

The Espalter, Time Importuned, Opus 7, Rainbow, Whether a Dove or Seagull, Boxwood, King Duffus, Twelve Poems, Collected Poems, Selected Poems, Lolly Willowes, Mr Fortune's Maggot, The True Heart, Summer Will Show, After The Death of Don Juan, The Corner that Held Them, The Flint Anchor, The Maze, Some World Far From Ours and 'Stay Corydon, Thou Swain', Elinor Barley, A Moral Ending, The Salvation, More Joy in Heaven, The Cat's Cradle Book, A Garland of Straw, The Museum of Cheats, Winter in The Air, A Spirit Rises, Sketches from Nature, A Stranger with a Bag, Swans on an Autumn River, Two Conversation Pieces, The Innocent and The Guilty, Kingdoms of Elfin, Scenes of Childhood, One Thing Leading to Another, Selected Stories, Somerset, Jane Austen, T.H.White: A Biography, Letters, The Diaries of Sylvia Townsend Warner, The Espalter, Time Importuned, Opus 7, Rainbow, Whether a Dove or Seagull, Boxwood, King Duffus, Twelve Poems, Collected Poems, Selected Poems, Lolly Willowes, Mr Fortune's Maggot, The True Heart, Summer Will Show, After The Death of Don Juan, The Corner that Held Them, The Flint Anchor, The Maze, Some World Far From Ours and 'Stay Corydon, Thou Swain', Elinor Barley, A Moral Ending, The Salvation, More Joy in Heaven, The Cat's Cradle Book, A Garland of Straw, The Museum of Cheats, Winter in The Air, A Spirit Rises, Sketches from Nature, A Stranger with a Bag, Swans on an Autumn River, Two Conversation Pieces, The Innocent and The Guilty, Kingdoms of Elfin, Scenes of Childhood, One Thing Leading to Another, Selected Stories, Somerset, Jane Austen, T.H.White: A Biography, Letters, The Diaries of Sylvia Townsend Warner, The Espalter, Time Importuned, Opus 7, Rainbow, Whether a Dove or Seagull, Boxwood, King Duffus, Twelve Poems, Collected Poems, Selected Poems, Lolly Willowes, Mr Fortune's Maggot, The True Heart, Summer Will Show, After The Death of Don Juan, The Corner that Held Them, The Flint Anchor, The Maze, Some World Far From Ours and 'Stay Corydon, Thou Swain', Elinor Barley, A Moral Ending, The Salvation, More Joy in Heaven, The Cat's Cradle Book, A Garland of Straw, The Museum of Cheats, Winter in The Air, A Spirit Rises, Sketches from Nature, A Stranger with a Bag, Swans on an Autumn River, Two Conversation Pieces, The Innocent and The Guilty, Kingdoms of Elfin, Scenes of Childhood, One Thing Leading to Another, Selected Stories, Somerset, Jane Austen, T.H.White: A Biography, Letters, The Diaries of Sylvia Townsend Warner, The Espalter, Time Importuned, Opus 7, Rainbow, Whether a Dove or Seagull, Boxwood, King Duffus, Twelve Poems, Collected Poems, Selected Poems, Lolly Willowes, Mr Fortune's

The Sylvia Townsend Warner Society Newsletter Number Twenty Two

Maggot, The True Heart, Summer Will Show, After The Death of Don Juan, The Corner that Held Them, The Flint Anchor, The Maze, Some World Far From Ours and 'Stay Corydon, Thou Swain', Elinor Barley, A Moral Ending, The Salvation, More Joy in Heaven, The Cat's Cradle Book, A Garland of Straw, The Museum of Cheats, Winter in The Air, A Spirit Rises, Sketches from Nature, A Stranger with a Bag, Swans on an Autumn River, Two Conversation Pieces, The Innocent and The Guilty, Kingdoms of Elfin, Scenes of Childhood, One Thing Leading to Another, Selected Stories, Somerset, Jane Austen, T.H.White: A Biography, Letters, The Diaries of Sylvia Townsend Warner, The Espalter, Time Importuned, Opus 7, Rainbow, Whether a Dove or Seagull, Boxwood, King Duffus, Twelve Poems, Collected Poems, Selected Poems, Lolly Willowes, Mr Fortune's Maggot, The True Heart, Summer Will Show, After The Death

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The Society's own website is online at
<http://www.townsendwarner.com>

NEWSLETTER NUMBER TWENTYTWO

Thanks go to Jay Barksdale (our mole in the New York Public Library archives) for his contribution to this Newsletter. Also (as always) to Judith Bond and Lynn Mutti. Judith Bond, with our Chairman, valiantly ate their way around Bath in preparation for the May weekend.

Judith Stinton

SUBSCRIPTIONS: a reminder

If you haven't yet paid for 2011, please send your subscription to Judith Bond, 26 Portwey Close, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 8RF. The cost for UK members still remains unchanged at £10, while the rate for overseas members is \$25. Cheques should be made payable to the Sylvia Townsend Warner Society.

CONTACT DETAILS

The Society's official email address is still stwsociety@tiscali.co.uk
If you would like to contact Judith Bond directly could you please note that her email address is now judithbond@hotmail.co.uk

STW SOCIETY WEEKEND 13 – 15 MAY 2011

Please let Richard Searle (01305 269204) know what meals you will be having. In the case of The Hole in the Wall, the restaurant needs to know not only the numbers but also diners' choice of food a week beforehand. (Richard will have a menu for you to choose from.)

Friday May 13th at 7.30pm. Meal at The Hole in the Wall Restaurant, 16 Great George Street, Bath, BA1 2EN (disabled access can be arranged via a door on restaurant level),

Saturday May 14th: 10.00am. Meet in the splendid setting of the Aix-en-Provence Room of Bath Guildhall (lift access), where tea, coffee and cakes will be served at 10.15am.

10.30am The Eleventh Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held.

‘LOLLY WILLOWES’
BY BRIDGET STREVENS ROMER
To be sold by the
Sylvia Townsend Warner Society by sealed bid auction

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2010 AGM
3. Matters arising
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Membership report
6. Journal Editor's report
7. AOB

Followed by sealed bid auction of portrait of Lolly Willowes by Bridget Strevens Romer (see facing page).

11.15am An opportunity to hear a reading of the letters of Sylvia Townsend Warner and David Garnett, originally performed in 1993.

12.30pm Break for lunch

2pm Trip lasting c. 50 minutes around the sites of Bath on an open-top bus. (Discounts available for National Trust members.) Meet at the Temperance statue, outside Bath Abbey (views are better on the left, they say). There's a second tour, ranging further afield, which starts from the Railway Station.

There are three second-hand bookshops (including Oxfam) and two excellent new bookshop, Toppings and Mr B's.

7.30pm Meal at Sally Lunn's, 4 North Parade Passage Bath, BA1 1NX. Please tell Richard if you're coming.

Sunday May 15th :10am Visit to the Roman Baths, much admired by Sylvia in her *Somerset* book. They are 'the eye of Bath...a green eye'.

12.00pm Lunch in the famous Pump Room, Stall Street, Bath, BA1 1LZ (next to the Roman Baths).

Accommodation:

The website www.visitbath.co.uk has a comprehensive list of hotels, guesthouses and bed & breakfast accommodation and bookings may be made through this site. The Tourist Information Centre can be contacted by email – tourism@bathtourism.co.uk or you can phone the Tourist Information Centre's personal booking service on 0844 847 5256, (from overseas +448448475257) for advice and help with booking arrangements.

This portrait of 'Lolly Willowes' was painted in 1987 by Bridget Strevens Romer as a commission for the dust jacket of a French edition of the novel. In the event, the portrait was not used for the jacket and the painting was purchased from the artist by Claire Harman, Sylvia Townsend Warner's biographer, who generously donated it in 2010 to the Sylvia Townsend Warner Society for us to sell to raise funds.



BRIDGET STREVENS ROMER (now Strevens-Marzo), writer, illustrator, translator:
'Lolly Willowes'
Oil on canvas (pencil guidelines visible)
Framed, not glazed
24 inches (61cm) by 20½ inches (52 cm), including frame
Estimate: £100 - £200.
The Society will have a reserve; if this amount is not reached in the bidding, the painting will not be sold.

If you would like to make a sealed bid for this portrait please complete the form below and send by post or hand delivery only (no emails, please) in a sealed envelope marked 'LOLLY WILLOWES PORTRAIT AUCTION' to 26 Portwey Close, Weymouth, DT4 8RF by Friday, 6 May 2011. The bids will be opened at the Society's AGM in Bath Guildhall at 10.45 on Saturday 14 May 2011. The highest bidder will win the item.



BIDDING FORM

I wish to bid (enter amount in words),

..... (enter amount in figures)

Name:

Address:

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I accept the Auction Rules and Bidder Agreement as outlined on the attached document:

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SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER DAY
September 18th 2010

The sun was shining unsympathetically when ten members met – at last, after several attempts – in Yeovil's Pen Mill Hotel, the scene of perhaps the most unhappy period of Sylvia Townsend Warner's life.

Pen Mill has recently been restored after a serious fire, and the room in which we sat was a stately one. Upstairs, intriguingly, was the room where Sylvia had stayed in 1949, looking 'out on the main road, with buses – behind is the station'. Lynn Mutti made a valiant attempt to persuade the staff to let us have a look, but unfortunately the room was occupied.

The food was good (with bargain offers) and the conversation, as usual, was even better. We welcomed two new members, Ailsa Granne and Amanda Dixie. Ailsa's doctorate is becoming increasingly centred on Ackland and Warner; Amanda was about to begin a postgraduate creative writing course at Bath Spa University.

After lunch, we went on to Lytes Cary Manor, which Sylvia had included in her *Somerset* guide, published in 1949. The house is full of small treasures. Objects Sylvia might well have enjoyed included a pair of china cats curled up together on a cushion, and two stumpwork pictures, in enchantingly knobby detail. There were also dried teasels placed carefully on all the more fragile seating – a ladylike deterrent.

Outside was a dovecote in a field, beside a garden which was a series of enclosures, intimate like the house: a place for trysts and conspiracies. We ended the afternoon amidst the wasps, beside the Simple Food Outlet – still talking.

With thanks to Lynn Mutti, who organised this gentle and pleasurable outing.

Judith Stinton

Pope : a review

Alexander Pope. Edith Sitwell. (Faber & Faber. 15s)

During the last decade so much biography has been put forth under the device "I come to unbury Caesar, not to praise him," that Miss Sitwell's readers should be grateful for the enthusiasm shown in her study of Alexander Pope. Pope, indeed, is both as a poet and a person a highly suitable subject for enthusiasm. So superb and sensitive a technician that a no less eminent example of the school of criticism Miss Sitwell deplors than Thackeray must describe him as "the greatest literary artist that England has seen", he was in character desirably faulty – for who cares to panegyricize a prig? Warm-hearted, generous, courageous, humane, the most admiring biographer must yet present him as waspish, suspicious, endlessly embroiled, or descending to unseemly shifts and falsifications in order to add a twopenny lustre, a sticking-plaster security, to his radiant and impregnable reputation. His friends were Swift, Bolingbroke, Peterborough, Arbuthnot, Gay; his hatred stooped to Cibber, Dennis, Curll, and Mr. James Moore Smith. In an age of corruption and place-seeking he kept his independence, more truly indifferent to the world in his compliance, than Swift in his scorn of it, and faithful to the spirit of the *Ode on Solitude* even while showing duchesses round Twickenham; yet he planted a revised version of a correspondence with Wycherley in Lord Oxford's library with the hope that it would be stolen thence and pirated; and adopted even more discreditable and ungainly shifts to get back his letters to Swift, that they also might appear in a re-touched form and be a credit to him, while Swift, the darkened Polyphemus, yet lived, but would now know.

Discrepancies such as these put enthusiasm on its mettle. "To this fine and sensitive artist, inferior poetry and clumsy texture in verse were an agony, and must have had almost the effect of a physical rupture." No doubt; *Fools rush into my head, and so I write.*

This is a perfectly satisfactory explanation of the attacks on Curll, Dennis, Cibber and Co. (Dr. Keate was affected in a rather similar manner by a false quantity); but it is no explanation of the letter business. It is scarcely tenable that Pope's ignominious dodges in order to re-possess himself of his letters were due to the fear lest these should fall unamended into the hands of his enemies, for the dodges were just as likely to become

enemy property, and could have been used much more damagingly. Nor does Miss Sitwell's general defence for her hero's eccentricities – the outraged sensibility of a passionate soul in a deformed and mocked-at body – convince, however much it may move, for outraged sensibility is hardly able to sustain a stratagem of months. Defence, moreover, is beside the question. It is the duty of a biographer to explain, not to exculpate. In the passage quoted above the explanation is so satisfactory that it is a pity that similar approach was not made to the difficulty of the letters, which, surely, falls into place when Pope's solicitude to titivate his reputation is seen as the superfluity and overflow into private life of the indefatigable solicitude which perfected his poetry.

The account of that perfection, and the analysis of how it is achieved, is the finest part of this book. Indeed, I do not see how it could be bettered, unless by being extended. Pope's was an art-concealing art; or perhaps it is that the flashing excitement and vigour of the thought conveyed, blinds readers to the delicacy of the versification; but henceforward there should be no excuse for those people who hold the view that Pope is a poet but not poetical. It is upon the purely poetical, almost the romantic, aspect of his genius that Miss Sitwell concentrates, and rightly so. There can be no need to insist upon the wit and spirit of such lines as:

*One solid dish his week-day meal affords,
An added pudding solemniz'd the Lord's;*

or,

*Flow, Welsted, flow! Like thine inspirer, Beer,
Tho' stale, not ripe; tho' thin, yet never clear;
So sweetly mawkish, and so smoothly dull
Heady, not strong; o' verflowing, tho' not full,*

but even if the ear tells one that the line

High on his helm celestial lightnings play,

is superior to the earlier version of

Bright from his beamy crest the lightnings play,

we need the acuteness of Miss Sitwell's analysis to show us that "the alliteration and the emphasis on one-syllabled words before the caesura give the effect of height, because of their emphasis" – and may I suggest further that the constancy of vowel sound in *helm* and *celestial* lengthens those lightnings almost into a garland, thus reinforcing the word *play*?

It would be pleasant if one could discuss Pope without being obliged to mention her whom I recently heard an authority on the eighteenth century refer to as "that besom, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu." But I must join issue with Miss Sitwell over her statement, in the matter of those lines,

*From furious Sappho scarce a milder fate,
Poxed by her love, or libeled by her hate,*
that "the only reason for connecting furious Sappho with Lady Mary Wortley Montague lies in that lady's not otherwise very active imagination." Such remarks as *Sappho's diamonds with her dirty smock*, square too certainly with the lines

*You laugh, if coat and breeches strangle vary,
White gloves, and linen worthy Lady Mary.*

And with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's reputation for personal uncleanliness, to allow for much doubt as to whom Pope intended by Sappho on the slut count; and he was constant in his nomenclature.

Sylvia Townsend Warner

NEW BOOKS

Readers might be interested to know that member Rosalie Parker's short story collection *The Old Knowledge* is now available for pre-order from Swan River Press:

<http://www.brianjshowers.com/swanriverpress.html>

This first collection of tales by Rosalie Parker contains eight stories that explore the uncanny in the modern world. As Glen Cavaliero observes in his introduction, "like all good stories of the preternatural, these in *The Old Knowledge* have a subversive effect." In them, "the world of logical, predictable reality is seen to be at risk from rejected modes of knowledge which can thwart the materialist and victimise those innocents who stumble into another order of reality."

In "The Rain", Geraldine heads to the North for a holiday she hopes will provide a welcome break from her busy city life, only to suffer a complicated and enigmatic distortion of her usual world-view. The narrator of "In the Garden" strays into new pastures while explaining her theory of gardening. In "Chanctonbury Ring", the well-meaning protagonist, helping a lady in distress, gets rather more than he bargained for. The temporary schoolteacher in "The Supply-Teacher" elicits altruism from her class, whilst, in "The Old Knowledge", a group of archaeologists called in to excavate a prehistoric round barrow have to negotiate local interventions. In "The Cook's Story" a Gothic country house provides the setting for a modern

tale of mystery.

Do not expect blood-and-guts, wraiths or revenants: these stories hold a different kind of terror. "Their unostentatious magic is of an insidious kind; and like the protagonist of the title story, is liable to exert itself in disconcerting ways."

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THE BOOK

Hesketh, an artist, is isolated with her daughter Kezia on a remote island coast where they came for sanctuary ten years ago. The effort of trying to maintain her powers of creation has turned her half-mad. Their only neighbour, Crambo, is a wild elemental, bereft of speech, who lives on the beach. An unknown wounded officer arrives to convalesce with Hesketh and Kezia, but far from being the expected eligible stranger, Fitz is an exiled anti-hero whose love is reserved for London, play-making, and Meredith, a poet. Their strange existence is threatened by the arrival of a machinegun crew who not only pollute the beach, but awaken dumb Crambo to the new powers of language – and explosives. As war sweeps ever closer, a violent sea-change brings all these castaways to their fate.

The Principle of Camouflage is a magical exploration of place, exile and home, the powers and duties of the artist, the restoration of lost things, the discovery of love, and the survival of hope in an apparently doomed world.

THE AUTHOR

Frances Bingham has published fiction, non-fiction and poetry, most recently *Journey from Winter* (Carcanet, 2008) the biographical critical edition of Valentine Ackland's

poems. Frances has performed at literary festivals, read poetry live on *Woman's Hour*, and contributed to the Radio 4 series *From the Ban to the Booker*. She is the daughter of the Scots historian and biographer Caroline Bingham, and now lives and works in London with her partner Liz Mathews.

DETAILS

New Title: April 4 2011

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EVENTS

Chaldon Herring Writers Festival

Saturday the 6th August

Organiser John Brewster writes:

The current plan is to run a programme from around 10.00am which will consist of a number of talks/presentations on the writers and painters who have lived in the village. Speakers during the day will include Judith Stinton and Frank Kibblewhite, and there will be a bookstall.

We will also have the writers' walk, to take interested people around the village and up on to the coastal path to talk about them & places they lived.

We will fit in a lunch at some point, probably at the Sailors Return, as by then it should be under new management.

In the evening we will hold a concert in the Church by Diana Johnstone (www.dianajohnstone.com) which will feature work relating to the writers and poets who lived in Chaldon. This will then be followed by a supper in the Village Hall.

Further details will appear in the Society's Summer Newsletter.

John P. Brewster
01305 852881
0780 171 7126
john.brewster@yahoo.co.uk

Concert

Philip Cashian has completed a commission 'All things wear silence' (a setting of three poems by Valentine Ackland for choir, brass and organ) which was premiered at St. Brides, Fleet St. London at 7.30pm on 24 March. It will be performed again on 9th July at St Leonard's Church, Hythe.

Translation

Society member Ayako Nakawa has recently translated STW's novel *Mr Fortune's Maggot* into Japanese. She writes: 'I did my best because I love *Mr Fortune's Maggot* and I really wanted to share the joy of reading it with Japanese readers'. (All the translated works of STW, *Kingdoms of Elfin*, 'A View of Exmoor' and *Jane Austen*, have long been out of print.)

Ayako Nakawa was born in 1969 and teaches English as a second language and British literature and culture at the Faculty of Intercultural Communication at Hosei University. Her speciality is the 19th and 20th British novel.

The translation was featured on Japanese television, using photographs from the Sylvia Townsend Warner archive.

Back Copies of Society Journals

From 1 April 2011, the price of a back copy of a Society Journal will revert to £5.00 inc p&p (\$10 + shipping outside UK). We have copies available of almost all the Journals published by the Society between 2000 and 2010, except those for 2003 and 2009. These last two can be supplied if required as a pdf file or as a photocopy. Visit the Society website www.townsendwarner.com/publications for a full list of all the Journal contents or contact Judith Bond for a summary.

Time and Tide March 19, 1932 [p. 318-19]

MISCELLANY

THINGS SEEN

by Sylvia Townsend Warner

I.

He was standing in the road.

From the valley to the summit of that Berkshire down which it curvingly mounted, the road was deeply familiar to me, though I had never set foot on it, did not know the name of the village which it left behind, nor whither, having reached the sky-line, it led. For I had always seen it from the train. Years before it had caught my eye, and my fancy; and since then I had looked out for it, seeing it under all weathers, in all times of year. I liked the constancy of its aspect. Whether the grayish white of winter mud or the glittering white of summer dust, it preserved the austere tonal relation of bared chalk to turf-covered chalk down. Without frippery of hedge or tree, its cunning windings, the residuum of how many generations taking the easiest way up, expressed the contours of the slope. I came to it as one might come to a landscape by Cézanne; and found little more variation in it than that which the changes in one's own mind bestow upon the constancy of a work of art revisited. Steep, and seldom used, it presented little incident. Once I had watched a donkey and cart going up it. And now I saw the man.

He was standing quite still. The railway here taking a wide arc about the bastion of downland enabled me to survey his stationary shape from east to west, as it were, and for a considerable length of time. As with a sun's journey I viewed him, and when I sank from him he was motionless as he had been at my rising. But what fixed him there? A man might stand on a dusty road for various reasons, to await a bus, to await a woman. But on such a road as this, a track rather, narrow and unfrequented, no bus would run, and no woman would make an appointment with a lover at such a spot as he had chosen, with neither privacy to commend, nor a stile, tree, or turning to mark it. No, he was just standing there.

It was that which made him so enigmatical, so memorable and surprising a figure. For in England, in Europe maybe, one might travel one's life through without seeing a man standing still with no tethering cause beyond the wish to stand so. Sheep on hillsides, cattle in pastures, herons at the river's edge, these may stand like trees, their stillness is a natural concomitant of the landscape. But man is always coming or going. *Cogito, ergo sum* sends him about his labour until the evening.

II.

It was in Kensington Gardens that I saw him. A heat-wave had come to London, its noonday fervour weighed down the slanting boughs of the lime-trees, even the most intrepid promenaders had risked their twopences and dragged chairs into the shade. Stilled, belittled, under the intense sunlight, the gardens seemed like some exact and elaborate toy, with trees, walks, monuments, artificial looking-glass waters, even people and dogs, all contrived to scale.

I was not conscious, drowsing under my heavily-hanging lime-tree, that my mind had conceived this image; but some such thought must have stolen upon me, or the clatter of a wood-pigeon's flight near at hand would not so have startled me with an accent of real life. Looking out from my shade as from a box at the theatre, I stared in the direction of the sound.

A man was walking along the path, a young man, an Indian, walking with the elegant, indolent gait of his race. He wore a lounge suit, too closely fitted to his waist and curving hips for English notions of manly befittingness, and the small swathed turban of his creed. And after him, bungling in its flight against the drooping lime-tree boughs, flew the wood-pigeon. As I watched,

he stopped and slowly extended his arm. Immediately the wood-pigeon settled upon his wrist. After a second he shook it off, and walked on; and then, stopping again, and again extending his arm, awaited the descent of the bird, that with creaking wings and low, circling flight came after him. So, strolling and staying, he passed by, as though it were fastened to him by some invisible elastic whose contraction brought it to his wrist, so duly did it alight there at every pause. Presently a second bird bumbled from the green overhead and joined it, and then a third. And these newcomers followed the Indian with the same diligence and familiarity as the first had shown, flying low about his head as he walked, and upon the instant of this pausing coming to his arm. I, in my shade, was so near that if he had whistled or spoken I must have heard it. But beyond halting and holding out his arm he did nothing to allure. He did not even turn his head to look at them as they settled, and whether he held them or tossed them away his impassive face preserved the same look of bland melancholy. With his bird, and his melancholy, and his abstractions, he might have been the falconer of some Rajput miniature.

That I actually saw him I am positive, since I observed others seeing him, too. Before he vanished out of my eye's reach he had gathered about him a crowd of curious and exclaiming children, to whom he paid no more attention than he gave to his birds, who, for all the children's outcries and gaspings, still followed him. But if I were not thus assured of his actuality, I might have believed that he was a mirage, that the vehemently-heated air had in some way conveyed him before my eyes, as though, by this sleight of atmosphere, I had beheld some devout Indian's dream of Krishna. For so might the god have moved, melancholy and complacent and gently rounded. But this a real man, a student maybe, living in a Bloomsbury lodging-house; and whatever the strange power running in this blood, it was left to the wood-pigeons to acknowledge it as they fluttered after him, infallibly drawn to perch upon that wrist where the blood beat its spell within the artery.

Minutes of the 10th Annual General Meeting 1st May, 2010, Dorset County Museum

Present:

Eileen Johnson, Helen Sutherland, Judith Bond, Judith Stinton, Lynn Mutti, Morine Krissdottir, Diane Bithrey, Mary Jacobs, Jan Montefiore, Tess Ormrod, Graham Pechey, Roger Peers, Rosie Sykes, Ruth Williams

1) Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Jay Barksdale, Susan Ellis, Winifred Johnson, Jill Miller, Annie Rhodes, Richard Searle

2) Matters Arising

The Minutes of the 2009 AGM were agreed as true and signed by the Chairman.

Morine Krissdottir asked if the Constitution had been looked at again, as had been agreed with Chris Gostick at the AGM of 2009. Eileen Johnson said that it had been agreed that Chris Gostick would write formally to the Society, setting out his points of concern, and that a letter and an email had not been received until 26th April 2010; too late for the Committee to consider before the AGM today. Eileen Johnson added that he had apologised for the late sending of the letter and that he had forgotten to write earlier.

General discussion ensued – several comments at once – the consensus being that the Society was able to function adequately with the current Constitution.

3) Treasurer's Report

Judith Bond distributed copies of the Balance Sheet for the past year: she said that income was healthy and expenditure stable.

The sale of sets of photographs of STW had broken even.

Money had been received via the 'Amazon Rewards' scheme; whereby items purchased through Amazon, using the link from the Society's website, generated cash.

Several items of expenditure not normally made were to the Norwich Cathedral Library in thanks for the Society's visit with regard to Tudor Church Music last September; the bus journey in the Sylvia Townsend Warner bus, also during the Norwich visit, and a donation in memory of Jean Larson, a friend of STW and Valentine Ackland, who had died recently.

Judith Bond distributed a 10th anniversary review, comparing expenditure for the printing of the journal during that time.

3) Treasurer's Report/continued

Helen Sutherland explained that the reason for the late appearance of the 2009 journal was that the printing company the Society used had gone into liquidation and another had had to be found who could reproduce to the same standard for similar cost. This had taken time, as had the process of liaising with a new company.

Judith Bond spoke about the Society's website, setup in 2003, and its attendant costs for this and later alterations. Karin Taubert, a member from Germany, now undertook webmastering tasks for no fee: the only

expenditure being for hosting and the domain name: and therefore costs have been considerably reduced.

The biggest change during the decade has been in postage charges which peaked in 2007. Since then the use of email has helped with expenditure. Stephen Mottram has reviewed the Society's accounts for 2009 and Eileen Johnson proposed a vote of thanks for this.

Membership of the Society remains steady at 136, although some 2010 subscriptions are outstanding.

4) Programme

Judith Stinton reminded members that this weekend's programme was in the newsletter. The tentative suggestion for the September weekend was Somerset, centred on Bath, with a visit to Penn Mill on the way. Further details would be in the next newsletter.

A discussion ensued regarding the planning and organising of two weekends a year as they were generally poorly attended. One weekend a year – the first one in May – was agreed in principle by the meeting.

5) A.O.B.

Morine Krissdottir reported that the film of *Mr Fortune's Maggot* had been completed and had been filmed in Polynesia.

'Faber Finds', with permission from the Estate of William Maxwell, were to re-publish four volumes of short stories including '*A Spirit Rises*' '*Scenes of Childhood*' and '*Stranger with a Bag*'.

There has been a great new demand for the use of the archive by researchers for various topics. Help with invigilation is required.

Roger Peers again brought up the matter of the Constitution and said it was a good idea to sort out problems as they arise. Eileen Johnson reiterated that the Committee saw no need to take the matter further.

Morine Krissdottir commented that Chris Gostick was a civil servant used to dealing with such matters. Eileen replied that that the Committee would settle the matter at the Committee Meeting in June.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.30am.

Diaries of Virginia Woolf

June 1, 1925

'...I like everyone, I said at 46 the other night; & Duncan said I liked everyone, & thought everyone quite new each time. That was at dinner to meet Miss Warner, the new Chatto & Windus poetess, & indeed she has some merit - enough to make me spend 2/6 on her, I think.'

(*The Espalier* had just been published. 46 Gordon Square was Maynard Keynes's house.)

Letter to *Time & Tide*

February 27, 1932 [pp 227-28]

LADY CHATTERLEY'S LOVER

Sir,

A statement has appeared in the press that *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, having been "drastically abridged and expurgated," is about to be published in an "authorized British edition."

Admirers of the late D. H. Lawrence cannot let this statement pass without demanding an explanation. During his lifetime Lawrence refused to consider any such mutilation of his book, and his reasons for so refusing are on record in the preface to the 1929 edition of *Lady Chatterley - My Skirmish with Jolly Roger*. His literary executors cannot pretend to be unaware of this and unless they have subsequent evidence that Lawrence changed his mind and authorized such an edition as is now announced, they are guilty of the gravest misdemeanour possible to literary executors - breach of faith with the dead. Compared with this even the monkey-trick of an offence against a work of art sinks into insignificance.

Have they any authorization from Lawrence's letters, etc., for permitting this mutilation? If not, why are they permitting it?

I am, etc.

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER.

113 Inverness Terrace,

W.2.