

*The Espalier, Time Importuned, Opus 7, Rainbow, Whether a Dove or Seagull, Boxwood, King Duffus, Twelve Poems, Collected Poems, Selected Poems, Lolly Willowses, 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 Salutation, 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 Espalier, Time Importuned, Opus 7, Rainbow, Whether a Dove or Seagull, Boxwood, King Duffus, Twelve Poems, Collected Poems, Selected Poems, Lolly Willowses, 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 Salutation, 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 Espalier, Time Importuned, Opus 7, Rainbow, Whether a Dove or Seagull, Boxwood, King Duffus, Twelve Poems, Collected Poems, Selected Poems, Lolly Willowses, 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 Salutation, 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 Espalier, Time Importuned, Opus 7, Rainbow, Whether a Dove or Seagull, Boxwood, King Duffus, Twelve Poems, Collected Poems, Selected Poems, Lolly Willowses, Mr Fortune's*

## *The Sylvia Townsend Warner Society Newsletter Number Twenty Eight*

*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 Salutation, 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 Espalier, Time Importuned, Opus 7, Rainbow, Whether a Dove or Seagull, Boxwood, King Duffus, Twelve Poems, Collected Poems, Selected Poems, Lolly Willowses, Mr Fortune's Maggot, The True Heart, Summer Will Show, After The Death*

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**NEWSLETTER NUMBER TWENTY-EIGHT**

From *The Countryman*, No XIX, Spring 1939  
'The Dark Clouds'

'These are days', as Sylvia Townsend Warner writes to us, 'which strain the heart'. 'But', she continues, in her spirited fashion, 'strain is better than fatty degeneration, and, may be, not so deadly'.

And so welcome to the twenty-eighth Newsletter. This contains details of the 2014 Society weekend in June which we hope members will be able to attend. It also includes an unpublished poem by Sylvia, discovered by Jay Barksdale in the New York Public Library, and a somewhat bizarre cartoon of her, from 1987.

This is the twenty-sixth newsletter I have edited, and I feel that it is time for someone else to take over the editor's role. Anyone interested in doing so can contact me at the above address. I'll be pleased to provide more details.

*Judith Stinton*

**Change of Email Address**

Please note that the Society's email address is now  
[society@townsendwarner.com](mailto:society@townsendwarner.com)

**Sylvia Townsend Warner Lecture**

On Thursday June 18 at 11am, Society member Dame Gillian Beer will be giving the Hesse Lecture as part of Aldeburgh Festival on 'Music and the Art of Being Alive: the example of Sylvia Townsend Warner'.

As well as being a musicologist and musician STW 'was also a radical whose life and works confirm the power of exuberant imagination. Her novels and short stories uncover every kind of hidden tale from the humdrum to high camp to calamity. Her letters and diaries are full of fireworks of insight, jokes, love, and politics. Her work reveals how much absurdity can mean, how deep are the sources of the everyday, how vehement is communal life. She thinks through music and her thinking takes

us into fresh ways of living. The lecture will explore how she can unloose the hidebound and surprise us now.'

Unfortunately for us, all tickets have already been sold, which must be a tribute to both lecturer and subject!

Tickets cost £12 [enquiries@aldeburgh.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@aldeburgh.co.uk)

### Norfolk Trip, June 20-22 2014

#### **Friday June 20**

7.30pm. Meal at Pizza Express, The Forum, Norwich. Please let Richard Searle know if you are coming (01305 269204)

#### **Saturday June 21**

10.00am. Old Hall, South Burlingham. Coffee with member Margaret Steward and Peter Scupham, and a tour of 17<sup>th</sup> century wall-paintings in this beautiful house.

11.15am. St Benet's Abbey gatehouse. Tour of the site with Caroline Davison (Norfolk Archaeological Trust, associated with *The Corner that Held Them*).

12.30pm. Lunch in Fisherman's Return, Winterton. (Please let Richard Searle know if you are coming.) Walk round Winterton including Hill House, the church (and Beach Cottage?).

2.45pm. Warren Farm, Horsey, where STW and VA stayed in 1949.

3.30pm. A walk around Waxham tithe barn with its church and manorial complex, followed by tea.

6pm. Evening meal at the Hill House pub, Happisburgh, a place with many literary and artistic associations – Lorna Sage, Arthur Conan Doyle, William Cowper and Henry Moore. (Again, please let Richard Searle know if you are coming.)

#### **Sunday June 22**

10.30am Sloley Old Hall (formerly known as Frankfort Manor, where STW and VA lived 1933-34).

11.45am. Coffee, and Shell Museum, Glandford (*The Flint Anchor*).

12.15pm. Cley Church (*The Flint Anchor*).

12.45pm. Lunch at Wiveton Hall café. (Please let Richard Searle know if you are coming.) Followed (for those who have time) by a walk to Blakeney, another place associated with *The Flint Anchor*.

This should be a fascinating trip. Please come if you can.

### ORANGES GALORE

Sylvia in Norfolk

Sylvia's introduction to Norfolk came in the form of a research trip to Norwich cathedral in the 1920s while working on the Tudor Church Music project but her love for the county, inextricably bound up with her love for Valentine, took root in 1930 with her first visit to Winterton to meet Valentine's mother who had a holiday retreat at Hill House. Over the next thirty years the couple returned often to Norfolk, most notably when they rented Frankfort Manor, Sloley, for eighteen months in 1933-4 and spent the winter of 1950-1 at Great Eye Folly, Salthouse. Inevitably the coast and its people, recalled with affection in letters and diaries, came to inhabit Sylvia's imagination in the small but significant body of work inspired directly by her time in Norfolk. Unfortunately 'An Island in Norfolk', written in 1935 for serialisation in News Chronicle, has not survived but two of her seven novels – *The Corner That Held Them* (1948) and *The Flint Anchor* (1954) – are set in the county together, most literally among the poems, with 'John Craske's Country' and 'Graveyard in Norfolk'. According to Claire Harman the short story 'The Sea is Always the Same', published posthumously in the collection *One Thing Leading to Another* (1984), was written after a trip to Cromer, but it is in 'Two Children' (*The Innocent and the Guilty* 1971) that Sylvia draws most convincingly on her familiarity with the Norfolk coast.

We know from the opening paragraph that this rite of passage is set in 'a flint-built Norfolk fishing village' in the aftermath of a north-easterly gale, a place that is Winterton in all but name. There are Crasques here, a nod to the retired fisherman-artist John Craske discovered by Valentine in the next village of Hemsby, and there are Larters too, one remove from the old Winterton family of Larners, still active in the village. What removes any doubt is the pub, with a parrot, called the Three Mariners and the expanse of viper-infested heath where the children play instead of gathering driftwood that is today Winterton national nature reserve. Like most fishermen in communities dominated by a few large families, the children's drowned father is known by his nickname 'Beauty' Hodds and Sylvia's ear, finely tuned to nuances of the Norfolk dialect – 'go you down to the beach' and

'you'd fare to die' – produces an authentic local voice while avoiding the pitfalls of a more generalised rural accent. There is though one memorable incident, touched on almost in passing, that colours the tale and helps fix it both in time and place.

Unlike most stories in *The Innocent and the Guilty*, 'Two Children' had not previously appeared in the *New Yorker*, and may have either been written for the collection or at some earlier point and put aside for future use. Either way when the children, clambering up the dunes, come upon the beach 'dotted with flecks of alien brilliant colours' Sylvia seems to be referencing an event which took place just before Christmas 1948 when the SS Bosphorus went aground on the notorious Happisburgh Sands just north of Winterton. The Norwegian-owned ship was eventually refloated but only by jettisoning its cargo of oranges bound for the Christmas market in Oslo. People all along the coast from Yarmouth right round to Cromer woke up the next day to beaches littered with oranges; women and children were soon swarming over the dunes with prams and sacks to gather up this exotic wind/waterfall before it began to rot in a real life re-enactment of Compton Mackenzie's Hebridean drama *Whiskey Galore* published the year before.

For two weeks in October the following year Sylvia and Valentine stayed at Warren Farm, Horsey, a mile or so up the coast from Winterton. Daily walks to collect driftwood gave some semblance of order to an emotionally charged time when Valentine's affair with Elizabeth Wade White had reached crisis point. At the same time tales of last year's bounty were still circulating in the locality and would, almost certainly, have been relayed to her two lodgers by Mrs Howlett at Warren Farm or by Valentine's mother. Either way the extraordinary scene on the beach at Winterton was too good to ignore and Sylvia weaves the bitter-sweet bounty – they become Seville oranges in 'Two Children' – into her Norfolk story.

*Peter Tolhurst*

**Letter from Sylvia Townsend Warner to T.F. Powys**

Frankfort Manor, Sloley, Norwich, 24. vii. 1933

Dearest Theodore

I wish you were here. You might almost wish it, too, if you could see the place. I have never seen so much good cover for retiring characters as there is in this garden. It is a very simple and sensible garden. Two-thirds of it is

all green. For there is a large lawn, which has never been cut but with a scythe, and standing around on two sides of it are a number of tall trees: beeches, oaks, Spanish Chestnuts. And beyond the kitchen garden is a small orchard, very nettley, and a small meadow, where the hay has just been cut and lies like summer clouds. Both the orchard and the meadow are entirely shut off. No one would know how to find them, or their occupants either.

For wet weather there is a small broken vinery; a toolshed, completely obliterated with a mop of ivy; some very nice weather-proof stables and, at the top of the house, four large attics, empty except for some old sun-blinds, a rusty poker or two, and a nest of young sparrows.

There are other more ordinary rooms, too, dining rooms and bedrooms and so forth; but the glory of the house is in its great variety of places to hide in.

It is a nice house. Very gentle and affectionate, with a good coal range and two larders. The sort of house (and I can think of no higher praise) into which one could safely invite Mr Dottery, if he ever left home, which I don't think he did.

We have a nice girl who works for us. She is about eighteen, tall and quiet, with large pale grey eyes. Her name is Irene. Her married brother works one day a week in the garden, he is quiet too and a good scyther. His wife does our washing. So we are very patriarchal. She brings the washing back in a cob and trap, which she drives herself, and sitting beside her is her daughter, who is only about five, I think, but she likes already to hold the reins.

To-day, while we were digging potatoes, the clergyman called. I thought (as he wore a flannel shirt and what Valentine called an Old Borstalian tie) that he was a tout. And I found I was not far wrong in this conjecture. He did nothing but complain of the collections and that the gentry didn't call on him. When we asked if there were any old or sick people in the parish whom we might be able to help, he said, Oh, none of the people here ever die! In a very cross voice.

The Inn here is called The Maids Head. They keep no draught beer, only bottled. But it is very good and strong. Bullards. There is no post-office, no

village street, only one shop. The cottages are scattered about as though they had been dropped by birds. But we have a blacksmith.

We do hope you are better, dearest Theodore. Write and tell us how you are, and if Susan Theodora has cut a tooth yet. Here are some of the photographs which Valentine took of her and Violet. They did not all come out very well, these are the clearest. With our fondest love to you all,

Sylvia

[on a separate sheet but apparently part of this letter]

Perhaps this would help with a short story. At Winterton there is a young man who is always called Tulip. He has a motor bicycle and a very obliging disposition. Three girls in the village are in love with him, and mean to marry him. They all have frightful tempers, and he is so afraid that they will find him out, turn on him and tear him, that he spends all his time taking them out one by one, on the back of his motor bicycle. By the end of the summer he is perfectly worn out, for he dare not refuse one of them in case she should say he is going with the other.

And here are a few names I have noticed lately.

Lusher. Greenhoe. Muskett. Sheales. Lawn (a seedsman). Mulley. Alstin. Goffin.

And this, from a tombstone.

Here lies

Molly Davis

The Mother of

Mr BOND

From which I conclude that she bedded above her, but that Mr Bond, since he gave her a fine large stone, was filial.

Of course she might have married again. Quite often. She died at the age of 102.

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## BOOKS

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### 'Books I Can't Live Without'

On Saturday 19 October, the BBC Newsnight and The Review Show presenter, Kirsty Wark, was welcomed to Ilkley for two Brontë-related events. Kirsty was the guest speaker at The Brontë Society annual Literary Lunch, which this year took place at the Wheatley Arms, Ben Rhydding. Seventy members gathered to hear award-winning programme maker Ruth Pitt interview presenter Kirsty Wark on the subject of 'Books I can't live without – from childhood to fifth decade'.

Treasurer Russell Watson welcomed members before trustee Alexandra Lesley introduced the event with informative biographies of both Ruth and Kirsty. A lively 'in conversation' discussion followed. Kirsty's book choices were wide ranging and began with childhood favourites, in fact she even brought along for all to see her very own copy of *Poems to Read Aloud* which she had been given in 1960, and read Rossetti's *Boats Sail on the Rivers, and Ships Sail on the Seas*. Other early favourites included Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* and Rider Haggard's *She: A History of Adventure* and we were delighted to hear of her admiration for *Wuthering Heights*, which Kirsty had read to her own children. She encouraged all to read *Lolly Willowes*, Sylvia Townsend Warner's imaginative book which calls for women to live their own lives, published three years before Virginia Woolf's impassioned cry for a room of her own.

### 'On the Shelf'

Famous female singletons in literature

How is it to be done, the writing of the single life? A few books stand out, like beacons. In 1893, George Gissing published *The Odd Women*, his variant on the voguish New Woman novel. At the time, there were vastly more women than men in England, and the book is, among other things, a fierce rebuttal of the idea that the lives of these spares would inevitably be "useless, lost, futile". I have two things to say about it here. The first is that you should read it this moment. It's wonderful. The second is that for all its sadnesses – some of its women characters are pushed to the limits of existence by poverty, and to the edge of sanity by society's cruelty – you will cherish Gissing's bluestocking heroine, Rhoda Nunn, with her ideas about work (yes), marriage (no) and holidays (she *will* stride across the mountains by Wastwater). Here is a "good" girl who does not marry, and does not die either; even better, a desirable man, the rakish Everard Barfoot,

falls in love with her because of her independence of mind rather than in spite of it. The reader – well, this reader – feels about Rhoda much as her friend, Mary Barfoot, does: "I don't flatter you, dear, I tell you bluntly of your faults and extravagances. But I am proud of your magnificent independence, proud of your pride, and of your stainless heart. Thank heaven we are women!"

Another beacon, albeit rather more satirical in style: *Lolly Willowes* by Sylvia Townsend Warner (1926). What a book! When it begins Laura "Lolly" Willowes is just 28, and yet already she is a maiden aunt, living with her brother and his wife and children following the death of her beloved father. Lolly spends her time doing needlework and generally being rather unobtrusive, for which reason it is all the more startling when she deters her only suitor with the declaration that he may be a werewolf. But this is just the start. Two decades on, and by now somewhat eccentric, at least in the eyes of her relatives, she moves out, taking a cottage in a remote part of the Chilterns, where she drinks a lot of dandelion wine and...*becomes a witch*. Liberation! As a member of the Great Mop coven, she is neither patronised nor pitied. She is, in other words, free to be who she is: "One doesn't become a witch to run around being harmful, or to run around being helpful either, a district visitor on a broomstick. It's to escape all that – to have a life of one's own, not an existence doled out to you by others."

*Rachel Cooke*

*Guardian*, October 12 2013

### The Peculiar People

In the July 1939 edition of *The Countryman*, writer Sylvia Townsend Warner described how she fell in love with the Essex marshes. On a visit to Whiteley's Department Store in 1922 she bought an Ordnance Survey map of Essex, simply because of the unusual place names and the fascinating blue/green configuration of the coastline. A few weeks later she took a train from Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness, and then a bus to Great Wakering, where she walked to the River Crouch. A thunderstorm resulted in a thorough soaking, and she was rescued by a farmer and his wife who gave her tea, dried her clothes, and told her about their lives. Her next trip took her from Liverpool Street Station to Southminster, and from there a walk to the River Blackwater, again finding a scene of empty skies and utter tranquillity. She stayed overnight on a farm at Drinkwater St Lawrence, making lifelong friends of its owners.

These private expeditions and the deep impression they made upon her resulted in the novel, *The True Heart*, first published in 1929, set on a small island she disguised as New Easter, clearly one of 'the Essex archipelago' near Great Wakering – namely Havengore Island, Foulness Island, New England Island, Potton Island, Rushey Island and Wallasea Island – all still isolated and mostly off-limits. Warner briefly alluded to the origins of *The True Heart* as a result of her early Essex outings in her introduction to the first edition. In 2012 Black Dog Books included the hitherto unpublished essay on 'The Essex Marshes' in *With the Hunted: Selected Writings*, and this gives a much more dramatic picture of her deep attraction to a landscape where, 'I knew that mysterious sensation of being where I wanted to be and as I wanted to be, socketted in the universe, and passionately quiescent.'

Not only did the marshes and saltings enchant Warner, she was intrigued by a religious sect she found there, notably The Peculiar People. This had been established in 1837 by a farm worker from Rochford who allegedly had a revelation after falling into a ditch one night, drunk. The church grew rapidly amongst the rural Essex poor, though not without controversy. Like the Plymouth Brethren, the Peculiars eschewed any kind of professional medical intervention, believing that all such matters were in God's hands, and on those occasions when young children died who might have well survived with proper treatment, they understandably incurred the antagonism of their neighbours and fellow workers.

This congregation was unique to Essex, and thrived separately for over a hundred years, only reuniting with other nonconformist churches in the 1950s, eventually becoming a member of the Union of Evangelical Churches, under whose auspices some chapels continue to worship. In *The True Heart* the meetings of the Peculiar People 'took place in a parlour and finished with seed cake'. This was unusual, because in fact the sect was remarkable in the number of chapels it built between the Essex marshes and east London over the years, some 43 in all, a number of which still stand.

I lived next door to a Peculiar chapel in Daws Heath, Thundersley, in the 1960s, and not surprisingly was intrigued by their name and the mysterious nature of their religious beliefs and observances. It soon became obvious they were almost indistinguishable from most other nonconformist congregations: teetotal, fond of rousing hymns, modest in their dress and lifestyle. That chapel has now gone, but the chapel in Tillingham near

Bradwell until very recently displayed a notice board proclaiming it to belong to The Peculiar People, while nearby at Steeple, there is a beautiful Peculiar chapel which I came across walking from Maldon to Southminster several years ago, now converted to a private house.

### *Ken Worpole*

Ken Worpole is Emeritus Professor at London Metropolitan University, and the author of many books on architecture, landscape and public policy.  
[www.worpole.net](http://www.worpole.net)

### Toller Fratrum Church

The church re-opened with an inaugural service on Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup>. The building is now in the possession of the Friends of St Basil, who will be holding services there.

### *Judith Stinton*

### Sylvia Townsend Warner in New York

In May, The New York Public Library will host four lectures on Sylvia Townsend Warner. All begin at 1:15 pm in the South Court Auditorium in the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building at Fifth Avenue and 42<sup>nd</sup> Street. No registration is required and admission is free. The schedule is as follows:

**Tuesday, May 6** – Claire Harman – Sylvia Townsend Warner : a Biographical Introduction

**Friday, May 16** - Peter Haring Judd - The Akeing Heart: Passionate Attachments and their Aftermath : Sylvia Townsend Warner, Valentine Ackland, Elizabeth Wade White

**Thursday, May 22** – Anne Fernald – Sylvia Townsend Warner's *Summer Will Show* : A Spectre Haunting Europe

**Thursday, May 29** – Elizabeth Powers – The Discerning Reader : Sylvia Townsend Warner on Writers

### *Jay Barksdale*

**THE SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER SOCIETY  
MARY JACOBS MEMORIAL ESSAY PRIZE**

**The Society invites essays on any aspect of the life and work of Sylvia Townsend Warner.**

**Aim**

• The aim of the prize is to perpetuate the high standard of the writings of Dr Mary Jacobs on Sylvia Townsend Warner and to encourage further study.

**The Award**

• The prize for the winning essay will be £200, publication in the Society's *Journal* and one year's free membership of the Society.

**Procedure**

- A 'call for papers' with details of the Prize will be published in December 2013 on the website of the University of Pennsylvania.
- Essays should be no more than 4000 words.
- Entries may be in electronic form or in hard copy and should be submitted in two parts – 1) the essay without any identifying details, and 2) a separate document with author's name, essay title and email and postal address.

Entries should be sent to the Editor of the Society's *Journal* at Helen.Sutherland@glasgow.ac.uk

- The deadline for entries will be 1 May 2014.
- The winner will be notified by the Chairman of the Society in July 2014.
- The winning essay will be published in the 2014 *Journal* at the end of the year.

**Terms and Conditions**

- The competition is open to all, with the exception of the officers of the Society's Committee.
- The judges' decision will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- The Committee reserves the right not to award the Prize if all the entries are deemed to be of an insufficient standard.
- Essays entered must not have been published elsewhere or have publication pending.
- The Society will not contribute towards any expenses incurred by entrants to the competition.

**Changes in the Sylvia Townsend Warner Committee**

Judith Bond, Hon. Treasurer and Membership Secretary, and the Newsletter Editor Judith Stinton have both declared their intention to stand down in

Spring 2015. Anyone interested in taking over either of these roles should contact our Chairman, Eileen Johnson.

**A date for your diaries**

The 2014 AGM will be held on Saturday May 24th at 11.30am in the Library of Dorset County Museum. It will be followed by lunch at the Saxon Arms in Stratton.

**Sylvia Townsend Warner Society  
Minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting  
29<sup>th</sup> June 2013, Dorset County Museum**

**Present:**

Eileen Johnson, Helen Sutherland, Judith Bond, Judith Stinton, Lynn Mutti, Richard Searle, Ren Draya, Tess Ormrod, Stephen Mottram, Susan Macmillan (guest), Karina Taubert, Jenny Wildblood, Ruth Williams.

**1) Apologies**

Apologies were received from: Jay Barksdale, Susan Ellis, Winifred Johnson, Graham & Rosemary Pechey.

**2) Minutes of the 2012 AGM**

The Minutes of the 2012 AGM were agreed as true and signed by the Chairman.

**3) Matters Arising**

Susan Macmillan asked who was 'mapping' STW's published works at the University of Exeter. Judith B directed her to Vike Plock and Alex Murray, organisers of last year's Warner Symposium.

Judith Bond also spoke about Peter Judd's self-published book 'The Akeing Heart' in which the assistance by the Society is acknowledged. Amazon has now lowered the price to £12.00. The Society benefits financially if the link from the website to Amazon is used to purchase items.

Judith Bond reported that the response to the questionnaire asking members what they wanted from the Society was disappointing: only 16 out of a membership of 138 replied. The Committee had hoped for a greater response from members to help with its work



in planning the future of the Society and the promotion of Warner's work.

#### 4) Elections

Judith Bond will be stepping down from her post as Treasurer & Membership Secretary in 2015. A volunteer, or perhaps two as the post could be divided, is needed to continue this vital role.

#### 5) Treasurer's Report

The £350 allocated to assist the Symposium costs last June was not given: a £33.75 profit came to the Society instead. The concert of STW's music also made a profit, after paying performers, of £11.00. The closing balance for the year was much as usual at £4,872.82. Thanks were given to Stephen Mottram for his work regarding the Society's accounts.

#### 6) Membership

This year a geographical map of where members lived replaced the usual list of names and was appreciated for its innovation.

The Society recruited 15 new members from the website – thanks to Karina Taubert for her work with this.

5 members did not renew and two have died: Richard Garnett and Pat Brown.

Ren Draya suggested that Karina sent information about the Society to the English Departments of UK universities. Susan Macmillan volunteered to prepare and email a list for Karina

#### 7) Journal

Helen Sutherland outlined her research into the possibility of positive changes to the journal. It has not proved possible to re-size the journal in-house to reduce both production and postal charges.

This task would need to be out-sourced to a graphic artist.

An approach to the Edinburgh University Press has been made regarding the production of the journal in both electronic and paper formats. The response has been positive; the Press believe that the journal would be 'a good fit' with their current publication list.

Editorial and peer-review responsibilities would remain with Helen. The consensus of the meeting was that a hard copy of the journal should be retained and the Society should decide its size and design. The major issue would be cost and membership subscriptions to the Society would have to rise.

A lengthy and wide-ranging discussion ensued and the major points were:

- The possibility of the journal being purchased without Society membership.
- Could Society funds assist with this project.
- Back issues should be available on demand, relieving the Society of keeping 10 copies of each issue.
- Electronic journal necessary for academe and the promotion of STW's work.
- 2 issues per year could justify membership subscription increase.

Helen to prepare a detailed proposal for Edinburgh University Press

#### 8) Essay Competition

The judges for the first Essay Competition were Judith Stinton, Ren Draya and Professor Gillian Beer.

4 essays were received and the outright winner was Jane Feaver on the 'English Pastoral.' Chairman Eileen Johnson to write to the winner with a cheque for £200, and also to notify those not selected. Judith Stinton and Karina Taubert to give the results of the competition in the Newsletter and on website

Ren Draya suggested advertising the next competition in the *Times Literary Supplement* and gave editorial information. Lynn Mutti to obtain costs for both a paper and an on-line advertisement.

Judith Stinton and Ren Draya agreed to be judges for the next competition in 2014. Helen to ask if Gillian Beer will judge for a second time.

#### 9) Website

Karina Taubert reported that all was stable regarding the website. The STW story *A Foregone Conclusion* which was made available on the website generated a lot of interest. There were also 900 'hits' regarding the Symposium and the Concert last summer.

The summary of the Society weekend written for the newsletter to be given to Karina for the website.

Helen Sutherland to contact STW copyright holder Tanya Stobbs regarding stories mounted on the website.

**10) A.O.B.**

*Cousin and Friend*: letters typed from the originals, together with 2 original letters from 1958, are now in the STW archive.

It is with regret that the Society heard of the death of Richard Garnett. Members spoke of their memories of the Society visit to his home, Hilton Hall, and his generosity in displaying artefacts relating to his father David Garnett's long friendship with STW. There was a reading from his edition of the correspondence between David Garnett and Warner.

To conclude the AGM, members read favourite passages of Warner's writing from the *Salutation*, *The Letters* and *The Akeing Heart*.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11.40am

Coastal Area

Who are these who march this way,  
And must we run or may we stay?  
Stay, stay, my dear, and turn the hay,  
For these who march are brown not grey.

If they were grey instead of brown  
Our house would quickly tumble down;  
I would be dead for Land and Crown,  
And you would be in a tattered gown.

But they are brown, and plain to see  
As brown the dunes and grey the sea,  
And why this difference should be  
'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

*Sylvia Townsend Warner*  
*Decision*, September 1941