

## March Poetry Group report by Terry Whitfield

As we met on a breezy day of sunshine and showers, it seemed appropriate that the theme was 'weather'. We started by listening to Ralph McTell singing 'After Rain':

'Come on now and dry your eyes  
Time will ease away the pain  
Clouds disperse and show the clear skies  
The earth smells sweeter after rain.'

In 'Composed in August' by Robert Burns. 'Autumn's pleasant weather' is the backdrop to Burns' description of a pastoral idyll of happy birds going about their business, interrupted only by:

'Tyrannic man's dominion;  
The sportsman's joy, the murd'ring cry,  
The flutt'ring gory pinion!'

Thomas Hardy came next with 'Weather':

'This is the weather the cuckoo likes,  
And so do I;  
When showers betumble the chestnut spikes, and nestlings fly.'

The Nicaraguan-Salvadoran poet Claribel Alegria (1924-2018) associates weather with her past in her poem 'Rain':

'Rain is falling  
falling  
and memories keep flooding by  
they show me a senseless  
world.....but I keep loving it  
because I do.'

Closer to home was 'Late Snow' by Barney resident Meg Peacocke:

'Snow had fallen again and covered  
the old dredge and blackened mush  
with a gleaming pelt.'

'Summer Shower' by Emily Dickinson was a bit warmer:

A drop fell on the apple tree,  
Another on the roof;  
A half a dozen kissed the eaves,  
And made the gables laugh'.

In 'The Hard' Simon Armitage managed to describe a Portsmouth seascape without mentioning rain or snow at all:

'Walk on, drawn to the shipwreck, a mirage of masts  
a mile or so out, seemingly true and intact'.

To finish, we were back with the snow again - Wendell Berry's wonderful 'March Snow':

'The morning lights  
whiteness that has touched the world  
perfectly as air.  
In the whitened country  
under the still fall of the snow  
only the river, like a brown earth,  
taking all falling darkly  
into itself, moves.'