

Poetry Group Meeting - May 10th Report

Our theme for this meeting was "Rivers" which resulted in an eclectic mix of poetic choices. A beautifully read "Composed upon Westminster Bridge" by Wordsworth gave a fresh enjoyment to all of us of what could be considered a rather hackneyed poem, and there were other well-known offerings, including Gerard Manley Hopkins' "Inversnaid", chosen by 2 members of the group. What could be more relevant today than Hopkins' impassioned wish: "Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet!" as our wild spaces become increasingly rare?

There were 3 poems about the Tees (see one below), one set in New Zealand and one by Mary Oliver linking the river to religious experience. As always, the poems were not only enjoyable in themselves but were a way in to sharing memories, spiritual belief/non-belief, laughter, sadness.

In Teesdale by Andrew Young

No, not tonight
Not by this fading light,
Not by those high fells where the forces
Fall from the mist like the white tails of horses.

From the dark slack
Where peat-hags gape too black
I turn to where the lighted farm
Holds out through the open door a golden arm.

No, not tonight,
Tomorrow by daylight;
Tonight I fear the fabulous horses
Whose white tails flash down the steep watercourses.

We're continuing the watery theme by sharing poems about the sea at our June meeting.

Gaynor Hemming