the fires of their experience.

I started *Salamander*, a nonprofit literary arts organization and a magazine for poetry, fiction, & memoirs, in 1992, from my home in the town of Brookline, near Boston, Massachusetts. I had graduated from Columbia University's M.F.A. program in Creative Writing in 1984, and I'd worked as a production editor in college-textbook and professional-book publishing in New York City after graduating. When my husband and I had our first child, in 1988, we moved to Boston. I wanted to put my editing and my production skills to use in an area that spoke to me directly—publishing talented emerging writers in a way that would allow them

to acquire new readers while they continued to develop their unique voices.

At the time most of the existing literary journals fell into two categories: there were well-funded, distinguished journals primarily publishing established writers; and there were hastily assembled new magazines that tended to produce just an issue or two before collapsing. I was starting out as a poet myself, and I wanted to read what was being done by the writers I had come into contact with at graduate school and after. Setting up shop as a literary journal allowed me to read new work constantly, to widen my knowledge of the many kinds of poems and stories being written by a generation that was just coming into its own.

In the early days of *Salamander*, writers found us largely through word-of-mouth: poets, story writers, and essayists that had published in the magazine encouraged others whom they knew to try us also. *Salamander's* visibility has increased over the years and we receive submissions from all parts of the United States as well as the U.K., Canada, India, and many other countries. In 2005, the magazine became affiliated with Suffolk University in Boston; this affiliation ensures *Salamander's* continuing financial viability. I now teach in Suffolk University's English Department and edit the magazine from an office at the University—which has proved to be much more convenient than working from my overcrowded attic at home.

One of my ongoing editorial goals at *Salamander* is to publish memoirs that illuminate recent history through the lens of an individual life. An account of a childhood spent on the prairies of Manitoba in the 1930s and a memoir about life on a New England

family farm appeared in the first issue; subsequent issues have included a son's reflections on his father's side career as a military artist; a memoir by Isaac Babel's widow A. N. Pirozhkova, detailing the harrowing last years of Babel's life; and a memoir by Nguyen Qui Duc about growing up during the war in Viet Nam and his family's subsequent fragmented departure from the country.

Through its Feature Excerpt section, *Salamander* provides readers with a look at recently published or soon-to-be-published books. The fall/winter 2005 issue presented the title short story from Yiyun Li's debut collection, *A Thousand Years of Good Prayers*, a book which subsequently received major national and international prizes. The issue currently in production includes an excerpt from Irène Némirovsky's *Suite française*, an unfinished novel about the German occupation of France that she had been working on just before her deportation from France to Auschwitz in 1942. The excerpt will be accompanied by a selection from a soon-to-appear biography of her by Jonathan Weiss.

Salamander's main focus continues to be on publishing outstanding new poems, stories, and memoir-essays. Submissions, which are reviewed by an editorial board, are welcome between the months of October and May. For information on how to subscribe to *Salamander* or to submit work, please visit our website at www.salamandermag.org.

Questions or requests for a sample back issue of the magazine can be directed to me at jbarber@suffolk.edu. Note that we do not accept email submissions at this time; submissions should be sent via postal mail to the magazine

(international submissions should include your email address for notification instead of a self-addressed stamped envelope). I hope you will become familiar with the magazine and get as much enjoyment and insight from its pages as I get from putting together.

--Jennifer Barber
Editor,

Salamander

Biographical Note: Jennifer Barber is the author of the poetry collection *Rigging the Wind* (Kore Press, 2003); her poems have appeared in such journals as *Poetry*, *Partisan Review*, *Agni*, *Fulcrum*, and the *Georgia Review*. She studied medieval literature at Oxford and is assistant professor in the English Department at Suffolk University, Boston, Massachusetts.

{*Editor's note.*}

{Is a small poetry magazine beyond the capabilities of a group of our members?

It doesn't have to be expensive and computers and printers are widespread throughout our membership. Why not discuss it at your poetry Group Meetings. We could then read "The Halesworth Anthology".... "The Hadleigh Clarrion" and "The Woodbridge Sonnet"}

For those who think a poetry magazine is too much work, please take note of Jerome K Jerome's definition of **idleness**:
"Something it is impossible to enjoy thoroughly unless one has plenty of work to do"

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Not the Chairman's Report.

This year
I missed most of the meetings, I'm afraid.

This year
my first grandchild was born.
They were going to call him Fred
but decided on Oscar.
Last year
when she told me she was pregnant she added;
I've no idea where my maternal instincts will
come from. I've never had any time
for babies. But he came regardless and with him
the endless round of feeding and changing, the
broken nights. I know how tired she is. She has
no time for herself. I hear her talking to him,
laughing until he laughs with her, that fat baby
chuckle.
and I smile.

This year
my first cousin committed suicide.
She was sixty, had a non-terminal
but painful and disabling illness.
Last year
she put a plastic bag over head
but her neighbour found her in time.
So she went to Switzerland
where it was done with dignity,
her husband said, his guilt
gradually confided in me.
Slowly lines on his face smooth out, his
shoulders relax. He visits friends not seen
for years, goes to a Gallery, a show
comes to the seaside to stay with me.
When my daughter arrives with Oscar
he jogs the baby on his knee
and smiles.

This year
my brother came to stay. A holiday,
his wife said. Ten years playing the violin
in Idaho, he surely needs the break.
Last year
on holiday in Germany, he gave four concerts
in three weeks. She sighed. The violin, I noticed,
hadn't been left behind this time either.
Three concerts in eight weeks., he gave.,
Restrained
for him. But practice and rehearsals ate
into time to be spent with friends
and relatives.. I heard him play in crowded
concert halls

hands slippery with sweat yet focused, inward,
rapt. Now he's back in air-conditioned Idaho
And I saw so little of him while he was here.
But the music – Mozart, Schubert, Bach,
some joyous Copeland – stays with me
and I smile.

This year
I missed most of the meetings.

Beryl Sable. Chairperson.

Hadleigh Poetry Group Programme

Devised and arranged by Jean Newble

Nov 5th
Gerard Melia, Recorded poetry.

Dec 3rd
Jack Edwards, Actor/Producer will
read a Christmas miscellany.

✓ Jan 7th 07
Pauline Stainer, Fire, Ice and Poetry.

Feb 4th
Catherine Dell, Talk about Garcia
Lorca

Feb 4th
Florence Cox. 'A Journey in Poetry'

March 4th
Meetings will take place at
**'The Long House', Corum Street,
Hadleigh.**

Tel 01473 827718

Quotable quotes;

"I am addicted to literature. I never go
anywhere without a Trollope." Sir Alec
Guinness.
"His books are going like wildfire—
everybody is burning them". George. de
Witt

2.30

Books about Poets and Poetry.

*"The Friendship;
Wordsworth and Coleridge."*
By Adam Sisman
Harperpress, £20. pp. 480
ISBN 000716026

Samuel Taylor Coleridge and his friend Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy lived in Dorset and were firm friends for six years. Their rambles in the Quantock Hills are legendary.

Intoxicated by the ideals of the French Revolution they talked incessantly. The British establishment did not regard them favorably and they were spied upon by security men who wrote –“they wrote things down in notebooks and talked in funny accents and one of them cohabits with a woman who passes as his sister.”

The spotlight of this book is firmly focused on the relationship between the two poets and is recommended as a good read.
G.M.

Thomas Hardy

Hardy's wife hated the way his writing excluded her and she was dismissive of his work. Yet on her death, Hardy was heartbroken and from that point in his career in writing took a new direction.

Claire Tomalin, his new biographer, is adamant that “ This is the moment when Thomas Hardy became a great poet.”

Over and over again , he returned in memory and poetry to the scenes of his first love. Emma, was reborn in elegy, loved again and then lost.

This book shows Claire Tomalin's biographical skills at their best. She brings together Hardy's human passions and the creative impulse.

Other biographies by Tomalin include *Shelley and His World*, and *Samuel Pepys; The Unequalled Self*

On sale now,

Thomas Hardy: the time-torn man.

Claire Tomalin. Penguin £25

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Lifelines.

Lifelines began in a classroom in Wesley College, Dublin in April 1985. Three pupils wrote to writers, politicians, people in the public eye and asked them to choose a poem which was important to them and to give reasons in a brief letter to support their choice. The success of their project led to the publication of three editions published in 1992-94-97. All royalties from these best -sellers went to aid the Developing World.

An edition called *Lifelines New and Collected* has now been published with a forward by Seamus Heaney.

He writes; when Conner Cruise O'Brien choose Milton's 'Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity' and Chaim Herzog, sixth president of Isreal choose, Yeat's 'Lake Isle of Innisfree' they were declaring obliquely that as private persons they live within a field of cultural force which maybe at some odds with the general perception of them as public figures. Here are some of the choices made ;

*Fleur Adcock 'Death Be Not Proud' Donne
Beryl Bainbridge Dover Beach M Arnold
Joseph Brodsky Desert Places Frost
Melvyn Bragg I wandered lonely as a cloud
Ted Hughes Donal Og Anon
David Lodge Among School Children Yeats
Mother Teresa Prayer for Peace St Francis.
Iris Murdoch A Summer Night W.H.Auden.
Seamus Heaney Cuchulain Comforted Yeats
Fay Weldon, 'If'
Bertie Ahern T.D. Canal Bank Walk
P. Cavanagh
Judy Dench Adlestrop E. Thomas.*

Would Society members like to write a brief letter about their favourite poem. We could publish two per edition. Ed.

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REGISTER OF MEMBERS WILLING TO READ THEIR OWN POETRY

The idea of having a register of poets willing to read their own poems is to help the Committee when choosing readers for various events. If you are keen to read, fill in the form and put N/A against any (or all) categories not applicable. Please return this form to Any member of the Society Committee.

1 Date

2 Name

3 Address

4 Telephone number

5 Email address

6 Portfolio member?

7 Poetry workshops attended

8 Poetry readings given

9 Other public performances (talks, plays, etc.)

10 Publications in which poems have appeared (magazines, newspapers, anthologies, etc.)

11 Pamphlets of poems published

12 Books of poems published

There's no need to mention more than 3 items in categories 7-12.

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Due to pressure of space and the new cost structure of postage several items have been filed for inclusion in our next Newsletter.