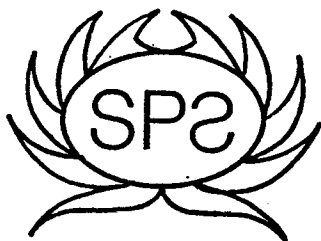


Suffolk Poetry Society



NEWSLETTER SPRING 1992

From the Chair

Dear Members

'An inaugural meeting of the Suffolk Poetry Society was held at the Crown and Anchor Hotel, Ipswich on Thursday Oct 9th 1952. Between sixty and seventy people were present. It was decided that a Society should be formed. Mr F H A Engleheart was elected Chairman...'

These lines, from the first page of our minute book, record the Suffolk Poetry Society's beginnings forty years ago. The many pages of minutes that follow chart four decades of activities and achievements, all pursued in the cause of poetry - that 'breath and finer spirit of all knowledge'.

To celebrate our fortieth anniversary, the Society is holding a buffet supper party, for members and friends, in the grounds of Manna Wood Farm (by kind permission of John and Terry Turk). As well as good company, food, wine, and the delights of a garden at eventide, there will be lute music from the sixteenth century - in keeping with Manna Wood's Elizabethan links. A not-to-be-missed event: on Saturday, 8 August. Details of how to get your ticket, and how to find your way, appear elsewhere in this newsletter.

The party comes midway through our main programme which is as intriguing and interesting as ever. In its choice of speakers, subjects and venues, the programme reflects the findings of last summer's questionnaire. We hope this will enhance its appeal - and prompt a surge in attendance.

Full details of meetings appear in the yellow programme leaflet, but may I draw your attention to two points. First, the AGM. Please note this starts at 2.30pm; Jack Herbert's talk on Eliot follows at 3pm. (If you have a collection of TSE's poetry, do bring it.) Second, Stoke-by-Nayland Priory (6 September). As most members know, this meeting - a well-established favourite - is by invitation of Henry and Victoria Engleheart and is, essentially, a members-only occasion. If, in exceptional circumstances, you wish to bring a guest please consult the Hon Secretary. It is also helpful to tell Mary Biggs if you yourself plan to attend this meeting as she does like to advise our host and hostess of anticipated numbers.

From the back page of the programme leaflet you will see that some jobs have changed hands. Douglas Wood replaces Kate Woodward as Hon Treasurer, and Gill Phillips takes over from Douglas as Hon Competition Secretary. Our grateful thanks to Kate for looking after the Society's finances so faithfully, and to Douglas for his able administration of the 'Crabbe'. A big thank you, also, to the other Committee members and helpers who put so much effort and energy into running the Society; and especially to Terry Turk and her team for organizing this spring's membership drive - a campaign of letters, leaflets and posters across the county. Dramatic results awaited!

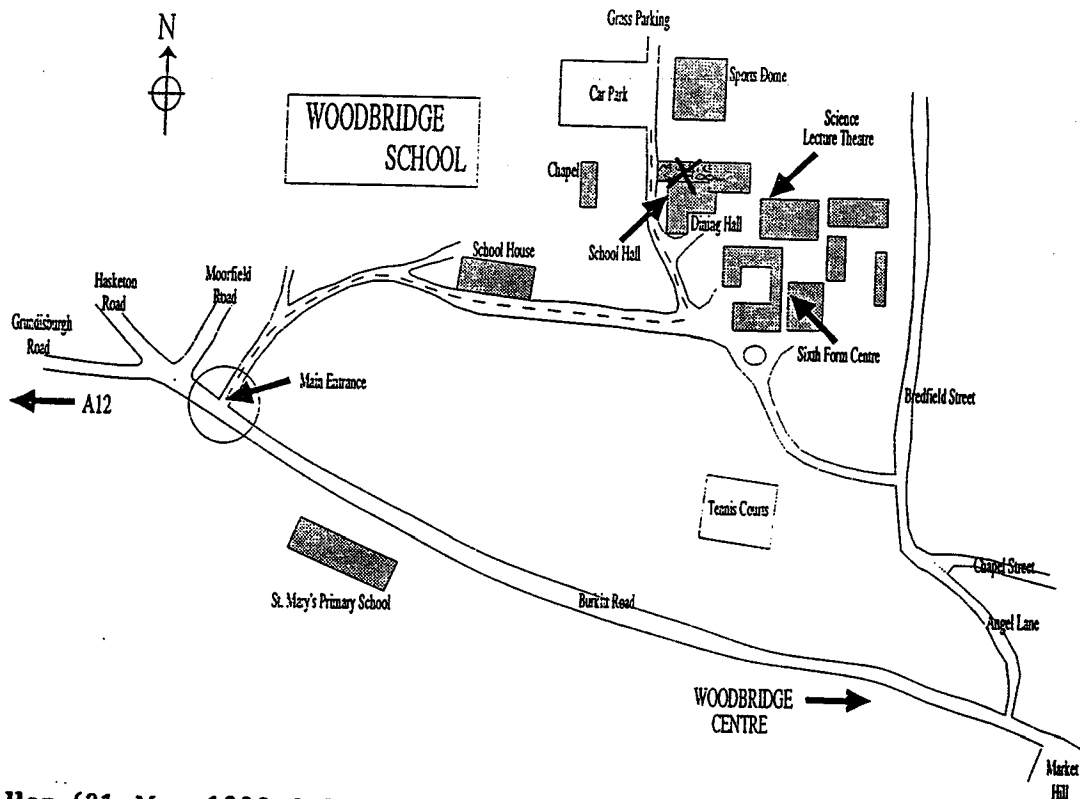
Hoping that you will give the Society your active support in this special anniversary year - and with all good wishes

Catherine Dell

WHO'S WHO IN THE SPS DIARY FOR 1992

Jack Herbert (26 April 1992 @ 2.30pm: Woodbridge School, Burkitt Road, Woodbridge [Music School - entrance via School Hall - see plan below]): Jack Herbert says, 'I was born and grew up in Gwent, Wales; and after studying at the University of Nottingham, Christ's College, Cambridge (where I did research on William Blake under Kathleen Raine), and the University of Munster, Germany, I went to Japan for three years as lecturer in English at the University of Kyushu. Returning to Germany, where I was lector in English at Munich University, I became staff tutor in literature with Cambridge University Board of Continuing Education from 1965 until October 1991. Currently, I am freelancing as lecturer and writer (poems in periodicals, contribution to the new Everyman Blake)'.

Music School entrance via School Hall



Bob Allen (31 May 1992 @ 3pm: Orwell Moat House Hotel, Felixstowe) is Head of English at the Deben High School, Felixstowe as well as being an Open University Arts Foundation Tutor and the OU Shakespeare Tutor for Norfolk and Suffolk. He is also a contributing author to Shakespeare in the Changing Curriculum 1991. Bob, who gave a very successful talk on John Donne to the SPS last September, is known locally for his keen interest in conservation. In his spare time, he writes poetry, paints and draws.

John Parry studied organ at Cambridge University with Boris Ord. He has since been Head of Music at Northgate and St Joseph's Schools in Ipswich, interspersed with a spell as lecturer at Colchester Institute. He is now retired but teaches for the Open University, Cambridge University Board of Continuing Education, the WEA and U3A, as well as finding time to be the organist and musical director at St Margaret's Church, Ipswich.

Rodney Pybus (5 July @ 3pm: Council Chamber, Guildhall, Market Place, Hadleigh) has lived in Suffolk for the past eight years, though he still regards himself as a northerner. He held an Arts Council fellowship in creative writing at Great Cornard Upper School, Sudbury, during 1982-4 and moved to that town with his family in 1983 from the Lake District, where he had lived for a few years after

returning from a lectureship at Macquarie University, Sydney. He has published several collections in the past twenty years, the most recent of which is The Cicadas in Their Summers (Carcenet, 1988). First prize in 1989 in the Peterloo Poets' International Poetry Competition is the most recent of several awards. **Hardiman Scott** (6 September 1992 @ 3pm: The Priory, Stoke-by-Nayland) is, of course, our President. He was for many years the BBC's Political Editor; the last five years of his BBC career were spent as Chief Assistant to the Director-General. Since then he has become a successful writer of political thrillers, his most recent being Bait of Lies, written in conjunction with Becky Allan and published by Brechinset Publications in 1986. A collection of poems, Part of Silence, also published by Brechinset, came out in 1985: previous collections are Adam and Eve and Us and When the Words are Gone. A new departure is his biography of a Suffolk farmworker, Many a Summer: the story of George 1893-1984 (Richard Castell 1991).

Elizabeth Bartlett (18 October @ 3pm: Church of SS Peter & Paul, Aldeburgh) was born in 1924 and says 'I have no academic background or qualifications of any kind. Neurosis and five years of psycho-analysis gave me greater insight, and the WEA filled in a few gaps in my education, but...the terrible mechanism of using words and making patterns from anything and everything which came my way cannot really be explored. Her first collection was A Lifetime of Dying and spanned the years 1942 to 1979; her latest one, published this year, is called Instead of Mass and is published by Headland Publications @ £6.95.

D J Enright was born in 1920. He taught in universities in Egypt, Japan, Germany and Thailand, before becoming Professor of English at the University of Singapore from 1960 to 1970. He edited The Oxford Book of Contemporary Verse 1945-1980 and The Oxford Book of Death. In 1981 he received the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry. An enlarged edition of his Collected Poems was published by Oxford University Press in 1987.

THINGS BEING VARIOUS

THE SPELL OF POETRY

A visitor to a class of seven-year-olds was struck by the sad, worldly-worn expression on the face of one little girl apparently labouring over a poem. Stopping by her desk he read her work:

Yesterday, yesterday, yesterday
 Happiness, happiness, happiness.
 Today, today, today
 Trouble, trouble, trouble.
 Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow
 Sorrow, sorrow, sorrow.

Very much moved by what she had written he asked what inspired her to write like that. She looked at him blankly and then replied that these were her spelling corrections. (Filched from the local parish magazine.) Apocryphal?

PENFRIENDS WANTED by Mr Gabor Erdodi, Hungarian English teacher & poetry translator @ 1022 Budapest, Filler Utca 50A and Wes Patterson, writer/poet @ 1600 NW 119 Street, Lot 103, Miami, Florida 33167, USA.
100 POEMS ON THE UNDERGROUND, published at £4.99: now in most bookshops.
WORD PROCESSING BUREAU offering presentation of poems on A4 paper in italic script, proportionally spaced, centred left to right and top to bottom, same level of resolution as laser printer. Full details from Mr N.R. Bassett, 68 Marlborough Road, Upper Holloway, London, N19 4NJ. (I can offer a similar service with a choice of typefaces - Ed.)
WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR POEMS by Evangeline Paterson, editor of Other Poetry. I haven't seen this book, but it comes well recommended for all poets.
WORDSWORTH SUMMER CONFERENCE AT DOVE COTTAGE 1-15 August 1992. Details from Dove Cottage, Grasmere, Cumbria LA22 9PS.

IN MEMORIAM

Peter Hewett died on 10 January, aged 77. In conjunction with Brenda Grainger, he presented a programme of Elizabethan poetry and music to the Society a few years ago and was awarded joint third prize in the Crabbe Poetry Competition in 1985. He became a member of the Society in 1990. His most recent book, Owslebury Bottom, an autobiography of his early childhood, was published by The Sumach Press last year and launched at the Wolsey Theatre, with the running of which he had been associated since its opening. An ex-teacher, Peter was a very kind and generous man and will be much missed by the hundreds of people he helped.

Murial McCarthy, who died on 29 January, aged 86, although not a member of the Society, was one of the judges in the Crabbe Competition in 1967, and her poem, Sizewell, was included in the SPS anthology, The Poets' Gift which she did a lot to sell in Beccles.

Freda Hickman of Woodbridge died on 29 February, aged 82. She had been a member of the Society for many years and for some time organized the Woodbridge Winter Group meetings, many of which were held at her own home. She came from a literary family and trained as a teacher at the Froebel College at Roehampton, subsequently taking a post as a private governess. She later married but, sadly, her husband died when their son and daughter were still teenagers. Freda then returned to schoolteaching. In her retirement, she derived much pleasure from the SPS and the friends she met at their meetings.

Maurice Langham died on 3 March. He was a very active member of the Hadleigh Group and a prolific contributor to the workshops. He had recently begun to contribute poems to the portfolio.

Phoebe Lockwood died on 14 March, aged 85. She had lived in Thorndon, near Eye since she married in 1947 and was a teacher there. She was a member of the Society for almost all of its forty years and a regular contributor to the portfolio. She always entered the Crabbe Competition in its early years, having several poems commended, including one on Margaret Catchpole in 1956. Most of her poems, however, were imbued with her deep knowledge of the countryside, many evoking the Suffolk of the past, as did her articles written under the pen-name of Ann Meadows. Phoebe had a number of short stories published before being invited by the BBC to make a radio broadcast in 1950 which began a series of contributions to Woman's Hour. In the mid-fifties she was asked to write for the East Anglian Daily Times for a six-week period. It lasted 35 years. Ann Meadows received countless letters from readers and was in great demand as a speaker. The county Phoebe Lockwood adored has lost one of its most knowledgeable characters and she will be widely missed.

Elizabeth Gillett died on 24 March, aged 73. She was a longstanding member of the Society and a regular contributor to the portfolio, her poems being usually about the countryside. She attended the Woodbridge Group meetings for many years.

They are not long, the days of wine and roses:
 Out of a misty dream
 Our path emerges for a while, then closes
 Within a dream.

NEWS FROM MEMBERS

Hardiman Scott visits Jane Austen's Bedroom, Chawton, in ORBIS (winter 1991) and has a couple of poems, Adelstrop and Words - both of which have appeared in previous books - coming out in a new anthology of poems for and about Edward Thomas. It is called Elected Friends, is edited by Anne Harvey with an introduction by Vernon Scannell, and is published by Enitharmon Press @ £9.95. It had a splendid launching at the Imperial War Museum attended by members of the Thomas family and of the Edward Thomas Fellowship.

The anthology contains poems by contemporaries of Thomas such as Robert Frost, Wilfrid Gibson, Walter de la Mare, Ivor Gurney and Eleanor Farjeon, as well as by many living poets, including Dannie Abse, Gavin Ewart, Michael Longley, Elizabeth Jennings, Peter Porter, Elizabeth Bartlett, Andrew Motion and Suffolk poet, Fred Sedgwick, who will be remembered for his lively reading to the SPS at Felixstowe last July. I'm already itching to get my hands on a copy.

Our President goes on to say that 'Thomas's most celebrated visit to Suffolk was nine weeks in 1909, when he was writing his biography of Richard Jefferies. During those weeks he became completely infatuated with a 17-year-old girl, Hope Webb. In a previous job, his wife, Helen, had actually looked after the girl, and said she was her "favourite child". The whole affair seems to have been quite unsexual, and although it must have been painful for Helen at the time, the ultimate effect was to bind Edward and Helen even closer together.'

I recently read Helen Thomas's autobiographies, As it Was and World Without End, in which she tells of her life with her husband, Edward. They are moving beautifully written and are published by Faber in one volume.

Finally, Marguerite Wood's visit to Rhodes results in When Symbols of Power are Laid Down in PERIAKTOS 6, and Jeremy Hubbard encounters a Ghost in the very first issue of SMITHS KNOLL, a local poetry magazine that has started as it means to go on, beautifully printed, with a spacious layout that lets the poems speak for themselves, and well worth listening to they are.

WRITING COURSES AND WORKSHOPS

HADLEIGH. Carol Rumens, poet-in-residence at the Aldeburgh Poetry Festival, held a poetry workshop for the SPS at Hadleigh on 8 November 1981. It was open to all members, but numbers had to be limited to ten. All who attended found it a valuable and enjoyable experience. It is hoped that a similar event will be held in November this year.

SATURDAY WORKSHOPS intended for people with experience of writing poetry. The final three of seven workshops conducted by Hugo Williams, Christopher and other invited poets. 8 May, 6 June and 11 July: 2-6pm. Details from The Co-ordinator, c/o Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AQ.

POEMS WANTED

THE PLUM REVIEW of Washington invites contributions of original poetry and poetry book reviews. Additional information from Sophie Ahmeen, 20 Waldemar Avenue, London SW6 5NA (Tel 071 731 4854)

POMES: submissions required for this postal performance poetry magazine. Contact the editor, Adrian Spendlow, 23 Bright Street, York YO2 4XS

Any poet lives in the hope of being new in thought as well as expression; and the way to permit this to happen, or not to happen, is to relax and write, and the outcome will be whatever it is and valued accordingly. - Douglas Dunn:
Acumen Magazine 13, April 1991

KEY NOTICESTHE 1992 CRABBE MEMORIAL POETRY COMPETITION

We have two excellent judges this year in Elizabeth Bartlett and D. J. Enright, so stop chewing your pencils and take part in the most rewarding word game of them all - writing poetry. The closing date is 31 May 1992. Full details from Gill Phillips, Lower Mead, Alphamstone, Near Bures CO8 5HS.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for the current year were due on 1 January and many are now overdue. The charges are: Ordinary Full Membership £5 p.a., Full Membership plus Portfolio £10 p.a., Associate Membership (Portfolio only) £5 p.a. There are even a number of members who have not yet paid their 1991 subscriptions. The Autumn Newsletter will be sent to paid-up members only.

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* OUR 40th BIRTHDAY PARTY... ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW *

* where Manna Wood Farm, Stackyard Green, Monks Eleigh *

* when From 7pm, Saturday 8 August *

* finding your way From Hadleigh, take the A1141 towards Lavenham. *

* After 1½ miles, just past Letts (pools/saunas) on the right, the A1141 *

* turns sharp left signed Lavenham and Monks Eleigh. Follow the A1141 *

* for a further 2½-3 miles. On the outskirts of Monks Eleigh turn left *

* up road signed Lindsey and Boxford (if you reach the bridge going into *

* Monks Eleigh you have gone too far). Continue for 1/4 mile, then turn *

* right into a lane - with no-through-road sign - to Stackyard Green. Go *

* along this lane until you reach dwellings. Manna Wood Farm, thatched, *

* is the second house on the left; follow notices into car park on right.*

* buying your ticket Tickets, £5.50 each, are available from end May. *

* Buy them at SPS meetings (31 May/5 July). Or send a cheque, payable to *

* Suffolk Poetry Society, plus sae, to Catherine Dell, Doggers, Old *

* London Rd, Copdock, Ipswich IP8 3JF. Last date for applications: 8 July* *

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POSTSCRIPT

Perhaps the Groups hibernated during the winter. This would account for my not having had any news from any of them. Maybe I should emulate the yellow press and make up my own. I certainly hope it isn't going to come to that. Anyway, we aren't due to use yellow paper until 1994.

There are a number of back numbers of the SPS Newsletter still available, packed with useful and interesting information. If you'd like any of them, just send me a second-class stamp and say which ones you want. I've still got March 1986, March 1987, Spring 1989, Autumn 1989, Spring 1990 and Spring 1991. If you'd like an issue not listed above, I can photocopy anything from Autumn 1991 to March 1984, which is as far back as my archives go. Is there anyone who can supply me with copies pre-1984? I should like to have a complete set of all the Newsletters for reference.

Finally, if you want an up-to-date list of competitions please let me have an sae and if you wish to comment on anything or send me any news, please write to 21 Sunningdale Drive, Felixstowe, IP11 9LE.

FRANK WOOD