

STW Society Newsletter  
No 1

### The Society Launch

The Sylvia Townsend Warner Society was launched at a meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2000, which was hosted by the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society at The Dorset County Museum, Dorchester. Wine and soft drinks were served beforehand to the twenty-nine who attended.

Richard de Peyer, the Museum's Curator, spoke first, thanking everyone for turning out on a cold winter's evening. He mentioned the Museum's long association with Sylvia Townsend Warner through not only her support of the museum, but also her friendship with his predecessor, Roger Peers. Mr Peers was in the audience with Susanna Pinney, who was also thanked for all her support as executor of Sylvia Townsend Warner's Estate.

Mr de Peyer said that the Museum was proud not only to have important collections by William Barnes, Thomas Hardy and the Powys Family but also to have under their roof the Sylvia Townsend Warner and Valentine Ackland collections.

Chris Gostick, Honorary Secretary to the Powys Society, kindly consented to act as master of ceremonies for the evening, and guided us through the technicalities of setting up the Society. Ray Russell spoke briefly about the draft constitution and a few minor suggestions and corrections were agreed. It was proposed by Eileen Johnson that the constitution be provisionally adopted for a period of three years. The proposal was seconded by Judith Bond and carried unanimously.

The following officers were proposed to serve until the first AGM in approximately eighteen months time:

Chair: Ray Russell  
Secretary: Eileen Johnson  
Treasurer and Membership Secretary: Judith Bond  
Publicity and promotion: Judith Stinton  
Editors of Journal: Ray Russell and Ros Parker  
Editor of Newsletter: Frank Kibblewhite

It was also mentioned that under 3.4 of the constitution that the committee could enlist additional specialist help and that at present three others attended committee meetings in the following capacities:

Patron: Janet Pollock  
Special advice: Claire Harman  
Representative of Estate: Morine Krissdóttir

The officers were proposed by Bruce Madge and seconded by Sheila Milton. The proposal was carried unanimously.

It was confirmed that membership would be set at £10 per year, running from January to December.

Diana Barrett then introduced our speaker for the evening, John Lucas, Research Professor of English at the Nottingham Trent University, and well known for his book *The Radical Twenties* \*. He has kindly agreed to write up his talk for the first issue of the Society's Journal which will appear later this year. His title was SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER: RADICAL and he looked at how her poetry, often outwardly traditional in form, usually had a political agenda. He stressed that she was invariably positive in the ideas that she explored and, when compared to such contemporaries as Eliot, her work was suffused with joy.

John Lucas was warmly received, and thanked by Ray Russell. Ray suggested that it was always important to remember that Sylvia Townsend Warner was not a 'safe' author. He then articulated the unanimous view that with John Lucas's talk the Society had got off to a splendid start.

Janet Machen then read two poems by Sylvia Townsend Warner, *East London Cemetery* and *Azrael*. Janet's reading was eloquent and poignant.

Everyone was thanked once again for attending, and Judith Stinton was in attendance to answer questions in the Literary Gallery afterwards.

\* Published by Five Leaves Publications (ISBN: 0907123171) and currently available in paperback at £11.99, The Times Literary Supplement described *The Radical Twenties: Writing, Politics, and Culture* as, 'stimulating and generous-spirited'. The book brings together writers from the 1920's who have never before been collectively studied in regard to their political radicalism. Drawing on the work of Sylvia Townsend Warner, Virginia Woolf, D. H. Lawrence, and others, John Lucas identifies the decade as a time of both political activism and of deliberately transgressive behaviour, particularly among women. The book is self-recommending to all members.

## Publishing News

Earlier this year, Virago Modern Classics reissued *The Corner That Held Them*, *Mr Fortune's Maggot* and *Lolly Willowes*. Little Brown, Virago's parent company, are generously extending a special offer to all members who are entitled to buy these new editions at 35% discount. Anyone interested should contact Michelle Salter on 0207-911-8089 (or [michelle.salter@littlebrown.com](mailto:michelle.salter@littlebrown.com)).

In spring 2001, the US publishers Counterpoint will publish two new Sylvia Townsend Warner books, both edited by Michael Steinman. *Never Mislaid A Pleasure: Letters of Sylvia Townsend Warner and William Maxwell 1938-1978* selects from more than thirteen hundred letters. Their correspondence began as a working one, for Maxwell was her editor at *The New Yorker*, but they quickly became devoted friends who wrote intimately and often. *The Music at Long Verney: Stories by Sylvia Townsend Warner 1929-1977* collects twenty of Warner's finest stories never published in book form, including memorable appearances by Mrs. Finch and Mr. Edom. Maxwell has written an introduction especially for this collection.

June 2000 will see the re-publication of *The Salutation*. Arguably one of her most important collections, the title story is the sequel to *Mr Fortune's Maggot*. It will be published by the Tartarus Press in an edition of 250 numbered, hardback copies, and will have a new introduction by Claire Harman.

By the end of the year a Bibliography of the writings of Sylvia Townsend Warner by R.B. Russell and J. Laurence Mitchell will be published, also by the Tartarus Press.

## Reviews for Lolly Willowes:

'Lolly Willowes is a morality fable, fully realized but sparsely told. . . . It remains a novel as original in its conception as it is subtle and refined in its artistry.' —Times Literary Supplement

'Lolly Willowes is a treasure; profound, crisp and brilliant, an allegory to enchant even the reader with little patience for allegory, a fantasy firmly and illuminatingly located in the very dailiness of life . . .' — Boston Sunday Globe

## Lolly Willowes

Lolly Willowes comes from a long-established family of country gentry, and grows up accepting the inalterability of all its customs. After her beloved father dies, she is sent off to London to be looked after by her officious brother and his pious wife. The years pass. Lolly feels increasingly lonely and out of place, until, impulsively, she decides to strike out on her own. She rents a room in a remote country village, where she becomes aware of mysterious goings-on. She begins to recognize the workings of the profound and uncanny power that will transform her life once and for all.

In *Lolly Willowes*, Sylvia Townsend Warner tells of a woman's struggle to break away from her family - a classic story that she treats with cool feminist intelligence, and to which she adds a dimension of the supernatural and strange. For Warner is one of the outstanding and indispensable mavericks of twentieth-century literature, a writer to set beside Djuna Barnes and Jane Bowles, with a subversive genius that anticipates the fantastic flights of such contemporaries as Angela Carter and Jeanette Winterson.

Sylvia Townsend Warner began her literary career as a poet, and her first novel is as nimble and precise as poetry and reads as if it might have been composed to a meter. Like some of Jane Austen's fiction, *Lolly Willowes* is a comedy about the perils, pleasures, and consolations of spinsterhood, and the predicament of its heroine is at first deliberately and deceptively commonplace. "Aunt Lolly, a middle-aging lady, light-footed upon stairs, and indispensable for Christmas Eve and birthday preparations," is nevertheless troubled by vague, indefinable longings, a hankering after the solitude of woods and dark rural places. At last a revelation in a greengrocer's leads her to abandon her outraged London family and take rooms in an obscure hamlet, Great Mop.

Here her neighbours keep curiously late and noisy hours, but otherwise allow her to pass the time "in perfect idleness and contentment." She is eventually pursued into her idyll, however, by her nephew, and Titus's familiar small demands drive her to rage and despair: "No! You shan't get me. I won't go back. I won't... Oh! Is there *no* help?" She is promptly visited by a mysterious black kitten, which fastens its claws upon her hand and draws blood. At once she understands. The kitten is her familiar, and has been sent by dark forces. "She, Laura Willowes, in England, in the year 1922, had entered into a compact with the Devil."

She has, in short, become a witch or, rather, she has rediscovered her own slumbering diabolical potential, in the unlikely setting of a Buckinghamshire hamlet that, as she now realizes, is peopled entirely by witches. Laura soon attends a rollicking but ultimately rather disappointing midnight Sabbath; she is visited by Satan in the shape of a pleasant-faced man in a corduroy coat and

gaiters who rids her of Titus and restores her to privacy and peace. She is left with a vision of the women "all over England, all over Europe ... as common as blackberries, and as unregarded" to whom he has offered the promise of adventure, "the dangerous black night to stretch your wings in." It is this vision that lends the novel its subversive edge, that ultimately allies it less with the work of Austen than with that of Virginia Woolf, and with later feminists. They "know they are dynamite," says Laura of Satan's women, "and long for the concussion that may justify them." - Sarah Waters

In this intriguing story, a middle-aged woman finally escapes her role as spinster when she decides to have a life of her own; "not an existence doled out to you by others." Laura Willowes - Lolly to her family - is twenty-eight when her father dies and she is taken in by her elder brother, Henry, and his family in London. While Lolly has no desire to leave Lady Place, her childhood country home, she proffers no argument to her family's assumption that she must live with someone. Henry and his family live a well-regulated and comfortable life into which Laura settles herself with quiet, nearly unconscious discomfort. Henry is a lawyer, a profession which, in Laura's mind, "had changed his natural sturdy stupidity into a browbeating indifference to other people's point of view." Although Laura tries her best to like London, she cannot. There are no fields to roam, no herbs to gather; there is no quiet to comfort her and feed her dreams. When Laura can no longer hide her feelings that the jaws of her potential suitors "were like so many mouse-traps, baited with commonplaces," Henry and his wife stop inviting eligible bachelors to their home. Rendered in wry and piercingly lovely prose, *Lolly Willowes* posits a realistic and still-relevant social dilemma that Warner resolves with surprising élan. - J Larsen

'With a chilling immediacy this book speaks today, as it did in 1925, for women. Not only women like Laura who are incapable of loving men, but for all those who have been "subdued" into ladyhood, or dwindled into wives. Women were strongly concerned with their status during the first forty years of this century. Now, after a sleep of twenty years, they, like Lolly Willowes, are awake again, seeking for lives of their own. - From the introduction to the Academy Chicago edition by Anita Miller

'Lolly Willowes . . . is the witty, eerie, tender but firm life history of a middle-class Englishwoman who politely declines to make the expected connection with the opposite sex and becomes a witch instead.' - John Updike in *The New Yorker*

## Price Guide to STW First Editions

The third edition of the Tartarus Press *Guide to 1st Edition Prices* was published on 1<sup>st</sup> Nov. 1999 and contains the following entry for Sylvia Townsend Warner (prices with/without dustjackets):

### Verse

<i>The Espalier</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1925	£100/£25
ditto, Dial Press (U.S.), 1925	£100/£25
<i>Time Importuned</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1928	£100/£25
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1928	£100/£25
<i>Opus 7</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1931	£20/£10
ditto, Chatto and Windus, 1931 (110 signed, numbered copies)	£85
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1931	£25/£10
<i>Rainbow</i> , Borzoi (U.S.), 1932 (wraps, in envelope)	£75/£65
<i>Whether a Dove or Seagull</i> , Viking Press (U.S.), 1933	£75/£20
ditto, Chatto and Windus, 1934, (with Valentine Ackland)	£65/£20
<i>Boxwood</i> , Monotype Corporation, 1957 (500 copies, withdrawn)	£100
ditto, Monotype Corporation, 1958 (500 copies)	£75
ditto, Chatto and Windus, 1960 (enlarged edition)	£35/£10
<i>King Duffus</i> , privately printed, 1968 (wraps)	£75
<i>Twelve Poems</i> , privately circulated (duplicated sheets, stapled), 1977	£80
ditto, Chatto and Windus, 1980 (reissue)	£10/£5
ditto, as <i>Azrael</i> , Libanus Press, 1978, (200 copies, wraps)	£65
<i>Collected Poems</i> , Carcanet Press/Viking Press (U.S.), 1982	£25/£10
<i>Selected Poems</i> , Carcanet Press, 1985 (wraps)	£10

### Novels

<i>Lolly Willowses</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1926	£65/£15
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1926	£65/£15
<i>Mr Fortune's Muggot</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1927	£50/£15
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1927	£50/£15
<i>The True Heart</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1929	£50/£15
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1929	£50/£15
<i>Summer Will Show</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1936	£40/£10
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1936	£25/£10
<i>After The Death of Don Juan</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1938	£30/£10
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1938	£25/£10
<i>The Corner that Held Them</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1948	£20/£10
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1948	£20/£10
<i>The Flint Anchor</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1954	£30/£10
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1954	£25/£10

### Short Stories

<i>The Maze</i> , Fleuron, 1928 (signed, wraps)	£75
<i>Some World Far From Ours and 'Stay Corydon, Thou Swain'</i> , Mathews and Marrot, 1929 (531 numbered, signed copies)	£35/£20

<i>Elinor Barley</i> , Cresset Press, 1930 (350 numbered, signed copies on mould made paper, slipcase)	£100/£125
ditto, Cresset Press, 1930 (30 numbered and signed copies on hand made paper, extra set of engravings, slipcase)	£400/£275
<i>A Moral Ending</i> , W Jackson, 1930 (550 numbered, signed copies)	£45
<i>The Salutation</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1932	£75/£35
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1932	£75/£35
<i>More Joy in Heaven</i> , Cresset Press, 1935	£35/£10
<i>The Cat's Cradle Book</i> , Viking Press (U.S.), 1940	£40/£15
ditto, Chatto and Windus, 1960	£25/£10
<i>A Garland of Straw</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1943	£30/£10
ditto, Viking Press, 1943	£25/£10
<i>The Museum of Cheats</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1947	£30/£10
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1947	£25/£10
<i>Winter in The Air</i> Chatto and Windus, 1955	£25/£10
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1956	£20/£5
<i>A Spirit Rises</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1962	£25/£10
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1962	£20/£5
<i>Sketches from Nature</i> , privately printed, 1963 (wraps)	£75
<i>A Stranger with a Bag</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1966	£25/£10
ditto, as <i>Swans on an Autumn River</i> , Viking Press (U.S.), 1966	£20/£5
<i>Two Conversation Pieces</i> , privately printed, 1967 (wraps)	£65
<i>The Innocent and The Guilty</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1971	£15/£5
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1971	£15/£5
<i>Kingdoms of Elfin</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1977	£15/£5
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1977	£15/£5
<i>Scenes of Childhood</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1981	£10/£5
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1981	£10/£5
<i>One Thing Leading to Another</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1984	£10/£5
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1984	£10/£5
<i>Selected Stories</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1989	£15/£5
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1989	£15/£5
<b>Translations</b>	
<i>By Way of Saint-Beuve</i> , by Marcel Proust, Chatto and Windus, 1958	£25/£10
<i>A Place of Shipwreck</i> , by Jean Rene Huquenin, Chatto and Windus, 1963	£25/£10
<b>Other Works</b>	
<i>Somerset</i> , Paul Elek, 1949, (withdrawn)	£40/£20
<i>Jane Austen</i> , Longmans Green, 1941 (wraps)	£10
<i>T.H. White, A Biography</i> , Jonathan Cape, 1967	£15/£5
ditto, Viking Press (U.S.), 1968	£10/£5
<i>Letters</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1982	£20/£10
<i>The Diaries of Sylvia Townsend Warner</i> , Chatto and Windus, 1994	£15/£5

From the dustjacket...

*Winter in the Air*, US First Edition The Viking Press, 1956

'Since 1926, when *Lolly Willowses* appeared, Sylvia Townsend Warner's name has been a hallmarked one on the literary scene. Her versatile excursions into the novel and short story fields have ranged from perceptive fantasy through historical realism to polished and pointed modern-day irony. This collection of eighteen of her short stories brings home anew the finished and positive artistry that illuminates everything from her pen. Each tale is as sharply limned as an etching, as exactly probing in its characterizations as an X-ray beam. But there is nothing of the 'clinical' approach here: compassion informs the stories throughout and a rare wit - by turns deeply comical and wryly ironic - leavens them. For instance, it will be a lugubrious reader indeed who is not hugely entertained by 'Uncle Blair', wherein a rigid bachelor of academic inclinations becomes the prey of a glittering, worldly bluestocking who exposes him to the 'evil eye' of an over-age adolescent. Or, there is the bittersweet quality of 'At Trafalgar Bakery', whose mother-ridden young heroine holds a rendezvous with romance and freedom in a bakeshop. Or, again, 'Funeral at Clovie' - which turns on a felicitous irony wherein a burial is actually the beginning of a new life for the supposedly deceased principal. Scope and variousness are here in generous proportion, but most satisfying of all is the sense of communicating with a highly developed artist.'

Some contemporary English reviews of *Winter in the Air*:

'Masterpiece is admittedly not a word to be lightly used... Yet it seems the only fitting term to apply to half a dozen stories in Miss Townsend Warner's *Winter in the Air*... These stories induce the sort of pleasure that spreads outwards long after they have been read, like ripples from a flung stone.' - The Times

'...a very impressive book indeed. Every story shows sensitiveness in the good sense - that is awareness of all the possibilities of a character or a situation, swiftness in reaching the honest conclusion.' -The Spectator

'Every new volume of short stories does a service to a grossly neglected art, and the best of Sylvia Townsend Warner's in *Winter in the Air* are very good indeed....' -Manchester Guardian

'The short story suits Miss Warner best of all, and those in *Winter in the Air* are to me worth several novels rolled into one.' -The Daily Telegraph

Two Letters from Sylvia Townsend Warner to H A Rappaport

*From a private collection of a dozen letters to an admirer of STW's work & collector of her books.*

Frome Vauchurch Maiden Newton Dorset  
16.xii.1954

Dear Mr Rappaport

Thank you very much for the copy of *The Cat's Cradle Book*. For this is the first time I have ever received one of my books as a Christmas present. I have long been of the opinion that such a present would be a very pleasing one; but now by experience, I know it. I have already looked at the illustrations, which delight me, and I am sure I shall enjoy reading the book very much. I can see at a glance that it is just the sort of book I like. I hope you will have had a very happy comfortable Christmas and I wish you a fortunate New Year.

Yours sincerely  
Sylvia Townsend Warner

13. xii. 1957

Dear Mr Rappaport

Thank you so much for the present of T. F. Powys's *Fables*. It is a book I am especially fond of, and I have long thought that it shows him at the height of his power in the matter of actual writing. I remember saying to Charles Prentice when we were both staying at Chaldon Herring, and T.F. had read some of them aloud to us from manuscript, that I thought they expressed much the same illumination of a familiar manner that one feels with the Beethoven posthumous quartets. Everything is there that one knows and admires already, but in some way a process of incandescence has taken place. T.F. must have thought well of them himself too, or he would not have read them to us - a thing he very seldom did, being as reticent as a mole about discussing or displaying his work.

I hope Mrs Rappaport is now thoroughly well again, and that you are looking forward to a Happy Christmas; and that it will be even happier than you anticipate.

Yours sincerely, Sylvia Townsend Warner

## The Songs of John Ireland

Although John Ireland (1879-1962) was strongly influenced by the music of Debussy and Ravel his own compositions are intensely personal in style and have always attracted a devoted following among discerning music lovers. Although he preferred the more intimate forms of chamber music, song, and piano music to the larger orchestral and choral canvases, his Piano Concerto is arguably the best to have been written by an Englishman. He was highly susceptible to the spirit of place which often provided a source of inspiration for his music, living in London for many years and eventually in Sussex, but he was devoted to the Channel Islands of Guernsey and Jersey. Their location between France and England must have seemed appropriate to his musical orientation, but more importantly he found traces of prehistoric pagan ritual to which he had originally been drawn through the writings of Arthur Machen.

Ireland was strongly influenced by English poetry and his settings of A.E. Houseman, Thomas Hardy, Christina Rossetti and Rupert Brooke are much loved and admired. He also set three of Sylvia's poems from *The Espalier* as songs: 'Hymn for a Child', 'The Scapegoat' and 'The Soldier's Return' which comprised half his *Songs Sacred and Profane* cycle. The songs from this major cycle ran the full gamut of life and emotion, from the gentle birth of Christ, via two aspects of secular love, to a diabolical touch in 'The Soldier's Return' and ironical humour in 'The Scapegoat'. In her biography of the composer, Muriel Searle records: "Those who heard Ireland himself accompany a performance at Wigmore Hall, during the 1951 Festival of Britain, did not easily forget the manner in which he set one of the staidest musical companies in London laughing aloud as the Scapegoat's figuration skipped in company with the words 'Dances on, and on, and on!' up the keyboard." One can only imagine Sylvia's delight had she been among the usually 'excessively sober' Wigmore Hall audience that evening.

A 2CD set featuring the *Songs Sacred and Profane* cycle and over sixty of Ireland's other songs was released by Hyperion Records in 1999 on CDA 67261/2. Performed by three marvellous young singers (John Mark Ainsley, Lisa Milne & Christopher Johnson with accompanist par excellence, Graham Johnson) this set can be unreservedly recommended. Previously, the witches' Sabbath in *Lolly Willowes* had provided the inspiration for Ireland when he composed the final movement of his Sonatina for Piano and for a period he actually contemplated composing an opera based on *Mr Fortune's Maggot* which he eventually passed over. (As an aside, I have occasionally wondered why Ireland's pupil, Benjamin Britten, never considered this particular novel for an opera. One of his perennial themes was the corruption of innocence but perhaps Britten felt he had explored it sufficiently in his chamber opera *The Turn of the Screw* and, unlike Miles, Lueli is never corrupted.)

## Michael Holroyd's Book of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

Sylvia Townsend Warner wrote *Mr Fortune's Maggot* (1927) in a state of advanced hallucination during the mid-1920s, following a vivid dream in which she saw a middle-aged man standing alone on an island beach, wringing his hands in despair. "I jumped out of bed," she recorded, "and began to write it down."

Later on, she realised that the dream may have arisen from a volume of letters she was then reading by a woman missionary in Polynesia, full of elementary scenery, with pleasing details of everyday life, and a gratifying absence of religion.

I remember reading this novel with extraordinary enchantment in my twenties. I loved its humour, charm, simplicity. But would it stand up to re-reading in my sixties? The fact is I admire it even more now, having discovered more imaginative layers of meaning within its apparent simplicity.

It is the story of Timothy Fortune, an ex-clerk of Lloyds Bank, who, having been left £1,000 by his godmother, enters the Church and, equipped with such useful paraphernalia as a second-hand harmonium and a sewing-machine, sets off on a pious escapade to a remote island in the South Seas. Here he converts no one except a young boy called Lueli - although actually he is converted to the boy's way of life.

The climax of the book, orchestrated by a volcanic eruption, leaves Lueli for dead and the Reverend Timothy Fortune reflecting on the nature of their relationship. He has eaten, as it were, from the Tree of Innocence and discovered the secret of happiness. The marvels and delights of this magic island, which is a place of love, puts into dramatic contrast the moral corruption of ordinary mainland life where the Great War has begun. But no one can stay on this elusive island for long without destroying its qualities.

*Mr Fortune's Maggot* is a minor masterpiece of island literature - a genre that includes "The Tempest", *The Coral Island*, "The Admirable Crichton" and "The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles". This island is one of those Utopias without which, as Oscar Wilde said, no map of the world is worth glancing at. But what is a "maggot"? It is a whimsical fancy - which is not what Sylvia Townsend Warner created, but what her eponymous hero lost as a result of his wonderful experiences.

## The Sylvia Townsend Warner & Valentine Ackland Archive

The archive is located in The Dorset County Museum, Dorchester, Dorset, and DT1 1XA and housed in the Sylvia Townsend Warner/Valentine Ackland Room (with restricted access), while some material is on display in the Literary Gallery (open to the public). The archive contains diaries, notebooks, manuscripts, letters, and photographs, in addition to published works and a selection of books from their library. There are also pictures and chattels from their home at Frome Vauchurch.

The formation of the Sylvia Townsend Warner Society has naturally stimulated interest in the STW/VA collection and the number of enquiries for access has increased. However, it is important to note that the criteria for permission to view any of the material in the collection remain unchanged. Applicants must obtain the written permission of both the Curator and Advisor to the collection (Dr Morine Krissdottir, Well House, Higher Odcombe, Nr Yeovil, Somerset BA22 8XE) and the Estate (Susanna Pinney, 7 Southbrook Road, London, SE12 8LH). Visits need to be arranged not less than a month in advance and applicants are expected to state the purpose of their research (usually for a written project on either writer) accompanied by a letter from an academic institution, publisher etc.

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An informal gathering of members met at East Chaldon on May 1<sup>st</sup> to commemorate the anniversary of Sylvia's death. A report will appear in the next issue of the Newsletter.  
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Edited by Frank Kibblewhite  
with thanks to Ray Russell

Contributions to the next and future issues of the Newsletter are warmly invited. Please send all articles, short items, photographs, news and letters to the Editor at:  
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(stwnews@talk21.com)

## The Sylvia Townsend Warner Society

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