

The Philip Larkin Society
Registered Charity No. 1085251

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SUBSCRIPTIONS (1 July – 30 June)

UK Institution £50

Full Member £25

Unwaged or senior citizen £18

Unwaged Undergraduate Student £10

Overseas

Institution £60

Full member £30

Unwaged or senior citizen £25

Unwaged Undergraduate £12

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Editorial

In 2004 the Society loaned to the East Riding of Yorkshire Museum Service a number of Larkinalia items retrieved from 105 Newland Park following the death of Monica Jones, including jewellery, pictures and Larkin and Monica's clothes. Time passed, the loan overran its eight-year term, and eventually in 2016 ERYMS requested that the Society take back the items. Many of them featured in the 'New Eyes Each Year' exhibition in the Brynmor Jones Library in 2017. But two oil paintings remained unlocated and seemed to have been lost or stolen. Then, in December 2018 they came to light in a box in the Goole Museum. They are illustrated here in colour. All the Larkinalia belonging to the Society are now housed in the Brynmor Jones Library collection in the Hull History Centre.

This issue opens with the masterly talk, 'Larkin and Freedom' by Blake Morrison, delivered at our final meeting of 2018 on 2 December. It is followed by Philip Pullen's exploration of Larkin's associations with Lincolnshire. This piece will form part of a wide-ranging book, 'Places, Loved Ones', in which Philip explores places of literary or personal significance to Larkin. Also in this issue Geoff Weston examines the exact circumstances of the writing of 'Reasons for Attendance'.

Among events recorded here is the Faber launch of *Letters Home* in November, generously hosted by Larkin's successor as Librarian, Michelle Anderson, in the Observatory on the top floor of the Library. Fifty-six people attended this enjoyable event at which Ann and Anthony Thwaite interviewed the editor, James Booth. Paul Dean reviews the edition in this issue. The Society is acting as a public partner in a student-curated exhibition on Philip Larkin and Ted Hughes at the University of Huddersfield, launched on 20 March by James Underwood. The exhibition will be open until 21 July. Don Lee also reviews Chris Arnot's *Larkin About in Coventry*, the launch of which he attended at King Henry VIII School, Coventry.

In a Letter to the Editor Ann Thwaite disputes Robert C. Evans's comment, cited in our last issue, that the *Selected Letters* 'did nothing but harm' to Larkin's reputation. She cites glowing reviews by John Carey and others. We also print Edward Wilson's reminiscences of the Hull Literary Society in the 1960s and of Larkin's friend, the charismatic medievalist and banjo-player John Norton-Smith. And we have an extract from a letter of 1973 from the then undergraduate Sally Button (née Turner) to her parents, describing her interview with the Librarian in his Office.

This issue is particularly rich in original poems, including fine works by Kieron Winn, Carol Rumens, Stuart J. Silverman and Andrew Thomas.

The Society is delighted to announce the inauguration of a 'Philip Larkin Society Prize' of £500, open to any UK poet over 18. It will be awarded in Bridlington at the East Riding Festival of Words in October. Details will be circulated in May.

The committee is currently undergoing renewal. Andrew Eastwood, our Secretary for fourteen years, since 2005, is stepping down. His entertaining summaries of the years' events at AGM's will be long remembered. Carole Collinson has taken over as Membership Secretary, and Graham Chesters will act as General Secretary until a new member of the committee, Kyra Piperides can take over. Jackie Sewell, our Treasurer for the past ten years, since 2009, is also leaving. She will be much missed. We welcome in her place as acting Treasurer (hopefully confirmed at the June AGM) Fiona Miller who works in Finance at Hull University. We also welcome to the Committee Helen Cooper, Librarian at Henry VIII School, Coventry, and Rebecca Devine, who is engaged on a PhD on Larkin in Hull.

Finally, in advance of the digitisation of the *About Larkin* archive, we offer past issues here: a last chance to complete your set, or to acquire a particular issue.

James Booth