

JUBILATE!

Annie hosted a group of seven Poetry Lovers to share poems on the theme of Celebration.

Christina Rossetti's heart eagerly anticipated the arrival of her love

*"because the birthday of my life
is come, my love to me"*

In The Summer Day Mary Oliver derives joy from really paying attention to a small part of the glory of the Cosmos, in this moment, in this place
- a grasshopper

Nina Cassion bursts through the doors of perception as her senses explode with an abundance of stimuli...as if on a mescaline trip.

Not for Norman Rowland Gale the cheap baubles of Fame, Wealth and Success.

Our cleric has accomplished something truly transcendent: recorded forever in Wisden -a cricket match in which he bowled three curates with three balls!

Edward Thomas' train stops unwontedly at Adlestrop. He sees a myriad of wildflowers. A blackbird sings...and farther and farther all the birds of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire.

Elaine Feinstein derives solace from getting older. Things have turned out OK. She takes delight in freesia, hot coffee and winter sunlight...which temporarily dispel the underlying darkness.

A cherished and lovingly crafted poem recited by many school children Is The Charge of the Light Brigade:
Is it a preposterous jingoistic celebration of Honour and Noble Failure, that has no relevance today?
Or is it a more subtle and nuanced account of military discipline?

Lord Byron, the Rock Star of his day, certainly knew how to seduce women with his honeyed words:

*She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.*

...by which time they were putty in his hands!

Ted Hughes celebrates the beauty and promise in a new born calf, slowly but steadily gaining poise and confidence in the world.

*Everything else is in order, just as it is.
Let the summer skies hold off, for the moment.
This is just as he wants it.
A little at a time, of each new thing, is best*

And so to the highlight of our meeting:

William McGonagall -

Lines in praise of Mr Graham Henderson, Hawick.

My words would be insufficient in capturing the beauty, nobility and economy of language in this poem...

So I won't even try!!

Robert Alabaster 14th May 2025