

Twelve River RIPPLES

Members' Poems



Sea-nibbled

Set in bright silver, the island glitters,
fine cut, like a tiny jewel.

Around its shores
relentless waves attack;
sturdy, white-sailed yachts compete.

Trickling streams, flanked by ferns,
wander seawards through dappled chines
and undercliffs, tumbling, mud-sliding down,
like happy children onto soft shales below,
where hidden fossils lurk.

Nibbled at the edges,
the island's backbone hills
remain reassuringly intact.
Tenacious islanders reinvent themselves
as the sea devours their home.

Isle of Wight

Julia Duke

Members' Poems cont.

Pest Control

They eat the mould but not the rotting wood.
It's evidence of dampness in the beams.
Quite soon he said they'll have their wedding day.
And sure enough on Thursday they emerged:
five hundred kings and queens their dainty wings
vibrating with desire to mate, to nest.

Brown ants that grace the beams of our old house
pepper the taps and basin with their frass
while little heaps of sawdust from woodworms
accumulate on picture frames and shelves.
Live with the ants, he says; they eat the mould
but not the wood; and then grow wings and fly.

Anne Boileau

Members' Poems cont.

Le Lac

Across the lake a pall of smoke
Hung, ominous in the distance
Here the children splashed
Played, despite the heat's insistence

Sailboats kept on sailing
Yards, embracing the breeze
The drinkers in the bar
Drank, sheltered by the trees

The smoke increased in intensity
Black, against a clear blue sky
The sun scorched the umbrellas
Shields, from the battle nearby

Flame red fire trucks saw
Hoses, in aching hands
Invisible to the tourists
Wandering, on the sands

A busy boat bustled
Herding, clearing a path
Swimmers and boarders bristled
Tangibly, exuding their wrath

Then a sound in the sky
Echoed, by yet another
An enormous elegant aircraft
Followed, by its brother

The waders turned to witness
Mesmerised, by the sight
The yellow birds swooped low
Seemed, as if to alight!

The monsters foamed forth
Scooping, water into their tummies
Then growled a gainly flight
Infants, hid behind their mummies

Spectators speculated
Wondered, what would now transpire?
The planes wheeled and straightened
Flew, low towards the pyre

One carefully took its aim
Dropped, a dowsing load of water
The other followed its path
As, a knight seeking no quarter

The murmuring crowd babbled
Excited, watched the show unfold
A story to relate to relatives
In winter, when the weather is cold

Three more times they circled
Repeating, round and around
Scooping releasing their relief
Enthralling, those on the ground

Quickly the smoke disbursed
Extinguished, one tragedy averted
The crowd went back to imbibing
....., where were we before diverted?

Hugh Lake

For a Ripple of Laughter

Bow-Back Chair

It's a bow-back traditional dining chair
with six supportive spindles
and four very firmly jointed legs,
which don't wobble when you move around.

For us it always will be known
as "the wee-wee chair" because,
one day, nappy-less, one of the kids
squatted and wee-d upon it.

It's long since dried out and, amazingly,
it's the most popular chair we have.
It's always a squabble to get there first:
for the children, the cat and me.

Simon Haines